

Printed from

THE TIMES OF INDIA

Finland crowned happiest country again. India is 118th, up from 126th

Agencies | Mar 21, 2025, 01:22 AM IST



HELSINKI: Finland is the happiest country in the world for eighth year in a row, according to World Happiness Report 2025 published Thursday.

Other Nordic countries are also once again at the top of the happiness rankings in the annual report published by the Wellbeing Research Centre at the University of Oxford. Besides Finland, Denmark, Iceland and Sweden remain the top four and in the same order.

Aino Virolainen, a digital commerce director, has lived abroad but always wants to return home to Finland. "This is where I always want to come back to and where I want to, you know, grow my kids and grow old myself," Virolainen said. "And I think it's because,

you know, the peace and the quietness and the trustworthiness. You know, how we speak directly and the nature, of course. It's clean and the air is fresh and what's there not to love?"

Country rankings were based on answers people give when asked to rate their own lives. The study was done in partnership with analytics firm Gallup and UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network.

"Happiness isn't just about wealth or growth: it's about trust, connection and knowing people have your back," said Jon Clifton, CEO of Gallup.

"If we want stronger communities and economies, we must invest in what truly matters: each other." Researchers say beyond health and wealth, some factors that influence happiness sound deceptively simple: sharing meals,

having somebody to count on for social support, and household size. In Mexico and Europe, for example, a household size of four to five people predicts highest levels of happiness. Believing in the kindness of others is also much more closely tied to happiness than previously thought, per the findings. As an example, the report suggests people who believe others are willing to return their lost wallet is a strong predictor of overall happiness of a population.

While European countries dominate the top 20 in the ranking, there were some exceptions. Despite the war with Hamas, Israel came in at eighth. Costa Rica and Mexico entered the top 10 for first time, ranked sixth and 10th respectively.

India ranked 118th in list, up from 126th position in the previous year but below countries like Nepal, Pakistan, Ukraine and Palestine. India, however, was listed much higher at 57 for (how people) donated; at 10 for how people volunteered; 74 for helping a stranger, and in case of wallet returned by a neighbour (115), stranger (86) and police (93).

When it comes to decreasing happiness - or growing unhappiness - the US has dropped to its lowest-ever position at 24, having previously peaked at 11th place in 2012. The report states the number of people dining alone in the US was up 53% over the past two decades. The UK, at 23, is reporting its lowest average life evaluation since the 2017 report.

Afghanistan is again ranked the unhappiest, with Afghan women saying their lives are especially difficult. Sierra Leone in western Africa is the second unhappiest, followed by Lebanon. The study said 19% of young adults across the world reported they have no one they could count on for social support.