

Basic Guide to the World

Quality of Life
Throughout the World

A report from **The Global Social Change Research Project**

Copyright December 2005

This report was prepared by **The Global Social Change Research Project**

The project began in 2000, as a way to help understand how society works. This project includes presenting reports about how the world has changed recently, for example population and economic changes.

We hope that our reports can be used to help the public come to a better understanding of society today.

We also hope that the reports and data used to prepare these reports will be useful for researchers, students and teachers.

Gene Shackman, Ph.D.
Applied Sociologist
Founder and Director
The Global Social Change Research Project
<http://gsociology.icaap.org>

Ya-Lin Liu, Ph.D.
The Global Social Change Research Project
<http://gsociology.icaap.org>

George Xun Wang, Ph.D.
The University of Wisconsin, Parkside
Department of Sociology/Anthropology
<http://www.uwp.edu/departments/sociology>
and
The Global Social Change Research Project
<http://gsociology.icaap.org>

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Overview

This report shows quality of life over time:

- By world regions
- For selected countries

This report shows quality of life by describing:

- Health
- Economic wellbeing
- Education¹
- Freedom² (political freedom and civil liberties)
- Self perceived wellbeing or satisfaction

These are typical indicators of quality of life³.

1 We use data from UNESCO for developing countries, and data from CIA World Factbook for developed countries. UNESCO has data for 1990 and 2000, but only for developing countries. World Factbook mostly has data for most recent year, generally 2000, but some times only for earlier years, as early as 1980.

2 Freedom is **Political rights** which “enable people to participate freely in the political process”, and **Civil liberties** which “allow for the freedoms of expression and belief, associational and organizational rights, rule of law, and personal autonomy without interference from the state.” From the Freedom House, retrieved January 1, 2006, from <http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=35&year=2005>

3 André, Pierre and Dieudonné Bitondo. (2001) Development of a Conceptual and Methodological Framework for the Integrated Assessment of the Impacts of Linear Infrastructure Projects on Quality of Life. Prepared for the Research and Development Monograph Series. Retrieved March 31, 2009 from <http://www.ceaa-acee.gc.ca/default.asp?lang=En&n=C10DF5DB-1>

Overview

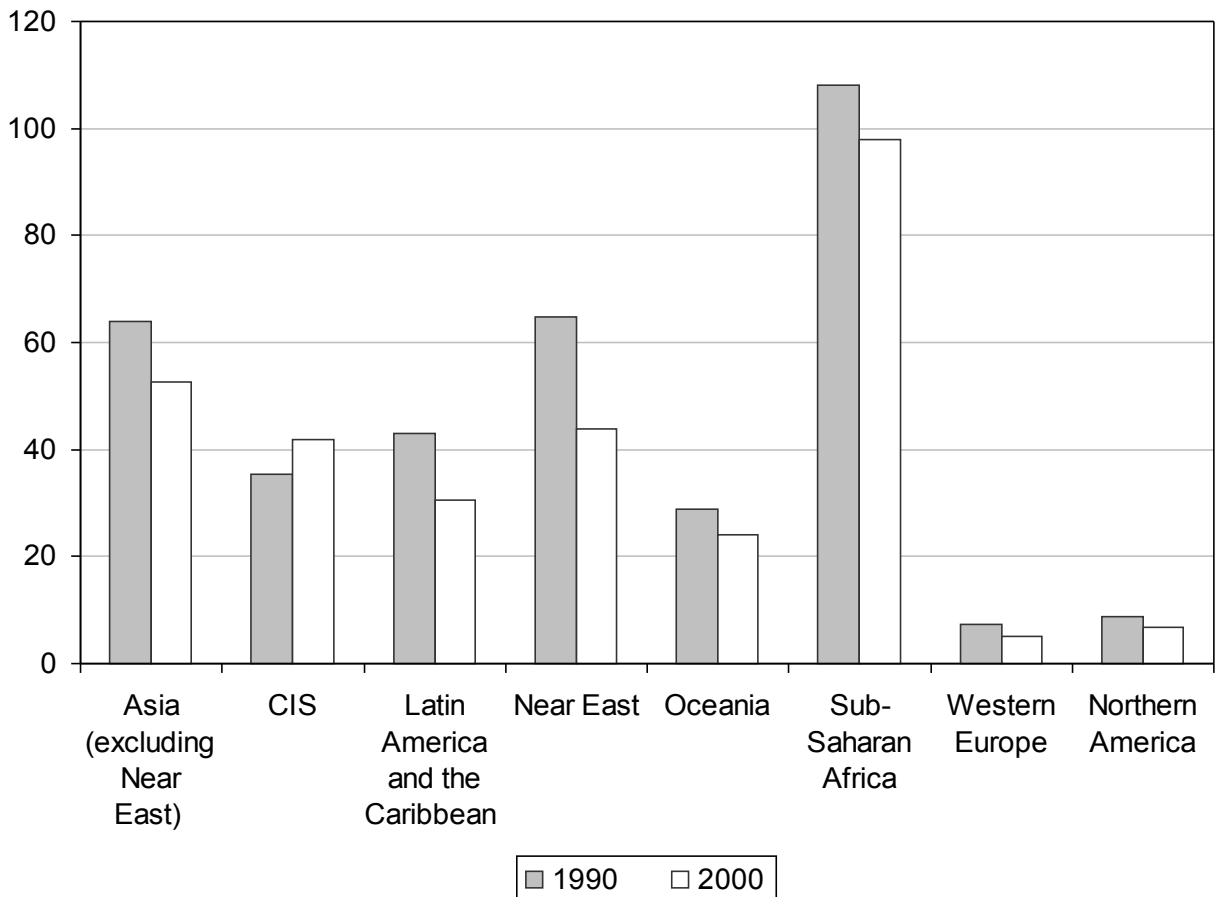
- In general, quality of life improved in most regions and in most aspects of life.
- Quality of life is by far the best in North America and Western Europe.
- On most indicators, quality of life is worst in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Some exceptions

