

# Wellbeing Economy Policy Design Guide

How to design economic policies  
that put the wellbeing of people  
and the planet first



**WELLBEING  
ECONOMY**  
ALLIANCE



# Wellbeing Economy Policy Design Guide

How to design economic policies that put the wellbeing of people and the planet first

## The Making Of The Wellbeing Economy Policy Design Guide – A Co-Creative Process

The heart of this guide to Wellbeing Economy policy design is **meaningful participation**. As a core policy design principle, centring participation leads to more inclusive and sustainable outcomes. Additionally, research shows that the act of participating itself is critical to wellbeing. For these reasons, it was important to us that this guide be a product of meaningful participation.

We believe it is. When we began this project, we put a call out to the WEAll membership to see if anyone was interested in supporting this guide's development. We were amazed by the response. More than 70 volunteers from all over the world shared their time, expertise, knowledge, and insights to create the guide you find here today.

This guide would not have been possible without the dedicated core **drafting team** who met weekly for nearly a year to support the drafting, facilitation, research and review required. We are grateful to our **country counterparts** for providing strategic support throughout this guide's development and who developed case studies to bring this guide to life. And special thanks to **all the members who contributed** to this guide's development by providing case studies, resources, and ideas. This truly was a joint effort and we look forward to seeing how it ripples out.

**Project Lead:** Amanda Janoo

**Drafting team:** Gemma Bone Dodds, Andrea Frank, Jakob Hefele (Zoe), Malin Leth, Andrew Turner And Michael Weatherhead. With thanks to Robert Pollock And Katie Gallogly-Swan for your engagement with the drafting team along the way.

**Country counterparts:** Yannick Beaudoin, Anna Chrysopoulou, Justin Connolly, Paul Dalziel, Jeremy Fackenthal, Jesse Knapp, Suzy Morrissey, Eduard Müller And Andrew Schwartz

**Content contributors and reviewers:** Rabia Abrar, Susana Martin Belmoste, João Bernardo Casali, Elaine Bone, Naomi Bourne, Laura Buckwald, Matthew Burke, Geraldine Campbell, Beth Caniglia, João Daniel De Carvalho, Juan Pedro Castro Baeza, Alvaro Cedenó Molinari, Nigel Cohen, Luca Coscieme, Michael Danson, Sandrine Dixson-Declève, Kate Downes, Margaret Frieling, Scherto Gill, Ana Gómez, Doreen Grove, Terry Hearn, Till Kellerhoff, Natalie Hemmings, Alan Higgins, Rutger Hoekstra, Lisa Hough-Stewart, Peter Jones, Osbert Lancaster, Michelle Maloney, Jacqueline Mcglade, Julie Mclachlan, Aileen Mcleod, Frank Murillo, Pavathy Nair, Deissy Perilla, Rachel Pryor, Alex Nichols, Garrett Thomson, Isabel Nuesse, Robert Pollock, Maaïke Stoel, Claire Sommer, Katherine Trebeck, Usman Tufail, Jessie Xu.

**Illustrations:** Marina Roa

**Design:** Diana Cuéllar

[wellbeingeconomy.org](https://wellbeingeconomy.org)  
[info@wellbeingeconomy.org](mailto:info@wellbeingeconomy.org)  
[f Facebook.com/weallalliance](https://www.facebook.com/weallalliance)  
[@WEAll\\_Alliance](https://twitter.com/WEAll_Alliance)  
[@WEAll\\_Alliance](https://www.instagram.com/WEAll_Alliance)

*The Wellbeing Economy Alliance (WEAll): WEAll is the leading global collaboration working together to catalyse economic systems change toward the realisation of a Wellbeing Economy. A crucial role for WEAll, as an organisation, is connecting the different elements of the Wellbeing Economy movement, creating unprecedented cooperation between actors working in their own areas and layers of the economic system.*

# Table of Contents

- Executive summary 5
- Why design a Wellbeing Economy? 6
- What is Wellbeing Economy policy design? 8
- Structure of guide 10
- 1. Developing a wellbeing vision 12
  - 1A. Understanding what matters for wellbeing 14
  - 1B. Crafting and communicating your wellbeing vision 16
  - 1C. Measuring wellbeing 18
- 2. Designing a Wellbeing Economy strategy 20
  - 2A. Identifying wellbeing economy activities & behaviours 22
  - 2B. Aligning institutions & stakeholders for wellbeing 24
  - 2C. Managing trade-offs & power dynamics 26
- 3. Assessing and selecting Wellbeing Economy policies 28
  - 3A. Assessing & reforming existing policies 30
  - 3B. Co-creating new policies for a Wellbeing Economy 32
- 4. Implementing wellbeing economy policies 34
  - 4A. Empowering localised policy implementation 36
  - 4B. Participatory monitoring of implementation 38
- 5. Evaluating policy impacts on wellbeing 40
  - 5A. Wellbeing assessments 42
  - 5B. Identifying best practices and lessons learnt 44
- Next steps 46

# Executive Summary

**“The flaws with mainstream economics and GDP are now well documented. What is needed is a practical guide on how to build a Wellbeing Economy and how to organise this transition in a democratic and participatory way. Such a guide can help to institutionalise the process, give tools to policy makers, bring academia and policy makers together, and present the Wellbeing Economy as a feasible alternative!”**

**Till Kellerhoff, Club of Rome and WEAll Member.**

Welcome to the Wellbeing Economy Policy Design Guide. This guide has been co-created by the Wellbeing Economy Alliance (WEAll) to support visionary policy makers, like you, to build more just and sustainable economies for people and planet.

Around the world, governments are moving beyond Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and embracing new metrics of progress, from the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to national wellbeing indicators. This movement is significant, as it moves us beyond a focus on ‘means’, i.e. economic growth, to a focus on the achievement of ‘ends’, i.e. our collective wellbeing.

The challenge is that our current economic thinking has not only determined our measurements of progress, but also our government structures, societal power dynamics and cultural narratives. Developing a Wellbeing Economy is, therefore, not only about different measures or different policies, but also about changing our relationship to the economy and our approach to its management and governance.

With this in mind, the aim of this guide is not to say what policies are needed to build a Wellbeing Economy, but rather to explore how to develop policies for a Wellbeing Economy. We recognise that there is no-one-size-fits-all approach, as every society has unique structures, values, and objectives. This guide therefore strives to be practical without being overly prescriptive so that you can align these policy design processes and ideas to your unique context. What we aim to provide in this guide is a starting point for policy makers interested in building a Wellbeing Economy; to consider relevant processes that can support them along the way.

In this guide you will find resources, tools, case studies, and suggestions that can help you to:

1. **Develop a wellbeing vision**, framework and measurements.
2. **Design a strategy** to foster the areas of economic life most important for our wellbeing.
3. **Assess and co-create Wellbeing Economy policies** to build a coherent and innovative policy mix.
4. **Successfully implement Wellbeing Economy policies** by empowering local stakeholders and communities.
5. **Evaluate policy impacts on wellbeing** for learning, adaptation and success.

Meaningful participation and holistic thinking are fundamental features; not only of a Wellbeing Economy, but also of the process we use to get there. Therefore, a Wellbeing Economy policy design approach requires an appreciation that all outcomes must be co-produced with communities and stakeholders who hold the insights needed to design an economy that aligns with their values and objectives.

This is just the first iteration of this guide and it is our hope that in the months and years to come we can continue to build this guide together. Through your experimentation, innovations and learnings we can show the world that a Wellbeing Economy is not only possible but already underway.



# Why design a Wellbeing Economy?

**Wellbeing Economy:** An economy that is designed with the purpose of serving the wellbeing of people and the planet first and foremost; in doing so, it delivers social justice on a healthy planet.

**Gross Domestic Product (GDP):** The total monetary or market value of all the finished goods and services produced within a country's borders in a specific time period. GDP fails to account for the positive or negative effects created in the process of production and development - which are key to a thriving society and planet.

Around the world we are witnessing important shifts in our understanding of 'progress' and 'development'. Societies and governments are moving beyond evaluating progress in terms of GDP or average income levels to evaluating progress in terms of our quality of life and collective wellbeing.

This shift in thinking comes from a recognition that wellbeing is determined by much more than money. It is determined by the quality of our lives and relationships, and the security of our futures. We have focused much of our efforts on building economies that can generate wealth and as a result we've become quite good at it, with global wealth per adult now reaching approximately \$77,000<sup>1</sup>. Such averages of course seem ludicrous when we consider that half of humanity is still living on less than \$5.50 a day<sup>2</sup> and that the way we are generating and distributing this wealth is actually leaving many of us worse off.

Our current economic system has been designed to promote growth, not balance, and we are seeing the devastating consequences of these imbalances during the COVID-19 pandemic. Economic inequalities have skyrocketed during this pandemic, with billionaires experiencing record increases in wealth while billions struggle to get by on government support schemes<sup>3</sup>. The injustice of our current economic system is leading to increasing levels of insecurity, anger, despair, and loneliness, resulting in social unrest and distrust of governments that are seen as facilitating these gross inequalities<sup>4</sup>.

Our current economic system is not only undermining our social wellbeing but also threatening our very survival. Our planet, our home, is on the brink of collapse. The UN warns that climate change is accelerating much more quickly than expected and is threatening our food, water and air supply<sup>5</sup>. Moreover, researchers warn that our systems of production and consumption are resulting in a 'biological annihilation' of wildlife, with biodiversity loss and the rapid extinction of billions of species rapidly undermining our prospects for healing our ecosystem<sup>6</sup>.

Much of our collective hesitation to tackle these crises head-on comes from a fear of the negative impacts these actions would have on 'the economy'. However, the economy is just a word we use to describe the way that we produce and provide for one another. Every good we produce ultimately comes first and foremost from the earth, and every service we provide is valuable in so far as it contributes to our quality of life. The economy is not something given, it is us, and we have the power to produce and provide things to one another in a way that heals historic injustices, empowers individuals, and regenerates our natural world. With clarity of vision and coordinated effort, we can create a Wellbeing Economy. An economy that promotes human flourishing on a healthy planet.

Around the world, we are seeing policy makers and governments embracing the vision of a Wellbeing Economy. Chiefly, the governments of New Zealand,

Finland, Wales, Iceland, and Scotland have formed the Wellbeing Economy Governments (WEGO) partnership to support one another to build economies that put the wellbeing of their people and planet first. However, this movement is not constrained to the North with many of the most innovative approaches to Wellbeing Economy policy design coming from the Global South.

Although the ultimate shape and structure of wellbeing economies differ depending on context, there are some core dimensions of this economy that unite us in our need for:

1. **Dignity:** Everyone has enough to live in comfort, safety and happiness.
2. **Nature:** A restored and safe natural world for all life.
3. **Connection:** A sense of belonging and institutions that serve the common good.
4. **Fairness:** Justice in all its dimension is at the heart of economic systems, and the gap between the richest and poorest is greatly reduced.
5. **Participation:** Citizens are actively engaged in their communities and locally rooted economies.

