



# How's Life? 2013

MEASURING WELL-BEING

## Country Snapshot Mexico



OECD  
**Better Life**  
Initiative

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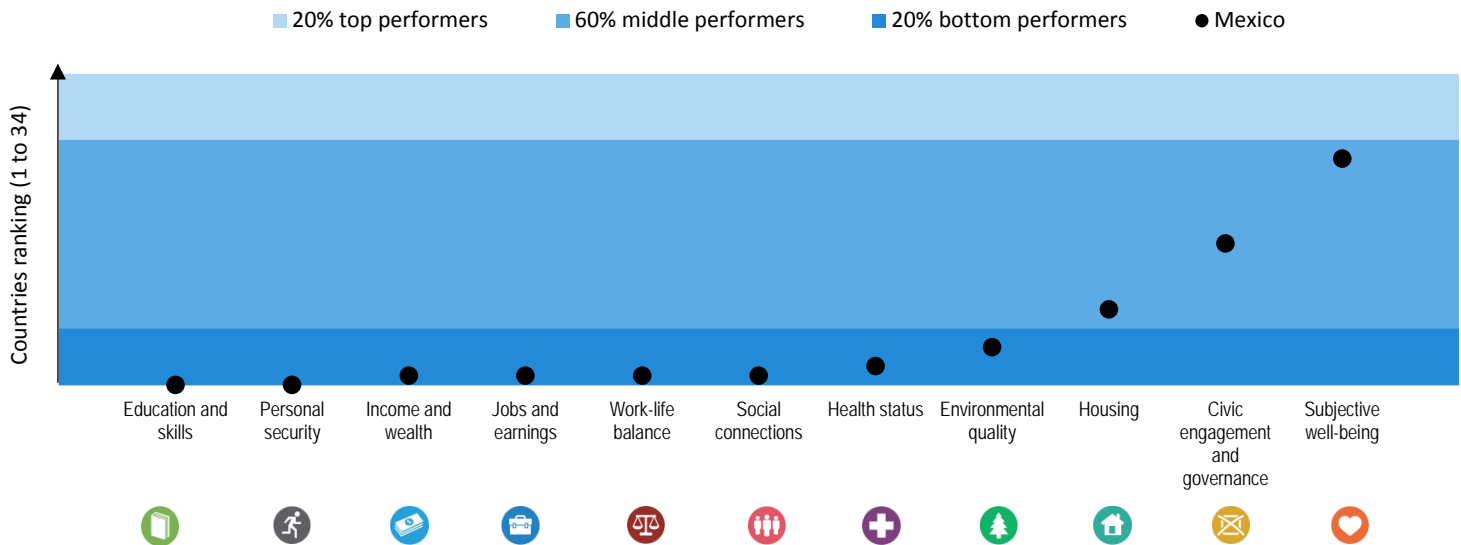
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## HOW'S LIFE IN MEXICO IN 2013?

Compared with other OECD countries, **Mexico** performs well in only a few of the 11 dimensions that the OECD considers as essential to a good life (income and wealth; jobs and earnings; housing conditions; health status; work-life balance; education and skills; social connections; civic engagement and governance; environmental quality; personal security and subjective well-being – See back page for more details). **Mexico** ranks above the OECD average in the dimension of subjective well-being but below average in the dimensions of civic engagement, housing, environmental quality, health status, social connections, work-life balance, jobs and earnings, income and wealth, personal security and education and skills.

**Figure 1 - How does Mexico compare?**

*Mexico's well-being compared with other OECD countries, 2013*



## WELL-BEING DURING THE CRISIS

Against this background, *How's Life?* shows that the **average Mexican household** has been affected by the crisis, with impacts that are particularly visible when looking at household income, jobs, life satisfaction and civic engagement.

From 2007 to 2010, Mexico recorded a cumulative decrease in real **household disposable income** of around 5%, one of the largest declines among the OECD countries. However, market income inequality (before taxes and transfers) remained unchanged over the same period while it increased by 1.2% on average in the OECD.

In the OECD countries most severely hit by the crisis, the largest impact of the crisis on people's well-being have come through lower employment and deteriorating labour market conditions. In contrast to the general trend, both the **employment rate** and the long-term unemployment rate remained stable in Mexico between 2007 and 2012.

