

A framework for comparison of child wellbeing in rich countries

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RC7: an overview of child wellbeing: no country at top nor at bottom; all can do better in one or more dimensions

Dimensions of child well-being	Average ranking position (for all 6 dimensions)	Dimension 1 Material well-being	Dimension 2 Health and safety	Dimension 3 Educational well-being	Dimension 4 Family and peer relationships	Dimension 5 Behaviours and risks	Dimension 6 Subjective well-being
Netherlands	4.2	10	2	6	3	3	1
Sweden	5.0	1	1	5	15	1	7
Denmark	7.2	4	4	8	9	6	12
Finland	7.5	3	3	4	17	7	11
Spain	8.0	12	6	15	8	5	2
Switzerland	8.3	5	9	14	4	12	6
Norway	8.7	2	8	11	10	13	8
Italy	10.0	14	5	20	1	10	10
Ireland	10.2	19	19	7	7	4	5
Belgium	10.7	7	16	1	5	19	16
Germany	11.2	13	11	10	13	11	9
Canada	11.8	6	13	2	18	17	15
Greece	11.8	15	18	16	11	8	3
Poland	12.3	21	15	3	14	2	19
Czech Republic	12.5	11	10	9	19	9	17
France	13.0	9	7	18	12	14	18
Portugal	13.7	16	14	21	2	15	14
Austria	13.8	8	20	19	16	16	4
Hungary	14.5	20	17	13	6	18	13
United States	18.0	17	21	12	20	20	–
United Kingdom	18.2	18	12	17	21	21	20

OECD countries with insufficient data to be included in the overview: Australia, Iceland, Japan, Luxembourg, Mexico, New Zealand, the Slovak Republic, South Korea, Turkey.

Correcting a calculation error re teen drinking places Denmark sixth rather than 3

Developing the analytical approach

1. Drawing on existing approaches:
 1. CRC
 2. Ireland/UK govts, US kidscount, child wellbeing index
2. Shaped by int comparable data sources
 1. OECD, WHO, World Bank
 2. OECD Programme of International School Achievement (PISA)
 3. Health Behaviour among School Age Children (HBSC – coordinated by WHO-EURO)
3. and yet, a first ever international comparison of its nature
4. and a work in progress – lack of data on early childhood, mental health, violence (EU version includes housing and civic participation)

The dimensions

- Material wellbeing: relative income poverty, households without an employed adult, reported deprivation (family affluence, educational resources and books)
- Health and safety: in infancy (IMR, LBW), preventive health services (immunization rates) safety (deaths from accidents and injuries)
- Educational well-being: school achievement at 15, continuing in education and training, aspirations for work
- Family and peer relationships: family structure, eating and talking w parents, peers 'kind and helpful'
- Behaviours and risks: eating and being healthy, risk or adverse behaviour (sex, drugs, violence), experience of bullying
- Subjective wellbeing: own views on health status, liking school, feeling satisfied and ranking personal wellbeing

... and the rest

- The right to shelter
- Civic participation
- Mental health & exposure to violence
- Children at all ages and by gender
Including early childhood development, breastfeeding

KEY FINDINGS

- No country at the top 1/3 or at the bottom 1/3 in all dimensions
Yet small societies w family friendly policies and low child income poverty dominate the top third
- No single dimension of child well-being stands is a reliable proxy for child wellbeing as a whole.
- No strong relationship between the per capita GDP and child well-being (within this group); Central European C do comparatively well
- Considerable dispersion within each dimension
- International qualitative data are not collected frequently, and indicators for key areas such as violence, early childhood, mental health are not readily
- Governments are not good at revising data in int public domain

