

Ekaterina Oparina

CONTACT INFORMATION	Centre for Economic Performance London School of Economics Houghton Street, London WC2A 2AE, UK	Email: e.oparina@lse.ac.uk Website: ekaterinaoparina.com
RESEARCH INTERESTS	Health Economics, Economics of Wellbeing, Policy Evaluation, Applied Econometrics	
ACADEMIC POSITIONS	Research Economist, Centre for Economic Performance (CEP), LSE Research Affiliate, Wellbeing Research Centre, University of Oxford	2020–present 2021–present
EDUCATION	Ph.D. Economics, University of Surrey Thesis: “Econometric Analysis of Subjective Wellbeing Data” Supervisors: Sorawoot Srisuma and Jo Blanden M.P.A., Higher School of Economics, Perm B.Sc. Economics, Higher School of Economics, Perm	2016–2020 2009–2011 2005–2009
WORKING PAPERS	<p>Oparina, E., Krekel, C., & Srisuma, S. (2025). “Talking Therapy: Impacts of a Nationwide Mental Health Service.” CEP Discussion Paper 1982, IZA Discussion Paper Media: IZA Opinion Piece</p> <p>Mental health problems impose significant costs, yet healthcare systems often overlook them. We provide the first causal evidence on the effectiveness of a nationwide mental health service in England for treating depression and anxiety using non-experimental data and methods. We exploit oversubscription and resulting exogenous variation in waiting times across areas and time for identification, based on a novel dataset of over one million patients. We find that treatment improves mental health and reduces impairment in work and social life. We provide suggestive evidence that it enhances employment. Impacts vary across patients and services. Nevertheless, the programme is highly cost-effective.</p> <p>Oparina, E., Krekel, C., Parkes, I., Srisuma, S., & Clark, D. (2025). “Evaluating the Effectiveness of Clinical Healthcare Services Using Population-Wide Patient Data: An Example of NHS Talking Therapies.” We propose a novel methodology for evaluating the effectiveness of healthcare services at the population level, with the aim and ambition to complement evidence produced by RCTs. Our methodology is particularly suitable in clinical settings where services are rolled out gradually or are oversubscribed, often resulting in waitlists for access to care. We illustrate it using an example from the NHS Talking Therapies programme, a nationwide service within the English National Health Service that provides treatment for common mental health conditions such as anxiety disorders. However, our approach is applicable to many other healthcare settings, including, for example, cancer treatment programmes.</p> <p>Kaiser, C., Oparina, E., & Oswald, A. (2024). “Is it Psychologically Dangerous to Live in a Rich Area? Evidence from Individual-Level Data on UK Suicides.” This paper uses the first-ever release of individual-level data on UK suicides to understand how humans respond to economic advantage and disadvantage and to relative deprivation in their geographical area. Under strict confidentiality requirements, we link these data to the UK Census. We report a range of new findings. Of particular importance: this paper documents evidence consistent with the view that <i>ceteris paribus</i> it can be psychologically dangerous to live in a rich area. Feelings of relative deprivation may matter intensely—even in decisions about whether death is preferable to life.</p> <p>Cotofan, M., Krekel, C., & Oparina, E. (2025). “Exercise, Volunteering, and Mental Health: Evidence from a Nation-Wide Programme.” There is growing interest in how social prescribing, a therapeutic approach that refers individuals with unmet social or emotional needs to community activities, can improve mental health and revolutionize health care systems at cost. However, robust evidence on which interventions are effective</p>	

is still scarce. We exploit a unique setting in the UK to measure the impacts of a lifestyle intervention that combines sports and volunteering on participant mental health. Using incentivised surveys linked to administrative data on participation, we compare individuals who participated with those who signed up but did not, including for exogenous reasons. We find that participation strongly reduces mental ill health and loneliness whilst raising feelings of belonging and connectedness. Impacts are sizeable and persistent. The programme is highly cost-effective.

