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***Happiness and
Development***



Greater happiness for a greater number

Did the promise of Enlightenment come true?

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World Happiness Report 2015

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Is life getting better?

- The issue
- Concepts of quality-of-life
- Measurement of final quality-of-life
- Trend Happy Life Years



The issue



The issue

- Promise of Enlightenment

versus

- Notions of declining quality of life



Promise of Enlightenment

- Man not doomed to misery
 - Happiness not only in Heaven
 - If Heaven exists at all..
- Better life possible on earth
 - Society not God-given, but man-made
 - Progress possible using human reason



Ethics of Enlightenment

- Better life desirable
 - Earthly life not for suffering
 - Happiness is good
- Happiness is the ultimate good
 - Consequentialis ethic
 - Morally best is what produces the greatest happiness for the greatest number



Robert Mauzi (1960)

The idea of happiness in French literature
in the 18th century



Peter Buijs (2007)

The age of happiness: Views on happiness during the Enlightenment in The Netherlands, 1658-1855





Notion of declining quality-of-life *among later society watchers*

- Marx: 'Verelendung'
- Freud: 'Unbehagen in der Kultur'
- Spengler 'Decline of the West'
- Riesman 'Lonely crowd'
- Putman 'Bowling alone'
- Easterlin 'Paradox stagnant happiness'



Notion of declining quality-of-life *in current public opinion*

Life was better in the 'good old days'

- Widely believed
- Growing belief since 1970s

Hagerty *Was Life Better in the 'Good Old Days'?* JOHS 2003



Rejection of moral desirability

In fiction:

Huxley's 'Brave new World'

In academic moral philosophy:

Treated as history



Concept of Quality-of-Life



Four qualities of life

	<i>external</i>	<i>internal</i>
<i>chances</i>		
<i>outcomes</i>		



Four qualities of life

	<i>external</i>	<i>internal</i>
<i>chances</i>	Livability	Life-ability
<i>outcomes</i>	Utility	Satisfaction with life

Source: Veenhoven, R. (2000) *The four qualities of life. Ordering concepts and measures of the good life.* Journal Of Happiness Studies, 1: 1-39



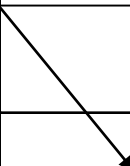
Analogous concepts in biology

	<i>external</i>	<i>internal</i>
<i>chances</i>	Biotope	Fitness
<i>outcomes</i>	Ecological function	Survival



Analogous concepts in biology

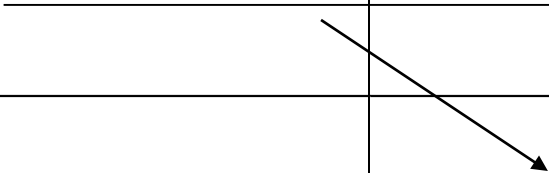
	<i>external</i>	<i>internal</i>
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<i>outcomes</i>	Ecological function	Survival





Four qualities of life

	<i>external</i>	<i>internal</i>
<i>chances</i>	Livability	Life-ability
<i>outcomes</i>	Utility	Long and happy life





Measurement of Quality-of-Life



Measurement of Quality-of-Life

- Measurement of happiness
- Combination with longevity



Measurement of happiness

Example of a survey question

Taking all together, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your life as a whole these days?

