

National Collaborating Centre  
for **Healthy Public Policy**

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## Whole-of-Government Wellbeing Approaches: A Comparative Analysis of Four Central Government Initiatives

Report | 2022



Centre de collaboration nationale  
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National Collaborating Centre  
for Healthy Public Policy

*Institut national  
de santé publique*

Québec



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## About the National Collaborating Centre for Healthy Public Policy

The National Collaborating Centre for Healthy Public Policy (NCCHPP) seeks to increase the expertise of public health actors across Canada in healthy public policy through the development, sharing and use of knowledge. The NCCHPP is one of six centres financed by the Public Health Agency of Canada. The six centres form a network across Canada, each hosted by a different institution and each focusing on a specific topic linked to public health. The National Collaborating Centre for Healthy Public Policy is hosted by the Institut national de santé publique du Québec (INSPQ), a leading centre in public health in Canada.



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## List of abbreviations and acronyms

CBA	Cost-benefit Analysis
COVID-19	Coronavirus-19 disease
FGCW	Future Generations Commissioner for Wales
GBA+	Gender-based Analysis Plus
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
NCCHPP	National Collaborating Centre for Healthy Public Policy
NEF	New Economics Foundation
NHS	National Health Service
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PSB	Public Services Boards
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
WEGo	Wellbeing Economy Government Partnership
<i>WFG Act</i>	<i>Well-being of Future Generations Act</i>
WHO	World Health Organization
WHOROE	World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe
WISE	Centre on Well-being, Inclusion, Sustainability and Equal Opportunity



## Summary

### Background

As the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic continues, governments around the world are incorporating into their discourse and economic recovery plans the need to “build back better” and promote what matters most to individuals and communities - their wellbeing - without compromising the future of the planet or the wellbeing of future generations (All Policies for a Healthy Europe, 2021; British Columbia Assembly of First Nations, 2020; Büchs et al., 2020; Jones et al., 2021; Morrison & Lucyk, 2021).

Reflecting changes in societal and political priorities, more than half of the member countries of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) now measure and report on their progress and prosperity by going beyond the use of standard economic indicators, such as gross domestic product (GDP) (OECD, 2020a). Some countries have gone still further and made wellbeing an explicit priority in their governance practices and public policies. Scotland, Finland, New Zealand and Wales are among them.

This study comes at a time when the Canadian government is signalling its intention to integrate wellbeing considerations more fully into its governance practices, drawing, in particular, on the experiences of Scotland and New Zealand (Sanmartin et al., 2021). In 2021, the Canadian government released a strategy for placing quality of life at the heart of its decision-making processes: *Measuring What Matters: Toward a Quality of Life Strategy for Canada* (Department of Finance Canada, 2021a).

### Comparative analysis of four wellbeing approaches

In order to inform decision making related to wellbeing approaches, the National Collaborating Centre for Healthy Public Policy (NCCCHPP) has produced a comparative analysis of four wellbeing approaches put forward by central governments, namely those of:

- Scotland, whose National Performance Framework was updated in 2018;
- Finland, who in 2018 implemented the approach set out in the United Nations’ 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda);
- New Zealand, whose Wellbeing Budget was adopted in 2019;
- Wales, whose *Well-being of Future Generations Act (WFG Act)* was adopted in 2015.

Based on a review of the literature, this study has identified similarities and contrasts between these four approaches in relation to the following:

- The wellbeing frameworks used;
- The main objectives pursued;
- Their implementation, evaluation and accountability mechanisms;
- The roles of various actors, including those in public health;
- The difficulties encountered during implementation;
- The pathways to overcoming these difficulties.

The role played by public health actors in the adoption of these approaches was a particular focus of this analytical study. Thus, this document is primarily intended for those involved or interested in the development of healthy public policy at the federal, provincial or territorial level. It could also be of use to actors working collaboratively with municipalities, even though the initiatives described are not spearheaded by local governments.

### **Highlights of the four wellbeing approaches studied**

The wellbeing approaches studied, with their reference frameworks and associated wellbeing indicators, are policy instruments for the entire government apparatus. Although these approaches have only recently been introduced and have been the subject of few evaluations, they appear promising. They are based on a vision of social, human, economic and environmental progress and rely on measurements that complement those of economic growth and GDP. Their adoption is intended to support what matters most to people, namely their wellbeing.

The main features common to the wellbeing approaches of these central governments are:

- They are intended to be whole-of-government approaches, i.e., they involve the entire government apparatus, as well as other actors (departments, governmental and paragonovernmental agencies, private sector actors, research groups, civil society, etc.).
- They view wellbeing as a multidimensional concept (e.g., with psychological, social, economic, and environmental dimensions) that is closely tied to both the concept of quality of life and the concept of progress, and that aligns with the OECD's Better Life Initiative (2011).
- They rely on a wellbeing framework officially put forward by the government, which also includes a dashboard of wellbeing indicators that complement GDP. These indicators vary from country to country and serve as a guide to measuring the country's progress and success in different areas of wellbeing.

The main objectives pursued by the governments through these wellbeing approaches are to:

- Enhance the performance of the government apparatus by linking decision-making processes to requirements for outcomes that go beyond standard economic measures;
- Be transparent and accountable to the public for actions taken to ensure and promote the wellbeing of all;
- Ensure a better future and greater wellbeing for future generations, nature and the planet as a whole, through prevention, long-term planning and intersectoral action;
- Build on collaboration and the sharing of responsibility among various actors;
- Increase the country's prosperity and stimulate the economy;
- Take action to protect the environment, including from climate change, with a view toward sustainable development and resource sustainability;
- Affirm and promote cultural and national identities;
- Promote justice and equity for the entire population;
- Act in support of international solidarity and cooperation.

In addition to relying on a wellbeing framework, the governments use a variety of means to achieve their objectives. The main mechanisms for implementation, evaluation and accountability are:

- The drafting of various reports that are integrated in different ways into the policy cycles of the central governments;
- The integration of wellbeing indicators into national budgeting processes;
- The creation or use of public bodies whose mandate is to ensure the implementation and monitoring of the wellbeing approach;
- The development of tools, guides, policies, teams, or resources dedicated to building capacity for implementing the wellbeing approach;
- The mobilization of various social groups, the consultation of various experts and citizens, and the setting up of independent commissions;
- Public awareness and communication campaigns.

### **Roles of public health actors**

Public health actors contribute in a variety of ways to these wellbeing approaches and to the achievement of the country's wellbeing objectives. They play a crucial role in the implementation and monitoring of these wellbeing approaches by providing knowledge, health promotion expertise, epidemiological data and training activities.

### **Challenges and potential solutions**

This study also points to challenges related to these approaches. These include the need for a change of culture, long-term planning, the adoption of the approach by various actors (e.g., levels of government, sectors, private companies), and consistent application of the wellbeing approach across public policy processes. This document also summarizes some of the ways in which wellbeing objectives can be better integrated within and outside of government. These include strengthening the leadership of senior public servants and other stakeholders, developing and making available wellbeing indicators to guide action, and building the capacity of actors and of partnerships with public health actors, among others.

### **Conclusion**

It is important to note that the wellbeing approaches studied, although there have been very few studies to evaluate their impact, focus on prevention and long-term planning, while building on the potential of individuals and communities. These same principles are central to health promotion and public health concerns. This document presents concrete examples of the contributions that different actors, including public health actors, can make to such initiatives. However, there is still a need to better understand how these approaches can improve the overall health of individuals, groups and communities, or facilitate certain public health initiatives.



# 1 Introduction

## “Build Back Better”

For decades, a growing number of central governments have been calling into question economic models that fail to address the major problems and challenges they face (e.g., issues related to the climate, the environment, universal justice, and health inequalities). The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, by revealing and exacerbating health inequalities, appears to have accelerated this necessary reflection surrounding the importance of wellbeing (United Nations Regional Information Centre, 2021; Gupta et al., 2021). This crisis has also highlighted the close links between the economy, the environment, health and population wellbeing (Fleischer, 2020). It has served as a reminder that many sectors of society are essential to the wellbeing of the population (e.g., health, education, transportation, energy, water, agriculture, food, childcare) (Wellbeing Economy Alliance, 2020). As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, governments around the world are incorporating into their discourse and economic recovery plans the need to “build back better” and promote what matters most to individuals and communities - their wellbeing - without compromising the future of the planet or the wellbeing of future generations (All Policies for a Healthy Europe, 2021; British Columbia Assembly of First Nations, 2020; Büchs et al., 2020; Jones et al., 2021; Morrison & Lucyk, 2021).

## Comparative analysis of four wellbeing approaches

Within this context, the National Collaborating Centre for Healthy Public Policy (NCCHPP) has produced a comparative analysis of four whole-of-government approaches<sup>1</sup> that aim to place wellbeing at the heart of central government decision-making, economic strategies and public policy making. This study falls within the context of the NCCHPP's work on public policy and wellbeing, including on wellbeing budgets (MacLaren, 2021; Morrison & Lucyk, 2021). Its purpose is to report on the current state of knowledge about wellbeing approaches and to contribute to furthering reflection on this subject. To this end, a literature search was conducted using a grid of questions (see Appendix 3). A synthesis of this analytical work is presented after Section 2, which sets out the context for the study. This synthesis covers the following elements in particular: the wellbeing frameworks put forward by the four countries studied, namely, Scotland, Finland, New Zealand and Wales; the objectives pursued by these governments; the main mechanisms linked to these approaches (implementation, evaluation and accountability mechanisms); the roles of the various actors – including those in public health – involved in the implementation process; the difficulties encountered during implementation; and pathways for overcoming these difficulties. Box 1 provides a working definition of what is meant by a “whole-of-government wellbeing approach.”

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<sup>1</sup> The term “whole-of-government approach” refers to an administrative approach that is both vertical (throughout a department or sector) and horizontal (between departments or sectors). The “whole-of-government” concept is closely related to that of “integrated governance” and also refers to “collaborative, multi-sectoral and multi-level administration aimed at achieving common goals” (St-Pierre, 2009, p. 8).

**Box 1. Central government wellbeing approach: a working definition**

An exploratory literature review led to the development of a working definition of the concept of a “central government wellbeing approach”:

A central government wellbeing approach comprises the express intention of a government to establish wellbeing objectives to which the whole government apparatus is expected to contribute. These objectives are accompanied by concrete policy instruments that may take the form of governance principles, budgeting processes, legislative measures or other public policies. A central government wellbeing approach also establishes ways of measuring and publicly reporting on social, human, environmental, cultural, and economic progress using indicators beyond traditional economic performance indicators, such as gross domestic product (GDP) or wealth.

**Intended readership**

This analysis is primarily intended for public health actors interested in healthy public policy and in whole-of-government approaches to improving the health and wellbeing of populations. It is specifically aimed at actors working at the federal, provincial and territorial levels in Canada. This document may also be of interest to actors who are called on to work with municipalities. Readers will be able to explore how these whole-of-government wellbeing approaches can contribute to achieving public health objectives, particularly those that require upstream action on the determinants of health.



## 2 Context

### Where did these wellbeing approaches originate?

Ensuring the wellbeing of the population has always been one of the main duties of a government. Still, according to Bache and Scott (2018), two waves of political interest in wellbeing are noteworthy. The first was in the 1960s, which saw a movement toward considering social indicators beyond GDP (see Box 2). At the time, U.S. President Kennedy asserted publicly that this economic indicator measures everything, except what matters most to people and makes life worthwhile (Bache & Scott, 2018). The second wave emerged in the 1990s with the rise of environmental concerns and the increase in the number of countries interested in measuring subjective wellbeing for the purpose of guiding policy choices (Bache & Scott, 2018). The interest of policy makers in wellbeing and its indicators has increased under the impetus of major economic conferences, such as the OECD's 2007 World Forum, *Measuring and Fostering the Progress of Societies*; the 2007 conference, *Beyond GDP*, organized by the European Commission (in partnership with the European Parliament, the Club of Rome, the World Wildlife Fund, and the OECD); and the 2009 G20 London Summit, which, following after the 2008 financial and economic crisis, encouraged thinking about a global and sustainable economy that benefits everyone, while respecting the environment (Aussillaux et al., 2015; Durand, 2018; Lepenies, 2019).

#### Box 2. What does “beyond GDP” mean?

The “beyond GDP” concept incorporates three main principal characteristics related to indicators of progress, according to Boarini and Mira d'Ercole (2013, cited in Llena-Nozal et al., 2019); namely, that what is measured should extend:

1. “beyond the market” to consider the multi-dimensional nature of wellbeing;
2. “beyond averages” to take account of the distribution of income and other wellbeing outcomes throughout society;
3. “beyond the here and now” to better measure and evaluate the long-term impacts of economic growth and public policies on environmental sustainability, social cohesion and economic resilience.

In 2008, France brought together preeminent economists and sociologists to lead the Commission on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress, also known as the Stiglitz-Sen-Fitoussi Commission, to consider indicators of progress that could complement national GDP and wealth. The report emanating from this commission (Stiglitz et al., 2009) constitutes a major contribution to the development and use of wellbeing indicators (Bache & Scott, 2018). Its main recommendation to countries is to broaden their table of economic indicators to include indicators of wellbeing in all its dimensions (e.g., indicators related to health, safety, leisure activities, social inclusiveness, and environmental sustainability), so as to guide policy choices toward the goals of wellbeing, extended human capabilities, sustainable development, resource sustainability, and the reduction of inequality (Durand, 2018; Durand & Exton, 2019; Lepenies, 2019; Stiglitz et al., 2009; OECD, 2021; Stiglitz et al., 2018). In 2009, the Commission of the European Communities (2009) published *GDP and Beyond: Measuring Progress in a Changing World*, with the aim of developing “more inclusive indicators that provide a more reliable knowledge base for better public debate and policy-making” (p. 2). Wellbeing indicators have been brought to the fore primarily to influence policy processes, including by placing specific issues on the agenda, identifying goals and priorities, and guiding the development, implementation, and evaluation of public policies (Durand, 2018).

Reflecting changes in societal and political priorities, more than half of OECD member countries now measure and publicly report their progress and prosperity by going beyond the use of standard economic indicators (OECD, 2020a). And many of them rely on a wellbeing framework to do so. Some have drawn on the OECD's Better Life Initiative (2011), which takes into account material conditions, quality of life, and sustainability. This initiative includes 64 indicators, 11 dimensions deemed essential to wellbeing (housing, income and wealth, employment, social connections, knowledge and skills, environment, civil engagement, health, subjective wellbeing, safety and work-life balance) and 4 main types of "capital" or "stocks" deemed essential to sustainable development and to preserving and creating wellbeing for present and future generations (natural capital, human capital, social capital, and economic capital). Additional information on the OECD's wellbeing framework is provided in Appendix 1. Several other wellbeing frameworks exist, including the New Economics Foundation's Five Ways to Wellbeing (2014) in the UK, or the University of Waterloo's Canadian Index of Wellbeing (2016). Along with their numerous indicators, the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (also known as the 2030 Agenda) of the United Nations Development Programme (n.d.) can also serve as a wellbeing framework (Durand & Exton, 2019; Sanmartin, 2021; Wellbeing Economy Alliance, 2021), and is being used as such in Finland (Finnish Government, 2020).

However, although many central governments are collecting data related to wellbeing indicators, these data do not necessarily guide political decisions related to strategic programmes legislation, or budgeting processes, nor do they guide intersectoral action and the mobilization of various stakeholders (Durand, 2018; Durand & Exton, 2019; Exton & Shinwell, 2018). Thus, some countries have gone further by explicitly making wellbeing a priority of their governance practices and public policies. This analysis focuses on four countries that have incorporated a whole-of-government wellbeing approach: Wales, Scotland, New Zealand and Finland.<sup>2</sup> The reasons for these choices are explained in Section 3.

## **2.1 The Canadian context: fertile ground for the adoption of a whole-of-government wellbeing approach**

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This report comes at a time when the Canadian Liberal government, re-elected for a third term in 2021, is demonstrating its intention to further integrate wellbeing considerations into its governance practices, including by drawing on the experiences of Scotland and New Zealand (Sanmartin et al., 2021). The Canadian Department of Finance (2021a) recently published a strategy aimed at placing wellbeing or quality of life<sup>3</sup> at the heart of its decision-making processes: *Measuring What Matters: Towards a Quality of Life Strategy for Canada*. It also published a reference framework (inspired by the OECD's Better Life Initiative) structured around three central objectives: quality of life, equality and sustainability (Department of Finance Canada, 2021a). These publications arrived concurrently with the tabling of the 2021-2022 federal budget, which contains a statement of intent to budget with regard to quality of life indicators, namely the Gender, Diversity and Quality of Life Statement (Department of Finance Canada, 2021b).<sup>4</sup> Statistics Canada has also released the report, *Moving Forward on Well-being (Quality of Life) Measures in Canada*, which identifies the economic, social

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<sup>2</sup> Other countries have formally adopted wellbeing approaches, including Bhutan with its Gross National Happiness Index, which replaces GDP, as a measure for assessing progress and guiding public policy. This index rests on four pillars: equitable and sustainable socioeconomic development, good governance, cultural preservation and promotion, and environmental conservation. For more information, visit the following site: <https://www.gnhcentrebutan.org/what-is-gnh/gnh-happiness-index/>.

<sup>3</sup> Although the concept of quality of life may not carry the same meaning as that of wellbeing, the two terms are often considered synonymous in the literature consulted.

<sup>4</sup> It points out that "while economic growth is important, there is now growing international interest in adopting broader measures of progress for decision making" (Department of Finance Canada, 2021a, p. 411).

and environmental areas for which indicators need to be developed so that Canada can move forward with the adoption of a quality of life framework (Sanmartin et al., 2021).

