



## A Global Project on Measuring the Progress of Societies

### **OECD World Forum on Statistics, Knowledge and Policy**

Jon Hall - [jon.hall@oecd.org](mailto:jon.hall@oecd.org)



## Goals

- To ensure decisions are taken on the basis of evidence, not anecdote or prejudice
- To improve the way our democracies function – so that decision-makers focus their efforts on the things that are seen as most important



Statistics ⇌ Knowledge ⇌ Policy


What... be fixed?

Use  
sh  
o  
nc

H  
addre


“Today we are  
bombarde  
by  
information” Jean-  
Claude Trichet

- Problem
- Problem: use, misuse and abuse of statistics

OECD  3 OCDE

## Problems to be fixed

- **Citizens:** “people often use ideology as a short-cut heuristic for deciding what position to take, when properly informing oneself is difficult” (Blinder and Krueger, 2004)
- **Businesses:** New economy “bubble” started with public statements based on wrong information about the importance of Internet and e-commerce: “Internet traffic is doubling every 100 days (2000); “E-commerce: a digital tsunami (1997)

OECD  4 OCDE

## Indicator Systems Can Help...

- Tremendous interest around the world at all levels of government ...
- ... and all sectors of the economy
- In many countries, the focus is on the ability, quality of life, and sustainability of the economy
- To measure progress and to generate progress

**If the GDP is up,  
why is America  
down?**

## From the Comptroller General of the USA

- "Key national indicators can help us to better understand which programs, policies, functions, and activities are working and which are not. When seen in the aggregate and as part of a broader portfolio, key national indicators can provide a fuller and fairer view of how well a nation is doing as well as whether and, if so, how its political leaders are planning for the future. Such information can educate policymakers and the public about the appropriateness, affordability, and sustainability of a nation's current path.

## From the Comptroller General of the USA

- Key national indicators can help elected officials make tough but necessary policy choices including facilitating better targeting of government actions while ensuring long-term fiscal, social and environmental sustainability as well as the intergenerational equity of existing and proposed government policies and programs.

## From the Comptroller General of the USA

- There's simply no substitute for understanding the big picture — that is, the position and progress of a nation as a whole. The challenge and the opportunity before us is to build sophisticated information resources and key indicator systems that yield vital insights that transcend specific economic sectors, public and private institutions, and national borders.

## From the Comptroller General of the USA

- There are many areas in which the stakes are high and better knowledge is needed. In the case of the United States, these areas include ensuring fiscal sustainability, enhancing homeland security, stimulating economic growth, creating productive and fulfilling jobs, improving education and innovation, delivering quality and affordable health care, strengthening competitiveness, protecting the environment, and promoting quality of life.“  
*David M. Walker, 2005*

## Why a World Forum?

- Much work underway, but no coordination
- And new challenges confront government
- Globalisation means progress requires international co-operation if it is to be measured and fostered
- Civil Society is putting pressure on governments to change the way they work with them
- No forum (as yet) to discuss all this



## Our Aims

- Use the statistics → knowledge → policy value chain to increase the quality and quantity of evidence based-decisions and strengthen the nexus between statistics and policy-making
- Our initial focus is around measuring the progress of societies using key indicators



## Mission Statement

The *Statistics, Knowledge, Policy* World Forum exists to foster the development of sets of key economic, social and environmental indicators and their use to inform and promote evidence-based decision-making within and across the public, private and citizen sectors, at sub-national, national and international levels. The Forum will be open to all sectors of society, building both on good practice and innovative research work, organised by the OECD in co-operation with national and international organisations.

## The First World Forum: Palermo 2004

- 540 people in attendance representing 43 countries
- Major global issues
- Forecast



## The First World Forum: Palermo 2004

- Keynote speeches by
  - David M. Walker, Comptroller General of the US
  - Jean-Claude Trichet, President of the European Central Bank
  - Donald J. Johnston, Secretary-General of the OECD
  - Heads of the US, Irish, Italian and Australian Statistical Offices

## Outcomes of the First World Forum

- Decisions are increasingly based on statistical information
- The demand for measuring progress comes from society
- There is no unique way to develop “key indicators”, nor a unique set of indicators
- The success of an initiative requires involving various sectors of society in a co-operative effort
- International comparisons are important - they put the results in the right context and can push poor performers to improve

OECD  15 OCDE

## Want to know more?

- The Proceedings are available for free online.
- The highlights are on the Forum website at [www.oecd.org/oecdworldforum](http://www.oecd.org/oecdworldforum)