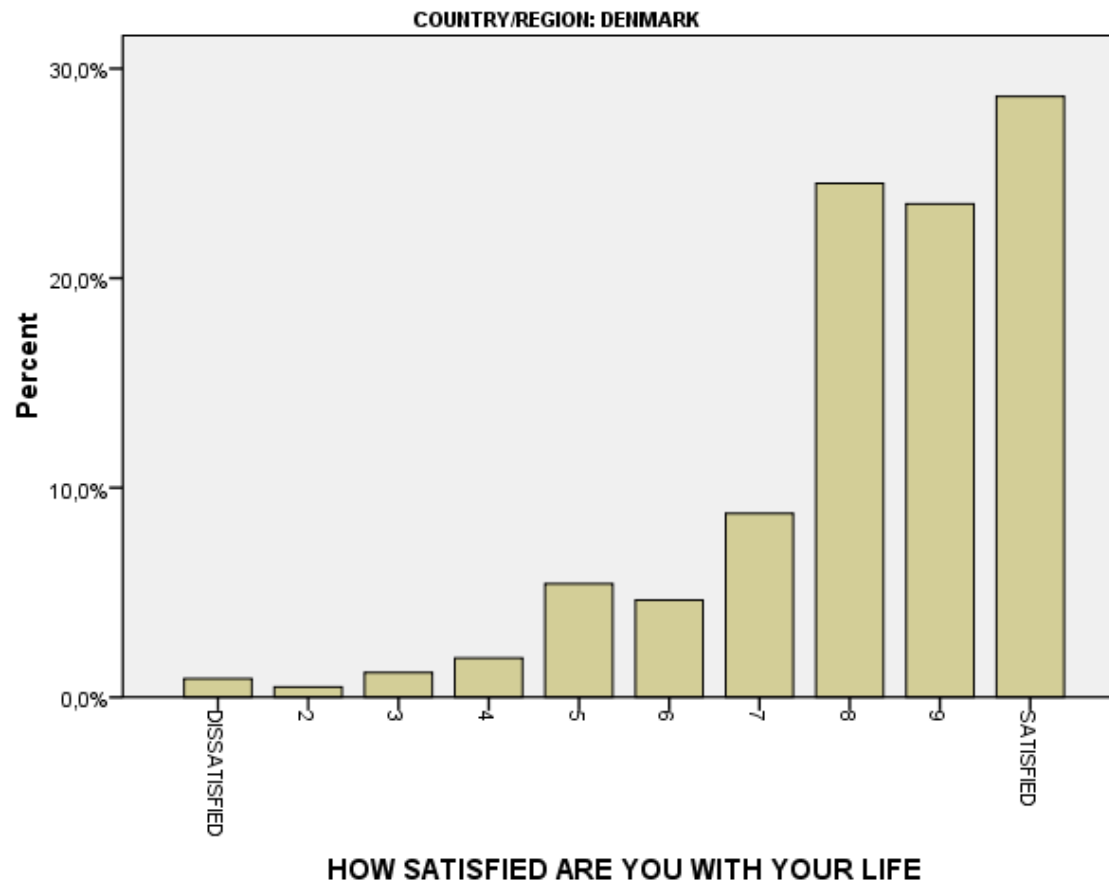
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Dissatisfied

