



# The Contribution of Leisure to the *Canadian Index of Wellbeing*

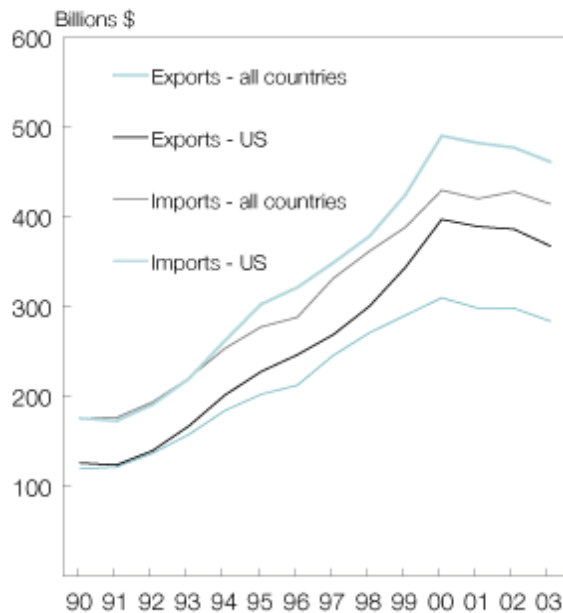
**Bryan Smale**  
University of Waterloo

2010 Leisure Studies Association Conference  
Leeds Metropolitan University  
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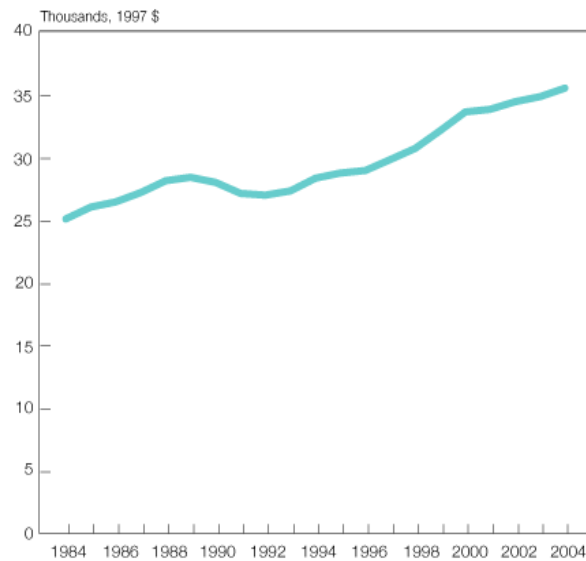
# How are we doing?

**Figure 1.1**  
Canadian Total Trade in Goods and Services, 1990 to 2003



Source: Statistics Canada, 2004.

Real GDP Per Capita, Canada, 1984-2004



Source: Statistics Canada, 2005

**Figure 2.9**  
Unemployment Rate in Canada and the US, 1994 to 2004



Note: Canadian official unemployment rates adjusted to US concepts for comparison.

Source: Statistics Canada, US bureau of Labor Statistics, 2004.

**“Is this really wellbeing?”**



*“Around the world, a consensus is growing about the need for **a more holistic and transparent way** to measure societal progress – one that accounts for more than just economic indicators such as the Gross Domestic Product and takes in to account the **full range of social, health, environmental, and economic concerns of citizens**”*

— The Honourable Roy J. Romanow  
Chair, CIW Advisory Board

# Measuring what Matters

Indicators are powerful because what we count and measure, influences how we make policy decisions

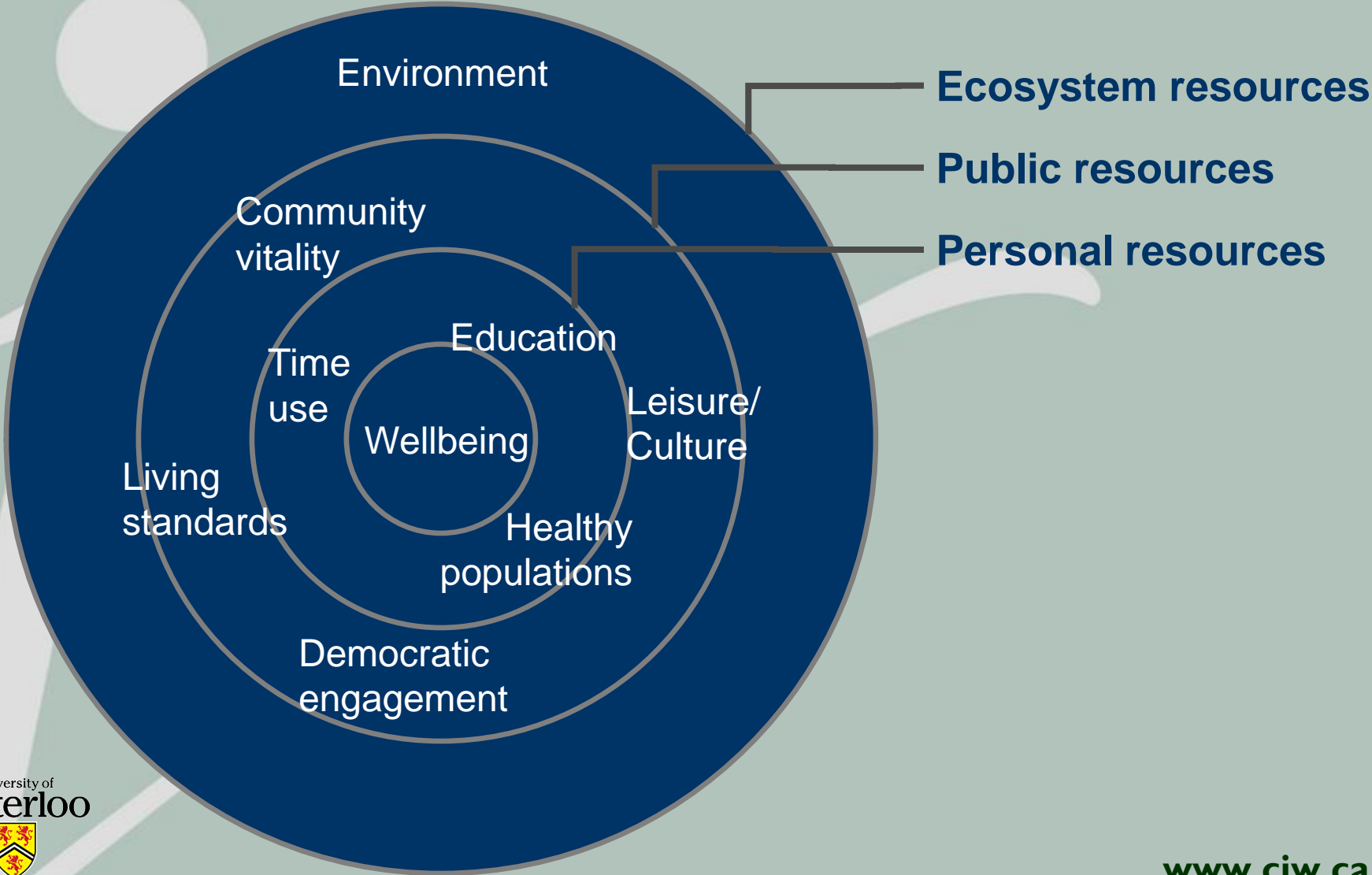
If we fail to assess wellbeing in all of its dimensions, it “doesn’t count” thereby leaving citizens to:

- gauge wellbeing using a narrow set of economic indicators
- misinterpret wellbeing or use surrogate measures
- ignore policy options that can fundamentally improve wellbeing

# Canadian Index of Wellbeing



# The CIW's Mandala of Wellbeing



# Key Definitions

## Wellbeing

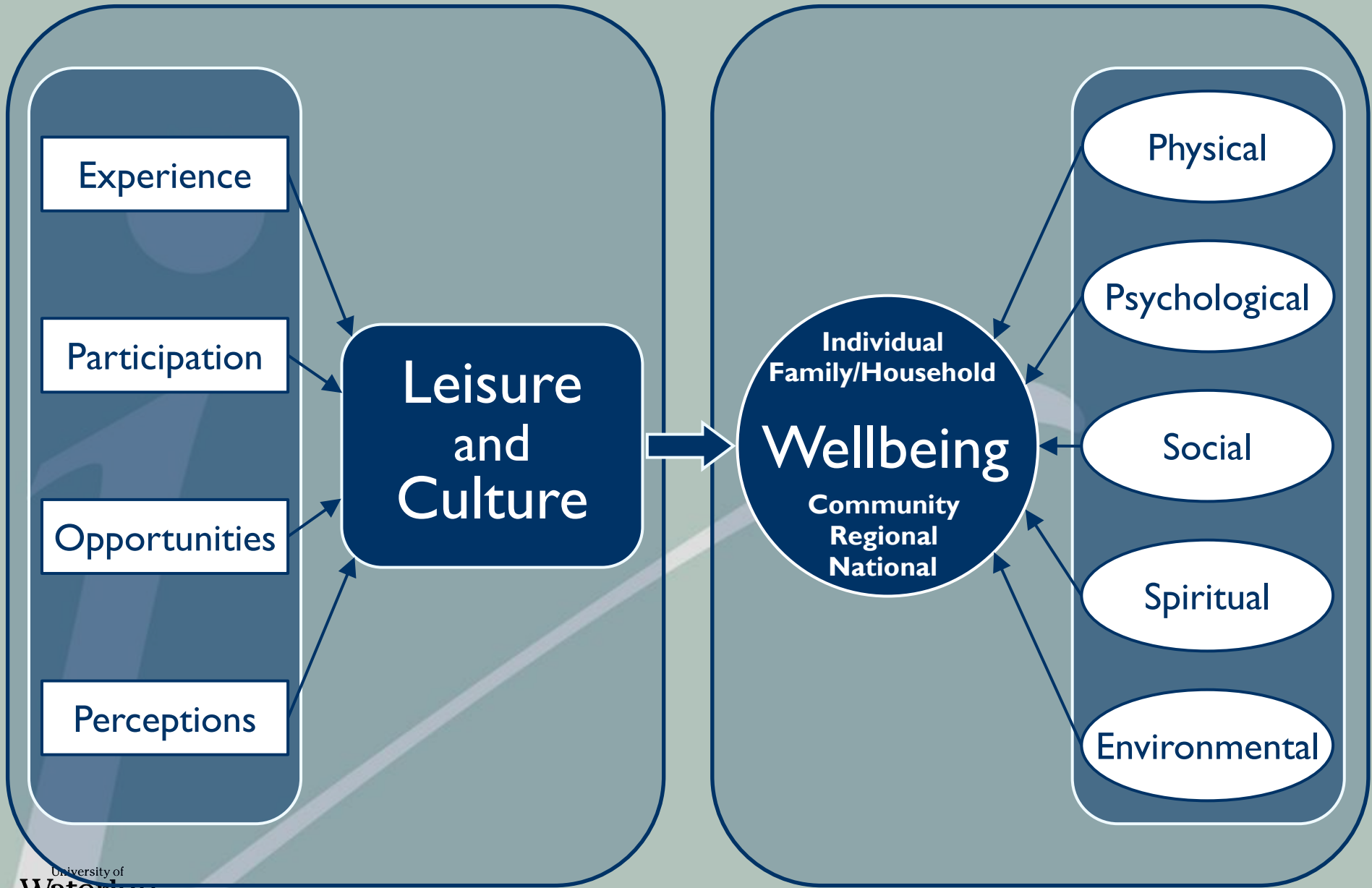
a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease, or infirmity (WHO, 2001)