- Infant mortality rate got worse in the Commonwealth of Independent States (former Soviet Union countries).
- Economic wellbeing declined very slightly in Sub-Saharan Africa.
- The Near East and North Africa had the least freedom, with no change in the last 20 years. The percent of people who were free in Sub-Saharan Africa also declined in that time.

Health (measured by infant mortality rate)

Figure 1.
 Infant Mortality Rates
 (Infant deaths per 1,000 births)



Data from US Census International Database
 CIS = Commonwealth of Independent States, including Russia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, and so on.

By Region

- Infant mortality rates decreased in every region between 1990 and 2000, except for the CIS, where it increased.
- Infant mortality rates are very much lower in Western Europe and North America and very much higher in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Lowest Infant Mortality Rates

Table 1
Countries with lowest IMR in 1990

Country	Region	IMR 1990	IMR 2000
Iceland	Western Europe	4.1	4.5
Japan	Asia	4.6	3.4
Finland	Western Europe	5.7	3.7
Sweden	Western Europe	6.1	3.0
Hong Kong	Asia	6.5	3.2
Netherlands	Western Europe	6.6	5.4
Norway	Western Europe	6.8	3.8
Switzerland	Western Europe	7.0	4.5
Singapore	Asia	7.1	3.0
Canada	North America	7.1	5.1
Spain	Western Europe	7.2	4.6
Germany	Western Europe	7.2	4.3
United Kingdom	Western Europe	7.3	5.5
France	Western Europe	7.4	4.6
Luxembourg	Western Europe	7.5	5.2

- The countries with lowest IMR were mainly in Western Europe, but also in Asia and North America.
- IMR improved within all of these countries except for a slight increase in Iceland.

