

# Introducing the Healthy Ageing and Prevention Index



**Prevention**  
**Health and care**  
International  
Costs  
Immunisation  
Life expectancy  
**Inequalities**  
Disease and conditions

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## Executive summary

In an ageing world, it's never been more important for countries to invest in preventative health. The Healthy Ageing and Prevention Index, created by ILC-UK, is a global index that ranks 121 countries against six indicators relating to healthy ageing and prevention: life span, health span, work span, income, environmental performance, and happiness.

The Index brings together health, wealth and societal metrics in one place for the first time. This allows us to compare how sustainable different countries are, both in terms of longer lives and the extent to which their governments are investing in efforts to prevent ill health and support healthy ageing.

### The countries ranked as the top five in the Index are:

Country	Life span (years)	Health span (years)	Work span (years)	Income GDP/head ppp (\$ 000s)	Environmental performance 0-100	Happiness 0-10
<b>Switzerland</b>	83.4	72.5	34	73.11	81.5	7.7
<b>Iceland</b>	82.3	72	37.2	60.08	72.3	7.5
<b>Norway</b>	82.6	71.4	32	68.35	77.7	7.4
<b>Sweden</b>	82.4	71.9	32.2	55.07	78.7	7.4
<b>Singapore</b>	83.2	73.6	34	101.94	58.1	6.4

Of the top 20, only a third are non-European. These include Singapore (ranked 5th ), Australia (ranked 6th), Canada and New Zealand (jointly ranked 11th), Israel (ranked 13th), and Japan (ranked 17th).

### The top five G20 countries are:

Country	Life span (years)	Health span (years)	Work span (years)	Income GDP/head ppp (\$ 000s)	Environmental performance 0-100	Happiness 0-10
<b>Australia</b>	83	70.9	33.0	52.20	74.9	7.2
<b>Canada</b>	82.2	71.3	32.8	50.66	71.0	7.1
<b>United Kingdom</b>	81.4	70.1	31.5	48.51	81.3	7.2
<b>Germany</b>	81.7	70.9	30.6	55.89	77.2	7.0
<b>Japan</b>	84.3	74.1	31.2	42.20	75.1	5.9

With an average population of only 8.4 million, **the top 10 countries account for only 1.1% of the world's population, while the top 50 account for just over a quarter.** This demonstrates significant inequality across the 121 countries ranked by the Index.

Our analysis finds that there are significant inequalities between countries at the top and bottom of the Index:

- There is a 24-year gap in life span (life expectancy) between the top 10 and bottom 10 countries.
- There is a 21-year gap in health span (healthy life expectancy) between the top and bottom 10 countries.
- There is a 23-year gap in wealth span (working life expectancy) between the top and bottom countries.

The US, China, and India have the largest number of older adults across their populations, and could significantly benefit from investing in healthy ageing and disease prevention but are ranked 31, 50, 102 respectively.

**If the UK's target of five extra healthy years by 2035 was met in 2019, it would be the best performing country jumping 27 places from its current 28<sup>th</sup> position on the health span metric, ahead of Japan, the healthiest country on the Index.** But unless the UK ups its current spend on prevention from 4.8% of the overall health budget to 6% this is an ambition that feels increasingly unlikely as the target date approaches.

In addition to ranking individual countries on their performance, the Index also ranks political and/or economic country blocs, such as the G20, EU and OECD. This information gives stakeholders another way of demanding action on sustainable longevity from their governments.

**Scandinavia is the top performing economic/political bloc, followed by the G7 and the EU.**

Looking at the ranking of countries across the Index, we see that there is a strong relationship not only between health and wealth, but also environmental performance and happiness. So, investing in prevention has ripple effects across society.

This year, we will formally launch the Index as an online tool to coincide with the 76<sup>th</sup> World Health Assembly. We will engage with world leaders and senior policymakers at the G7 and G20 summits and ministerial meetings.