The Wellbeing Economy movement therefore goes beyond just fixing, healing and redistributing to building an economic system that gets it right the first time. It is about actively co-creating, through participatory processes, the better world we envision. It is about changing the way we view, manage and engage with the economy to ensure dignity and fairness. By recognising that the ultimate measure of our success is not wealth but wellbeing now and for generations to come.

**Economy:** The way we provide for one another's wants and need.

**Economics:** refers to what we decide the purpose of an economy should be and comprises the models and theories people have created and chose to use to deliver on this purpose.

**The Wellbeing Economy Governments (WEGo) Partnership:** WEGo is a collaboration of national and regional governments promoting sharing of expertise and transferrable policy practices, with the aim to deepen their understanding and advance their shared ambition of building Wellbeing Economies. WEGo was sparked by WEAll and currently comprises Scotland, New Zealand, Iceland, Wales, and Finland.

**"We need a new narrative and a change in our worldview. A recognition of the interconnection of people and the planet - of social and environmental wellbeing. We need new measures of success that move us beyond GDP and to recognise the inadequacy of our current system."**

**Andrew Schwartz (Ecociv)- WEAll Member**

1. <https://www.credit-suisse.com/about-us/en/reports-research/global-wealth-report.html>

2. <https://www.oxfam.org/en/5-shocking-facts-about-extreme-global-inequality-and-how-even-it>

3. <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2020/oct/07/covid-19-crisis-boosts-the-fortunes-of-worlds-billionaires>

4. <https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2020-11-14/2020-s-covid-protests-are-a-sign-of-the-social-unrest-to-come>

5. <https://www.ipcc.ch/reports/>

6. <https://www.pnas.org/content/114/30/E6089>

# What Is wellbeing economy policy design?

**Wellbeing Economy Policy Design:** Policy design takes a holistic, collaborative, and iterative approach, inviting stakeholders into the process at all stages, collaborating across normally siloed sectors or departments, and repeating steps to ensure input is received from all constituencies to build a just and sustainable economy

**Economic Policy:** Policy interventions that aim to influence economic behaviour towards the achievement of societal goals.

**Community:** People living within a particular geographic region (e.g. town, city, nation, region, etc.)

**“A Wellbeing Economy is not some fully fleshed out system waiting for adoption. The change we seek must be open, conditional, and iterative. A Wellbeing Economy must be driven by the people, according to their context and priorities, and therefore, we should be wary of those who demand a fully articulated model for adoption.”**

**Robert Pollock,** Managing Director, Regional Development Solutions

**“Wellbeing Economy policy design is about moving beyond just fixing the problems created by the economy. It is about using holistic approaches to design an economy that works for people and planet, first time around.”**

**Dr. Gemma Bone Dodds,** Innovation and Systems Change Specialist

Wellbeing Economy policy making requires a shift in how we develop economic policies, beginning with the goals we set. The goal of policy making shifts from promoting economic growth, to promoting the wellbeing of our people and planet. Such policy design would aim to support the areas of the economy that contribute to collective wellbeing, while shrinking those areas of the economy that damage it.

This shift requires abandoning many of the standard economic approaches which treat the economy like a science and employ abstract models to inform decision making. Once we realise that the way we produce and provide for one another is influenced by our geography, history, culture, values, policies, and priorities, we realise that there can be no one-size-fits-all economic model. This recognition removes the economy from being an abstract ‘technical’ system, to an aspect of life on this earth. This places the economy back into the sphere of democratic influence, as its shape and form should be determined by the people who comprise it.

Wellbeing Economy policy design, therefore, moves the government beyond just correcting ‘market failures’ to proactively fostering the activities and behaviours important for our wellbeing. This is no small shift, as you will have to move from focusing on problems or deficits (e.g., a lack of skills, tech or finance) to focusing on your priorities and strengths.

This will require entering into new territory, to understand the existing actors, actions, behaviours, and institutions in your communities that are aligned with your Wellbeing Vision and goals. You will have to gather new evidence, in areas that have not been previously considered or valued as part of the ‘economy’, in order to develop a holistic compass to help guide decision making.

It will require experimentation and co-creation to find the strategies and policies that can support you and your communities to align your economies with your vision for a better world. Wellbeing Economy policy design is about using participatory and holistic methods to develop policies for the better world we envision.

Several key principles inform the policy design processes needed to create a Wellbeing Economy.



## Goal oriented

Policies are designed to promote the wellbeing of people and planet.

## Participatory

Policy is created through open, co-creative, and transparent processes. Diverse communities are able to meaningfully engage and contribute throughout the policy design process.



## Contextual

There is no one-size-fits-all solution. Economic policies are embedded in local values, culture, context, and objectives.

## Experimental

Policy processes encourage continuous learning and experimentation to find innovative solutions that foster wellbeing.



## Holistic

The economy is part of, and not distinct from, society and the environment.

## Evidence based

Policy making is informed through a systematic use of qualitative and quantitative evidence.



## Strength-based

Policy recognises the strengths of communities, focusing on achieving the positive aspirations of society rather than purely mitigating negative outcomes.

# Structure of guide

This Wellbeing Economy Policy Design Guide is divided into five sections which explore:

1. **Developing a wellbeing vision** and framework that reflects local values, objectives and contexts
2. **Designing a Wellbeing Economy strategy** that identifies the areas of economic life most important for our wellbeing and outlines a plan for fostering them
3. **Assessing and selecting Wellbeing Economy policies** by their alignment with wellbeing values and goals
4. **Implementing Wellbeing Economy policies** by empowering communities to take the lead in this transformation and,
5. **Evaluating policy impacts on wellbeing** for learning and adaptation

While these sections are presented in numerical order, we recognise that policy design is rarely a sequential process. It is as much an art as it is a science, and there are continuous feedback loops and interconnections between all of the outlined policy design processes. However we hope this structure helps you to find the information that is most useful for your context and situation.



Each section includes a short introduction with a:

- Quote by leading policy makers in the Wellbeing Economy movement,
- Short description of the purpose of the section, and a
- Text box that compares how a Wellbeing Economy approach differs from 'standard' economic policy approaches.

As well, Sub-sections dive into particular policy design processes that relate to different stages of the Wellbeing Economy policy design process. (For example, in Section 1: Developing a Wellbeing Vision, you will find a sub-section on 'How to Measure Wellbeing'. Within each subsection, you will find:

- Purpose: A short statement on the intended purpose/outcome of the policy design process
- Quotes: By WEAll members that contributed to the guides' development
- Definitions: Of key words or phrases
- How: Different methods you can use to execute the policy design process
- WEAll Tips: Guidance and suggestions from the WEAll membership on how best to execute the policy design process
- Guiding question: Questions for reflection as you work towards building a Wellbeing Economy
- Case study: Each sub-section includes one inspiring case study from around the world that relates to the policy design process. You can find more case studies that relate to each section on our website [here <weall.org/case-studies>](https://weall.org/case-studies).

The reality is that many of these processes are still emergent, so we do not yet have all the tools needed to operationalise all of them. But we do have inspiring case studies, key principles, and innovative ideas that can serve as a starting point for designing policies for a Wellbeing Economy, included here in Version one of our Wellbeing Economy Policy Design Guide. We hope that as you continue to experiment, you will join us in further developing this guide and support others on their journey towards

**"The benefits of the Wellbeing Economy approach are that it helps us to:**

1. **Apply a broader lens of what is of value;**
2. **Look beyond the here and now, to the ultimate goal of what we are trying to achieve; and**
3. **Overcome common silos and encourage collaboration towards our shared wellbeing objectives"**

Dr. Margreet Frieling- Associate Principle, Kōtātā Insight



# Developing a wellbeing vision

“We need to move beyond narrow measures and views of value and broaden our definition of progress”

Patsy Reddy, Governor-General of New Zealand

Wellbeing Economy policy design begins with setting a different vision of progress. For decades, we have used economic indicators such as wealth and GDP growth to assess societal progress. This has led us to focus on fostering economic growth, regardless of whether or not it leads to improvements in collective wellbeing. Many governments are now flipping the script and developing more holistic and longer-term visions of progress, so that collective wellbeing becomes the ultimate measure of economic success. These visions help us to recognise wealth as one driver of wellbeing, alongside a wide variety of other social and environmental factors.

The challenge, of course, is that viewing wealth as the main indicator of progress has become embedded in many of our cultures, influencing the way we view our own capacities, relationships, and purpose. Changing this requires expanding our understanding of the economy, its relationship to social and ecological wellbeing and our notion of progress to encompass a wide variety of factors that determine the quality of our lives on this planet. As such, a Wellbeing Vision is not something that can be imposed; it must be co-created with communities. This requires engagement with communities to understand what matters for their wellbeing, now and for generations to come.

As you work to develop your Wellbeing Vision, we offer three policy processes which can help you along the way: 1) Understanding what matters for wellbeing, 2) Crafting and communicating the Wellbeing Vision, and 3) Measuring wellbeing. The purpose of this process is to develop a medium- to long-term Wellbeing Vision towards which your society and government will work.



## Old Economic Policy

Economic growth (as measured by GDP) is the ultimate indicator of progress, even when it comes at the detriment of human and ecological wellbeing.

Economy viewed as separate and superior to social and ecological dimensions.

Strong economic assumptions regarding what people want and why.

## Wellbeing Economy Policy

Collective wellbeing is the ultimate indicator of progress, whether or not that involves economic growth.

Economy viewed as one aspect of society, which is part of the environment.

Meaningful democratic engagement to identify and understand what matters for current and future collective wellbeing.



# 1A. Understanding what matters for wellbeing

Wellbeing: Wellbeing is about our quality of life as individuals, communities and societies and how sustainable that will be in the future. It encompasses our personal and collective wellbeing as well as the wellbeing of planets, animals and our environment.

“The first thing we have to do is get out there. Take the policy writing out of the capital and ask communities ‘what does wellbeing look like? What does it mean to you? This process generates solidarity and ensures a connection to context and what people really want. It’s important to recognise that when you do this in different locations, you will get different answers.”

Jacquie McGlade, Professor,  
University College London

**Purpose:** To understand what matters for personal, collective, and future wellbeing, as a basis for building an economy that delivers this wellbeing.

Governments have taken different approaches to understanding wellbeing: some use conceptual frameworks based on research on the determinants of wellbeing while others conduct public consultations. The process of engaging with communities to understand their vision for the future and the areas of life most important to their wellbeing is transformative, both as a process and as an outcome. It facilitates communication, trust, and empowerment for further participation in the transformative journey ahead.

**How:** community forums, citizen assemblies, appreciative inquiry, deliberative polling, citizen conferences, town meetings, focus groups, surveys.

## WEAll Tips:

- **Identify trusted community institutions or leaders** who can **facilitate discussions** on wellbeing priorities.
- **Train policy makers** to undertake **open, co-creative policy** design processes.
- **Ask powerful questions that support communities** to identify their positive vision for the future, rather than focusing only on existing problems or challenges.
- **Allow people to express their wellbeing** priorities in images or stories.
- **Ensure consideration of both current and long-term wellbeing priorities.** What is required for the wellbeing of future generations?
- **Encourage reflection** on what matters for personal wellbeing, community wellbeing, humanity’s wellbeing, and the wellbeing of plants, animals, and the environment.
- When discussing what matters for wellbeing, **ask additional ‘why?’ follow-up questions** to better understand the key outcomes and values underpinning the stated priorities.
- **Identify core values** that relate to these wellbeing priorities and that can act as guiding principles in the policy design process.

