



International Conference on  
**Measuring Well-Being “Beyond GDP” in Asia, South-East Asia and Korea**  
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# Policy Applications of the Well-Being Indicators in Korean Perspectives and their Implications for International Community

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Statistics Korea

Statistics Research Institute





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**I . Well-being Measurement in Korea**

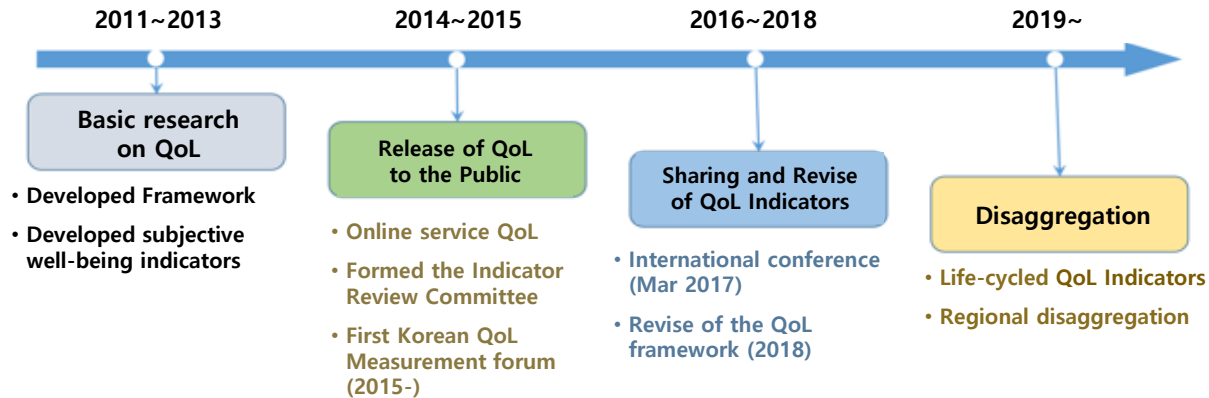
**II. KOSTAT's Efforts to Enhance the Utilization of KQoL Indicators**

**III. Policy Interest and Applications**

**IV. Implications for the Role of the International Community**

### ▪ Quality of Life Indicators Development Progress

- Since late 2000s: Growing interest in 'happiness' with national happiness as a national vision
- 2011~2013: Development of a QoL framework and subjective well-being indicators
- Since 2014: **Online Release of 'Quality of Life Indicators in Korea' (KQoL)**



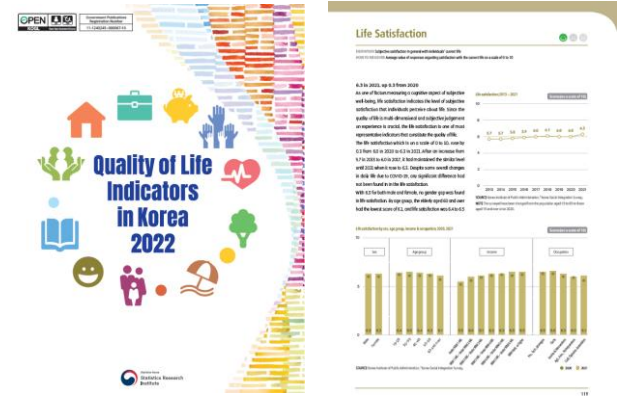
## ■ Service Status

After revision in 2018, the current KQoL covers 11 domains with 71 indicators.

Since 2019, the annual reports of KQoL report have been distributed to relevant government departments and organizations, along with press releases.

In a dashboard form, we offer individual indicator data and trends, indicating improvements, deteriorations, or no changes from the previous years.

- ✓ Providing essential data for identifying long-term time series changes.
- ✓ Highlighting vulnerable areas in overall life quality and vulnerable population groups, rather than focusing solely on changes in summarized comprehensive indicator values.



