

The role of subjective indicators in measuring the equitable and sustainable well-being in Italy

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For decades in Italy, the national system of official statistics has been completely focused on objective indicators for the support of the governments' economic policies. Since the early fifties the national statistical system was considered inadequate to monitor social changes, but only during the seventies emerged a clear understanding that objective indicators were no longer sufficient to represent social reality and that an encompassing system should have been complemented with subjective indicators. Istat was one of the first national statistical office in Europe to understand the relevance of a system of social surveys capable of collecting both objective and subjective information and it has developed an integrated system of social surveys with the aim of monitoring citizens' quality of life.

Istat in collaboration with the National Council for Economics and Labor (CNEL) in 2010 has developed a comprehensive and shared approach to monitor the Equitable and Sustainable Well-being (Bes) defining a framework for wellbeing and the appropriate indicators to monitor it. This paper will highlight the importance of subjective measures in the Bes framework where they play a double role. Firstly, subjective wellbeing is one of the twelve domains which constitute the framework of the BES. The measures included in this domain synthesize important aspects for the evaluation of individual well-being which cannot be objectively measured. Secondly, subjective indicators are present in almost every domains to support and integrate objective measures.

The paper will also show the relationship between objective and subjective measure using the results of the first report on Equitable and Sustainable Well-being (Bes) in Italy.

Key Words: Subjective well-being, well-being measure, cognitive measures, positive and negative affects