Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

Understanding Life in Ireland: The Well-being Framework 2023

Contents

Executive Summary

Ireland's Well-being Framework provides policy-makers and Government with a more holistic way of thinking about how Ireland is doing as a country. It focuses on quality of life, with a particular emphasis on equality and sustainability. It reviews performance across economic, environmental and social issues simultaneously, rather than in isolation.
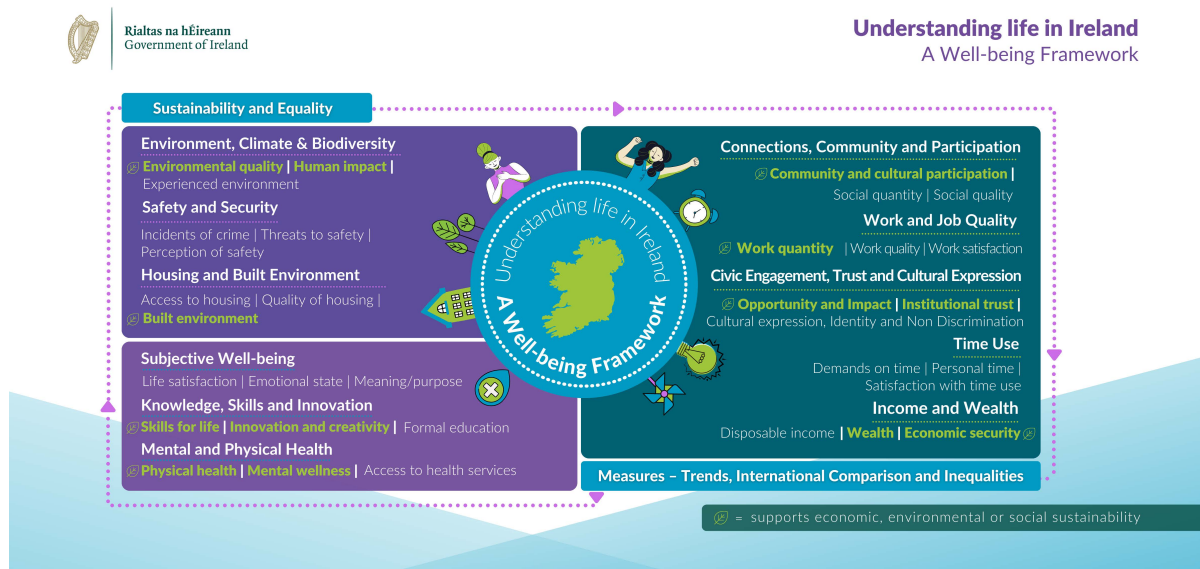
Ireland's Well-being approach consists of eleven dimensions which cover outcomes associated with sustainable quality of life. These are represented by 35 indicators which can be viewed on the CSO dashboard.[1] The Framework has been informed by two phases of consultation and four research projects. More information can be found on the Well-being Portal.[2]

The Well-being initiative is now being integrated across policy-making in Government. For example, the dashboard analysis fed into the Budgetary cycle last year, including at the National Economic Dialogue, in the Summer Economic Statement and in Budget Day documentation. This will now be an annual contribution to the Budget cycle, which will provide evidence to help inform the identification of potential policy priorities.

Understanding Life in Ireland

This year's report is the second annual analysis and intends to provide an overall picture of the country's progress across the eleven dimensions with a particular focus on sustainability and equality. [3] To facilitate a medium-term view of quality of life the

---

[1] CSO Well-being Information Hub. Available from: www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/hubs/p-wbhub/well-beinginformationhub/

[2] Well-being Portal. Available from: www.gov.ie/wellbeing-framework

[3] The analysis is based on latest data as of 31 May 2023.

analysis reviews trends over approximately 5-years and compares Ireland's performance to other countries.[4]

This paper analyses each dimension individually, discussing overall performance, examines each in terms of equality and sustainability, and draws attention to any changes that may be reported since last year's analysis.

It is important to note that the Dashboard cannot provide the full breadth of data available across the quality of life issues that it covers. Instead, each dimension contains between two and four indicators to provide a high-level view of progress in Ireland.

The purpose of this Report is to provide a medium-term view of the country, and therefore the data chosen is often annual, and frequently with long lead-in times. The reference periods that the analysis considers vary across the indicators from 2018 to 2023. Some data (e.g. in the work and job quality dimension) covers the period where inflation and cost of living issues arose, whereas the most recent indicators for other dimensions (e.g. subjective well-being) are from 2018. As a result, care should be taken in interpreting and comparing the performance of the dimensions. For information on when new data is due to be published, please see Appendix 1.

In addition, tensions exist across the dashboard. Some areas are mutually reinforcing while performance in other areas may pull against each other. There are also tensions between sustainability and current quality of life indicators. This is the nature of a multi-dimensional dashboard approach.

Overall performance

Overall performance is positive across the indicators in 10 of the 11 dimensions. Only one dimension, the Environment, Climate and Biodiversity, shows a negative performance. Dimensions that performed well include Housing and the Built Environment (driven by performance in new dwelling completions; A or B domestic dwelling energy rating, and; housing cost overburden rate), Subjective Well-being (driven by performance in overall life satisfaction, and; population who did not feel depressed or downhearted) and Safety and Security (driven by Ireland's performance in comparison with other countries in the murder rate per 100,000 people; and the population who worry they could be a victim of a crime; alongside reductions in the number of persons killed or injured on roads).

---

[4] Where possible, depending on available data. Some indicators do not have trends available, others do not have international comparisons.

Of the 35 indicators, 8 show negative performance (based on time trend and/or international comparison):

Dimension	Indicator
Subjective Well-Being	School-aged children who report being happy with their life overall
Knowledge, Skills and Innovation	Research and development personnel
Environment, Climate and Biodiversity	Pollution, grime or other environmental problems
	Water body quality
	Greenhouse gas emissions
	Waste generated
Time Use	Long working hours in main job
Civic Engagement, Trust and Cultural Expression	Persons who experienced discrimination in the last two years

Equality

The introduction of a comparable figure for equality across indicators allows for the assessment of each dimension for equality outcomes. Particular cohorts that perform less well than other comparable groups across multiple dimensions can be identified.

An examination of this data shows that several groups experience inequality across a high proportion of indicators. These are women, single-parent households, people living alone, immigrants/non-Irish, unemployed people, households with lower incomes, households in rented accommodation, and people with long-term illness or disability. Note that the groups featured here are based on research, relevance and data availability. There may be other groups that experience inequality that the available data does not show.

Of the eleven dimensions, two show particularly large average differences between groups. These were Housing and the Built Environment; and Income and Wealth. Dimensions that showed small differences between groups include Civic Engagement, Trust and Cultural Expression; and Subjective Well-being.

Sustainability

Fourteen of the thirty-five indicators have been identified as particularly important for sustainable well-being.[5] There is only one dimension that has overall negative performance of the sustainability indicators – the Environment, Climate and Biodiversity.

---

[5] As defined in the Department of Finance: Department of Finance (2022), *Sustainability in the Irish Well-being Framework: A Review,* which also identified the fourteen indicators. Available from: https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/3da98-sustainability-in-the-irish-well-being-framework-a-review/

Of the fourteen sustainability indicators, four have a negative performance overall. These are research and development personnel, water body quality, greenhouse gas emissions and waste generated.

The sustainable indicators perform better than the overall average performance for only two dimensions. These are Knowledge, Skills and Innovation; and Civic Engagement, Trust and Cultural Expression. This may indicate a prioritisation of current well-being issues in favour of sustainability.

The infographic overleaf shows the insights discussed by dimension, showing average **performance** (as measured by trend of approximately 5 years, and comparisons with other countries), the performance of the **sustainability** indicators separately, and **equality** results of the average difference between groups discussed on the CSO's Well-being Information Hub. For information on the methodology, see 'How to read this report' on p. 8. For full breakdown of the results for each dimension and indicator, see Appendix 2.

Understanding Life in Ireland | A Well-being Perspective 2023

Trend over 5 years – International comparisons – Differences between groups

Categories shown: Subjective Well-Being*, Mental and Physical Health, Knowledge, Skills and Innovation, Income and Wealth, Housing and the Built Environment, Environment, Climate and Biodiversity, Safety and Security*, Work and Job Quality, Connections, Community and Participation*, Time Use*, Civic Engagement, Trust and Cultural Expression

*Not all areas have sustainability indicators

Performance | Sustainability | Equality

gov.ie/wellbeing-framework

Introduction

Ireland's Well-being initiative, which is a Programme for Government commitment, seeks to help inform Government priorities and policy objectives, and to think about longer-term challenges that face the country in a new way, by reviewing these areas together. It also places an explicit focus on sustainability and equality.

A First Report on the development of a Well-being Framework was published in 2021 and was followed by the development and launch of the Well-being Portal, the CSO's Well-being Information Hub, a comprehensive Public Conversation, and the progression of several strands of research. A Second Report was then published in 2022 capturing the outcomes of this work and plans for embedding the Framework over time. The Government has committed to a review of the Framework in approximately four years' time.

How to read this report

For each dimension there are graphs that discuss performance, equality and sustainability. The numbers associated with these graphs can be interpreted as follows:

	+1	**0**	**-1**
Performance[i]	*100% improvement in the trend over approx. 5 years and/or Ireland is the best performing country.*	*No change in the trend over approx. 5 years and/or Ireland's performance is the same as the average.*	*100% deterioration in the trend over approx. 5 years and/or Ireland is the worst performing country.*
Sustainability	*100% improvement in the trend over approx. 5 years and/or Ireland is the best performing country for the indicators tagged as 'sustainable'.*	*No change in the trend over approx. 5 years and/or Ireland's performance is the same as the average for indicators tagged as 'sustainable'.*	*100% deterioration in the trend over approx. 5 years and/or Ireland is the worst performing country for indicators tagged as 'sustainable'.*
Equality[ii]	*No difference between the best and worst performing groups, as broken down on the CSO Dashboard.*	*100% difference between the best and worst performing groups, as broken down on the CSO Dashboard.*	*200% difference between the best and worst performing groups, as broken down on the CSO Dashboard.*

i Trend and/or international comparison used depending on data availability.
ii The CSO Well-being Information Hub does not include all possible areas of inequality. Instead, the groups discussed for each indicator were chosen on the basis of relevance, research and data availability.

For more detail on the methodology, including practical examples, see Appendix 3.

This year marks the second annual analysis of the dashboard that accompanies the Framework.[6] The Framework is now an annual contribution into the Budgetary cycle and will be part of Budget day documentation.

