

Beyond GDP Forum: International directions – HLEG & SNA 2025, 11th March 2025

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Two processes: HLEG & SNA2025

- **High level Expert Group on Beyond GDP (HELGE)**
- **System of National Accounts 2025** & later releases, plus revisions
- Distinct from each other, no formal authority, both are UN processes however
- But are linked, (in a sense)...
- Former tasked with influencing latter, via common membership of Governance bodies, technical leadership, apex level oversight

High Level Expert Group (HLEG) on Beyond GDP

- **Purpose: End over-reliance on GDP**, address its limitations; **Make the invisible, visible** & reflect well-being, equity & inclusion, & environmental sustainability
- Mandated by **GA adoption of the Pact for the Future 2024** (Action 53)
- **Does not seek to replace GDP, but supplement it.** HLEG cognizant of importance & support for GDP-type metrics (has shaped direction of thinking)
- **Aims for a new framework, that allows for better, more complete, application of wider (multi-dimensional) metrics** to support decision-making
- **Highly credentialed experts**, global membership. **Supported by UNCTAD**
- **Formal timeline/ outputs:** See chart, **ends in report to GA80.** Will be followed by **inter-governmental (political) process**, member state inputs

HLEG Interim Report

- Does not seek to end the use of GDP, **but to provide supplementary insights & challenge its pre-eminence**
- Informed discussion at 1st-inpsesosn meeting
- Early **technical thinking responded to the well-documented critiques**
 - New analytics: GDP plus multiple metrics within dashboard approach, but with a focus on outcome measures
 - Perception-based metrics are under consideration

Adjusted GDP

v-GDP (Valued goods & services)

e-GDP (Inclusion & equality)

s-GDP (Environmental sustainability)

Dashboard

Multidimensional metrics – HPI etc.

10 (?) SDG type indicators

Perception-based metrics – human happiness

Proceedings at 2nd In-Person Meeting

- Some change in direction [dashboard prioritized](#), adjusted GDP metrics de-prioritized
- **3 pillars** (guiding concepts) & **7 domains** (clusters of indicators)
- **Principles for selection:** (1) Scientifically robust & SDG-aligned; (2) Policy-relevant & outcome-focused; (3) Simple to communicate
- **Disaggregated** where relevant & allowing for **national customization**
- Position not clear on whether specification would be mandated
- Plus, emphasis on [wealth \(environmental & social welfare\) accounting](#) (the SEEA etc.)
- **Falls short of adjusted-GDP**, but would facilitate (parallels efforts in the SNA2025)

Dashboard

Well-being

Equity & Inclusion

Sustainability

Material Well-being

Health

Education

Environmental Quality

Subjective Well-being

Social Capital

Governance

System of National Accounts & the SNA 2025

- **Global statistical standard for compiling national accounts**
- **Basis for calculation of GDP** (& other metrics - GNI, GNI PPP, NNP etc.)
- **Overseen by Inter-Secretariat Working Group on National Accounts (ISWGNA):**
UN, IMF, World Bank, OECD & Eurostat
- Governed by **UN Statistical Commission**, technical assistance provided by **Advisory Expert Group**
- **SNA 2025 = Sixth edition of SNA rule book**, adopted by UN Statistical Commission in March 2025
- **Nations & international bodies obliged to apply (within capacities). Full adoption will take time.** DOSM now rolling-out

What's new in the SNA 2025

- **Globalization:** Better treatment of global production arrangements, multinational enterprises, contract manufacturing & digital cross-border activities
- **Digitalization:** Guidance on digital platforms, data as an economic asset, AI-driven services, and “free” digital services. New chapter on digitalization
- **Well-being & sustainability:** New chapters addressing well-being & sustainability, reflecting critiques of GDP & aligning with environmental-economic accounting
 - **Enhanced harmonization with SEEA Framework**, ensuring ecological assets & natural resource flows are integrated into macroeconomic accounting
- **Expanded treatment of financial risks:** Improved representation of financial vulnerabilities, financial instruments & risk exposure (including crypto-lending & treatment of collateral)
- **Updated institutional and Sectoral Classifications:** Revisions to definitions of institutional units, digital enterprises, and cross-border production roles

Does not mandate green GDP, but would enable estimation