

How can we make Singaporeans Happier?

A critique of the World Happiness Report



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**Let's start with the
basics**



What is the World Happiness Report?

- Uses data from Gallup World Poll Surveys – Cantril ladder
- Ranks more than 150 countries according to happiness level

Measures happiness:

- Levels of GDP
- Life expectancy
- Generosity
- Social support
- Freedom
- Corruption





Why is happiness important?

**United Nations
General
Assembly
resolution
(65/309):**

Happiness is a
fundamental
human goal

Is Happiness Actually Important?
(Carter, 2009):

Happy people: more creative, better
equipped to develop personal
resources, greater resilience

*Happiness, Wellbeing and Society:
What Matters for Singaporeans*
(Tambyah & Tan, 2018):

Policy makers, organisations,
institutions responsible for
developing Singaporean society have
a stake and responsibility

***How can we
make
Singaporeans
happier?***

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**What are some
critiques of the WHR?**



Singapore Quality of Life Survey vs World Happiness Report

Happiness, Wellbeing and Society: What Matters for Singaporeans (Tambyah & Tan, 2018):

Well-rounded: sense of belonging, fun & enjoyment, self-fulfillment

Limitations of WHR:

Not as well-rounded,
tendency to focus, can
be subjective (Cantril
ladder is self-reporting)

Life satisfaction

Satisfaction with life, 15 life domains and satisfaction with the overall quality of life in general, 25 aspects of life in Singapore and satisfaction with the overall quality of life in Singapore

Wellbeing indicators

Happiness, enjoyment, achievement, control, purpose, psychological flourishing, and economic wellbeing



Exploring other factors

Other factors:

- Average sleep duration
- Annual working hours
- Number of vacation days
- Global Peace Index
- Unemployment Rate
- Percentage of the population aged 15–64
- Percentage of the population using Internet
- Percentage of population with mental health disorders
- Size of population