Satisfied

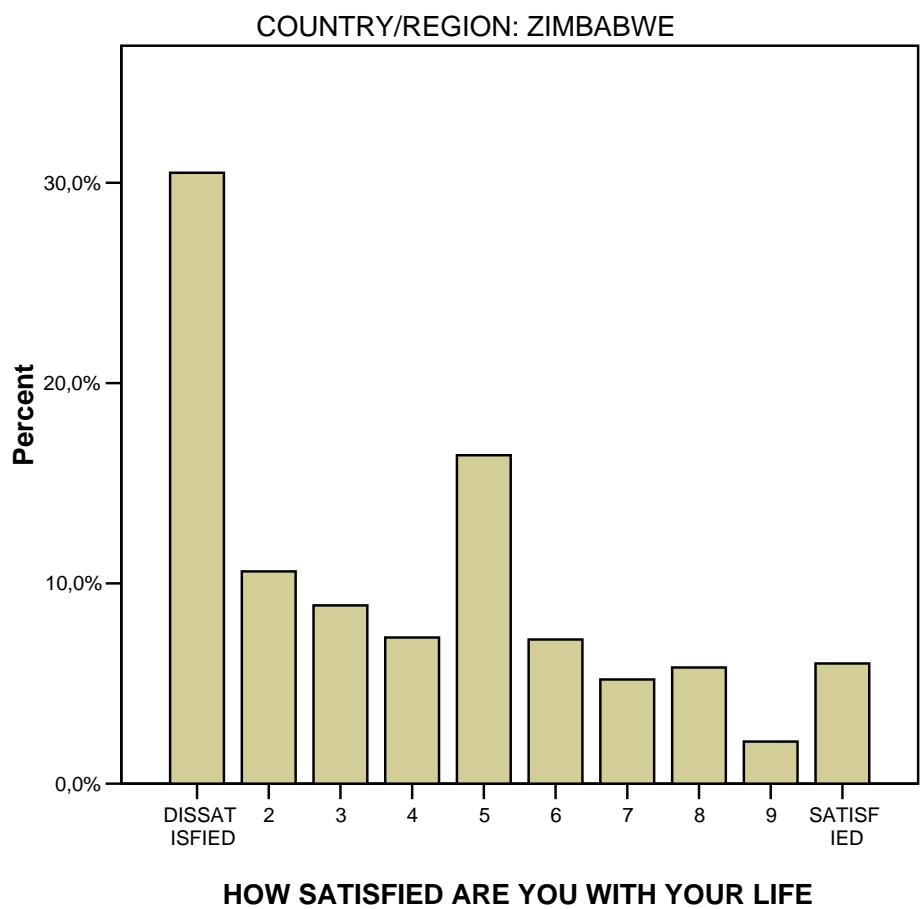


Happiness in Denmark



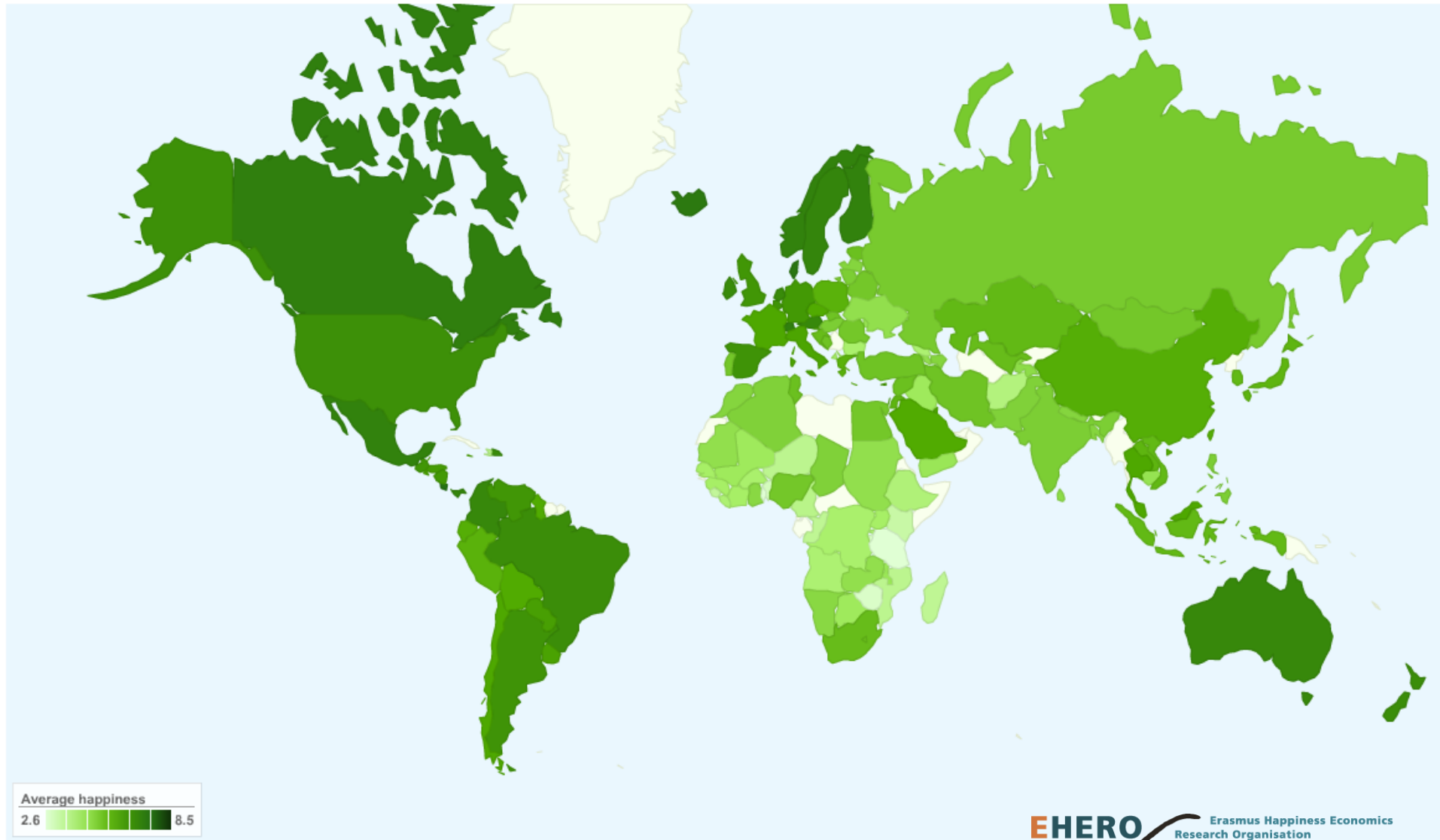


Happiness in Zimbabwe



AVERAGE HAPPINESS IN 148 NATIONS 2000-2009

How much people enjoy their life-as-a-whole on scale 0 to 10





Happiness in nations 2000-2009

• Denmark	8,3
• Netherlands	7,6
• USA	7,4
• Germany	7,1
• Japan	6,5