In the OECD as a whole, the poor employment situation had a major impact on life satisfaction. In contrast to the general trend, the percentage of Mexican people declaring being very satisfied with their lives increased from 55% to 70% from 2007 to 2012, one of the highest increases in the OECD.

In the OECD countries most severely hit by the crisis, people's **trust in institutions** and in the way democracy works has also declined during the crisis. This decline extended to Mexico where the percentage of **Mexican** people reporting that they trust the government fell from 42% to 33% between 2007 and 2012.

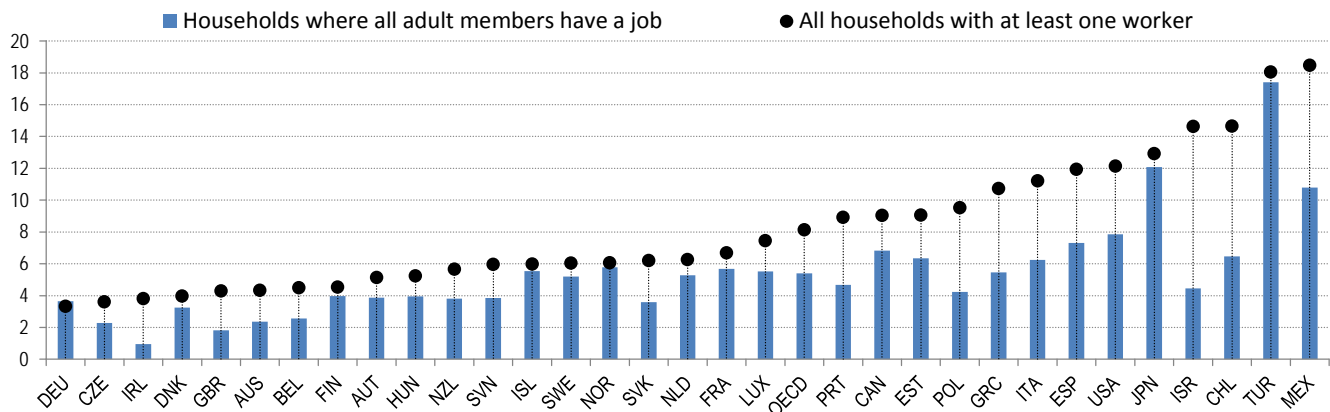
Over the same period, **new forms of solidarity and engagement** have emerged in the countries the most impacted by the crisis. In **Mexico**, this trend is less clear cut as the percentage of people reporting having helped someone decreased by 3 percentage points while the share of people reporting having volunteered their time increased by 4 percentage points between 2007 and 2011.

## QUALITY OF EMPLOYMENT AND WELL-BEING

From a well-being perspective, what matters is to have a job of good quality. Quality of employment encompasses many elements, one being that paid work ensure adequate standards of living. In-work poverty reflects different forms of precarious employment (e.g. low working hours and hourly pay among full-time workers, frequent moves between low-paid work and joblessness, etc), and its incidence informs about quality of employment. In 2010, **19% of Mexican people households with at least one worker experienced in-work poverty, while 11% of those living in households with all adult members employed were in poverty**, both shares being the highest in the OECD. Strategies to fight in-work poverty are at the forefront of the policy agenda in many countries, particularly in the context of the economic crisis.

**Figure 2 – In-work poverty in Mexico, 2010**

Poverty based on a threshold set at 50% of median household disposable income



## GENDER DIFFERENCES IN WELL-BEING

Gender gaps in well-being, typically in favour of men, have declined in most OECD countries, including in **Mexico** where the gender wage gap between men and women is one of the smallest in the OECD. Despite these gains, **Mexican women** are still less likely than men to have a paid job or be elected to Parliament, and more likely to spend many hours performing household tasks or to feel insecure when walking alone at night. A significant proportion of Mexican women also report having experienced various forms of intimate partner violence.