The federal government is progressively rolling out a wellbeing approach with favourable support, while other jurisdictions have formally stated their intention to adopt “wellbeing budgets,”<sup>5</sup> including the province of Nova Scotia (Rankin, 2021) and the City of Victoria in British Columbia (City of Victoria, 2021). The federal government is also developing its wellbeing approach, with several recent changes in budgeting processes and government funding practices already reflecting efforts to go “beyond GDP” (Department of Finance Canada, 2021a). For example, gender budgeting and Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) encourage federal ministers to formulate policies and measure their impacts based on an equity agenda that accounts for different personal attributes (e.g., gender, ethnicity, age, or income) (Government of Canada, 2021). The federal government is also building on some of its international commitments that align with a wellbeing approach, including its commitment to the United Nations’ 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which calls for changes to be made to budgeting processes, to support the achievement of the 17 SDGs (Department of Finance Canada, 2021a).

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<sup>5</sup> Although there is no consensus regarding the definition of a “wellbeing budget” (or wellbeing budgeting), this term can be used as a synonym for what we are referring to as a “wellbeing approach.” The concept of a “wellbeing budget” refers to “a variety of policy approaches that emphasize the importance of making wellbeing and quality of life a policy goal of central governments. Although not all of the policies that are being considered or have been adopted use these terms, it is increasingly common to see it used as an umbrella term for a variety of others – quality of life; wellbeing economy; economy of wellbeing; wellbeing policy; etc. – that have grown out of the perceived need to measure progress by going beyond its economic indicators” (Morrison & Lucyk, 2021, p. 2).



## 3 Methodology

### Selection of countries studied

The documentary search was carried out in two phases: an initial phase of general exploration, and a second, more in-depth country-specific phase. The initial exploratory review of the literature was aimed at defining the scope of this work and determining which countries would be studied. Four countries were selected during this phase: New Zealand and Finland (two national governments) and Scotland and Wales (two subnational governments with devolved powers). The decision to restrict study to four countries was made based on the time and resources available for the work. The selection was made based on the scope of the countries' wellbeing approaches (e.g., if they were linked to associated public policies), how they were internationally, and the similarity of their sociodemographic, socioeconomic and political characteristics to those of Canada. The situation of the countries with devolved powers (Scotland and Wales) are in many ways similar to that of Canadian provinces and territories within a decentralized federal government, which made their analysis particularly interesting. It was also relevant to study two countries with Indigenous peoples, New Zealand and Finland, without implying that their realities (historical, sociopolitical, geographical, etc.) are the same as those of the First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples of Canada. Finally, the availability of literature in French or English was also a selection criterion.

### 3.1 Review of the literature

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To gather the most relevant literature, an iterative literature review was conducted using a keyword search of the Ovid (psychinfo) and EBSCO databases, and using the Google search engine. Since this analysis aims to shed light on public policy implementation, it was also important to consider the grey literature (Petticrew & Roberts, 2006, cited in Morestin et al., 2010). For this reason, the websites of governments (especially those of countries that have integrated a whole-of-government wellbeing approach) and of non-governmental organizations were searched. The bibliographies of selected documents were also searched for other relevant documents. The literature search was conducted from October 21, 2020 to July 8, 2021. The search strategy can be found in Appendix 2.

### 3.2 Selection of documents

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Since this analysis aims to shed light on public policy implementation, in order not to omit relevant documents, it was necessary to be flexible in assessing the quality of the documents identified and to adopt very broad inclusion criteria (Pawson, 2006, cited in Morestin et al., 2010). Among other criteria, the papers selected from the grey literature had to be about a central government wellbeing approach and had to specifically mention the wellbeing approach in question. The scientific papers had to examine one or more of the whole-of-government wellbeing approaches being studied. It should be noted that very few peer-reviewed articles were identified and that, for this reason, this comparative analysis is based primarily on grey literature (e.g., official documents, legislative texts, various reports) produced by government and other agencies.

### **3.3 Analysis and synthesis of the information**

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Questions were formulated prior to the literature search and adjusted during the search process (see Appendix 3). These questions guided the analysis. By going back and forth between the four different approaches, similarities and contrasts were identified, particularly in terms of:

- The wellbeing frameworks used;
- The main objectives pursued;
- Their implementation, evaluation and accountability mechanisms;
- The roles of the various actors – including those in public health;
- The difficulties encountered during implementation;
- The pathways to overcoming the difficulties.

These comparative elements are discussed in the next section.

## 4 Analysis and synthesis

Readers wishing to begin with an overview of the wellbeing approaches studied can consult Table 1. For those who prefer to consult the country-specific information sheets, please refer to Appendices 4, 5, 6, and 7.

**Table 1 Overview of the four wellbeing approaches studied**

<b>Wales</b>	<b>Scotland</b>	<b>New Zealand</b>	<b>Finland</b>
<b>Name of initiative</b>			
<i>Well-being of Future Generations Act (WFG Act)</i>	Scotland's National Performance Framework	Wellbeing Budget	2030 Agenda <sup>6</sup>
<b>Year initiative took effect</b>			
2016 (adopted in 2015)	2018	2019	2018
<b>Purpose</b>			
Anchor in law the duty of the government and 44 other public bodies to commit to sustainable development, meaning the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural wellbeing of Wales by taking action aimed at achieving the wellbeing goals for present and future generations.	Incorporate principles of wellbeing economics, based on performance outcomes, into all government practices. Provide all stakeholders from the public, private, and non-profit sectors with a vision of progress associated with concrete results.	Align public policy and national budgeting processes with the wellbeing priorities established by the government.	Align public policies and the government's roadmap with the 17 SDGs, using a participatory approach that involves many civil society actors.
<b>Wellbeing frameworks</b>			
Future Generations Framework	National Performance Framework	Living Standard Framework and Living Standard Dashboard	2030 Agenda and Society's Commitment to Sustainable Development <sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> This refers to the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

<sup>7</sup> The Society's Commitment is presented as a strategy that is also viewed as a key instrument for implementing the 2030 Agenda (Finnish Government, 2020).



**Tableau 1 Overview of the four wellbeing approaches studied (cont'd)**

Wales	Scotland	New Zealand	Finland
<b>Main components of the reference frameworks</b>			
<p><b>Seven main goals</b>, for a Wales that is:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) More equal;</li> <li>2) Healthier;</li> <li>3) Resilient;</li> <li>4) Prosperous;</li> <li>5) Globally responsible;</li> <li>6) Culturally vibrant and with a thriving Welsh language;</li> <li>7) Made up of cohesive communities.</li> </ol> <p><b>Four aspects of wellbeing:</b> environmental, social, cultural and economic.</p> <p><b>Five ways of working</b>, also referred to as applying the sustainable development principle, which consist in focusing on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The long-term;</li> <li>2) prevention of problems and their exacerbation;</li> <li>3) integration of the various wellbeing objectives;</li> <li>4) collaboration among the various actors;</li> <li>5) involvement of people of all ages.</li> </ol> <p><b>Forty-six wellbeing indicators</b> that are linked to the seven goals.</p>	<p><b>Five strategic goals:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Create a more successful country;</li> <li>2) Give opportunities to all people living in Scotland;</li> <li>3) Increase the wellbeing of people living in Scotland;</li> <li>4) Create sustainable and inclusive growth;</li> <li>5) Reduce inequalities and give equal importance to economic, environmental and social progress.</li> </ol> <p><b>The values guiding the approach:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Treat all our people with kindness, dignity and compassion;</li> <li>2) Respect the rule of law;</li> <li>3) Act in an open and transparent way.</li> </ol> <p><b>Eleven key expected outcomes:</b> outcomes reflect the values and aspirations of the people of Scotland, are aligned with the United Nations' SDGs, and help to track progress in reducing inequality.</p> <p><b>Eighty-one indicators</b>, which measure progress toward the achievement of the SDGs, and some of which are taken from the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-Being Scale.</p>	<p><b>Twelve wellbeing domains</b> strongly inspired by the OECD's Better Life Initiative, with the addition of one more domain, namely cultural identity.</p> <p><b>Four types of capital (or stocks)</b>, on which intergenerational wellbeing is based:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Natural capital;</li> <li>2) Social capital;</li> <li>3) Human capital;</li> <li>4) Financial/physical capital.</li> </ol> <p>It is important to address the growth, sustainability, and distribution (among people, geographical locations and generations) of these types of capital.</p> <p><b>Sixty-five indicators in a Living Standard Framework Dashboard</b>, composed of 43 indicators related to the 12 domains, and 22 indicators related to the four types of capital.</p>	<p><b>Aims to transform six key societal systems:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Sustainable and just economies;</li> <li>2) Food and nutrition;</li> <li>3) Urban and peri-urban areas;</li> <li>4) Energy;</li> <li>5) Global environmental commons;</li> <li>6) Wellbeing and capabilities.</li> </ol> <p><b>Eight priorities:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Equal prospects for wellbeing;</li> <li>2) Participatory society for citizens;</li> <li>3) Sustainable work;</li> <li>4) Sustainable local communities;</li> <li>5) A carbon neutral society;</li> <li>6) An economy that is resource-wise;</li> <li>7) Lifestyles that respect the carrying capacity of nature;</li> <li>8) Decision-making that respects nature.</li> </ol> <p><b>Ten baskets</b>, or specific themes, related to the priorities (e.g., a "resource-wise economy and carbon-neutral society").</p> <p><b>Forty-five indicators</b>, one-third of which are from the global SDG indicator set, and the rest of which are country-specific.</p>

**Tableau 1 Overview of the four wellbeing approaches studied (cont'd)**

Wales	Scotland	New Zealand	Finland
<b>Main influences on the approach</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Numerous texts on sustainable development produced in Wales, including by the Wales Audit Office (2010), and the Sustainable Development Scheme (Welsh Government, 2009)</li> <li>- Work from the UK, including that of the New Economic Foundation (2014)</li> <li>- The 17 United Nations' SDGs</li> <li>- The results of a broad public consultation carried out in the country, "The Wales We Want by 2050"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The OECD's Better Life Initiative</li> <li>- The 17 United Nations' SDGs</li> <li>- The work of the Stiglitz-Sen-Fitoussi Commission (Stiglitz et al., 2009)</li> <li>- The Carnegie Trust Report (2011)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The OECD's Better Life Initiative</li> <li>- Other international work, including the Stiglitz-Sen-Fitoussi Commission report (Stiglitz et al., 2009), and Sen's (1993) work on capabilities and inclusive and sustainable growth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The 17 United Nations' SDGs</li> <li>- Several economic models that go "beyond GDP": the circular economy, the wellbeing economy, and Doughnut Economics (Raworth, 2017)<sup>8</sup></li> </ul>
<b>Legislative framework</b>			
<p>The WFG Act is linked to several other Welsh laws (see Appendix 4 for details).</p>	<p>Various legislative measures support the implementation and sustainability of the wellbeing approach (see Appendix 5 for details).</p>	<p>Legislation has been developed or amended to support the Wellbeing Budget (see Appendix 6 for details).</p>	<p>Several climate change-related laws and policies facilitate the implementation of the country's wellbeing approach (see Appendix 7 for details).</p>
<b>Main actors associated with implementation</b>			
<p><b>Coordination</b> Office of the First Minister</p>	<p><b>Coordination</b> Office of the First Minister</p>	<p><b>Coordination</b> New Zealand Treasury</p>	<p><b>Coordination</b> The Prime Minister's Office</p>
<p><b>Main actors</b> The Future Generations Commissioner for Wales and Auditor General for Wales. Some 44 public bodies, including parliament, ministries, and the 22 regional Public Services Boards.</p>	<p><b>Main actors</b> Chief Statistician, Chief Economist, Performance Unit and all departments.</p>	<p><b>Main actors</b> Statistics New Zealand and all government departments.</p>	<p><b>Main actors</b> Finnish Parliamentary Committee for the Future's National Commission on Sustainable Development, Finland's Development Policy Committee, several civil society actors and all ministries.</p>

<sup>8</sup> The Doughnut Economics model developed by Kate Raworth (2017) represents the space of wellbeing and security in which humans should be living, referred to as "a safe and just space for humanity" in which a stationary economy must operate (Handcock, 2020, p. 13). The "doughnut" concept allows us to understand through a simple visual representation the close links between nature, people's wellbeing and sustainable development. This tool helps to visualize the dual challenge facing governments. The first is to achieve the social and societal goals represented by the comfort zone within the doughnut. The second is to do so while ensuring that we do not exceed environmental resource limits or the ecological ceiling beyond the doughnut and while leaving no one behind in the doughnut hole in conditions that do not adequately ensure their wellbeing (e.g., access to housing, food, health care) (Finnish Government, 2020) To view the interactive doughnut analogy site: <https://www.kateraworth.com/doughnut/>.

## 4.1 Characteristics of the reference frameworks of the wellbeing approaches studied

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As Llana-Nozal and colleagues (2019) point out, relying on a wellbeing framework can potentially guide policy choices toward sustainable and equitable societal projects that will be more likely to contribute to individual wellbeing. Thus, before discussing the objectives pursued by these central governments, it is appropriate to focus on a component that seems particularly important, even essential, and that sits at the core of these approaches, namely their wellbeing framework. Indeed, the approaches studied all rely on a reference framework that is acknowledged to be their wellbeing framework. Moreover, these share many similarities related to how they were developed, the way they conceptualize wellbeing, and their use within government.

### The wellbeing frameworks share the following main elements:

- They were developed over a number of years, under the leadership of senior public servants. The latter acted as policy entrepreneurs advocating for their adoption as whole-of-government reference frameworks and gaining the support of stakeholders.
- Their various components<sup>9</sup> (domains, goals and wellbeing objectives) draw inspiration from the work of a number of international, national and non-governmental organizations, including that of the Stiglitz-Sen-Fitoussi Commission (Stiglitz et al., 2009), the 17 UN SDGs<sup>10</sup>, and the OECD's Better Life Initiative (see the Scottish example in Box 3).
- They characterize wellbeing as a multidimensional concept (including psychological, social, economic, and environmental dimensions), that is closely related to both the concept of quality of life and that of progress, and aligned with the OECD's Better Life Initiative (2011), although wellbeing is very rarely defined in government texts (see the Welsh example in Box 4).
- They rely on a dashboard of wellbeing indicators, that are complementary to GDP, which vary from country to country and are used to measure the country's progress and success. Wellbeing cannot be reduced to a single indicator such as the degree of satisfaction with life, although this is one of its dimensions.<sup>11</sup> The indicators, most of which are objective, take into account multiple dimensions of wellbeing (e.g., health, equity, social justice, material conditions, the environment, and sustainability).
- They are subject to change over time and must be kept up to date by the many actors concerned. In particular, there is a plan to regularly update the choice of indicators.

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<sup>9</sup> The frameworks comprise various components, including targets, goals, objectives, baskets, and wellbeing domains. However, the significance of these components may vary from one framework to another. There are also annually formulated "objectives" or "priorities" that are informed by the framework. See Appendices 4, 5, 6, and 7 for the 2021-2022 objectives of the countries studied.

<sup>10</sup> The 17 SDGs are: 1. No poverty. 2. Zero hunger. 3. Good health and wellbeing. 4. Quality education. 5. Gender equality. 6. Clean water and sanitation. 7. Affordable and clean energy. 8. Decent work and economic growth. 9. Industry, innovation and infrastructure. 10. Reduced inequalities. 11. Sustainable cities and communities. 12. Responsible consumption and production. 13. Climate action. 14. Life below water. 15. Life on land. 16. Peace, justice and strong institutions. 17. Partnerships for the goals (United Nations Development Programme, n.d.).

<sup>11</sup> This is an indicator that measures one dimension of subjective wellbeing for a given group; it gives the average of responses to the following question: "Imagine an eleven-step scale where the lowest value (0) represents the worst possible life for you and the highest value (10) represents the best possible life for you. What level do you personally feel you are on at the moment?" (Aussilloux et al., 2015, p. 1).

- They are intended to serve as a whole-of-government guide<sup>12</sup> (i.e., for departments, governmental and para-governmental agencies, private sector actors, research groups, and civil society) to formulating goals and courses of action, and to measuring progress toward shared wellbeing goals. These frameworks are used, to varying degrees, to guide the planning, development, and assessment of public policies and budgeting processes.
- They serve as a tool to assist in governing for the future, by establishing a roadmap and milestones for taking action to conserve and create resources, and thus ensure the wellbeing of youth, future generations and the planet.
- They aim to articulate a shared vision and a common language to improve the overall coherence of government decisions and actions, including those that are intersectoral. Moreover, the frameworks are presented in a variety of formats and with pictograms that make it easy to understand their various components.
- They serve to make explicit and transparent the results obtained as well as the trade-offs made in relation to wellbeing. Indicators are used to reveal social inequalities, such as the way certain groups or individuals are affected differently by policy decisions.

### **Box 3. Developing the reference framework: the Scottish Example**

Scotland's National Performance Framework (Scottish Government, 2021a), which now stands as a wellbeing framework, was developed over more than a decade. Roundtable consultations with diverse members were set up by the Carnegie UK Trust and the Sustainable Development Commission for Scotland (Wallace et al., 2012). Scotland was inspired by the recommendations of the Stiglitz-Sen-Fitoussi Commission report, which advocate for the participation of various actors in the process of developing priorities for action and indicators of progress or development complementary to GDP (Stiglitz et al. (2009). In addition, according to a speech by the Scottish First Minister, the OECD greatly facilitated the integration of wellbeing concerns into the heart of Scottish policy by offering the government support for the development of the Better Life Index (Scottish Government, 2019b).

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<sup>12</sup> Some of the measures put forward are mandatory. Among other things, the *WFG Act* requires various actors to formulate wellbeing goals and to implement all measures required to achieve them (Welsh Government, 2015a).

#### **Box 4. Wellbeing viewed as a multidimensional concept: the Welsh example**

In Wales, in documents related to the *Well-being of Future Generations (WFG) Act* and the Future Generations Framework (the country's wellbeing framework), wellbeing takes the guise of a multidimensional concept with economic, social, environmental and cultural facets (Welsh Government, 2015a; see also the latest version: Welsh Government, 2021e). In addition, the *WFG Act* distinguishes between the wellbeing of individuals and the wellbeing of Wales. The concept of wellbeing, as presented, most closely resembles a common good or state that, notably, cannot be attained without incorporating the principles of sustainable development (Jones, 2019; Davies, 2016, 2017; Messham & Sheard, 2020). The Future Generations Commissioner of Wales (FGCW), the official guardian of the law's enactment, describes wellbeing as follows:

In the Well-being of Future Generations Act, 'well-being' refers to the state of our population, society and our environment across Wales overall. It looks to ensure that people have the economic, social, environmental and cultural conditions around them to be well. Crucially, all four dimensions of wellbeing (sometimes referred to as pillars), are equally important. The economy cannot be prioritized at the expense of the environment or society, for example. Wales is also one of the first countries in the world to recognize the importance of cultural wellbeing to our lives and to the fabric of our society (Future Generations Commissioner of Wales [FGCW], 2020a, p. 37).