This year, similar to last year's publication, the performance of the fourteen indicators tagged for sustainability are highlighted separately. Sustainability covers economic, environmental and social sustainability and is defined as well-being which can be maintained into the future, at least at the current level of well-being.[7]

To complement this approach, this year's analysis introduces a figure for equality across indicators. This allows for the assessment of each dimension for equality outcomes. The focus on equality in the Report aligns with the emphasis placed on equality throughout the development of the Framework (particularly through the two phases of consultation). This also complements the forthcoming paper by the National Economic and Social Council, 'Inequality and Well-Being Frameworks' which specifically highlights the ability of Well-being Frameworks to identify areas of inequality.

The Second Report on the Well-being Framework[8] outlined the significant overlap between the Framework and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Embedding the Well-being Framework into the policy-making process will support progress towards the SDG's.

Note that throughout and across all methods, performance is relative compared to previous performance and other countries' performance. For example, General Government Wealth remains negative (-€108.3 billion). However, over the last five years this figure has improved by almost 25% which is the basis of the positive assessment over time.

The methodology developed will remain under review to ensure it is fit for purpose and provides enough clarity and nuance.

The following sections of this paper discuss each Well-being dimension individually in terms of its overall performance, its performance in terms of equality and sustainability and finally reviews any changes compared to last year's analysis. All data comes from the CSO Well-being Information Hub[9] unless otherwise stated.

---

[6] First Report: Understanding Life in Ireland 2022 (2022), Department of the Taoiseach. Available from: www.gov.ie/wellbeing-framework

[7] As defined in the Department of Finance: Department of Finance (2022), *Sustainability in the Irish Well-being Framework: A Review*, which also identified the fourteen indicators. Available from: https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/3da98-sustainability-in-the-irish-well-being-framework-a-review/

[8] Second Report on the Well-being Framework for Ireland (2022), Department of the Taoiseach. Available from: www.gov.ie/wellbeing-framework

[9] Available from: https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/hubs/p-wbhub/well-beinginformationhub/

Understanding Life in Ireland: Analysis 2023

1. Subjective Well-being

An individual's personal perspective of their mental state, how their life is going and their outlook for the future.

Overall, the performance of the subjective well-being dimension is positive. In 2018, 45% of people in Ireland rated their overall life satisfaction as 'very high' (9 or 10 out of 10) – the highest of any EU country. This was nearly a 50% increase on the 2013 figure (31%). In the same year, more than 63% of the population reported they did not feel depressed or downhearted in the last year, up 20% from 2013. However, between 2014 and 2018, the proportion of school-aged children who reported being happy with their lives at present reduced slightly (by less than 2%).
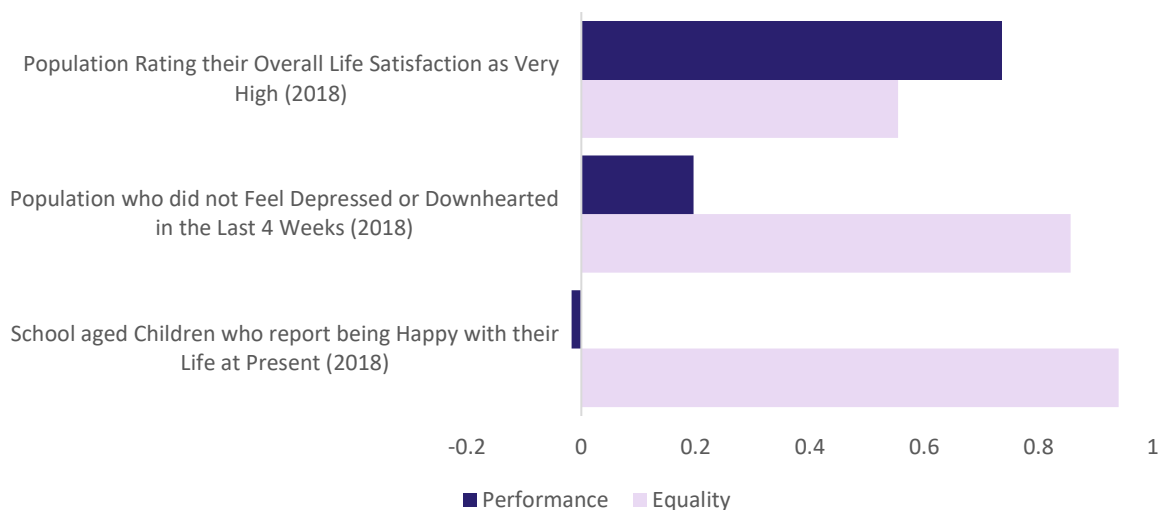
Equality

There is a large difference in overall life satisfaction depending on health status. Only 23.2% of people who report their health as 'fair', 'bad' or 'very bad', rate their overall life satisfaction as 'very high'. This figure is 57.9% for people who report their health status as 'very good'.

Those at risk of poverty were more likely to have felt downhearted (50.2%) than those not at risk of poverty (65.5%).

Results for both indicators varied only slightly by age group. The age group with the smallest proportion of 'very high' life satisfaction (age 25-49 at 41.5%) was the most likely to have not felt downhearted (64.4%), highlighting how different aspects of subjective well-being can vary across the life cycle.[10] See below table for results of all age groups.

---

[10] In general, age-related variation in subjective well-being and happiness is u-shaped, with younger and older cohorts having higher levels of well-being than middle-aged people. For further information see:

Subjective Well-being Indicators for people over 16 by age group (2018)

Indicator	16 - 24	25 - 49	50 - 64	65 +	Total
Population Rating their Overall Life Satisfaction as Very High (%)	45.6	41.5	44.7	46.4	44.4
Population who did not Feel Depressed or Downhearted in the Last 4 Weeks (%)	61.4	64.4	61.4	63.8	63.4

There was very little difference by sex[11] or population group for school aged children reporting being happy with their life at present. Female children were slightly lower (85.6%) than male children (91.1%), and children with a disability (83.5%) and immigrant children (84.8%) had lower rates than traveller children (88.6%) or the average (88.2%).

What has changed?

No new data relating to the indicators in this dimension has been released in the last year. Data on overall life satisfaction will be updated in Q2 2023. New data for 2022 on children's happiness with life at present is also expected later in 2023.[12]

2. Mental and Physical Health

> *The capacity of an individual to be and feel well, with good mental and physical health, living a life unencumbered by illness. Collectively, the good mental and physical health of the population also contributes to future well-being.*

The overall performance of the mental and physical health dimension remains positive.[13] In 2020, average healthy life years at birth was down slightly from 67.2 in 2015 to 66.2 in 2020. This was slightly above the EU average (64 years), but over six years less than the highest performing country (Sweden, 72.7 years).

In 2019, 14% of the population reported experiencing depression (mild, moderate, moderately severe or severe). There is no trend or internationally comparable data for this indicator.


OECD, (2013), OECD Guidelines on Measuring Subjective Well-being, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264191655-en

[11] Sex is used here and throughout this document based on the CSO Standard Sex Classification which was approved by the CSO Classifications Board in 2002. More information available here: https://www.cso.ie/en/methods/classifications/standardsexclassification/

[12] As part of the Health Behaviour in School-aged Children 2022 Survey. More information available from: https://www.universityofgalway.ie/hbsc/hbscireland/2022study/

[13] The Mental and Physical Health indicators align with the Health System Performance Assessment Framework, developed by the Department of Health, which moves from activity-based indicator measurement to outcome-based performance measurement. A new online portal for the HSPA will be available to the public shortly.

In 2021, 2% of the population reported unmet need for medical care.[14] This is down slightly from 2.5% in 2016. Ireland's results are the same as the EU average, while the top performing countries (Germany, Cyprus and Malta) are all at 0.1% of the population.
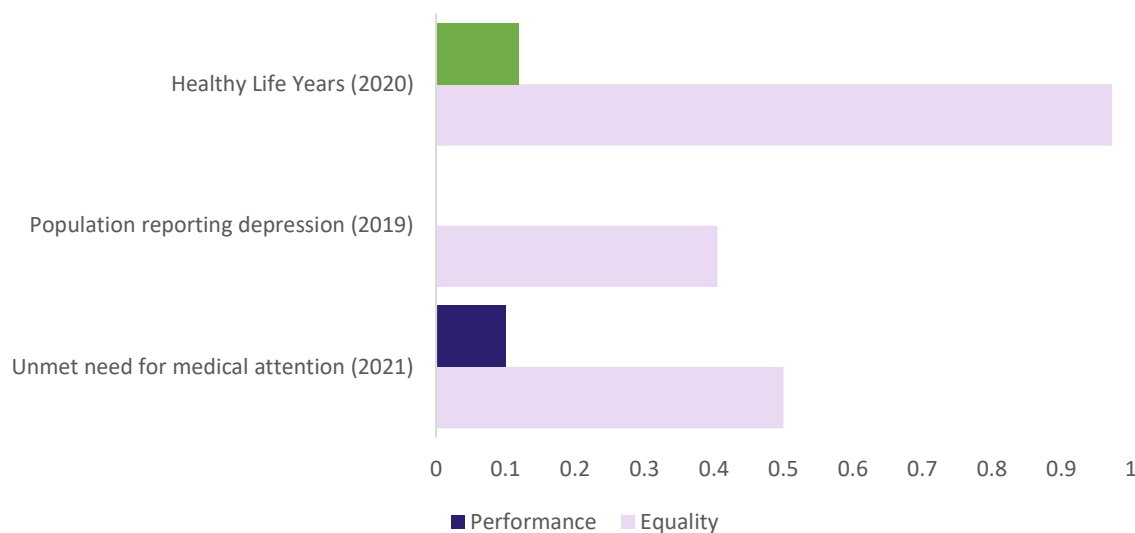
Healthy life years and the population reporting depression are sustainable indicators, and its performance bar is coloured green to highlight this.

Equality

All three of the indicators are discussed with reference to sex. In 2020 women had higher healthy life years at birth (67.1) than men (65.3). Women had higher rates of reported depression (16%) than men (11%), and higher rates of unmet need for medical attention (2.5%) than men (1.5%).

The proportion of the population reporting depression is also explored based on employment status, with much higher rates of depression reported by those who are unemployed (21%) than those at work (8%). Similarly, those in the bottom 20% of the income distribution[15] had higher levels of reported depression (18%) than those in the top 40% (11%).

Sustainability

Healthy Life Years and Population Reporting Depression are sustainability indicators. Healthy Life Years has a positive performance driven by Ireland's results in comparison with other EU countries. Population reporting depression does not have trend or international comparison, so performance is not assessed.

---

[14] Due to expense, travel times or waiting lists. Available from: Eurostat table [TESPM110].

[15] Labels based on income quintiles: top 20% is 'very affluent', bottom 20% is 'very disadvantaged'.

What has changed?

While new data on unmet need for medical attention has been published, this has not changed the overall performance, and continues to show a very slow downward trend in this indicator.

