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## MYWEB (Measuring Youth Well-Being)

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### WP9: Dissemination

#### Deliverable 9.3. Project finding outputs: A summary report of the project outputs and findings

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## 1. Introduction

All dissemination activities were performed to support the objective, which the project aimed to fulfil: to explore the feasibility of conducting a longitudinal survey, which would capture the full picture of the growing-up process possibly from birth to the end of a child's education. This deliverable concerns the MYWeB project finding outputs: (1) preparation of one academic paper for each participating country; (2) an edited collection; (3) a summary report aimed at being accessible to children and young people.

## 2. Preparation of one academic paper for each participating country

Academic publications represent a major vehicle for dissemination in the research community and are therefore a key aspect of the work within the MYWeB project. Academic papers are a resilient dissemination tool, they encourage academic organizations and researchers to conduct further search in regard to the issues of an evaluation/appraisal methodology for a European Longitudinal Study for Children and Young People. They ensure that MYWeB has a long-lasting impact beyond the project duration, particularly in relation to academic discourse in the area. The academic papers published by consortium members enable researchers to participate in dialogue around open access to research findings.

### **Published articles / due to appear:**

- Szántó Zsuzsa; Susánszky Éva, Berényi Zoltán, Sipos Flórián, Murányi István. 'A jólét fogalmának értelmezése az európai szakirodalomban (2009-2014)' [The interpretation of the concept of well-being of European academic literature]. In: *METSZETEK*. Vol. 5/1. (2016), pp.16-47.
- Goswami, H., Fox, C., and Pollock, G. 'The current evidence base and future needs in improving children's well-being across Europe: is there a case for a comparative longitudinal survey?' In: *Child Indicators Research*. Vol. 9/2. (2016), pp. 371-388.
- Jaroslav Mihálik. 'Measuring Youth Well-Being: Major Assumptions from Slovakia'. In: Dudžáková, A., Mura, L., Slovák, P. (eds.) *Cyril-Methodius Days of Social Services II - Proceedings of the International Expert - Scientific Conference*. Trnava: University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius, 2016, pp. 129-139.
- Mariam Kobaladze; Rayya El Zein; Kristina Vacharadze. 'Happiness and well-being as seen by children and young people in Georgia'. In: *GESJ: Education Sciences and Psychology. Reviewed electronic scientific journal*. 20.09.2016. [http://gesj.internet-academy.org.ge/en/news\\_en.php?b\\_sec=edu](http://gesj.internet-academy.org.ge/en/news_en.php?b_sec=edu)
- Magda Nico; Nuno de Almeida Alves. 'O bem-estar das crianças e dos jovens em Portugal: contributos de uma pesquisa qualitativa' [The well-being of children and young people in Portugal: contributions of qualitative research]. In: *Sociologia: Revista da Faculdade de Letras da Universidade do Porto*. Vol. n.a. (2017).

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- Inta Mierina. 'Interpreting children and young people's wellbeing in Europe: expert reviews'. In: *Social Indicators Research*. Vol. n.a. (2017).
- Anita Stasulane. 'Factors determining children and young people well-being at school'. In: *Journal of Teacher Education for Sustainability*. Vol. 19/2. (2017).
- Mariona Ferrer-Fons; Pau Serracant; Roger Soler-i-Martí, 'Understanding well-being from children and young people's voices', In: *Papers: Revista de Sociologia*, vol. n.a. (2017) pp. n.a.
- Tadić, M., Brajša Žganec, A., Franc, R. 'Children and young people views on well-being'. In: *Child Indicators Research*, vol. n.a. (2017) pp. n.a.
- Franc, R., Sučić, I., Babarović, T. 'Cognitive interviewing – qualitative method for improvement of questionnaire design and measurement validity'. In: Irena Burić (ed.) *The Book of Selected Proceedings of 20th Psychology Days in Zadar*. Zadar: University of Zadar. 2017, pp. n.a.
- Kaliterna Lipovčan, L. J., Brajša – Žganec, A., Dević, I. 'Opinions of Croatian experts about measuring well-being of children and young people'. In: Irena Burić (ed.) *The Book of Selected Proceedings of 20th Psychology Days in Zadar*. Zadar: University of Zadar. 2017, pp. n.a.

