

Happiness Report Card 2022

Year of the Tiger




Happiness
Alliance

2022 is the Year of the Tiger A Year of Hope, Courage & Change

Hope, Courage & Change

A Year of

2022 IS THE YEAR OF THE TIGER



From home springs beliefs and values,
which drive change.

From courage springs innovation and action.

We can change to a world where the
happiness of all people, wellbeing of all
communities, and sustainability of our planet
are realities.



“The Happiness Movement is a Revolution where nobody loses.”
- John Helliwell, Author and Editor of the World Happiness Reports



Stated at the OECD World Forum: Statistics, Knowledge, Policy
at the panel hosted by the Happiness Alliance

A Decade of Happiness

2022 marks a decade since the unofficial launch of the Happiness Movement with the UN High Level Meeting Wellbeing and Happiness: Defining a New Economic Paradigm.

World leaders, lead by the first Prime Minister of Bhutan and the Secretariat General of the United Nations, came together for three days to meet, discuss and share ideas and plans for transformation to a wellbeing and happiness based economy and government. We at the Happiness Alliance were among the invited members.



We have been providing the Happiness Index, modeled after Bhutan's Gross National Happiness Index with their blessing, to individuals and communities around the world since 2011.

We have been fostering hope, inspiring activists, and empowering action with our tools, resources and knowledge.

Our Happiness Report Cards are among them.

We hope you are inspired and delighted by this report.



“The Happiness Movement centers upon people, planet and regenerative economics. As opposed to outdated and discredited models that center upon profit, power, exploitation and destruction symbolized so powerfully in the terrifying confrontation unfolding in eastern Europe. If we can’t look after people, we’ll never be able to look after the planet.”

– Paul Rogers, Director of Planet Happiness



Happiness matters

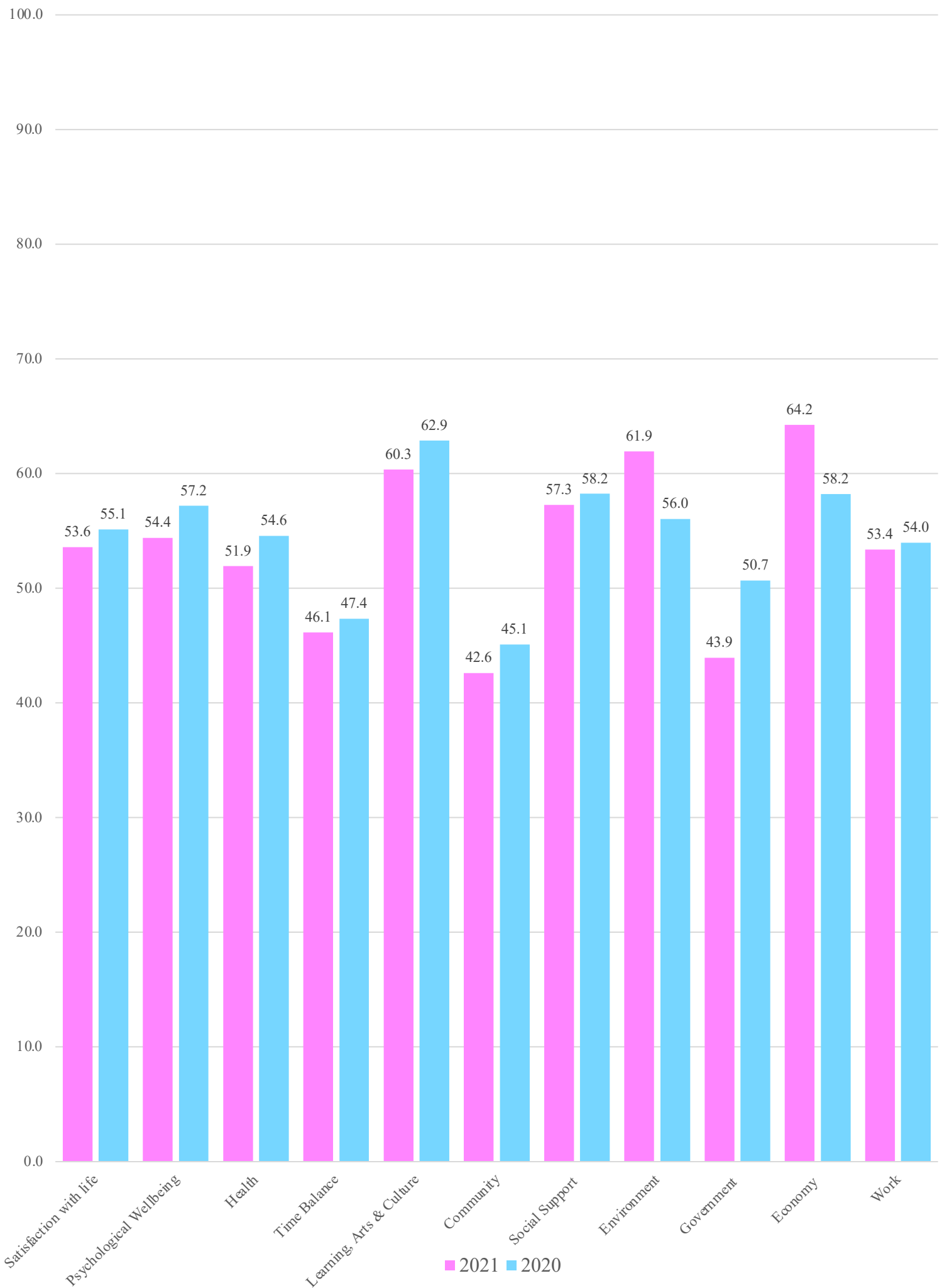
What we measure is what we care about. When we limit our measures to one or two dimensions of wellbeing, we miss the opportunity to understand and manage our wellbeing.

Optimal happiness scores on a scale of 0-100 would be in the neighborhood of 70 or upwards. A neutral score of about 50 does not leave much room for resiliency.

Overall our happiness scores have not been optimal for the last few years in many of the domains, particularly the domains of government, time balance and community.

In this report we compare scores between 2020 and 2021, and find a downward trend in the domains where we are hurting the most. You can find more information about the number of respondents and the Happiness Index on our page [For Researchers](#) on the Happiness Alliance website.

