Dissatisfaction with GDP as the sole measure of development/progress has prompted the Social Indicator Movement as early as 1960s. Sustainable development enters the debate from the 1970s, and the first decade of the XXI century inaugurates the era of well-being measures as ways to go beyond GDP.

Over the last 20 years, the possible economic and social impacts of culture and the arts have gained the attention of decision makers, but that goes hand in hand with a declining appreciation of culture and the arts per se.

The international effort aimed at producing measures of well-being represents an unprecedented opportunity. The challenge is how to make explicit the role culture plays in well-being, combining instrumental and "intrinsic" perspectives. Social impacts of culture include Curiosity, Awareness, Knowledge, Cooperation, Participation, Empathy, Belonging, Community, Self-esteem, Engagement, Hope, Trust, Not being lonely.

Of course, the measurement of culture is by no means an easy task, and theoretical and practical difficulties must be addressed. Data are scarce, irregular and extremely varied, and the national profiles are hardly comparable. There are things at the intersection of culture and society that will remain non measurable, despite our efforts and the refinement of our tools. They require a different, qualitative approach: i.e. narratives in the place of indicators. Other phenomena, instead, are measurable, but require new tools, yet to be created.

The paper proposes an indicator building process and a tentative list of indicators for measuring the social impact of culture-based development projects, as well as effectiveness and efficiency of the cultural organizations involved, both ex ante and ex post.

*Keywords: well-being, cultural indicators, measurement, social impact*