## **4.2 Main objectives of the wellbeing approaches**

In the documents consulted, the four governments set out various objectives related to their wellbeing approach, and these are summarized in Table 1 which briefly presents the wellbeing frameworks (more information can be found in Appendices 4, 5, 6, and 7). Regarding these objectives, several commonalities were identified and are discussed below.

### **4.2.1 ENHANCE THE PERFORMANCE OF THE GOVERNMENT APPARATUS BY LINKING DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES TO REQUIREMENTS FOR OUTCOMES THAT GO BEYOND STANDARD ECONOMIC MEASURES**

At the heart of the rationale for these approaches is the realization that economic growth cannot constitute the sole indicator of progress and wellbeing. Thus, policy makers have framed problems related to the performance of the state apparatus in terms of socioeconomic and environmental progress, and have pointed to a whole-of-government wellbeing approach as a solution. Indeed, these wellbeing initiatives have all emerged from the realization by these governments that the solutions usually put forward to address social and environmental problems (social inequalities, unemployment, housing crises, environmental degradation, climate change, high rates of depression and suicide, etc.) are inadequate. According to various government documents consulted, these new approaches to governance seek to move away from a focus on processes toward a greater emphasis on the government's accountability for achieving measurable results in progressing toward wellbeing goals. As stated by Nicola Sturgeon, Scotland's First Minister, in a speech on the adoption of her economic model based on wellbeing indicators:

As governments, we see the promotion of sustainable and inclusive growth as a vital way of raising living standards for all. But we also understand that growth is only of any real value if it makes people's lives better, it is not, and never should be seen, as an end in itself. We have to test whether we are creating a fairer, healthier, happier nation in the process (Scottish Government, 2019b, paragraph 22).

In this regard, the governments of the four countries studied assert that they are setting new objectives for progress and success that are more in line with what matters to the individuals and communities that make up their society, and that also reflect solidarity with the wellbeing of future generations. These approaches propose new mechanisms and rationales for action related to government priorities, expenditures and investments, and are intended to guide various processes, including the process of developing public policies, programs and strategies. For example, in Wales, the seven national wellbeing objectives must be integrated into government strategic planning and decision-making processes (Welsh Government, 2015a; 2021f).<sup>13</sup> In addition, the *WFG Act* requires ministers to set milestones related to wellbeing indicators (Welsh Government, 2016b) so that the country's progress can be measured. In Finland, discussions concerning wellbeing objectives are strategically integrated into parliamentary planning and budgeting cycles. More details about this are provided in Section 4.3, which discusses accountability and evaluation mechanisms. New Zealand is distinguished by its Wellbeing Budget, which must be based in part on the wellbeing priorities that have been established and are reviewed annually (Government of New Zealand, 2019). Appendix 8 contains more information on the priorities for action built into New Zealand's Wellbeing Budget.

#### **4.2.2 BE TRANSPARENT AND ACCOUNTABLE TO THE PUBLIC**

The adoption of a wellbeing approach also aims to increase transparency in public policy decision making, in the allocation of funds, and in the progress made toward achieving wellbeing goals. This transparency is achieved by linking decisions to wellbeing indicators, which are accessible to all. As Carol Tannahill, Chief Social Policy Advisor of Scotland reports:

As a Government we need to ensure that we are open and transparent in the way in which we use evidence to understand the impact of our spend; we need to ensure that we are channelling funding into those areas which have the greatest impact on improving societal wellbeing (Scottish Government, 2019a, p. 12.).

These approaches require the involvement of senior public servants and are coordinated by the offices of first ministers. Table 1 and Appendices 4, 5, 6, and 7 provide more detail on the sharing of responsibility for the wellbeing approaches. For example, in Wales, 44 public bodies are required under the *WFG Act* to formulate and publish their wellbeing objectives and “to take steps to meet those objectives” (Welsh Government, 2015a, p. 1). The indicators must make sense to people and be communicated in language that is easily understood, in order to rally the Welsh nation around the vision for the future expressed through the *WFG Act*. In all four countries studied, processes have also been put in place to allow for open discussion and debate about policies, laws, and goals, and especially about their relevance and effectiveness with respect to promoting wellbeing. To facilitate this, government publications and performance reports may be scrutinized by various governmental, paragonovernmental or independent groups.

#### **4.2.3 ENSURE A BETTER FUTURE AND GREATER WELLBEING FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS, NATURE AND THE PLANET AS A WHOLE, THROUGH PREVENTION, LONG-TERM PLANNING AND INTERSECTORAL ACTION**

The wellbeing initiatives studied have also been put into action with the aim of encouraging various stakeholders to implement preventive actions and to adopt a logic of foresight with respect to the anticipated challenges of the coming years. Actors are encouraged to think long-term, which is facilitated by the development of a roadmap and milestones by which to measure their progress toward global wellbeing. Prevention covers a very wide range of undesirable eventualities and is applicable in all sectors of the government apparatus. The government documents reviewed refer, for

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<sup>13</sup> See page 12 (Welsh Government, 2021f) for an overview of Wales' strategic plan, which is based on the principles of the *WFG Act* as well as on those of Planning Policy Wales (Welsh Government, 2021c).

example, to the prevention of health, social, economic, systemic (including social injustice and discrimination) and environmental problems. One of the Scottish government's priorities is to prevent adverse childhood and adolescence experiences.<sup>14</sup>

To act preventively, wellbeing approaches explicitly encourage breaking down administrative and sectoral silos and fostering cooperative action across different government departments and agencies, private businesses and other stakeholders. For example, climate, environmental and nature-related issues are linked to other social challenges, such as ensuring justice for all and addressing health inequalities. Thus, the New Zealand Wellbeing Budget requires ministries to work together and to submit joint project proposals (Government of New Zealand, 2019). In Wales, one of the key elements of the wellbeing approach is the “sustainable development principle.” This principle consists of five cross-cutting ways of working together: 1) thinking about and deciding for the long term; 2) attempting to prevent problems and their exacerbation; 3) taking an integrative approach to all wellbeing objectives; 4) collaborating with other authorities to achieve the objectives; and 5) supporting the involvement and inclusion of people of all ages who wish to contribute to achieving the wellbeing objectives (Hands et al., 2019; Welsh Government, 2015a; see also Welsh Government, 2021e). Several public bodies are subject to this legislation (see Welsh Government, 2015b 2015c; 2015d; 2015e) as well as to its framework and the Future Wales National Plan 2040 (Welsh Government, 2021f). In a very similar way, Finland’s 2030 Agenda is based on legislation and parliamentary motions that call for concerted action among various actors. The aim of this cooperation is to develop public policies that adhere to the principles of long-term planning, coherence, transformation, comprehensive partnership, inclusion and participation of different societal groups<sup>15</sup> (Finnish Government, 2020). Additionally, application of these principles extends beyond electoral periods, thus ensuring some sustainability (Finnish Government, 2020).

#### 4.2.4 BUILD ON COLLABORATION AND THE SHARING OF RESPONSIBILITIES AMONG VARIOUS ACTORS

Another method explicitly used to ensure that wellbeing approaches are optimally successful and representative of different segments of the population is to elicit the participation of different levels of government and of various stakeholders (scientists, interest groups, non-profits, etc.). For example, in Wales, Scotland and Finland, wellbeing approaches rely on the creation of various platforms for consultation and for the exchange of ideas, and the input of their members is solicited. In addition, in order to give a voice to young people and allow them to contribute, various mechanisms have been established, such as the 2030 Agenda Youth Group in Finland (Finnish Government, 2020) and the Young Ambassador Programme in Wales, which was set up through the collaborative efforts of many actors (FGCW, 2020a).<sup>16</sup>

However, the sharing of responsibilities related to the implementation of wellbeing approaches varies from country to country. Sometimes they are very broadly shared and other times they are rather narrowly shared, as is the case in New Zealand. Yet New Zealand’s Minister of Finance, Grant Robertson, argued the following in a speech preceding the tabling of New Zealand’s first Wellbeing Budget: “Getting it right requires partnership. For us to achieve the wellbeing outcomes we seek, we need to work with all our social partners, including business” (Government of New Zealand, 2019f,

<sup>14</sup> Adverse childhood and adolescence experiences are traumatic experiences that occur during these periods of life and leave indelible marks on adult life. For an individual, this may include having been verbally, psychologically, physically, or sexually abused or exposed to domestic violence, drug or alcohol abuse, or tumultuous and hostile parental separations (Public Health Wales, 2020).

<sup>15</sup> The participation of multiple actors in political life has been a tradition in Finland for more than 25 years and is aimed at strengthening sustainable development throughout Finnish society (Finnish Government, 2020).

<sup>16</sup> Many of the impacts of the *WFG Act*, as well as the challenges encountered, are presented in the extensive report of the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales (FGCW, 2020a) and other reports available on the Commissioner’s website: <https://www.futuregenerations.wales/>.

paragraph 65). Although many actors were involved in the development of New Zealand's wellbeing framework, the approach itself is instead seen as highly centralized and administered by federal public servants with very little involvement from local governments (Dalziel, 2019; McKinlay, 2019). In contrast, in Wales, the distribution of responsibilities affects 44 public bodies, including 22 Public Services Boards (PSBs) in the administrative regions, which are called upon to define their own wellbeing objectives and to produce their own plans. Thus, the power to act rests predominantly with local authorities (Jones, 2019; Welsh Government, 2015a; 2015e). Appendix 9 provides more detail concerning the operations of Welsh PSBs.

Finland, in keeping with its tradition of acting very democratically, has also opted for a highly participatory approach, assisted by an Inter-Ministerial Coordination Network, led by the Prime Minister's Office. This network represents the sustainable development focal point of each of the line ministries and includes actors drawn from 23 Finnish institutions (e.g., Statistics Finland, research institutions, academia) (Finnish Government, 2020). This network meets three to four times a year to discuss priorities and monitoring mechanisms, and to select and update wellbeing indicators, among other things (Finnish Government, 2020). Finland also relies on the National Commission on Sustainable Development, which is led by the Prime Minister; the Expert Panel on Sustainable Development; and various groups that are called upon during different phases of the policy cycle, including the 2030 Agenda Youth Group (Finnish Government, 2020). In addition, the Finnish government invites many actors (e.g., from civil society, municipalities, the private sector, regional authorities, and members of the Sámi Indigenous community<sup>17</sup>) to assess Finland's performance in achieving the SDGs. The Sámi Parliament also drafts chapters of the annual report submitted to the United Nations Voluntary National Reviews of the country's performance towards achieving the 17 SDGs (Finnish Government, 2020). These chapters address, in particular, access to education in the Sámi language and the truth and reconciliation process involving the government, which addresses the colonial past and policies which discriminated against them (Finnish Government, 2020).

#### **4.2.5 INCREASE THE COUNTRY'S PROSPERITY AND STIMULATE THE ECONOMY**

While these wellbeing approaches can be said to go “beyond GDP,” they are not inconsistent with the goals of prosperity, vitality, or economic gain, nor are they inconsistent with measures aimed at creating jobs, supporting technological and social innovation, and stimulating different sectors of the economy. On the contrary, wellbeing objectives are quite closely linked to the objective of economic growth, which remains central to these governments. On the other hand, growth is not a goal in itself and must be achieved with wellbeing as the primary concern. Moreover, wellbeing objectives contribute to a healthy economy. As the Finnish government asserted in commenting on the choice to integrate the 17 SDGs into budgeting processes: “It is not only good for the people and planet, but also smart for the state economy” (Finnish Government, 2020, p. 102). In addition, all four governments reviewed are keen to support innovation, a priority reiterated in their economic recovery plans and budgets, in the wake of the crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic (Finnish Government, 2021a; 2021b; Government of New Zealand, 2021; Scottish Government, 2021c, 2020a; Welsh Government, 2021a, 2021f).

Also, growth is presented as a way to increase resources and services, which are among the “stocks” that enable individuals to lead rewarding, balanced, and meaningful lives (Dalziel, 2019). The approaches studied target a transition to a greener, more inclusive and sustainable economy, in part through the creation of resilient ecosystems. They underlie investments in strategic sectors, such as education, to transform the employment sector (e.g., to support digital transition), or the employment

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<sup>17</sup> The Sámi are the only Indigenous people living in the territory of the European Union.



and income sector, to increase wages and social assistance. Public policies that support the achievement of these objectives are framed less as expenditures and more as investments that can generate positive benefits for the population and thus reduce future fiscal liabilities (Mintrom, 2019; Welsh Government, 2021f). For example, New Zealand's Wellbeing Budget portrays investments in priority areas as beneficial to the overall wellbeing of the population and the country, which includes economic wellbeing (Galea, 2019).

#### **4.2.6 TAKE ACTION TO PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT, INCLUDING FROM CLIMATE CHANGE, WITH A VIEW TOWARD SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND RESOURCE SUSTAINABILITY**

Through the adoption of a wellbeing framework, the four governments studied are integrating and following up on their prior commitments concerning the environment (SDGs, Paris Agreement, etc.), for example commitments related to decarbonization, greenhouse gas reduction and renewable energy. Indeed, in Wales, the *WFG Act* was originally meant to focus on sustainable development for future generations. This legislation is also presented as a comprehensive model for integrating the SDGs into local and regional action (Welsh Government, 2019e; World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe [WHOROE], 2017). Uniquely, the *WFG Act* requires the various stakeholders to meet their present needs using only their fair share of resources so as not to compromise the abilities of future generations to meet their own needs (Welsh Government, 2015a).

The SDGs are also central to the Finnish government's whole-of-government wellbeing approach: "Sustainable development seeks to combine greater economic prosperity and social justice with a healthy environment, in order to improve the overall wellbeing and stability of society" (Finnish Government, 2020, p. 71). Although there is still much to be done in terms of integration, all Finnish ministries have begun to integrate the SDGs into their sectoral and intersectoral guides, policies and strategies (Finnish Government, 2020). Finland also subscribes to the principles of an "economy of wellbeing," meaning one that aims for societal stability by seeking resource sustainability and sustainable development, which in the long run should increase the wellbeing of Finns:

The economy of wellbeing emphasizes the balance between the three dimensions of sustainable development – social, economic and environmental sustainability. In the economy of wellbeing, public resources are allocated for improving people's wellbeing. In the long run, the sustainability and stability of society will improve (Ministry of Social Affairs and Health of Finland, 2020, paragraph 3).

#### **4.2.7 AFFIRM AND PROMOTE CULTURAL AND NATIONAL IDENTITIES**

The governments studied also use their wellbeing and sustainable development approach to affirm a cultural and national identity. As a multidimensional concept, wellbeing includes the idea of collective wealth, culture, arts and cultural heritage. These wellbeing approaches can also attach themselves, in the minds of certain actors, to societal aspirations. For example, in Wales, the 2011 referendum gave the Welsh Parliament the power to legislate without interference from the UK (Welsh Parliament, 2020). The *WFG Act*, signed into effect in 2015, was one of the first laws adopted by this young government. Thus, according to Jones and Ross (2016), the broad public consultations associated with this act<sup>18</sup> were an opportunity to affirm a nationalist vision as well as the values of the Welsh

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<sup>18</sup> In order to enrich the bill with a variety of perspectives, extensive in-person consultations were conducted from February 2014 to February 2015 by the non-governmental organization The Wales We Want. They met with 7000 individuals and groups across the country. Additional consultations were also conducted on social media, online, and using postcards (Cynna Cymru-Sustain Wales, 2015). These consultations were conducted as part of the 2015 United Nations global initiative, The World We Want.

people relating to justice, language, territory, and culture, among other areas.<sup>19</sup> Similarly in New Zealand, cultural identity was added to the Living Standard Framework as the twelfth domain of wellbeing (Government of New Zealand, 2019d; McLeod, 2018). According to New Zealand's Living Standard Dashboard, “having a strong cultural identity is important for one’s sense of self and overall wellbeing. For example, cultural identity influences the extent to which people feel a sense of belonging and therefore self-worth” (The Treasury, 2018a, p 26).

#### **4.2.8 PROMOTE JUSTICE AND EQUITY FOR THE ENTIRE POPULATION**

Strengthening justice and promoting the equitable distribution of opportunities and resources to all people are objectives that are intrinsically linked to the wellbeing approaches studied. The data associated with the indicators should lead to action on social inequalities, a central goal associated with the approaches. For this reason, indicator data (both macroeconomic and individual survey data) are reported at a disaggregated level whenever possible (Government of New Zealand, 2021; McLeod, 2018). In addition, across sectors in New Zealand, the Wellbeing Budget aims to ensure that public policies help address the social inequalities and discrimination experienced by certain groups and communities (e.g., youth, ethno-cultural minorities, women, people with disabilities, elderly people, Māori and Pacific Peoples in New Zealand). A report on the targets set and actions taken to address child poverty must also be included in the Wellbeing Budget, under the *Child Poverty Act* (2018) (Government of New Zealand, 2020). Scotland and Finland have also adopted budgeting processes that address social inequalities, including gender inequalities, which are viewed as barriers to national prosperity.<sup>20</sup>

#### **4.2.9 ACT IN SUPPORT OF INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY AND COOPERATION**

The wellbeing approach is integrated into the country's domestic and foreign policy in such a way as to take into account the complexity of international reality. Since many of the issues these countries are trying to address are global, their wellbeing approaches incorporate considerations that extend beyond their borders, including environmental and world heritage concerns. For example, in Scotland, one of the goals of the National Performance Framework is for the country to be open, connected, and make a positive contribution internationally (Scottish Government, 2021a). Wales' *WFG Act* aims to ensure that the country uses resources in a way that is fair to other jurisdictions and does not harm the planet.

