



OECD  
**Better Life**  
Initiative

# OECD Better Life Index

Dan Morrison, Head of Media  
Agenda Setting 2011 - Lucerne

# The idea

“...the gross national product does not allow for the **health** of our children, the quality of their **education**, or the joy of their **play**. It does not include... the intelligence of our **public debate** or the integrity of our public officials...it measures everything, in short, except that which makes life worthwhile.”

*Robert F. Kennedy*

# Supported by headlines

Comment

FINANCIAL TIMES

FT.com  
FINANCIAL TIMES

- 6 JAN. 2011

## Japan finds there is more to life than growth

1994 Japan's share of global GDP ... capita income ... what people in the ... leisure and lack of social tax

GALLUP

DAILY NEWS POLITICS ECONOMY WELLBEING WORLD

Hot Topics: Egypt Muslim World Wellbeing Global Employment Economy

January 28, 2011

## Worldwide, Personal Wellbeing Related to Civic Engagement

Religious adults also more likely to be civically engaged

by Cynthia English and Julie Ray

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THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

WSJ.com

PAGE 60

ESSAY

TIME  
www.time.com

## A Better Measure

Our obsession with gross domestic product is unhealthy—and misleading

BY STEPHAN FARIS

## Channel 4 News

CATCH UP Programme at 1900 weekdays, weekend timings see [listings](#)

We should measure wellbeing - David Cameron

10 JAN. 2011

# Nations seek success beyond GDP



# Supported by OECD initiatives



www.france24.com

- 2 JUL. 2007

## OECD 'to go beyond GDP' to measure well-being

The OECD said Monday that it would help develop and publish a survey of social progress aimed at improving policy making and the well-being of people around the world.

"The OECD is to work with other international organisations and partners to develop a new approach to measuring how societies are changing," a statement said.

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development statement followed the group's second global forum on statistics, knowledge and policy, held in Istanbul.

The Paris-based organisation said it would work with the European Commission, Organisation of the Islamic Conference, the United Nations, the UN Development Programme and the World Bank on new surveys.

The organisations declared at the weekend that national statistics services and public and private bodies needed to go "beyond conventional economic indicators such as gross domestic product (GDP)."

Together they would seek a way of "measuring and fostering the progress of societies in all dimensions, with the ultimate goal of improving policy making, democratic and citizen