HOW DO MEN AND WOMEN PERFORM IN MEXICO?			AND IN THE OECD?	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
<b>Women and men throughout their lifetime</b>				
<b>Health status</b>				
Life expectancy at birth (years)	77	71	83	77
Share of people in good/very good health conditions	64%	67%	67%	72%
<b>Education and skills</b>				
Tertiary degrees awarded (all fields)	55%	45%	58%	42%
<b>Women and men in paid and unpaid work</b>				
<b>Jobs and earnings</b>				
Employment rates (tertiary educated individuals)	72%	88%	79%	88%
Wage gap between men and women	-	+5%	-	+16%
Share of poor single-adult households	21%	28%	37%	30%
<b>Work-Life balance</b>				
Number of hours dedicated to household tasks (per week)	44	30	32	21
<b>Women and men in society</b>				
<b>Civic Engagement and governance</b>				
Share of seats in national parliament	37%	63%	27%	73%
<b>Personal security</b>				
Share of women reporting intimate partner violence*	47%	-	-	-
Share of people feeling safe when walking alone at night	52%	57%	61%	79%
<b>Subjective well-being</b>				
Levels of life satisfaction on a 0 to 10 scale	7.1	7.2	6.7	6.6

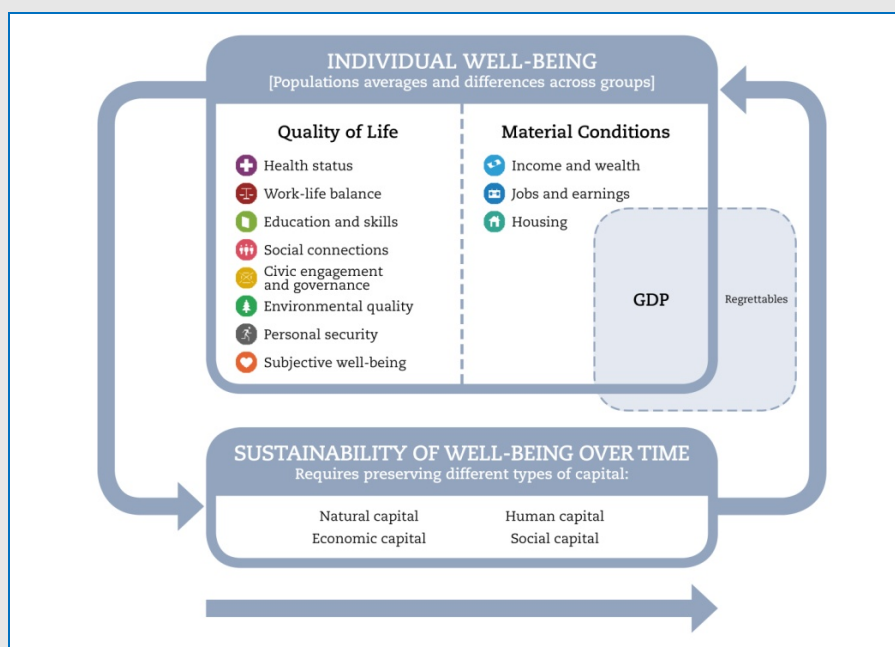
\*This percentage includes physical, sexual and emotional or psychological violence

## HOW TO MEASURE BETTER LIVES?

What matters most when it comes to people's well-being? The OECD *Better Life Initiative* assesses individual and societal progress by looking not only at the functioning of the economic system but also at the diverse experiences and living conditions of people. The OECD conceptual framework for defining and measuring well-being distinguishes between current and future well-being. Current well-being is measured in terms of outcomes and their distribution across the population achieved in the two broad domains: material living conditions (i.e. income and wealth; jobs and earnings; housing conditions) and quality of life (i.e. health status; work-life balance; education and skills; social connections; civic engagement and governance; environmental quality; personal security; and subjective well-being).

## SUSTAINING WELL-BEING OVER-TIME

How can we be sure that steps taken to improve well-being today do not undermine the well-being of people in the future? To assess the sustainability of well-being over time, the OECD focuses on four different types of resources (or "capitals") that can be measured today, and that matter for the well-being of future generations: economic, natural, human and social capital.



## THE BETTER LIFE INDEX

What matters to you in life? Create and share your *Better Life Index*. The *Better Life Index* is an **interactive tool** that uses the information from *How's Life?* and allows you to measure and compare well-being across countries according to **your own priorities**. Go to [www.oecdbetterlifeindex.org](http://www.oecdbetterlifeindex.org)



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