<b>Health</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>life expectancy</li> <li>healthy life expectancy</li> <li>stress self-recognition*</li> <li>self-reported health*</li> <li>obesity rate</li> <li>physical activity rate*</li> <li>suicide rate</li> </ul>	<b>Civic Engagement</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>voter turnout rate*</li> <li>perception of political empowerment*</li> <li>corruption perceptions index*</li> <li>institutional trust*</li> <li>citizenship*</li> <li>voluntary work participation rate</li> <li>interpersonal trust*</li> </ul>	<b>Leisure</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ratio of expenditure on leisure*</li> <li>leisure time*</li> <li>sufficiency of leisure time*</li> <li>participation in culture-sports event*</li> <li>travel days per person*</li> <li>leisure satisfaction</li> </ul>
<b>Employment and Wage</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>employment rate*</li> <li>unemployment rate*</li> <li>average monthly wage*</li> <li>proportion of low-paid workers*</li> <li>working hours*</li> <li>job satisfaction</li> </ul>	<b>Safety</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>homicide rate</li> <li>crime victimization rate</li> <li>feeling safe walking alone at night*</li> <li>industrial accident mortality rate*</li> <li>number of fire fatalities</li> <li>road traffic accident fatality rate*</li> <li>child mortality rate from safety accidents</li> <li>child abuse rate</li> <li>perception toward societal safety*</li> </ul>	<b>Education</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>preschool enrollment rate*</li> <li>degree of education cost burden*</li> <li>perception toward effects of school education*</li> <li>school life satisfaction*</li> <li>population with tertiary education</li> <li>employment rate of college graduates</li> </ul>
<b>Subjective Wellbeing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>life satisfaction</li> <li>positive emotions*</li> <li>negative emotions*</li> </ul>	<b>Family and Community</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>live-alone elderly rate*</li> <li>family relationship satisfaction*</li> <li>sense of belonging to a community*</li> <li>social group participation rate*</li> <li>social isolation</li> </ul>	<b>Housing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>home-ownership rate</li> <li>rent to income ratio</li> <li>residential area per capita</li> <li>dwelling without basic facilities</li> <li>commuting time to office</li> <li>housing environment satisfaction</li> </ul>
<b>Income, Consumption, Wealth</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GNI per capita*</li> <li>equitized median income</li> <li>income satisfaction</li> <li>consumption satisfaction</li> <li>household net wealth*</li> <li>household debt ratio</li> <li>relative poverty rate</li> </ul>	<b>Environment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>fine dust concentration level*</li> <li>waterworks supply rate in rural area*</li> <li>urban park area per capita</li> <li>air quality satisfaction*</li> <li>water quality satisfaction*</li> <li>soil quality satisfaction*</li> <li>noise level satisfaction*</li> <li>green environment satisfaction*</li> <li>climate change recognition*</li> </ul>	

### ▪ Focus on Measuring Quality of Life

Statistics Korea aims to provide diverse monitoring data that government departments can integrate into their policies.

**What we measure** affects what we do (Stiglitz et al, 2018, p.13)

- ① Measuring quality of life by life cycle
- ② Measuring quality of life by region
- ③ Holding forums regularly

### ① Measuring quality of life by life cycle

Produce monitoring indicators for quality of life, which are tailored to each population group targeted by policies

**Reports on quality of life indicators for children and adolescents (2022~)**

**Conducting research to create an indicator report for young adults and the elderly (2023~)**

### ② Measuring quality of life by region

Ensuring the comparability of life indicators, especially subjective ones, is essential for regional policy formulation and achieving balanced development among regions.

**Providing guidelines for key items of regional social surveys (2020~)**

### ③ Holding forums regularly

Annually host KQoL forums to share and disseminate quality of life measurement results and policy use cases

9th (2023)	Social change and quality of life in line with digital transformation
8th (2022)	Happiness and quality of life measurement and policy applications
7th (2021)	Changes in quality of life amidst COVID-19 and the quality of life of the elderly
6th (2020)	Status of quality of life in Korean society and the quality of life of young adults
5th (2019)	Reorganization of social indicators in Korea and disaggregated quality of life measurement
4th (2018)	Policy applications of quality of life measurements
3rd (2017)	Establishing relationships between different indicators and measuring quality of life on a granular level
2nd (2016)	Korea's implementation plan for Beyond GDP issues
1st (2015)	Korea's quality of life measurement achievements and future challenges

