

Cities and Happiness: A Global Ranking and Analysis

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First Global Ranking of City Happiness

Why cities?

- 4.2 billion people (about half of world's population) live in urban areas today
- Estimated to increase by 1.5 times to 6 billion (about three quarters) by 2050
- SDG 11 “Sustainable Cities and Communities”, casting anchor for benchmarking

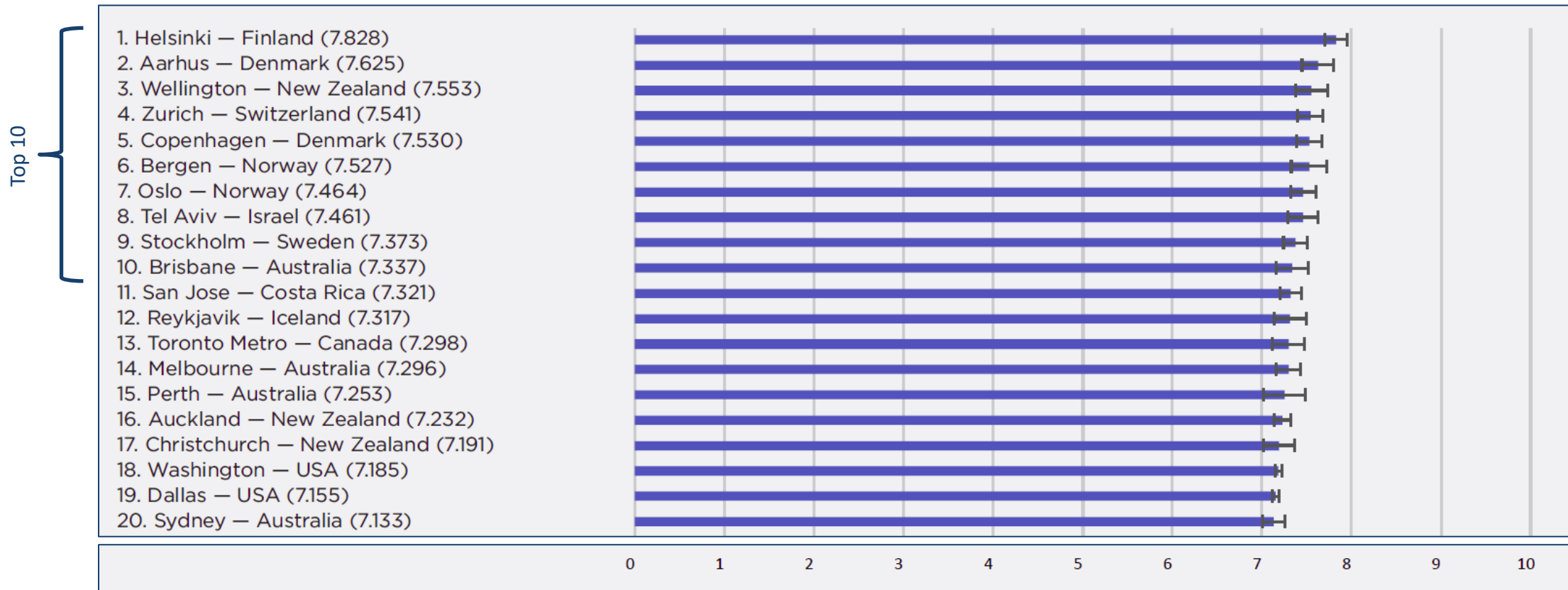
Why happiness?

- City dwellers themselves are the best judge of what matters most to them – democratic
- Fundamentally different approach from existing rankings (objective list accounts)

How?