### 3. An edited book

A central objective of task 9.3 was to communicate MYWeB outcomes to an academic audience. Overall, academic dissemination in MYWeB involved publishing of an edited volume with the input of all partners. The edited collection with a provisional title 'Children's and Young People's Well-Being: How a pan-European longitudinal survey could improve policy' will be published. To ensure the quality of the book an editorial board was established: Gary Pollock, Haridhan Goswami, and Anita Stasulane. Joint chapters, i.e., chapters involving more than one partner institution, are a tangible measure of the MYWeB integration process. The manuscript contains:

Gary Pollock. **Introduction**

#### **Part 1. The complex nature of well-being: from academic definitions to policy programmes**

Chapter 1. Gary Pollock, Chris Fox, Jessica Ozan, Haridhan Goswami, Rowenna Baldwin, Chris

O'Leary **The notion of well-being across contexts and countries**

Chapter 2. Britta Busse, Leonie Backeberg, Andreas Etling, Jochen Tholen **Child and youth well-**

**being on the European political agenda**

Chapter 3. Jessica Ozan, Inta Mierina, Ilze Koroleva **A comparative expert survey on measuring**

**and enhancing well-being in Europe**

#### **Part 2. Measuring children and young people's well-being**

Chapter 4. Britta Busse, Leonie Backeberg, Andreas Etling, Jochen Tholen **Longitudinal research on**

**children and young people in Europe and beyond**

Chapter 5. Zsuzsa Szántó, Éva Susánszky, István Murányi, Zoltán Berényi, Flórián Sipos **Current**

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### **attempts to measure children and young people well-being**

Chapter 6. Alexandros Sakellariou, Magda Nico, Nuno de Almeida Alves, Alexandra Koronaiou, Giorgos Alexias, Jaroslav Mihalik, Michal Garaj, Marge Unt, Marti Taru **Conceptions of well-being and differences among Children and Young People in Europe**

Chapter 7. Renata Franc, Ines Sučić, Toni Babarović **How To Develop Well-Being Survey Questions For Young Children: Lessons Learned From Cross-Cultural Cognitive Interviews**

### **Part 3. Possibilities for further research**

Chapter 8. Gary Pollock, Chris Fox, Jessica Ozan, Haridhan Goswami, Rowenna Baldwin, Chris O'Leary **Challenges in conducting a new longitudinal study on children and young people well-being in European Union**

Chapter 9. Haridhan Goswami, Gary Pollock, Chris Fox, Jessica Ozan, Rowenna Baldwin, Chris O'Leary **Strengths and shortcomings of survey of children and young people well-being**

Chapter 10. Mariona Ferrer-Fons, Pau Serracant, Roger Soler, Magda Nico, Nuno de Almeida Alves **Strategies and methodological challenges for involving children and young people in a research on wellbeing**

Chapter 11. Jessica Ozan, Gary Pollock, Chris Fox, Haridhan Goswami, Rowenna Baldwin, Chris O'Leary **With a view towards the future: different options to measure the well-being of children and young people across Europe longitudinally**

Chapter 12. Chris O'Leary, Jessica Ozan, Gary Pollock, Chris Fox, Haridhan Goswami, Rowenna Baldwin **The potential policy benefits of measuring child wellbeing across Europe**

For abstracts of MYWeB twelve chapters, see Annex.

## **4. A summary report aimed at being accessible to children and young people**

One of the goals of the MYWeB project was to take into consideration the views and opinions of children and young people on their understanding of well-being and its different dimensions. Consequently the MYWEB project involved children and young people throughout the project. Central to the MYWEB project was a conviction in the need to disseminate project findings to children and young people. It was important to show to children and young people involved in the project what they had contributed to and that their voice had been listened to.

The country level report for children/young people were produced in the national languages by each partner, written for children and young people which summarizes the results of the MYWeB project. In order to gain greater reach in disseminating to children and young people we redeveloped the project website to include digital documents of the information leaflets in each of the national languages: <http://fp7-myweb.eu/children-and-young-people.html>

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## 5. Annex

### CHILDREN'S AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S WELL-BEING:

#### HOW A PAN-EUROPEAN LONGITUDINAL SURVEY COULD IMPROVE POLICY

##### Introduction

This book reports on the results of a major European project which has explored the feasibility of setting up a Europe wide longitudinal survey of the well-being of children and young people. This has involved a range of activities which are reported below including interviews with children and young people, interviews with policy makers and academics, analyses of existing surveys and the policy environment. The broad aim of improving child and youth well-being across Europe through the collection of longitudinal data is, therefore, the general focus. This inevitably draws in discussions about meaning of concepts, methods of measurement, the role of young people in the research process, the political realities of policy development, as well as the practicalities of mounting an ambitious and complex survey with all the capacity and cost related issues.