**The Healthy Ageing and Prevention Coalition** is a group of advocates at the forefront of the healthy ageing and global health debate, led by the ILC. The Coalition has come together with the shared vision to improve population health and support healthy ageing by investing in preventative health. We will formally launch the Coalition alongside the Index in May to drive forward and communicate the Index's key messages and promote prevention among global health actors. The Coalition will also use the Index to respond to key policy developments and make calls for action.

Our aim for the Coalition is a diverse membership, with representation from individual experts, organisations (such as charities), academia, government and industry.

If you're interested in joining the Coalition, contact Arunima Himawan, Senior Health Research Lead, at [ArunimaHimawan@ilcuk.org.uk](mailto:ArunimaHimawan@ilcuk.org.uk).

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## It's time to act

Over the last three years, ILC has engaged with expert stakeholders from around the globe.

Through our programme we have:

- Helped convince G20 Ministers in Japan to commit to a joint focus on the prevention of ill health across the life course in 2019.
- Informed the WHO and UN joint Decade of Healthy Ageing (2020-2030).
- Supported the development of a whole chapter on life course immunisation as part of the WHO Immunisation Agenda 2030.
- Engaged with key healthy ageing stakeholders, including the Indian High Commission in the UK, ahead of India's G20 presidency in 2023.

The consensus is clear: it's never too late to prevent ill health. The health and economic costs of failing to invest in preventative healthcare across the life course are too high to ignore. The COVID-19 pandemic has shown how important it is for governments to invest more in prevention.

But we are still far from where we ought to be. **Despite repeated commitments to prioritise prevention at the G20 level, action and investment continue to lag.**

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**By 2050, the proportion of people aged 50 and over will increase by 11 percentage points, resulting in 40% of the G20 population being aged over 50**



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**G20 citizens aged 50 and over collectively lived 118 million years with disabilities in 2019 due to largely preventable diseases**

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**Across the G20, preventable conditions cost economies 1.02 trillion USD in yearly productivity loss among those aged 50-64 this is roughly equivalent to the estimated loss in global worker income for the first half of 2021 as a result of COVID-19**

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Across the OECD alone, countries spend an average of just 2.8% of their health budgets on prevention.<sup>1</sup> Among these countries, Canada spends the most, at 6% of its health budget. As a result, it has seen:

- A steady decrease in avoidable mortality rates, from 150 for every 100,000 citizens in 2000 to 116 in 2017.
- An increase in life expectancy from 79 to 82.1 years.
- One of the OECD's highest five-year survival rates for lung and breast cancers.

While that's far from perfect, it's a starting point.<sup>2</sup> **Increasing preventative health spend by just 0.1 percentage points** would not only benefit our health, but our economies too: **it could unlock an additional 9% of spending every year** by people aged 60 or over and support people to work, care and volunteer for longer.

This is where the Healthy Ageing and Prevention Index comes in, to:

- Hold Governments to account, by tracking progress on the key metrics relating to healthy ageing and prevention.
- Engage with leading global health leaders to persuade them to move from commitment to action on preventative healthcare:

We will hold a series of global policy forums, to engage directly with Ministers and senior policymakers, including forums during the G7 and G20.

- Build strong relationships with leading organisations to form a Healthy Ageing and Prevention Coalition, which will demand action and hold governments to account on preventative healthcare:

The Coalition will promote prevention among actors at the forefront of healthy ageing and global health, and use the Index to respond to key policy developments and make calls to action.

## About the Index

The Healthy Ageing and Prevention Index measures and ranks 121 countries against six indicators: **life span, health span, work span, income, environmental performance, and happiness.**

These indicators give us a comprehensive picture of the extent to which different governments are investing in efforts to prevent ill health and support healthy ageing. We take a broad view of healthy ageing, based on evidence from wider literature and global policy developments that includes the UN Decade of Healthy Ageing.<sup>3</sup>

Healthy ageing isn't just about the number of additional years people live, but: how many of those years are spent in good health; the opportunities for individuals to work and have an income that helps them meet their needs; the opportunity to live in an environment where they can live dignified and healthy lives; and the opportunity to do the things they value and to live fulfilled and enriched lives.