Another way of integrating an international perspective is to maintain networks of influence, which increases awareness about the country's approach and promotes knowledge sharing. For example, Finland's report on the 2030 Agenda was commented on by Switzerland and Mozambique through a process known as “peer dialogue” (Finnish Government, 2020). Finland also sought to extend its influence in this area by promoting whole-of-government wellbeing approaches among Nordic and European countries during its presidency of the European Union<sup>21</sup> in 2019. It promoted innovative ideas that allow the economy to be conceived of differently, using models such as the wellbeing

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<sup>19</sup> Consult Marshall et al. (2012) for more information on the links between communication about sustainability and attachment to land, language, identity, and culture in Wales.

<sup>20</sup> According to a study by the European Institute for Gender Equality, gender equity would help increase GDP by 6.1 to 9.6% (Ministry of Social Affairs and Health of Finland, 2019).

<sup>21</sup> The European Union has agreed on a strategic program with four priorities for the 2019-2024 period: “1) protecting citizens and freedoms; 2) developing a strong and vibrant economic base; 3) building a climate-neutral, green, fair and social Europe; and 4) promoting European interests and values on the global stage” (Finnish Government, 2020, p. 70).

economy, the circular economy<sup>22</sup> or Doughnut Economics<sup>23</sup> (see Box 5) (Cylus & Smith, 2020; Finnish Government, 2020).

#### **Box 5. The Wellbeing Economy Governments Partnership or WEGo**

The international WEGo network, with members from Scotland, Wales, Iceland, Finland and New Zealand (and with Canada participating as a guest country), provides a forum for sharing information on the wellbeing economy, COVID-19 post-crisis planning, achieving the SDGs, the environment and other related issues. As Kate Forbes, Scotland's Cabinet Secretary for Finance, points out regarding the growing number of countries that are adopting whole-of-government wellbeing approaches:

There are other countries taking a similar approach to tackling some of the big defining challenges that the world currently faces. We know we can learn from international organizations and countries across the world, and share with them our experiences, which is why in 2018 Scotland and partners established the Wellbeing Economy Governments group, or WEGo as it is known (Forbes, 2020, paragraph 5).

### **4.3 Key implementation, evaluation and accountability mechanisms**

Several implementation, evaluation and accountability mechanisms connected to the wellbeing approaches have been put in place. The main ones are presented in this section.

#### **4.3.1 THE DRAFTING OF VARIOUS REPORTS THAT ARE INTEGRATED IN DIFFERENT WAYS INTO THE POLICY CYCLES OF THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENTS**

Among the key mechanisms for monitoring the wellbeing approaches studied is the integration of accountability measures and the monitoring of wellbeing goals into governments' policy cycles. This integration appears to be more thorough in central governments than at other levels of government. Thus, stakeholders are expected to publish reports, which vary in number according to the legislative and policy frameworks of the respective countries, to help identify current and future trends, impacts, and challenges faced by these central governments. Wales is distinguished by the sheer number of reports<sup>24</sup> that must be produced annually by various bodies, including the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales, the Auditor General of Wales, Welsh Ministers, the central government and the 22 regional PSBs. The specific elements to be presented in these various reports are detailed in the text of the *WFG Act* (Welsh Government, 2015a). For example, the National Assembly must publish the *Future Trends Report*, which measures progress in wellbeing on the economic, environmental, social and cultural levels, as well as reports assessing the current status of wellbeing in Wales (e.g., Welsh Government, 2017a; 2017b; 2019a). Reports may also focus on the wellbeing of a particular segment of the population, a notable example being children (Welsh Government, 2018). The Welsh Parliament Public Accounts Committee (2020, 2021) has published reports on the progress of the *WFG Act*'s whole-of-government approach to wellbeing and on the challenges faced by various public bodies covered by the Act. Among other things, according to the *WFG Act*, "The Welsh Ministers must – (a) publish indicators ('national indicators') that must be applied for the

<sup>22</sup> For more information, see Blériot (2021): <https://www.oecd-forum.org/posts/plotting-the-course-for-a-circular-economy-transition>

<sup>23</sup> Different models of wellbeing economics exist. For more information, see page 21 of the Wellbeing Economy Policy Design Guide from the Wellbeing Economy Alliance (2020).

<sup>24</sup> Wales' wellbeing approach is the longest standing, the *WFG Act* having come into effect in 2016. A large number of documents connected to it were found.

purpose of measuring progress towards the achievement of the well-being goals, and (b) lay a copy of the national indicators before the National Assembly” (Welsh Government 2015a, p. 8).

Like that of Wales, the Finnish, Scottish and New Zealand approaches also require reports to be produced. For example, according to the country’s National Performance Framework, Scottish ministers are required to produce a report at least every five years on the monitoring of wellbeing indicators (Scottish Government, 2021a). New Zealand’s Minister of Finance is required to produce a report on the wellbeing of New Zealanders every four years (Government of New Zealand, 2019). The reports linked to the wellbeing objectives of Finland, Scotland, and New Zealand are more fully integrated into the budget cycle than those of Wales (see next section).

#### **4.3.2 THE INTEGRATION OF WELLBEING INDICATORS INTO NATIONAL BUDGETING PROCESSES**

In New Zealand, Scotland, and Finland, data on wellbeing indicators must be made available in a timely manner (in accordance with policy and budgeting timelines) to support decision making and the development of action plans. The New Zealand Wellbeing Budget is the primary source of information for tracking wellbeing indicators. The budget includes a statutory requirement for a report on the status of child poverty and targets for addressing it (Government of New Zealand, 2019c), as well as a report on future trends, including comparisons with other countries where possible (The Treasury, 2018b). In addition, the Wellbeing Budget incorporates complementary data from the New Zealand General Social Survey, which contains subjective measures of wellbeing, and the Māori Wellbeing Survey (Te Kupenga), conducted by Statistics New Zealand. The latter is more reflective of Māori culture (Scott & Masselot, 2018; Statistics New Zealand, 2020).

In Finland, the 2030 Agenda (the country’s wellbeing framework) has been integrated into the policy planning cycles (annual and four-year) and the budget cycles, through various processes involving diverse actors. In particular, ministers must connect the monitoring of the 17 SDGs with the monitoring of wellbeing indicators and integrate this into their annual budget planning. Also, a multidisciplinary team composed of members of three organizations<sup>25</sup> is in charge of evaluating the 2030 Agenda and is expected to present its findings and recommendations prior to the parliamentary elections (Finnish Government, 2020). In Scotland, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are in place to support each budget decision. Other measures encourage actors to consider wellbeing indicators without forcing them to do so. For example, informally, Scottish ministers and policymakers are asked to specify whether spending has delivered the intended results, especially in relation to reducing social inequalities, by reviewing indicators in the National Performance Framework or other relevant frameworks (Scottish Government, 2019a). Unlike those required by New Zealand’s Wellbeing Budget, these analyses related to social inequalities are not mandatory. Rather, they are intended to complement more standard economic indicators in order to guide budgetary decisions.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> These are Demos Helsinki, Helsinki Institute of Sustainability Science (HELSUS) and the Finnish Environment Institute (SYKE) (Finnish Government, 2020).

<sup>26</sup> New Zealand’s Wellbeing Budget aims to heighten the accountability of ministers for achieving wellbeing targets. By law, they are obliged to use wellbeing indicators to guide decision making. However, some of the measures put forward by these governments are not mandatory, which raises a number of questions about the actual buy-in and participation of the various ministries, questions that are beyond the scope of this work.

#### **4.3.3 THE CREATION OR USE OF PUBLIC BODIES WHOSE MANDATE IS TO ENSURE THE IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING OF THE WELLBEING APPROACH**

Firstly, in all of these countries, senior public servants acted as policy entrepreneurs advocating for the adoption of the wellbeing approach and, subsequently, coordinating its implementation. For example, New Zealand's Minister of Finance is responsible for ensuring that ministries incorporate the new principles associated with the Wellbeing Budget and for coordinating the implementation of this initiative. Several tools have been developed by the New Zealand Treasury Board to facilitate the work of the various ministries, including a cost benefit analysis tool, the CBAX Tool<sup>27</sup> (discussed in the next section). In addition, public bodies have been assigned roles in ensuring the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of these approaches. For example, Finland has established the inter-ministerial Sustainable Development Coordination Network to coordinate the work of the National Commission on Sustainable Development, led by the Prime Minister and the Expert Panel for Sustainable Development (Finnish Government, 2020). In some cases, public bodies were given new responsibilities, including auditing, as was the case for the Wales Audit Office or the National Audit Office in Finland. In other cases, an independent body is mandated to ensure that the government meets its obligations with respect to the wellbeing goals. This is the case, for example, for a panel of expert advisors on sustainable development in Finland (Finnish Government, 2020).

New bodies can also be created. For example, a Future Generations Commissioner was appointed in Wales to act as the guardian of the application of the *WFG Act*. Since being appointed and taking office in 2016, she has published numerous reports, documents, and tools on her website<sup>28</sup> (e.g., FGCW, 2017a; 2017b; 2018; 2018b; 2019a; 2019b; 2019c). One of the Commissioner's main functions is to assess whether the various public bodies specified are integrating the principles of the Act, and to make recommendations or propose various tools to facilitate the desired changes. For example, the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales considered a £1.4 billion highway project in the City of Newport to be unacceptable because it did not meet environmental wellbeing objectives. The government ultimately abandoned the project. This assessment also helped lead to the rewriting of *Planning Policy Wales* (Welsh Government, 2021c) to bring it in line with the principles of the Act (McKinley, 2019). Every five years, the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales must also produce a report on the wellbeing of future generations. The first of these was published in 2020, four years after the law took effect, and three versions of the report are presented on the website (see FGCW, 2020a; 2020b; 2020c). This report contains several critical analyses related to implementation issues and highlights varied and inspiring initiatives at the local, regional, national and international levels.

#### **4.3.4 THE DEVELOPMENT OF TOOLS, GUIDES, POLICIES, TEAMS OR RESOURCES DEDICATED TO BUILDING CAPACITY FOR IMPLEMENTING THE WELLBEING APPROACH**

Numerous tools have been developed to facilitate the work of public servants and other stakeholders involved in implementing the whole-of-government wellbeing approaches studied. These tools are related to objective setting, indicator selection, planning, funding applications, report writing, etc. For example, the New Zealand Treasury Board has developed a tool for conducting cost-benefit analyses tied to the country's wellbeing indicators, the CBAX Tool (The Treasury, 2020). This tool helps to estimate the impacts on wellbeing of various actions carried out over a 50-year horizon and thus encourages the diverse actors to show solidarity with future generations. Another tool created by New Zealand's Ministry of Social Development (the Child Impact Assessment Tool) assesses the impact of policies on the wellbeing of children and adolescents (Ministry of Social Development of New Zealand, 2018, as cited in Durand & Exton, 2019).

<sup>27</sup> Cost benefit Analysis (CBA) Tool. This tool consists of an Excel spreadsheet that incorporates a database of impact values (The Treasury, 2020).

<sup>28</sup> See: <https://www.futuregenerations.wales/>.

In Finland, many tools have been developed to facilitate the participation of all (the public sector, businesses, municipalities, civil society, individuals) in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. These include: Green Deals, a tool that promotes the circular economy (waste reduction, material reuse, recycling, etc.) and climate change mitigation; and Society's Commitment to Sustainable Development, a tool launched in 2013 that includes eight wellbeing goals and a long-term vision for sustainable development (Finnish Government, 2020). In addition, Society's Commitment to Sustainable Development provides a strategy, a wellbeing framework, and a concrete policy instrument for implementing the 2030 Agenda (Berg et al., 2019). This tool calls on actors to formally declare their commitments. To meet with approval, these must be innovative, based on measurable objectives, and meet the principles of sustainable development<sup>29</sup> (Finnish Government, n.d.). Finnish citizens can also use the Sustainable Lifestyles tool to engage in more sustainable lifestyle choices, for example by calculating their personal carbon footprint<sup>30</sup> (Finnish Government, 2020).

Scotland has also put in place tools to promote overall wellbeing. Two of these are: the Scottish Government's Sustainable Procurement Tools, which assist in embedding sustainability into procurement processes; and a tool for strategic prioritization of procurement and commodity planning that takes into account circular economy considerations in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic recovery plans (Scottish Government, 2021b). Section 4.4 of this report presents some of the additional tools developed by public health actors in Scotland.

Wales has also developed a number of tools and strategies to facilitate integrating the principles of the *WFG Act* and producing the required departmental reports. Among other things, the Welsh Assembly has developed a toolkit, *Planning Policy Wales* (Welsh Government, 2021c), that helps stakeholders assess how proposed developments are likely to contribute to the economic, social, environmental, and cultural wellbeing of Wales. *Planning Policy Wales* is a guide to policy development aimed at ensuring that policies are consistent and integrated, are fundamentally in the public interest, and involve the right people. The goal is to maximize the contributions of all actors to the country's wellbeing objectives. The National Social Value Taskforce Wales (2021) has also produced the *National Social Value Measurement Framework For Wales*, a three-part guide that supports public and private organizations in assessing their contribution to the *WFG Act*, in terms of both financial and social benefits (e.g., job creation for people who have long been unemployed). Several strategic plans have also been developed in connection with the *WFG Act*, including *Future Wales: The National Plan 2040*, which targets all seven of the country's wellbeing goals at all levels of government (Welsh Government, 2021f). Other more focused strategic plans have also been produced to address loneliness and social isolation and promote mental health, such as *Connected communities: A strategy for tackling loneliness and social isolation and building stronger social connections* (Welsh Government, 2020b). Another example of a strategy is *A healthier Wales: Long term plan for health and social care* (Welsh Government, 2021d), which presents a comprehensive vision of a health and social services system oriented toward health promotion and disease prevention.

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<sup>29</sup> All the commitments that have been made can be viewed online: Sitoumus2050.fi: [https://sitoumus2050.fi/en\\_US/toimenpidesitoumukset#/?commitmentType=33553&category=organizations](https://sitoumus2050.fi/en_US/toimenpidesitoumukset#/?commitmentType=33553&category=organizations).

<sup>30</sup> The firm implementing this tool, the Finnish Innovation Fund Sitra, and the Prime Minister's Office in Finland are prepared to support legislation that would see this tool adapted to their national context: [https://sitoumus2050.fi/en\\_US/lifestyles#/](https://sitoumus2050.fi/en_US/lifestyles#/).

#### **4.3.5 THE CONSULTATION OF VARIOUS EXPERTS AND CITIZENS AND THE SETTING UP OF INDEPENDENT COMMISSIONS**

These wellbeing approaches also rely on a variety of resources external to government that function as implementation and evaluation mechanisms (expert committees or panels, commissions, citizen groups including young citizens) to guide policy choices related to wellbeing. As an example, the Welsh government consulted with multiple stakeholders on the choice of milestones for progress in social, economic, environmental, and cultural wellbeing in the country (Welsh Government, 2019c). Finland seems to stand out for having embedded numerous democratic processes in policy cycles. For example, the national indicators are regularly updated by the National Follow-up Network, an expert group chaired by the Prime Minister (and consisting of representatives from ministries, Statistics Finland and other partners, including some from research institutions). Among other things, this group is mandated to publish an interpretative text comparing Finland's results to those expected by the country and to those of other countries. In addition, a citizen panel composed of 500 volunteers is asked to comment on the interpretative texts produced by ranking the results in a table available online. The rankings assess recent developments and the state of affairs with regard to sustainable development (on a scale from good to bad), and reflect the average of the assessments of all the panel members (Finnish Government, 2020). Also in Finland, the National Commission on Sustainable Development organizes an annual event to discuss the current and future state of sustainable development (Finnish Government, 2020). Finally, the Finnish government has committed to setting up an independent commission every four years, toward the end of the electoral period, to evaluate public policies and the country's progress toward sustainable development (Finnish Government, 2020).

#### **4.3.6 PUBLIC AWARENESS AND COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGNS**

To ensure the successful implementation of these approaches within the broad population, the countries studied have undertaken, to varying degrees, communication and awareness campaigns aimed at the general public. Such promotion includes short communications written in plain language. For example, in Wales, information on the Future Generations Framework is available in documentation using simple infographics (e.g., Cynnal Cymru-Sustain Wales, 2015; Welsh Government, 2021b; 2016a). Some documents are specifically designed for youth (e.g., Welsh Government, 2017c). In Finland, the government conducted an awareness-raising campaign for civil society and the private sector. The intent was to promote the importance of sustainable development and support an economic paradigm shift toward a circular wellbeing economy. This included the use of advertising displays on public transit services and promotion on social media (Finnish Government, 2020).

### **4.4 Contributions of public health actors to the implementation and monitoring of the wellbeing approaches**

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According to the documents consulted, public health actors contribute through their actions to the achievement of the central governments' wellbeing objectives. These actors include the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare<sup>31</sup> in Finland; Public Health Scotland in Scotland; Public Health Wales in Wales; and the New Zealand Ministry of Health (whose mandate includes public health provision). These contributions are described below.

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<sup>31</sup> Sometimes also called the National Institute for Health and Welfare.

#### **4.4.1 ROLES RELATED TO IMPLEMENTING THE WELLBEING APPROACH AND ACHIEVING THE COUNTRY'S WELLBEING OBJECTIVES**

Public health actors play crucial roles in the implementation of wellbeing approaches, in particular by providing leadership, coordination and support for the various stakeholders. It should be noted that we found significantly more public health documents on this subject in Wales than in the other jurisdictions studied (see Box 6). This does not mean, however, that public health actors in other countries have not contributed to the implementation of wellbeing approaches in their jurisdictions. In this regard, New Zealand's Ministry of Health (whose mandate includes public health) has played a role in leading and coordinating the implementation of action plans related to wellbeing priorities, among others those related to mental health, addiction and primary health care services (Ministry of Health New Zealand, 2020).

