B2-C1 English Worksheet

Does Living in a Wealthy Country Make You Happier?

The Happy Passports Index 2026

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Article

When Global Citizen Solutions published its Happy Passports Index 2026, Finland came out on top with 93.2 points, ahead of Iceland and Denmark. Rather than treating travel privileges as a shortcut to happiness, researchers sought to take into account four dimensions: wellbeing, freedom at home, international mobility, and a combined measure of prosperity, health and safety. The results suggest these advantages often go hand in hand, but the relationship is far from straightforward. The ranking covers 50 countries, and its composite score should not be mistaken for a direct measurement of how every resident feels.

Singapore stands out: despite leading the sample for passport access and measures of prosperity and health, it finished tenth overall, reflecting weaker wellbeing and domestic freedom scores. Its material advantages could not fully make up for these differences. New Zealand placed eighth despite ranking 25th for income, while Britain came seventeenth. Such contrasts emphasise the disparity between external opportunities and people's perception of life at home. A substantial salary may bring comfort, yet autonomy can be constrained by limited personal choices. Among wealthier countries, researchers found freedom was more closely associated with life satisfaction than passport strength.

Still, the appeal of a country rarely boils down to its place on a league table. Someone deciding where to settle down must weigh up costs, relationships and healthcare. A glamorous destination may fall short of expectations if daily life proves costly or lonely. The index invites readers to look beyond wealth and visa-free travel, although some remain sceptical of reducing complex lives to one number. As the report comes from a company providing migration advice, readers should assess its conclusions critically. A place that suits one person may leave another dissatisfied.

True/False

Decide if each statement is True (T) or False (F).

No.	Statement	T / F
1	The ranking combines several measures beyond international travel access.	
2	Iceland and Denmark both finished ahead of Finland.	
3	Singapore placed higher overall than New Zealand.	
4	The researchers considered both domestic freedom and opportunities to travel.	
5	Singapore's travel advantages completely offset its weaker wellbeing scores.	
6	New Zealand performed better in the combined index than in the income category.	
7	The article argues that relocation to a wealthy country guarantees fulfilment.	
8	The article encourages readers to question what a single national score captures.	

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Phrase Match

Match each phrase (1-10) to the correct definition (A-J).

Phrases (1-10)	Definitions (A-J)
1. came out on top	A. be more noticeable than others
2. take into account	B. fail to meet an expectation or standard
3. go hand in hand	C. be mainly explained by one thing
4. stands out	D. happen together or be closely connected
5. make up for	E. consider options carefully before deciding
6. boils down to	F. finish in first place
7. settle down	G. consider more than the obvious details
8. weigh up	H. compensate for something lacking
9. fall short of	I. consider a factor when judging something
10. look beyond	J. establish a permanent home or stable life

Synonym Match

Match each word (1-10) to a synonym (A-J).

Words (1-10)	Synonyms (A-J)
1. prosperity	A. highlight
2. autonomy	B. doubtful
3. substantial	C. gap
4. disparity	D. restricted
5. perception	E. wealth
6. emphasise	F. view
7. constrained	G. evaluate
8. sceptical	H. considerable
9. assess	I. combined
10. composite	J. independence

Use the New Language

Choose 5 words or phrases and write your own sentences.

No.	Your sentence
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	

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Discussion Questions

Student A	Student B
1. What are the three most important things that make you happy in everyday life?	1. Does living in a wealthy country necessarily provide a better quality of life?
2. If you could live in any country for one year, where would you choose and why?	2. Why might people in some countries report high happiness despite relatively low incomes?
3. What do you like most about living in your current country?	3. What matters more to wellbeing: financial security, personal freedom or close relationships?
4. Have you ever visited somewhere and thought you would enjoy living there permanently?	4. Should governments measure success through economic growth or improvements in quality of life?
5. Would you prefer a high salary in an expensive city or a lower salary somewhere more relaxed?	5. Why might the Nordic countries' success be difficult for other societies to reproduce?
6. How important are good weather and access to nature when choosing somewhere to live?	6. Can moving abroad genuinely make someone happier, or do people take existing problems with them?
7. What would you miss most about your home country if you moved abroad?	7. How reliable are happiness rankings when cultures may define happiness differently?
8. Would you rather have more money, more free time or more opportunities to travel?	8. If you redesigned the Happy Passports Index, which factors would you add or remove?

Answer Key

True/False

1=T, 2=F, 3=F, 4=T, 5=F, 6=T, 7=F, 8=T

Phrase Match

1=F, 2=I, 3=D, 4=A, 5=H, 6=C, 7=J, 8=E, 9=B, 10=G

Synonym Match

1=E, 2=J, 3=H, 4=C, 5=F, 6=A, 7=D, 8=B, 9=G, 10=I

Example Sentences With the Phrases

No.	Example sentence
1	Among the fifty countries, Finland came out on top.
2	We should take into account the cost of living before moving.
3	High wages and life satisfaction do not always go hand in hand.
4	New Zealand stands out for its balanced scores.
5	A generous salary may not make up for a lack of free time.
6	The decision rarely boils down to money alone.
7	Many people hope to settle down near friends and family.
8	Before relocating, weigh up the benefits and disadvantages.
9	A dream city can fall short of expectations in daily life.
10	It is important to look beyond passport rankings.