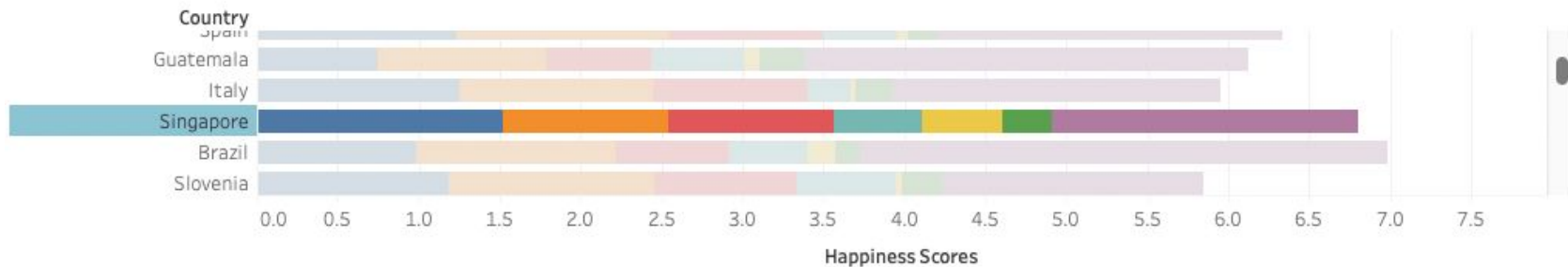
5

Data & Visualization: Our Dashboard



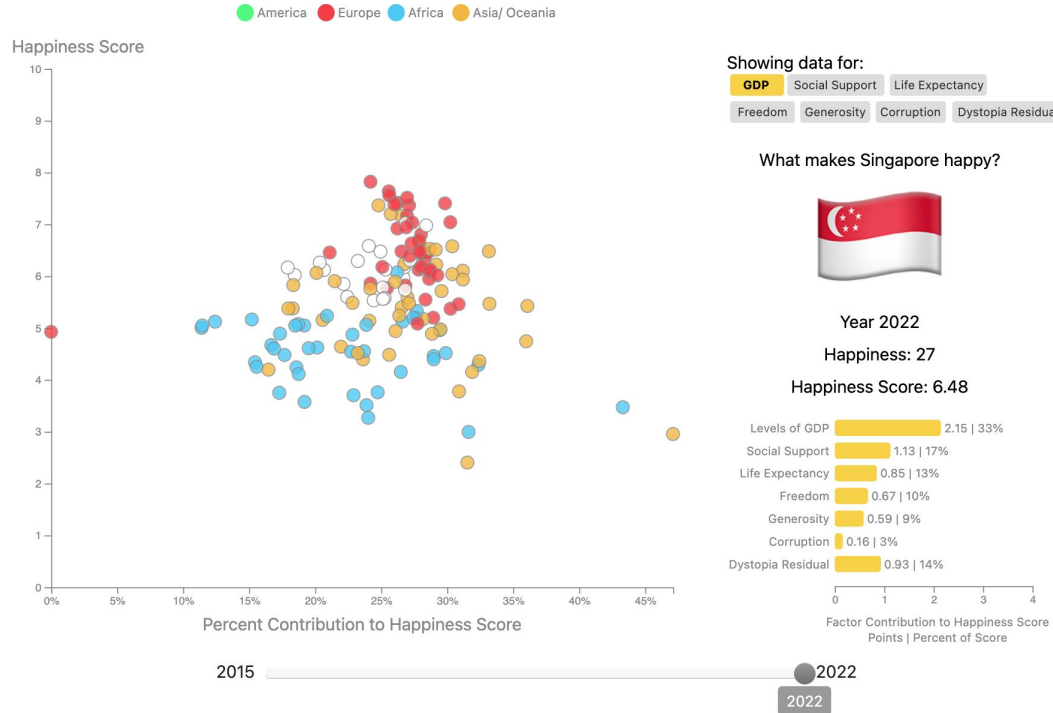
How happy is SG in comparison to the rest of the world?