• Global Project on Measuring the Progress of Societies

• World Forums in 2004, 2007 and 2009

• Contribution to Stiglitz-Sen-Fitoussi Commission

# OECD Better Life Index



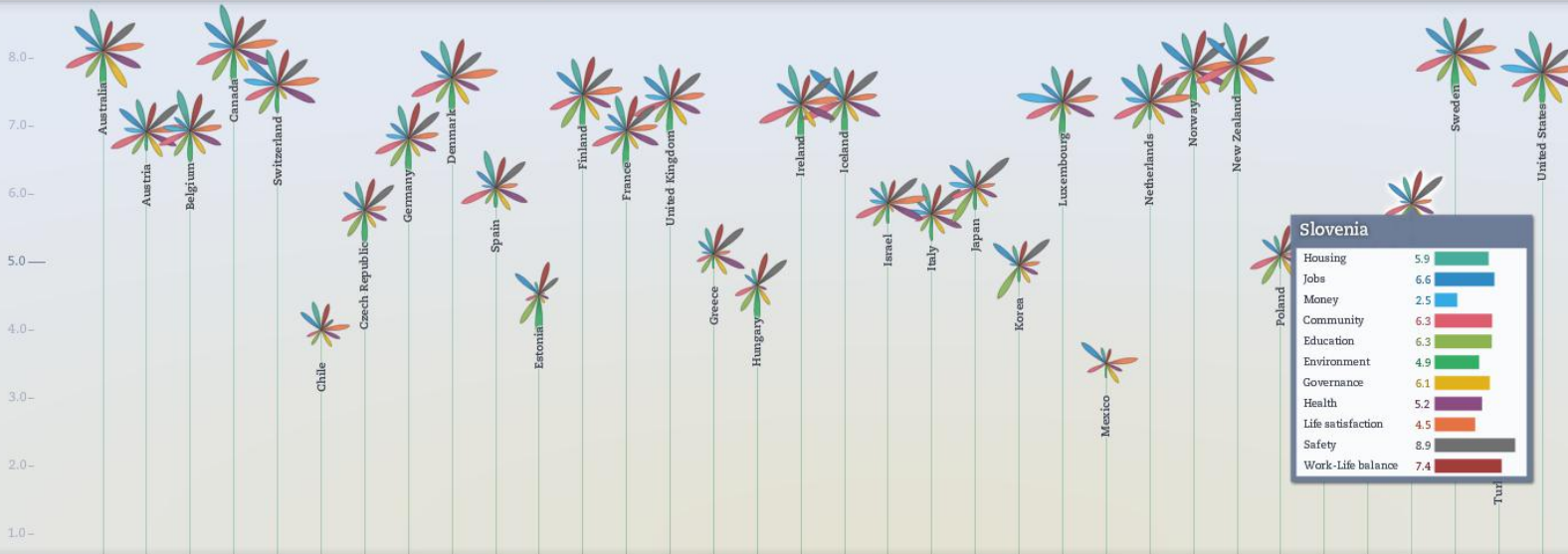
EN | FR | [contact](#) | [oecd.org](#)

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Countries

Topics

About



## Create Your Better Life Index

Select the topics that are important to you:

- ☒ Housing
- ☒ Jobs
- ☒ Money
- ☒ Community
- ☒ Education
- ☒ Environment
- ☒ Governance
- ☒ Health
- ☒ Life satisfaction
- ☒ Safety
- ☒ Work-Life balance

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Sort countries by **Alphabet** | Score

## Create Your Better Life Index

There is more to life than the cold numbers of GDP and economic statistics – use our interactive tool to create an index based on the topics that are important to you.

[Download Executive Summary](#)

[Learn more about the index](#)

### Countries



The index not only covers all OECD member countries, but also includes Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Russia and South Africa.

### Topics



There is more to life than the cold numbers of GDP and economic statistics – the Better Life Index is the first index to cover all aspects of life, from education to politics to work-life balance.

### no reports

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# Well-being captured in 11 topics

 Housing

 Income

 Jobs

 Community

 Education


 Environment

 Governance

 Health

 Life satisfaction

 Safety

 Work-Life balance

## Create Your Better Life Index

Select the topics that are important to you:

	-	+
 Housing	●	● ● ● ● ●
 Income	●	● ● ● ● ●
 Jobs	●	● ● ● ● ●
 Community	●	● ● ● ● ●
 Education	●	● ● ● ● ●
 Environment	●	● ● ● ● ●
 Governance	●	● ● ● ● ●
 Health	●	● ● ● ● ●
 Life satisfaction	●	● ● ● ● ●
 Safety	●	● ● ● ● ●
 Work-Life balance	●	● ● ● ● ●

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# Connecting user priorities with country policies

## AUS Australia

### Key Findings

A cohesive society is one where citizens have a high degree of confidence in their governmental institutions and public administration. **71% of people in Australia say they trust their political institutions**, higher than the OECD average of 56%. High voter turnout is another measure of public trust in government and citizens' participation in the political process. In most recent elections for which data is available, **turnout in Australia was 95% of those registered** – the highest in the OECD.

While voter turnout is indeed compulsory (and enforced) in Australia, it is nevertheless a useful measure of citizen engagement. In the context of the Better Life Index, voter turnout measures how engagement contributes to the well-being of the country and the society. From this perspective, the political system performs well in the sense that it reflects the will of a very large number of citizens (irrespective of what drives high participation).