## Leisure

Leisure is considered primarily as a condition, sometimes referred to as a state of being, an attitude of mind or a quality of experience. It is distinguished by the individual's perceived freedom to act and distinguished from conditions imposed by necessity. It is assumed to be pleasurable and, although it may appeal because of certain anticipated benefits, it is intrinsically motivated: it is an end in itself and valuable for its own sake (Cushman & Laidler, 1990)

## Culture

Cultural participation includes creating, witnessing, preserving, and supporting artistic and cultural expression (Walker et al., 2002)





# Criteria for Selecting Indicators

## Validity

the indicator is a direct and accurate measure of an ***aspect of leisure and culture*** participation, perceptions, or opportunity

## Quality

the indicator captures the types of things that best reflect the ***direct relationship*** between leisure and culture and wellbeing

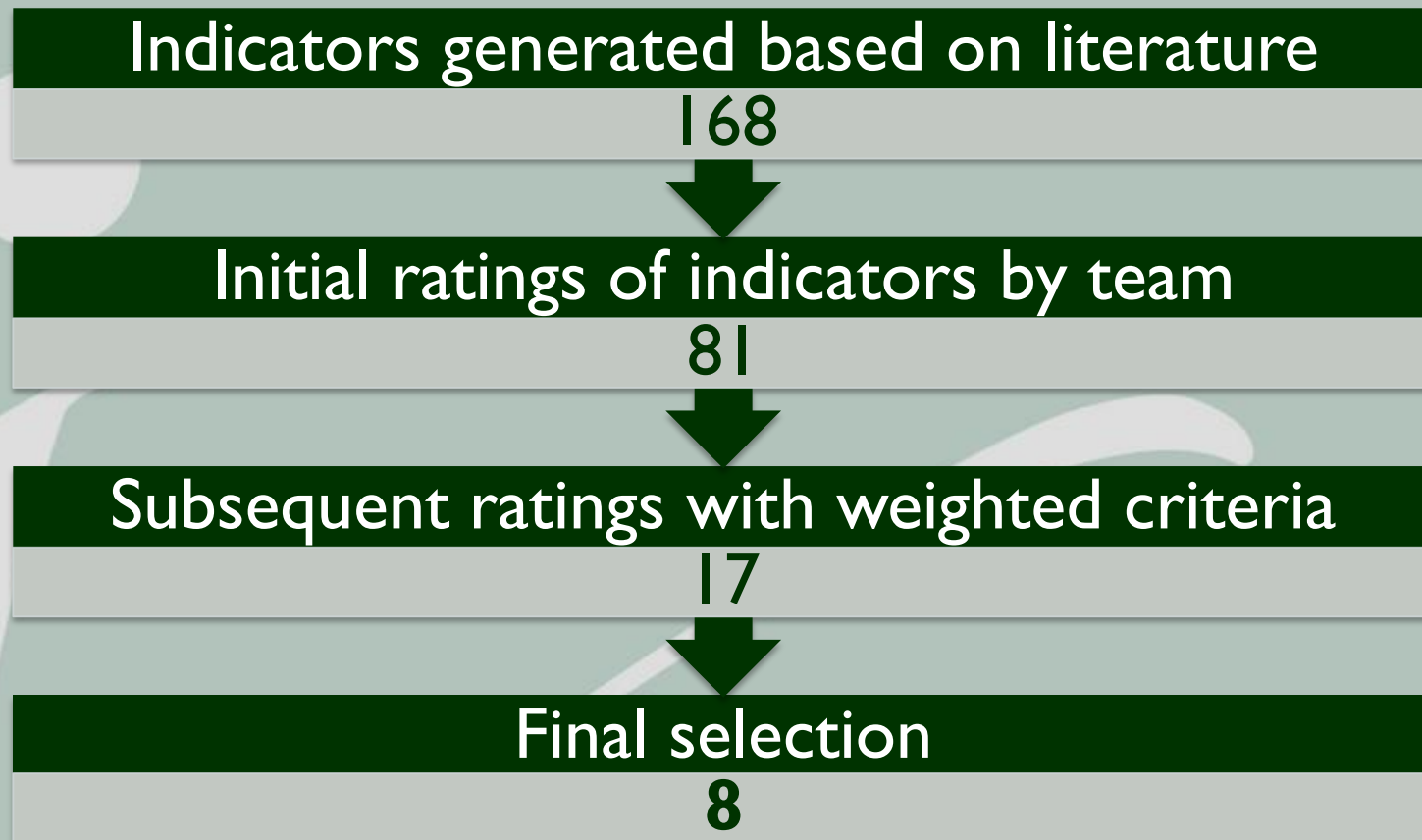
## Relevance

the indicator is clearly ***relevant to the goals*** of the CIW project and the relationship between leisure and culture and wellbeing specifically