3. Income and Wealth

> *The financial resources that shape the range of choices an individual or society has to meet their day-to-day needs and wants, and the ability to mitigate personal and broader economic and societal risks, both now and in the future.*

Average performance in this dimension continues to be positive. In 2022, median real household disposable income was €46,999, up from €43,915 in 2020.[16] In the EU in 2021, Ireland had the 4th highest equivalised net income in the EU at €28,130 (behind Netherlands at €28,441, Denmark at €38,705 and Luxembourg at €43,229).

Median household net wealth increased over the four years to 2020 from €178,400 to €193,100. At an EU level, in 2017 Ireland was 5th highest (at €179,090) behind Cyprus, Belgium, Malta and Luxembourg.

The proportion of households making ends meet with great difficulty reduced slightly from 6% (2020) to 5.7% (2022).[17] In 2021 Ireland was below the EU average (7%), but still behind the best performing country (Netherlands at 1.6%).
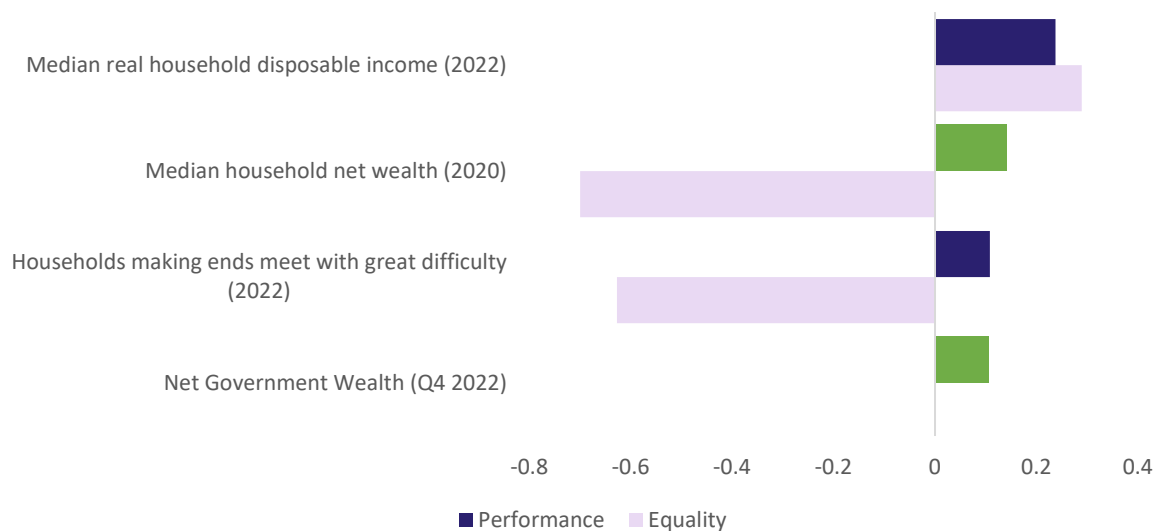
Median household net wealth and net Government wealth are sustainable indicators, and their performance bars are coloured green to highlight this.

---

[16] A break in the time series for SILC means trend data is only available over two years instead of five.
[17] *Ibid.*

Finally, while Net Government Wealth is still negative overall (-€108.3 billion in Quarter 4 2022), this has improved by almost 25% since Quarter 4 2017 (-€143.3 billion). Across OECD member countries, Ireland's general government financial wealth as a proportion of GDP[18] (-40.8%) is just below the average (-29.7%), and better than the worst performing country (Greece at -169.5%).

Equality

Three of the four indicators in the Income and Wealth dimension are examined with an equality lens, and there is strong evidence of inequality across two of these. It is important to note, however, that these indicators are explored at specific moments in time within a household – people of working age compared with people in retirement, families with and without dependent children, households renting versus those who own their homes, and households experiencing unemployment – which may be temporary – compared to those in work. If these indicators could take account of income and wealth over the entire life cycle, these results would likely be more equal.

Selected Income and Wealth indicators by Household Composition

Indicator	1 adult > 65	1 adult < 65	2 adults, 1 > 65	2 adults, < 65	3 + adults	1 adult with children	2 adults, 1-3 children	Others with children	All
Median equivalised nominal disposable income (€ '000s) [19] 2022	16.8	24	23.6	33.5	30.5	18.9	26.9	24.2	26.3
Median household net wealth (€ '000s) 2020	212.9	96.8	361.8	163.8	338.8	4	142.3	231.7	193.1
Households making ends meet with great difficulty (%) 2022	6.3	8.2	2.4	3.7	4.1	9.8	5.8	11	5.9

Household composition is explored across each of the indicators (shown in the table above). Households with working age adults tend to have higher disposable income,[20] while households with retirement age adults tend to have greater net wealth. Single-parent households have low household disposable income (€18,870) and very low net

---

[18] Reviewing government wealth in Ireland as a proportion of GDP underestimates the negative assets as GDP is not a suitable measure of the size of the Irish economy – further information at: www.gov.ie/en/publication/498058-gdp-and-modified-gni-explanatory-note-may-2018/

[19] Equivalised household income is used here as it accounts for the number of adults and children living in the household, allowing for more meaningful comparison. SILC 2022 Release Tables 3.1-3.5.

[20] Equivalised household income is used here as it accounts for the number of adults and children living in the household, allowing for more meaningful comparison. Available from CSO SILC 2022 Release, Tables 3.1-3.5.

wealth (€4,000) compared to other households. These households have the second highest proportion of making ends meet with great difficulty (9.8%). Other households with children (11%) and single person households of retirement age (8.3%) are also more likely to have difficulty making ends meet.

Median real household disposable income is also reviewed based on employment status. Those who are unable to work due to long-standing health problems had the lowest household incomes (€22,665), followed by retired households (€29,418).

Household net wealth varies widely by tenure status, with owner-occupied households having average net wealth of €303,900, while households that are rented or rent free have average net wealth of €5,300.

11.6% of households in the bottom quintile are making ends meet with great difficulty compared to 1% of households in the top income quintile.

Sustainability

Median household net wealth and net government wealth are sustainability indicators. Both perform well in aggregate. However, while net government wealth continues to improve over time, it remains below the EU average. Furthermore, its position relative to other countries is likely overestimated given this comparison relies on GDP.

What has changed?

In Quarter 4 2022, while net government wealth (including pension liabilities) remained negative (-€108.3 billion), this position has seen steady improvement since Quarter 3 2020 (as seen in the chart below).

Net Government Wealth 2017-2022 (€ millions)
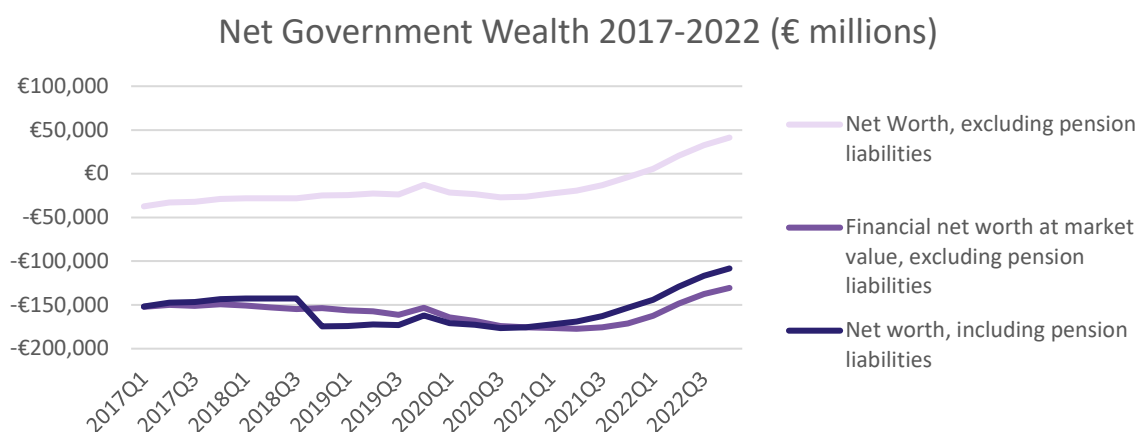
Source: CSO Well-being Information Hub

There has been very little change in real household disposable income and difficulty in making ends meet in 2022 data compared to 2021. However, the full impact of the cost

of living crisis may not have been felt at the time the 2022 data was collected (January to June 2022).

4. Knowledge, Skills and Innovation

The cognitive and motor skills acquired and developed over the course of a person's life that promotes agency and ability to self-actualise and progress in society.

Overall, the knowledge, skills and innovation dimension continues to perform well. In the six years to 2018, the reading ability of Irish 15-year-olds did not change significantly,[21] and was 4th highest across OECD countries (behind Estonia, Canada and Finland). Over the same period, average maths scores also did not change significantly,[22] and scored above the OECD average.

In Quarter 1 2023, the Lifelong Learning Rate[23] stood at approximately the same level (10.3%) as in Quarter 4 2017 (10.8%) following an increase over late 2020 to early 2022 (possibly due to upskilling and reskilling undertaken while pandemic restrictions were in place). In 2022, Ireland had approximately the same lifelong learning rate (11.8%) as the EU average (11.9%), and remained behind the top performers (Sweden at 36.2%, Denmark at 27.9% and Netherlands at 26.4%).
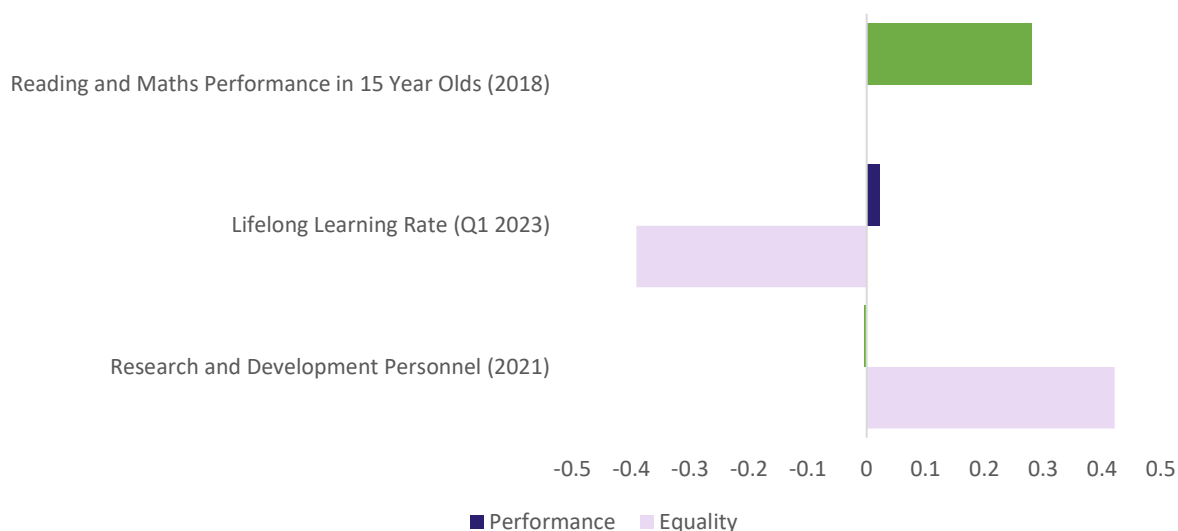
Reading and maths performance in 15 year olds and research and development personnel are sustainable indicators, and their performance bars are coloured green to highlight this.