##### **Box 6. Participation of Public Health Wales in implementing the *WFG Act***

Public Health Wales is obligated under the *WFG Act* to collaborate on the development of regional wellbeing plans and to contribute to the development of wellbeing objectives, including as a member of regional Public Services Boards (PSBs) (Welsh Government, 2015a). Public Health Wales also participated in public consultations conducted prior to the legislation being passed (Messham & Sheard, 2020), and subsequently participated in several collaborative projects with other actors (FGCW, 2019a). It is also important to note that the *WFG Act* in Wales is closely associated with a Health in All Policies initiative and thus strengthens public health mandates targeting the determinants of health (WHOROE, 2017). Public Health Wales has also established a team, the Health and Sustainability Hub, whose mandate is to support the implementation of the *WFG Act* (Hands et al., 2019). In addition, the Health Impact Assessment Support Unit of the WHO Collaborating Centre on Investment for Health and Well-being, which is affiliated with Public Health Wales, was created to build capacity for conducting health impact assessments of public policies related to the *WFG Act* (Green et al., 2021). This group provides advice, recommendations, and training to guide policy decisions (Green et al., 2021).

According to the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales (2020), pertaining to the *WFG Act*, Public Health Wales stands out for having engaged in activities and actions related to planning, strategy development, and decision making, as well as for having set a strategic direction and for looking at ways of communicating and demonstrating progress differently (FGCW, 2019a). Public Health Wales has demonstrated leadership by integrating the principles of the *WFG Act* into its operations, in particular by prioritizing action aimed at achieving the seven wellbeing objectives and at implementing the five ways of working (i.e., by focusing on long-term planning, prevention of problems and their exacerbation, integration of the various wellbeing objectives, collaboration with various actors, and involvement of people of all ages). Public Health Wales has, among other things, furnished its offices with second-hand materials and worked with local communities on various health promotion projects (FGCW, 2019a).

#### **4.4.2 PUBLISHING EPIDEMIOLOGICAL DATA, SURVEY REPORTS, TOOLS, INTERVENTION STRATEGIES**

As part of their mandate, public health actors provide knowledge and data on wellbeing indicators (e.g., life expectancy, mortality and morbidity rates, gender inequalities, ethnic groups, socioeconomic classes, etc.) through various publications. Their publications facilitate the assimilation of the wellbeing approach, help guide decisions and enable evaluation of the impacts of actions and policies. In addition, the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare is one of 23 Finnish



public bodies that are required to provide data for the national database on sustainable development indicators (Finnish Government, 2020).

Public health actors also produce several other documents that help track trends and measure progress toward wellbeing goals. Since one of the goals of wellbeing approaches is to strive for equality of opportunity and social justice as regards wellbeing, disaggregated reporting of indicator data is particularly important. This is a concern for Public Health Scotland, which publishes data associated with the National Health and Wellbeing Outcomes (Scottish Government, 2015) and the National Performance Framework indicators, in an effort to identify social inequalities and group-specific results (Public Health Scotland, 2021d). Similarly, the morbidity index of the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare provides a portrait of the health status of the population and health inequalities within it, along with comparisons to other jurisdictions (Finnish Government, 2020). Table 2 describes some of the many publications produced by public health actors in Wales.

**Table 2 Examples of publications by public health actors related to the *Wellbeing of Future Generations Act***

<p><b>Studies and reviews of the current state of knowledge on wellbeing indicators and objectives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Making a difference: Investing in sustainable health and well-being for the people of Wales. Supporting evidence</i> (Public Health Wales, 2016). This document presents the current state of knowledge on various effective measures related to, among other issues, the prevention of diseases, the reduction of health inequalities, and the promotion of a sustainable economy, a prosperous society, and the wellbeing of present and future generations.</li> <li>▪ <i>Research into the potential impact of future trends on existing inequalities in Wales</i> (FGCW, 2021b, January). This research project, initiated in 2021, aims to reduce health inequalities by discerning future trends that may affect health and by identifying wellbeing indicators, with a particular focus on the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. This public health study is being conducted in collaboration with the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales.</li> <li>▪ <i>A basic income to improve population health and well-being in Wales?</i> (Jones, 2021). This paper from Public Health Wales details the results of a study on the impacts of a guaranteed minimum income on health and wellbeing and is intended to guide policy choices.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Implementation tools, strategies and recommendations related to the <i>Wellbeing of Future Generations Act</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Public Health Outcomes Framework</i> (Public Health Wales, 2019). This framework presents the most significant outcomes for public health linked to the 46 wellbeing indicators and their milestones. It aims to guide actions so as to protect health and promote wellbeing. This framework is regularly updated, as are the associated tools and documents (e.g., user guides and indicator maps), which are used by various actors (e.g., from the government, public services communities).</li> <li>▪ <i>Three horizons: A toolkit to help you think and plan for the long-term</i> (Future Generations Commissioner for Wales &amp; Public Health Wales, 2019). This is a “toolbox” intended to assist in long-term decision making.</li> <li>▪ <i>Futures for Wales</i> (Graham et al., 2018). This report includes 14 recommendations for the various public bodies covered by the <i>WFG Act</i> to help them make concern for the future a central consideration of their planning activities.</li> <li>▪ <i>Planning and Enabling Healthy Environments. Incorporating a template for planning policy</i> (Public Health Wales, 2021). This paper focuses on the links between the environment, health and social inequalities. It presents plans and public policies that can impact the health and wellbeing of individuals, communities and the environment.</li> <li>▪ <i>How to make the case for sustainable investment in well-being and health equity: A practical guide</i> (Dyakova et al., 2019). This guide is presented in the form of interactive modules to assist in the country-wide implementation of the <i>WFG Act</i>. It comprises a guide to advocating for equity in health and wellbeing at the international level.</li> </ul>

#### **4.4.3 ACTING AS AN ADVISOR AND AN ADVOCATE AND EXERTING INFLUENCE TO SUPPORT THE SUCCESS OF PROJECTS THAT PROMOTE HEALTH AND WELLBEING**

As experts in population health and health prevention, various public health actors contribute to the implementation of these whole-of-government approaches. They do this by advising decision makers (in government bodies and parapublic agencies), by acting as advocates and by trying to influence their choices. They participate in working groups and share their knowledge and expertise in order to develop projects and public policies that foster the health and wellbeing of populations. Among other things, Public Health Wales serves on the expert panel that advises the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales, and is a member of the regional PSBs. Public Health Wales thus provides knowledge that influences decisions related to combatting health inequalities as well as to promoting prevention in the area of health and wellbeing (e.g., preventing teen pregnancy or adverse childhood experiences) (Cynnal Cymru-Sustain Wales 2015). Public Health Scotland (2021) is urging the Scottish government to act on growing health inequalities and has participated with NHS Health Scotland in the National Taskforce for Human Rights Leadership, which is responsible for making recommendations related to human rights in Scotland (Public Health Scotland, 2021b).

Finally, public health actors participate in discussions, debates and the exchange of ideas on wellbeing approaches through opinion pieces (e.g., articles, editorials, commentaries, blogs) or oral communications (e.g., conferences, webinars). The Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare publishes various critical articles on its website focused on the concept of wellbeing economics (e.g., Vaalavuo, 2019; Linnosmaa, 2019; Moisio, 2021).

### **4.5 Challenges in implementing the wellbeing approaches**

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The documents consulted report several challenges related to the implementation of these approaches. The main difficulties are presented here.

#### **4.5.1 PARTIAL, SUPERFICIAL AND OVERLY SLOW IMPLEMENTATION OF THE APPROACH**

The literature consulted reports that the implementation of these approaches is partial, superficial and too slow, which creates problems of consistency among the various public policies. Even in Finland, which leads all countries in terms of achieving the SDGs (Finnish Government, 2021a), several outcomes are considered unsatisfactory, including those related to the consumption and production of goods, action on climate and biodiversity, obesity, and gender equity (Finnish Government, 2021a). Similarly, in Scotland, despite the adoption of the National Performance Framework to guide policy choices, an independent commission (Trebek & Baker, 2020) points to the persistence of problems such as child poverty and high suicide rates.

Several factors can explain this overly slow and partial integration. Often, the various policies and laws of these countries are not sufficiently aligned to ensure the optimal integration of wellbeing approaches. For example, in Wales, various public bodies are required to integrate sustainable development principles without being required to report on progress in meeting wellbeing objectives. Also, some Welsh public servants apply the prescribed wellbeing approach as if it were simply “another thing to do,” while seeing little connection between the national wellbeing objectives and their day-to-day work (Welsh Parliament Public Account Committee, 2020). Various official Welsh reports have found that the five ways of working in accordance with the sustainable development principle are only very partially integrated into the operations of the government and other public bodies. All of these findings related to the Welsh wellbeing approach indicate that at this rate, targets are unlikely to be met (e.g., for climate change or poverty reduction) (FGCW, 2020a; Audit Wales, 2020).

In Scotland and Wales, there is also too little integration of wellbeing objectives into budgetary processes. For example, although the budget in Scotland is linked to the *Equality Act 2010*, which stipulates that a report focused on equity issues must accompany the budget, this report is not produced until after the budget is written, making it ineffective in influencing budget decisions (Trebek & Baker, 2020).

According to Anne-Marie Conlong of the Scottish Government's Performance Unit (as cited in Durand, 2018), in Scotland, the adoption of the National Performance Framework has positively transformed the culture, leadership, and ways of working within the government and its agencies. However, the integration of the National Performance Framework is uneven across different government sectors and departments and across different levels of government (Scottish Government, 2021b). For example, the National Performance Framework is used very little within the departments of health and education (Wallace, 2019). As for Finland, while the 2030 Agenda functions as a framework for many strategies and public policies, only a few ministries put it to practical use. Ensuring the overall coherence of the 2030 Agenda therefore remains an important challenge at the national, European and international levels (Finnish Government, 2020). Furthermore, despite the Finnish commitment to the SDGs, according to Berg and colleagues (2019), change is slow to occur due to the compartmentalization of issues, the lack of a clear and shared vision concerning the changes desired, and the absence of a comprehensive plan for achieving the SDGs.

#### **4.5.2 THE MISUNDERSTANDING AND SIMPLIFICATION OF WELLBEING GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

Often, wellbeing objectives appear to be only partially understood within the government. This can be observed, for example, in relation to the implementation of the *WFG Act* in Wales (Hands et al., 2019) or the National Performance Framework in Scotland. As Durand and Exton (2019) point out, ten years after the introduction of the National Performance Framework in Scotland, public servants are still struggling to integrate the framework into their decision making. This problem is complex. It is partly due to insufficient resources being allocated to implementing the approach (e.g., training staff on the new ways of developing public policy). Also, poor understanding of the objectives can result in individuals becoming disengaged from the wellbeing initiatives (Welsh Parliament Public Account Committee, 2020). In Wales, there are also challenges related to formulating simple key messages that would enable relevant actors to understand how the multiple components of the *WFG Act* work together (WHOROE, 2017). In the Welsh case, many government publications adhere to narrow definitions of the national wellbeing objectives, and many strategies and policies are reportedly not connected to the *WFG Act* (FGCW, 2017).

As a concrete example of goal simplification, several public bodies covered by the *WFG Act* report incorporating the goal of ensuring a “prosperous Wales” through projects targeting education, employment, poverty, or GDP. However, as the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales points out, these public bodies very often omit important dimensions of this goal. Indeed, it is not only a question of creating “jobs,” but of having “decent jobs.” It is not just about stimulating the “economy,” but about stimulating the “local economy,” “fair and local” procurement, etc. (FGCW, 2020c). According to official reports, these partial applications often result in changes “on paper,” rather than actual changes (FGCW, 2020a; Wales Audit, 2020). These gaps complexify and complicate the implementation of the wellbeing approach within the various Welsh departments (FGCW, 2020a).

### 4.5.3 DIFFICULTY IN ACTING PREVENTIVELY AND PLANNING FOR THE LONG TERM

According to Wallace (2019), while the National Performance Framework in Scotland allows members of the government apparatus to share a common vision and a common language, it is not clear that this framework provides a vision that supports real change for Scotland's future. Challenges include being able to plan long term, for periods extending several years beyond election cycles, and considering future generations (WHOROE, 2017). Berg and colleagues (2019) pinpoint, among other things, various actors' conflicts of interest (e.g., immediate gains and commercial profits versus long-term gains for society, the environment, or human rights). According to a report by the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales, short-term thinking and the attraction of immediate gains are blocking plans focused on the long term, such as passing legislation that strengthens preventive measures. Moreover, government demands for accountability on certain levels still arise from short-term thinking, and thus prevent long-term planning (FGCW, 2020c).

### 4.5.4 PUBLIC POLICIES OR STRATEGIES THAT COMPETE AGAINST THE WELLBEING APPROACH

Among the difficulties mentioned in relation to the implementation of these whole-of-government wellbeing approaches is the problem of consistency across public policies, with some even contradicting or competing with each other (FGCW, 2020a; Finnish Government, 2020; Rae et al., 2019). For example, in Finland, having two reference frameworks linked to sustainable development has caused confusion among the various actors (Berg et al., 2019; Finnish Government, 2020). Several of them only make use of the 2030 Agenda and fail to take into account the other framework, Society's Commitment to Sustainable Development - The Finland we want by 2050, which was launched in 2015, even before the 2030 Agenda. The Society's Commitment framework is now mainly put forth as one of the principal tools for implementing the 2030 Agenda (Finnish Government, 2020). In Scotland, several frameworks, rationales for action, and even the budget compete with the National Performance Framework (Trebeck & Baker, 2020). The Future Generations Commissioner for Wales asserts that the Welsh government persists in introducing new policies, legislation, and assessments that do not take into account the *WFG Act*, which makes it difficult to integrate the wellbeing approach into the activities of the various actors (FGCW, 2020a).

As another example of a contradiction, Welsh stakeholders continue to establish new local councils rather than to engage with the PSBs created under the Act (FGCW, 2020). Among other things, the Welsh government proposes to pass a Social Partnership Bill to increase equality. This project raises several questions about how the bill aligns with the *WFG Act*, which does not appear to be sufficiently clear (Welsh Government, 2020a). Such competing laws and strategies can lead to confusion, frustration, duplication of effort (e.g., related to accountability), and conflicting demands on various levels of government and on other actors subject to the Act (FGCW, 2020). These problems, according to the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales, are related to insufficient integration of the various wellbeing objectives, difficulty drawing connections between different contexts and issues, and funding decisions that disregard the *WFG Act* (FGCW, 2019a).

Finally, some wellbeing goals may also compete with each other and, additionally, political will may be required to go against more popular choices. For example, focusing on environmental preservation (e.g., decarbonization) generally has little immediate positive impact on the wellbeing of individuals. Thus, some goals come with costs and sacrifices for the public that policymakers do not seem willing to impose.

#### **4.5.5 DIFFICULTIES OF DEVOLVED COUNTRIES IN MODIFYING BUDGETING PROCESSES RELATED TO WELLBEING APPROACHES**

Like New Zealand, Scotland and Wales have begun work to link their national budgets to their wellbeing frameworks. However, their devolved status, which in some respects resembles the status of provinces and territories in Canada, limits their ability to govern themselves and to carry out desired reforms. For example, the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales has repeatedly recommended since 2017 that the Welsh government adopt a wellbeing budget model (FGCW, 2020a; 2020d; 2021a). However, while the Welsh government plans to explore this possibility (Welsh Government, 2019b), it laments that UK funding transfers and their associated conditions do not allow for multi-year funding, or for other reforms that would lead to better long-term planning (Welsh Parliament Public Account Committee, 2020; 2021). In the case of Scotland, the government does not have the power to adjust the tax mix, viewed as inadequate, or corporate taxes. The Scottish Government believes its powers are too limited for it to make the borrowing and fiscal arrangements necessary for budgetary reform and laments having little control over immigration, which is particularly important in building the country's workforce (Scottish Government, 2021c).

#### **4.5.6 THE CHALLENGES OF CHOOSING INDICATORS TO MEASURE VARIOUS DIMENSIONS OF WELLBEING AND OF OBTAINING DATA TO GUIDE DECISION MAKING AND MEASURE SUCCESS AND PROGRESS**

Much work remains to be done to make it possible to measure the contribution of public policies to social progress using precise indicators. Several factors impede the availability of data on wellbeing indicators that complement GDP and are needed to inform policy decisions in the countries studied. A report by the Wales Centre for Public Policy (Smith, 2021) points to a lack of capacity for analyzing issues linked to inequality, which undermines the achievement of one of the country's seven wellbeing goals, "a more equal Wales." Similar issues are also reported in Scotland, where gender-disaggregated data are difficult to obtain (Rae et al., 2019). A national commission in Finland also concludes that the use of indicators is insufficiently systematic and overly fragmented across sectors and argues that too many indicators are not clearly linked to national targets (Berg et al., 2019). Moreover, in Finland, although sustainability indicators related to environmental factors have been relatively well integrated into public policy, this seems to be less true for indicators related to social factors (Finnish Government, 2020). For one thing, the collection of data on minority group membership (based on skin colour, ethnic group, indigenous status, disability) is rarely accepted in Finland for ethical reasons, which means there is a lack of disaggregated data with which to monitor certain social indicators, for instance social inequality (Finnish Government, 2020). In New Zealand, non-individual indicators are given less consideration (e.g., family, cultural capital, indigenous perspectives, and economic endeavours) (Dalziel, 2019b). The government recognizes that it does not sufficiently incorporate the vision of wellbeing held by Māori and Pacific Peoples. Indeed, although the He Arotahi Tatauranga statistical framework of Statistics New Zealand includes four Māori-specific domains, including: *wairua* (spirituality), *tikanga* (Māori customary practices), *te reo Māori* (the Māori language), and *whanaungatanga* (social connectedness) (Dalziel, 2019), these domains are not yet well integrated into the latest iteration of the Living Standard Framework (The Treasury, 2021). However, Statistics New Zealand is working to address this issue, with changes expected in late 2021 (Government of New Zealand, 2019).