• South Korea	6,0
• Russia	5,5
• Iraq	4,7
• Zimbabwe	3.0



Happy Life Years in nations 2000-2009

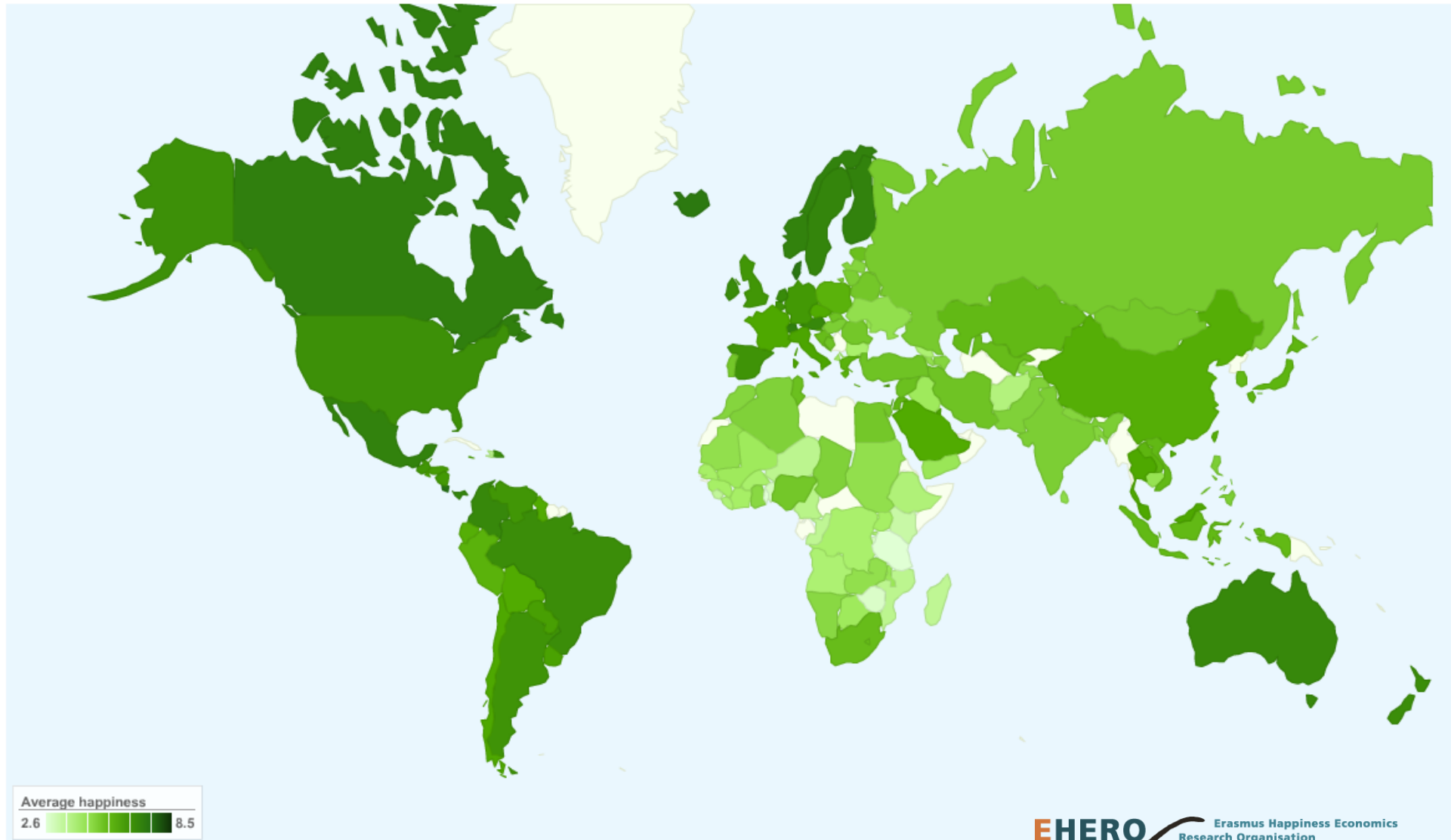
	<i>Average happiness</i>	<i>Life expectancy</i>	<i>HLY</i>
Denmark	8,3	81,3	65,2
Netherlands	7,6	79,2	59,9
USA	7,4	77,9	57,9
Japan	6,5	82,3	53,5
Russia	5,5	65,0	36,1
Iraq	4,7	66,5	31,1
Zimbabwe	3,0	40,9	12,5