---

[21] Difference of -5 (523 to 518 average score) with an s.e. of 5.1 – not statistically significant. Available from: Table I.B1.10 https://doi.org/10.1787/888934029090

[22] Difference of -2 (501 to 500 average score) with an s.e. of 4.6 – not statistically significant. Available from: Table I.B1.11 https://doi.org/10.1787/888934029090

[23] Refers to persons aged 18 - 74 years who have participated in formal education or training in the 4 weeks preceding the interview for the Labour Force Survey (this includes students on holidays).

The number of full-time equivalent Research and Development personnel increased from 31,396 in 2018 to 34,721 in 2021.[24] This represents 1.52% of employment, below the EU average (1.61%) and below the top performers of Belgium (2.49%), Denmark (2.23%) and Austria (2.06%).

Equality

The lifelong learning rate is explored on the CSO's Well-being Information Hub across principal economic status and age groups. In the calculation for the equality figure in the chart above, students were excluded as 99% of students had undertaken learning in the previous 4 weeks. By comparison, the lifelong learning rate was 4.9% of those at work, 4.4% for unemployed people and 10.8% for 'other'.[25]

Similarly, the lifelong learning rate for those aged 18-24 was much higher than other groups (57.8%) given a large portion of this group would be in full-time education, and was therefore excluded in the above analysis. However, there were still very large differences across the remaining age groups, with a 220% difference between the lifelong learning rate for those aged 25-34 (10.6%) and those aged 55-64 years (1.4%). High rates of lifelong learning across the life cycle will be important as the digital transition continues to ensure that people of all ages have the new skills needed, and to promote digital inclusion. This echoes the findings of the recent *OECD Skills Strategy Ireland: Assessment and Recommendations* which highlights that participation in lifelong learning is essential for reskilling and upskilling in Ireland, and that targeting adults with low levels of education, women and people with disabilities will be important to ensure no disadvantaged groups are left behind.

In 2019, of the 32,170 research and development personnel, 35% were female and 65% were male.

Sustainability

While the scores for reading and maths of 15-year-olds is positive (driven by Ireland's performance compared to other OECD members), Ireland remains below the EU average of the percentage of research and development staff in employment. Overall, the performance of the sustainability indicators alone is stronger than the performance of the dimension overall – one of only two dimensions where this is seen.

What has changed?

As mentioned above, the lifelong learning rate has seen a levelling off since the worst impact of the pandemic restrictions, coinciding with a return to employment of those who had been temporarily out of work.

---

[24] Due to a break in the time series, trend is only available from 2018. Full-time equivalent personnel available from Eurostat table [RD_P_PERSQUAL11].

[25] NB that results for those engaged in home duties, retired or unable to work due to permanent sickness or disability were too small to report.

The overall performance of the research and development indicator is just under zero in this year's report. This performance is driven by comparisons with other countries, in particular differences between Ireland and top performing countries, despite increases in the number of Ireland's R&D personnel over the three years to 2021.

No new data has been released for reading and mathematics for 15-year-olds. However, new data from 2022 are expected by the end of 2023.

5. Housing and the Built Environment

Housing captures the physical infrastructure that shapes the ability of an individual to meet basic needs such as shelter, security and social belonging. The local built environment determines access to infrastructure and broader services, for example safe, sustainable and accessible transport choices.

The number of new dwelling completions continues to increase from a low of 890 in Quarter 1 2013 to almost 6,716 in Quarter 1 2023. Over five years, there has been an increase of almost 110%, but this is from a very low base. In addition, research taking account of changing demographics has suggested that this needs to be closer to 33,000 per year in order to meet rising demand.[26] While there is no fully standardised internationally comparable data across the EU, Deloitte provided a breakdown of new dwelling completions per 1,000 residents for a selection of European countries. Ireland, at 4.08 in 2021, was 6th highest out of 17 countries.[27]

The proportion of domestic dwellings with an A or B energy rating has also increased from 22% in 2017 to over 45% in 2022. Note that this is a proportion of domestic dwellings that have been rated. This is compulsory for homes being sold, offered for rent, new dwellings and in order to avail of grants for energy-efficiency improvements.

In 2021, the housing cost overburden rate[28] was 2.5%, down from 4.6% in 2016. Ireland had the second lowest overburden rate across the EU, with only Hungary having a lower rate (2.4%).

There is no trend or internationally comparable data for average distance to everyday services.

---

[26] ESRI (2020), *Regional demographics and structural housing demand at a county level*, available at: https://www.esri.ie/publications/regional-demographics-and-structural-housing-demand-at-a-county-level

[27] Deloitte, (2022), Property Index: Overview of European Residential Markets 11th Edition. Available from: https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/at/Documents/presse/at-property-index-2022-final.pdf

[28] The proportion of households spending over 40% of disposable income on housing (net of housing allowances). This includes both rental and mortgage costs. Available from: Eurostat table [ILC_LVHO07C].
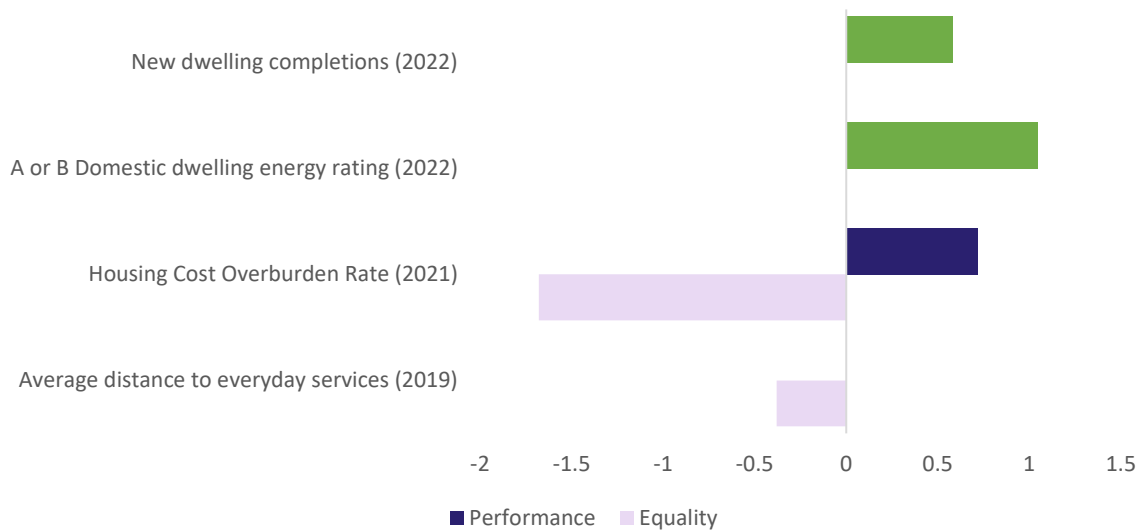
New dwelling completions and A or B domestic dwelling energy rating are sustainable indicators, and their performance bars are coloured green to highlight this.

Equality

While overall performance is positive, there is clear evidence of inequality – the highest level across all dimensions.

There is a very large difference in the proportion of households paying over 40% of income on housing costs depending on tenure status (the housing cost overburden rate – see chart below). Less than 1% of households who own their home (either with or without an outstanding mortgage) experience housing cost overburden. By comparison, over 10% of households renting at market price, and over 4% of households renting at reduced price, spend more than 40% of their income on housing costs.

Housing Cost Overburden Rate (%) - Tenure Status
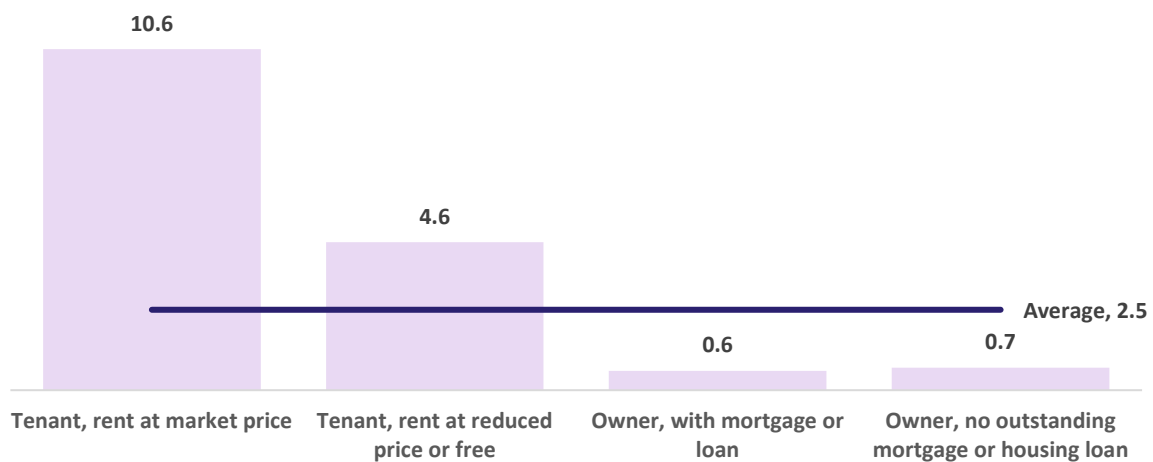
Housing cost burden is more concentrated in cities, where the overburden rate is 4.6%, compared to 1.2% for towns and suburbs and 1.6% for rural areas.

The average distance of residential dwellings to everyday services varies by urbanisation, with services in rural areas further away in 2019. The largest percentage difference was the average difference to pharmacies (0.8 km in urban areas, 5.9 km in rural areas) followed by GP (0.9 km in urban areas, 6.5 km in rural areas). The smallest percentage difference was distance to primary and secondary road network (3.2 km in urban areas, 7.1 km in rural areas) followed by HSE maternity hospitals (14.6 km in urban areas, 34.2 km in rural areas).

Sustainability

The proportion of A or B BER rating in domestic dwellings continues to perform strongly, as does the completion of new dwellings. The average distance of dwellings to everyday services does not have trend or international data to calculate performance.

What has changed?

There has been no change in the trend overall for any of the indicators in this dimension. However, the inclusion of an international comparison for new dwelling completions, and a normalised equality measure for affordability measures, has provided important nuance to the message; in particular, highlighting that housing affordability issues are concentrated in certain groups (e.g. those renting) and areas (cities).