## Feasibility

the indicator is ***available, accessible, and systematically gathered*** to allow for updates to the index over time

# Process for Selecting Indicators



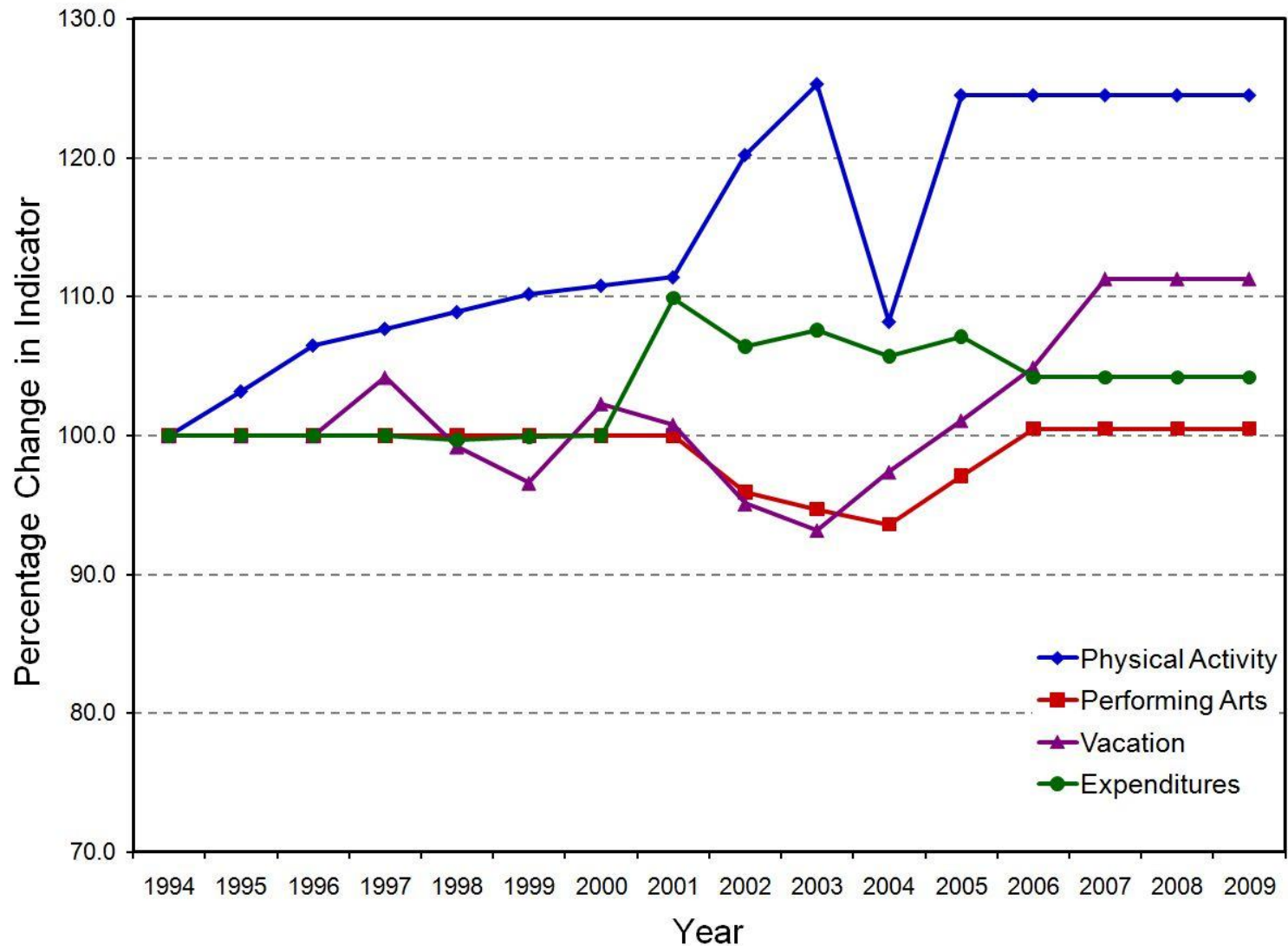
Data sources:

- General Social Survey on Time Use (1992, 1998, 2005)*
- Canadian Community Health Survey (2000 to 2005)*
- Canadian Survey on Giving, Volunteering, and Participating (1997, 2000, 2004)*
- Travel Survey of Residents of Canada (1994 to 2007)*
- Survey of Household Spending (1997 to 2008)*
- Annual Survey of Service Industries: Performance Arts (2002 to 2008)*
- Parks Canada (1995 to 2009)*