WHR Overall in 2015





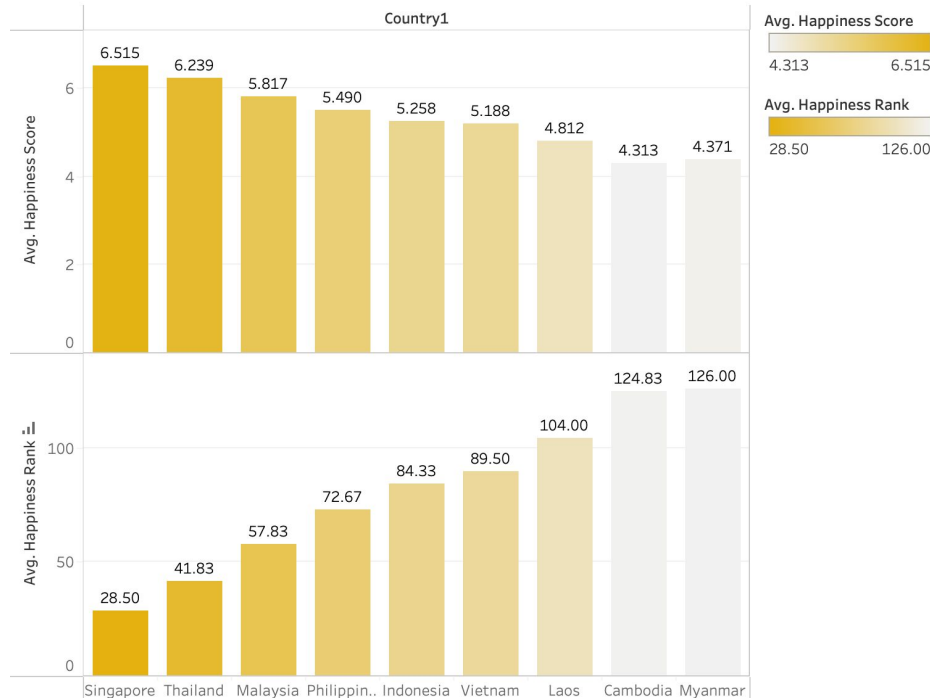
EDA - D3 - World





EDA - SEA Region

Singapore vs SEA



Happiest Country in SEA

- Average score: 6.515
- Average rank: 28.50

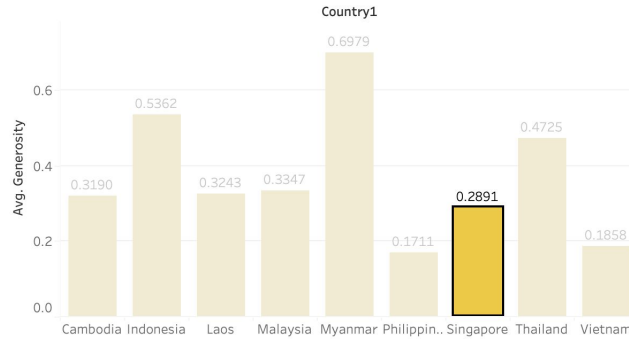
Factors contributing to high score

- GDP, Life expectancy, %population aged 15-64, % using internet
- Corruption, GPI value



EDA - SEA Region

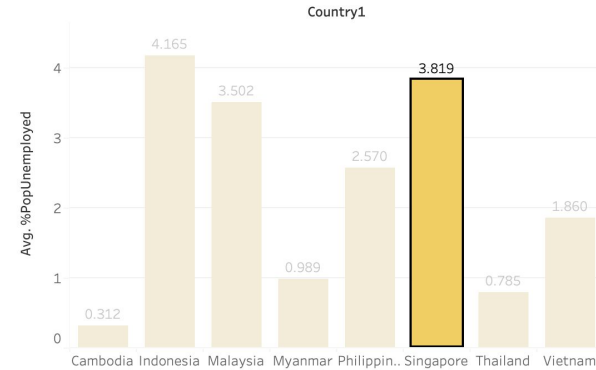
Generosity



Generosity

- Quite low (0.2891)

Population Unemployed



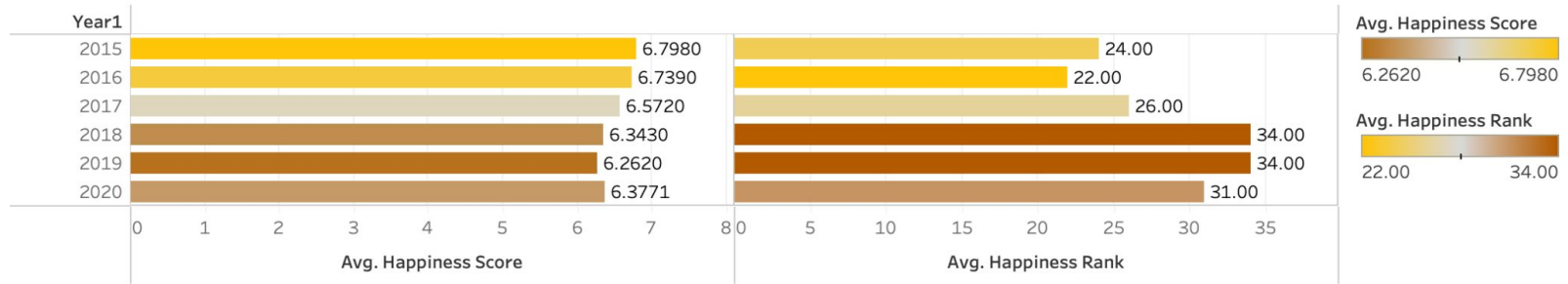
Population Unemployed

- Very high (3.82%)



EDA - Singapore

Singapore score over the years



Overall Decline

- Lowest score: 6.2620 (2019)
- Lowest rank: 34 (2018 & 2019)