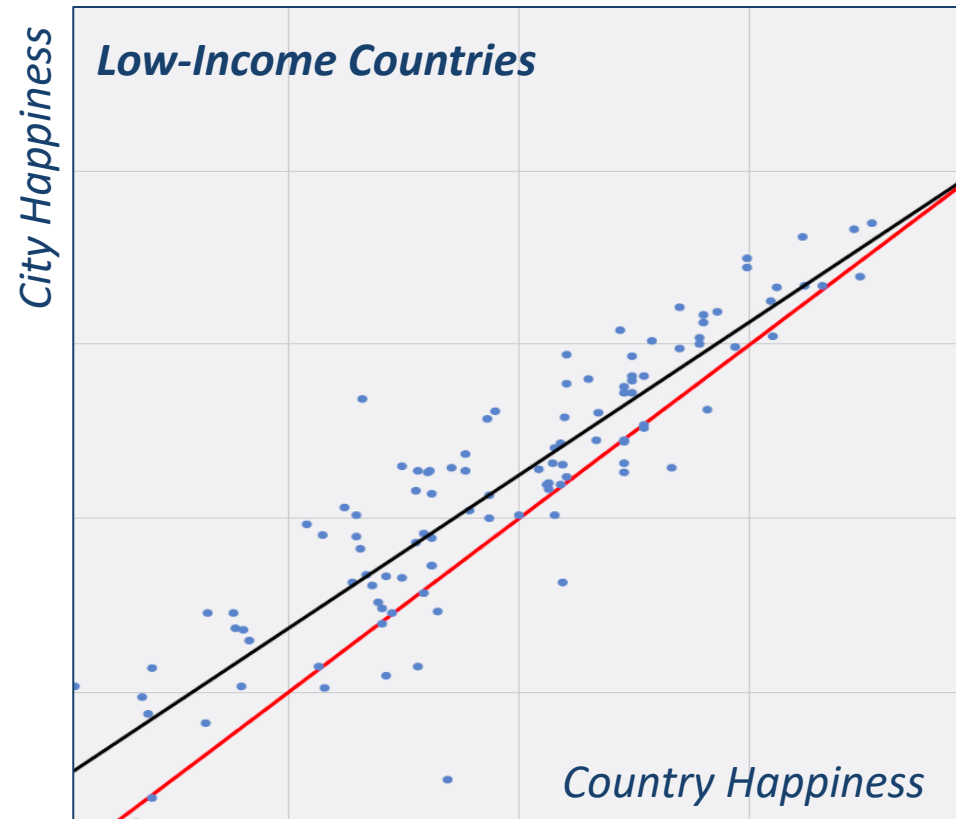
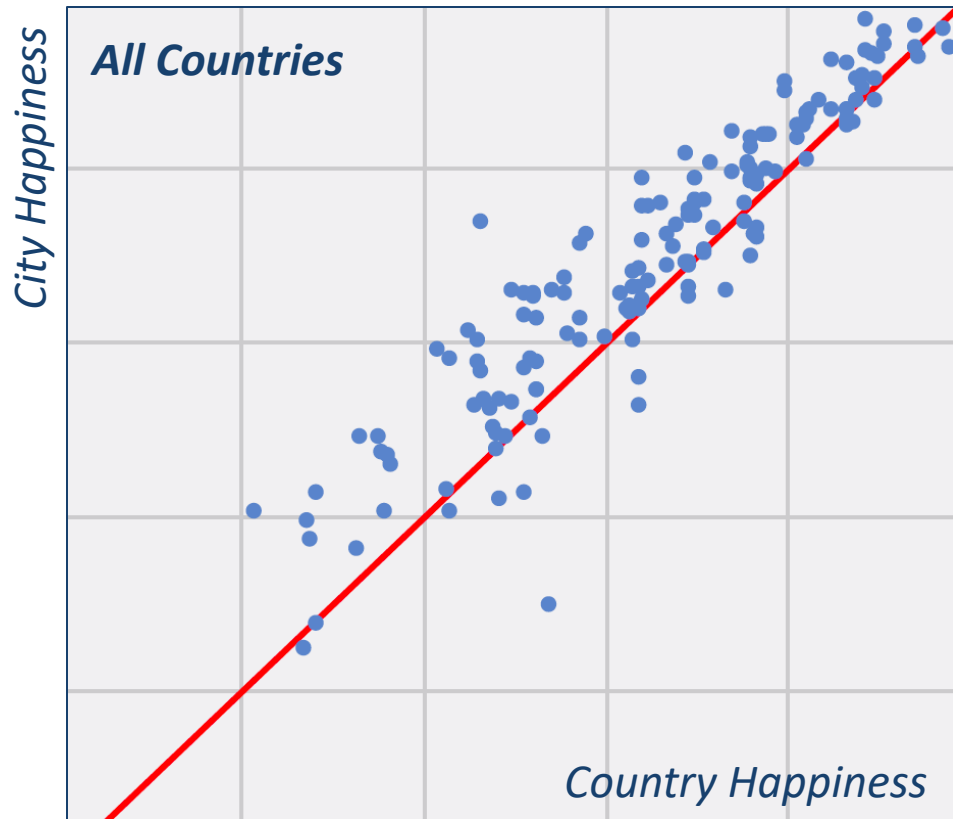
- Gallup World Poll and Gallup US Poll, self-reports of how city dwellers evaluate their lives
- Mean ranking of life evaluation (zero-to-ten), 186 cities in more than 160 countries

