

Preface

This short book provides our personal perspective, as Chairs of the OECD-hosted High-Level Group on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress (HLEG), on the most salient issues discussed by the Group over the past five years (from 2013 to 2018). Over this period, the HLEG periodically convened to discuss many of the issues that are reflected in this book. The HLEG, whose members are listed in Box 1 below, was created to pursue the work of the Commission on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress convened by former French President Nicolas Sarkozy in 2008 (the “Stiglitz-Sen-Fitoussi Commission”). A companion report, *For Good Measure: Advancing Research on Well-being Metrics Beyond GDP*, provides a series of authored chapters, prepared by some HLEG members, on those topics that have been the focus of the HLEG work, and which are also discussed here.

While this book presents our own perspective on the deliberations of the HLEG, it rests on the enormous contributions of its members; not just the authored chapters in the companion report but the extensive discussions and deliberations, both in our plenary meetings and in the thematic workshops. Full credit needs to be given to the HLEG members for their huge intellectual contributions, which are reshaping how we think about the measurement of economic performance and social progress.

Any Group of this kind, dealing with complex and important issues, faces an insoluble dilemma. To get agreement among all HLEG members on all the salient issues is extraordinarily difficult and time consuming. As we undertook this new phase of the work, with greater constraints and higher ambitions, the Group decided to have authored chapters on each of the topics upon which it would focus – with the hope that each of these chapters would take into account the deliberations and comments of other HLEG members.

At the same time, we believed it important to provide an overview of the issues that we discussed. The Group therefore agreed that there would be a Chairs’ summary, reflecting and taking into account the views of all members of the HLEG. It was understood that not every member would agree with each of our interpretations of the issues. Some members might not even agree that we have captured accurately the spirit of our deliberations though, based on the feedback we have received from members, we are confident that we have been able to strike a good balance.

We feel remiss that we have not been able to give individual credit to each of the ideas that each HLEG member has contributed. They have been selfless in their dedication to this project, and we are deeply grateful. All we can say is “thank you”.

Our thanks also go to the OECD, for having hosted the work of the HLEG during this 5-year period, to the many foundations and organisations who hosted and financially supported the organisation of the thematic workshops, and to the many researchers who attended these workshops and shared with us their expertise on these subjects. These workshops have focused on:

- “Intra-generational and Inter-generational Sustainability” (22-23 September 2014), Rome, hosted by the Einaudi Institute for Economics and Finance and the Bank of Italy and sponsored by SAS;
- “Multi-dimensional Subjective Well-being” (30-31 October 2014), Turin, organised in collaboration with the International Herbert A. Simon Society and Collegio Carlo Alberto, and with the support of Compagnia di San Paolo;
- “Inequality of Opportunity” (14 January 2015), Paris, hosted by the Gulbenkian Foundation in collaboration with Sciences-Po Paris and the CEPREMAP;
- “Measuring Inequalities of Income and Wealth” (15-16 September 2015), Berlin, organised in collaboration with Bertelsmann Stiftung;
- “Measurement of Well-being and Development in Africa” (12-14 November 2015), Durban, South Africa, organised in collaboration with the Government of South Africa, the Japanese International Cooperation Agency, Columbia University and Cornell University;
- “Measuring Economic, Social and Environmental Resilience” (25-26 November 2015), Rome, hosted by the Einaudi Institute for Economics and Finance, supported by the Bank of Italy and Istat, and sponsored by SAS;
- “Economic Insecurity: Forging an Agenda for Measurement and Analysis” (4 March 2016), New York, organised in collaboration with the Washington Center for Equitable Growth, the Yale Institution for Social and Policy Studies, and the Ford Foundation; and
- “Measuring Trust and Social Capital” (10 June 2016), Paris, organised in collaboration with Science-Po Paris and the European Research Council.

We would like to express our special thanks to a number of colleagues who have supported our work throughout this period: Marco Mira d’Ercole, for his many valuable inputs to this book; Elizabeth Beasley, for acting as rapporteur of the authored volume; Martine Zaïda, for co-ordinating the HLEG and organising all the thematic workshops and plenary meetings; Patrick Love, for his inputs and for editing the books; Christine Le Thi for statistical assistance; and Anne-Lise Faron, for preparing these books for publication.

Box 1. High-Level Group on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress

Chairs

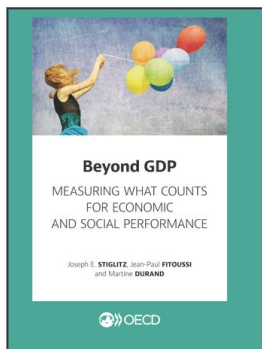
- Joseph E. Stiglitz, Professor of Economics, Business and International Affairs, Columbia University
- Jean-Paul Fitoussi, Professor of Economics at Sciences-Po, Paris and Luiss University, Rome
- Martine Durand, Chief Statistician, OECD

Members

- Yann Algan, Professor of Economics, Sciences-Po, Paris
- François Bourguignon, Paris School of Economics
- Angus Deaton, Senior Scholar and Dwight D. Eisenhower Professor of Economics and International Affairs Emeritus, Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs and Economics Department, Princeton University
- Enrico Giovannini, Professor of Economic Statistics, University of Rome Tor Vergata
- Jacob Hacker, Director of the Institution for Social and Policy Studies, and Stanley B. Resor Professor of Political Science, Yale University
- Geoffrey Heal, Garrett Professor of Public Policy and Corporate Responsibility, Professor of Economics and Finance, Columbia University Graduate School of Business; Director of the Earth Institute Center for Economy, Environment, and Society, Columbia University
- Ravi Kanbur, T.H. Lee Professor of World Affairs, International Professor of Applied Economics and Management and Professor of Economics, Cornell University
- Alan Krueger, Bendheim Professor of Economics and Public Affairs, Princeton University
- Nora Lustig, Samuel Z. Stone Professor of Latin American Economics, Tulane University
- Jil Matheson, Former United Kingdom National Statistician
- Thomas Piketty, Professor, Paris School of Economics
- Walter Radermacher, Former Director-General, Eurostat
- Chiara Saraceno, Honorary fellow at the Collegio Carlo Alberto, Turin
- Arthur Stone, Senior Behavioral Scientist, Professor of Psychology, University of Southern California
- Yang Yao, Director of CCER and Dean of National School of Development, Peking University

Rapporteurs

- Marco Mira d'Ercole, OECD
- Elizabeth Beasley, CEPREMAP and Sciences-Po



From:

Beyond GDP

Measuring What Counts for Economic and Social Performance

Access the complete publication at:

<https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264307292-en>

Please cite this chapter as:

Stiglitz, Joseph E., Jean-Paul Fitoussi and Martine Durand (2018), "Preface", in *Beyond GDP: Measuring What Counts for Economic and Social Performance*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264307292-1-en>

This document, as well as any data and map included herein, are without prejudice to the status of or sovereignty over any territory, to the delimitation of international frontiers and boundaries and to the name of any territory, city or area. Extracts from publications may be subject to additional disclaimers, which are set out in the complete version of the publication, available at the link provided.

The use of this work, whether digital or print, is governed by the Terms and Conditions to be found at <http://www.oecd.org/termsandconditions>.