Highest Infant Mortality Rates

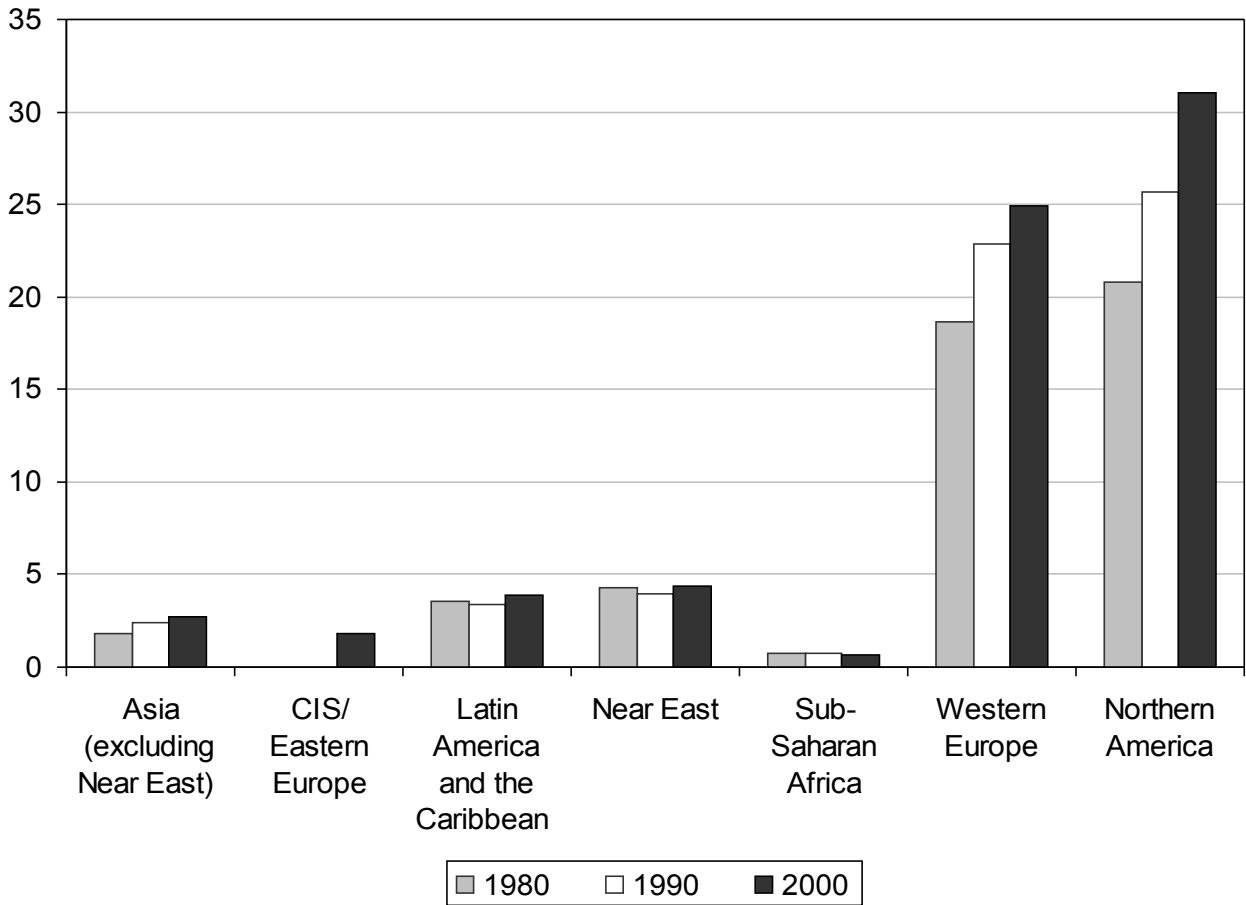
Table 2
Countries with highest IMR in 1990

Country	Region	IMR 1990	IMR 2000
Angola	Sub-Saharan Africa	207.8	197.1
Afghanistan	Asia	180.9	165.1
Liberia	Sub-Saharan Africa	172.0	174.0
Sierra Leone	Sub-Saharan Africa	169.8	169
Western Sahara	Northern Africa	165.7	133.6
Mozambique	Sub-Saharan Africa	147.7	136.6
Mali	Sub-Saharan Africa	141.1	118.5
Bhutan	Asia	132.5	111.0
Niger	Sub-Saharan Africa	131.7	126.6
Guinea-Bissau	Sub-Saharan Africa	131.4	116.3
Malawi	Sub-Saharan Africa	127.5	105.1
Djibouti	Sub-Saharan Africa	125.8	111.3
Somalia	Sub-Saharan Africa	125.7	125.7
Ethiopia	Sub-Saharan Africa	125.6	103.7
Chad	Sub-Saharan Africa	123.6	101.3

- The countries with highest IMR were mainly in Sub-Saharan Africa and also in Asia and one in North Africa.
- IMR improved within most of these countries except for an increase in Liberia. There was only a very small change in Sierra Leone, and apparently no change in Somalia.