By combining these indicators, we can compare countries that are doing well and are on a sustainable path, with others where more work is needed. We can also pinpoint key action areas by country and best practice.

Over time, we will compare each country's ranking in the Index to specific policy interventions and country-by-country progress, to identify which interventions are linked to improvements in the Index.

### Why develop this Index?

This Index brings together health, wealth and societal metrics for the first time, to give us a comprehensive picture of sustainable longevity in different countries, and whether they're investing in interventions that will help people live well for longer in the long term. The Index builds on existing indices, such as the Yale Environmental Performance Index (EPI). It includes metrics like happiness and environmental conditions, which hasn't been done before. It also presents data in an accessible and easy-to-understand format, saving users from having to retrieve data from individual sources.

Most importantly, in addition to ranking individual countries on their performance, the Index also ranks political and economic country blocs, such as the G20, EU and OECD. This information gives stakeholders another way of demanding action on sustainable longevity from their governments. The Index can function as a roadmap for ministers to set their national priorities and measure their success.

## The Index metrics

The Index uses pre-COVID baseline data from 2019, which is the latest, most complete dataset currently available. However, as new data becomes available, the Index will track progress over time.

The six indicators are:

Measure	Definition and source
<b>Life span</b>	<p>This is the number of years an individual can expect to live. This is measured at birth in years, using life expectancy measures obtained from WHO.</p> <p>The top five countries in 2019 were Japan (84.3), Switzerland (83.4), South Korea (83.3), Spain and Singapore (83.2).</p>
<b>Health span</b>	<p>This is the number of years an individual can expect to spend in good health. This is measured at birth in years, using health expectancy measures obtained from WHO.</p> <p>The top five countries in 2019 were Japan (74.1), Singapore (73.6), South Korea (73.1), Switzerland (72.5), and Israel (72.4).</p>
<b>Work span</b>	<p>This is defined as the expected number of years spent being economically active. For this metric we use the labour force participation rate. We use 15 as our lower age limit and 65 as our upper age limit. The upper age limit is the average effective age of retirement in countries in the Index.</p> <p>We translate this percentage figure into number of years. For instance, if everyone in a given population were to be in work between the ages of 15 and 65, that country's average work span would be 50 years across the life course. However, if only half of that population were to be in work (50%), the average work span would be only 25 years across the life course.</p> <p>Data are obtained from the World Bank and the International Labour Organisation.</p> <p>The top five countries in 2019 were Cambodia (43.7), Ethiopia (40.7), Eritrea (40.6), Burundi (39.5), and Laos (39.4).</p>
<b>Income</b>	<p>This is measured by GDP per capita, using purchasing power parity (ppp) (\$ 000s), with data obtained from the World Bank.</p> <p>We use GDP per capita as a measure of economic wellbeing and standard of living. GDP is a measure of the size and health of a country's economy over a period of time (usually one year) and is based on the total value of all finished goods and services.</p>

	<p>GDP is also used to compare the size of different economies at different points in time. We use ppp to ensure comparability between countries. This takes into account the relative cost of local goods, services and inflation rates of the country, rather than using international market exchange rates, which may distort the real differences in per capita income.</p> <p>The top five countries in 2019 were Luxembourg (120.96), Singapore (101.94), Ireland (89.43), Switzerland (73.11), and Norway (68.35).</p>
<b>Environmental performance</b>	<p>This is measured using the Yale Environmental Performance Index (EPI)<sup>4</sup> which positions countries on a scale of 0 to 100 (100=best).</p> <p>The EPI ranks countries against 40 performance indicators across 11 issue categories and three themes:<sup>5</sup> climate change performance, environmental health and ecosystem vitality.</p> <p>The global average EPI rating is 48.8; the top five countries in 2020 were Denmark (82.5), Luxembourg (82.3), Switzerland (81.5), the UK (81.3), and France (80).</p> <p>We use 2020 data in our Index because the EPI is released only every two years, making 2019 data unavailable, with the most recent release in 2022.</p>
<b>Happiness</b>	<p>Happiness positions countries on a scale of 0-10. Scores of 0-4 are interpreted as "suffering", 5-7 as "struggling", and 8-10 as "thriving".</p> <p>Data are taken from the annual Gallup World Poll, which asks respondents to think of a ladder and rate their current lives on the 0-10 scale. Rankings are from nationally representative samples.<sup>6</sup> The UN creates reports from these polls, from which we obtain the data.</p> <p>The top five countries in 2019 were Finland (7.8), followed by Switzerland (7.694), Denmark (7.693), Iceland (7.5), and Norway (7.4)</p>