6. Environment, Climate and Biodiversity

The environment that an individual lives in shapes their ability to interact with nature alongside access to basic needs such as clean water and air. The quality of this environment – both now and in the future – is shaped by human influence and actions.

The performance of all four indicators in this dimension are negative. In 2020, greenhouse gas emissions were below those in 2015 by 4.5%. As predicted in last year's Report, this reduction is likely due to the impact of the Covid-19-related restrictions on industry.[29] However, in 2021 Ireland's emissions in tonnes per capita (14.1) was the highest of all EU member states (below Luxembourg at 16.5) and well above the EU average (7.4). The best performing country was Sweden (at 0.7 tonnes per capita) followed by Romania (3.5).[30]

---

[29] Department of the Taoiseach, (2022), *Understanding Life in Ireland: The Well-being Dashboard 2022*. Available from: www.gov.ie/wellbeing-framework p. 11.
[30] Available from: Eurostat table [SDG_13_10].

In the latest water body assessment (2016-2021),[31] 50% of Ireland's rivers were assessed as 'high' or 'good' (the top two ratings out of five), down from 57% in the period 2010-2015.[32] At an EU level (measured during 2018-2021) Ireland was just below the EU average (34.1%) at 33.2%. The best performing countries were Romania (63.2% of rivers), Greece (61.2%) and Slovakia (56.2%).[33]

In 2020, 8.2% of households in Ireland reported problems with pollution, grime or other environmental problems – up from 4.7% in 2015. However, this is below the EU average (13.7%). Croatia (5.5%), Sweden (5.9%) and Austria (7.9%) were the best performers.[34]

Finally, waste generated in Ireland increased from 600 kg per capita in 2018 to 644 kg per capita in 2020[35] – an increase of almost 10%. This is above the EU average of 521 kg per capita. The best performing countries are Romania (290 kg per capita), Poland (346 kg) and Estonia (383 kg).
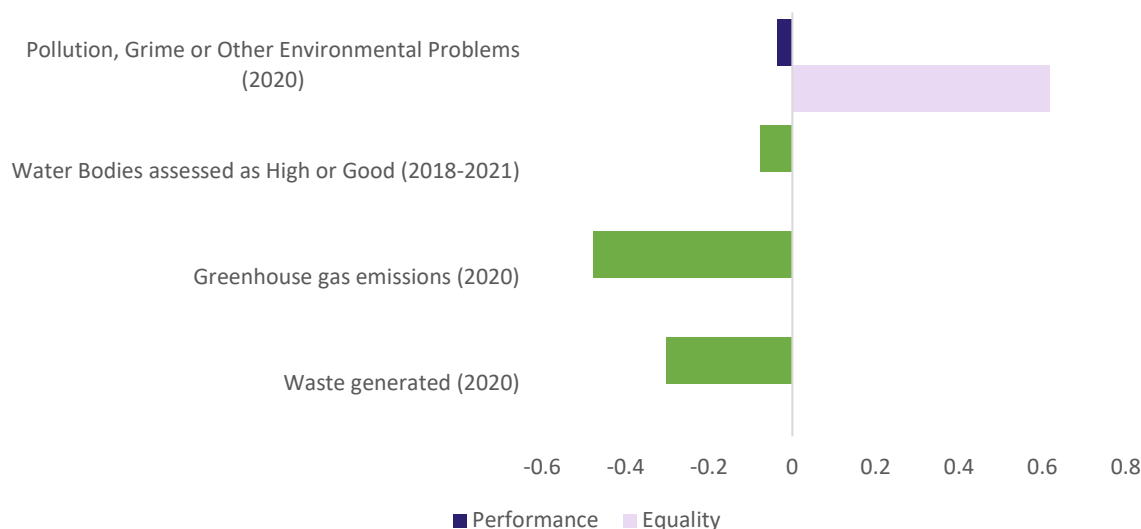
Water bodies assessed as 'high' or 'good', greenhouse gas emissions and waste generated are sustainable indicators, and their performance bars are coloured green to highlight this.

---

[31] EPA, (2021), *Water Quality in Ireland 2016-2021*. Available from: https://www.epa.ie/publications/monitoring--assessment/freshwater--marine/EPA_WaterQualityReport2016_2021.pdf

[32] This classification is based on the EU Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC). Under the directive, water quality is ranked from best to worst as 'high', 'good', 'moderate', 'poor' and 'bad'.

[33] WISE Water Framework Directive data viewer, Table SWB Ecological Status, available from: https://www.eea.europa.eu/data-and-maps/dashboards/wise-wfd

[34] Available from: Eurostat table [ILC_MDDW02].

[35] The CSO Well-being Information Hub provides data over three years for this indicator.

Equality

Only one indicator in this dimension is available for investigating equality issues – self-reported pollution, grime or other environmental problems. This reveals some differences across groups. For example, 7.6% of rented or rent-free households report environmental problems compared to 5.4% of owner-occupied households.

When households are explored by disposable income quintile, households within the second highest quintile have the highest self-reported environmental problems (7.7%), with the other quintiles at or just below the average 6% (lowest 5.3%).

Sustainability

Three indicators in this dimension are tagged for sustainability (greenhouse gas emissions, waste and water quality). All three of these perform negatively. The result for greenhouse gas emissions is driven by Ireland's negative performance in relation to other EU countries. The performance of the water quality indicator is driven by negative trend, and to a small extent, comparison to other countries. Finally, for the waste indicator, both negative trend and performance compared to other countries drives the negative result. The sustainability indicators perform more poorly when isolated than overall performance.

What has changed?

Last year's report noted the likelihood of a short-term reduction in emissions as data covering the period during Covid-19-related restrictions became available. This has come to pass, with greenhouse gas emissions reducing, however the performance compared to other EU countries remained negative and outweighed this trend.

7. Safety and Security

The factors that shape an individual's ability to live life and engage in activities without fear of harm and to mitigate the risks and impacts associated with infrastructural, mechanical and natural hazards. Harm can come from crime, conflict, violence, terrorism, accidents or natural disasters, and can occur online as well as offline and can be emotional as well as physical. As a dimension of well-being, safety tends to be concerned with the risk of victimisation and perceptions of safety.

Overall, the performance of this dimension is positive. However, the murder rate per 100,000 people increased by over 10% to 0.86 in 2022 compared to 2017. In 2020 (latest international data), Ireland (at 0.68) was below the EU average of 1.21. The best performers were Luxembourg (0.32), Italy (0.48) and Slovenia (0.52).

In 2020, the number of persons killed or injured on roads was down by almost 30% since 2015 from 8,002 to 5,743. In 2021, Ireland had 27.36 deaths on roads per million inhabitants, 7th lowest overall, and lower than the EU average (44.59). The best performing countries were Norway (14.8), Malta (17.4) and Sweden (18.5).[36]

In 2019, 15% of people were worried they could be a victim of a crime causing physical injury. While there is no trend, or direct international comparison, the OECD published the percentage of the population that feel safe walking alone at night. In Ireland, 76% of people feel safe walking home alone at night – which is the median response across OECD countries. The best performing countries are Norway (93%), Slovenia (91%) and Finland (88%).

It is acknowledged that the indicators in this dimension pertain to crimes in public places, and does not account for crimes that frequently occur in the home such as domestic, sexual and gender-based violence.[37]
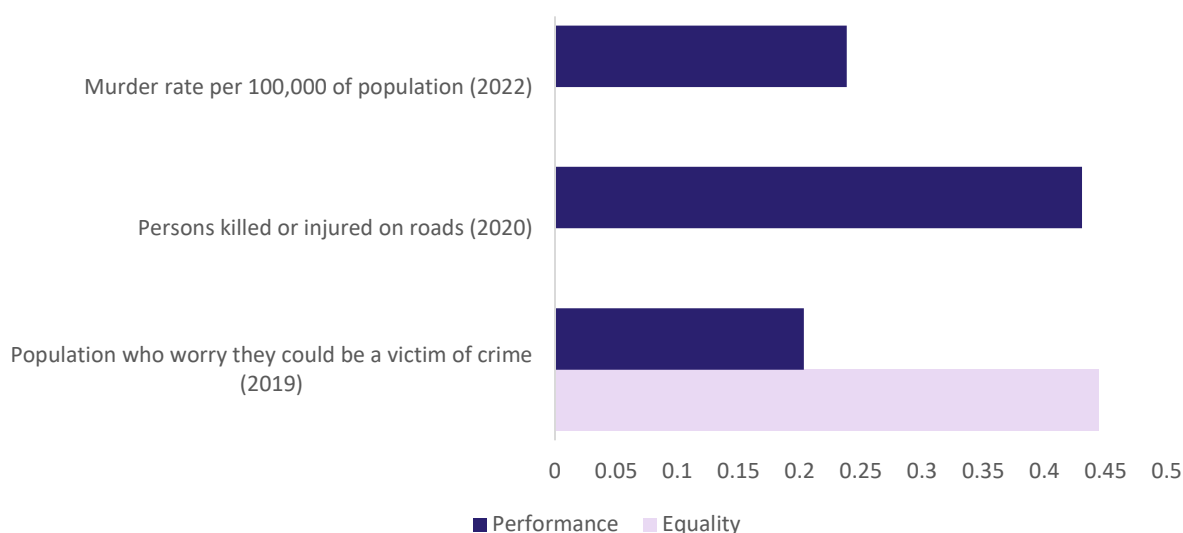
Equality

Only one indicator in this dimension is available to explore inequality, which is the proportion of people who worry they could be a victim of a crime. There are clear differences across groups in this indicator, with women (19%) more worried than men (11%), and people over 60 years (19%) more worried than younger people (13% for age groups 18-29 and 30-44).

People in the Midlands region had much higher rates of worry (22%) than the other regions (Dublin, Mid-East and Mid-West 16%; South-East 15%; West 13%; South-West and Border 11%).

---

[36] European Transport Safety Council, (2022), *16th Annual Road Safety Performance Index Report*, Background Table 2. Available from: https://etsc.eu/16th-annual-road-safety-performance-index-pin-report/
[37] The recent CSO Sexual Violence Survey 2022 provides new information on some of these issues. Available from: https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-svsmr/sexualviolencesurvey2022mainresults/introduction/

What has changed?

There has been an increase in the murder rate per 100,000 in the latest data from 2022, representing a negative change from the prevailing trend of a gradual reduction since 2017.

8. Work and Job Quality

The productive activities (both paid and unpaid) that shape how an individual progresses through their life (i.e., develop their skills and abilities, fulfil their ambitions) as well as building and supporting their self-esteem and their sense of contributing to society.