GDP per Capita

Figure 2
GDP per Capita
Thousand 1995 US dollars



Data from US Energy Information Administration

By Region

- GDP per Capita steadily increased in Asia, Western Europe and in Northern America. GDP per Capita decreased very slightly in Sub-Saharan Africa.
- GDP per Capita is very much higher in Western Europe and North America and very much lower in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Lowest GDP per Capita

Table 3
Countries with lowest GDP per Capita in 1980
shown in dollars

Country	Region	GDP/ Capita 1980	GDP/ Capita 2000
Bhutan	Asia	94	206
Ethiopia	Sub Saharan Africa	104	108
Chad	Sub Saharan Africa	129	228
Nepal	Asia	154	234
Mozambique	Sub Saharan Africa	155	184
Afghanistan	Asia	155	77
China	Asia	166	817
Malawi	Sub Saharan Africa	167	161
Burundi	Sub Saharan Africa	181	150
Gambia, The	Sub Saharan Africa	189	395
Tanzania	Sub Saharan Africa	190	184
Liberia	Sub Saharan Africa	198	No data
Burkina Faso	Sub Saharan Africa	205	249
Viet Nam	Asia	210	371
Uganda	Sub Saharan Africa	211	344

- The countries with the lowest GDP per Capita are mainly in Asia and Sub Saharan Africa.
- Most countries had improvements in GDP per Capita.
 - A few countries had declines (Afghanistan, Malawi, Burundi, Tanzania).
 - A few countries had large increases (China, Gambia, Bhutan).

Highest GDP per Capita

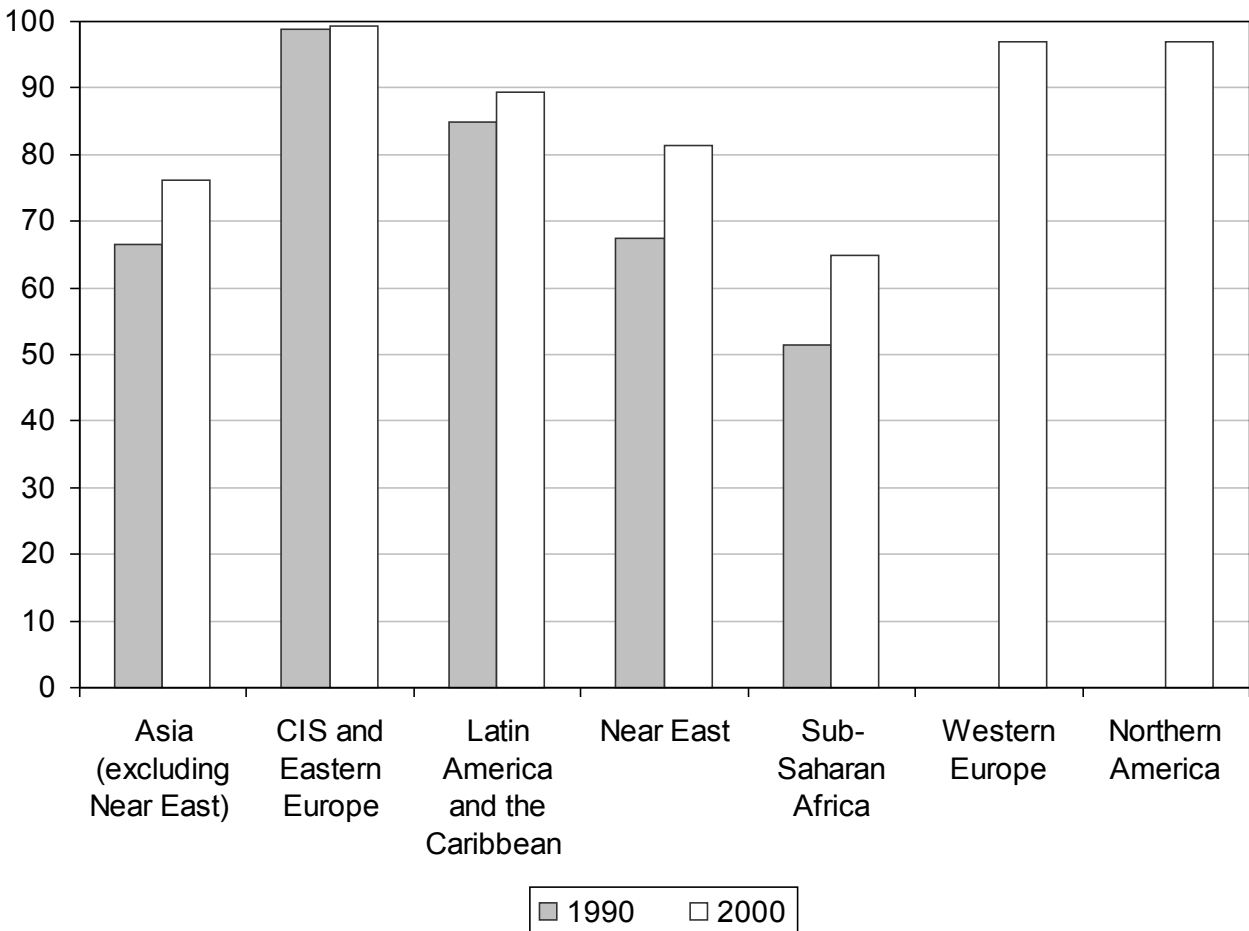
Table 4
Countries with highest GDP per Capita in 1980
shown in **thousands of dollars**