### How we developed the Index

We sought a simple way of combining information on living standards, health and life span, working lives, the quality of the environment, and satisfaction with life. We found that simply ranking countries against the individual indicators from 'best' to 'worst' performing and then ranking their performance against all the indicators combined was the most straightforward and fair way to compare countries' performance.

**Step 1:** Countries are categorised from 'best' to 'worst' for each individual metric. We use the original values from the relevant data source for each metric except work span (see The Index metrics section).

**Step 2:** We assign each country a numerical rank for that metric.

Below is a visual representation of steps one and two, using the life span metric as an example. Country Y and country X are the two best-performing countries in the Index. In this example, we can see that despite being the best-performing countries across all metrics, they are ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> on life expectancy. This is because we are looking at one metric in isolation. When we take their performance across all six metrics, their average performance pushes them to the top of the Index

**Example: ranking the life span metric for the top two countries in the Index**

Country	Step 1: categorising values from 'best' to 'worst'	Step 2: numerical rank
Country Y	83.4	2
Country X	82.3	14

We repeat steps one and two for all six indicators for all 121 countries.

**Step 3:** We then take the sum of these numerical ranks for each country to generate an overall score for each country.

**Example: Generating a country score for the top two performing countries in the Index**

Country	Life span	Health span	Work span	Income	Environmental performance	Happiness	Country score
Country Y	2	4	25	4	3	2	40
Country X	14	9	11	9	17	4	64

**Step 4:** Aggregated country scores are then assigned a further and final numerical rank. The smaller the total score, the higher the rank.

### Example: final ranking assigned from aggregated country scores for the top two countries in the Index

Country	Life span	Health span	Work span	Income	Environmental performance	Happiness	Country score	Rank
Country Y	2	4	25	4	3	2	40	1
Country X	14	9	11	9	17	4	64	2

In our Index, life span is always higher than health span which in turn is higher than work span. Life and health span are highly correlated and work span is more strongly correlated with health span than life span. Across the Index, life span outcomes vary considerably more than health and work span outcomes.

Countries that achieve the same combined score hold the same position in the global ranking, such as Australia, Luxembourg and Netherlands which are ranked joint 6<sup>th</sup>.

In deriving the Index we chose not to weight each indicator for importance, as there's no 'right' way to do this. Some will argue that income is the most important, while others happiness or health. Instead we give all indicators equal weight as contributors to global health and well-being. When developing the political and economic bloc rankings, we apply population weights.

The online version of the Index will allow users to look at each metric individually.

Countries included in the Index are selected primarily on the basis of their population size – the cut-off for minimum population size is two million. Of our 121 countries, 114 (95%) have populations in excess of this figure. To ensure the Index is representative of the global economy, we also include seven countries with a smaller population that have an average per capita income of \$30,000 a year or more. This includes countries such as Luxembourg and Malta.

There are 11 countries with incomplete data on one or more of the metrics. Where this occurs, the countries concerned are given a value of zero and are ranked accordingly. If only one country is missing a value, the country concerned would be ranked 121, the lowest possible value for that metric. In the case of environmental performance data, four countries have missing values each of which is therefore ranked 118 making this the lowest possible value. Missing values are also reflected in the combined score based on all measures and therefore fall near the bottom of the Index.