Choosing the right indicators also remains a challenge. Continued research in this field is thus essential. For example, in Wales, a study by the Newcastle City Council (Social Finance, 2016) found that, for young people, the indicator that best predicted the risk of being not in education, employment or training (NEET) is not the failure to graduate from high school. Instead, the best indicator is having "had as little as six interactions with social services," which is associated among

youth with having spent almost three times longer “out of education or training” (FGCW, 2020c; Social Finance, 2016).

#### **4.5.7 AN IMBALANCE BETWEEN THE TIME SPENT COLLECTING DATA ON WELLBEING INDICATORS AND THE CONCRETE ACTIONS TAKEN**

The frameworks comprise many indicators (from 45 indicators in Finland to 81 in Scotland). These serve as guides for overall state governance, especially for developing roadmaps to achieving wellbeing goals and planning for the future while taking into account the complexity and interrelatedness of the various issues. However, one risk that has raised concern is that efforts to compile and analyze data may come at the expense of taking action (Durand & Exton, 2019). This problem has in fact been reported in connection with a public policy cost benefit assessment tool developed in New Zealand (the CBAX) (The Treasury, 2020), for use with its Wellbeing Budget (Durand and Exton, 2019).

#### **4.5.8 AN IMBALANCE IN THE SHARING OF POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES BETWEEN CENTRAL GOVERNMENT, OTHER LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT AND OTHER ACTORS**

Although the wellbeing approaches studied aim, in principle, to include the participation of various actors, they are seen as essentially top-down in Scotland and Wales, among other places (Audit Wales, 2020; Wallace, 2019). According to Wallace (2019), there is no evidence that the Scottish wellbeing approach contributes to increasing the participation of different groups in democratic processes. In Wales, wellbeing objectives are thought to have been chosen by too few actors. Indeed, various actors who are supposed to be involved under the *WFG Act* are not meaningfully involved in decision-making processes (FGCW, 2019; Audit Wales, 2020). In New Zealand as well, the unequal sharing of responsibilities between different levels of government is raised as an issue (Delziel, 2019a; McKinlay, 2019). It is felt that the centralized approach cannot sufficiently take into account the contexts, preferences and priorities of individuals, families, the *whānau* (a group of families recognized as the fundamental unit of Māori society) and communities in New Zealand. Moreover, such centralization feeds into preexisting tensions in New Zealand between central and local governments, as the latter have very little responsibility for developing, identifying, or administering important services (McKinlay, 2019).

## **4.6 Elements that can support the implementation of a wellbeing approach**

The documents consulted also identified pathways toward the successful implementation of the wellbeing approaches put forward by the central governments studied. This section presents a list, although incomplete, of solutions that help better support the implementation of these approaches.

### **4.6.1 PROVIDING SUPPORT FOR CULTURE CHANGE**

Changing work culture and ways of working together requires a great deal of effort from different government sectors and is one of the main challenges faced in integrating these approaches. As Exton and Shinwell (2018) have pointed out, “in most cases, these initiatives are only a few years old. Therefore, it will be essential to provide support to public bodies not only to ensure the sustainability of these mechanisms over time, but also to pilot them through the different policy cycles” (p. 5). To bring about a culture change, the objectives must also be well understood, which is why it is important to commit the resources necessary for their support and to focus on capacity building (FGCW, 2019a; Welsh Parliament Public Account Committee, 2020; 2021). Berg and colleagues (2019) recommend, among other things, that Finland draw on change theories and partner with various actors to develop a roadmap leading to the desired changes. Training needs to be provided

so that actors can assimilate the new work culture and take a holistic approach to integrating the various national wellbeing targets, which are too often viewed as separate and even in competition with each other (Hands et al., 2019). Thus, tools and information materials need to be developed to assist the various actors in the government apparatus, in paragovernmental organizations, or in the private sector in more fully integrating the wellbeing approach into everything they do (Durand & Exton, 2019, p. 159). For example, in Wales, one of the main projects of the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales is the series of documents *The Art of the Possible – Simple Changes*, which suggests various concrete steps that public bodies can take, including 80 proposals for “simple changes”<sup>32</sup> through which they can better contribute to Wales' wellbeing objectives (FGCW, 2018b). Several other examples of capacity building can be underscored, some of which were initiated by public health actors.

The use of a variety of policy instruments can also provide incentive for change. Among other things, according to Durand and Exton (2019), approaches that are buttressed by legislation may benefit from sustainability, as future governments will not be able to easily modify or repeal laws. In fact, all four of the approaches studied are linked to legislation that is intended to hold various authorities and public bodies accountable for their decisions and actions (see Appendices 4, 5, 6, and 7 for more details). Also, since legislation cannot be passed without being debated in parliament, it can potentially generate more debate, discussion, and consensus surrounding the project in question (Durand & Exton, 2019).

#### **4.6.2 PROVIDING CENTRAL GOVERNMENT LEADERSHIP TO SUPPORT THE INTEGRATION OF WHOLE-OF-GOVERNMENT WELLBEING APPROACHES**

Durand and Exton (2019) believe that the central government must demonstrate leadership to encourage the various levels of government, government agencies, and other partners, such as the private sector, to adopt the proposed wellbeing approach. This includes leading by example, as suggested by a Finnish commission that recommends the government make wellbeing objectives central to all activities (Berg et al., 2019). Individual stakeholders also need to provide leadership by directing their actions toward sustainable development and ensuring that other political goals, such as profit generation, do not supplant it (Berg et al., 2019). The same commission also recommends that foreign policies be more focused on sustainable and global development, with the aim of leaving no one behind.

With an eye toward the difficulty institutions have in planning with future generations in mind, the Welsh government commissioned Public Health Wales and NSH Trust UK to make recommendations, resulting in the report *Futures for Wales* (Graham et al., 2018). The report offers 14 key recommendations to public organizations, including better embedding consideration for the future into planning activities, building futures work capacity and skills, investing in future tools and methods, and seeking the involvement of citizens and stakeholders. With regard to health specifically, this report recommends: focusing on early diagnoses of health issues; taking preventive action; adopting a Health in All Policies approach; conducting more health impact assessments; and ensuring professional practice standards through competency certifications and training in the sustainable development principle (Graham et al., 2018).

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<sup>32</sup> To learn more about these simple changes: <https://www.futuregenerations.wales/simple-changes/>.

#### 4.6.3 INTEGRATING WELLBEING OBJECTIVES MORE FULLY INTO POLICY PROCESSES, INCLUDING BUDGETING PROCESSES

Several authors suggest that governments should further integrate their wellbeing goals into their policy and budgeting processes, drawing inspiration from New Zealand (Finnish Government, 2020; Trebeck & Baker, 2020). For example, one commission recommends that Scotland align its budgeting processes with the objectives of the National Performance Framework and the targets of the *Child Poverty Act* (Trebeck and Baker, 2020). One of the perceived benefits of a wellbeing budget, according to the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales, is it provides the ability to plan for desired changes over the long term. However, the Commissioner points to many challenges facing Wales, such as austerity policies, political instability (leaving the European Union), or crises such as that caused by COVID-19 (FGCW, 2020b). Multi-year budgets such as those introduced in New Zealand can also encourage long-term funding of projects (FGCW, 2020b). Finally, there is still much to be done to integrate wellbeing objectives into the full range of policy processes and cycles. As the Finnish government points out in its report linked to the 2030 Agenda:

Challenges remain in ensuring that all the phases of the policy cycle are interconnected in a systematic way: policy planning should guide the preparation of the budget, and reporting should clearly indicate how the Government has succeeded in the allocation of resources into policy areas that promote sustainable development in a desired manner (Finnish Government, 2020, p. 9).

#### 4.6.4 ENCOURAGING THE ACTIVE PARTICIPATION OF COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

Because the notion of wellbeing may differ from community to community, authors emphasize the importance of a bottom-up approach to wellbeing that promotes local initiatives so as to capture the varying wellbeing contexts, preferences and priorities of people, *whānau*, and communities in New Zealand (McKinlay, 2019). It is possible to cite several cases of community mobilization in Wales. For example, Monmouthshire Council has developed a procurement strategy that targets local purchasing and job creation, and contributes to several national wellbeing goals, including resilience, prosperity, global responsibility, and socially cohesive communities (FGCW, 2019a).

In response to criticism that the New Zealand approach is overly centralized, the New Zealand Minister of Local Government has proposed a form of co-governance that includes ongoing dialogue with communities and citizens (McKinlay, 2019). In addition, the New Zealand government repealed the *State Sector Act 1988* in 2020 to make the public sector more citizen-centric and cross-sectoral (Government of New Zealand, 2020c). In New Zealand, the Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission (2021) has also recommended that the New Zealand government strengthen the powers of regional and local governments to better promote community wellbeing in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Also, a report by the Treasury Board and the Minister for Māori Development (Te Puni Kōkiri & The Treasury, 2019) recommends drawing on Māori knowledge and perspectives to promote intergenerational wellbeing through all New Zealand policies and to address wellbeing inequalities among Indigenous peoples (e.g., lower levels of wellbeing capital, inequitable access to resources and tools to promote their wellbeing). Also, Statistics New Zealand is working to incorporate indicators that better reflect a conceptualization of wellbeing that is collective and *whānau*-centered, in accordance with the partnership principles set out in the Treaty of Waitangi<sup>33</sup> (Te Puni Kōkiri & The Treasury, 2019).

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<sup>33</sup> The 1975 Treaty of Waitangi requires that New Zealand policy formally recognize Indigenous peoples. It is based on four principles: 1) partnership or working together with other *iwi* (tribes), *hapū* (subtribes/kinship groups), *whānau* (family groups), and Māori communities; 2) participation, the involvement of Māori at all levels of decision-making, planning,



#### **4.6.5 SELECTING A PUBLIC BODY TO ACT AS GUARDIAN OF THE WELLBEING INITIATIVE AND LEVERAGING THE CONTRIBUTION OF VARIOUS PUBLIC BODIES**

There are a number of ways to ensure that the required changes are implemented. For example, various actors could be involved in naming a public body to act as the guardian of the approach, and thereby hold the government and other stakeholders to account. In Scotland, for example, an independent report commissioned by Children Scotland, Cattanach, and the Carnegie UK Trust, (Trebeck & Baker, 2020) recommends establishing an independent office responsible for monitoring decisions related to children's wellbeing, drawing inspiration from the example of the mandate given to the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales. As mentioned earlier, the Commissioner plays a unique role as guardian of the wellbeing of future generations and, most importantly, she is mandated to ensure that the Act is respected and applied.

Leveraging the contribution of various actors also helps integrate the wellbeing approach. In order for decisions to be guided by recent data, these data must be known to exist, be reliable and be available (Finnish Government, 2020). One way to limit the time spent compiling data is to rely on indicator data collected by a variety of governmental or non-governmental agencies. Thus, in Finland, 22 public bodies contribute data related to the 2030 Agenda. Various actors can also participate in assessing the approaches. For example, Audit General Wales has specific mandates, including that of assessing the performance of various stakeholders relative to achieving the country's wellbeing objectives, and making related recommendations. A national commission in Finland recommends strengthening groups that have mandates to evaluate and advise, such as the expert panel in Finland, and using the work of these groups to support the country's wellbeing approach (Berg et al., 2019).

#### **4.6.6 IDENTIFYING BEST PRACTICES AND LESSONS LEARNED**

Since the approaches studied were all recently introduced, it is important to consider the steps to come as the governments of the countries studied are doing. As Kate Forbes, Scotland's Cabinet Secretary for Finance, also points out: "Scotland, by putting wellbeing at the heart of everything we do, is on a journey and we have significant roads still to travel" (Forbes, 2020, paragraph 5). Also, according to New Zealand's Minister of Finance, the Wellbeing Budget marks the first step in a long journey toward integrating wellbeing concerns into public policy and toward achieving concrete results tied to wellbeing targets related to child poverty or climate change, for example (Government of New Zealand, 2019a; Robson, 2020).

Moreover, all of these central government approaches are largely based on long-term goals toward which it is necessary to measure progress. Thus, to better plan for the future, the *WFG Act* requires the government to establish measurable milestones linked to the wellbeing indicators, and to do so by 2050. To better plan how to move forward, it is important to be able to highlight the good that has been achieved as well as the aspects that need improving. This can be accomplished by analyzing processes, conducting multiple assessments, and involving a variety of actors, including some from government, civil society, and the private sector (Wellbeing Economy Alliance, 2020).

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development and delivery services; 3) protection, which involves the Government working to ensure Māori have at least the same level of health as non-Māori; and 4) safeguarding Māori cultural concepts, values and practices (Ferdinand et al., 2020, p. 5).



## 5 Conclusion

This largely descriptive comparative analysis of four central government wellbeing approaches, namely those of the governments of Scotland, Finland, New Zealand and Wales, draws primarily on documentation from governmental, non-governmental and international agencies. While this work does not provide evidence of the effectiveness of the wellbeing approaches studied at increasing overall wellbeing in these countries, it does convey the intentions expressed by these governments and by various stakeholders, who are committed to a different way of thinking about progress and the economy. By adopting a wellbeing approach and a framework with its associated indicators, governments equip themselves with policy instruments that apply to the entire government apparatus. One strategy is to use wellbeing indicators that go “beyond GDP” to guide policy choices toward what matters most to people and communities, which is wellbeing, without compromising the wellbeing of future generations and the planet.

Faced with the health crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has revealed the flaws in our societies, and facing growing social inequalities and the multiplication of environmental emergencies, governments in Canada may wish to draw inspiration from these models to “build back better” and improve the wellbeing of individuals and communities. Studying these experiences has allowed for the identification of similarities and differences between the different approaches. Key similarities include adhering to a whole-of-government approach and being guided by a wellbeing framework. Also, in all these approaches, wellbeing is linked to multiple dimensions, indicators, and political and social priorities, such as human, economic, and social development, which touch on many aspects of life, including health, equity, and culture. The approaches are based on more than material growth, as measured by GDP, which cannot account for wellbeing or inequality among people (Fioramonti et al., 2022). They nevertheless include objectives linked to economic prosperity, such as job creation, support for technological and social innovation, and the stimulation of various economic sectors, which are determinants of individual wellbeing. Spending (e.g., on education, health, culture) is seen as an investment in overall wellbeing that will also reduce future fiscal liabilities. Prosperity is integral to a vision of a future that many people desire and that necessarily involves commitments not only to human development and individual wellbeing, but also to the environment, through decarbonization and the use of green energy (Welsh Government, 2019d).

These approaches are also tied to commitments of solidarity with other countries and to global concerns, given the major problems that extend beyond their countries’ borders. The problems related to climate change, the loss of biodiversity or the COVID-19 pandemic serve as examples. Finland, Scotland, Wales, New Zealand and Iceland have formed the Wellbeing Economy Governments Partnership (WEGo) to exchange information on the public policies associated with a wellbeing economy that are most likely to bring about the desired changes. Among the contrasts between the approaches is the differing extent to which wellbeing goals have been integrated into budgeting processes. New Zealand is distinguished by its Wellbeing Budget. The New Zealand approach is described as more centralized, while Finland and Wales rely more on the participation of multiple actors. In Finland, for example, several democratic processes are incorporated into policy cycles. Moreover, these countries have differing political regimes. In particular, the devolved governments of Scotland and Wales are limited in their ability to fulfill certain plans, such as the introduction of wellbeing budgets, because they must rely on transfers from the United Kingdom.

Also worth highlighting is the significant contribution of public health actors to the implementation of whole-of-government wellbeing approaches. Firstly, these recently introduced approaches, although the subject of few evaluations, appear to hold promise for the overall health and wellbeing of societies, since they are based in principle on concrete wellbeing indicators, which are derived from

scientific knowledge and evidence. Public health actors will have a role to play in the selection and development of future wellbeing indicators. Additionally, the concept of wellbeing, although poorly defined, is characterized as multidimensional. It encompasses many of the determinants of health, which are thus taken into account in these approaches that focus on prevention and long-term planning, while building on the potential of individuals and communities. These same principles are at the heart of health promotion (World Health Organization, 1986), and of public health concerns. In addition, the approaches studied rely on intersectoral action and multi-stakeholder collaboration, principles that guide public health actions tied to health promotion and to reducing health inequalities (Green, 2021b).

Thus, when a central government adopts a wellbeing approach, public health actors are called upon to play crucial roles in ensuring its implementation and in monitoring its use, notably by providing knowledge, expertise, epidemiological data, training activities and advocacy, and by critically assessing its processes and results. Among other things, according to Green and colleagues (2021b), a Health in All Policies approach can support a whole-of-government wellbeing approach, as it is also based on sharing responsibility for healthy governance among multiple actors and sectors. The Health in All Policies approach (WHO & Ministry of Social Affairs & Health Finland, 2014, 2014a, 2014b) is indeed an integral part of the implementation of the *WFG Act* in Wales. However, it would be useful to seek to better understand how these wellbeing approaches can facilitate certain public health initiatives.

This study also identifies several implementation challenges. Indeed, these wellbeing approaches are part of a paradigm shift in how we measure a society's progress and reflect a movement toward the whole-of-government governance approach that underlies them. They require significant changes in the governance approach and culture of public administrations, which take time. Also, the vision of wellbeing put forward by these different approaches is not necessarily shared by the entire population, hence the importance of ensuring the participation of a variety of actors.

One of the challenges of integrating a wellbeing approach within a central government such as the Canadian federal government or within its provincial and territorial governments lies in the capacity to take into account the needs and aspirations of the different communities that make up society. This concern has been raised in relation to the needs and aspirations of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples (British Columbia Assembly of First Nations, 2020; Morrison, 2021; Panelli & Tipa, 2007). The frameworks studied will thus be subject to many modifications moving forward, based on the input of the many actors, experts and communities that have been consulted. In this regard, Māori and Pacific Peoples in New Zealand feel that their holistic and community-based vision of wellbeing is not well represented in the New Zealand project. As a result, changes are expected in the next iteration of the country's wellbeing framework (Government of New Zealand, 2019; Te Puni Kōkiri & The Treasury, 2019).

