

A good way to tell what countries are “the best” is to focus on the reports of life satisfaction and happiness, as measured annually by the United Nations World Happiness Report. This research project interviews people in nations around the world, asking them how they feel about their own life.

People feel happier when they have good healthcare, enough money to meet their needs, when they have a satisfactory sexual and emotional life, and someone else they can count on, and when they experience trust and generosity, and have the freedom to make their own major life-decisions.

People interviewed in the United States gave interviews that came in 19th among all surveyed nations. This ranking was higher than citizens living in other large nations, but in general people are happier in smaller nations.

Here are the ten happiest nations based on the United Nations World Happiness Reports for 2018-2020

Finland, Denmark, Switzerland, Iceland, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Luxembourg, New Zealand, Austria.

Note that all of these nations are smaller in population, and spend relatively little on military and police forces, have strong governmental programs for universal health coverage, free education for all, good old-age supports, and other socialized programs. They all have higher taxes and lower levels of poverty and lower levels of crime. These socialized democratic governments seem to be best in providing their citizens with a good happy life.