Happiness Index Domains





	2021	2020	Change
Satisfaction with life	53.6	55.1	-1.5
Psychological Wellbeing	54.4	57.2	-2.8
Health	51.9	54.6	-2.7
Time Balance	46.1	47.4	-1.2
Learning, Arts & Culture	60.3	62.9	-2.5
Community	42.6	45.1	-2.5
Social Support	57.3	58.2	-1.0
Environment	61.9	56.0	5.9
Government	43.9	50.7	-6.8
Economy	64.2	58.2	6.0
Work	53.4	54.0	-0.6





“Happiness makes the world go 'round - and this movement has the power to change us all for the better.”
- Rhonda Phillips, Happiness Alliance Board Director and Dean of Purdue Honors College

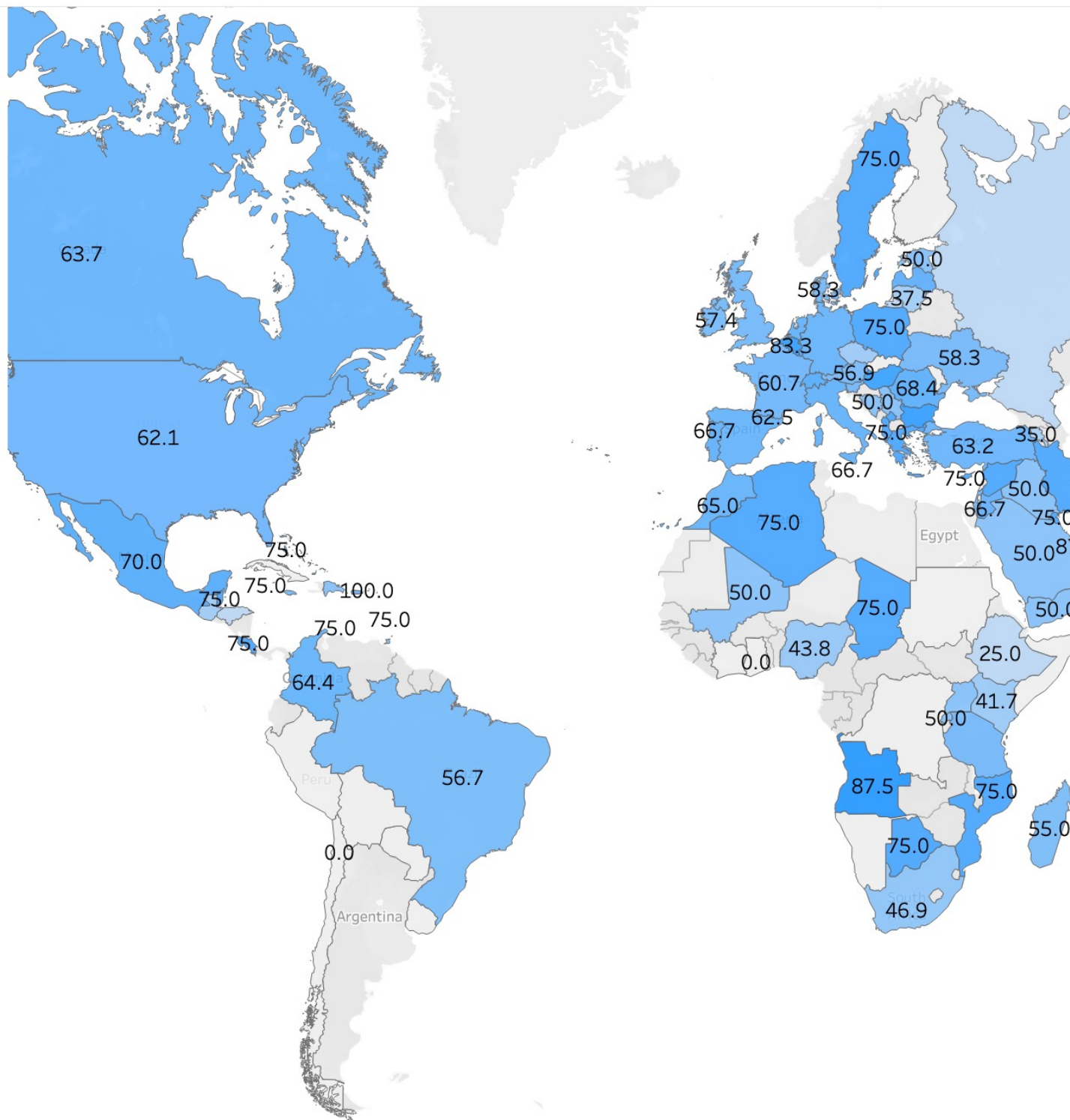
Maps of Happiness

Maps are a way to visualize data. Mapping happiness is an intuitive way to understand data, in particular, to see the differences between geographies.

We present these maps to inspire policy makers and community organizers, researchers and teachers, innovators and visionaraires, to use happiness data.