**Guiding Question:** What areas of life are most important for your current and future wellbeing?

# Wellbeing In Germany - ‘What Matters To Us’

In 2015, the German government instigated a national dialogue to better understand what mattered for people’s wellbeing. In order to ensure diversity and hear as many opinions as possible, the German government asked for help from a large number of social groups (such as workers associations, adult education centres, chambers of commerce, women’s agricultural association, etc.). Over a period of six months, they hosted over 200 national dialogue events in every region of Germany, with the Chancellor and first ministers being invited to 50 of the events, to engage in wellbeing discussions. Those who were not able to attend these in-person events were invited to participate online or by returning a postcard that had been mailed to all residents. A total of 15,750 participants took part in the national dialogue. Over 400 different topics and areas important for wellbeing were identified during the national dialogue, with the following aspects being mentioned particularly often:



Through this public consultation, people expressed a mix of values, processes, and outcomes as being important for their wellbeing: key values included freedom, equity, and helpfulness, important democratic processes included civic engagement and political participation, and crucial outcomes for a functioning state included healthcare, education, and unspoiled nature. These priorities were then organised into three broad categories with 12 dimensions: 1) ‘Our life’, which describes five dimensions: health, work, education, income, and the time we have available. 2) ‘Our surroundings’, which covers three dimensions of lives: where we live, infrastructure and mobility in our cities and rural areas, security, and social cohesion. 3) ‘Our country’, which forms the national and international framework and relates to the economy and environment, being able to live in freedom and equality, and the concerns of citizens about peace and Germany’s responsibilities in the world.

Source: <https://www.gut-leben-in-deutschland.de/report/national-dialogue/>  
Read more case studies on ways that policy makers understand wellbeing [here](#).



# 1B. Crafting and communicating your wellbeing vision

**'You need to have a strong vision that is widely owned, so that you are not knocked off course by special interest groups and powerful lobbyists along the way.'**

**Mike Danson**, Professor Emeritus, Herriot-Watt and Strathclyde Universities

**Purpose:** To craft and communicate a clear and tangible vision of progress, founded on wellbeing priorities.

Wellbeing is a holistic concept that brings together priority social, economic, environmental and democratic outcomes into a shared vision for the future. When you ask people what matters for wellbeing you likely get a wide range of values, processes, and outcomes. You will need to organise these priorities into a clear Wellbeing Vision. This is crucial to unifying diverse stakeholders in focusing on wellbeing outcomes rather than economic growth and shifting views of governments as stewards of the economy to governments as stewards of social and ecological wellbeing. Governments will often organise priority wellbeing outcomes into thematic areas as a 'wellbeing framework' and communicate this framework in the form of an infographic or other visual representation. Other times governments communicate the wellbeing priorities as a vision statement for the future. Both help governments to focus on medium- to long-term wellbeing outcomes.

You will want to engage the public in the process of articulating this Wellbeing Vision and support its widespread communication. This vision is a key to building new narratives about progress and the purpose of government and policy action. This shift can take time but ensuring accessible public communication and continuous dialogue will build the necessary foundations for long-term transformative change.

**How:** Community forums, focus groups, inter-governmental & multi-stakeholder discussion forums, expert forums, wellbeing framework, public communication campaign.

## WEAll Tips:

- **Develop a vision statement** or a Wellbeing Framework by grouping wellbeing priorities into **common themes** (read how this was done in Scotland and in Wales [here](#)).
- **Allow for the holistic representation** of wellbeing **values and outcomes** across social, economic, environmental, political, and spiritual dimensions of life.
- **Use the same language used by the community** when crafting your Wellbeing Vision (e.g., recognising that the word for 'wellbeing' may be different in different places).
- **Respect cultural diversity** and differing wellbeing priorities across and within communities in the **collective Wellbeing Vision or Framework**.
- Place special emphasis on **human rights and environmental protection**.
- **Give extra weight to the wellbeing priorities of marginalised communities**.
- **Embrace indigenous wisdom** and perspectives on wellbeing and our relationship to the earth.
- **Use personal stories, images, music and narratives** as part of Wellbeing Vision **communication campaign**.
- **Engage all government institutions** in the process of building a Wellbeing Framework.
- Ensure the Wellbeing Vision is **presented as long-term project** that spans political administrations.
- **Embrace meaningful public participation** when crafting and communicating your Wellbeing Vision.

**Guiding questions:** What is your wellbeing vision? Is it a shared vision? By whom?

## Ecuador – 'Buen Vivir'

'Buen Vivir', meaning 'living well together', is the Spanish translation of Sumak Kawsay, a term used by the Quechua peoples of the Andes, to describe a way of doing things that is rooted in community, ecology, culture, and spiritual connection to the land.

The government of Ecuador developed a Wellbeing Vision based on the concept of 'buen vivir', which was integrated into the Ecuadorian constitution in 2008. It presents a vision of development which goes beyond economic growth by focusing on the factors that determine our wellbeing including health, education, environmental protection, and community participation; all to be achieved through the principles of interculturality. The government expressed their Wellbeing Vision in 2018 as follows:

*'We want a society in which people can satisfy their needs, live and die worthily with social equality and justice, free of violence or discrimination and achieving individual, social and natural harmony'*



This Wellbeing Vision was communicated through various media campaigns, with one commercial featuring an elderly woman declaring, 'finally, money does not make the difference in achieving dignified health...health is a right, for which they cannot charge money.' Another popular advertisement of the Wellbeing Vision features musicians representing different regions and ethnic groups singing together.

Read more case studies on crafting and communicating Wellbeing Visions, [here](#).

# 1C. Measuring wellbeing

## 'What you measure matters.'

Doreen Grove, Head of Open Government, Scottish Government

**Purpose:** Measure and assess wellbeing over time, in order to support effective policy development.

As you move beyond GDP as the major indicator of progress, you will want to develop new wellbeing measurements. Developing wellbeing indicators can help you to better understand the current level of wellbeing and track its performance over time. As the determinants of wellbeing are multi-dimensional, these measurements can help policymakers to better understand synergies and trade-offs between dimensions over time. Measuring wellbeing requires looking at how society as a whole is progressing across all of your various wellbeing dimensions, rather than using economic indicators as a proxy for wellbeing or focusing on specific areas at the expense of others.

**How:** Wellbeing data generation, surveys, use existing wellbeing metrics/indices, local data generation, public discussions, expert forums.

## WEAll Tips:

- **Employ qualitative and quantitative** methods to find appropriate indicators for the wellbeing priorities, noting that often, wellbeing priorities will be multi-dimensional or subjective.
- **Support local data generation** and community engagement in the selection of indicators, making clear that community members will be involved in the monitoring and evaluation of policies.
- **Identify intuitive indicators** that can be easily understood by a general audience.
- **Prioritise indicators that directly connect with desired outcomes**, rather than an input/driver. For example, measure whether people feel safe in their neighbourhood (an outcome), rather than number of police officers (an input).
- **Find indicators that directly correspond to a dimension in your Wellbeing Framework** and that have a positive relationship with other dimensions as well.
- **Explore existing wellbeing metrics and indicators** for inspiration (see table), but ensure adaptation to your communities' unique values and priorities.
- **Identify internationally comparable indicators**, where possible, to benchmark performance against other countries and communities over time.

**Guiding questions:** How will you measure real progress? How will you ensure that the measurement doesn't overtake the outcome?

## Examples of Wellbeing Measurements

- Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Indicators
- Social progress Index
- Genuine progress index
- OECD wellbeing framework
- Happy planet Index
- Eurostat- Quality of Life indicators
- Wheel of Wellbeing
- Sustainable Wellbeing Index
- Multidimensional Poverty Index
- Wales National Wellbeing Indicators
- Thriving Places Index
- New Zealand Wellbeing Indicators
- Gallup Wellbeing Index
- Humankind Index
- Iceland wellbeing indicators
- Genuine Wealth Accounting

# Wales – 'Measuring the right things the right way'

In 2015, Wales put forth a Wellbeing Vision of improving 'the way in which decisions are made across specified public bodies in Wales, so that Wales became prosperous, resilient, healthier, more equal and globally responsible, with a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language'.

In working to achieve this vision, the Welsh Government requires all Ministers to propose indicators to measure progress in these areas. A key principle for selecting indicators was 'effective communication', to ensure better transparency and engagement with the public in pursuing the wellbeing goals.

## Principle

### Effective Communication

## Description

1. What the indicator measures should be capable of being summed up briefly in a way that will be immediately grasped by the public.
2. The indicator should allow comparisons to be made over time. Thus, comparisons should remain valid even as policies or data collection methods change, there should be secure sources of data, and the value of the indicator should be capable of change over time.
3. Ideally the indicator should allow comparisons with other places and so should be internationally recognised.
4. The significance of any changes should be immediately obvious.
5. All audiences need to believe that the indicator really does measure the outcome effectively and reliably, and the indicator should be understood in the same way by different groups.
6. Indicators must provide up-to-date information and with sufficient frequency to allow judgements about progress and to stimulate appropriate action.
7. Indicators must be selected and designed to avoid encouraging actions that improve the indicator at the expense of wider outcomes.

On the basis of these principles, the Welsh government ended up identifying 46 national indicators to measure performance toward their seven wellbeing areas. These indicators are gathered throughout the year and published annually and include quantitative & qualitative (e.g. survey based) data.

**Source:** Public Policy Institute for Wales (2015). Measuring progress towards the achievement of Wales's wellbeing goals:

A discussion paper. Accessed 26 October 2020 at [http://www.ppiw.org.uk/files/2015/02/Measuring-progress-towards-achievement-of-Wales-Wellbeing-goals\\_a-discussion-paper.pdf](http://www.ppiw.org.uk/files/2015/02/Measuring-progress-towards-achievement-of-Wales-Wellbeing-goals_a-discussion-paper.pdf).

To read more case studies on measuring wellbeing, see [here](#).



# Designing a Wellbeing Economy strategy

“The federal government (of Germany) believes wellbeing should lie at the heart of policymaking that simultaneously pursues economic, social and environmental goals...If the government is to develop effective policies, it is vital to consider all the different aspects of wellbeing and the interrelations between them that both reinforce, but also at times, compete with one another. Improving wellbeing is the responsibility of government, but also of business and industry, societal groups and, last but not least, every individual citizen.”

Federal Government of Germany

Wellbeing economy strategy: A theory of change which outlines concrete changes in the economy required to achieve your wellbeing goals

Designing a Wellbeing Economy strategy begins with a recognition that the purpose of the economy transcends its role in generating incomes. The way that we produce and provide for one another has enormous impacts on our personal, collective and future wellbeing far beyond the money we gain from the transaction. Our economic system influences our sense of purpose, social connections and the health of our people and planet. Developing a strategy which outlines concrete changes in the economy required to improve current and future wellbeing involves taking holistic and multi-dimensional view of progress. It involves abandoning much of our old economic thinking and embracing an understanding of our economies as embedded within our society and environment. This shift can take time and it will be important to involve diverse stakeholders along the way to encourage a broad shift in the understanding of what the economy is and for. This are-orientation requires fundamental shifts in process and thinking at all levels of society but for now let's explore how to 1) Identify Wellbeing Economy activities and behaviours, 2) Align institutions and stakeholder for wellbeing, and 3) Manage trade-offs and power dynamics.



