

## **The OECD's Better Life Indexes for Canadian Provinces from 2000-2013: Challenges and Results**

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### **Abstract:**

Over the past decade the OECD has advocated that the well-being of a society should involve more than an indicator involving real GDP. In May 2011, that organization produced its **Better Life Index** ([www.betterlifeindex.org](http://www.betterlifeindex.org)) for many countries. This action was carried out as a means of measuring social progress in order to both engage citizens and to motivate governments to focus on what sort of society its citizens wish for. The composite BLI index produced for individual countries is based on 11 dimensions, which reflect what people consider matters most in their lives. Since that May in 2011, the BLI has been updated and some new indicators have been produced. This year is no exception.

While the OECD's indicator relates to nations, it has been recognized that meaningful citizen engagement can also occur at the provincial/state level and also the community/neighbourhood level where governments and non-government organizations also exist. In our session, we present the OECD's BLI indicators for the 10 provinces over the period from 2000-2013. During the production of these indicators we briefly outline some of the challenges we faced as well as the idiosyncrasies we discovered. As for the provincial results that we will present, they are somewhat surprising and do not seem to necessarily follow a provinces economic fortunes.