

Subjective well-being over the life course: evidence and policy implications

Hong Kong Theatre, London School of Economics and Political Science

12-13 December 2016

If we are to change the wellbeing of our people, it is not enough to measure it. We must also understand what causes wellbeing. The time is now ripe to gather together the evidence – and to do it in a way that makes it accessible to policy-makers. That is one aim of this conference – to present the latest findings from an international consortium of researchers working on the determinants of subjective well-being over the life-course. The second aim of the conference is for leading policy-makers and policy-analysts to reflect on the evidence and how it can be put to use in the real world. How are policy-makers to be induced to care about subjective well-being? And what difference would it make if they did?

A major international conference on these issues has the potential to be a landmark event in the development of public policy analysis. It will be open to the public and last two days. The first day will begin with the British evidence followed by a broad debate on the policy implications of wellbeing evidence. The second day will provide detailed evidence from across the international consortium.

The conference is jointly organised by the OECD, the Centre for Economic Performance of the London School of Economics, and the CEPREMAP Wellbeing Observatory of the Paris School of Economics, in conjunction with the What Works Centre for Wellbeing. The conference will also see the launch of a new Wellbeing Society.

DAY 1: Monday 12 December

9:30 **Conference opened** by Lord Gus O'Donnell "Subjective well-being and policy"

9:50 **Objective of the conference:** Martine Durand (OECD)

10:00 **Wellbeing over the life course** (Presentation of *The Origins of Happiness*)

- Richard Layard (London School of Economics, LSE)
- Andrew Clark (Paris School of Economics, PSE)
- Nick Powdthavee (University of Warwick)

Discussant: Martine Durand

11:45 *Coffee break - room 2.02, 2nd floor*

12:15 **Keynote address** by Jeffrey Sachs (Columbia University) "Economics for the Common Good"

12:50 Q&A/ discussion

13:15 *Lunch break- room 2.02, 2nd floor*

14:30 **Keynote address** by Mari Kiviniemi (OECD Deputy Secretary General)

14:50 **Panel session 1: Why should policy-makers care about people's wellbeing?**

Chair: Martine Durand (OECD)

Panellists:

- Ohood Al Roumi (Minister of State for Happiness, United Arab Emirates)

- Eva Christiansen (German Chancellery)
- Oliver Letwin (former UK Cabinet Minister)
- Vincent Aussilloux (France Stratégie)

16:15 *Coffee break - room 2.02, 2nd floor*

16:45 Panel session 2: How would policies differ if wellbeing was the objective?

Chair: Evan Davis (BBC)

Panellists:

- David Halpern (UK Behavioural Insights Team)
- John Helliwell (University of British Columbia)
- Girol Karacaoglu (New Zealand School of Government)
- Mark Pearson (OECD)

18:00 Closing keynote speaker: Alan Krueger (via video)

18:20 Launch of a new Wellbeing Society: Paul Frijters (University of Queensland)

18:30 *Conference drinks reception - Senior Dining Room, 5th Floor, Old Building, Houghton Street*

Day 2: Tuesday 13 December

OECD Consortium on Life-Course Determinants of Wellbeing

Coffee on arrival

Chair: Carrie Exton (OECD)

10:00 USA : Effects of adolescence (Wisconsin Longitudinal Survey USA)

Tom Lee and Andrew Clark (PSE/CEP). Discussant: Stephen Jenkins (LSE)

10:45 GERMANY: Expanding the toolbox for measuring well-being to include text responses from quantitative social science survey data: Age and Cohort Effects in the SOEP

Gert G. Wagner (DIW). Discussant: Conal Smith (OECD)

11:30 NORWAY: Effects of birth order on life outcomes

Kjell Salvanes (Norwegian School of Economics). Discussant: Stephen Machin (LSE CEP)

12:15 *Lunch break- Room 2.02, 2nd floor*

Chair: Nick Powdthavee (University of Warwick and LSE CEP)

13:30 SWEDEN: Family and childhood correlates of adult outcomes in register data

Daniela Andren and Sune Karlsson (Örebro University School of Business).

Discussant: Nick Powdthavee

14:15 FRANCE: Early childcare arrangements and children's psychological development (EDEN)

Maria Melchior (Pierre Louis Institute for Epidemiology and Public Health).

Discussant: Liam Delaney (University of Stirling)

15:00 *Coffee break - Room 2.02, 2nd floor*

Chair: Richard Layard (LSE)

15:30 DENMARK: Explaining inter-area variation in wellbeing

Niels Ploug and Jens Bonke (Statistics Denmark). Discussant: Steve Gibbons (LSE)

16:15 AUSTRALIA: Resilience: The effect of childhood circumstances on later life wellbeing variability (HILDA) Paul Frijters (University of Queensland). Discussant: Andrew Steptoe (UCL)

17:00 Closing address by John Helliwell (UBC)

What have we learned from life-course evidence? How does it relate to other evidence?

17:30 Close