This report also identifies several pathways toward better integration of the desired changes into the activities of central governments and stakeholders. They include training and capacity building, provision of tools, policies and legislation, the allocation of resources, and the involvement of groups or a guardian to support the approach (e.g., the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales). Another key element of these wellbeing approaches is their reliance on the participation of many stakeholders, including communities, to ensure that policy choices reflect the aspirations, needs and realities of a diversity of individuals and communities.

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## **Appendix 1**

### **OECD Framework**



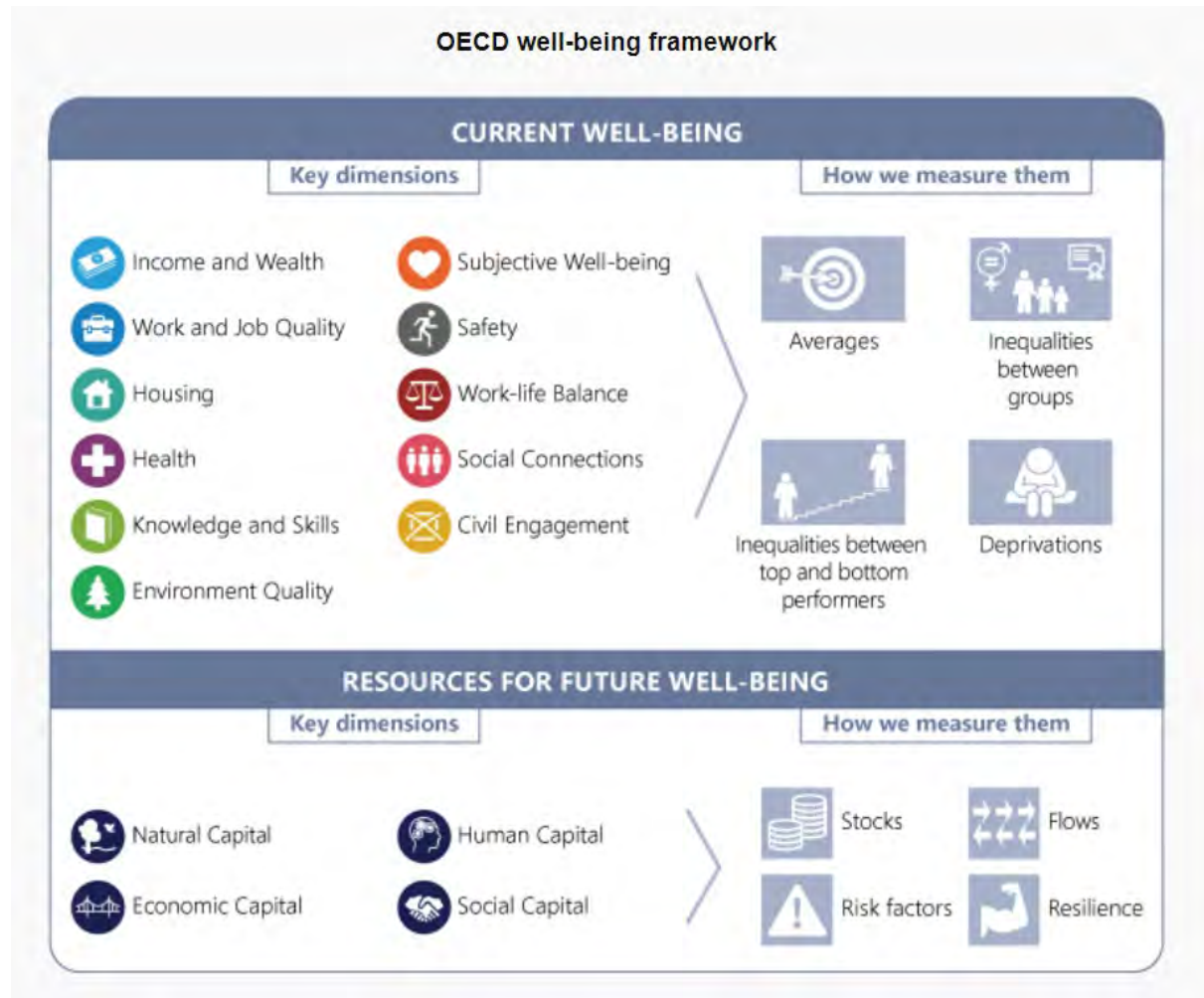
### ***OECD Wellbeing framework and its indicators***

The OECD (2011) acts as a leader in measuring wellbeing and progress with its Better Life Initiative that focuses on three pillars: 1) material conditions; 2) quality of life; and 3) sustainability. The initiative includes 64 indicators grouped under 11 key dimensions of wellbeing: housing, income, employment, social connections, education, environment, civil engagement, health, subjective wellbeing, safety, and work-life balance. It also considers four types of “capital” or “stocks” that are recognized as essential to the sustainability and wellbeing of present and future generations (Stiglitz et al., 2009).

1. **Natural capital** is composed of the reserves of natural resources, which include land, air, water and all living things;
2. **Human capital** refers to the knowledge, skills and health accumulated by people over the course of their lives;
3. **Social capital** consists of shared social networks, norms, values and arrangements that facilitate cooperation within and between different groups;
4. **Economic and material capital**, which includes the financial, intellectual and material resources necessary for activities related to natural capital and which allow the flow of products and services.

This framework serves as a governance tool for central governments. The OECD (2020b, 2020c) also launched the Centre on Well-Being, Inclusion, Sustainability, and Equal Opportunity (WISE), which aims to provide new data and solutions to improve wellbeing, reduce inequality, and assess the impacts of public policies and actions on the wellbeing of future generations.

The OECD also publishes a biennial report entitled *How's Life?* This allows for comparison between countries. It has also developed several tools for integrating people's wellbeing into the heart of public policy, such as a guiding framework for public policies that promote inclusive growth, the Framework for Policy Action on Inclusive Growth (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2018), as well as the New Approaches to Economic Challenges Initiative, which focuses on the need for an alternative economic paradigm for the future of humanity and the planet (OECD, 2020b; 2020c).



Source: OECD (n.d.). *Measuring Well-being and Progress: Well-being Research*. <https://www.oecd.org/statistics/measuring-well-being-and-progress.htm>

## **Appendix 2**

**Documentary search strategy used in database searches**





Search strategy for the Ovid (psychinfo) database  
Queried on December 14, 2020

#	Query	Results
1	("well-being" or wellbeing or wellness or happiness).ti,ab OR *happiness/	112,529
2	(policy or policies or act or law* or legislat* or legal* or national or budget* or gross or financing).ti OR ((policy or policies or act or law* or legislat* or legal* or national or budget* or gross or financing) ADJ2 ("well-being" or wellbeing or wellness or happiness)).ab	79,125
3	(indicator* or metric* or measur* or index or indice*).ti,ab	922,936
4	(implement* or planning or application).ti,ab	349,569
5	((policy ADJ1 (analysis or entrepreneur* or development or maker* or adopt* or initiation or process)) or "political cycle" or sustainab*).ti,ab.	400,200
6	1 AND 2 AND (3 OR 4 OR 5)	1272
7	limit 6 to yr="2008 - 2021"	1011

Search strategy for the EBSCO database  
Queried on December 8, 2020

#	Query	Results
S1	TI ("well-being" or wellbeing or wellness or happiness) OR MJ (happiness)	51,952
S2	TI (policy or policies or act or law* or legislat* or legal* or national or budget* or gross or financing) OR AB ((policy or policies or act or law* or legislat* or legal* or national or budget* or gross or financing) N2 ("well-being" or wellbeing or wellness or happiness))	807,937
S3	TI (indicator* or metric* or measur* or index or indice*) or AB (indicator* or metric* or measur* or index or indice*)	5,581,328
S4	TI (implement* or planning or application) OR AB (implement* or planning or application)	2,781,649
S5	TI ((policy N1 (analysis or entrepreneur* or development or maker* or adopt* or initiation or process)) or "political cycle" or sustainab*) OR AB ((policy N1 (analysis or entrepreneur* or development or maker* or adopt* or initiation or process)) or "political cycle" or sustainab*)	372,185
S6	S1 AND S2 AND (S3 OR S4 OR S5)	1205
S7	S6 AND (DT 2008-2021)	991

<b>Google search of grey literature by country</b>	
<b>United Kingdom, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, England</b>	(site:.gov.uk   site:.gov.scot   site:.gov.ie   site:.gov.wales) AND ("Well-being" AROUND(5) (budget   budgeting   economy   economics))  (site:.gov.uk   site:.gov.scot   site:.gov.ie   site:.gov.wales) AND (Well-being   equity   gender ) AROUND(5) (budget   budgeting   economy   economics))
<b>Iceland, Finland, Sweden</b>	(site:.Iceland.is   site:.government.is   site:.valtioneuvo.fi   site:.finland.fi   site:.vn.fi   site:.Government.se   site:.sweden.se) AND ("Well-being" AROUND(5) (budget   budgeting   economy   economics))  (site:.Iceland.is   site:.government.is   site:.valtioneuvo.fi   site:.finland.fi   site:.vn.fi   site:.Government.se   site:.sweden.se) AND (Well-being   equity   gender ) AROUND(5) (budget   budgeting   economy   economics))
<b>Australia, New Zealand</b>	(site:.gov.au   site:.govt.nz) AND (Wellbeing AROUND(5) (budget   budgeting   economy   economics))
<b>Canada</b>	(site:.canada.ca   site:.gc.ca) AND (Wellbeing AROUND(5) (budget   budgeting   economy   economics))  (site:.canada.ca   site:.gc.ca) AND (Well-being   equity   gender ) AROUND(5) (budget   budgeting   economy   economics))
<b>United States</b>	site:.gov (Wellbeing AROUND(5) (budget   budgeting   economy   economics))
<b>France, Belgium, Switzerland, Luxembourg (in English)</b>	(site:.Belgium.be   site:.federal-government.be   site:.admin.ch/gov   site:.ch.ch   site:.gouvernement.lu   site:.Gouvernement.fr   site:.gouv.fr) (Wellbeing AROUND(5) (budget   budgeting   economy   economics))
<b>France, Belgium, Switzerland, Luxembourg (in French)</b>	(site:.Belgium.be   site:.federal-government.be   site:.admin.ch/gov   site:.ch.ch   site:.gouvernement.lu   site:.Gouvernement.fr   site:.gouv.fr) (Bien-être AROUND (5) (budget   budgétiser   budgéter   économie))

## **Appendix 3**

### **Questions that guided the comparative study**



### **Context and main objectives**

1. What were the main challenges or issues that led to the adoption of this approach?
  - 1.1 What are the elements (precursors, contextual factors) that played in favour of this process?
  - 1.2 What are the main goals/objectives and strategies (or rationale) of the approach?

### **Description of the strategy**

2. What is the name of the strategy and the legislative and policy framework surrounding it? In particular, what are the main mechanisms or strategies that have been used to integrate a wellbeing approach into central government practises and to ensure its sustainability (e.g., wellbeing budgets, new legislation, amendments to legislation, policies or strategic plans)?
3. What consultative processes were carried out prior to the adoption of this national initiative?

### **Description of the reference framework used**

4. What framework, main goals, objectives and indicators were put into practice?
  - 4.1 How was it selected/developed (key influences and public consultations, if any)?
  - 4.2 How is wellbeing defined?
  - 4.3 What types of indicators are measured (subjective, objective, mixed, integrated or not integrated in an index or dashboard, etc.)?

### **Implementation mechanisms**

5. How was the approach operationalized at the national, regional and local levels?
  - 5.1 What have been the concrete changes to budget or resource allocation processes?
  - 5.2 What use is made of the indicators (prioritization, resource allocation, reporting, etc.)?
6. Who are the key actors, what are their roles and how have they contributed to the implementation of the initiative?
  - 6.1 How are elected officials and public servants held accountable for implementing and monitoring the strategy and the objectives linked to the initiative?
  - 6.2 Have specific institutional structures been put in place (e.g., commissioners, independent agency, etc.) or have the missions/priorities of existing structures changed?

### **Capacity Building**

7. What capacity-building support is available to public servants and other stakeholders to facilitate the implementation of change (e.g., guides, ongoing training, etc.)?

### **Role of public health**

8. What roles did public health play prior to the adoption of the initiative?
9. What public health roles were related to the initiative's implementation?

### **How do these countries intend to measure the impact of their policies**

10. What evaluation mechanisms exist?



## **Appendix 4**

**Table summarizing Wales' wellbeing approach**





<b>Well-being of Future Generations Act (WFG) – 2015 – Wales</b>		
<b>Objectives and sharing of responsibilities</b>	<b>Reference framework</b>	<b>Legislative and strategic framework</b>
<p>With the <i>WFG Act</i> of 2015, the Welsh government enshrined its duty to ensure the wellbeing and interests of future generations. A world first, this legislation includes measures whose goals are to change the way we address pressing environmental, social, economic, and cultural issues (e.g., poverty, health inequalities, unemployment, etc.), and to plan for the wellbeing of future generations, with the year 2050 as a target (Welsh Government, 2015a; see also the latest version, Welsh Government, 2021e).</p> <p>Under the coordination of the devolved central government, some 44 public bodies are required to act in accordance with the <i>WFG Act</i> (set wellbeing objectives, publish action plans and direct their decisions and policies towards achieving the wellbeing objectives): Welsh Ministers (the Welsh Government), the 22 Public Services Boards, as well as local authorities, Local Health Boards, Public Health Wales NHS Trust, Velindre NHS Trust,<sup>34</sup> National Park Authorities, Fire and Rescue Authorities, Natural Resources Wales, Higher Education Funding Council for Wales, Arts Council of Wales, Sport Wales, National Library of Wales, and National Museums and Galleries of Wales (Audit General, 2020; see also Welsh Government, 2015b 2015c; 2015d; 2015e).</p>	<p><b>Name of reference framework</b> Future Generations Framework</p> <p><b>Use made of reference framework</b> The reference framework provides guidance to Ministers and other public bodies specified under the Act, including concerning the development of wellbeing objectives, priorities for action, public policies, programs, legislation and strategies related to wellbeing.</p> <p><b>Main influences</b> The framework reflects the influence of the 17 UN SDGs, of numerous studies and reports from Wales, including that of the Wales Audit Office (2010) and the Welsh Sustainable Development Scheme (Welsh Government, 2009). Work from the UK has also been influential, most notably that of the New Economic Foundation (2009), which defines sustainable development in terms of wellbeing. Finally, a broad public consultation involving various social actors led to the addition of culture and language as essential elements of the population’s wellbeing.</p> <p><b>Main components</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Seven main goals</b>, aimed at creating a Wales that is: 1) more equal; 2) healthier; 3) resilient; 4) prosperous; 5) globally responsible; 6) culturally vibrant and with a thriving Welsh language; 7) made up of cohesive communities.</li> <li>▪ <b>Four aspects of wellbeing</b>: environmental, social, cultural and economic</li> <li>▪ <b>Forty-six wellbeing indicators</b> that are linked to the seven goals</li> <li>▪ <b>Five ways of working</b> also referred to as applying “the sustainable development principle,” which consist in focusing on: (1) the long-term; (2) prevention of problems and their exacerbation; (3) integration of the various wellbeing objectives; (4) collaboration; and (5) involvement of people of all ages.</li> </ul>	<p>The <i>WFG Act</i> is linked to several other laws.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ First, with the <i>WFG Act</i>, the Welsh Government is fulfilling its legal obligation under the 2006 Act to develop a sustainable development strategy (Welsh Government, 2006).</li> <li>▪ In addition, the <i>WFG Act</i>, the <i>Environment (Wales) Act</i>, and the <i>Planning Policy (Wales) Act (2015)</i> are among the Welsh Parliament’s first pieces of legislation that are tied to its commitment to making sustainable development a high priority (Davies, 2017; Welsh Government, n. d.).</li> <li>▪ Finally, the <i>WFG Act</i> led to the amendment and repeal of several existing laws. For more information, see pages 48-56 of the Act (Welsh Government, 2015a).</li> </ul>

<sup>34</sup> Velindre HNS Trust is a trust dedicated to providing cancer services.

### ***Well-being of Future Generations Act (WFG) – 2015 – Wales***

#### **Government priorities or objectives for 2021-2022**

The ten objectives of the Welsh Government for 2021:

- Provide effective, high quality and sustainable health care;
- Protect, rebuild and develop our services for vulnerable people;
- Build an economy based on the principles of fair work, sustainability and the industries and services of the future;
- Build a stronger, greener economy as we make maximum progress towards decarbonization;
- Embed our response to the climate and nature emergency in everything we do;
- Continue our long-term programme of education reform, and ensure educational inequalities narrow and standards rise;
- Celebrate diversity and move to eliminate inequality in all of its forms;
- Push towards a million Welsh speakers, and enable our tourism, sports and arts industries to thrive;
- Make our cities, towns and villages even better places in which to live and work;
- Lead Wales in a national civic conversation about our constitutional future, and give our country the strongest possible presence on the world stage (Welsh Government, 2021, p. 9).