Worldwide Top 20 of City Happiness



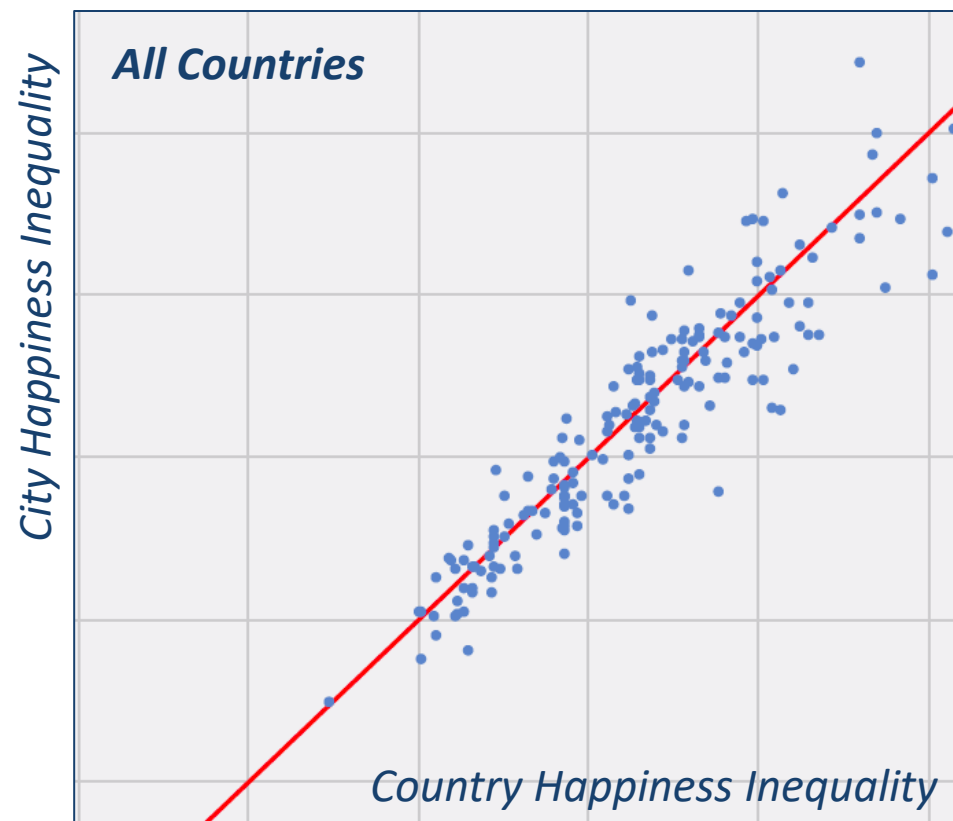
More than half of top 10 located in Scandinavia, two in Australia and New Zealand

City Happiness vs Country Happiness



Happiness in cities somewhat higher than countries, especially in low-income countries

Happiness Inequalities



Happiness inequalities are similar in cities and countries

- Highest-ranking cities in terms of current life evaluation found in Scandinavia, Australia and New Zealand, and North America – quite similar to country ranking
- However, many Latin America and Caribbean cities rank high in terms of expected *future* life evaluation – reported in chapter, alongside affect
- City ranking based on happiness partly mirrors rankings based on objective lists, but there are clear differences
- Differences between happiness and objective list for city rankings are important avenue for future research, including drivers of city happiness