Country	Region	GDP/ Capita 1980	GDP/ Capita 2000
Switzerland	Europe	39.8	46.9
Qatar	Near East	37	18.1
United Arab Emirates	Near East	34.9	16.9
Bermuda	North America	34	36.9
Brunei	Asia	29.8	16
Libya	Near East	29.8	6.2
Luxembourg	Europe	28.8	58.2
Japan	Asia	28.2	44.6
Denmark	Europe	27.3	38.7
West Germany	Europe	26.8	No data
Norway	Europe	23.8	39.5
Sweden	Europe	23	32.9
Austria	Europe	22.6	33.3
Iceland	Europe	22.4	31.2
France	Europe	21.7	29.2
Belgium	Europe	21.3	30.9
United States	North America	21.2	31.9

- Several countries in the Near East had highest GDPs per Capita in 1980, but their GDP per Capita all declined.
- Other countries with highest GDPs per Capita were in Europe, North America, and two in Asia. The GDP per Capita for these countries all increased.

Literacy

Figure 3
Literacy Rate



Data from UNESCO, except for Western Europe and Northern America, 2000 data from CIA World Factbook.

By Region

- Literacy rates increased throughout the world between 1990 and 2004
- In general, literacy rates are lowest in Sub-Saharan Africa, and highest in the CIS and Northern America and Western Europe.

Lowest literacy

Table 5
Countries with lowest literacy rates in 1980

Country	Region	Percent Literate 1980	Percent Literate 2000
Niger	Sub-Saharan Africa	11.4	17.1
The Gambia	Sub-Saharan Africa	25.6	No data
Benin	Sub-Saharan Africa	26.4	39.8
Guinea	Sub-Saharan Africa	27.2	No data
Chad	Sub-Saharan Africa	27.7	45.8
Senegal	Sub-Saharan Africa	28.4	39.3
Ethiopia	Sub-Saharan Africa	28.6	41.5
Nauru	Oceania	30.4	No data
Nepal	Asia	30.4	44
Yemen	Near East	32.7	49
Central African Republic	Sub-Saharan Africa	33.2	48.6
Mozambique	Sub-Saharan Africa	33.5	46.5
Bangladesh	Asia	34.2	41.1
Mauritania	Sub-Saharan Africa	34.8	41.2
Pakistan	Asia	35.4	41.5
Iraq	Near East	35.7	No data

- The countries with the very lowest literacy rates are in Sub Saharan Africa. Other low literacy countries are in Asia and the Near East.
- All of these low literacy countries (for which there are data) showed an increase in literacy rate.
 - Many countries have very large growth in literacy rate.

Highest literacy

Table 6
Countries with highest literacy rates in 1980 (Unesco data)
or highest literacy rates in 2000 (World Factbook)