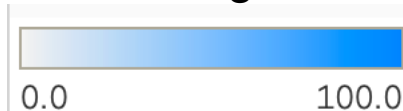


Map of Optimism

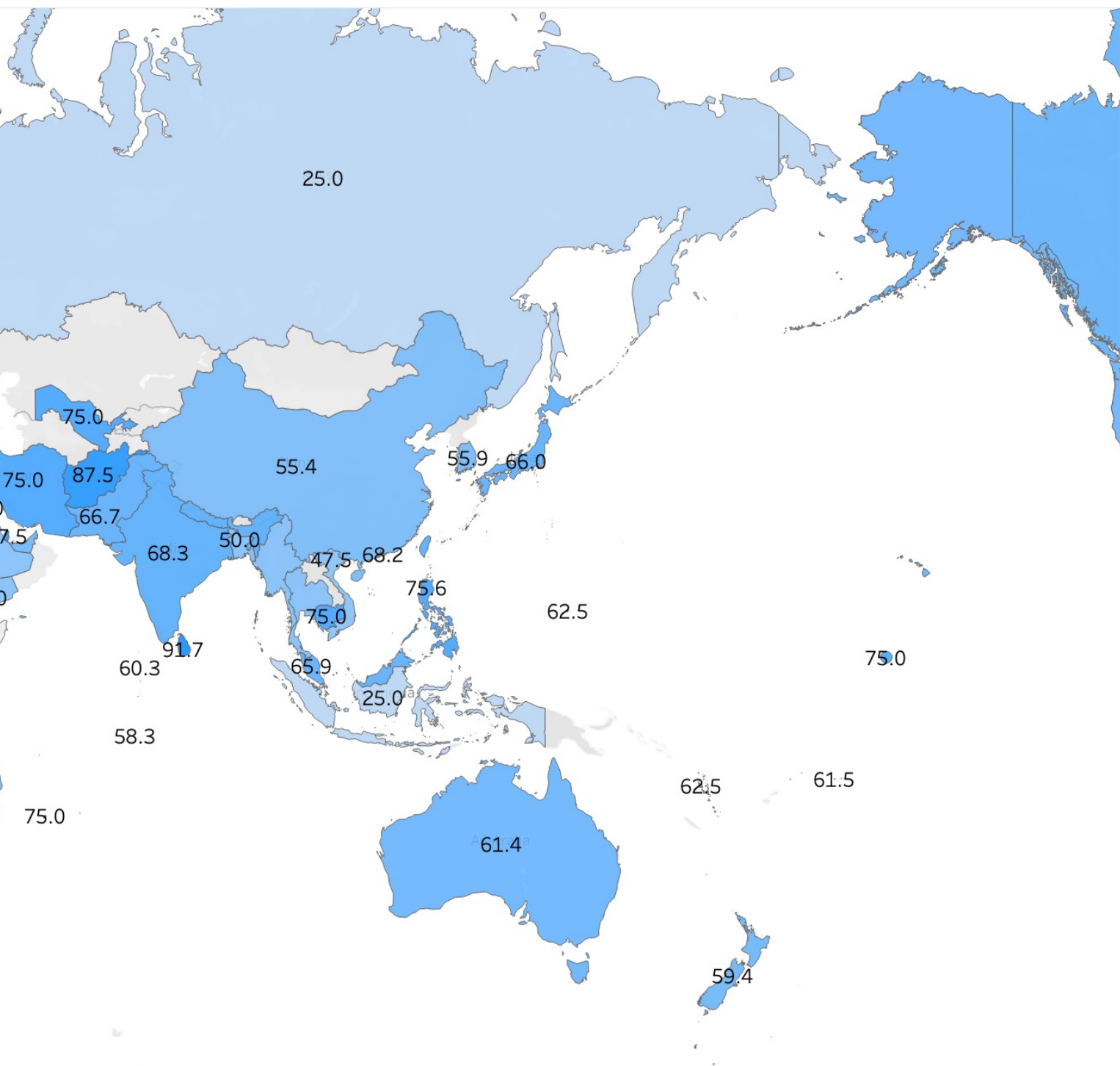


Map of Optimism:

100 is completely optimistic and 0 is completely not optimistic. Darker is more optimistic. Lighter is less optimistic.



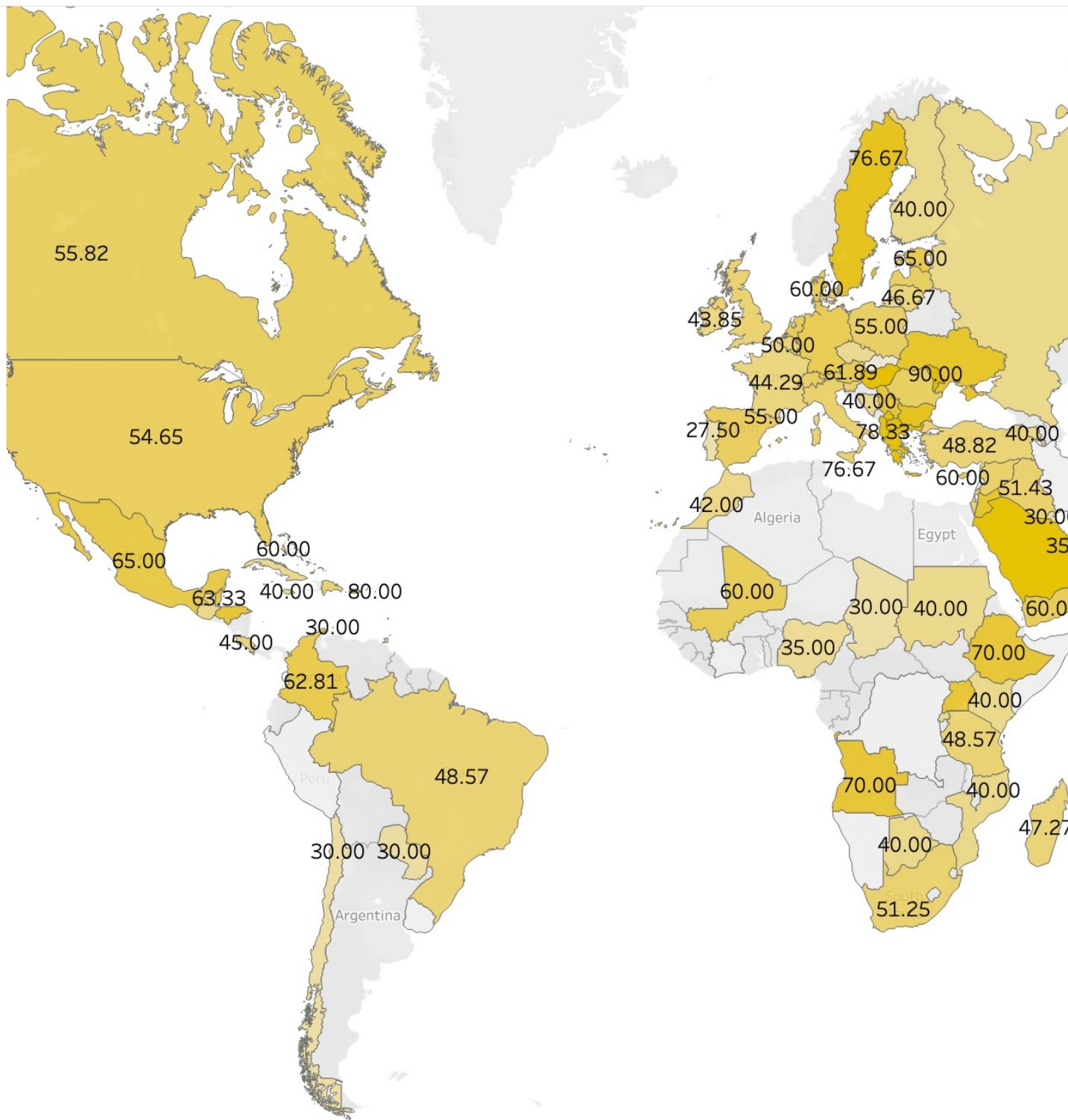
Data for some countries represents a very small number of people. All data is from a convenience sample



Optimism is important in a population and in personal life. When a population is optimistic, a nation's social and economic systems are more stable. Lack of optimism in a population can portend unrest, immigration or other destabilizing behaviors.