##### **Part 1. The complex nature of well-being: from academic definitions to policy programmes**

Chapter 1. Gary Pollock, Chris Fox, Jessica Ozan, Haridhan Goswami, Rowenna Baldwin, Chris O'Leary **The notion of well-being across contexts and countries**

Well-being is far from being a singularly understood concept. While discourses of poverty and inequality have long been used by academics and policy makers to highlight differential opportunities for children and young people there is a growing interest in the ways in which society is stratified in psychological ways. There is, hence, a need to combine both sociological and psychological theory in the pursuit of a better understanding of well-being. Moreover, as a concept with a subjective component the difficulties in understanding and measuring well-being are compounded by linguistic, cultural and contextual factors which require an approach that is sensitive to such nuances.

Chapter 2. Britta Busse, Leonie Backeberg, Andreas Etling, Jochen Tholen **Child and youth well-being on the European political agenda**

The term well-being stands for a comprehensive concept that has been interpreted in research as well as in politics with diverse emphasis. When handling a more or less open concept like this, different aspects and political levels need to be addressed in order to reach a solid basis for any political actions. In this chapter we will shed light on current political agendas contributing to child and youth well-being in the European Union member states. Therefore, we will take into consideration existing laws and regulations as well as experts' evaluation of their actual efficacy. We will analyse notable differences when it comes to the establishment of child and youth well-being on different political levels (EU, state, regional level). Also various organisations involved in children's and young people's welfare (e.g. government, NGOs, church) may have a different impact on well-being policies reflected in everyday life. For ensuring a common standard for child and youth well-being across the EU member states, it is necessary to take the following steps: 1) A common understanding of what are children's and young people's basic needs has to be agreed on. 2) These basic needs have to be covered in every country. 3) A monitoring system for understanding their implementation and development has to be established. Therefore, we will describe the state of the art of these prerequisites in the EU on basis of a secondary analysis of national laws, regulations and expert interviews from all EU member states. We seek to highlight encouraging as well as unfavourable aspects of the political advancement of

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children's and young people's well-being across the EU.

Chapter 3. Jessica Ozan, Inta Mierina, Ilze Koroleva **A comparative expert survey on measuring and enhancing well-being in Europe**

The understanding of children and young peoples' 'well-being' varies greatly not just between different experts and scholars, but also across countries and cultures, depending on the historical and socio-economic context. However, an effective application of scholarly research to policy-making, especially at the supra-national level, requires establishing a comparable set of indicators that would allow measuring and comparing children and young people's well-being across countries, over time and in relation to specific policy instruments. This chapter outlines the key findings from a Delphi survey, comprising a panel of 334 European experts in the fields of survey methodology, children and youth studies, well-being, and policy. The chapter brings focus on how experts in different European countries view the concept of well-being, as applied to children and young people, as well as how they think it should be captured.. Our findings reveal a strong consensus among experts that future studies should include both objective and subjective measures of well-being, potentially to an equal weight. Moreover, surveys should cover a child's lifespan (0-25) and include pre-natal information. Second, we focus on the policy needs in relation to child-wellbeing identified by the experts in different countries. Among the first necessities the need for evidence in policy design and evaluation is mentioned. The experts also identify important gaps between data coverage and policy relevance for some of the eudaimonic dimensions of well-being (i.e. competence, autonomy, purpose in life and amount of choice). Hence, this chapter not only highlights the differences in similarities between the understanding of 'well-being' in different countries in Europe, and identifies a set of indicators to measure its different dimensions, but it also provides guidance as regards to specific steps that policy makers across Europe could take to enhance children and young peoples' well-being.

**Part 2. Measuring children and young people's well-being**

Chapter 4. Britta Busse, Leonie Backeberg, Andreas Etling, Jochen Tholen **Longitudinal research on children and young people in Europe and beyond**

Surveying child and youth well-being can be done in various ways. The diverse options depend on the theoretical concept used (e.g. eudaimonic or hedonic), the target group (e.g. different age groups), the scope of interest (e.g. informing regionally or internationally working politicians), and other factors. Above all, this chapter examines the question of whether or not surveying children's and young people's well-being should be done in a longitudinal design. Within the MYWEB project we undertook a comprehensive review of existing administrative and survey data sets across EU countries that cover core dimensions of child and youth well-being. On basis of this analysis, we will highlight those aspects of child and youth well-being that are already covered well by the existing data and those aspects which have been neglected so far. We will particularly consider the advantages longitudinal studies on child and youth well-being may hold compared to cross-sectional surveys. Starting from a psychological point of view, we will point to the central role of a long-term perspective in regard to policies that aim at the improvement of children's and young people's well-being. Further on, we will demonstrate that existing longitudinal surveys on child and youth well-being have added considerable value to results coming from cross-sectional surveys. We will close the chapter with recommendations for future surveys on child and youth

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well-being and policy making.