Overall, performance is positive across the indicators in this dimension. The labour underutilisation rate[38] decreased over the 5 years to Quarter 1 2023 from 15.1% to 10.5%. Internationally, Ireland was just under the EU average of 12.1%, and behind the top performers of Czechia (3%), Malta (4.9%) and Poland (5%).[39]

Similarly, the employment rate increased over the same period from 67.7% in Quarter 1 2018 to 73.6% in Quarter 1 2023. Again, Ireland is similar to the EU average (in 2021, this was 68.4% with Ireland at 69.8%).

The labour underutilisation rate is a sustainable indicator, and its performance bar is coloured green to highlight this.

---

[38] This indicator refers to the number of persons classified as unemployed, plus those classified as part-time under employed, plus those outside the labour force who are available for work but not seeking work as a percentage share of the total labour force.

[39] In Q4 2022. Available from: Eurostat table [LFSI_SLA_Q].

Finally, mean weekly earnings increased from €744.76 in Quarter 1 2018 to €923.48 in Quarter 1 2023[40] – this is an increase of almost 25%. While this has been registered as a positive in the analysis, this increase must be considered in the current context of high inflation. In 2021, Ireland had the 4th highest net average annual earnings[41] for a single worker without children at €39,617, behind Luxembourg (€47,640), Netherlands (€41,557) and Denmark (€40,585). The EU average was €26,135.

Equality

Across the indicators in this dimension, men consistently have better outcomes than women. The labour underutilisation rate for men is about one third lower than women, and the employment rate is more than 10 per cent higher. In 2021, mean weekly earnings were more than one-quarter lower for women than men.

Work and Job Quality indicators by Sex

	Males	*Females*
Labour underutilisation rate (2023 Q1)	8.9%	12.4%
Employment rate (2023 Q1)	78.1%	69.2%
Mean weekly earnings (2021)	€928.07	€712.10

All three indicators are also explored by age group. In much of the analysis, the younger age groups (in particular 15-19) are excluded from the analysis. For example, it is not desirable for this age group to be employed instead of in education.

Those aged 20-24 have the highest labour force underutilisation rate (16.9%) – likely a function of transition into the workplace from education, or the need for flexible working during education. The next highest is for those aged 65-74 years (11.9%). The smallest labour force underutilisation rate is for those aged 75 years and over, followed by those aged 35-44 years at 7.9%.

The employment rate varies less by age, with those aged 60-64 having the lowest rate (60%), followed by 20-24 years (68.7%), and those aged 55-59 years (74.8%). For the age groups between 25-54, the employment rate was between 82% and 85% on average.

Unsurprisingly, those further along in their career have higher earnings, with those aged 40-49 at €1,003.65, and 50-59 at €961 per week. By comparison, those aged 15-24 earned €372.13 per week, and those aged 25-29 earned €692.16.

---

[40] This refers to Earnings Hours and Employment Cost Survey results available here: https://data.cso.ie/table/EHQ03. This is used here instead of the Earnings Administrative Data in the Well-being Information Hub, due to timeliness.
[41] Available from: Eurostat annual net earnings [EARN_NT_NET].

Mean weekly earnings is also disaggregated by nationality. UK nationals (€932.34) make more weekly on average than other nationalities (€834.28), Irish nationals (€831.08) and EU nationalities (€718.58).

Sustainability

The labour underutilisation rate is a sustainability indicator. It shows a positive performance, driven mostly by trend over time, and to a lesser extent, by comparison with other EU countries.

What has changed?

In last year's analysis, the labour market underutilisation rate was approximately the same as it had been 5 years previously – this trend has now become more positive (likely due to the lifting of covid-19-related restrictions).

9. Time Use

The ability of an individual to manage the demands placed on their time, and their access to time for personal development, leisure or hobbies, subject to the constraint of a fixed quantity of time available in any single day. This includes work-life balance.

This dimension overall has a very slight positive performance, driven by the proportion of the population who were very satisfied with their time use. Scored from 1 through 10, in 2018 34.7% of the population rated their satisfaction either 9 or 10, up from 29% in 2013. Ireland's average score was 7.5, joint second highest in the EU alongside Denmark. Finland scored on average 7.8.

The proportion of people working long hours in their main job[42] reduced over the five years to Quarter 1 2023 from 10.6% to 8.3%.[43] However, Ireland (at 9.1%) was above the EU average which was 7.3% in 2022.

In 2019, 13% of people over 15 provided care at least once a week. Of these, 31% provided 20 hours or more of care per week. There is no trend or internationally comparable data available for the proportion of carers providing at least 20 hours of care per week.

---

[42] 49 Hours or more per week.
[43] Caution must be applied in interpreting labour market statistics during the pandemic period, including long working hours.

Long working hours in main job (Q1 2023)

Carers providing at Least 20 Hours Care per Week (2019)

Population very satisfied with time use (2018)

-0.1   0   0.1   0.2   0.3   0.4   0.5

■ Performance   ■ Equality
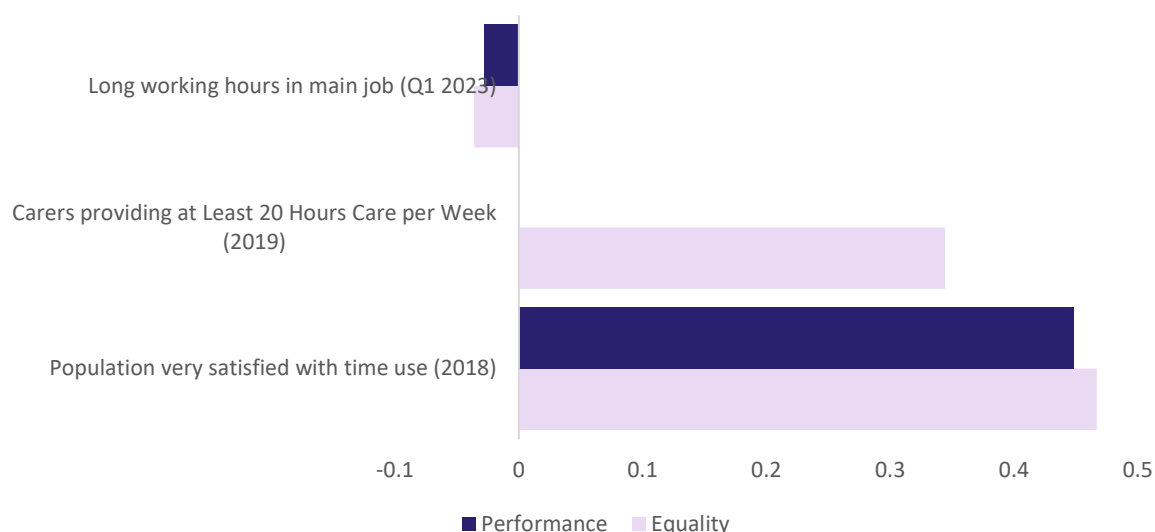
Equality

Reviewing these indicators by sex suggests inequality exists across time use, but also points towards the need for further data. A much higher proportion of men work long hours in their main job (12.1%) in comparison with women (4%). Similarly, a higher proportion of women provide at least 20 hours of care per week (37%) than men (23%). Data combining the time spent on care and employment would be ideal here,[44] however subjective satisfaction with time use provides some insight into how these various demands on time balance out, with 36.5% of men very satisfied with their time use compared to 33% of women.

Demands on time generally increase with age, both for paid and unpaid work. In paid work, demands on time are highest at the later stages of career with 13.4% of 65-74 year olds and 12.4% of 60-64 year olds working long hours in their main job – compared to 4.3% of 25–34-year-olds. Demands on time for unpaid work is higher for people of child-bearing age (34% for those age 35-44) and those of retirement age (32% for those aged 35-75, and 51% of those aged 75 and over).

A higher proportion of people from disadvantaged (35%) and very disadvantaged (36%) households provide at least 20 hours of care per week compared to very affluent households (23%).

Finally, households where at least one person is of retirement age have the highest satisfaction with time use (over 57% rated 9-10). In comparison, households with children had the lowest proportion (23.9% for single parent households, 24.5% of two-parent households).

---

[44] As discussed in: Department of the Taoiseach, (2021), *First Report on the Well-being Framework for Ireland.* Emerging Data Gaps pp. 40-42. Available from: www.gov.ie/wellbeing-framework

What has changed?

In last year's analysis, the proportion of people working very long hours was higher than five years previously. However, as can be seen in the graph below, this year has seen the continued reduction of this figure to below it's peak in Quarter 4 2017 (11.1%) to the approximate same level as it was in Q1 2017 (8.1%). This has been driven almost entirely by changes in male working hours. Overall, this figure remains negative driven by comparison with other EU countries.

Persons working very long hours (%) 2018-2023
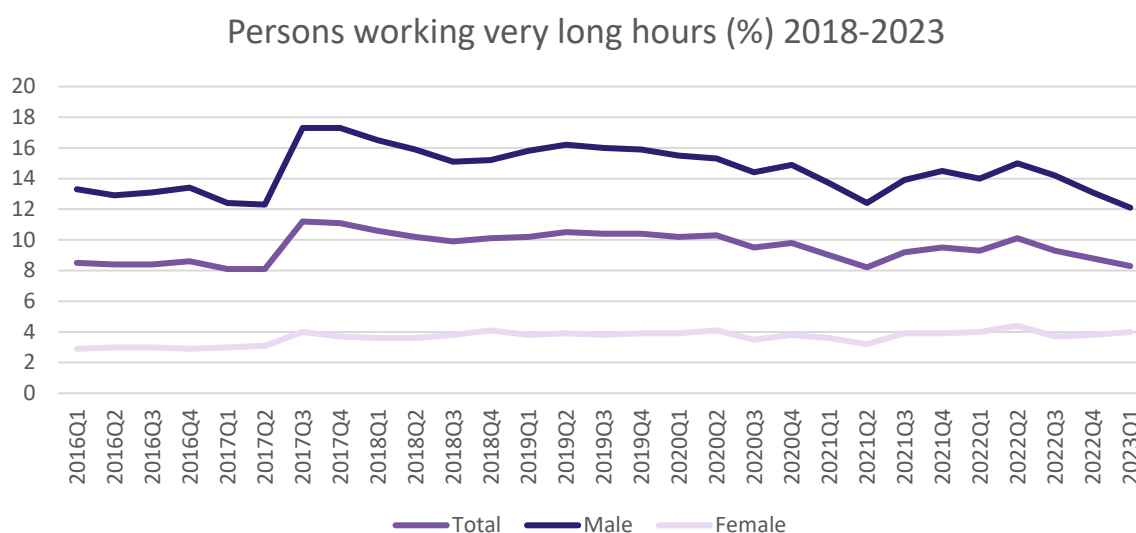
No new data for the other two indicators has become available over the last year.

10.   Connections, Community and Participation

The ability and opportunities that an individual has to meet the basic needs of personal connection and engagement with family, friends and wider community. In the modern era, this includes online social connections and interactions. This dimension also covers connection to the community, for example, through volunteering or other community activities.