## Examples of wellbeing economy strategies

**Circular economy** – Transform production and consumption processes to reuse resources, design waste and pollution out of the cycle, and regenerate the natural world. The primary ways to do this are recycling waste for new production or using waste for conversion to energy.

**Community wealth building** – Identifies ‘anchor’ economic institutions with strong linkages to the local economy, to foster ‘bottom-up’ and inclusive development.

**Regenerative economy** – Focuses on building an economy that mimics nature by regenerating the social and ecological assets needed for wellbeing.

**Economic democracy** – Ensures equitable distributions of economic power through democratic management of economy via policy, social enterprises, and community wealth management.

**Common good economy** – Evaluates business success not by profits, but rather by their contribution to the ‘common good’ and alignment with values of Dignity, Social Justice, Environmental Sustainability, and Transparency.

**Solidarity economy** – Promotes the expansion of economic activities and behaviours that are based on principles of reciprocity, cooperation, and solidarity.

**Doughnut economics** – Supports the design of economic systems that ensure necessary social foundations, while respecting planetary limits.

**Core economy** – Recognises central importance of economic activities that occur amongst families, friends, and communities, which are non-monetised and driven by values of love, empathy, responsibility, and care.

**Foundational economy** – Advocates for the use of public policy to secure the supply of basic goods and services to all people in a sustainable manner (e.g. socially and environmentally responsible).

## Old Economic Policy

Begins with the identification of economic challenges or ‘market failures’ where government intervention is needed.

Economy viewed as driven by competitive and profit-oriented individuals and enterprises.

Economy viewed as separate and superior to other policy areas, with other government agencies working to redistribute, heal, and fix negative outcomes from economic activity.

Economic strategies developed by economists and senior economic policy makers.

## Wellbeing Economy Policy

Begins with priority wellbeing goals and identifies changes in the economy required to achieve goals.

Economy viewed as driven by activities, behaviours, and institutions that contribute to, or detract from, wellbeing.

Government institutions work collaboratively to achieve wellbeing goals by fostering holistic strategies that recognise interconnections between the social, economic, and environmental dimensions of life.

Economic strategies developed through participatory and multi-stakeholder processes.





# 2A. Identifying wellbeing economy activities & behaviours

**'An important element here is the space to explore, iterate, and discover. This can be done with deliberative-type processes (e.g., citizen juries, stakeholder groups), where there is a focus on learning and sharing and not needing to find the 'correct' answer'**

Justin Connolly, Director, Deliberate

Wellbeing economic activities and behaviours: Actions made by individuals, institutions and our natural environment that provide for our wants and needs

**Purpose:** To identify the economic activities and behaviours that directly contribute to your wellbeing priorities.

Standard economic strategy design is often 'deficit-based' in the sense that it focuses on the need for external investment, technology or skills as the way of fostering economic development. However, as you work towards building a Wellbeing Economy, it can be useful to take a strength-based approach whereby you identify the existing economic activities, skills and behaviours that are already positively contributing to wellbeing. This will help you to develop an economic strategy that builds on the existing strengths and capacities in your community as the building blocks for your Wellbeing Economy.

By identifying positive economic activities and dimensions for support and expansion it can ensure people see the positive benefits of building a Wellbeing Economy (rather than fearing that promoting social and ecological wellbeing will negatively impact their quality of life). The process of engaging people in economic discussions and decision making is important for long-term transformation as it helps us to ground our understandings of the economy in lived experiences rather than theoretical models and shift our popular narratives regarding the purpose of the economy. Finally, the identification of positive economic activities will be a critical starting point for considering how to best foster the areas of the economy most important for wellbeing so you can prioritise policy efforts in these areas.

These discussions can help to expand your understanding of value and consider areas of life that have traditionally been excluded from economic analysis, such as household work or environmental stewardship. This process is important, as it helps people to embrace a new narrative about the economy and its purpose, and to visualise their role in a new one.

**How:** Genuine wealth accounting, discussion forums, asset mapping, citizen assemblies, creative placemaking, appreciative inquiry, green economy dialogue, systems thinking, reframing the economy, participatory research.

## WEAll Tips:

- Facilitate community discussions around **understandings of the economy and its relationship to wellbeing** (See UK case study)
- Train government officials on **strength-based approaches** to consider the existing economic activities and behaviours that are contributing to wellbeing
- Employ back casting and have communities / stakeholders **imagine the society has achieved their wellbeing goals**. What does the economy look like? **What is different in terms of the way we produce and provide for one another?** What is the same?
- Use a **broad definition of the economy**, for example, 'the way we provide for one another', so that people have space to consider areas that may otherwise be seen as outside the scope of the 'economy' e.g., parenting, social

services, nature, etc.

- For each of your wellbeing priorities, consider a **wide range of activities** that are positively contributing to its achievement e.g., sectors, occupations, producers, services, institutions, etc.
- For each of your wellbeing priorities, consider a **wide range of behaviours** that are directly contributing to its achievement e.g., production processes, patterns of consumption, exchange, distribution, provision, etc.
- Pay special attention to your **wellbeing values** and discuss what areas of life people see these values being promoted e.g., where do you see solidarity, generosity, respect, etc.?
- Carry out discussions of **non-monetised areas of the economy** and their contribution to wellbeing e.g., care work, civic activity, volunteering, mutual aid etc.
- Through the process of identifying wellbeing economic activities and behaviours, take note of those that are viewed as negatively **impacting wellbeing**.
- Use this opportunity to **gather data and evidence** on these activities and behaviours that can be used for assessments and evaluations.
- Support **research on Wellbeing Economy approaches** and engage **local experts** who can provide insights on the existing activities and behaviours contributing to the wellbeing priorities.
- **Gather quotes and stories** from your discussion that can be used to communicate new narratives regarding the drivers of a Wellbeing Economy.

**Guiding question:** Which economic activities currently serve the future you are trying to create and which activities actively works against it in the long term?

## COVID-19 and the identification of 'essential' economic activities

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, many governments around the world temporarily suspended parts of their economies to slow the spread of the disease. As part of this process, many governments had to identify which types of economic activities were deemed most 'essential' for collective wellbeing and would continue to operate during 'lockdown'. While the exact list of 'essential' or 'key' sectors and workers varied across and even within countries, some common areas included:

- Healthcare
- Energy
- Education
- Childcare
- Water
- Agriculture and food production
- Critical retail (e.g., grocery stores, pharmacies, hardware stores, etc.)
- Critical trades (e.g., construction, electricians, plumbers, etc.)
- Transportation & delivery
- Government and community-based services

The ability of policymakers to very quickly identify these 'essential' economic activities illustrates that we have an intuitive understanding of the economic activities that are most important for maintaining collective wellbeing. The challenge is to expand our time horizon and consider the activities that are most important for future wellbeing as well, and to co-create strategies to foster and promote these economic activities in a way that promotes social justice on a healthy planet.

For more case studies identifying wellbeing economy activities and behaviours see [here](#)

## 2B. Aligning institutions & stakeholders for wellbeing

**'Bring people with you, make it cross-organisational, everybody's business - not a competition'**

**Dr. Andy Turner, Public Health Specialty Registrar and Health Policy Lead, Liverpool City Region Combined Authority**

**Purpose:** To empower stakeholders and align institutions to jointly achieve priority wellbeing outcomes.

Building a Wellbeing Economy requires more than just different measures of progress, it is about changing how we work together to achieve that progress. It requires an appreciation that since the determinants of our wellbeing are multi-dimensional, all outcomes must be co-produced by a wide variety of actors, such as government, business, communities, and citizens. As you work towards achieving your wellbeing goals, you will want to consider how best to align government departments and local authorities to effectively work together, instead of in silos, to achieve the priority wellbeing outcomes, while simultaneously allowing space for individuals, communities, businesses, and other stakeholders to meaningfully contribute to achievement of these goals as well. This requires adjusting governmental systems and structures so that they encourage a joined-up and co-creative approach to developing strategies and delivering public services to achieve wellbeing goals.

**How:** multi-stakeholder forums, stakeholder mapping, political economy analysis and power analysis, multi-stakeholder dialogues, collaborative governance, sociocracy, multi-stakeholder management, enabling state.

### WEAll Tips:

- **Ensure wide-spread government involvement** (across levels and departments) early on in the process, so that all agencies have clear understanding of the priority wellbeing goals and can take the lead in coordinating efforts in accordance with their mandates
- Develop a **multi-stakeholder and intergovernmental committee** to support and coordinate strategy development (see [Wales](#))
- Present the achievement of your Wellbeing Vision as **medium- to long-term** initiative that transcends political administrations, to ensure continuity
- **Instigate any necessary institutional reforms** to better align agencies that may have conflicting mandates to priority wellbeing goals (See [Netherlands](#))
- **Begin with the Wellbeing Economy goals** and discuss with all stakeholders their role in achieving the objectives.
- **Facilitate multi-stakeholder and community discussions** to identify the legitimate role of government in instigating changes and areas where households, private sector or civil society should take the lead (see [Sikkim](#)).
- **Map the power of stakeholders** to promote or constrain movement towards the wellbeing goals.

**Guiding question:** How do you ensure that you will have the people and organisations you need aligned to practically achieving your vision? How can you guard against failure by involving diverse groupings early on?

## Utah – 'How we grow matters'

In the 1990s, the state government in Utah, USA instigated a participatory policy design process to promote more inclusive and sustainable growth. Initially, the Government faced resistance by the various regions, towns, and districts who all saw themselves as responsible for managing growth and by other influential stakeholders, who were sceptical of involving residents in an economic strategy design process. However, it made some strategic choices that allowed 'Envision Utah' to develop as a participatory economic strategy design process:

1. **The first was to regard the pursuit of an inclusive and sustainable economy as a long-term endeavour, not one that would be managed within the confines of political or administrative cycles.**
2. **The second was to frame Envision Utah's work as visioning rather than 'planning', which is generally associated with narrow, technically managed processes.**
3. **The third was to see the visioning as a continuous process, not a project. This ensured that stewardship of Utah's economic development was not a short-term, managerially-driven exercise that was restricted to isolated, time limited projects.**

With widespread public buy-in for the project, the Government commissioned the 'Values Survey', which asked residents a series of building questions to gain a better understanding of what people valued about living in Utah and why they valued it. Upon completion of the Values Survey, the Government developed a model of what Utah would look like if economic growth continued unabated. This study was extremely time intensive as the state had never gathered or coordinated local information at this scale. More than 140 public and private agencies provided information on land-use data, air quality, water, transportation, infrastructure, housing, business, economic development, open air and critical lands and neighbourhood demographics. This baseline model was released to the public in 1997 and was a big wake up call for residents of the potential damages of uncontrolled economic growth.