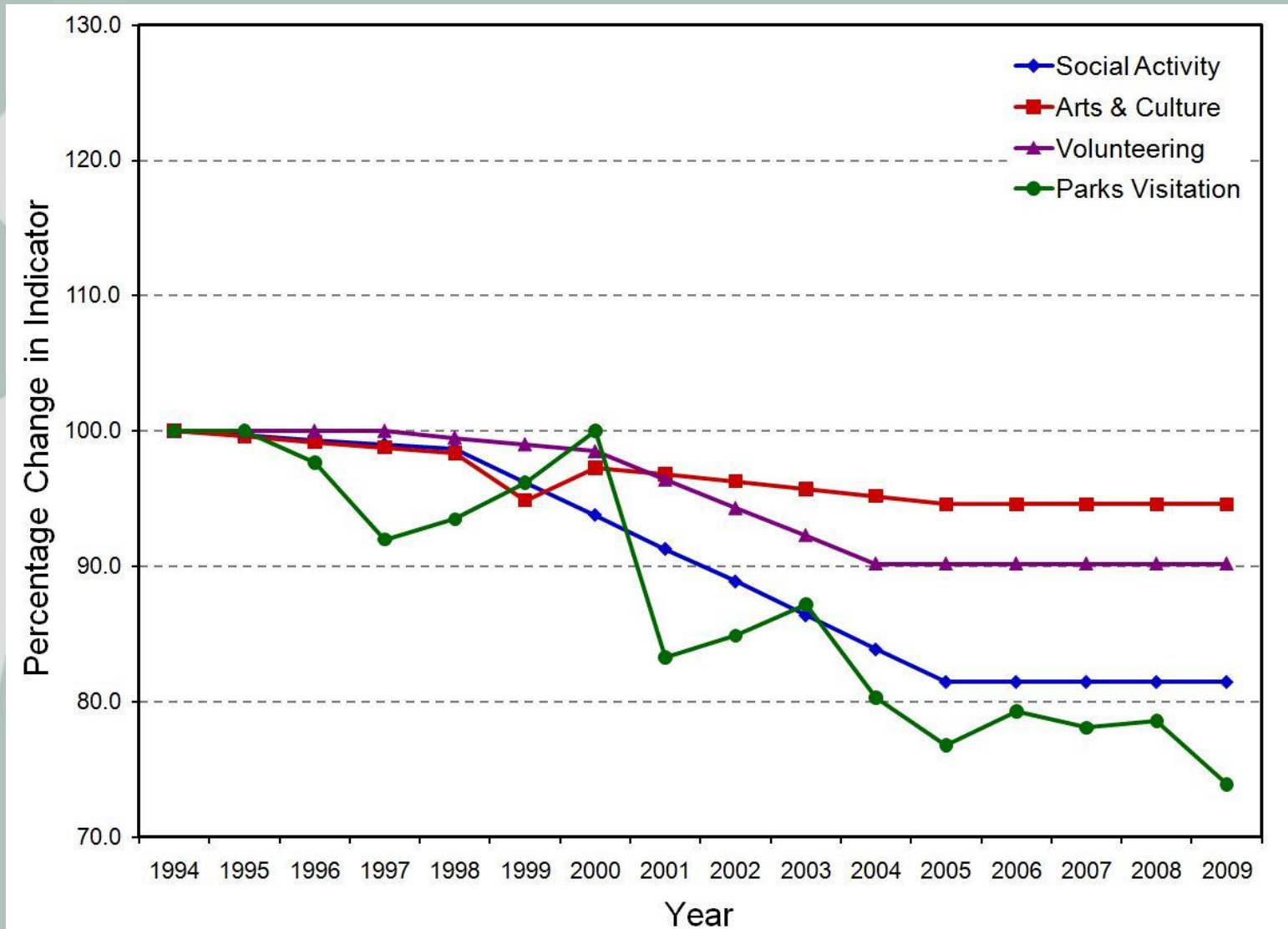
# Final Indicators in the Leisure and Culture Domain

<b>Component</b>	<b>Indicator</b>
<b>Time Use</b>	Percentage of time spent on the previous day in <i>social leisure</i> activities
<b>Time Use</b>	Percentage of time spent on the previous day in <i>arts and culture</i> activities
<b>Time Use</b>	Average number of hours in past year <i>volunteering for culture and recreation organisations</i>
<b>Activity Participation</b>	Average monthly frequency of participation in <i>physical activity</i> lasting over 15 minutes
<b>Activity Participation</b>	Average attendance per performance in past year at <i>all</i> performing arts performances
<b>Activity Participation</b>	Average visitation per site in past year to <i>all National Parks and National Historic Sites</i>
<b>Activity Participation</b>	Average number of nights away per trip in the past year on <i>vacation trips</i> to destinations over 80 kilometres from home
<b>Expenditures</b>	Expenditures in past year on <i>all aspects of culture and recreation</i> as a percentage of total household expenditures