When you feel optimistic, you are more likely to make decisions and take actions that bring happiness. Optimism feeds positive outcomes, and lack of optimism does the opposite.

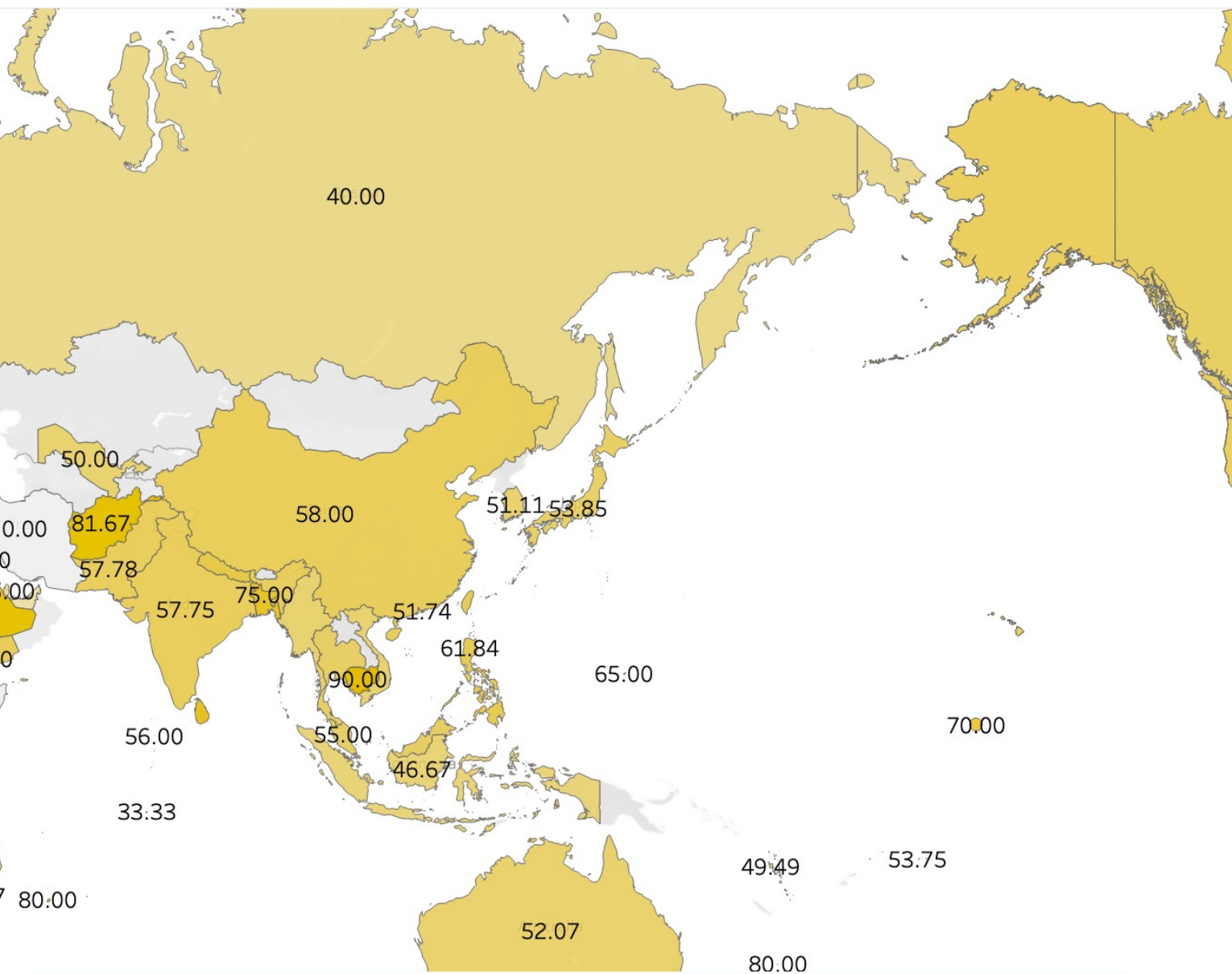
Map of Happiness



Map of Self Assessment of Happiness:
100 is completely happy and 0 is completely not at all happy.
Darker is happier. Lighter is less happy.



Data for some countries represents a very small number of people.
All data is from a convenience sample