The government undertook a massive media and information campaign to educate residents on the potential challenges of growth, to raise awareness of the 'Envision Utah' initiative, and to motivate them to participate in future surveys and meetings. Community meetings were used to develop the 'Quality Growth Strategy' with participants, for example, building their ideal neighbourhoods by placing chips on a map to represent green spaces, residential buildings, mixed-use buildings, employment centres, cultural or civic centres, and retail space. These community discussions also provided space for communities to express their desired form of government intervention; with residents expressing a clear preference for incentives over regulations. Communities also wanted to ensure that these strategies were tailored to each community's unique character and needs and did not add additional layers of bureaucracy, but rather helped communities and decision-makers to consider a variety of choices.

After years of exhaustive involvement by the public, 'Envision Utah' successfully developed a publicly supported 'Quality Growth Strategy', which outlined their plan to protect the environment, maintain economic vitality, and promote quality of life:

The achievements of 'Envision Utah' have been impressive, from reduced carbon emissions to smarter land-use. However, one of the major successes cited by its organisers was a regional transportation policy. In 1990, voters rejected a proposal to expand Utah's public transportation system, as many residents held conservative values which made them sceptical of tax increases and government planning. However, in 2000, as a result of awareness raising and public debate facilitated through the 'Envision Utah' initiative, all three counties in the state passed the measure. Illustrating how participatory strategy design processes can help shift public opinion and foster greater trust in government for transformative change.

Sources: <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5c059ead36099b1445c1d246/t/5d6ea271ddf8b900016729ac/1567531638955/History+of+Envision+Utah.pdf>

RSA Report: <https://www.thersa.org/globalassets/pdfs/reports/rsa-inclusive-growth-in-action.pdf>

To read more case studies on empowering and aligning stakeholders in wellbeing policy design, see [here](#).

## 2C. Managing trade-offs & power dynamics

**'The most important thing is the dialogue and discussion itself, so people can identify tensions, appreciate unintended consequences and others' views when confronting these challenges and trade-offs.'**

**Mike Danson**, Professor Emeritus, Herriot-Watt and Strathclyde Universities

**Holistic/systems thinking approach:** Systems thinking acknowledges that a complex system is best understood by inquiring into how the different basic parts and elements of the system interrelate and evolve over time within the larger system

**Purpose:** Manage trade-offs and power dynamics to develop effective strategies to foster Wellbeing Economic activities and behaviours.

As you develop your Wellbeing Economy strategy, you will likely find that in order for certain activities and behaviours to flourish, others will need to decline. Managing these trade-offs in a strategic and democratic manner will be vital to ensure a just transition to a Wellbeing Economy. Over time, your wellbeing measurements (see section 1) and assessments (see section 5) can help you better understand inter-relationships between these various dimensions. However, while quantitative data is certainly helpful for understanding complex systems, conceptual understandings of system and power dynamics are vital as they influence the strategies and narratives that underpin change. Engaging with a wide range of stakeholders, including experts, policy makers, civil society groups, and citizens will be critical to ensure that all actors in society understand and appreciate these interconnections and why particular shifts are necessary to improve collective wellbeing, now and for generations to come.

**How:** Community discussion forums, back-casting, systems thinking, affinity diagrams, political economy analysis and power analysis, social dialogue and tripartism, scenario planning, stakeholder analysis, consensus conference, wisdom council

### WEAll Tips:

- Begin with your Wellbeing Vision and have communities discuss **how they see social, environmental, economic and political dimensions of wellbeing interrelating** with one another.
- Consider **long-term wellbeing** and which actions today can improve collective wellbeing in the future.
- Explore wellbeing outcomes and goals and **use systems thinking tools** to consider how improvements in one area will positively or negatively impact other areas.
- Have **open and honest discussions regarding trade-offs** and use participatory approaches to find the best ways to manage them.
- Openly **discuss power-relationships** and conduct power mappings to identify potential barriers to building a Wellbeing Economy.
- Use **communication and public awareness campaigns** to foster necessary buy-in for shifting power dynamics in society.
- **Empower the most marginalised in society** to outline the most important changes needed for their wellbeing
- Use **scenario planning** to consider how different changes in one wellbeing area could have positive or negative impacts on others.
- Develop a **causal logic**, which outlines the activities, behaviours, and institutions that need to be fostered as well as those that will need to be discouraged, to build a Wellbeing Economy
- Create **pictures, infographics and simple narratives to explain this causal logic** and why particular interventions in the economy are viewed as necessary to achieving wellbeing goals.

**Guiding questions:** Who holds the power in the current system and what stands in the way? How will you be clear about trade-offs between wellbeing priorities and how can you enable a just transition for those who will lose out?

## New Zealand – 'Managing trade-offs through a just transition'

The New Zealand Government identified a trade-off between their environmental and social wellbeing goals, as they were concerned that a transition to a zero-carbon economy could threaten the employment and livelihoods of people currently working in the oil and gas sector. In response to this challenge the government established a 'Just Transition Unit' in May 2018, to foster a transition towards a low emissions economy that is 'fair, equitable, and inclusive'. The unit operates by creating partnerships in communities undergoing a major transition.

These partnerships have four objectives:

1. **Build an understanding of potential pathways to transform the economy to create lower emissions;**
2. **Identify, create, and support new opportunities, new jobs, new skills, and new investments that will emerge from the transition;**
3. **Better understand how the transition might impact different communities, regions, or sectors; and**
4. **Make choices about how to manage these impacts in a just and inclusive way.**

As part of its climate change programme, the Government stopped issuing new permits for offshore oil and gas exploration in 2018. That policy had a large impact on economic security in the Taranaki region, which has supported oil and gas exploration off the west coast of the North Island of New Zealand for several decades. The Just Transitions Unit has worked in that region, with a particular focus on its energy sector in a low emissions future.

It established a Taranaki Transition Lead Group of representatives drawn from central government, local government, the Māori community, business, the workforce, education, and community organisations. This group facilitated 29 workshops around the region, including a specialised event for youth. It also sponsored a creative competition for students aged 7–18 to describe their vision for Taranaki in 2050; more than 140 took part. Material from this process fed into a draft Taranaki 2050 Roadmap, launched at a National Just Transition Summit hosted in the region in May 2019. The Summit involved 550 people from around the country. Kate Raworth, author of Doughnut Economics and WEAll Ambassador, was a keynote speaker.

Following the finalisation of the Roadmap in August 2019, the Lead Group then facilitated workshops to create eleven Transition Pathway Action Plans (TPAPs). The Energy TPAP, for example, agreed on the following Action Statement: 'Using our know-how and resources, we will transition to a world-leading energy ecosystem that provides sustainable, secure, and affordable low-emissions energy by 2050, while creating meaningful work, community wellbeing, and prosperity for generations to come.' Projects to implement the TPAPs are under way, including a project to build a Clean Energy centre in Taranaki.

Source: Paul Dalziel, Lincoln University, New Zealand

To read more case studies of managing trade-offs and power dynamics, see [here](#).





# Assessing and selecting wellbeing economy policies

“Fifty years have elapsed since Robert Kennedy rightly said that GDP measures everything except that which makes life worthwhile. Economics is nonetheless still centred on the measurable, dividing government outlays into two categories: expenses and investment. This dualism classifies money spent on physical infrastructure as an investment and, therefore, worthy of public monies. On the other hand, social infrastructure (e.g., childcare, healthcare, education) is branded as expenses or operating costs, preferably the first in line to be cut. Yet, these are the structures that sustain us from (before) birth to death and create the conditions that make life worthwhile.”

Katrin Jakobsdottir, Prime Minister of Iceland

Wellbeing Economy Policies and programmes: Specific government interventions that contribute to the achievement of wellbeing goals by influencing the behaviour of economic actors

Transformation of systems rarely occurs from the introduction of a single policy, but rather through a series of policy reforms that redefine rights and responsibilities and encourage certain activities and behaviours relative to others. Governments have a broad range of policy tools which they can use to influence the shape and form of the economy, such as:

- **Legislation / Regulations** – Define the rights and responsibilities of various stakeholders in society by requiring or prohibiting particular activities and/or behaviours (e.g., property rights, competition policy, and environmental protections).
- **Incentives** – Encourage or reward particular types of activities and behaviours (e.g., grants, subsidies, tax rebates).
- **Disincentives** – Discourage particular types of activities or behaviours (e.g., tariffs, taxes, fees).
- **Information Campaigns** – Gather and disseminate information to encourage or discourage particular behaviours (e.g., buy-local campaigns, databanks, certifications)
- **Public Provision** – The Government supplies or demands particular goods and services (e.g., education, infrastructure, public procurement).
- **The Commons** – Civil society management of collective resources (e.g., non- state or market governance).

In working to build a Wellbeing Economy, you will want to assess the alignment of the suite of policies and programmes already in place with your wellbeing goals and strategy. This assessment requires inter-governmental collaboration, multi-stakeholder discussions, and community consultations to identify which existing policies and programmes should be expanded, adjusted, or phased-out. Once you have identified necessary reforms to existing policies, you can co-create new policies or pilot programmes that can fill important gaps and help to manage your transition to a Wellbeing Economy. While there are many different considerations when assessing and selecting policy instruments, we can begin by looking at 1) assessing and reforming existing policies and 2) co-creating new policy initiatives.

Old Economic Policy		Wellbeing Economy Policy
Governments encouraged to take a 'hands-off' approach to economy and to intervene only when there are 'market failures'.	>	Government and communities develop policies to transform the economy to achieve wellbeing goals.
Economic policies used to promote economic growth and social and environmental policies used to mitigate negative impacts of growth.	>	All policies are adapted and designed to foster activities and behaviours that support social and ecological wellbeing.
Policies assessed by financial cost vs. benefit.	>	Policies assessed by contribution to current and future wellbeing.

Building a Wellbeing Economy needs everyone with all their ideas, passion and practical delivery. But the role of policy makers and government cannot be downplayed – they create incentives, they reward certain activities, they bring in money, and deploy it. Put together, policies shape the road on which our shared journey towards a Wellbeing Economy will travel!

Dr. Katherine Trebeck, WEAll Advocacy Lead



# 3A. Assessing & reforming existing policies

Wellbeing Economy policy package:  
A suite of policy initiatives that jointly work to transform the structure of the economy for wellbeing

“Cross-reference different areas of improvement (environment, wealth redistribution, affirmative actions, monetary policy, food security, for example) with the wellbeing goals, understanding which ongoing policies already find themselves in these intersections and which do not.”

João Daniel Carvalho – Member of Legal Community of Sistema B Brazil, the Legal Impact Lab and Founder of Lobeira Environmental Consultancy

**Purpose:** To assess and adapt existing policies (e.g. regulations, social services, taxes, etc.) to be in line with your wellbeing priorities.

Before developing new policies and programmes to shift the structure of your economy to promote wellbeing, it is important to assess the alignment of your existing policies with your wellbeing strategy and goals. This can help you to not only better understand which policies have been working well and why, but also support stronger policy coherence, which is key to ensuring you are not wasting resources on competing or conflicting policies or programmes. The process of re-aligning policies will require consideration of which existing policies need to be phased out, adjusted, or expanded in order to achieve your wellbeing goals. By adjusting your existing policies first, you will maximise the impact of public resources and facilitate better coordination towards the achievement of your wellbeing goals.