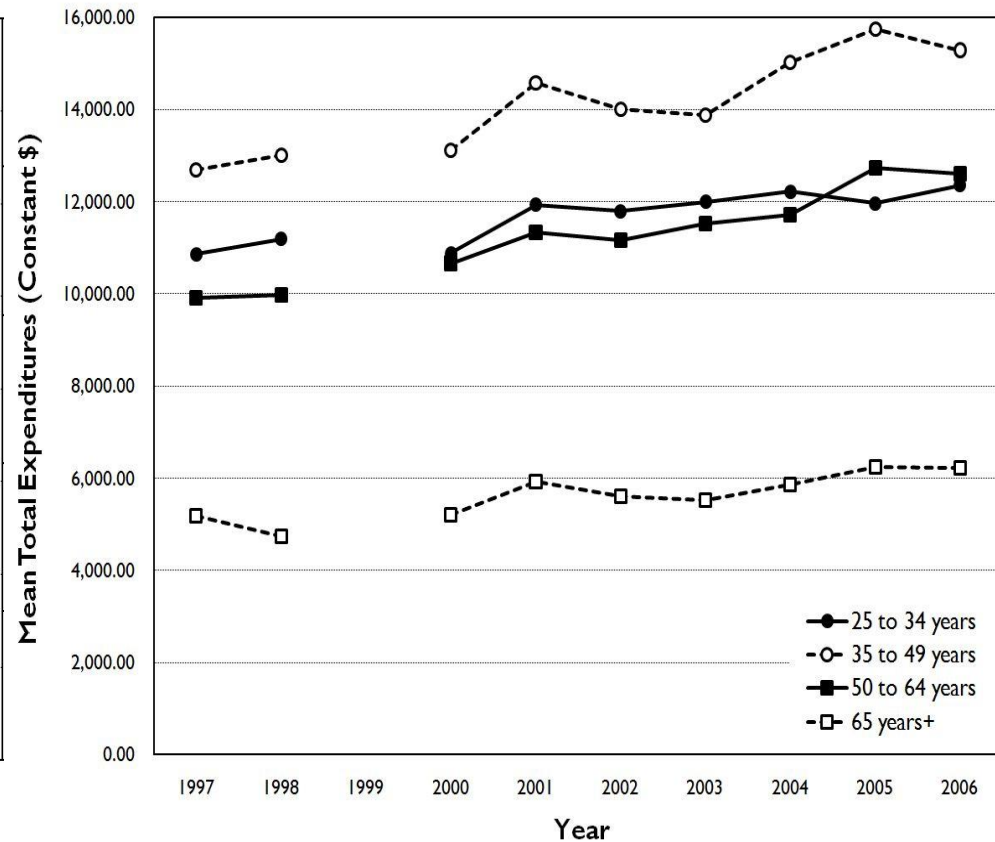
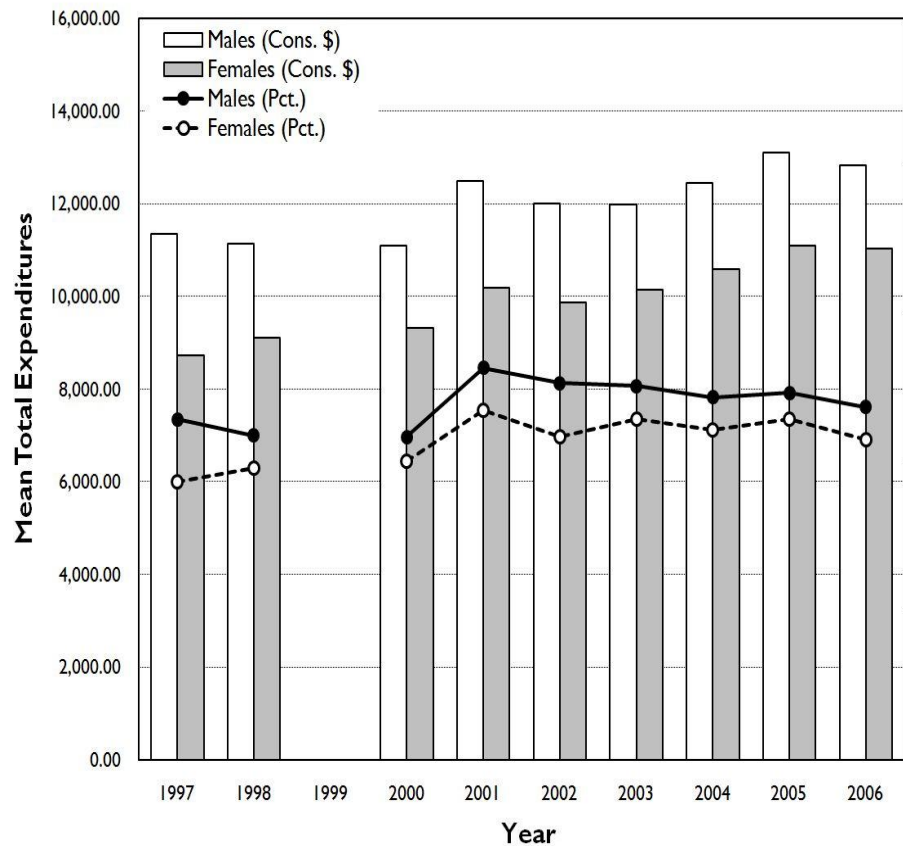
# Indicators Performing Better 1994 to 2009