# Findings

## Global rankings

**The top five countries in the Healthy Ageing and Prevention Index are Switzerland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and Singapore.** 13 of the 19 G20 countries (excluding the EU) feature in the top 50, with Australia leading in position six.

### The top 50 countries in the Index

Country	Global ranking
Switzerland	1
Iceland	2
Norway	3
Sweden	4
Singapore	5
Australia	6
Luxembourg	6
Netherlands	6
Denmark	9
Ireland	10
Canada	11
New Zealand	11
Israel	13
Finland	14
Austria	15
United Kingdom	16
Germany	17
Japan	17
France	19
Malta	20
Spain	21
Cyprus	22
South Korea	23
Italy	24
Belgium	25
Slovenia	26

<b>Costa Rica</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Portugal</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Czech Republic</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Estonia</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>United States of America</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>Colombia</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>Slovakia</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Peru</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>Chile</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>Greece</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>Poland</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>Lithuania</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>Thailand</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>Ecuador</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>Brazil</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>Kazakhstan</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>Argentina</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>Hungary</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>Mexico</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>Latvia</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>Malaysia</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>Romania</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>Croatia</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>China</b>	<b>50</b>

This table breaks down the top five countries' scores by indicator.

<b>Country</b>	<b>Life span (years)</b>	<b>Health span (years)</b>	<b>Work span (years)</b>	<b>Income GDP/head ppp (\$ 000s)</b>	<b>Environmental performance 0-100</b>	<b>Happiness 0-10</b>
<b>Switzerland</b>	83.4	72.5	34	73.11	81.5	7.7
<b>Iceland</b>	82.3	72	37.2	60.08	72.3	7.5
<b>Norway</b>	82.6	71.4	32	68.35	77.7	7.4
<b>Sweden</b>	82.4	71.9	32.2	55.07	78.7	7.4
<b>Singapore</b>	83.2	73.6	34	101.94	58.1	6.4

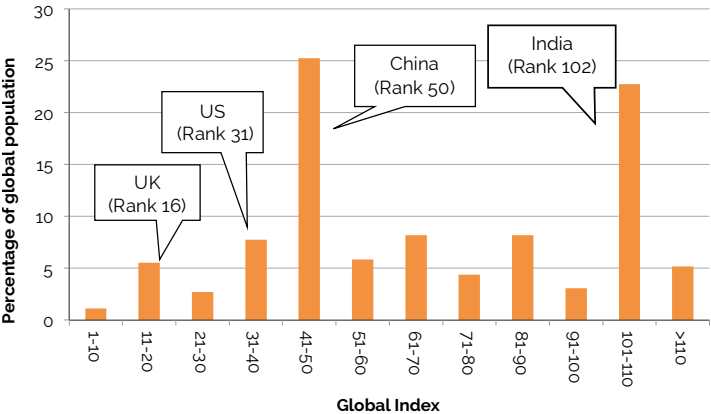
With an average population of only 8.4 million, **the top 10 countries account for only 1.1% of the global population**, while **the top 50 account for just over a quarter**. This demonstrates significant inequality across the countries in the Index, whereby a relatively small proportion of the global population is best adapted to longer, healthier lives. This is particularly evident in the second graph below showing the cumulative percentage of the global population by country grouping.

Our analysis finds that there are significant inequalities between countries at the top and bottom of the Index:

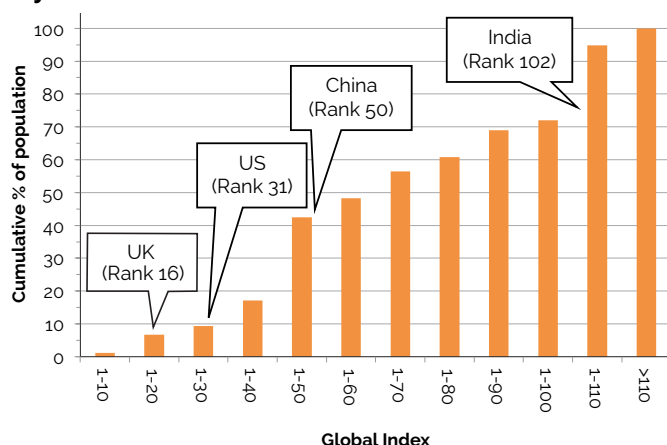
- There is a 24-year gap in life span (life expectancy) between the top 10 and bottom 10 countries.
- There is a 21-year gap in health span (healthy life expectancy) between the top and bottom 10 countries.
- There is a 23-year gap in wealth span (working life expectancy) between the top and bottom 10 countries.