**How:** multi-criteria policy assessments, citizen juries, cross-impact analysis, inter-governmental & multi-stakeholder forums, policy databases, systems thinking, research and analysis of existing policies, vertical and horizontal policy coherence, expert discussions on current policy landscape, policy feedback forums.

## WEAll Tips:

- Develop an **inventory of policy instruments** from across agencies and levels of government, and organise based on their alignment with wellbeing goals and identify policies that are cross-cutting.
- Move beyond traditional ‘cost-benefit’ analysis to **assess policies in terms of their contribution to current and future wellbeing** (using multi-criteria or value-based assessments such as racial equity budgeting tools).
- **Evaluate regulations alongside power assessments** and consider if they are protecting the rights of the most vulnerable or only of the most powerful in society.
- Assess **incentives and disincentives** in terms of whether they **encourage and reward** the activities and behaviours most important for creating collective wellbeing.
- Use participatory budgeting or other democratic methods to **assess whether public provisions align with public wellbeing priorities** and values.
- Use **systems analysis to map your existing policies** and consider how they inter-relate with one another to foster wellbeing behaviours and activities.
- Assess the current policy package to **identify policies (or group of policies) that have worked well and understand why**.
- Assess options and alternative policy impacts by **mapping wellbeing effects across dimensions, groups, and over time**.

- Consider the **external policy environment or constraints** that may be limiting impact on wellbeing and develop strategies for engaging and advocating for change in external policy discussions (see Ecuador).
- When adapting or expanding policies, **ensure communities can adapt and align policies to their local context**.
- Phase out existing policies that are **constraining desirable behaviours**. This requires that you recognise the role of Wellbeing Economy policy as empowering society to realise their collective objectives rather than dictating behaviour.
- Acknowledge the **need to develop short-term policies to buffer impacts** on those who are negatively impacted by the transition to a Wellbeing Economy.

**Guiding Question:** Which policies are no longer serving your vision? Which policies are harmful or support wellbeing?

## Iceland – ‘Policies through a wellbeing lens’

In working to build a wellbeing economy, one of Iceland’s primary goals has been gender equality. Icelandic prime minister, Katrin Jakobsdottir wrote, ‘As governments are slowly turning their focus from raw GDP-driven measurements toward wellbeing criteria when judging economic success, the demand for progressive social justice policies is increasing...The campaign for women’s equality in Iceland has demanded government action to liberate women from social structures that have kept them down for centuries.’[1]

In order to achieve this wellbeing goal, Iceland recognised that they needed to have a better understanding of their policies’ impact on gender. This required going beyond traditional cost-benefit analysis of policies, so the government instigated a gender mainstreaming and budgeting initiative ‘to make the impact on genders visible, so it’s possible to re-evaluate policies, expenditures, and sources of income in accordance with objectives for equality’. This process took several years, with all ministries test piloting different approaches to gender mainstreaming alongside expert consultations to develop new criteria for assessing existing and future policies. This reassessment of existing and proposed policies led to legislative changes for women’s sexual and reproductive freedoms, strengthened equality laws and gender quotes for corporate boards as well as policies in areas such as universal childcare and shared parental leave.

Iceland’s commitment to building a more equitable economy led them to not only develop more holistic methods for assessing and selecting policies, but also to join the Wellbeing Economy Government’s (WEGo) partnership in 2018. Like other WEGo states, Iceland has now developed 39 wellbeing indicators based on the SDGs to ‘serve as the basis for an assessment of real prosperity and quality of life in Iceland’. Following on from their experience with gender budgeting, the government is now in the process of developing a wellbeing budgeting initiative to inform their five-year fiscal strategies and annual budgets. It will analyse the wellbeing impact of different policy options, with the aim of reforming and developing a coherent mix of policies that can deliver on Iceland’s wellbeing goals.

Sources: <https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/fandd/2019/03/gender-equality-in-Iceland-inclusive-economy-jakobsdottir.htm>  
<https://www.standard.co.uk/comment/comment/iceland-wellbeing-measure-success-katr-n-jakobsdottir-a4324791.html>  
To read more case studies on wellbeing assessments of existing policies, see [here](#).

# 3B. Co-creating new policies for a wellbeing economy

Wellbeing Economy policy package:  
A suite of policy initiatives that jointly work to transform the structure of the economy for wellbeing

“Engaging with diverse communities to co-create good public policy is highly skilled work. The impact is immense, through the public sector’s distinctive contribution to expanding capabilities of current and future generations to live well.”

Paul Dalziel, Professor, Lincoln University and author of ‘Wellbeing Economics: The Capabilities Approach to Prosperity’

“Engage stakeholders in a process of co-creating and co-producing policies and pilot projects.”

Susana Martin Belmont - Scientific Coordinator, MedTOWN project, Asamblea de Cooperacion por la Paz (ACPP)

**Purpose:** To co-create new and innovative economic policies that to support current and future wellbeing.

As you embrace a more holistic approach to the economy policy making, it will be helpful to take advantage of the expertise and lived experiences in your societies to co-create new Wellbeing Economy policies. By providing space for various stakeholders to meaningfully engage in co-creating new policy initiatives e.g. piloting projects or proposing ideas for policy initiatives, you will not only find innovative and context specific ideas, but also enhance the level of trust people have in government.

**How:** community forums, citizen assemblies, focus groups, deliberative polling, inter-governmental policy forums, participatory budgeting, wellbeing budgets, deliberative policy development, public policy conferences, citizen conferences, on and off-line decision making spaces, town meeting, expert forums, research on international best practice.

#### WEAll Tips:

- Revisit **your wellbeing vision, goals, and values** when designing new policies and programmes.
- **Consider how different policy instruments** (regulations, incentives, disincentives, commons, information, public provision) **could be used to achieve the same outcomes**, before selecting the one(s) most appropriate for your context.
- Recognise that expertise comes in many forms and engage Wellbeing Economy experts as well as **‘unusual suspects’** who can provide knowledge and insights when co-creating new policy instruments.
- Identify and **co-create new pilot projects and policies** with communities through participatory budgeting, community forums, public policy conferences, etc.
- Spend additional time exploring how to develop policies that can **promote behaviours that may have traditionally been outside the realm of standard economic thinking** (e.g. generosity, environmental stewardship, cooperation, etc.)
- Make special efforts to empower those who have been **historically marginalised in policy areas** to co-create initiatives (e.g., engage the homeless in housing policy, prisoners in prison reform policy, etc.).
- When selecting policies, consider the **community’s perspective regarding the legitimate role and scope of government**. This will help to determine if, for example, if a regulation or incentive programme would be more appropriate.
- Prioritise policies and initiatives that have positive benefits for a **variety of wellbeing goals**.
- **Validate the proposed policy package** with communities, implementing agencies, and stakeholders.

**Guiding Questions:** How can you design policies based on long-term benefits as opposed to short-term challenges? How can you support the co-creation of new policies by your society?

#### Examples of wellbeing economy policies

- A 3-day workweek to lower environmental pressures and achieve higher social wellbeing
- Introduction of a Time banking system to increase social inclusion
- Introduction of a resource cap and trade scheme to limit resource extraction
- Green infant industry border tax to support sustainable production
- Land value Tax to make the appreciation of land value publicly available
- Universal basic income or unconditional cash transfers
- 100% inheritance tax rate to increase intergenerational economic mobility and social cohesion
- Universal Job guarantee to ensure stable employment
- Set up social business incubators to support businesses designed to increase societal wellbeing
- Law protecting the rights of the environment
- Tax rebates for local production and consumption, to encourage short supply chains and the engagement of businesses with local communities
- Public Procurement to support Wellbeing Economy activities & behaviours
- Property right reform to support the commons
- Common Benefit Corporation laws
- Binding code of conduct multi-national corporations

## Decidim Barcelona – ‘Technology for wellbeing policies’

Following the 2009 global recession, Barcelona developed a technological platform to gather citizens’ input on economic recovery efforts. Decidim Barcelona is a web-based platform where citizens could submit policy proposals and help to design and monitor the participatory process of selection. From 2015-2016, over 220,000 interactions took place, with citizens submitting proposals and also commenting, debating, and voting on the proposals of others. The city council evaluated every policy proposal using technical and qualitative criteria, whereby they did not only consider the number of votes a proposal received, but also the number of neighbourhoods that discussed the proposal and the number of organisations that supported it.

Barcelona implemented a wide range of policy reforms informed by this participatory process. In particular, there was a shift to re-municipalisation and localisation of resources and economic assets via the promotion of cooperative business models and the use of public procurement to shift local economies in this direction.

Source: <https://www.decidim.barcelona/>

To read more case studies on co-creating Wellbeing Economic policies, see [here](#).



# Implementing wellbeing economy policies

**“We have important work ahead of us. But I have no doubt that together, we will get to a world that leaves no one behind – a world where promises made are promises kept, for people and planet, for human rights, and for human dignity.”**

**Amina J. Mohammed, Deputy Secretary General, United Nations**

Many governments face challenges when it comes to implementation, with a large gap between what was planned and what happens on the ground. Many of these challenges can be overcome by engaging people throughout the strategy and policy design process, so that they have a clear understanding of the logic and purpose of policy initiatives and can tailor them to their context (see Sections 1-3). While the process of developing strategies and policies begins with a high-level Wellbeing Vision and works its way down, the actual achievement of this vision will necessarily be ‘bottom-up’, driven by transformations in activities and behaviours in all sections of society. Thus, empowering people to take the lead in designing, aligning, and monitoring wellbeing policy initiatives is important for effective implementation. While the exact shape and form of your implementation will depend on your context, there are a couple of processes worth considering, 1) empowering localised policy implementation and 2) participatory monitoring of implementation.

Traditional Economic Policy		Wellbeing Economy Policy
Centralised, top-down implementation of economic policies.	>	Bottom-up, decentralised, and coordinated implementation.
Policies implemented in silos, without coordination and consideration of related activities being done in the same area.	>	The interconnectedness of government agencies, the private sector, civil society and community activities in achieving economic outcomes is recognised.
Implementation challenges due to limited understanding of intended impact and goals of policies.	>	Policies assessed by contribution to current and future wellbeing.



# 4A. Empowering localised policy implementation

“Know when to provide support and when to step back, to empower transformative action.”

Malin Leth, Zero Waste Expert and Founder of Circulous

**Purpose:** Provide space for coordinated local action in designing and implementing policies to ensure greater legitimacy, adaptability, and continuity of wellbeing policy initiatives. The ultimate achievement of your wellbeing vision will be driven by changes in the way that people produce and provide for one another. And the ultimate execution of your Wellbeing Economy strategy will be driven by local actors, institutions, and communities. You can support effective local action by providing the tools and resources needed for implementation and by developing communication networks to support transparency and knowledge sharing throughout the process.

**How:** open policy making, decentralisation, participatory rural appraisal, citizen relationship management systems, citizen advisory board, multi-level and dimension coordination forums, local resource allocation, inter-agency action plan development forums, community committees.