## Mexico

Learn even more about Mexico at [oecd.org](http://oecd.org)

### How's Life?

Mexico has made tremendous progress over the last decade in terms of improving the quality of life of its citizens, especially in the areas of education, health and jobs. Notwithstanding, Mexico ranks low in a large number of topics relative to most other countries in the Better Life Index.

Money, while it cannot buy happiness, is an important means to achieving higher living standards. In Mexico, the average household earned 12 182 USD in 2008, less than the OECD average.

In terms of employment, nearly 60% of people aged 15 to 64 in Mexico have a paid job. People in Mexico work 1857 hours a year, more than in other OECD countries. 57% of mothers are employed after their children begin school, suggesting that women encounter difficulties when balancing family and career.

Having a good education is an important requisite to finding a job. In Mexico, 34% of adults aged 25 to 64 have earned the equivalent of a high-school diploma, much lower than the OECD average. As to the quality of its educational system, the average student scored 425 out of 600 in reading ability according to the latest PISA student-assessment programme, also lower than the OECD average.

In terms of health, life expectancy at birth in Mexico is 75 years, or four years below the OECD average. The level of atmospheric PM10 – tiny air pollutant particles small enough to enter and cause damage to the lungs – is 33 micrograms per cubic meter, and is much higher than levels found in most OECD countries.

Concerning the public sphere, there is a strong sense of community and moderate levels of civic participation in Mexico. 87% of people believe that they know someone they could rely on in a time of need, near the OECD average of 91%. Voter turnout, a measure of public trust in government and of citizens' participation in the political

### Topics

#### Housing

3.6

#### Income

0.7

#### Jobs

7.1

#### Community

4.4

#### Education

0.4

#### Environment

5.8

#### Governance

4.7

#### Health

3.7

#### Life Satisfaction

6.7

#### Safety

0

#### Work-Life Balance

### Did You Know?

Population	106.7 mil.
Visitors per year	22.6 mil.
Renewable energy	9.52 %

### OECD in Action



#### Improving Schools in Mexico

The OECD is working with national and international experts to improve the quality of education in Mexican schools.

[View this video on youtube](#)

### Find Out More

May 2, 2011

#### Doing Better for Families: Mexico

[Download this report](#)