Increase in 2020

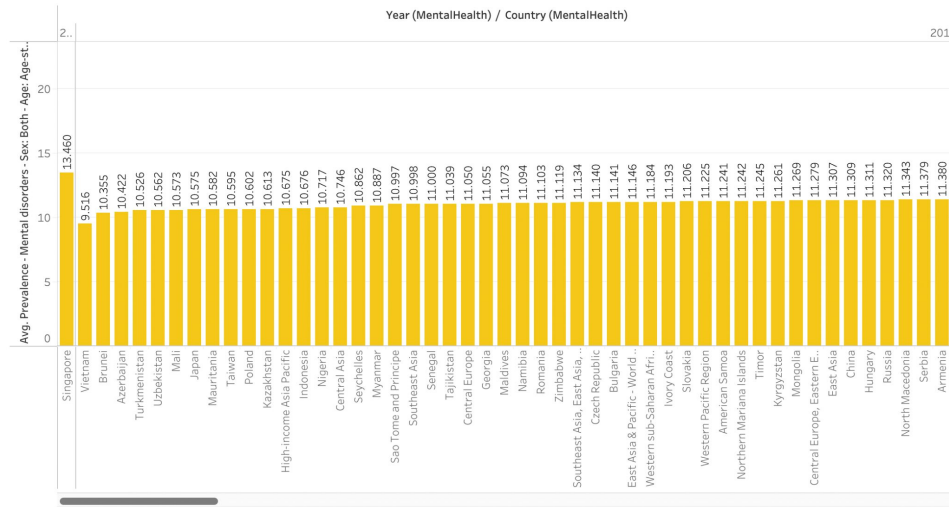
- Increase in resilience and adaptability
- More time for family, personal pursuits



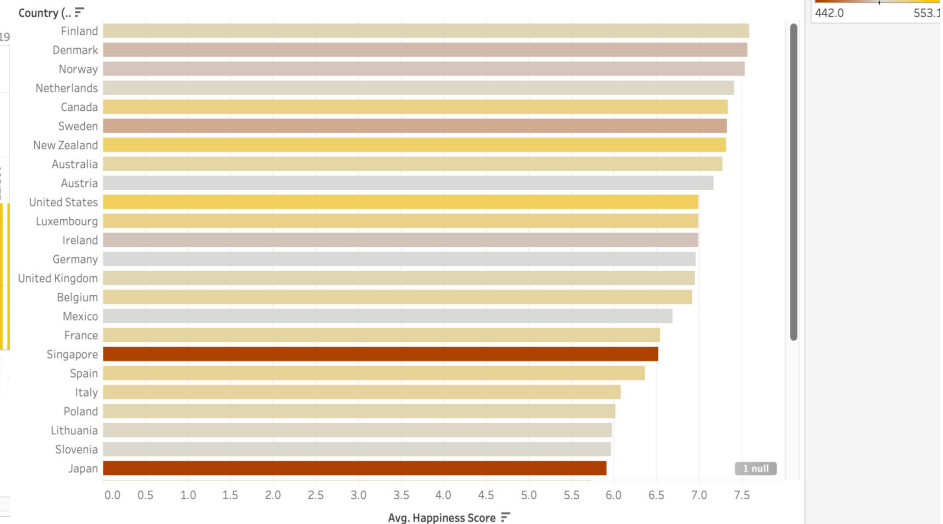
EDA - Singapore

Where is Singapore Lacking?

Mental Health



Sleep





EDA - D3 - World, Other Factors

PopAge

Internet

%PopUnemployed

GPI

Sleep

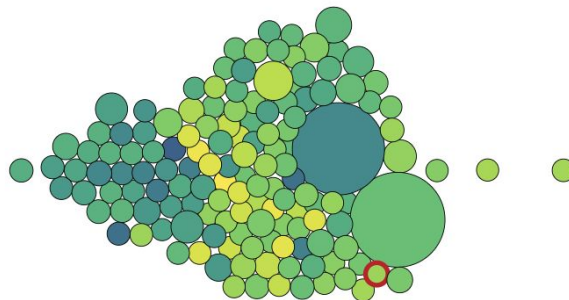
Working Hours

Vacation Days

Mental Health

PopAge

Less happy



More happy

Size legend:

Smaller
population



Bigger
population

Color legend:

Less happy
countries



More happy
countries

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What are our key findings?