AVERAGE HAPPINESS IN 148 NATIONS 2000-2009

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How much people enjoy their life-as-a-whole on scale 0 to 10





Trend Happy-Life-Years



Trend Happy-Life-Years

Short-term

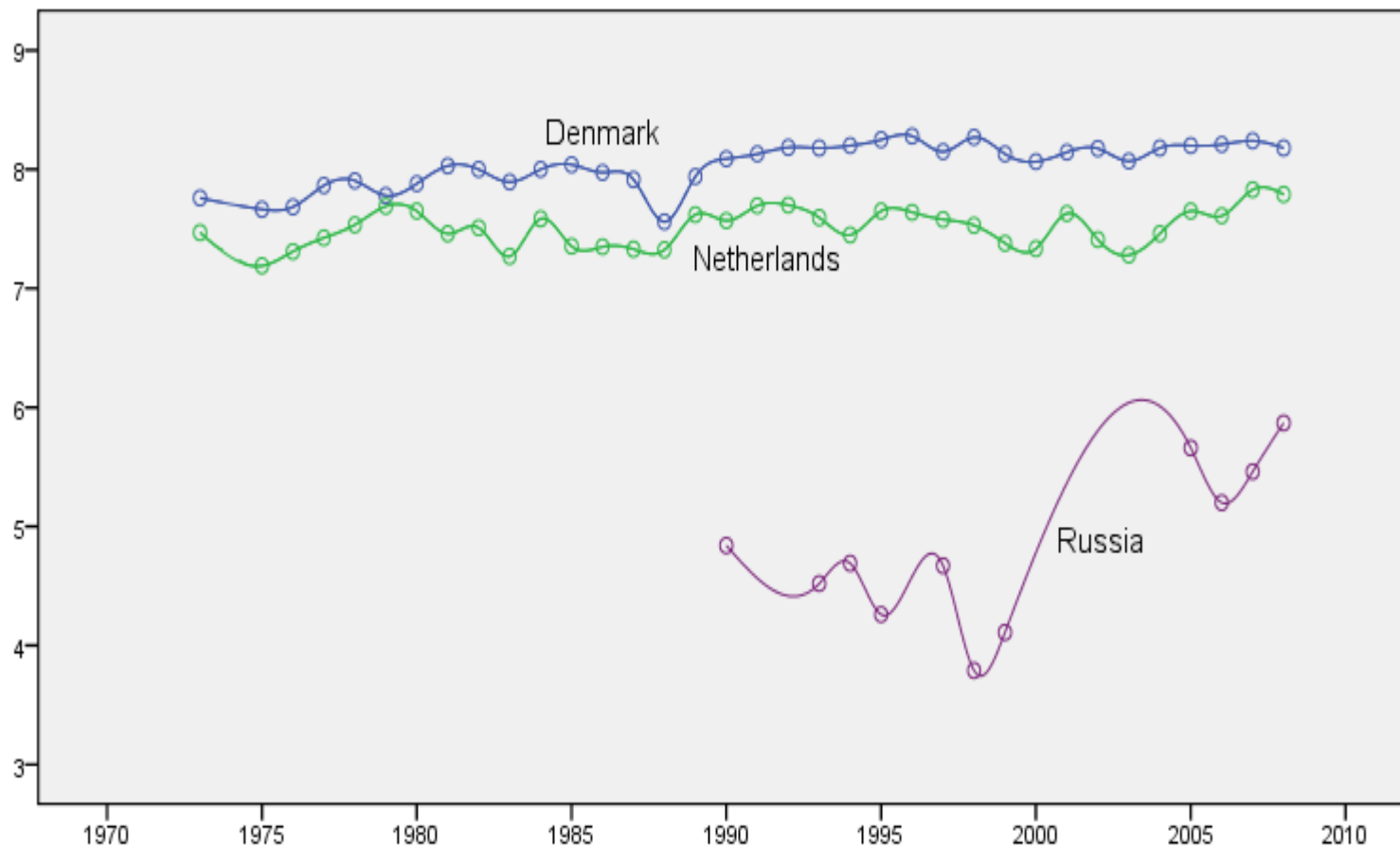
- Change in modern nations 1973-2005

Long-term

- Development over human history



Change average happiness in nations 1973-2000, scale 0-10



Source: World Database of Happiness: Trends in nations



Change average happiness in nations

1973-2000, scale 0-10

Italy	+ 0,63
France	+ 0,55
Denmark	+ 0,55
USA	+ 0,29
UK	+ 0,26
Japan	+ 0,20
Germany (west)	+ 0,00
Belgium	– 0,33