April 12, 2011

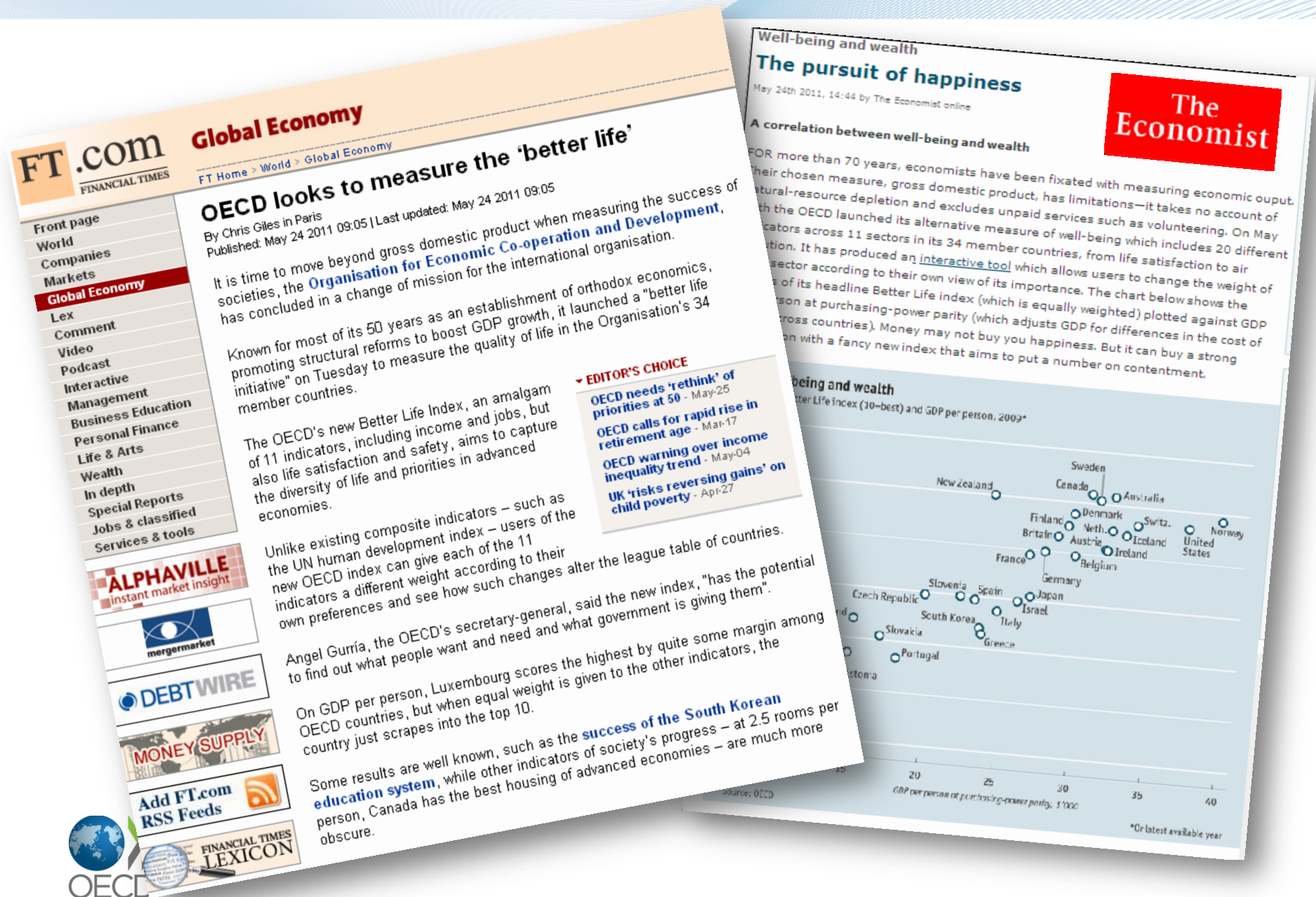
#### Society at a Glance: Mexico Key Findings

[Download this report](#)