## **Appendix 5**

**Table summarizing Scotland's wellbeing approach**



Scotland's National Performance Framework and wellbeing economy		
Objectives and sharing of responsibilities	Reference framework	Legislative and strategic framework
<p>Through Scotland's updated National Performance Framework (2018), which integrates the principles of a wellbeing economy, Scotland is pursuing outcomes-based governance that aims to be sustainable and inclusive by placing equal emphasis on reducing social inequalities and increasing the competitiveness of the economy and the wealth of the nation (Scottish Government, 2019b, 2020a, 2020b).</p> <p>The objective is for everyone to work together toward the achievement of national outcomes, including national and local government, businesses, voluntary organizations and people living in Scotland.</p> <p>One of the main factors that led the government to adopt a wellbeing approach was the country's underperformance in certain areas, including health, despite large-scale social and public health interventions (Wallace, 2019). Scotland's National Performance Framework is also a governance and performance tool that facilitates a whole-of-government approach to developing public policies, including economic policies.</p>	<p><b>Name of reference framework</b> National Performance Framework (NPF)</p> <p><b>Use made of reference framework</b> The National Performance Framework (NPF) is used to determine the arrangements and methods for monitoring and evaluating the performance of public bodies responsible for delivering public services (Hardoon et al., 2020). The NPF is also a resource for advocacy, policy development and social change that promotes wellbeing.</p> <p><b>Main influences</b> In its latest iteration in 2018, the NPF, which was originally a framework for measuring government performance, officially became a wellbeing framework (Scottish Government, 2021a). It draws heavily on the OECD's Better Life Initiative, the United Nation's 17 SDGs, the work of the Commission on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress, better known as the Stiglitz-Sen-Fitoussi Commission (Stiglitz et al., 2009), as well as on a Carnegie Trust report (2011) on the importance of measuring performance by going "beyond GDP" (Exton &amp; Shinwell, 2018), while reflecting Scotland's values and priorities (Scottish Government, 2021b).</p> <p><b>Main components</b> <b>The five strategic goals:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Create a more successful country;</li> <li>2. Give opportunities to all people living in Scotland;</li> <li>3. Increase the wellbeing of people living in Scotland;</li> <li>4. Create sustainable and inclusive growth;</li> <li>5. Reduce inequalities and give equal importance to economic, environmental and social progress.</li> </ol> <p><b>The values guiding the approach:</b> treat all our people with kindness, dignity and compassion; respect the rule of law; act in an open and transparent way.</p> <p><b>The eleven key expected outcomes</b> have in common that they: reflect the values and aspirations of the people of Scotland, are aligned with the SDGs of the United Nations, and help to track progress in reducing inequality.</p> <p><b>The framework contains 81 indicators</b>, which measure progress toward the achievement of sustainable development goals, and some of which are indicators of mental wellbeing from the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-Being Scale (Hardoon et al., 2020).</p>	<p>Various legislative measures have been put in place to ensure the implementation and sustainability of the wellbeing approach, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The <i>Equality Act (Scotland) (2010)</i>, to which the national budget is subject, requires an evaluation and report to be produced after the budget is tabled (Trebeck and Baker, 2020).</li> <li>▪ The <i>Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015</i> requires the government to develop a vision for Scotland and to measure progress toward achieving goals that improve the wellbeing and quality of life of the people of Scotland. The law focuses on reducing social inequalities, requiring ministers to publish and regularly review the indicators of progress toward outcomes, and giving members of the public the right to participate in decisions about resource allocation (The Foundation for the Economics of Sustainability, 2021).</li> </ul>

### Scotland's National Performance Framework and wellbeing economy

#### Government priorities or objectives for 2021-2022

The priorities of Scotland's National Performance Framework outlined in the 2021-2022 Budget (Scottish Government, 2021c) are tied to the 2020-2021 Programme for Government, whose aim is to protect and renew Scotland and reset progress towards national outcomes by focusing on three priorities:

- Defining a national mission to create new jobs, good jobs and green jobs;
- Promoting lifelong health and wellbeing;
- Promoting equality and helping our young people fulfill their potential (Scottish Government, 2021c, p. 5).

## **Appendix 6**

**Table summarizing New Zealand's wellbeing approach**





New Zealand's Wellbeing Budget		
Objectives and sharing of responsibilities	Reference framework	Legislative and strategic framework
<p>Since its first Wellbeing Budget of 2019, New Zealand has been aligning its national policies and budget processes with its wellbeing priorities.</p> <p>The budget includes new funding allocated on the basis of priority wellbeing goals. These goals focus on empowering New Zealanders<sup>35</sup> to aspire to wellbeing and to live a life that is meaningful to them and to future generations (Government of New Zealand, 2021a).</p> <p>Under the leadership of the Minister of Finance, this approach requires public servants to establish priorities for resource allocation, plan strategically to meet long-term wellbeing goals, and track investments and expenditures using the Living Standards Framework and its dashboard (Government of New Zealand, 2019).</p>	<p><b>Name of reference framework</b> Living Standards Framework (LSF) and Living Standard Dashboard</p> <p><b>Use made of reference framework</b> The Living Standards Framework (LSF) is a flexible tool used by the Treasury Board (or Department of Finance) to gain an overall perspective of all revenues and expenditures. The Living Standard Dashboard is another tool primarily for use by Treasury (Government of New Zealand, 2019d). These indicators allow priorities to be established based on observed trends, the distribution of differences (e.g., gender, ethnicity, age, etc.), and international comparisons where possible (Government of New Zealand, 2019d; Smith, 2018).</p> <p><b>Main influences</b> The LSF was influenced by the OECD's Better Life Initiative as well as by other international work, including the Stiglitz-Sen-Fitoussi report (Stiglitz et al., 2009) and Sen's (1993) work on capabilities and on growth that is inclusive and related to social welfare. Main components</p> <p><b>Twelve wellbeing domains</b> strongly inspired by the OECD's Better Life Initiative with the addition of one domain, namely cultural identity.</p> <p><b>Four types of capital (or stocks)</b>, namely natural capital, social capital, human capital and financial/physical capital on which intergenerational wellbeing is based. It is important to address their growth, sustainability and distribution (among people, geographical locations and generations).</p> <p><b>Sixty-five indicators in an LSF Dashboard</b>, composed of 43 indicators related to the 12 domains and 22 indicators related to the four types of capital.</p>	<p>Legislation was developed or amended to support the Wellbeing Budget, and its principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The new <i>Child Poverty Reduction Act 2018</i>, which aims to ensure that the government meets its obligations to end child poverty by adopting clear and transparent targets and measures of success. The Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy is associated with this Act (Government of New Zealand, 2019; 2019e).</li> <li>▪ The 2020 amendment to the <i>Public Finance Act 1989</i>, which requires that the government report on progress related to reducing child poverty when developing a budget; that each budget be developed with wellbeing in mind; and that the associated wellbeing targets and fiscal strategy be made explicit (Government of New Zealand, 2020; 2021b).</li> <li>▪ The repeal in 2020 of the <i>State Sector Act 1988</i> (Government of New Zealand, 2020) to encourage the public sector to prefer citizen-centred approaches and new models of intersectoral work.</li> <li>▪ A new law, the <i>Local Government Community Well-being Amendment Act 2019</i> (Government of New Zealand, 2019g), which calls for local governments to play a greater role in promoting social, economic, environmental, and cultural wellbeing using a sustainable development approach (Government of New Zealand, 2019c).</li> </ul>

<sup>35</sup> New Zealand's wellbeing economic model was inspired by Sen's (1993; 1999) work related to "the capabilities of persons to lead the kind of lives they value—and have reason to value" (Dalziel et al., 2019).

### New Zealand's Wellbeing Budget

#### Government priorities or objectives for 2021-2022

The New Zealand government's priorities, as outlined in the Wellbeing Budget 2021 (Government of New Zealand, 2021a), aim to support the long-term wellbeing of New Zealanders. "The priorities are

- Continuing the COVID-19 response;
- Delivering priority and time-sensitive manifesto commitments;
- Supporting core public services through managing critical cost pressures; and
- Continuing to deliver on existing investments" (Government of New Zealand, 2021a, p. 2).

Investment decisions under these priorities will be guided by the Government's wellbeing objectives, as required by the *Public Finance Act 1989*.

Our wellbeing objectives at Budget 2021 are:

1. **Just Transition** – Supporting the transition to a climate-resilient, sustainable and low-emission economy while building back from COVID-19;
2. **Future of Work** – Enabling all New Zealanders and New Zealand businesses to benefit from new technologies and lift productivity and wages through innovation, and support into employment those most affected by COVID-19, including women and young people;
3. **Māori and Pacific** – Lifting Māori and Pacific incomes, skills and opportunities, and combatting the impacts of COVID-19;
4. **Child Wellbeing** – Reducing child poverty and improving child wellbeing;
5. **Physical and mental wellbeing** – Supporting improved health outcomes for all New Zealanders and keeping COVID-19 out of our communities." (Government of New Zealand, 2021a, p. 2).

## **Appendix 7**

**Table summarizing Finland's wellbeing approach**



The 2030 Agenda and Finland's economy of wellbeing		
Objectives and sharing of responsibilities	Reference framework	Legislative and strategic framework
<p>Since 2018, Finland has been integrating the 17 SDGs into policy processes with its 2030 Agenda, which also functions as a wellbeing framework.</p> <p>One of the objectives is to promote the leadership of politicians and encourage the participation of different social actors (Finnish Government, 2020).</p> <p>In addition, Finland's State Budget is debated by multiple stakeholders as well as by federal public servants from various ministries. This democratic process is carried out in accordance with the 2030 Agenda and is informed by the economy of wellbeing framework. Finland focuses on four main levers: governance; economy and business; individuals and collective action; and science and technology (Finnish Government, 2020).</p> <p>The key challenges facing this approach are related to the need for changes in consumption and production patterns, as well as for action on climate change, conservation and biodiversity (Finnish Government, 2020).</p>	<p><b>Name of the main reference framework</b> 2030 Agenda<sup>36</sup></p> <p><b>Use made of reference framework</b> The framework is integrated into the National Audit Office's programs and the government's annual planning, budgeting and reporting cycles (Finnish Government, 2020). The budget can be described as one that goes "beyond GDP."</p> <p><b>Main influences</b> The basis for the 2030 Agenda is the 17 SDGs of the United Nations, targeting three dimensions: social, economic and environmental. Kate Raworth's Doughnut Economics (2017) also inspired Finland's strategic planning. This theory advocates respecting the ecological limits of the planet while ensuring the wellbeing of Finnish citizens and Nordic societies (Finnish Government, 2020).</p> <p><b>Aims to transform six key societal systems:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Sustainable and just economies;</li> <li>2. Food and nutrition;</li> <li>3. Urban and peri-urban areas;</li> <li>4. Energy;</li> <li>5. Global environmental commons;</li> <li>6. Wellbeing and capabilities.</li> </ol> <p><b>Based on eight priorities:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Equal prospects for wellbeing;</li> <li>2. A participatory society for citizens;</li> <li>3. Sustainable work;</li> <li>4. Sustainable local communities;</li> <li>5. A carbon neutral society;</li> <li>6. An economy that is resource-wise;</li> <li>7. Lifestyles that respect the carrying capacity of nature;</li> <li>8. Decision-making that respects nature.</li> </ol>	<p>Finland has been committed to the SDGs for several years and has developed several climate change related laws and policies that facilitate the implementation of the wellbeing approach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Parliament has ratified a motion to use the 2030 Agenda as a guide for the design of government programs and the formulation of related policies and strategies.</li> <li>▪ The principles underpinning the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, which were adopted in 2017, are still applicable and extend beyond electoral periods (Finnish Government, 2020).</li> <li>▪ The <i>Climate Change Act (609/2015)</i> requires all successive governments to plan with consideration for the climate.</li> <li>▪ Energy Climate Roadmap 2050 is a public strategy launched in 2014 that lays out a path toward a carbon neutral society (Finnish Government, 2019).</li> </ul>

The 2030 Agenda and Finland's economy of wellbeing (cont'd)		
Objectives and sharing of responsibilities (cont'd)	Objectives and sharing of responsibilities (cont'd)	Objectives and sharing of responsibilities (cont'd)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Consists of 10 baskets</b>, with specific themes, such as: “Resource-wise economy and carbon-neutral society”, “Housing and communities”, “Social inequality” and “Global responsibility and policy coherence.”</li> <li>▪ <b>Comprises 45 indicators</b><sup>37</sup> for assessing results. One-third of the indicators are from the global SDG indicator set, while the rest are country-specific.</li> </ul>	
<p>Government priorities or objectives for 2021-2022</p> <p>Finland established priority objectives connected to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, set to begin in 2021. These objectives are linked to the country's 2021-2022 budget.</p> <p>Funding will be divided among four pillars:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A green transition supporting economic restructuring and an affluent carbon-neutral society (pillar 1);</li> <li>▪ Digitalization and a data economy to help boost productivity (pillar 2);</li> <li>▪ A higher employment rate and enhanced skills to boost sustainable growth (pillar 3);</li> <li>▪ Reinforced access to health and social services with greater cost effectiveness (pillar 4) (Finnish Government, 2021b, May 26, paragraph 33).</li> </ul>		

<sup>36</sup> Note that another reference framework, Society's Commitment, is also presented as a strategy and one of the main tools for implementing the 2030 Agenda (Finnish Government, 2020).

<sup>37</sup> The indicators were renewed in 2017 by a national network consisting of representatives from 23 Finnish institutions including representatives from various ministries, Statistics Finland, research groups and interest groups. The indicators are updated annually (Finnish Government, 2020).

## **Appendix 8**

### **Priorities for action in New Zealand's wellbeing Budget**





In its first Wellbeing Budget of 2019, the New Zealand government asserts that New Zealanders generally enjoy a high level of wellbeing: they have relatively good health, high educational attainment and a high material standard of living overall. Nevertheless, according to the government's analysis, the country is underperforming in some areas. Based on the following weaknesses, the 2019 wellbeing priorities were developed:

1. Disappointing mental health outcomes;
2. A significant number of children living in poverty;
3. High levels of greenhouse gas emissions;
4. Significant inequalities in wellbeing based on ethnicity, particularly for Māori and Pacific Peoples<sup>38</sup> (Government of New Zealand, 2019).

Also, New Zealand's 2019 Wellbeing Budget clearly exposes links between individuals' subjective wellbeing, their abilities to lead a life that is meaningful to them, and the multiple determinants of wellbeing:

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 (Government of New Zealand, 2019, p. 5).

New Zealand's Wellbeing Budget includes a chapter on the wellbeing approach, specifying the government's priorities and the data on which those priorities rely. The Wellbeing Budget also includes a summary of all actions planned to achieve the country's wellbeing objectives. Thus, in 2019, to ensure that all people can benefit from economic growth, the government allocated new funding to put toward six priorities (mental health, children's wellbeing, Māori and Pacific Peoples' wellbeing, the nation's prosperity, transforming the economy, and investing in New Zealand). Money is distributed based on precise, measurable results. The Wellbeing Budget also includes a portion of new funding allocated on the basis of the country's wellbeing priorities. The amount can vary from year to year. In 2019, it represented about 4% of the total budget, according to Cylus and Smith (2020). It also contains resource allocations that extend over a four-year period. These allocations require joint proposals and intersectoral action involving various ministries (New Zealand Treasury, 2019). However, the allocation of core spending (on education, health, transport, etc.) remains unchanged from previous years (Government of New Zealand, 2019b).

In 2021, child poverty remains a major problem; domestic violence and social inequality are persistent and affect mostly Māori and Pacific Peoples. Thus, in addition to post-pandemic economic recovery, the five priorities for 2021 are: just transition to a sustainable economy; the future of work; Māori and Pacific Peoples; child wellbeing; and physical and mental wellbeing (Government of New Zealand, 2021b).

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<sup>38</sup> Most people in New Zealand are of European origin. The country also has populations of Māori (15%), Asian (12%) and Pacific (7%) descent. New Zealand had been settled by Polynesians since the 13th century, before being annexed by the British Empire in 1840 through the terms of a treaty with Māori leaders (Rodd, 2019). Today, New Zealand policies formally recognize Indigenous peoples, notably under the *Treaty of Waitangi Act 1975*. Policy developments have also helped to redress some of the injustices associated with the colonial and postcolonial past, although more work remains to be done in this area (Mintron, 2019). Although Māori make up 16% of the population, in 2005 they accounted for 50% of those incarcerated. They earn 16% less than non-Māori people, and their life expectancy is eight years less than the average for the general population (The Social Report, 2005, cited in Sibley et al., 2008).



## **Appendix 9**

### **Public Services Boards in Wales**



Since regional Public Services Boards (PSBs) are unique to Wales and allow for greater participation of various stakeholders, it seems worthwhile to provide more details about these boards here. Thus, twenty-two PSBs were created under the Welsh *WFG Act* (Welsh Government, 2015a). Their primary responsibilities are to:

1. Form a public services board and to set out the details of its operations and those of any sub-groups that may be formed from it;
2. Assess the wellbeing of their region by consulting the local population and stakeholders and taking into consideration several elements specified in the law, including assessment of the adequacy of services offered (schools, daycare, play spaces, etc.) and reports on the regional situation (e.g., in relation to health, safety, crime and substance use) produced by partners;
3. Prepare a wellbeing plan and objectives based on the wellbeing assessment conducted in their geographic area. They must develop this plan after consultation with various groups, individuals, and sources (e.g., the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales and their recommendations, invited participants of the PSB and other partners, relevant community groups);
4. Prepare and publish annual assessment reports on the economic, social, environmental, and cultural wellbeing status of their region taking into account national milestones and various indicators (Jones, 2019; Welsh Government, 2015a).

PSBs in the same region can also collaborate, as do those in the Gwent region, which has five PSBs. This group of PSBs is participating in a joint project to foster ecosystem resilience, The Green Grid, and has created the Integrated Well-Being networks Gwent, with its health hubs, to address the health and wellbeing needs of communities (e.g., access to health services) (FGCW, 2020a).

Jones (2019) analyzed the *WFG Act* in Wales from a national, geographic, and territorial perspective. According to Jones, the law is based on three distinct and interrelated levels of responsibility: (1) the national level, which presents Wales as a nation, a region and a decentralized state with power devolved to the Welsh government; (2) the local level within Wales; and (3) the level of individuals and public servants responsible for ensuring that the law is applied. For Jones (2019), PSBs are an “antidote” to the tendency to homogenize implementation of the *WFG Act* at the national level. Thus, regions can establish their own objectives in response to more specific issues. For example, Jones (2019) reports that, in 2017, the Torfaen Area PSB chose to prioritize addressing chronic health conditions and improving local skills. Gwynedd and Anglesey, on the other hand, chose to prioritize protecting and promoting the Welsh language, better understanding demographic changes, and ensuring there would be a sufficient stock of affordable housing for the region (Jones, 2019).

Also, through the iterative local plans produced by the PSBs, the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales has been able to identify national priority objectives. For example, PSBs in the post-industrial regions of Torfaen and Blaenau and PSBs in the rural regions of Ceredigion, Gwynedd, and Anglesey chose to prioritize addressing adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), an objective that was later made a national priority (Jones, 2019).



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