

BEC中级阅读：幸福不能靠政府 PDF转换可能丢失图片或格式，建议阅读原文

[https://www.100test.com/kao\\_ti2020/491/2021\\_2022\\_BEC\\_E4\\_B8\\_AD\\_E7\\_BA\\_A7\\_E9\\_c67\\_491300.htm](https://www.100test.com/kao_ti2020/491/2021_2022_BEC_E4_B8_AD_E7_BA_A7_E9_c67_491300.htm) 有关政府政策应更明确地聚焦于"增进幸福"的主张，近来正获得支持。支持此种观点的人指出，基于所谓幸福感调查的幸福指标，已停滞了几十年。一个重要的原因是，各国政府着眼于提高一个定义狭隘、以物质为本的经济福利衡量指标，即国民生产总值(GNP)，而非一个更全面的基于幸福的福利指标。 The idea that government policy should be focused more explicitly on promoting happiness has been gaining support. Proponents of this view argue that happiness indicators, based on surveys that purport to measure how happy people feel, have stagnated over decades. An important reason is that governments have aimed to maximise a narrowly defined materially based measure of economic welfare, gross national product, rather than a more holistic indicator of welfare based on happiness. 这一前提显然是错误的。古往今来，政界人士想实现的许多目标，并非旨在提高GNP。例如，最近在英国财政部网站公布的公共服务协议，阐明了政府的承诺，要增加中小学的体育课，鼓励人们参与艺术活动，并减少羊搔痒症的发病率。想必，这并非"曲线"推动经济增长的方式。 This premise is clearly false. Politicians have always sought to achieve many things that are not designed to increase GNP. The most recent public service agreements on the British Treasury website, for example, spell out government commitments to make schoolchildren do more physical education, increase participation in

the arts and reduce scrapie in sheep. Presumably these are not just oblique ways of boosting the economy. 幸福趋势几十年停滞不前，也许正说明政府政策总体上是失败的，说明过去50年来，通过政治进程来"改善人类"的努力是徒劳的。但这将是一个令人沮丧的结论。因此，幸福感倡导者把GNP当作替罪羊，主张经济增长与幸福无关，甚至有害。 A decades-long flat happiness trend could be showing that government policies in general fail. that efforts to improve the human lot through the political process over the past 50 years have proved futile. But this would be a depressing conclusion. Instead, happiness advocates make a scapegoat out of GNP and argue that economic growth is irrelevant or detrimental to happiness. 另一种观点是，长期的幸福感数据包含的真正信息很少，甚至完全没有。我们根本不能依赖此类数据作为有用的指标。的确，这些数据并未显示出与一系列显然有望增进幸福的因素具有相关性，例如大幅增加休闲时间，预期寿命更长，以及性别不平等的缩小。 The alternative view is that the happiness data over time contain little or no genuine information. We simply cannot rely on such data as an indicator of anything useful. Indeed, they show no correlation with a whole range of factors that might reasonably be thought to improve well-being, such as a massive increase in leisure time, a tendency to live longer and a decline in gender inequality. 人们往往主张，收入不平等是幸福与否的重要决定因素，而这一"事实"被用作增加累进税收的理由。然而，在收入不平等加剧或减缓期间，我们没有发现幸福感数据有任何变化。我们还被告知，近数十年来，忧郁症发病率大幅上升，但幸福指标并未出现与之

对应的下降。Income inequality is often claimed to be a strong determinant of happiness, and this "fact" used to argue for more progressive taxation. Yet we do not see any change in recorded happiness when inequality goes up or down. We are also told there has been a large rise in depression in recent decades, but this is not reflected by a downturn in measured happiness. 有时候，我们被告知，幸福程度之所以没有上升，是因为家庭和邻里关系破裂在抵消经济增长的益处。但是，按照这种说法的逻辑，决策者应该无动于衷，因为以这种"全面"的幸福指标来衡量，我们并没有比以前变得更糟。就连最阴沉的正统经济学家也不会声称，物质财富可以替代亲情。 Sometimes we are told that happiness has failed to increase because the benefits of economic growth have been offset by a breakdown in family and community relationships. But the normative implication of this argument is that policymakers should be indifferent because, by this supposedly all-encompassing measure of welfare, we are no worse off than we were before. Not even the most dismal orthodox economist would claim that material wealth is a substitute for kinship. 政府试图提高幸福指标，而非提高我们的生活水平，这种做法很可能适得其反：设立武断的目标，分散了公务员的核心职能；向许多人传递一个信息：幸福来自国家政策，而非我们自己的努力；以及为政府制造压力，要求政府提高一个指标，而这个指标以往从未对任何政策或社会经济变化做出系统性反应。这些正是一切瞄准目标的心态的错误所在，这种心态正弥漫英国公共领域。我们应该从这些错误中吸取教训，而非重复它们。 Government attempts to increase measured happiness, rather than

making life better for us, may well do the opposite: create arbitrary objectives that divert civil service energies from core responsibilities. give many people the message that happiness emanates from national policy rather than our own efforts. and create pressure for government to appear to increase an indicator that has never before shifted systematically in response to any policy or socioeconomic change. These are exactly the mistakes of the target-driven mentality that now pervades the British public sector. We should learn from these rather than replicate them. 从更阴暗的角度看，这个世界的幸福观具有内在的反民主倾向。拿着笔记本、掌握统计知识的专家比普通人更清楚是什么让他们"幸福"。因此，他们能够"理直气壮"地推翻当地民主决策或个人决策。因为从表面上看，增进幸福是一个无可辩驳的目标，它可以压倒对某些政策的反对，而实际上，这些政策构成政治上永远存在的非常真实的艰难选择。 More sinisterly, the happiness view of the world has tendencies that are inherently anti-democratic. The expert with his or her clipboard and regressions knows better than ordinary people themselves what makes them happy. So local democratic or individual decisions can be overridden with a clean conscience. Because, at face value, promoting happiness is an incontestable aim, it would be ideal for steamrolling opposition to policies that, on closer inspection, pose the same very real tough choices that are a continual presence in politics. 国民生产总值并不是包含一切的福利指标；它只是衡量经济的规模。它还没有纳入许多对我们的幸福颇为重要的因素。这些因素的维系，要依靠一个强大的公民社会，以及有民主监督的责任制度、运行良好的政

府。如果，在没有"科学证据"的情况下，我们就不能令人信服地证明这些因素使人们幸福，那么我们在道德上就陷于不确定状态。政府不会因为没有衡量幸福而失败，但是，当政府以劣质信息为依据，在资源配置方面失误时，它就会失败。 GNP is not an all-encompassing measure of welfare. it simply measures the size of the economy. There are many things important to our wellbeing that are not captured by it. Those things need to be sustained by a strong civil society and democratically accountable, well-run government. If we cannot make convincing cases for them without "scientific proof" that they make people happy, we are morally adrift. Government does not fail because it does not measure happiness. it fails when its energies are misdirected on the basis of poor quality information. 100Test 下载频道开通，各类考试题目直接下载。详细请访问 [www.100test.com](http://www.100test.com)