September 23, 2010

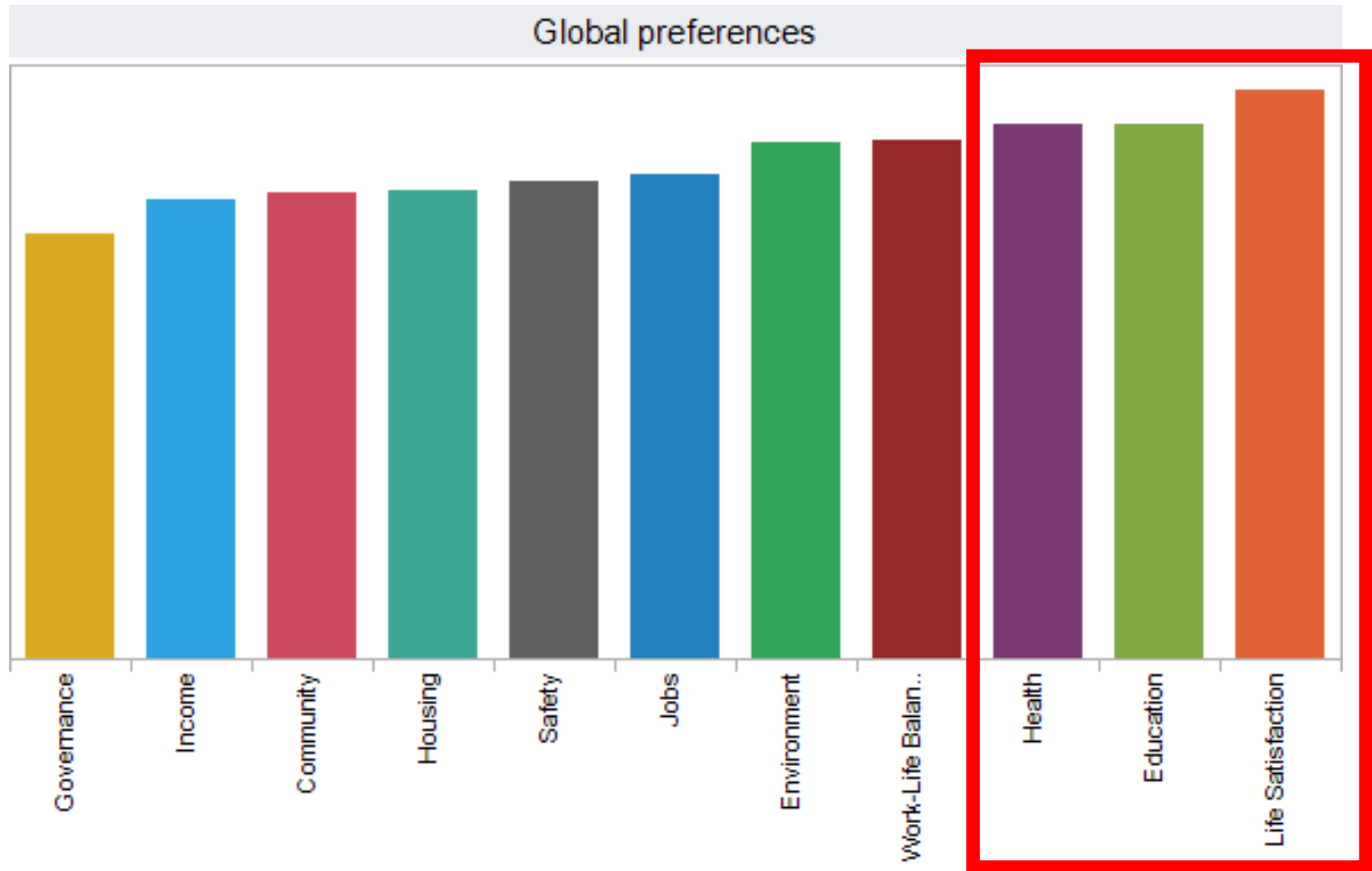
#### Obesity and the Economics of Prevention: Mexico