**제9회 국민 삶의 질 측정 포럼**

디지털 전환에 따른 사회변화의 삶의 질

일시: 2023.8.14(화) 13:30~17:30  
장소: 대전 동대(대전동대 국제컨벤션 110호) 동서관 110호

**PROGRAM**

시간	주요내용	내빈
13:30~14:00	사전 회의	국립중앙도서관, 한국과학기술정보연구원, 한국정보보호진흥원, 한국인터넷진흥원, 한국콘텐츠진흥원, 한국문화재단, 한국문화재단, 한국문화재단
14:00~14:30	개회식	국립중앙도서관, 한국과학기술정보연구원, 한국정보보호진흥원, 한국인터넷진흥원, 한국콘텐츠진흥원, 한국문화재단, 한국문화재단, 한국문화재단
14:30~15:00	주요연사	국립중앙도서관, 한국과학기술정보연구원, 한국정보보호진흥원, 한국인터넷진흥원, 한국콘텐츠진흥원, 한국문화재단, 한국문화재단, 한국문화재단
15:00~15:30	특별연사	국립중앙도서관, 한국과학기술정보연구원, 한국정보보호진흥원, 한국인터넷진흥원, 한국콘텐츠진흥원, 한국문화재단, 한국문화재단, 한국문화재단
15:30~16:00	특별연사	국립중앙도서관, 한국과학기술정보연구원, 한국정보보호진흥원, 한국인터넷진흥원, 한국콘텐츠진흥원, 한국문화재단, 한국문화재단, 한국문화재단
16:00~16:30	특별연사	국립중앙도서관, 한국과학기술정보연구원, 한국정보보호진흥원, 한국인터넷진흥원, 한국콘텐츠진흥원, 한국문화재단, 한국문화재단, 한국문화재단
16:30~17:00	특별연사	국립중앙도서관, 한국과학기술정보연구원, 한국정보보호진흥원, 한국인터넷진흥원, 한국콘텐츠진흥원, 한국문화재단, 한국문화재단, 한국문화재단
17:00~17:30	특별연사	국립중앙도서관, 한국과학기술정보연구원, 한국정보보호진흥원, 한국인터넷진흥원, 한국콘텐츠진흥원, 한국문화재단, 한국문화재단, 한국문화재단

**문의처** 국립중앙도서관 정책지원팀 (02-312-6100) / 한국과학기술정보연구원 (02-312-6100) / 한국정보보호진흥원 (02-312-6100) / 한국인터넷진흥원 (02-312-6100) / 한국콘텐츠진흥원 (02-312-6100) / 한국문화재단 (02-312-6100)

#### ■ **Central Government**

Present a shared goal of enhancing the quality of life across ministries and use quality of life indicators as policy benchmarks

**2nd Social Security Master Plan (2019~)**

**Three major projects to protect people's lives (2018~)**

(focusing on suicide prevention, worker's industrial accident compensation, and reducing traffic fatalities)

Conduct research to strengthen the policy applicability of KQoL indicators, with a consideration of their relevance with budgeting.

**Research to examine the possibility of integrating quality of life indicators into budgeting process (2021)**

**Research on prospects and goals of Korean quality of life in 2050 (2023)**



## ▪ National Assembly

Make legislative efforts to seek a policy paradigm shift from GDP to GNH (Gross National Happiness)



**Proposed the "Act on the Promotion of Gross National Happiness"**

#### Efforts Made

- Formed a research group under the National Assembly in July 2020.
- Built consensus and refined the bill from 2020 to 2023.
  - Enhanced private academic exchanges and hosted symposiums.
  - Conducted National Assembly debates.
- **Proposed the Act on the Promotion of Gross National Happiness on March 20, 2023.**
  - Co-proposed by 39 members of the National Assembly.

#### Main Contents of the Act (Draft):

- Aims to establish the government's responsibilities for realizing the people's right to pursue happiness.
- Development and dissemination of happiness indicators and Gross National Happiness indicators.
  - Analysis and evaluation of the impact on Gross National Happiness when implementing policies.
  - Establishment and implementation of a master plan for promoting Gross National Happiness.
  - Creation of a presidential committee for Gross National Happiness.
  - Designation of Happiness Day and Happiness Week.

## ▪ Local governments

Efforts to shift and implement happiness policies at the regional level.

- Established Happiness Realization Local Government Council in 2018  
: Formed by a coalition of local government leaders.
- Enacted Happiness Promotion Ordinances (by 21 Local Governments as of August 2023)
- Developed regional happiness indicators for policy integration (e.g., Seoul city and Bupyeong-gu, Incheon)
- Held Korea Happiness Policy Festival: discussing happiness and sharing regional success cases
- Conducted research to reflect people's happiness in policy process (e.g., 'Happiness Impact Assessment')
- Took active steps to establish dedicated happiness departments.(e.g., Director General for Happiness in Gwangsan-gu, Gwangju)

### ▪ Difficulties in Policy Applications

1. (Policy matching) Challenges in integrating quality of life indicators into specific policies due to their comprehensive coverage across various areas.
2. (Production frequency) A mismatch between indicators production cycles and policy evaluation cycles
  - Limiting the ability to link short-term changes in indicators with policies

Indicators creation year (as of June 23): 42 in 2022 (59%), 26 in 2021 (37%), 2 in 2020 (3%), 1 in 2019 (1%)
3. (Subjective indicators) Limitations in interpreting trends in subjective indicators and integrating them into policies
4. (Simplistic listing of indicators) Limited role in guiding policy response prioritization

### ■ Implications for the International Community

- (Europe-centered indicators) Current cross-national well-being measures by the OECD are Europe-centered (mostly using surveys conducted in Europe), potentially limiting comparability.
- (Comparison between East Asian regions) Subjective indicators may be more comparable due to cultural similarities, but significant geographic, linguistic, and economic differences exist.
- (Sharing Results) It is necessary to share results on various cases such as indicators, measurement results, utilization methods, and limitations of each country.



**Thank YOU!**