Countries ranked from 41-50 (which include China) have the largest average populations with 186.7 million. Countries ranked from 101-110 (which include India) have the second largest average populations with 168.4 million.

**Percentage of the global population by country grouping (by rank)**



## Cumulative percentage of the global population by country grouping (by rank)



The US, China, and India have the largest number of older adults across their populations, and could significantly benefit from investing in healthy ageing and disease prevention but are ranked 31, 50, 102 respectively.

If the UK's target of five extra healthy years by 2035 was met in 2019, it would be the best performing country jumping 27 places from its current 28<sup>th</sup> position on the health span metric, ahead of Japan, the healthiest country on the Index. But unless the UK ups its current spend on prevention from 4.8% of the overall health budget to 6% this is an ambition that feels increasingly unlikely as the target date approaches.

## Political and economic bloc rankings

Scandinavia is the top performing country bloc in the Index, while the African Union is the worst performing. It is striking that the EU has a particularly low work span, which has contributed to the bloc's ongoing skills shortages.<sup>7</sup>

Country	Life span (years)	Health span (years)	Work span (years)	Income GDP/head ppp (\$ 000s)	Environmental performance (0-100)	Happiness (0-10)	Global rank
Scandinavia	82.0	71.4	31.5	58.1	79.3	7.5	1
G7	80.9	69.5	30.5	55.3	64.7	6.7	2
European Union	81.2	70.7	28.6	46.5	72.8	6.6	3
OECD <sup>a</sup>	80.4	69.4	30.4	46.3	63.0	6.5	4
Americas	77.2	66.3	31.3	34.0	50.6	6.4	5
APEC <sup>b</sup>	76.9	67.4	33.2	24.9	43.5	5.6	6
ASEAN <sup>c</sup>	72.2	63.6	33.4	12.8	37.6	5.5	7
G20	75.4	65.4	30.1	21.4	41.4	5.0	8
African Union	66.2	57.6	29.5	5.2	34.3	4.2	9

<sup>a</sup>The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

<sup>b</sup>Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation.

<sup>c</sup>Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

## **Under the spotlight: a closer look at work span**

On average, the work span for the highest ranked countries (with an Index ranking of 60 or below) is 31.5 years. This group tends to have more robust welfare and pension systems than lower ranked countries.

Work span in countries ranked greater than 60 is less, averaging 27.6 years and falling to 22.1 years in the lowest ranked category (>110).

They include fast growing and populous countries in the world such as India and also several economically successful African countries.

In the least economically successful African countries, working lives may be disadvantaged by having shorter lives and poorer health, but also underdeveloped labour markets and health care systems.

As a metric, work span only gives us an indication of the average number of years that an individual will work between the ages of 15 to 65. It doesn't tell us anything about the quality of work or people that work beyond normal retirement or child workers.

Work span is affected by many factors, including health, labour market conditions, and the stage of economic development within a country, educational attainment and women's representation in the workforce. It can also be affected by the demographic makeup of a country e.g., if there is a large percentage of older workers. For instance, Cambodia, a middle ranked country, ranks first for work span but 88th for income. Its working-age population is currently growing faster than its total population plus its economy is moving from agriculture to industry and services, but many of these are low-paying positions.<sup>8</sup>

Whilst work span tends to bunch together more than our indicators, its inclusion in our Index gives a more accurate picture, by shining a light on countries which experience poor health and low life expectancy.