# How We Reached Media



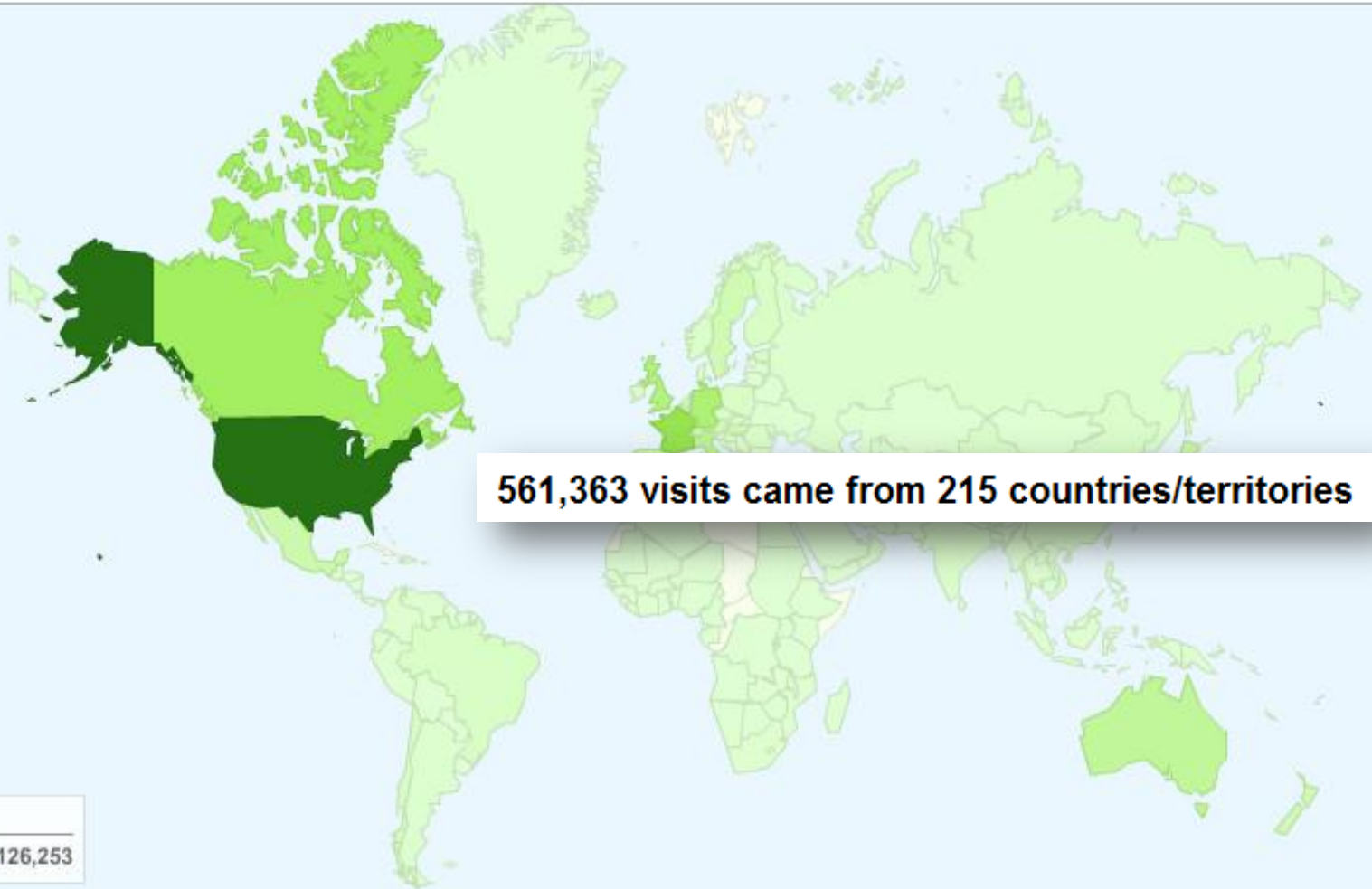


# Beginning to measure



# Participation

Visits ▾



# Participation

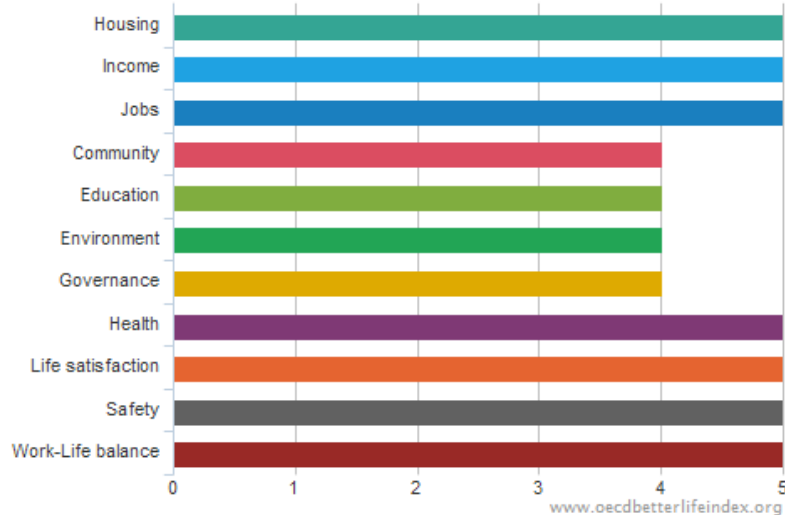


*real-time!*  
**Your Better Life Index**

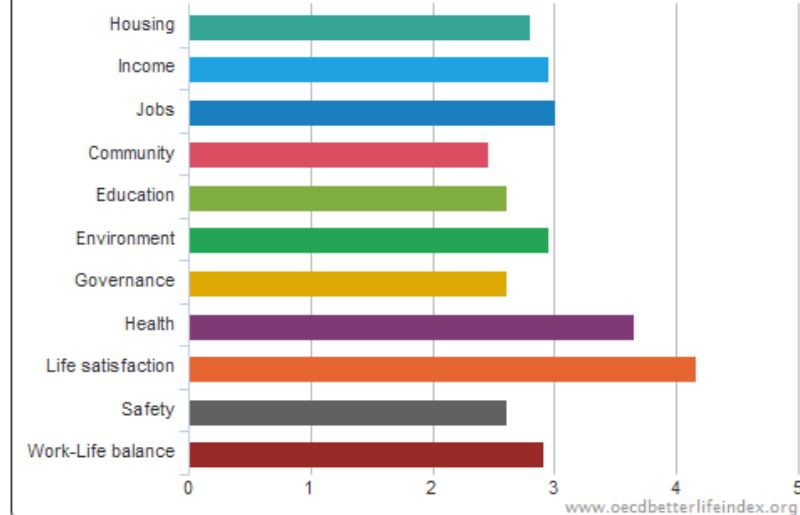


So far  
**21,718**  
indexes shared!

Somebody in **Europe** recently shared this index



Average of the last 20 shared indexes



Want to know how people are voting for each topic? [Click here to find out...](#)



# Continuing The Drumbeat



OECD

OECD Better Life Initiative is one month old today!! Help us celebrate by sharing what makes YOUR life better.

18,000 people have shared their indexes, have you?



**OECD Better Life Initiative**

[www.oecdbetterlifeindex.org](http://www.oecdbetterlifeindex.org)

The interactive tool of the Better Life Initiative allows you to create an index based on the topics that are important to you – because there is more to life than the cold numbers of GDP and economic statistics.

13,788 Impressions · 0.20% feedback

Like · Comment · Share · 24 June at 18:06

25 people like this.



**Lim Sunjung** This is good information.

25 June at 16:12 · Like



**Protected Cow Dairies** Simple is nice. Kana Krishna likes simple. Please visit our page and click LIKE to help protect cows.

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Protected-Cow-Dairies/118327284907538>

26 June at 01:00 · Like



**Ronique Breaux-Jordan** Master's level education and the technology learning curve that is accompanying this course of study...

29 June at 10:00 · Like

10. France



Work Life Balance Index: 7.0  
Time devoted to leisure and personal care: 16.06 hours  
Employment rate of women with children: 68 percent  
Employees working very long hours: 0.09 percent

twitter



**flaming\_amy** Amy Ward

According to OECD's **better life index**, I should be living in Canada. Nice. [oecdbetterlifeindex.org](http://oecdbetterlifeindex.org)

5 hours ago

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**European Crisis Could Tip U.S. Into Recession, Economists Say**



**Deficit Could Be One-Third Lower If Economy At Full Potential: CBO**

## The 10 Countries With The Best Work-Life Balance: OECD

The Huffington Post | Harry Bradford | First Posted: 6/1/11 10:10 AM ET | Updated: 8/4/11 08:40 AM ET

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ness of economic uncertainty, personal lives can often be forgotten to the pressures of the workplace, king the work-life balance out of whack.

might be true now more than ever, but not for all countries. Recently, the Paris-based Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) released the **Better Life Initiative**, examining how various factors of people's lives affect the general well-being of whole countries. And besides taking into account factors like housing and income, the OECD also looked at the work-life balance of each country.

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It's about listening.