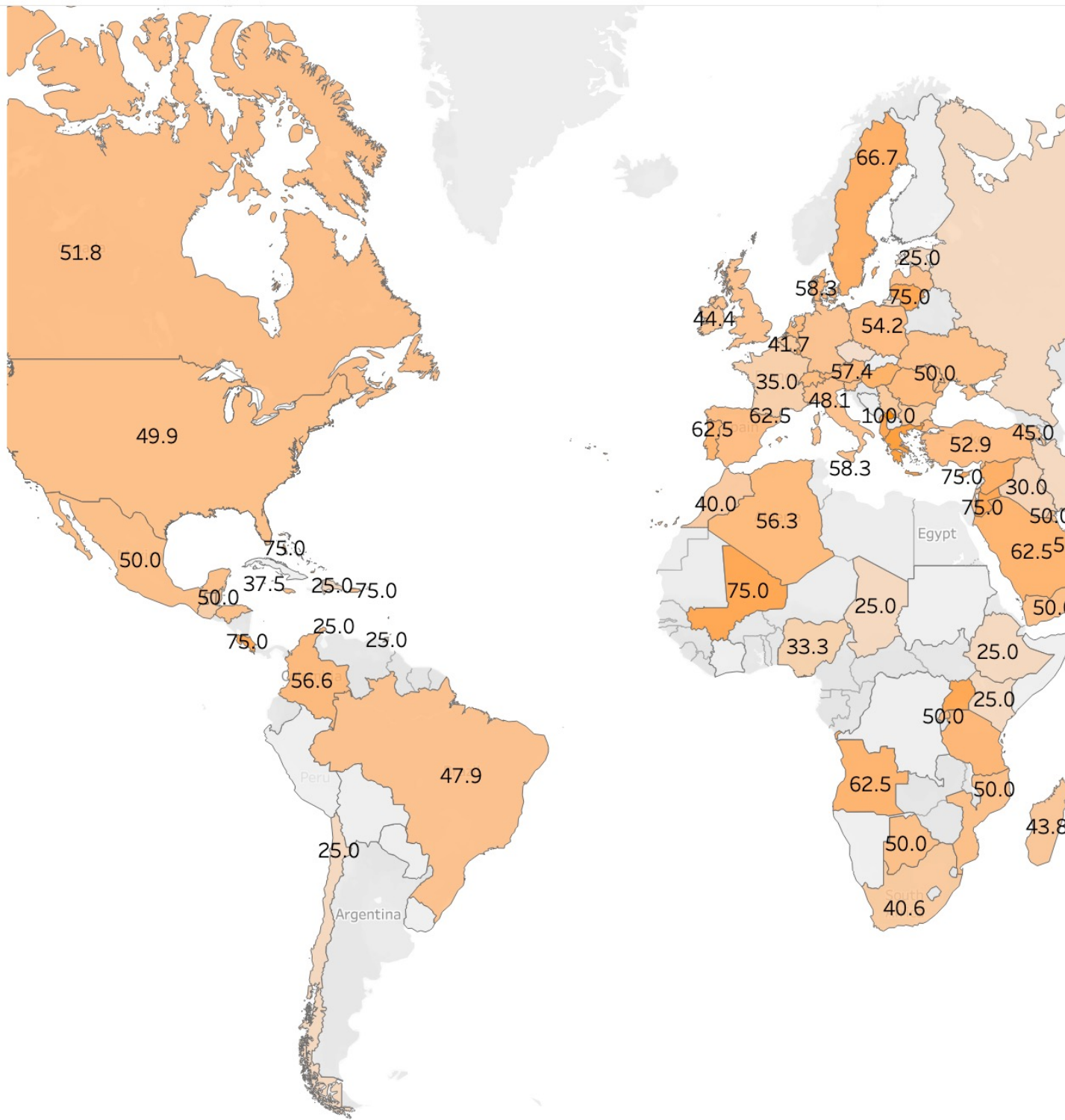


Feelings are the basis of all our decisions and actions, even the seemingly rational ones. From eating and going to the bathroom, to choosing the kind of work you will do, committing to a relationship or having children, feelings matter. If you choose to do something that makes you unhappy, no matter how much it makes financial or other sense, it makes life less worth living. At the core, we do things because of feelings, whether the things we do make sense or not.

Feelings also determine memories, which influence satisfaction with life and other factors. When your memories of something are happy, you are more likely to continue that path. When your memories are unhappy, you are likely to avoid the same or similar situations.

Understanding the role of feelings is important for your own decisions, and for understanding the decisions of others and of populations.

Map of Health



Map of Self Assessment of Health:

100 is completely healthy and 0 is completely not at all healthy. Darker is healthier. Lighter is less healthy.



Data for some countries represents a very small number of people. All data is from a convenience sample

Happiness is a legitimate
goal of public policy.

- Jon Hall, UNDP Policy
Specialist



Stated during as a speaker for a Happiness Alliance webinar

Happiness for Public Policy

The business of government is the business of happiness, and happiness data points the way for government.

It gives policy makers a tangible way to understand if their policies really do make people better off by directly measuring the impact on people's happiness and wellbeing. Happiness also opens the door for wider consideration of how to govern a people for present and future wellbeing and sustainability.

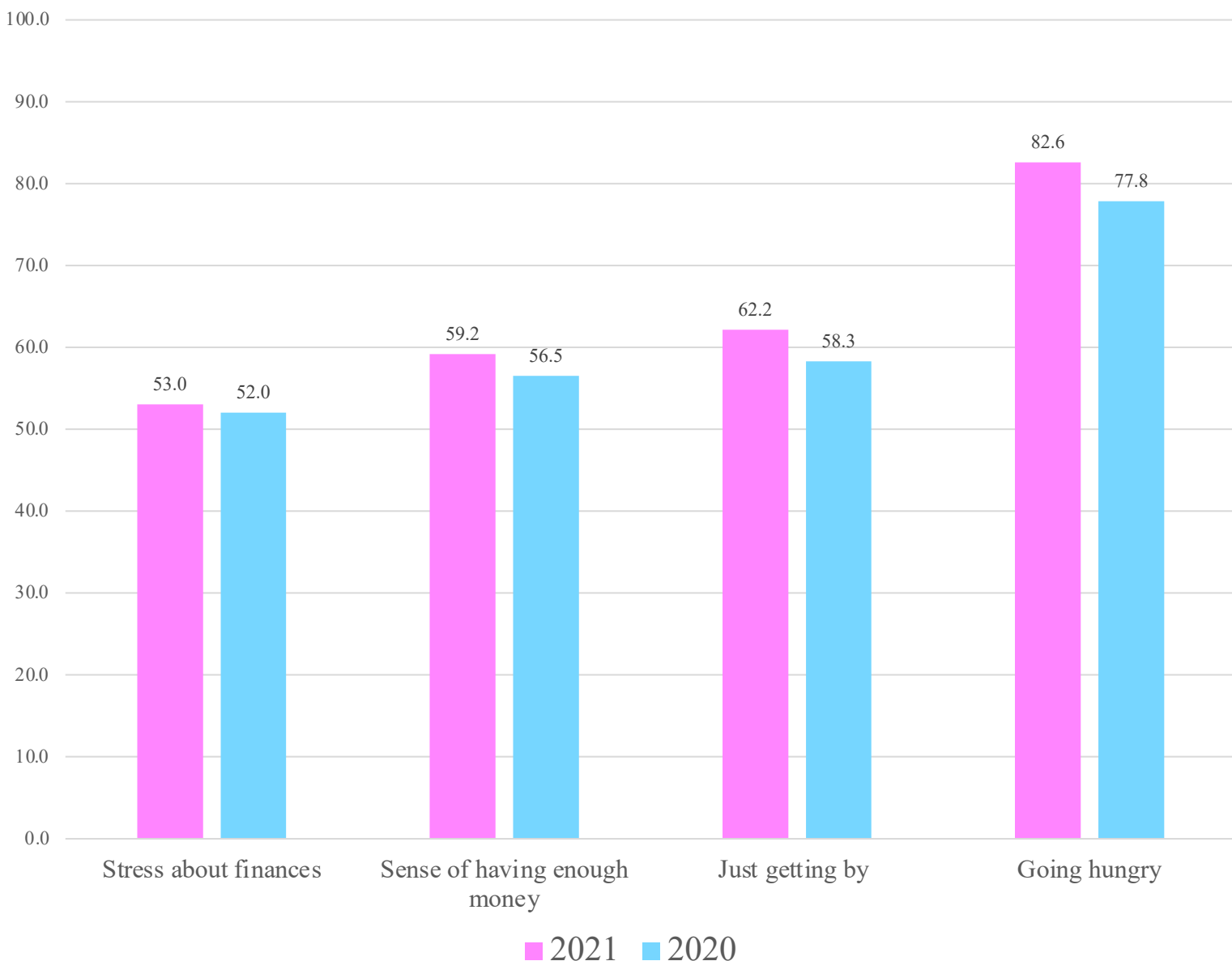
Today governments such as Bhutan and New Zealand are already centering their policies around happiness and wellbeing goals and metrics. It can be done.