## The G20

There is significant variation across the G20, from 6<sup>th</sup> in the global rankings (Australia) to 102<sup>nd</sup> (India). But this heatmap demonstrates much less variation within individual countries.

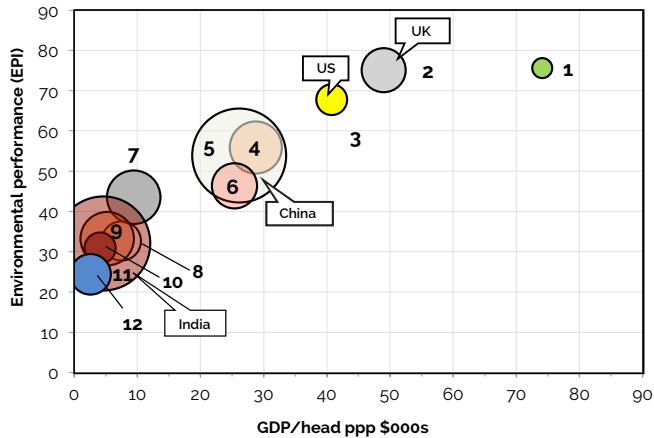
Country	Life span (years)	Health span (years)	Work span (years)	Income GDP/head ppp (\$ 000s)	Environmental performance (0-100)	Happiness (0-10)	Global rank
Australia	83.0	70.9	33.0	52.20	74.9	7.2	6
Canada	82.2	71.3	32.8	50.66	71.0	7.1	11
United Kingdom	81.4	70.1	31.5	48.51	81.3	7.2	16
Germany	81.7	70.9	30.6	55.89	77.2	7.0	17
Japan	84.3	74.1	31.2	42.20	75.1	5.9	17
France	82.5	72.1	27.5	49.38	80.0	6.7	19
South Korea	83.3	73.1	31.6	42.73	66.5	5.9	23
Italy	83.0	71.9	24.9	44.85	71.0	6.4	24
United States of America	78.5	66.1	31.3	65.28	49.1	6.9	31
Brazil	75.9	65.4	32.2	15.39	51.2	6.5	41
Argentina	76.6	67.1	30.8	23.00	52.2	6.1	43
Mexico	76.0	65.8	30.7	20.45	52.6	6.4	45
China	77.4	68.5	34.1	16.77	37.3	5.1	50
Saudi Arabia	74.3	64.0	27.9	48.95	44.0	6.6	51
Russia	73.2	64.2	30.7	29.19	50.5	5.4	55
Turkey	78.6	68.4	26.4	27.32	42.6	4.9	59
Indonesia	71.3	62.8	34.0	12.31	37.8	5.3	61
South Africa	65.3	56.2	28.0	13.01	43.1	5.0	81
India	70.8	60.3	24.7	7.00	27.6	3.2	102

## Health, environment and happiness

There is significant evidence on the relationship between health and wealth metrics, but much less on the relationship between, say health and wealth, or environmental performance and happiness.

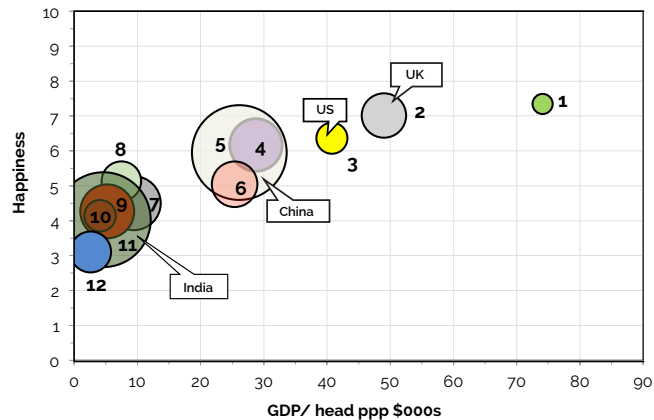
The two bubble graphs below are just one example of the relationship between environment performance, happiness and our other indicators. In this instance, we focus on income.