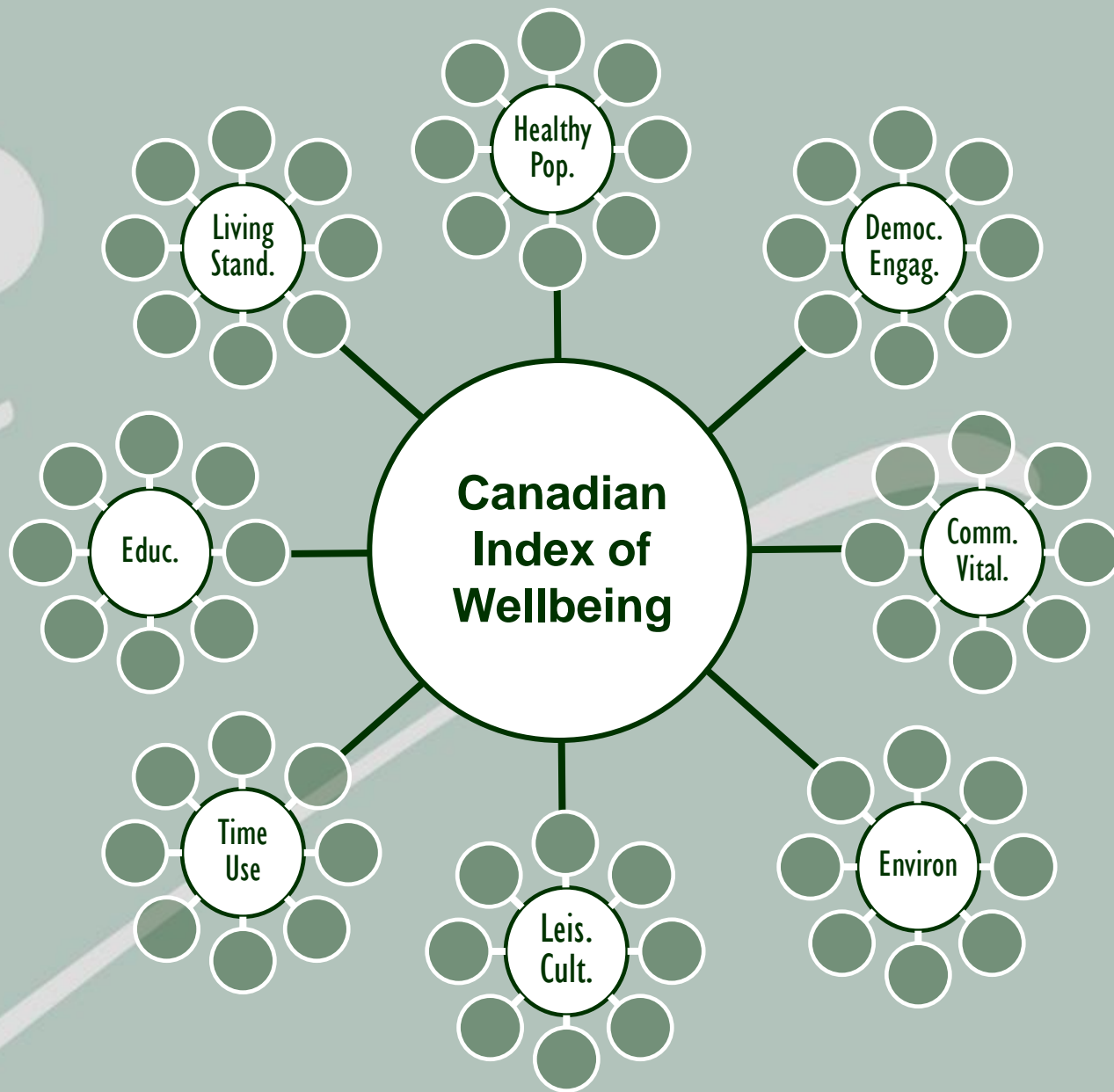


# Indicators Performing Worse 1994 to 2009

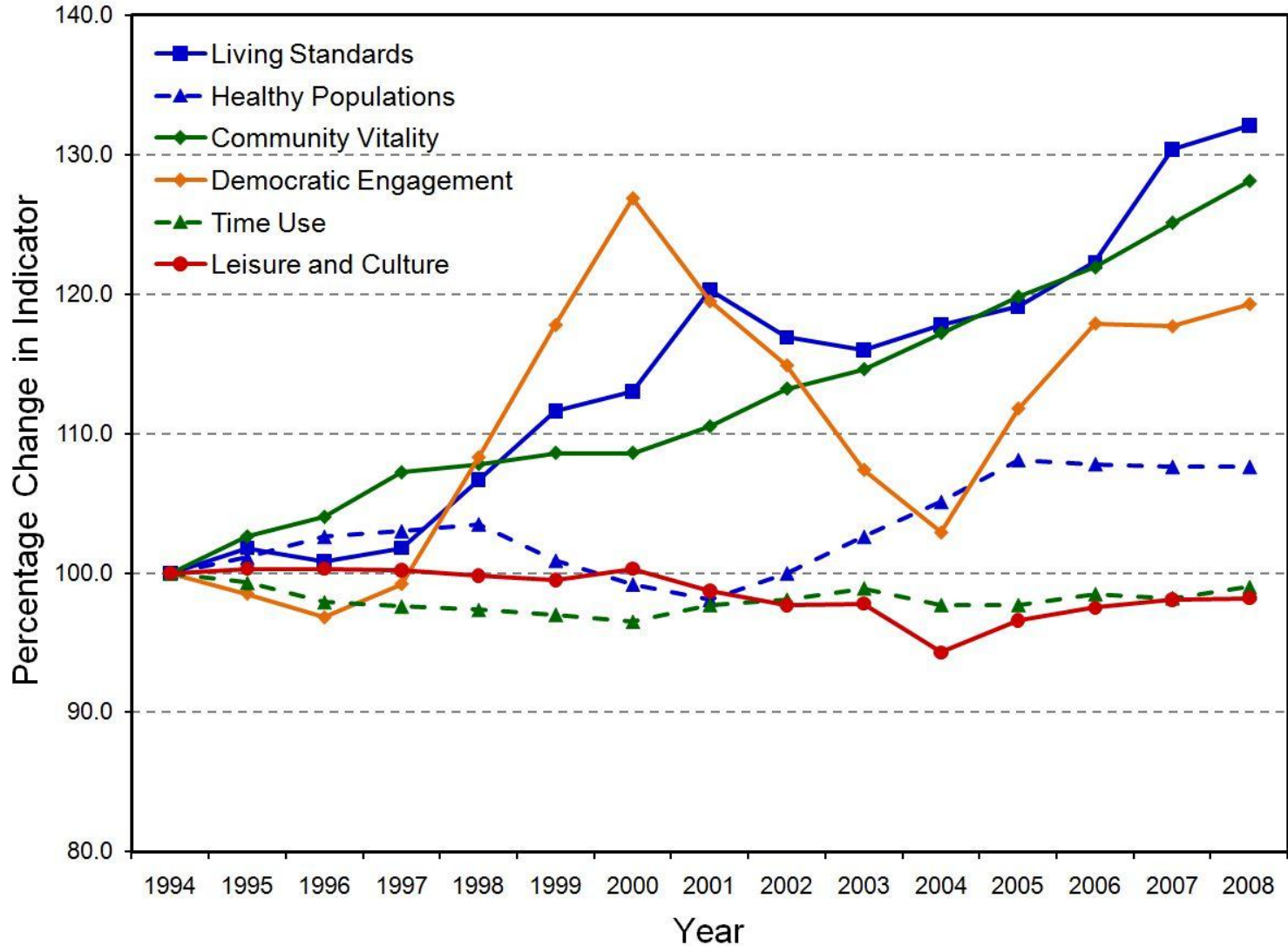


# Example: Household Expenditures on Culture and Recreation by Gender and Age



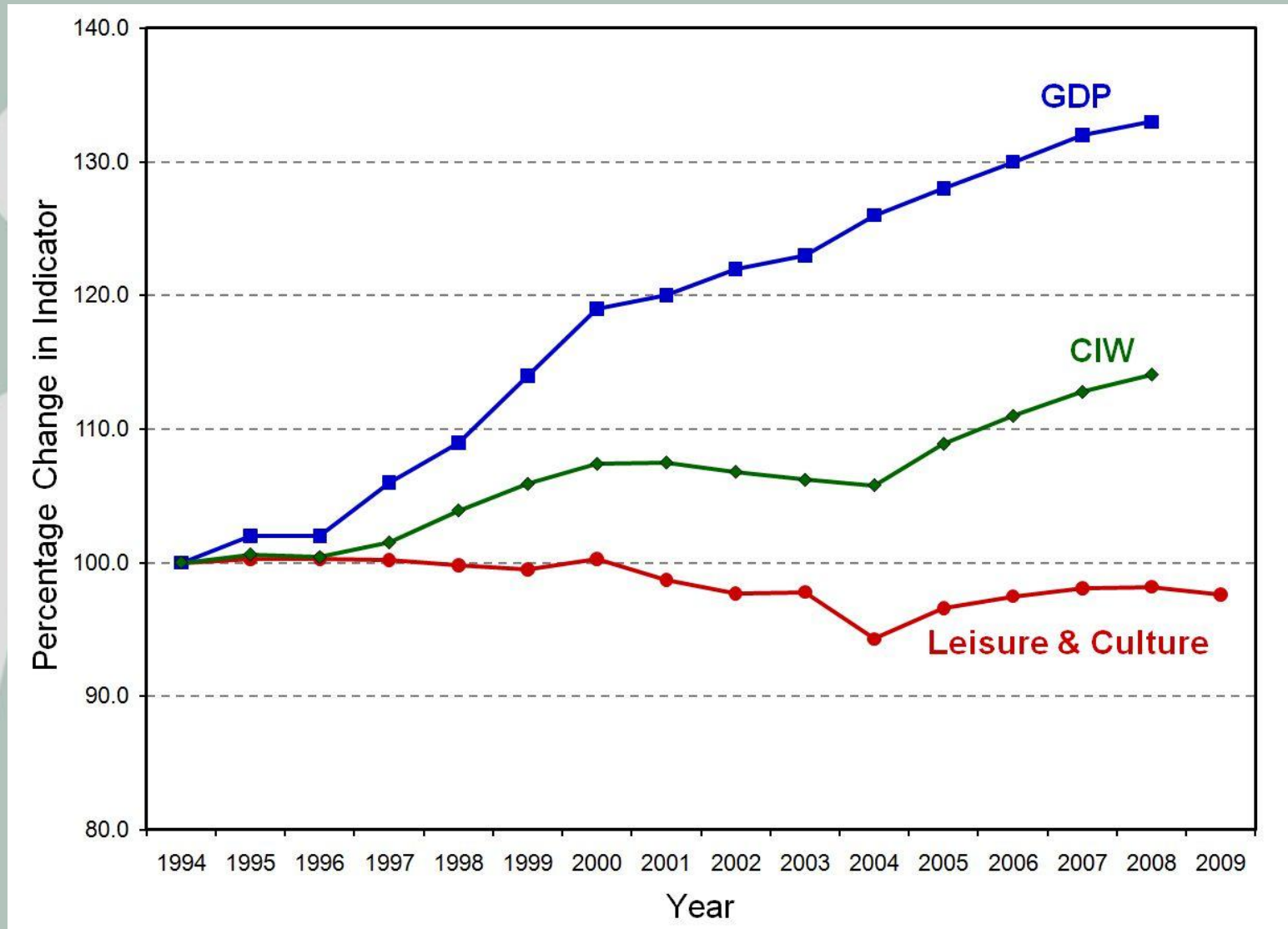


# Relative Performance of Composite Domain Indicators





# Relative Performance of GDP, CIW, and Leisure & Culture Domain



# Challenges

- *meanings* and *perceptions* associated with leisure and culture often have strongest relationship to wellbeing, but they are largely absent in data
- desire for, but lack of consensus on role of, *negative* indicators for wellbeing (e.g., computer/internet use, alcohol)
- *inconsistency* in and *sustainability* of measures
- systemic, political factors threaten our ability to advance leisure and culture as critical contributors to our wellbeing. Salient indicators could serve to change the nature of policy debate



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For copies of reports related to the Canadian Index of Wellbeing,  
including the Leisure and Culture Domain final report:

<http://www.ciw.ca>