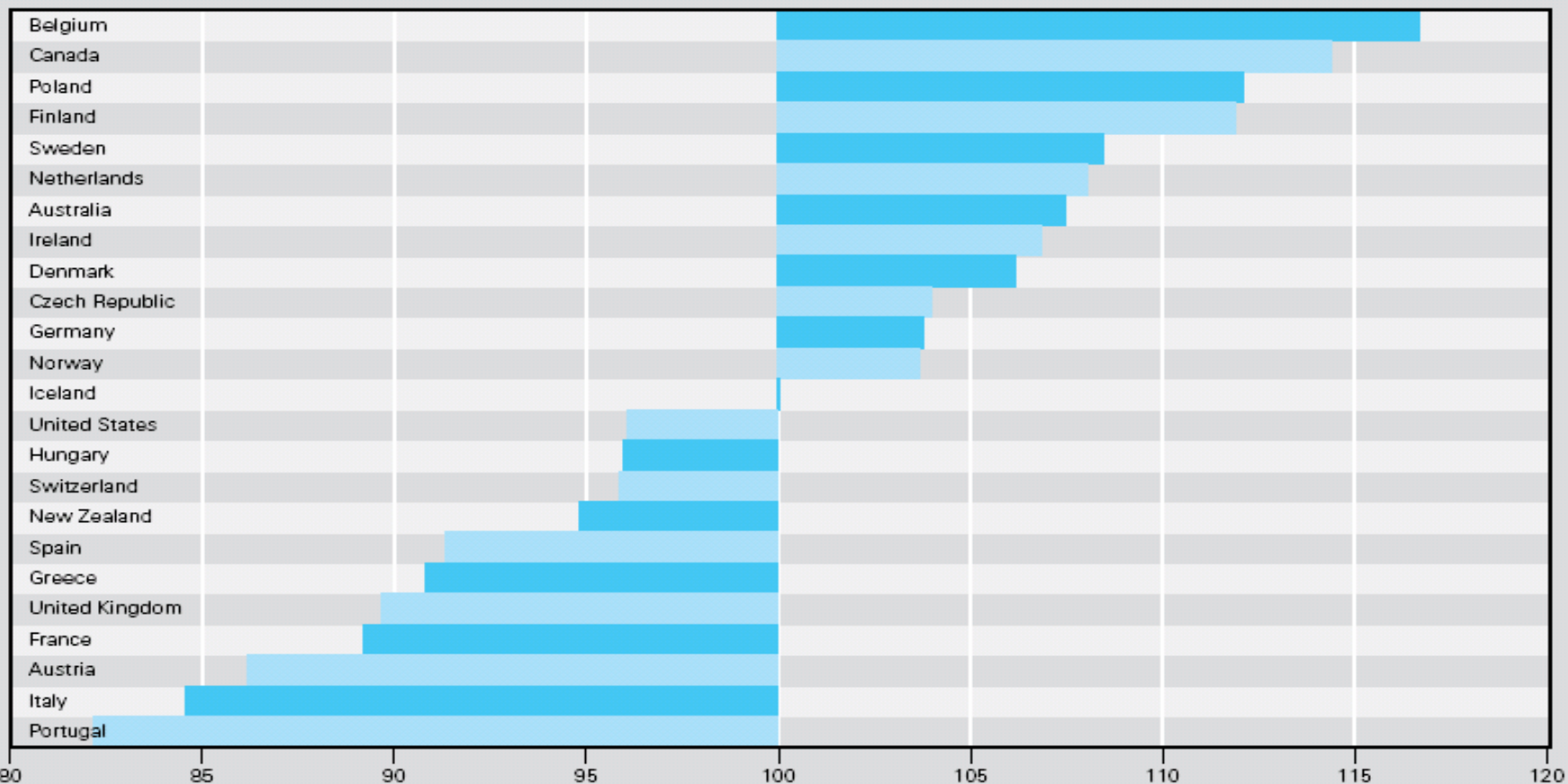
ranking	Australia	Spain 5th	Canada 12th
<i>Material Wellbeing</i>	13	12	6
> 50%	11	20	15
not working	23	13	8
affluence/possessions	3*	8	4
<i>Health</i>	14	7	16
IMR	16 (4-5)	9	21
LBW	11	18	8
Immunization	11 (92%)	9	16
Deaths acc/injuries	17	6	23
<u>Education</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>2</u>
Attainment	3	22	2
in school	16 (82%)	17	
not in school or work	11 (7%)	15	10
aspire to low skills	10 (25%)	12	7

ranking	Australia	Spain 5th	Canada 12th
<i>Family and peers</i>	X	8	18
single/step		3/4	15/14
eat & talk to parents	19/19	12/14	18/23
friends are kind		16	13
<i>Behavior and risk</i>		5	17
b'fast fruit exercise weight		11	12
smoke, drink, dope, sex		2	17
... incl teen births	16	6	17
fighting/bullying		16/6	6/18
<i>Subjective wellbeing</i>		2	15
good health		1	10
like school		9	12
satisfied		7	10
lonely awkward out	avg	lower	higher

Figure 3.0 The educational well-being of children, an OECD overview

The league table below attempts to show each country's performance in 'children's educational well-being' in relation to the average for the OECD countries under review. Scores given are averages of the scores for the three components selected to represent children's educational well-being (see box below).

This overview table is scaled to show each country's distance above or below the OECD average of 100.





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