

Case study for Road Map on Statistics for SDGs 2.0***Netherlands: Using well-being and SDG indicators to hold government to account***

Description	<p>Following a debate on a broader concept of well-being than measured by GDP in the Dutch House of Representatives and a subsequent motion carried by the House, the minister for Economic Affairs requested the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) to compile an Annual Monitor of Well-being. It has been published since 2018 and is used to hold the government to account every year on Accountability Day in May on the basis of not only economic growth in terms of GDP, but also in terms of a broad concept of well-being.</p> <p>The first Monitor of Well-being included over 100 indicators on quality of life here and now, and how this affects the well-being of future generations and that of people living elsewhere.</p> <p>Since 2019, the SDG indicators have been incorporated in this monitor, as there is a lot of overlap between the well-being indicators CBS was using and the global SDG indicators. So every year in May the Dutch government is now held to account partly on how it performs on in terms of wellbeing and SDG's. In addition Statistics Netherlands publishes Fact sheets on Well-being and the SDGs on Budget Day in September. The indicators selected are relevant to a specific Ministry's policy themes.</p> <p>These Fact Sheets provide an insight into the status quo regarding well-being in the policy areas of the Ministry, and indicate where these touch on the various SDGs. They also provide input for political debate by highlighting the relevant policy themes along departmental lines. The Fact Sheets also provide a general overview of whether issues that are important from the perspective of well-being are moving in the right direction. Fact Sheets do not include policy projections. Nor are they intended to give the impression that there is always a direct link between the policies implemented and the outcomes measured. A wide range of factors will affect developments in any given policy area, and central government is just one of those. External shocks (such as the war in Ukraine) also play a role, and local government, businesses, civil society, knowledge institutions and citizens exert an influence too. It is the complex interplay between factors and actors that determines whether well-being improves and, if so, through which mechanisms.</p>
Advantages	<p>Parliamentarians have information at their fingertips about how the country is doing on over 300 different indicators with red and green arrows showing the direction in which the indicator is moving and an easily readable graph of the position of the Netherlands for each indicator in the EU. It has also led to a dialogue between parliament and NSO.</p>
Challenges	<p>As it proved quite difficult to reconcile the two indicator sets, in the Monitor of Well-being and the SDGs we choose to look at SDGs from a Dutch perspective (monitoring indicators relevant for the Dutch situation/Dutch policymaking). A separate dataset</p>

is provided to show progress for indicators exactly matching the UN list/descriptions.

**Future
steps**

The improvement will continue, as will the expansion of a number of SDGs for which we have little data availability (e.g. SDG 14).

**More
information**

[MBW en SDG's 2024 | CBS](#)

[Well-being Fact Sheets 2024 | CBS](#)