Change average happiness in nations

199 time series >10 years 1945-2010

- Rise 133
- Decline 66

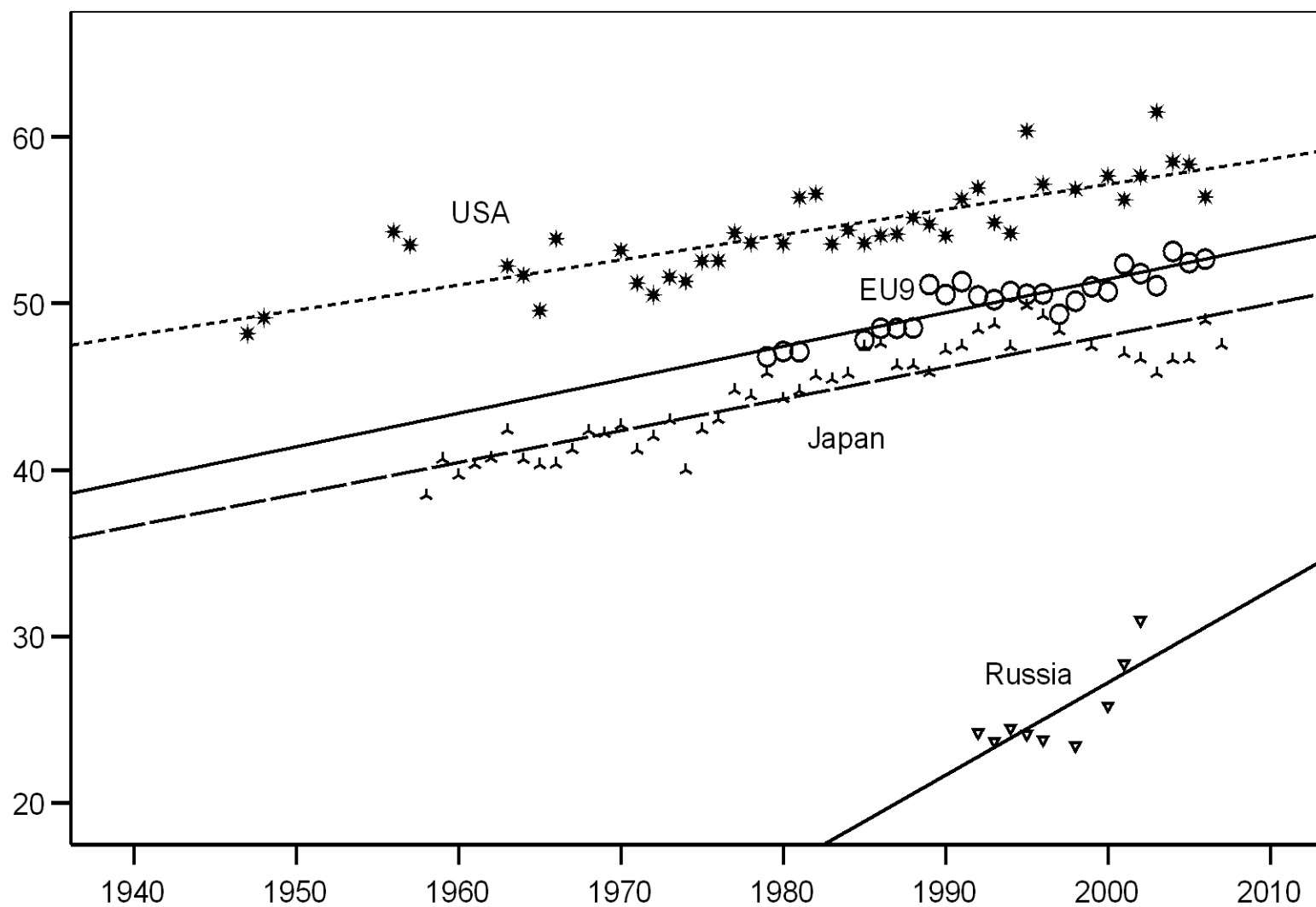
Ratio 2,1 $p < 0.01$

Average yearly rise: 0.012

Veenhoven & Vergunst, *The Easterlin illusion*, International J of Happiness and Development (in press)



Trend Happy Life Years 1948-2010





Gains Happy Life Years 1973-2010

Italy	+ 10,5
France	+ 10,0
Denmark	+ 8,0
UK	+ 6,7
Japan	+ 6,6
USA	+ 6,1
Germany (west)	+ 5,8
Belgium	+ 3,4

Source: World Database of Happiness: Trends in nations



Trend Happy Life Years

Development over human history

Societal evolution and quality of life