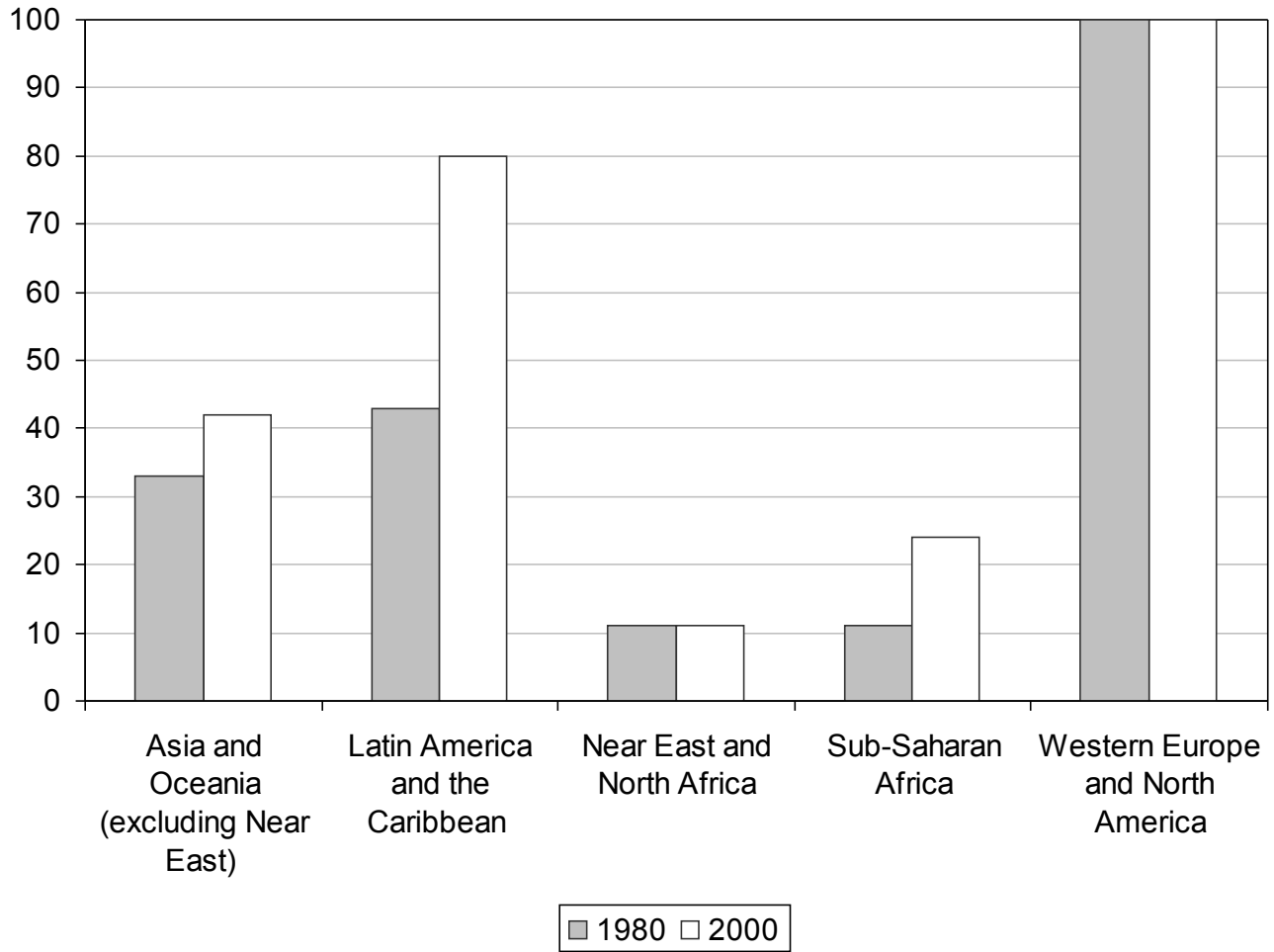
Country	Region	Percent Literate 1980	Percent Literate 2000
Andorra*	Western Europe		100
Australia*	Oceania		100
Denmark*	Western Europe		100
Finland*	Western Europe		100
Liechtenstein*	Western Europe		100
Luxembourg*	Western Europe		100
Norway*	Western Europe		100
Czech Republic*	Eastern Europe		99.9
Iceland*	Western Europe		99.9
Estonia	Baltics	99.8	99.8
Poland	Eastern Europe	99.6	No data
Slovenia	Eastern Europe	99.6	99.7
Belarus	CIS	99.5	99.7
Barbados	Latin America and Caribbean	99.4	99.7
Ukraine	CIS	99.4	99.6
Lithuania	Baltics	99.3	99.6
Russia	CIS	99.2	99.6
Hungary	Eastern Europe	99.1	No data

Data from UNESCO, or (*) Data from CIA World Factbook

- The countries with the highest literacy rates are in Western Europe, Eastern Europe, CIS, and the Baltics. Two others are in Oceania and the Caribbean.