World Happiness Report

Which are the happiest countries?

Top 10 countries across all years are: Norway, Finland, Denmark, Sweden, Netherlands, New Zealand, Australia, Canada, Switzerland, Iceland

How is Singapore ranked in WHR?

Not very highly-ranked internationally

Happiest in Southeast Asia (SEA) neighbourhood

Despite being the happiest in SEA, we can improve in areas which can make Singaporeans happier: *sleep, working hours, mental health*



How can we make Singaporeans happier?

More time outside of work

CAREERS • EDITORS' PICK

Belgium Is The Latest Country To Join The Four-Day Workweek

Jack Kelly Senior Contributor

I write actionable interview, career and salary advice.

Follow

Feb 15, 2022, 10:

Commentary

Commentary: Won't be long before four-day work week idea sees more support

Younger managers are much more open to the idea than their bosses. Female leaders like it too, says a Financial Times columnist.



Pillita Clark

24 Jan 2022 03:31PM
(Updated: 24 Jan 2022 03:31PM)

More sleep

cna
LIFESTYLE

ENTERTAINMENT

WOMEN

WELLNESS

LIVING

STYLE & BEAUTY

DINING

TRAVEL



WELLNESS

Nearly 6 in 10 Singaporeans aren't sleeping well because of COVID-19, study confirms

This World Sleep Day (Mar 19), find out how we ranked in a global study during COVID-19 times – and what we desperately Googled to try and catch some zzzs.



Khoo Bee Khim

19 Mar 2021 06:30AM
(Updated: 08 Aug 2021 02:42PM)



How can we make Singaporeans happier?

Greater support for mental health

Singapore

The rise of mental health awareness – and the stigma that remains attached to certain conditions

Singapore

Wellness festival, board sports facility among new tourism offerings



Grace Yeoh

@GraceYeohCNA

05 Jun 2021 06:01AM
(Updated: 05 Jun 2021 08:15AM)



Vanessa Lim

@VanessaLimCNA

06 Apr 2022 10:33AM
(Updated: 06 Apr 2022 02:26PM)



Where are the best places to live for mental health?

Rank	Country	Long Hours	Leisure Time	Green Spaces	Avg Temp (°C)	Avg Rainfall (mm)	Govt Mental Health Spend	Rank Score
1	Sweden	1.1%	15.2	68.7	2.1	624	9.0%	7.13
2	Germany	4.3%	15.6	32.7	8.5	700	11.3%	6.60
3	Finland	3.8%	15.2	73.7	1.7	536	5.6%	6.47
4	France	7.7%	16.4	31.5	10.7	867	15.0%	6.40
5	The Netherlands	0.4%	16.1	11	9.3	778	7.1%	6.27

What makes these places the countries with the best mental healthcare in the world?

We analysed a list of OECD countries on a number of different factors relating to positive mental health in each country. Each country was given a normalised score out of ten for each factor, before taking an average across all the factors to reach our final score out of ten. Thus, there is an urgent need to address this huge problem. Factors include:

- ✓ Hours devoted to leisure and personal care
- ✓ The average number of hours per day spent on leisure and personal care
- ✓ The most green spaces
- ✓ Average temperature
- ✓ Average rainfall
- ✓ Government spending on mental health

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**What are our
limitations?**



Limitations

Limited data

Unable to acquire data for all relevant countries and years

Limited ability to produce interactive dashboards

Unable to utilise more dynamic platforms and code for developing more interactive dashboards

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Let's conclude



Conclusion

Singapore isn't one of the happiest countries in the world according to WHR

Average rank of 28.5, but the happiest in Southeast Asia according to WHR

But that's ok, because the WHR isn't perfect

Limited representation of happiness, hence we decided to look at other factors which contribute to happiness

Regardless, Singaporeans can be made happier by looking holistically at their needs

Specifically, we can look at sleep, working hours, mental health



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Thanks!

Any questions ?