Domain with the biggest change

Traditionally called Standard of Living by the government of Bhutan, the economy domain measures stress about finances, going hungry, frequency of getting by paycheck to paycheck, and sense of having enough money to buy what you want.

With an overall improvements of about 3%, the greatest increase was in the going hungry question, meaning less people are going hungry less.

Economy/Standard of Living Domain Changes



Meeting Our Basic Needs

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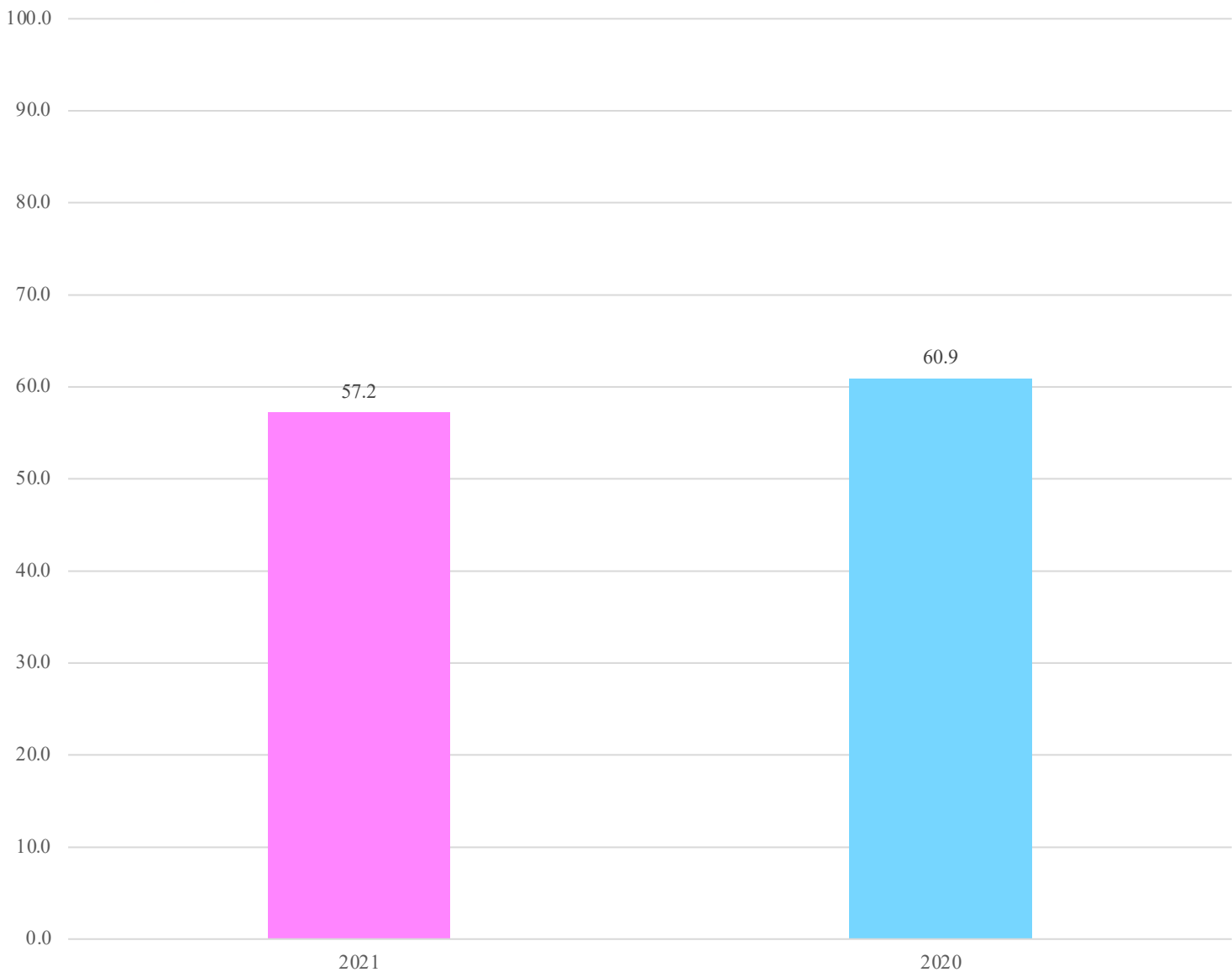


Our Biggest Change

We measures the frequency of volunteering in the domain of community. Scores usually fall below 50, meaning people volunteer less than once every six months. Scores fell by almost 10%, to, on average, volunteering about once a year.

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Satisfaction with access to recreation



Giving Back

Volunteering takes many forms – from helping a neighbor to donating time to a nonprofit.

Volunteering has a long term positive impact on your happiness in no small part because it makes others happy.

The World Happiness Reports include consideration of donation activity as part of the variable that explain happiness in a nation. Our Happiness Index also includes a measure for donations.



A Data Story

Our Happiness Index data for satisfaction with access to recreation and with exercise decreased by an overall 3.4 percent but our opportunities to enjoy nature increased a little bit, by 1%.

The data tells a story about the importance of access to nature. Spending time in parks, on rivers, in the mountains or anywhere else in nature brings happiness. Preserving greenspaces, developing parks and greenways and protecting wildlife habitat brings happiness.