Bhattacharya, D., Oparina, E., & Xu, Q. (2024). “**Empirical Welfare Analysis with Hedonic Budget Constraints.**”

[CEP Discussion Paper 2050](#)

We analyze demand settings where heterogeneous consumers maximize utility for product attributes subject to a nonlinear budget constraint. We develop nonparametric methods for welfare analysis of interventions that change the constraint. Two new findings are Roy’s identity for smooth, nonlinear budgets, which yields a Partial Differential Equation system, and a Slutsky-like symmetry condition for demand. We illustrate our methods with welfare evaluation of a hypothetical change in relationship between property rent and neighbourhood school quality using British microdata.

Oparina, E., Clark, A.E., & Layard, R. (2024). “**The Easterlin Paradox at 50.**”

[CEP Discussion Paper 2048](#)

Media: Financial Times, Vox, Alternatives Économiques, LSE Inequalities, Economics Observatory

We use Gallup World Poll data from over 150 countries from 2009-2019 at both the individual and country levels to revisit the relationship between income and subjective wellbeing. Our inspiration is the paradox first proposed by Easterlin (1974), according to which higher incomes are associated with greater happiness in cross-sections, yet increases in a country’s GDP per head do not increase its average wellbeing. Across individuals one unit of log income raises subjective wellbeing by 0.4 points on a 0-10 scale. Across countries, the picture is different. In rich countries, income no longer has a significant effect, either in country cross-sections or in time series once social variables like health and social support are controlled for. For low-income countries, income raises happiness in both cross-section and time series, whether the social variables are controlled for or not.

Kirchmaier, T. & Oparina, E. (2024). “**Under Pressure: Victim Withdrawal and Police Officer Workload.**”

[CEP Discussion Paper 1985](#)

Media: LSE British Politics and Policy, CentrePiece, CEP Policy Brief

When police officers are overwhelmed with cases, vulnerable victims of domestic abuse disengage from the criminal justice process. Using uniquely detailed administrative data on over 15,000 high-risk domestic abuse cases from a major English police force, we show that adding ten cases to an officer’s monthly workload is associated with a three percentage point increase in the probability of victim withdrawal. The effect is concentrated entirely in high-risk cases. Our findings reveal an unintended secondary cost of police austerity: reduced victim engagement in precisely the cases where it matters most.

PEER-REVIEWED
PUBLICATIONS

Rzepnicka, K., Sharland, E., Rossa, M., Dolby, T., Oparina, E., Saunders, R., Ayoubkhani, D., & Nafilyan, V. (2026). “**The Effect of Adult Psychological Therapies on Employment and Earnings: Evidence from England.**” *Psychological Medicine*, 56, e33. [\[Link\]](#)

Media: LSE Business Review, CentrePiece

Cooper, K.B., Heffetz, O., Ifcher, J., Oparina, E., & Wu, S. (2026). “**Teaching Happiness (Economics) in Your Dismal-Science Courses.**” *The Journal of Economic Education*, 1–15. [\[Link\]](#)

Oparina, E., Kaiser, C., Gentile, N., Tkatchenko, A., Clark, A., De Neve, J-E., & D’Ambrosio, C. (2025). “**Human Wellbeing and Machine Learning.**” *Scientific Reports*, 15(1632). [\[Link\]](#)

Oparina, E. & Srisuma, S. (2022). “**Analyzing Subjective Wellbeing Data with Misclassification.**” *Journal of Business & Economic Statistics*, 40(2), 730–743. [\[Link\]](#)

Chen, L.-Y., Oparina, E., Powdthavee, N., & Srisuma, S. (2022). “**Robust Ranking of Happiness Outcomes: A Median Regression Perspective.**” *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization*, 200, 672–686. [\[Link\]](#)
Media: VoxEU