16.6% of the population reported feeling lonely at least some of the time in 2018. In 2019, 99% of the population had someone they could count on if they had a serious problem.

While there is limited trend and international data in this dimension, some indications of relative performance are available.[45] In 2015, the proportion of people who had someone they could ask for help was 96.2%, approximately the same as in 2013 (97%). This was above the EU average (94.1%). The top three performers were Finland, Czechia (both 98.1%), and Sweden (97.3%).[46]

---

[45] There is no trend or internationally comparable data available for the population who feel lonely.
[46] Available from: Eurostat table [ILC_SCP15].

Performance   **Equality**
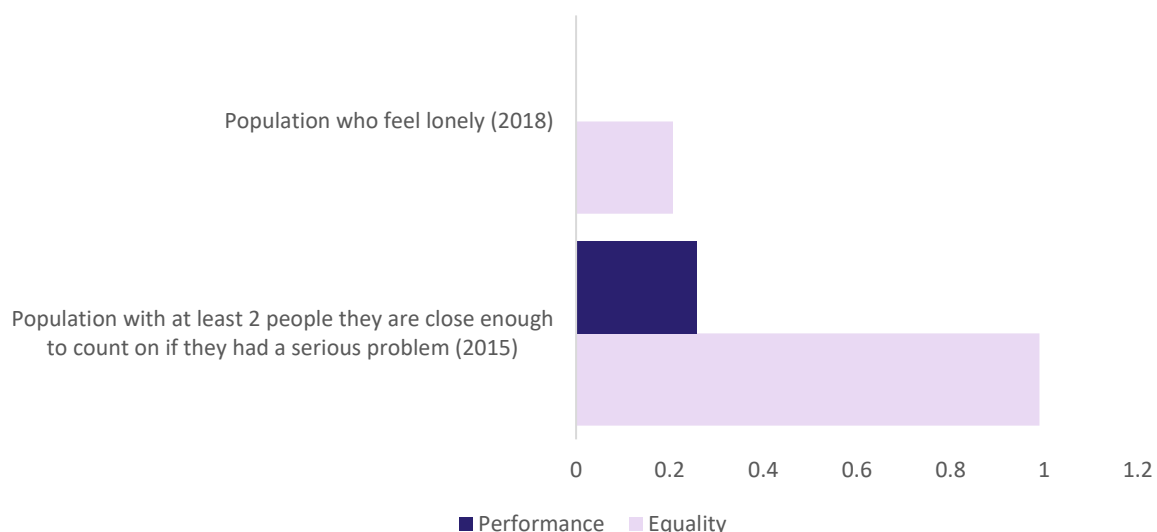
Equality

Adults living alone, or with no other adults in the household, had higher proportions of feeling lonely at least some of the time (36.7% of adults of retirement age living alone, 25.2% of adults of working age living alone, 24.4% of single-parents). By comparison, only 11.6% of two-parent households reported feeling lonely at least some of the time.

In 2018, a higher proportion of women reported feeling lonely at least some of the time (19.9%) than men (13.3%). People of retirement age (65+) were more likely to report feeling lonely (23.3%) than younger age groups (approximately 15.5% of 25-49 year olds and 50-64 year olds, 17.2% if 16-24 year olds).

There was very little difference across age groups of the proportion of people with at least one person they could count on if they had a serious problem (98% or 99% for all age groups).

What has changed?

There has been no new data available for the indicators in this dimension.

11.   Civic Engagement, Trust and Cultural Expression

The rights and opportunities an individual has to impact the political functioning of their society, the existence of institutional arrangements that foster cooperation and freedom of expression of identity and non-discrimination, and trust in those institutions and across broader society.

This dimension shows a relatively mixed picture in terms of performance. The proportion of people who reported experiencing discrimination over the previous two years in Quarter 1 2019 was 18%, up from 12% in Quarter 3 2014. While not directly comparable, in 2021 3% of people in employment experienced discrimination in their current job compared to an EU average of 4%.

In January-February 2023, 82% of people were satisfied with how democracy works in Ireland, compared to 73% in Spring 2017.[47] This is much higher than the EU average of 58%. The top performers were Denmark (89%), Luxembourg (87%) and Finland (85%).

In 2018, the average reported rank of perceived social inclusion (1-10) in Ireland was 7.6. However, no trend or internationally comparable data is available for this indicator.
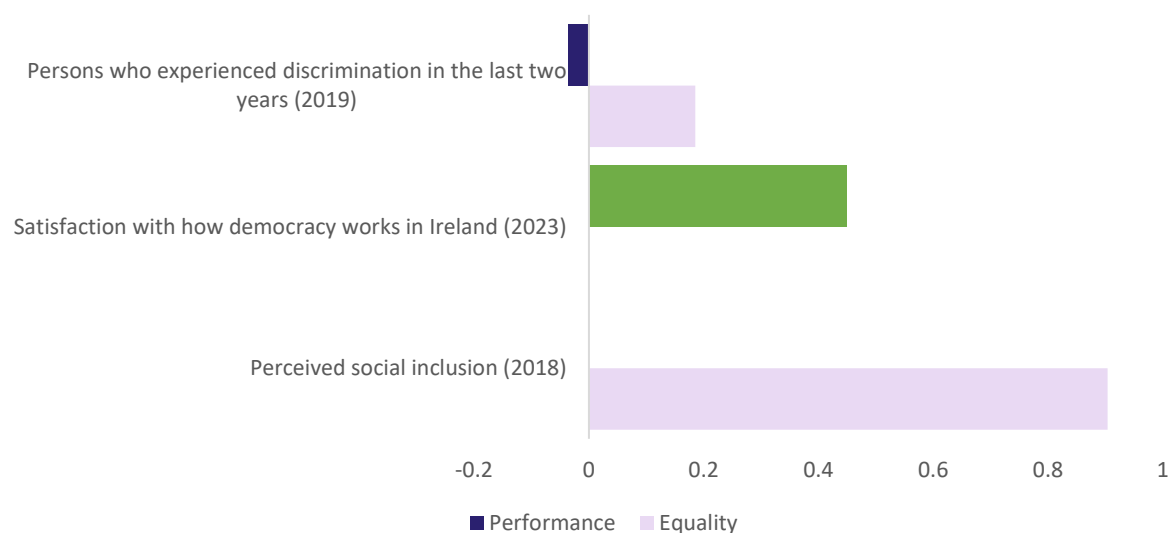
Persons who experienced discrimination in the last two years is a sustainable indicator, and its performance bar is coloured green to highlight this.

Equality

In 2019 a much smaller proportion of Irish nationals experienced discrimination in the previous two years (16%) than non-Irish nationals (27%). Similarly, a much smaller proportion of Roman Catholics experienced discrimination (14%) than other stated religions (29%). Finally, a higher proportion of people who were unemployed (30%) and students (22%) experienced discrimination compared to those who were retired (12%) or engaged in home duties (14%).

There was very little variation in perceived social inclusion across sex (no difference) and age group (ranging between 7.4 and 7.9 out of 10). However, there was some variation based on principal economic status, with those unable to work due to permanent sickness or disability and those unemployed rating their social inclusion at 6.3 and 6.4 out of 10 respectively, compared to people at work (7.8) and retired from work (7.6).

---

[47] Eurobarometer, (2023), *Standard Eurobarometer 98 – Winter 2022-2023*. Available from: https://europa.eu/eurobarometer/surveys/detail/2872

Sustainability

Satisfaction with how democracy works in Ireland is a sustainability indicator: it has shown improvement over the last five years and is above the EU average. This has resulted in sustainable indicators performing stronger than the overall dimension – one of only two dimensions that show this trend.

What has changed?

Only one indicator (satisfaction with how democracy works in Ireland) has updated data this year and shows a continued positive performance.

Conclusion

This report has reviewed the 35 indicators across the 11 dimensions in the Well-being Framework. It has highlighted areas where relative performance (over time, and in comparison with other countries) are positive or negative, and examined equality and sustainability outcomes across these areas. It highlights how this multi-dimensional approach to assessing performance can provide complex and sometimes opposing messages. It intends to move towards a more holistic representation of how Ireland is doing, improving accuracy as new data becomes available over time.

Performance

Overall, performance is positive across 10 of the 11 dimensions with only one dimension, the Environment, Climate and Biodiversity, showing a negative performance. Dimensions that performed well include Housing and the Built Environment (driven by performance in new dwelling completions; A or B domestic dwelling energy rating, and; housing cost overburden rate), Subjective Well-being (driven by performance in overall life satisfaction, and; population who did not feel depressed or downhearted) and Safety and Security (driven by Ireland's performance in comparison with other countries in the murder rate per 100,000 people; and the population who worry they could be a victim of a crime; alongside reductions in the number of persons killed or injured on roads).

There were particularly positive indications for the proportion of new dwellings with A or B energy ratings; the proportion of the population rating their overall life satisfaction as very high; and the overall proportion of people spending more than 40% of their income on housing (please see the Equality section below for more nuance on housing costs). Of the 35 indicators, 8 show negative performance:

Dimension	Indicator
Subjective Well-Being	School-aged children who report being happy with their life overall
Knowledge, Skills and Innovation	Research and development personnel
Environment, Climate and Biodiversity	Pollution, grime or other environmental problems
	Water body quality
	Greenhouse gas emissions
	Waste generated
Time Use	Long working hours in main job
Civic Engagement, Trust and Cultural Expression	Persons who experienced discrimination in the last two years

Equality

The CSO Well-being Information Hub also breaks down each indicator by specific cohorts chosen for relevance, research and data availability. This allows an examination of equality across dimensions, identifying particular cohorts that perform less well than other comparable groups across multiple dimensions.

An examination of this data shows several cohorts that experience inequality across a high proportion of indicators. These are women, single-parent households, people living alone, immigrants/non-Irish, unemployed people, households with lower incomes, households in rented accommodation, and people with long-term illness or disability.

The introduction of a comparable figure for equality across indicators this year has provided the ability to assess each dimension for equality outcomes. Of the eleven dimensions, two had particularly large differences between cohorts: Housing and the Built Environment; and Income and Wealth. Dimensions that showed small differences between groups include Civic Engagement, Trust and Cultural Expression; and Subjective Well-being.

Sustainability

A subset of fourteen, of the overall thirty-five indicators in the dashboard, have been identified as particularly important for sustainable well-being. [48] These indicators are assessed separately, and in comparison with overall performance of each of the dimensions.

When reviewed by dimension, there is only one that has overall negative performance of the sustainability indicators: the Environment, Climate and Biodiversity. The best performing are Housing and the Built Environment; Work and Job Quality; and Civic Engagement, Trust and Cultural Expression.

