Which Country's Citizens Are Considered the Happiest in the World?

Amid a persisting global health crisis, communities around the globe are struggling to stay positive. One nation, however, seems to have figured it out.

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In the seemingly endless pandemic and recent headlines of racial violence, it's difficult to find optimism. Communities across the world – especially those that have been marginalized – have struggled to adjust to a new reality.

One country, however, has appeared to maintain a level of happiness, ranking above all others during an incredibly challenging time. According to the Gallup World Poll, Finland has topped the list of the world's happiest countries for the fourth straight year. The Nordic country is followed by Iceland, Denmark, Switzerland and the Netherlands.

Conducted by researchers from the University of British Columbia, University of Alberta and KDI School of Public Policy and Management, the report paid particular attention to how Covid-19 impacted happiness around the globe. The key measurements that were used included the amount of trust that people had in their government and "in the benevolence of others."

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Interestingly enough, the United States ranked in the top 20, at number 14 (up from 18th place last year). The country's ranking seems to suggest that, despite struggling with a months-long health crisis that has claimed the lives of more than 500,000 Americans, most people appeared to find some glimmer of hope or positivity.

"Surprisingly there was not, on average, a decline in wellbeing when measured by people's own evaluation of their lives," John Helliwell, one of the study's authors, told CNN. "One possible explanation is that people see Covid-19 as a common, outside threat affecting everybody and that this has generated a greater sense of solidarity and fellow-feeling."

One of the major takeaways from the study was that happiness levels in certain countries, namely the United Kingdom, were impacted by lockdowns and social distancing. The U.K., which has seen an uptick in the number of reported mental health issues, fell from 13th place to 18th place last year.

The countries that reported the lowest levels of happiness were Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Jordan, India and Cambodia.

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