WORK IN PROGRESS	<p>Comparing Effectiveness of CBT and Counselling for Depression in Routine Practice: Evidence from Population-Wide NHS Talking Therapies Data (with D. Clark, C. Krekel, I. Parkes, and S. Srisuma)</p> <p>The Effects of the Nation-Wide NHS and Care Volunteer Responders Programme (with C. Krekel, A. Boler, and A. Smith)</p> <p>Measuring Aversion to Wellbeing Inequality (with R. Layard)</p>
POLICY REPORTS AND BOOK CHAPTERS	<p>Layard, R. & Oparina, E. (2021). “Living Long and Living Well: The WELLBY Approach.” In <i>World Happiness Report 2021</i>. Sustainable Development Solutions Network.</p> <p>Layard, R., Oparina, E., De Neve, J.-E., & Kaats, M. (2023). “Exercises.” In R. Layard & J.-E. De Neve (Eds.), <i>Wellbeing: Science and Policy</i>. Cambridge University Press.</p>
GRANTS	<p>100x Impact Accelerator Grant, “Closing the Gap: Evaluating a Lay-led Intervention to Support People with Depressive Symptoms in Brazilian Primary Health Care,” with C. Krekel, D. Frayman, and ImpulsoGov. £82,000. Co-I. 2025</p> <p>Labour Markets Evaluation and Pilots (LMEP) Fund Grant, “Labour Market Outcomes of NHS Talking Therapies,” joint with ONS. £480,075. Co-I. 2024</p> <p>ESRC SDAI Grant, “Analysing Heterogeneous Effects of the IAPT Programme,” with C. Krekel and S. Srisuma. £240,000. Co-I. 2022</p> <p>Research for ClimateXchange on Climate Journalism, with C. Krekel, via LSE Consulting. \$25,000. 2025</p> <p>Peer Review of Research on Life Satisfaction and Housing Quality, DLUHC, via LSE Consulting. £10,000. 2024</p>
AWARDS AND FELLOWSHIPS	<p>LSE Excellence in Education Award 2023, 2024, 2025</p> <p>LSE Teaching Award 2023</p> <p>Doctoral Scholarship, University of Surrey 2016–2020</p>
TEACHING	<p>PP424: Happiness and Public Policy, School of Public Policy, LSE (postgraduate, MPA/MPP), co-teaching with R. Layard. Evaluations: 4.8/5, 4.8/5, 5/5 2023–2025</p> <p>Master Dissertation Supervision, PBS, LSE (37 dissertations) 2023–2025</p> <p>PB421: Happiness, Dept. of Psychological and Behavioural Science, LSE (postgraduate). Evaluations: 4.7/5 2024</p> <p>Module on Happiness and Public Policy, The Urban95 Academy, Van Leer Foundation × LSE (executive) 2024</p> <p>Guest Lecturer, PB421: Happiness, PBS, LSE (postgraduate) 2022–2023</p>
SEMINARS AND CONFERENCES	<p>2025: City St George’s University, Welfare & Policy Conference (Bordeaux), Measuring Progress Seminar Series (Luxembourg), ISQOLS Conference, Easterlin Memorial Workshop (Paris School of Economics), UK Treasury</p> <p>2024: ASSA Annual Meeting, LSE Mental Health Workshop, City University, CEP Annual Conference, Office for National Statistics, Highland Health Economics Symposium, Van Leer Foundation, Warwick Business School, IFS-CAGE Workshop on the Economics of Mental Health, EEA-ESEM Congress</p> <p>2023: Royal Economic Society and Scottish Economic Society Annual Meeting, Canadian Economic Association, Measuring Progress Annual Workshop (Luxembourg), LSE Wellbeing Seminar</p>

2022: LSE Wellbeing Seminar, Loughborough University, Mental Health and Economic Status Workshop (University of Warwick)

2021: Global Wellbeing Summit (Gallup)

2019: LSE Wellbeing Seminar, European Meeting of the Econometric Society, IAAE Annual Conference, Royal Economic Society Symposium of Junior Researchers

PROFESSIONAL	Associate Editor, Applied Research in Quality of Life (ARQOL)	2025–
SERVICE	Co-Organizer, LSE Wellbeing Seminar	2021–
	Fellow, Higher Education Academy	2019–

Referee for journals: Health Economics, Nature Communications, Oxford Bulletin of Economics and Statistics, Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization, Review of Income and Wealth, Journal of Behavioral & Experimental Economics, Journal of Population Economics, Journal of Happiness Studies, Economica, the Unjournal

Referee for conferences: European Association of Young Economists 2024, 2025

Grant reviewer: UK Research and Innovation, Colt