

World Happiness Report 2025 - India's Happiness Ranking Improves but Still Trails Pakistan

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World Happiness Report 2025 Latest News

- The World Happiness Report 2025, published by the Wellbeing Research Centre at the **University of Oxford**, ranks **Finland** as the happiest country for the **eighth consecutive year**.
- It highlights **an improvement in India's happiness score and ranking** over the past three years. However, despite its economic and governance advantages, India continues to lag behind Pakistan in overall happiness rankings.
- The rankings are based on Gallup surveys and the **UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network**.

Methodology of the World Happiness Report

- **Life evaluations:** Based on responses from the Gallup World Poll, where people rate their life on a 0-10 scale using the Cantril Ladder method.
- **Three-year average:** The 2025 rankings are based on data collected from 2022 to 2024.
- **Key indicators considered:** While the rankings are not based on an index, **six primary factors** influence happiness scores:
 - **GDP per capita**
 - **Healthy life expectancy**
 - **Social support**
 - **Perceived freedom to make life choices**
 - **Generosity**
 - **Perception of corruption**

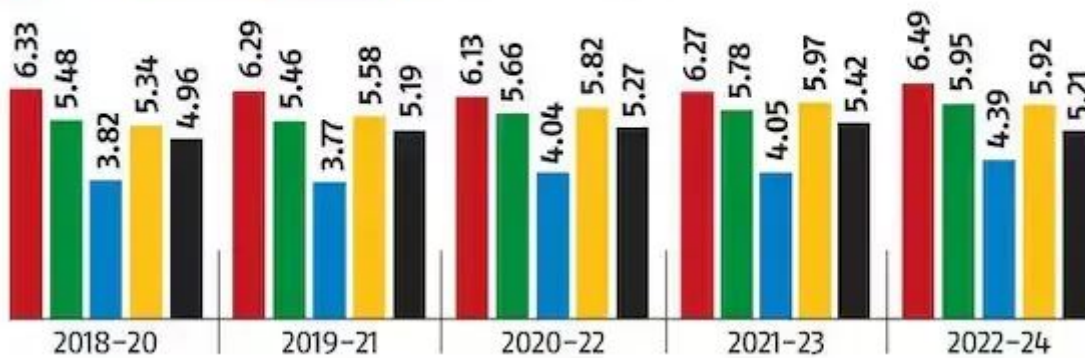
Key Highlights of the World Happiness Report 2025

- **Top-ranked countries:**
 - **Nordic dominance:** Finland, Denmark, Iceland, and Sweden occupy the top four positions.
 - **New entrants in top 10:** Costa Rica (6th) and Mexico (10th) made it to the top ten for the first time.
 - **Israel (8th):** Despite the ongoing war with Hamas, Israel secured a high position in the rankings.
- **Determinants of happiness:**
 - Beyond **economic growth, trust, social connections, and support networks** play a crucial role in happiness.
 - **Household size:** In Mexico and Europe, families with four to five members report the highest happiness levels.
 - **Belief in kindness:** Trust in strangers returning a lost wallet strongly correlates with national happiness.
- **Declining happiness in the west:**
 - **United States (24th):** Dropped from 11th (2012) due to increased **isolation**, with a 53% rise in people dining alone over two decades.
 - **United Kingdom (23rd):** Lowest happiness level since 2017.
- **Least happy countries:**
 - **Afghanistan:** Continues to be the unhappiest, with Afghan women facing extreme hardship.
 - **Sierra Leone and Lebanon** ranked second and third lowest.
- **Global social support decline:** 19% of young adults reported having no one to rely on.

India's Ranking and Performance

REPORT CARD Scores of Brics countries (out of 10)

■ Brazil ■ Russia ■ India ■ China ■ South Africa



HOW THE NEIGHBOURS FARED



Countries	Happiness score (2022-24)	Change in happiness score from 2006-10 to 2022-24
Nepal	5.31	0.71
Pakistan	4.77	-0.37
INDIA	4.39	-0.58
Sri Lanka	3.89	-0.38
Bangladesh	3.85	-0.92

Note: Scores have been calculated on a three-year average

Source: World Happiness Report 2025

- **Improved ranking:** India moved up from 126th (out of 143 countries last year) to **118th** (out of 147 countries).
- **Score increase:** India's happiness score rose from 4.054 to 4.389 (on a scale of 10).
- **Sub-indicators:**
 - 57th for donations.
 - 10th for volunteering.
 - 74th for helping a stranger.
 - Wallet return probability: 115th (by neighbor), 86th (by stranger), 93rd (by police).
- **Comparison with neighbors:** India ranked **below Nepal, Pakistan (109th), Ukraine, and Palestine** in overall happiness.

Discrepancies in India's Ranking

- **Lower ranking than Pakistan:** Despite India's superior economic and governance indicators, it ranks lower than Pakistan in happiness.
- **Economic strength:** India's per capita income (\$2,480.8 in 2023) is significantly higher than Pakistan's (\$1,365.3).
- **Health indicators:** India's healthy life expectancy (58.1 years in 2021) is slightly better than Pakistan's (56.9 years).
- **Corruption perception:** India ranked 96th in the Corruption Perceptions Index 2024, much better than Pakistan (135th).

Conclusion

- India's improvement in happiness ranking signals progress, but the **methodology of the report raises concerns** as it does not fully account for economic strength, health, and governance.
- The rankings suggest that **social factors, trust, and well-being perceptions** play a larger role in determining happiness than material prosperity alone.
- According to Gallup CEO (Jon Clifton), **happiness isn't just about wealth or growth** – it's about trust, connection, and knowing people have your back. **Investing in one another is essential** if we want stronger economies and communities.

World Happiness Report 2025 FAQs

Q1. What is the basis of the World Happiness Report rankings, and which organization publishes it?

Ans. The report, published by the Wellbeing Research Centre at the University of Oxford, ranks countries based on life evaluations collected through the Gallup World Poll using the Cantril Ladder method.

Q2. How has India's ranking changed in the World Happiness Report 2025 compared to previous years?

Ans. India's ranking improved from 126th (out of 143 countries) to 118th (out of 147 countries), with its happiness score increasing from 4.054 to 4.389 between 2021-23 and 2022-24.

Q3. Despite economic challenges, why does Pakistan rank higher than India in happiness?

Ans. This is due to factors like social support, perceived freedom, and community trust, despite having lower GDP per capita, lower healthy life expectancy, and higher corruption perception.

Q4. What are the six key factors considered in explaining differences in happiness scores among countries?

Ans. The six key factors are GDP per capita, healthy life expectancy, social support, perceived freedom to make life choices, generosity, and perception of corruption.

Q5. What are some criticisms regarding the methodology of the World Happiness Report?

Ans. The rankings are questioned as they do not directly use economic and governance indicators like GDP per capita, corruption perception, or life expectancy, making social perceptions a dominant factor.

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