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# US drops out of top 20 on the latest world's happiest countries report

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People in the United States are not as happy as they once were. Younger people in particular have pulled the country down in the [newest world's happiest countries report](#).

The World Happiness Report, measured between 2021 and 2023, during the COVID-19 pandemic, showed that happiness scores from those under 30 were dramatically lower than those 60 and older.

"We can fairly say that Generation Z, as a whole, has significantly higher rates of unmet expectations," said Dr. Amir Afkhami, vice chair for clinical affairs and director of medical student education in the department of psychiatry at George Washington University.

Topping the rankings are the Nordic countries with Finland as No. 1 for the seventh year in a row.

The U.S. is now ranked No. 23, dropping from No. 15.

### So what do we do now?

Afkhami said it comes down to mental health.

"We need to increase funding for behavioral health care and coverage for behavioral health care, and increasingly see this as an essential aspect of national well being and not just an issue that we address when there is a crisis," Afkhami said.

He said the COVID-19 pandemic did have an impact, but there were signs of changes in Gen Z before the shutdowns ever happened.

"Even prior to the pandemic, there was a growing sense of disillusionment with economic prospects and the ability to achieve the American dream," he said.

The study, which is a publication of the Wellbeing Research Centre at the University of Oxford, is done by ranking social supports, income, health, generosity and absence of corruption. But the scores are based on an individuals' own assessment of their lives in those categories.

"A big factor in this fall is something that we observed in our clinical practice here in Washington, D.C., which was a significant rise in the lack of well being, particularly the rise in behavioral health disorders."

Read more [about the study here](#).

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