Chapter 5. Zsuzsa Szántó, Éva Susánszky, István Murányi, Zoltán Berényi, Flórián Sipos

#### **Current attempts to measure children and young people well-being**

While measurements of well-being regularly appear in social and psychological studies, there is no consensus on the components of holistic well-being. The chapter presents the findings of a systematic review of the definition and the current attempts to measure children and young people well-being in contemporary European literature. It is based on the collaborative efforts of researchers who participated in the MYWeB FP7 research project of the European Union. To identify how well-being is conceptualized and measured in the European social science literature, we employed a systematic review of literature in key electronic databases: EBSCO, Sociological Abstracts, ERIC, MEDLINE, Ovid, Web of Science, and local academic databases in the eleven participating countries. The examination of these papers revealed six domains and their corresponding indicators used by authors for the construction and measurement of the concept. In the reviewed documents well-being emerged as a predominantly psychological concept with strong cognitive, health-related, behavioural, and social aspects. Our conclusion is that in examining well-being, researchers should pay more attention to the social and communicative aspects of the concept and dedicate more effort to the exploration of its embeddedness into the institutional environment and the information society.

Chapter 6. Alexandros Sakellariou, Magda Nico, Nuno de Almeida Alves, Alexandra Koronaiou, Giorgos Alexias, Jaroslav Mihalik, Michal Garaj, Marge Unt, Marti Taru

#### **Conceptions of well-being and differences among Children and Young People in Europe**

Despite substantial academic and policy interest in well-being there is no universally accepted definition of the concept. In the academic literature, it is used as an over-arching concept to refer to the quality of life of people in society. In defining the concept of well-being, a distinction is also made between hedonic and eudaimonic approaches and is measured using both objective (not filtered by perceptions and independent from personal evaluations) and subjective measures (explicitly express subjective states, such as perceptions, assessments and preferences). The purpose of this chapter is to present the findings of the MYWEB project regarding the conceptions of well-being among children and young people and the possible differences among them in four European countries (Portugal, Greece, Slovakia and Estonia). Based primarily on qualitative research, semi-structured interviews and focus groups, with children and young people this chapter will try to answer the following questions: Do children and young people understand the concept of well-being? Which content they attribute to it? Which are the similarities and differences among various European countries? Having in mind that in order to organise and conduct a longitudinal survey on children and young people's well-being the understanding of the concept of well-being is substantial, this chapter will try to cast light on the different approaches and understandings of the concept and discuss the obstacles and problems that might arise in such a process.

Chapter 7. Renata Franc, Ines Sučić, Toni Babarović **How To Develop Well-Being Survey Questions For Young Children: Lessons Learned From Cross-Cultural Cognitive Interviews**

There are several major challenges related to conducting cross-cultural well-being

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surveys, which are even more pronounced when respondents are young children. In order to explore how young children from different countries understand, interpret and process well-being survey questions, within the MYWEB project, the cognitive interviews (CI) study was conducted with young children in six European countries. The specific research objectives were to test new/adapted measures of well-being, whereas the CI testing was focused on item reading, comprehension and appropriateness of items and exact wording, recall and judgement in the given time frames, and the given response format among young children. The CI study was conducted in three consecutive rounds, whereas in total, 77 seven year-olds and 118 eight year-olds (N=195) were interviewed by 26 interviewers. The chapter will discuss the main findings and present general recommendations how to develop and conduct well-being survey that is age-appropriate for young children and could be processed similarly in different countries.

### **Part 3. Possibilities for further research**

Chapter 8. Gary Pollock, Chris Fox, Jessica Ozan, Haridhan Goswami, Rowenna Baldwin, Chris O'Leary **Challenges in conducting a new longitudinal study on children and young people well-being in European Union**

Longitudinal studies have a number of disadvantages / challenges in terms of data collection and analysis including; sample attrition which refers to the continued loss of respondents from the sample due to nonresponses through deaths, moving, and subjects withdrawing from the research; panel conditioning where responses from participants may be conditioned by their previous experience of taking the survey; coverage error where there is a gap between the sampling frame and total population; and time and cost as it generally takes longer and is more costly to prepare a longitudinal survey than a cross-sectional one since questionnaire instruments cannot be designed independently from those used at a later stage.