 Statistics,  
Knowledge  
and Policy  
KEY INDICATORS TO INFORM  
DECISION MAKING

OECD  16 OCDE

## Bellagio: Measuring the Progress of Societies

- March 2006 in Bellagio, Italy at the Rockefeller Foundation Study and Conference Centre



## Who was there?

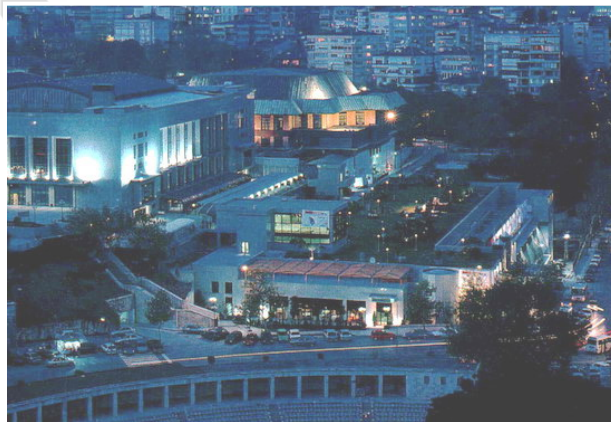
- Donald J. Johnston, Secretary-General of the OECD
- Harvey Fineberg, President, Institute of Medicine, National Academies of the US
- David M. Walker, Comptroller General of the USA
- Ken Prewitt, Professor of Public Affairs, Columbia University
- Chris Hoenig, Director of Strategy, IBM
- Simon Briscoe, Statistics Editor, Financial Times
- Lorenzo Bini Smaghi, Executive Board Member, ECB
- François Bourguignon, Chief Economist, World Bank
- Bruno Rebelle, Director, Greenpeace International
- Paul Cheung, Chief Statistician, UN
- Judith Randel, Founder, Development Initiatives
- Ignazio Visco, Central Manager for International Affairs, Bank of Italy
- Key OECD people – Jean-Philippe Cotis, John Martin, Richard Manning,

## Outcomes of the Meeting

- Able to bring various groups to a consensus – and develop a mission statement.
- Consensus to use the Forum as a place to debate the meaning of progress.
- Interest in using the Forum to discuss the future of the MDGs post 2015.

## 2nd OECD World Forum in Istanbul

- 27-30 June 2007
- Lutfi Kirdar Convention and Exhibition Centre




## Towards the second World Forum

- The event is intended for people interested in:
  - Making better use of the latest techniques for measuring societal status and progress;
  - Identify best practices on how to address key national policy issues;
  - Discuss global policy issues based on solid statistical evidence.

## Towards the second World Forum


- Speakers should include the World Bank's Commission on Growth and Development, OECD's Secretary-General
- The agenda should include:
  - The meaning of progress
  - The importance of quality of life policy
  - The role of innovation in measuring and fostering progress
  - And key policy issues

Climate Change, Health, Aging, the Brain Drain, Biodiversity Loss, Financial Security and Stability, Globalisation,




## Partners and sponsors




- Building a strong support base
- The project is now being run officially in cooperation with the UN, the World Bank and the European Commission
- and in association with PARIS 21
- Support for the project from the ABS and IBM
- Support for events from the Korean National Statistics Office, TURKSTAT and the Turkish State Planning Organisation
- Seeking to expand the support base





Australian Bureau of Statistics



KNSO  
Korea National Statistical Office







## On the Road to Istanbul

- Via Milan
- Regional “pre-conferences”





### Asian Pre-Conference

- Korea, 8-9 February
- South, East and South-East Asian countries
- Hosted by the KNSO
- Agenda to be decided, but could include
- Indicator project case studies
- Roundtable “What is Progress?”
- Policy Issues (eg knowledge economy, inequality, pollution, globalisation, water, financial stability)
- International Sets of Indicators: Measuring Progress – Fostering Progress
- Building Statistical Capacity
- Turning Statistics into Knowledge, Knowledge into Policy

## OECD horizontal project on indicators

### Aims: The 3Ds


- **Development:** Foster the improvement of existing sets of OECD indicators and develop new ones;
- **Dissemination:** Improve the dissemination of OECD indicators and make them more accessible;
- **Decision-making:** make indicators more useful for governments, businesses, individuals;
- And improve the coherence of OECD statistics and indicators




## For more information


- Jon Hall  
jon.hall@oecd.org
- [www.oecd.org/oecdworldforum](http://www.oecd.org/oecdworldforum)

OECD  27 OCDE



## Questions



OECD  28 OCDE