Physical Activity Data Story



Our Natural Environment

The data tells a story about the importance of access to nature. Spending time in parks, on rivers, in the mountains or anywhere else in nature brings happiness.

Preserving greenspaces, developing parks and greenways and protecting wildlife habitat brings happiness.





The Happiness Movement empowers us to make a conscious choice about how we spend our time and what our work is in service to.
-Bogdana Rakova, Happiness Alliance Board Director & AI Strategist

Choosing Happiness

Happiness is a choice, and is also not a choice. Some of your happiness is entirely up to you. When you have the freedom to make decisions about your life, more of your happiness is your choice.

Freedom comes in many forms. There is economic freedom, meaning you have enough financial resources and stability to make decisions. There is the freedom to make life choices, such as where you will live, what kind of work you will do, who you will live with and what kind of family you will have. Other freedoms include freedom of expression, assembly, press, religion and belief. When you do not have these freedoms, happiness is not as much of a choice.

Consistently we have been scoring low in the domains of government, time balance and community.

Scores in all three went down between 2020, and 2021.

Where We Score Low

When people do not trust each other, do not feel safe, or do not feel a sense of belonging to community, they are less satisfied with their lives. When people do not feel safe, they are more likely to give away their rights or submit to an autocratic system or tyrannical ruler if they feel they will be safer.

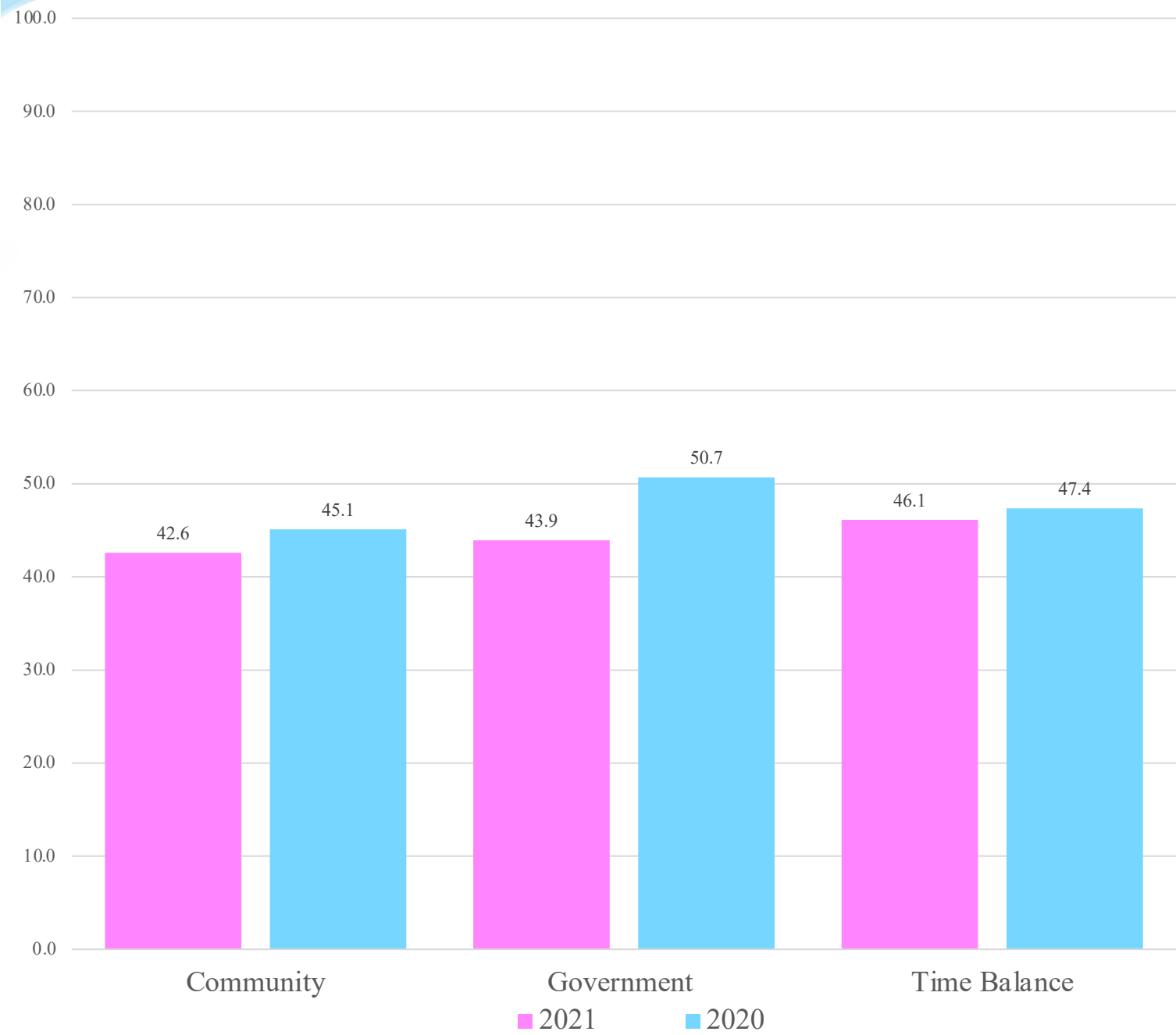
A good government is fundamental to happiness. The unhappiest countries in the world are in conflict or under oppressive regimes. It is easy to take a good government for granted.

Decades ago, the technological revolution promised leisure time. Today we are always on, always working. Doing work you enjoy has never been so important.

Ensuring that people have the access to good jobs is part of the role of both local and national government. Ensuring they have opportunity to gain the education and experience to work in meaningful jobs is also part of the role of government.



Happiness Index Domains



“The Happiness Movement brings a change in values where the happiness of people, wellbeing of communities and sustainability of our planet matter most.”

- Laura Musikanski, Happiness Alliance Executive Director and co-Founder



A Global Medley

Our Happiness Index scores are a global medley of data representing people who chose to take the Happiness Index. Our scores are generally lower than scores taken from random samples by such organizations as Gallup and Pew, but this does not necessarily mean that our scores mean less. In our 2021 Happiness Report Card we discussed some of the issues with random sampling, and encouraged deeper consideration of all kinds of data.

The pandemic has been hard on humans around the world. Globally, these last years health, has never been as present in our lives on a global scales since, perhaps the bubonic plague.

Connecting human health with the health of the planet calls for a paradigmatic shift in society, government and economies. We believe this shift is necessary for the long term survival of humankind.