## WEAll Tips:

- Identify the most **trusted institutions** that will act as the key implementation agencies for the policies (with particular emphasis on institutions that are comprised by historically marginalised communities).
- Ensure **continuity across policy periods**, so stakeholders always know with whom they should work.
- Provide sufficient financial resources, particularly in poorer areas to **allow for adaptation and expansion of initiatives when needed**.
- Strive to **reduce bureaucratic barriers** for action and coordination whenever possible (see UK).
- Provide tools and **mechanisms for local authorities** to coordinate with external policy networks and institutions.
- Develop a system for **continuous feedback, monitoring, and knowledge-sharing** between various implementation agencies. This includes facilitating face-to-face connections whenever possible.
- Consider **phasing of implementation** by assessing which sequential actions are needed for longer-term transformations. For example, the first step in implementation may be capacity development or data gathering, before action is possible.
- Develop **short narratives for each policy initiative**, which clearly explain how the proposed policies will ultimately improve the lives of communities. It is particularly important to promote narratives for longer-term transformations, in order to foster societal 'buy-in' for agendas that may span across political administrations.
- Study previous **implementation 'success stories'** for the factors that helped to make these examples of good policy implementation, the challenges they faced, and how they were overcome.

**Guiding Question:** How can you realise the benefits of deep stakeholder engagement to test, iterate and refine your policies before, during and after implementation?



## La Paz, Bolivia – ‘Barrios de Verdad’

Beginning in 2005, La Paz began an innovative programme called ‘Real Neighbourhoods for La Paz’ (PBCV), with the aim of empowering and improving the wellbeing of poor urban communities. The programme was based on the Law of Popular Participation, which encourages people to commit themselves to the development of their community by volunteering to be part of a ‘neighbourhood committee’. The first step of the PBCV programme had communities discuss and put forward a strategy and proposed budget for infrastructure and community development. These plans included road development, school improvements, public safety initiatives, recreation (green space, parks, and community centres), community housing and legal reforms to allow for ownership of property and basic services.

These programmes were put forth with the understanding that the neighbourhood committees would ultimately be responsible for allocating public resources and overseeing the implementation of these projects. Throughout the implementation and execution of these projects, the neighbourhood committees would monitor the process, identify any ‘deviations’, and propose solutions when any difficulties or unseen challenges arose. Through their local Operative Plan, they were provided additional resources when new complementary projects were identified that were not part of the initial plan. Once the projects were finalised, the neighbourhood committees then worked to ensure effective maintenance (e.g., recycling, cleaning campaigns, and waste reduction) and sustainability of the projects through community governance mechanisms.

The results of this programme on poverty reduction, sanitation, education, health, environmental sustainability, and many other dimensions of wellbeing for over 111,000 people have inspired development agencies and other countries to explore more empowering approaches to policy design and implementation.

Sources: <https://www.urbanagendaplatform.org/best-practice/real-neighborhoods-la-paz>  
<https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/fandd/2019/03/gender-equality-in-iceland-inclusive-economy-jakobsdottir.htm>

To read more case studies on empowering localised policy implementation, see [here](#).



## 4B. Participatory monitoring of implementation

“If a community feels like they are going to be part of the monitoring and evaluation, then they’re going to get a lot more involved and engaged in the development of goals and policies.”

Jacque McGlade – Professor, University College London.

**Purpose:** Empower local communities to continuously monitor and provide feedback on wellbeing policies.

In order to maintain transparency, promote trust, and support effective implementation of your Wellbeing Economy policies, local communities must be empowered to monitor implementation to check whether planned outcomes are being achieved. To enable this, you will want to develop methods for people, particularly those whose voices are not normally heard, to provide you with feedback throughout the implementation period. The major goal is to conduct implementation in ways that are strategic and goal oriented, while also allowing space for adaptation or recourse if unexpected challenges arise.

**How:** mutual accountability mechanisms, community score cards, monitoring system development, participatory evaluations, participatory indicators, community feedback forums, multi-level feedback and information sharing systems.

### WEAll Tips:

- Include **mechanisms for continuous community engagement** and feedback on policy implementation and impacts in implementation plans.
- Provide **tools and methods for continuous data gathering at** every level (e.g., wellbeing priorities, policy intervention areas, and implementation baselines, etc.).
- Gather **people-centred stories** throughout the implementation period, about how policies are impacting lives and the environment.
- Support **knowledge sharing amongst implementing agencies** regarding best practice and challenges.
- Develop **contingency plans and support networks** for if implementation is failing or having adverse effects.
- Encourage **community accountability mechanisms** for effective implementation and monitoring.
- Reflect on a regular basis with the communities on their wellbeing priorities and be willing to adjust them in a timely manner.
- Use **wellbeing ‘barometers’ in public spaces** so that the ideas and voices of people and communities are being heard on a continuous basis.

**Guiding Question:** How can local knowledge and data help you to improve implementation and policy impact?

## Porto-Alegre, Brazil – ‘Continuous innovations in empowering policy design and implementation’

The city of Canoas, which is part of the metropolitan area of Porto Alegre, Brazil, has become a leading example of citizen participation and transparency in public management. Beginning in 2009, local authorities began to experiment and innovate with participatory approaches to policy design and implementation to find solutions to the challenges of a rapidly growing city.

The city created the System of Popular Citizen Participation, which now includes a wide variety of tools to connect policy makers directly with citizens throughout the policy design process and to ensure continuous feedback and engagement throughout the implementation process. Some of these participatory tools include:

- **Congress of the City of Canoas 2011-2021:** engaged in a year-long discussion wherein citizens proposed and discussed the future of the city. This process ended with a conference with over 600 delegates, through which a strategic vision for the city was developed for the next 10 years.
- **Open, Participatory Multi-Year Planning Community Meetings:** organised in each neighbourhood to hear what people suggested as priority policies and programmes for the next four years.
- **Sectoral plans:** A series of community discussions were held to determine priorities, strategies, and the structure for delivering services tied to particular wellbeing outcomes, including health, education, and sanitation.
- **Participatory Budgeting:** Citizens determine priority policies and services for their neighbourhoods through an annual vote. The city allocates a third of their budget annually to be directed and determined by the citizens.
- **Better Neighbourhood projects:** Citizens can decide where to allocate the 50% of the IPTU (Tax on Predial Property and Urban Territory) for local projects and initiatives. Each project requires that 20% of the project costs are covered by volunteer work and/or donations of materials or services.
- **Business Engagement:** Semi-annual meetings are organised, in which all companies are invited to participate, and where worker and business representatives discuss challenges and policy proposals.
- **Council for Economic and Social Development:** Brings together 50 professionals from different policy areas every two months, to have a transparent and collaborative dialogue to assess and review the municipality’s public policies.
- **A Plenary of Public Services:** Conducted every semester for each quadrant of the city where the local government presents the status of various policies and programmes and are held accountable for achieving their goals with citizens being able to provide feedback and suggestions to the major and other local policy makers.
- **Policy makers on the street:** Every Saturday, the Mayor, Vice Mayor, and municipal secretaries set up a street stall where citizens can come and discuss any wellbeing priorities and grievances.
- **Mayor in the station:** Every Thursday, during peak rush hour, the Mayor opens a space for public dialogue in one of the city’s subway stations, where anyone can come and discuss their issues with current policies or programmes.
- **Public hearings:** Held every Monday, where 20 citizens can discuss challenges or proposals with the Mayor and the Cabinet.
- **Agora in Rede:** A virtual tool that allows weekly online dialogue on policy issues between the population and the Mayor and the Municipal secretaries, via video and other multimedia possibilities.
- **House of the Councils:** A space that brings together 33 municipal councils and provides human resources and necessary materials so that the work of the various local agencies can be coordinated more effectively.

In seven years of the current municipal administration, more than 170,000 people participated through the tools of the System of Popular and Citizen Participation.

Source: <https://oidp.net/distinction/en/candidacy.php?id=1149>

To read more case studies on participatory monitoring of Wellbeing Economic policies, see [here](#).



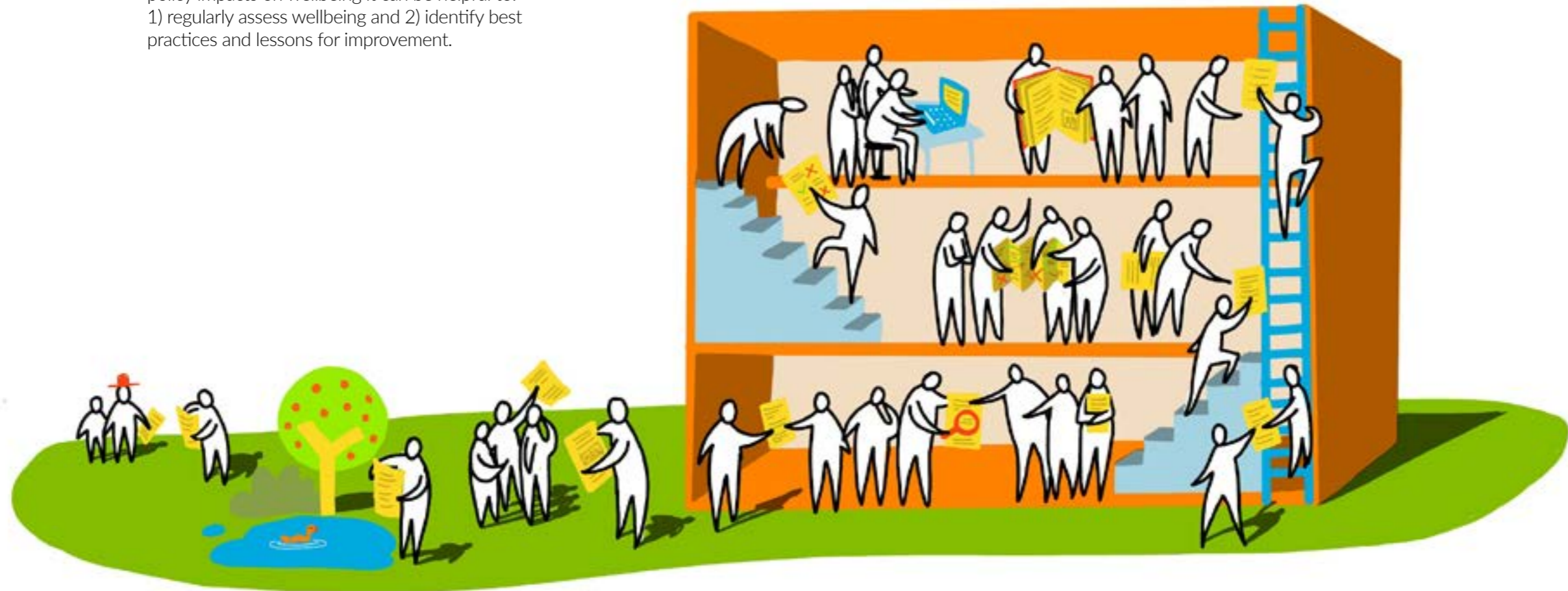
# Evaluating policy impacts on wellbeing

**“Improving the quality of our lives should be the ultimate target of public policies. But public policies can only deliver the best fruit if they are based on reliable tools to measure the improvement they seek to produce in our lives”**

Ángel Gurría, OECD Secretary-General

We live in a complex, interconnected, and constantly changing world. No matter how visionary, strategic, or evidence-based your policies are, you will only know if they have improved wellbeing after they have been in place for some time. Only through a process of trial and error, adaptation, and innovation, will you be able to find policy solutions that best align with your particular context, values, and objectives. This process of learning-by-doing is about assessing improvements in social and ecological wellbeing as well as reflecting on and adapting the policy design process itself. Evaluations throughout the policy design process help identify interconnections, impacts, and changes in wellbeing as well as unexpected barriers and accelerators of change. When evaluating the policy impacts on wellbeing it can be helpful to: 1) regularly assess wellbeing and 2) identify best practices and lessons for improvement.