In addition, variability exists among European nations the availability and coverage of sampling frames, laws and regulations that restrict aspects of survey practice, availability and abilities of survey research organisations, cultural and behavioural norms, language (s) spoken, geographical dispersal of the study populations. In cross-national research, as Harkness (2008) stated, the pursuit of data quality is simultaneously the pursuit of data comparability.

Finally, there are a number of models on how the children and young people can/should be involved in a study with reference to the degree of control and participation that they have. In any study involving children and young people, the first challenge for the researcher is to make a decision on the level they want or are willing to allow the children and young people to participate. The level of their participation (whether just as respondents, consultants, collaborators or owners) will guide how the whole study needs to be designed and resource allocated.

Chapter 9. Haridhan Goswami, Gary Pollock, Chris Fox, Jessica Ozan, Rowenna Baldwin, Chris O'Leary **Strengths and shortcomings of survey of children and young people well-being**

There has been a growing interest among academics, policy makers and practitioners in the subjective well-being of children and young people (CYP). The recognition of CYP's rights to having a good childhood and good future life chances, coupled with the injunction from the New Sociology of Childhood to consult with CYP as active agents have resulted in an increasing number of studies on children and young people's well-being at national and international levels. However, the

design, content, and modes of data collection used in these surveys are influenced by the question of the extent to which the researchers view children and young people as similar or different to adults and which participatory models they are undertaking for the young people in the study. This chapter critically reviews the paradigm shifts in the participatory models and the perceptions that adult researchers hold of children and how these influence the level of participation for children and young people in well-being surveys. It also discusses the strengths and shortcomings of the most recent 'child centric approach' to surveying children and young people's well-being and how this approach can be developed further for a cross-European longitudinal survey on child well-being.

Chapter 10. Mariona Ferrer-Fons, Pau Serracant, Roger Soler **Strategies and methodological challenges for involving children and young people in a research on wellbeing**

In this chapter we will discuss, considering the results of a qualitative fieldwork done with children and young people in the framework of MYWeb, some strategies to motivate children and young people to participate in a research on wellbeing in a longitudinal perspective. Among them, we consider aspects of the process of collection of data, the use of incentives, the use of particular strategies for ensure the presence certain social groups and give feedback of the impact of the research.

Chapter 11. Jessica Ozan, Gary Pollock, Chris Fox, Haridhan Goswami, Rowenna Baldwin, Chris O'Leary **With a view towards the future: different options to measure the well-being of children and young people across Europe longitudinally**

The book has so far exposed the policy needs and benefits, as well as the challenges, of implementing a cross-national longitudinal survey on children and young people's well-being. This concluding chapter brings together lessons from previous sections with a view to form recommendations for a pan-European longitudinal study. It considers the prospective impact of this method in terms of instrumental use (direct impact of research on policy and practice decisions) and conceptual use (where research changes ways of thinking, alerting policy-makers and practitioners to an issue or playing a more general 'consciousness-raising role'). The chapter examines different methodological options (e.g. household surveys, birth cohorts) and argues that an accelerated cohort design is a feasible methodology that would start meeting policy needs within the policy cycle. Acknowledging the costly investment required for such an enterprise, recommendations are made towards building the necessary buy-in from policy-makers. This involves activities such as communicating existing evidence from research and undertaking a pilot study of the survey.

Chapter 12. Chris O'Leary, Jessica Ozan, Gary Pollock, Chris Fox, Haridhan Goswami, Rowenna Baldwin **The potential policy benefits of measuring child wellbeing across Europe**

It is clear that measuring the wellbeing of children across Europe is both desirable and feasible. But would it be beneficial and, particularly, would such a survey be of use to and used by policy makers, and would this use improve the effectiveness of policies targeting children and young people's welfare? This chapter explores the potential role of a European children's wellbeing survey in policy making. It explores and evaluates the extant literature on survey data utilisation in the policy process, focusing on the UK (because the UK has both a large number of such surveys and also research around the use of surveys in the policy process). It examines this literature, drawing on the four types of research utilisation identified

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by Nutley et al (2003) and identifying some of the key challenges and limitations of using such survey data and, more specifically, identifying the use of such data. This analysis suggests that survey data are unlikely to have a direct, observable effect on policy making difficult any assessment of the benefits of surveys or their impact on the policy-making process or policy outcomes. As such, a typical cost benefit analysis approach would not be feasible. The chapter concludes by proposing an alternative means of estimating the potential benefits of a European children and young people's wellbeing survey and examines the level of change that would be necessary to justify public expenditure on a such a survey.