The Core of Happiness

Satisfaction with life is the measure used by the World Happiness Report and many policy makers to evaluate populations, and to understand whether policies are working.

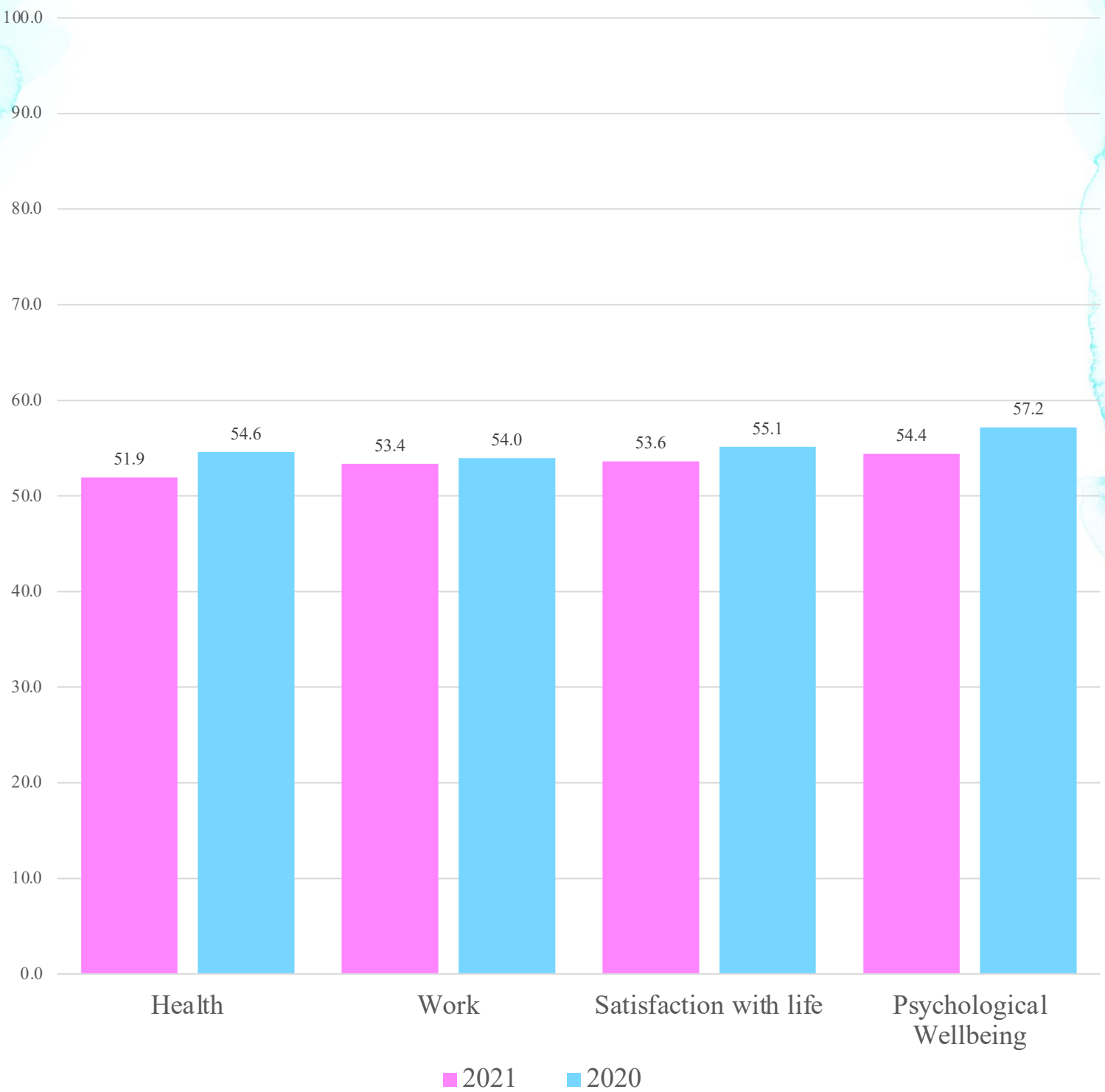
Psychological wellbeing is the core of what makes life worth living. It includes feeling that life has purpose and meaning, how a person feels about themselves and sense of optimism. It predicts success in relationships, work and in life in general.

We were all children at one time. Perhaps the most important thing to psychological wellbeing is a healthy, happy and stable family where caretakers love, protect and provide for their children.

On average, a person spends more time working than in any other activity than sleep. Loss of work has a lasting negative impact on a person's life. Meaningful work that provides a wage that allows a person to meet their needs is necessary to individual happiness and national wellbeing.



Happiness Index Domains



Happiness is having the courage and the freedom to discover our own heart's destiny, supported and blessed by our mothers and fathers and in the service of all.

- Clinton Bliss, MD, Happiness Alliance Board Director



Love and Happiness

The pandemic put a spotlight on the importance of relationships – to other humans and to our pets. Love is the door to happiness.

Culture and learning have traditionally been grounded in togetherness. Learning throughout life is often undervalued, and culture as a medium for cohesion rather than polarization misunderstood, to all of our detriment.



Lessons from the Pandemic

Money matters for happiness, but only up to a point, and when there is great economic inequality, everybody's happiness decreases except those who don't care about others, such as psychopaths and narcissists. When people feel less safe, do not trust their government or people in their community, they are more likely to focus on making more money so they can buy safety, in a vicious feedback loop.

The pandemic gave us an opportunity to live more ecologically sustainably, and for many other species to recover from our spread into their territory and use of their lives to feed our economic growth. At a global scale, we will probably take the advantages technology gave us in working from home into the future, but will we take the deceleration of decimation of our environment into the future? Our own future depends on how we answer this question more than we know.

Happiness Index Domains



Are You Ready for Change?

Our values and beliefs determine our future.

When people stop believing in justice, injustice prevails.


When people stop believing in equality, inequality seeps in.

When people stop believing in the inalienable human rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, it becomes okay to kill, imprison, or silence other people. Intolerance and oppression prevail.

Believe in happiness.

**Commit to justice, equality and
human rights for all**





Happiness is bringing a smile to a friend's face - James Bradbury, Happiness Alliance Board Director Emeritus

Musikanski, L. & Bradbury, J. (2022) Happiness Report Card 2022
Year of the Tiger . [Happiness Alliance](#)