Old Economic Policy		Wellbeing Economy Policy
Economy evaluated by productivity, employment, and GDP growth.	>	Economy evaluated by improvements in wellbeing.
Evaluations considered at the end of the policy design process.	>	Evaluation considered at each stage of policy cycle, with continuous community engagement to determine what worked and why.
One-off evaluations to identify impacts of particular projects or initiatives.	>	Continuous monitoring and evaluation, with recognition that transformation of the economy can take time and wellbeing impacts may not be immediately evident.
Reluctance to acknowledge policy failures or unintended consequences.	>	Recognition that we can learn from both successes and failures on the journey towards a Wellbeing Economy.



# 5A. Wellbeing assessments

Wellbeing assessments: Holistic assessments of changes in social and ecological wellbeing.

“Assess what is working well and where there are opportunities for improvement. Consider if new ways of measurement are needed.”

Andrea Kane Frank, Chesapeake Counseling and Consulting, Founder, raising human•kind

**Purpose:** To monitor social and ecological wellbeing over time and identify any shifts or changes.

Conducting regular assessments and evaluations can help you better understand causal relationships between wellbeing dimensions, so that you can improve your strategy design processes. These regular assessments are also an important way for you to communicate economic progress in terms of changes in wellbeing, which will be important in shifting popular narratives regarding the purpose of the economy and our role within it. Although evaluation is presented at the end of this guide, you will want to be conducting and using evaluations throughout the policy design process to inform your strategy, policies, and implementation.

**How:** wellbeing reports, collaborative outcomes reporting, wellbeing database, ecosystem assessments, time use & wellbeing surveys, theory of change, participatory evaluations, systems analysis, expert forums, citizen assemblies, stories.

### WEAll Tips:

- **Publish regular wellbeing assessments** in the form of reports and engage the media and communities in discussions on the progress made (See Scotland)
- Use the **intervention logic or theory of change** developed during the policy design process to identify specific concrete targets and impact indicators that can help to monitor shifts at all levels.
- Ensure the **monitoring and evaluation plan is considered at the beginning** and throughout the policy design process, to develop a structured plan for data collection, engagements, coordination, etc.
- Identify areas **where more wellbeing information or data** is needed to inform policy making processes in the future and build this learning into future monitoring and evaluation planning.
- Identify if there have been any **major changes in wellbeing** in particular areas or amongst particular demographics, paying special attention to changes in wellbeing for vulnerable groups and the environment.
- When conducting a holistic assessment of wellbeing (social, environmental and economic), assess changes over time with the aim **to understand relationships and possible causality** in the system (See South Africa).
- **Facilitate discussions about overall wellbeing performance** and if the Wellbeing Vision has changed.
- **Use personal stories gathered** throughout policy design process to complement quantitative analysis to assess the status of collective wellbeing and progress.
- Develop a **wellbeing database** so that the public can access and utilise wellbeing data for independent research and analysis.

**Guiding Question:** How can you best keep track of changes in wellbeing and understand what led to those shifts?



## Edmonton, Canada – ‘Genuine wellbeing index’

The Edmonton Wellbeing Index, made up of Genuine Progress Indicators (GPIs), was commissioned by the chief economist of the City of Edmonton in 2008. The Edmonton Wellbeing Index and wellbeing assessment was a system of measuring the progress of the City relative to its 10-year strategic plan: ‘The Way Ahead’ and answering the question: Is Edmonton’s economic progress sustainable in terms of other quality of life and wellbeing conditions?

The GPI analysis examined the trends and interrelationships of economic growth (measured in terms of real GDP per capita) with 47 other indicators of wellbeing. The result is a State of Wellbeing account for the City of Edmonton.

The strategic planning department and the Chief Economist, found the GPIs/Wellbeing Index useful for:

- Tracking overall economic, social, health, and environmental wellbeing conditions and trends
- Providing decision makers and citizens with a high-level overview of wellbeing of the city
- Offering context to inform and guide the City’s annual policy and budgetary decisions
- Assessing the interrelationships and correlations between key economic and wellbeing indicators, and using this information to create future projections of wellbeing.
- Determining the impacts and value of wellbeing policies for municipal capital and operating spending.

Source: Yannick Beaudion, David Suzuki Foundation & Mark Anielski, Anielski Management Inc. To read more case studies on Wellbeing Assessments, see [here](#).



## 5B. Identifying best practices and lessons learnt

**'Keep listening after implementation. Be prepared to admit when something hasn't worked, to change approach, to try again, to experiment.'**

**Dr. Andy Turner**, Public Health Specialty Registrar and Health Policy Lead, Liverpool City Region Combined Authority

**Purpose:** To improve effectiveness of policy design processes by building on successes and learning from failures.

Transforming the structure of your economy will take time and will require continuous experimentation, adaptation and learning to figure out what works and what doesn't in your particular context. By utilising participatory policy design approaches you will foster and empower economic governance systems that can support you to better align policy with societal values and objectives overtime. Monitoring and evaluation are powerful tools that can help you to showcase quick-wins, progress in wellbeing and learn from policy failures. Acknowledging failures can be politically challenging but by supporting continuous public dialogue and discussion you can help people to appreciate trade-offs, unintended consequences and the complexity of achieving their wellbeing goals. Through continuous evaluations and discussions you will gain valuable information that can help you to not only improve policy impact but also their method of design and implementation.

**How:** quantitative mappings of impact, policy learning, focus groups, inter-governmental & multi-stakeholder discussion forums, participatory evaluations, impact reflections, reporting and dissemination of best practices and learnings.

### WEAll Tips:

- **Consider changes in overall wellbeing** as well as impacts of Wellbeing Economic policies.
- Identify communities, areas, or individuals where **policies have had powerful impacts on wellbeing**, and discuss what can be learned and replicated elsewhere, depending on relevant context.
- Use **quantitative / statistically driven counterfactual impact evaluation** which establishes the causal link between policy and impact, **along with qualitative evaluation research**, to identify what has worked and provide a rounded view of attribution / causality (i.e. why it has worked).
- **Be open to receiving criticism** or negative feedback on policies in order to learn about why they did not work or how they could be reformed for increased impact.
- Discuss potential **new wellbeing goals or gaps** to be considered.
- Pay particular attention to **unintended impacts** and consider relationships between dimensions.
- Identify **unexpected barriers to impact** and discuss strategies for overcoming them.
- Consider **lessons learnt in terms of the policy design process itself**. What aspects worked well? Where can it be improved in the future?
- Conduct **quantitative assessments from both 'bottom-up'** (e.g., starting with changes in the action plan, then economy intervention areas, then wellbeing goals) **and 'top down'** (e.g., starting with wellbeing goals, etc.) to understand different causal links.
- **Publish and share best practice** with your community and the world.

**Guiding Question:** How can you learn from your innovations and experimentations and where and with whom will you share this to create a bigger impact?

## New Zealand- Building on the 2019 Wellbeing Budget

In May 2019, New Zealand attracted international attention for producing what it called the world's first 'Wellbeing Budget'. The Budget began with a wellbeing vision which expressed:

*'Wellbeing is when people are able to lead fulfilling lives with purpose, balance and meaning to them. Giving more New Zealanders capabilities to enjoy good wellbeing requires tackling the long-term challenges we face as a country, like the mental health crisis, child poverty and domestic violence. It means improving the state of our environment, the strength of our communities and the performance of our economy.'* (The Wellbeing Budget, 30 May 2019)

The Wellbeing Budget aimed to create a new approach to economic policy by considering economic, environmental and social objectives together. It incorporated three core principles into their policy design:

1. **Breaking down agency silos and working across government to assess, develop and implement policies that improve wellbeing.** An example of this shift was that the Treasury now requires collaboration across ministries when submitting budget bids. This led to 10 agencies coming together to jointly put in a bid to help address family and sexual violence, for example.
2. **Focusing on outcomes that meet the needs of present generations at the same time as thinking about the long-term impacts for future generations.** On the basis of their wellbeing assessments the government identified 5 priority wellbeing areas for the 2019 budget: Improving mental health, reducing child poverty, Addressing inequalities faced by Indigenous Maori and Pacific Island People, Thriving in a digital age; and Transitioning to a low-emission, sustainable economy
3. **Tracking progress with broader measures of success, including the health of people, communities, the environment, and public finances.** This included a redesign of budget documentation to make clear how any policy or initiative, including the government's balance sheet and asset management contributed to improvements in wellbeing.

The 2019 wellbeing budget was a bold experiment in not only shifting understandings of progress but also embracing a new way of designing policies. While the 2019 wellbeing budget only accounted for new spending for one fiscal year, the Government has now embedded a wellbeing approach into legislation through the Public Finance (Wellbeing) Amendment Act 2020.

The government has expressed their commitment to build on the successes and lessons learnt from their 2019 wellbeing budget, writing that: 'Achieving genuine and enduring change in the way Budgets and policies are developed takes time. We know that we cannot meaningfully address long-term problems like child poverty, inequality and climate change through a single Budget. This is why the Government committed to taking a wellbeing approach to Budget 2020 and beyond to build on the successes of our first Wellbeing Budget'

Source: <https://www.treasury.govt.nz/publications/wellbeing-budget/wellbeing-budget-2020-html>



# Next Steps

This guide has explored some of the important considerations and design processes for a Wellbeing Economy but there is much more work to be done. The Wellbeing Economy movement is still young. At the time of writing, we are seeing renewed interest in wellbeing measurements but questions remain as to how to use these indicators to meaningfully transform our understanding of value, our economic systems and our collective decision making. Our hope is that this guide helps to move the debate forward and provides you with some ideas of how to practically begin building a Wellbeing Economy in your context.

You are a leader in this movement and the experiences, processes, and tools you develop as you work to build a Wellbeing Economy will be invaluable to the leaders of tomorrow. In the months and years to come we hope to use this guide as a starting point for discussions and policy workshops where we can explore Wellbeing Economy policy design processes and challenges together. Your task is to illustrate to the world that a Wellbeing Economy is not only possible but already underway. Our task is to ensure that you are not alone, that you are supported by leading organisations, academics and change makers in this field as you develop new and innovative economic policies that can transform and inspire the world.

Please [get in touch](#) to let us know about your Wellbeing Economy policy design journey and share any case studies, tools, or tips that can strengthen and expand this guide.

## Wellbeing Economy Policy Design Guide

How to design economic policies  
that put the wellbeing of people  
and the planet first



**WELLBEING  
ECONOMY**  
ALLIANCE