Figure 2.3
Long-term trend in quality of life



Source: Veenhoven, R (2010) *Life is getting better: Societal evolution and fit with human nature*, Social Indicators Research 97:105-122



Conclusions

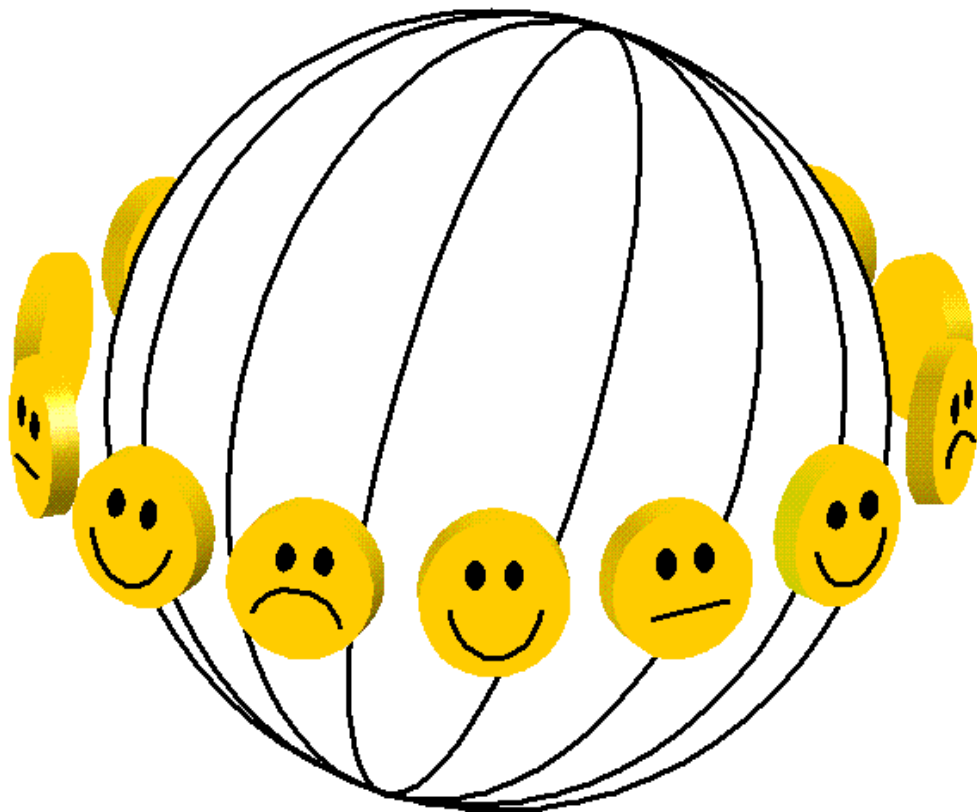


Conclusions

- We live longer and happier than ever
- The promise of Enlightenment came true
- Trend likely to continue



World Database of Happiness



<http://worlddatabaseofhappiness.eur.nl>



More about happiness

- **World Database of Happiness**
<http://worlddatabaseofhappiness.eur.nl>
- **Journal of Happiness Studies**
<http://springerlink.com>