

Happiness is not universal

Where developed nations in Western Europe and Australia & New Zealand dominate, Africa and Southern Asia fall behind. The top 50 stayed stable from 2015 – 2017, while less developed countries experienced drastic fluctuations in rank both globally and within their regions.



Despite lower GDP and near Africa level corruption, LATAM is above-average happy - 4th happiest region with *Costa Rica, Chile, Brazil, Argentina* and *Mexico* rounding out the top 25 from '15-'17 mostly due to the highest average dystopia residual potentially in part due to cultural overlap. *Haiti* is the bottom of the region with one of the lowest GDP per capita in world. Volatility in Western Europe Diverse cultures and economic conditions drive differences despite high health and family. *Spain, France* and *Italy* are notably missing from top 25 due to trust and freedom.

Nordic countries reign supreme All five countries consistently in Top 10 and boast the highest freedom and dystopia residual scores in Europe.

Central Europe staying consistent while making its way up

In 2017, the region breached the top 25 with *Czech Republic* (#23). Majority of region falls between top 50-100.

Happiness disparity in MENA

Biggest score difference of 3.75 between *Israel* and *Syria* due to freedom, family, health and GDP. Most evenly distributed region across rankings in the world.

Happiness Score 7.59 4 2.69

4 SE / E Asia at global average

Singapore, Thailand and Taiwan favorably outweigh lower scored Myanmar and Cambodia most notably in GDP, life expectancy and trust.

Southern Asia second to last

A close second to Sub-Saharan Africa, the region falls below average in all metrics, except generosity, most notably GDP and life expectancy.

Africa consistently stuck at the bottom From 2015-17, **85%+** of Sub-Saharan Africa bottoms out with the lowest GDP, average life expectancy, and freedom of all regions.

Factor overview: non-subjective/ tangibles influencing happiness most



Economy, health, and family are most correlated with a country's happiness score. More subjective or perceived measures including generosity, freedom, and trust have less significance between the happiest and unhappiest countries.



Dystopia Residual

The "unexplained" aspect of happiness explains a lot of a country's overall score representing ~35% of the score's weight despite weaker correlation.

Weighting v. Correlation (Regression)		
Factor	2017 Avg Score Composition	R-Sq (All Years)
Dystopia Residual	35%	24%
Family	22%	41%
Economy	18%	62%
Health	10%	56%
Freedom	8%	31%
Generosity	5%	3%
Trust	2%	17%

Weight v. correlation: due to specific nature of other 6 factors, the magnitude and encompassing nature of "unknown" creates sensitivity and volatility in happiness score

> Hypothesis: dystopia residual is the combination of intangible cultural influences, environment, and general happiness/unhappiness impacting the perception of subjective metrics

The formula for happiness

While high GDP, health, and family are compelling characteristics of the happiest countries, they are by no means the foolproof formula to get there. The "unexplained" or dystopia residuals, in addition to the other metrics, differentiates happiness score and ultimately, a country's ranking.

Costa Rica

- Ranked #12 despite lower GDP than peers in top 25 driven primarily by **2nd highest** dystopia residual
- Latin America and Caribbean represents 44% of top 25 of metric- indicating that specific factors such as culture, values (e.g. religion), and geographic location/ weather are influential

Venezuela

- World events (e.g. war, political turmoil) affecting dystopia residuals in conjunction with changes in other metrics
- Dropped **59** spots to #82 from 2015 to 2017 despite increases in GDP per capita and family along with decreases in health, trust, and freedom