**The relationship between environmental performance and income by country grouping**



Countries are grouped together by Index rank scores, where Group 1 = all countries with an Index ranking of 1 to 10, Group 2 = all countries with an Index ranking of 11-20, and so on, up to group 12 = all countries ranked >110.

**The relationship between happiness and income by country grouping**



Countries are grouped together by Index rank scores, where Group 1 = all countries with an Index ranking of 1 to 10, Group 2 = all countries with an Index ranking of 11-20, and so on, up to group 12 = all countries ranked >110.

These graphs indicate that on average, the countries that perform better on the Index also do better in terms of income, environmental performance and happiness.

Both demonstrate a relationship between a country's environmental performance and income scores, and between its happiness and income scores (although the relationship is less strong between happiness and income). This could be because happiness is the only subjective metric included in the Index: it's based on people's perceptions of their own happiness, which are likely to be influenced by a number of factors including cultural perceptions of what it is to be "happy".

## Using the Index

The Index gives us a comprehensive picture of how well countries perform against key healthy ageing metrics. These are the issues that matter to policymakers most. And if we compare its metrics with other factors (secondary indicators), such as health spending, access to health care, immunisation uptake and particular policies, the Index becomes a vital tool to understand what drives better performance.

We need not restrict its use to these factors; for example, we could also include education, labour market policy and pensions.

By comparing the Index with other metrics, we can identify:

- What actions countries must take to improve their global ranking
- Which issues drive good and poor performance
- Where we can use "What if" analysis into how a country's global ranking might change if one or more of its indicators changed score. For instance, how might the UK's ranking improve if we were to increase our healthy life expectancy by five years?

## What happens next

This year, we will formally launch the Index as an online tool to coincide with the 76<sup>th</sup> World Health Assembly. We will engage with world leaders and senior policymakers at the G7 and G20 summits and ministerial meetings.

We will also launch the Healthy Ageing and Prevention Coalition to hold governments to account, and ensure our messages are reaching the right people. The Coalition is a group of advocates, led by the ILC, which is at the forefront of the healthy ageing and global health debate. It has come together with the shared vision to improve population health and support healthy ageing by investing in preventative healthcare. The Coalition will drive forward and communicate the key messages from the Index and promote prevention among global health actors. The Coalition will also use the Index to help it respond to key policy developments and make calls for action.

Our aim for the Coalition is a diverse membership, with representation from individual experts, organisations (such as charities), international organisations, academia, government and industry.

If you're interested in joining the Coalition contact Arunima Himawan, Senior Health Research Lead, at [ArunimaHimawan@ilcuk.org.uk](mailto:ArunimaHimawan@ilcuk.org.uk).

## Conclusion

We know that prevention works. It's cost effective and its benefits extend well beyond national healthcare systems. Investing in population health is vital for everyone's wellbeing and to ensure that we can truly benefit from the "longevity dividend" that could result from an ageing population.

Yet significant inequalities persist between countries in terms of that investment, with some heading in the right direction towards sustainable longevity and others, falling behind.

Globally, there's been a meaningful push to safeguard population health in light of the significant toll taken by the COVID-19 pandemic. This gives us a window of opportunity to highlight how countries can do better.

We want to use our Index and the Coalition to clearly demonstrate the state of health around the globe and ensure that healthy ageing and prevention are placed at the heart of public health policy.

We want to hold governments to account, and we want to see them investing in strategies that will ensure people live healthier, not just longer lives.

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## About the ILC

The International Longevity Centre UK (ILC) is the UK's specialist think tank on the impact of longevity on society. The ILC was established in 1997, as one of the founder members of the International Longevity Centre Global Alliance, an international network on longevity.

We have unrivalled expertise in demographic change, ageing and longevity. We use this expertise to highlight the impact of ageing on society, working with experts, policy makers and practitioners to provoke conversations and pioneer solutions for a society where everyone can thrive, regardless of age.



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