Of the fourteen sustainability indicators, four have a negative performance overall. These are research and development personnel, water quality, greenhouse gas emissions and waste generated.

An alternative way of reviewing each dimension is to compare the performance of the sustainability indicators within each dimension against performance of all of the indicators. When reviewed in this way, there are only two dimensions where sustainable indicators have better performance than the overall. These are Knowledge, Skills and Innovation; and Civic engagement, Trust and Cultural Expression.

---

[48] Identified as part of a study undertaken by the Department of Finance: Department of Finance (2022), *Sustainability in the Irish Well-being Framework: A Review*. Available from: https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/3da98-sustainability-in-the-irish-well-being-framework-a-review/

What has changed?

The new methodology for performance has allowed a more nuanced analysis for each dimension and reduces the likelihood of a 'neutral' performance. This has resulted in changes across many of the dimensions in their relative performance, and two dimensions that had a 'neutral' performance last year (Time Use; and Civic Engagement, Trust and Cultural Expression) are performing positively this year. However, the poor performance of the Environment, Climate and Biodiversity dimension remains.

Across the 35 indicators, research and development personnel and the waste indicator are now negative (both performed positively in 2022 analysis). Both of these indicators are tagged as sustainable.

Appendix 1: Forthcoming Data Releases

Indicator	Source	Latest Release	Next Release[i]
Population Rating their Overall Life Satisfaction as High	SILC Module on Well-being	2018	Sep-23
Population who did not Feel Depressed or Downhearted in the Last 4 Weeks	SILC Module on Well-being	2018	Sep-23
School aged Children who report being Happy with their Life at Present	Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) Survey	2018	Dec-23
Healthy Life Years	Healthy Life Years at Birth	2020	Jun-23
Population Reporting Depression	Irish Health Survey	2019	2026
Unmet Need for Medical Attention	Irish Health Survey	2021	2026
Median Real Household Disposable Income	SILC	2022	Mar-24
Median Household Net Wealth	Housing, Finance and Consumption Survey	2020	2025
Households making Ends Meet with Great Difficulty	SILC	2022	Mar-24
Net Government Worth	Government Finance Statistics	Q4 2022	Oct-23
Reading and Maths Performance in 15 Year Olds	PISA	2018	Dec-23
Lifelong Learning Rate	LFS	Q1 2023	Aug-23
Research and Development Personnel	Business Expenditure on Research and Development (BERD)	2021	Aug-23
New Dwelling Completions	New Dwelling Completions	2022	Jul-23
A or B Domestic Dwelling Energy Rating	Domestic Building Energy Ratings	2022	Jul-23
Average Distance to Everyday Services	Measuring Distance to Everyday Services in Ireland	2019	2024
Housing Cost Overburden Rate	SILC	2021	Mar-24
Pollution, Grime or Other Environmental Problems	SILC	2020	Mar-24
Water Bodies assessed as High or Good	Ireland's UN SDGs - Report on Indicators for Goal 6 Clean Water and Sanitation	2018-2021	2024
Greenhouse Gas Emissions	Environmental Accounts Air Emissions	2020	End of 2023
Waste	Measuring Ireland's Progress	2020	2024
Murder Rate per 100,000 Population	Recorded Crime	2022	Jul-23
Persons Killed or Injured on Roads	Road Fatalities and Injured Casualties	2020	Nov-23
Population who worry they could be a Victim of a Crime	Crime and Victimisation	2019	2025
Labour Underutilisation Rate	LFS	Q1 2023	Aug-23
Employment Rate	LFS	Q1 2023	Aug-23
Mean Weekly Earnings	Earnings, Hours and Employment Costs Survey (EHECS) **and** Earnings	Q3 2023, 2022	Aug-23. Sep-23

Indicator	Source	Latest Release	Next Release[i]
	Analysis using Administrative Data Sources		
Long Working Hours in Main Job	LFS	Q1 2023	Aug-23
Carers providing at Least 20 Hours Care per Week	Irish Health Survey	2019	2026
Population satisfied with Time Use	SILC Module on Well-being	2018	Sep-23
Population who Feel Lonely	SILC Module on Well-being	2018	Sep-23
Population with at least 2 people they are close enough to count on if they had a serious problem	Irish Health Survey	2015	2026
Persons who Experienced Discrimination in the Previous 2 Years	Equality and Discrimination	2019	end 2024
Satisfaction with How Democracy Works in Ireland	Eurobarometer Report	2023	TBC
Perceived Social Inclusion	SILC Module on Well-being	2018	Sep-23

i As of 24 May 2023

Appendix 2: Analysis Results

Dimension / Indicators	Performance	Sustainability	Equality
Subjective Well-being	**0.3**		**0.78**
Population Rating their Overall Life Satisfaction as High (2018)	0.74		0.55
Population who did not Feel Depressed or Downhearted in the Last 4 Weeks (2018)	0.2		0.86
School aged Children who report being Happy with their Life at Present (2018)	-0.02		0.94
Mental and Physical Health	**0.07**	**0.06**	**0.63**
Healthy Life Years (2020)	0.12	0.12	0.97
Population reporting depression (2019)	0	0	0.40
Unmet need for medical attention (2021)	0.1		0.5
Income and wealth	**0.15**	**0.12**	**-0.35**
Median real household disposable income (2022)	0.24		0.29
Median household net wealth (2020)	0.14	0.14	-0.7
Households making ends meet with great difficulty (2022)	0.11		-0.63
Net Government Wealth (Q4 2022)	0.11	0.11	
Knowledge, skills and innovation	**0.1**	**0.14**	**0.02**
Reading and Maths Performance in 15 Year Olds (2018)	0.28	0.28	
Lifelong Learning Rate (Q1 2023)	0.02		-0.39
Research and Development Personnel (2021)	0.00	0.00	0.42
Housing and the built environment	**0.8**	**0.54**	**-0.88**
New dwelling completions (2022)	0.58	0.58	
A or B Domestic dwelling energy rating (2022)	1.05	1.05	
Average distance to everyday services (2019)		NA	-0.38
Housing Cost Overburden Rate (2021)	0.72		-1.68
Environment, Climate and Biodiversity	**-0.22**	**-0.29**	**0.62**
Pollution, Grime or Other Environmental Problems (2020)	-0.04		0.62
Water Bodies assessed as High or Good (2018-2021)	-0.08	-0.08	
Greenhouse gas emissions (2020)	-0.48	-0.48	
Waste generated (2020)	-0.3	-0.3	

Dimension / Indicators	Performance	Sustainability	Equality
Safety and Security	**0.29**		**0.44**
Murder rate per 100,000 of population (2022)	0.24		
Persons killed or injured on roads (2020)	0.43		
Population who worry they could be a victim of crime (2019)	0.2		0.44
Work and Job Quality	**0.26**	**0.24**	**0.52**
Labour underutilisation rate (Q1 2023)	0.24	0.24	0.09
Employment rate (Q1 2023)	0.1		0.77
Mean weekly earnings (Q1 2023, 2021)	0.43		0.7
Time use	**0.21**		**0.26**
Long working hours in main job (Q1 2023)	-0.03		-0.04
Carers providing at Least 20 Hours Care per Week (2019)			0.34
Population very satisfied with time use (2018)	0.45		0.47
Connections, Community and Participation	**0.26**		**0.6**
Population who feel lonely (2018)			0.21
Population with at least 2 people they are close enough to count on if they had a serious problem (2015)	0.26		0.99
Civic Engagement, trust and cultural expression	**0.21**	**0.22**	**0.9**
Persons who experienced discrimination in the last two years (2019)	-0.04		0.19
Satisfaction with how democracy works in Ireland (2023)	0.45	0.45	
Perceived social inclusion (2018)			0.9

Dimension figures represent the average of the performance/equality/sustainability figure of the two to four indicators within each dimension. However, this may not translate to exact averages of the numbers listed as figures are rounded to two decimal places.

No available data or indicator is not a 'sustainability indicator' where a cell is blank.

Appendix 3: Methodology

Note that throughout and across all methods, performance is relative compared to previous performance and other countries' performance. For example, General Government Wealth remains negative (-€108.3 billion). However, over the last five years this figure has improved by almost 25% which is the basis of the positive assessment over time.

The methodology developed will remain under review to ensure it is fit for purpose and provides enough clarity and nuance.

Progress

Progress measurement is the average of 1) the percentage change over time (approximately 5 years, depending on data availability) and 2) a measure of international comparison.

International comparison measures the difference between Ireland's position (X_{ie}) and the average (X-bar) in comparison with the best performing country (X_{bc}) and the average:

$$International\ comparison = \frac{X_{ie} - \bar{X}}{X_{bc} - \bar{X}}$$

Where trend is not available, the international comparison measure is used on its own (and *vice versa*).

Therefore, where performance is 1, this means there was 100% improvement in the indicator over c. 5 years and/or Ireland is the best performing country. Where performance is 0 this means that there was no change over the last 5 years and/or Ireland's score is the same as the average. Where performance is -1, this means there was 100% deterioration in the indicator over c. 5 years and/or Ireland is the worst performing country.

Practical Example: Healthy Life Years
- Healthy Life Years reduced slightly over the period 2015 to 2020 by 1.5% (or -0.015).
- Ireland is above the EU average by 2.2 years. By comparison, the top performer is above the EU average by 8.7 years: 2.2/8.7=0.25.
- Therefore, the average is (-.015+0.25)/2 = 0.12

Equality

Equality measurement is 1 minus the average percentage difference of the best and worst performing groups for each indicator available on the CSO's Well-being Hub. Therefore, if there was perfect equality across groups the result would be 1. Where the average difference is greater than 100%, then the score is negative.

Practical Example: School-aged children who reported being happy with their life
- 91.1% of male school aged children who reported being happy with their life at present, compared to 85.6% of female children – this is a percentage difference of 6.2%.
- 88.6% of traveller children reported being happy with their life at present (the highest performing group) compared to 83.5% of children with a disability – this is a percentage difference of 5.8%.
- The average of the two (0.062+0.058)/2 resulted in an average of 6% (or 0.06).
- This can be read as 6% inequality, or 94% equality (1-0.06=0.94).

Sustainability

Sustainability is the progress scores for those indicators that have been tagged as sustainable. For any dimension that contains sustainability indicators, an average of sustainability indicators can be compared to the performance of all of the indicators.

Practical Example: Environment, Climate and Biodiversity:

Indicators	Performance	Sustainability
Pollution, Grime or Other Environmental Problems	-0.037	
Water Bodies assessed as High or Good	-0.077	-0.077
Greenhouse gas emissions	-0.469	-0.469
Waste generated	-0.303	-0.303

Performance Calculation: ([-0.037] + [-0.077] + [-0.469] + [-0.303])/4 = **-0.221**

Sustainability Calculation: ([-0.077] + [-0.469] + [-0.303])/3 = **-0.283**