Freedom

Figure 4
Percent of countries that are free

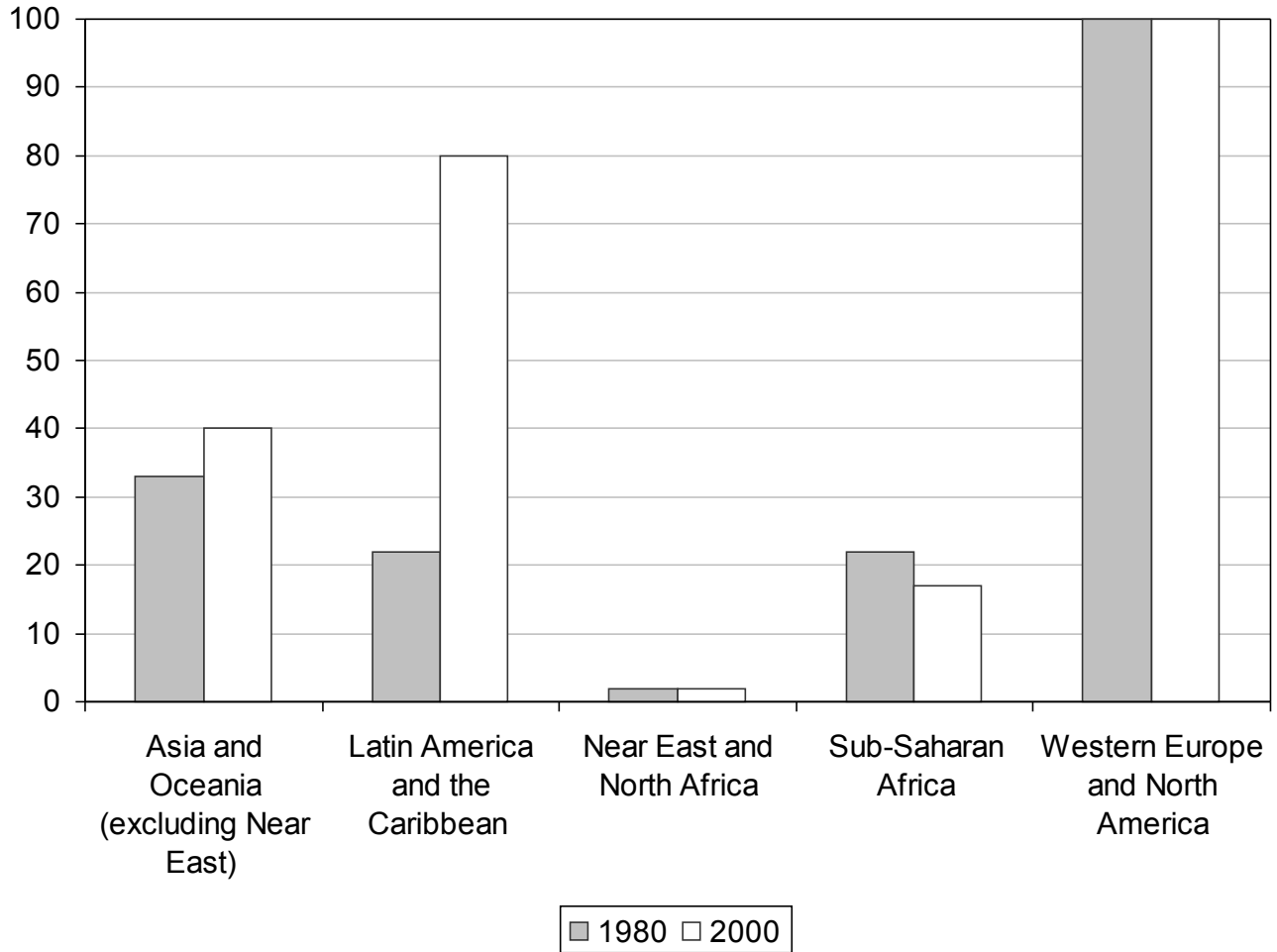


Data source: The Freedom House

- There was an increase in the percent of countries that were free, except there was no increase in the Near East and North Africa.
- Western Europe had the highest percent of countries that were free, and Africa and the Near East had the lowest percent.

Quality of Life Throughout the World

Figure 5
Percent of people that live in countries that are free



Data source: The Freedom House

- There was an increase in the number of people who lived in countries that were free increased, except for **no increase** in the Near East and North Africa, and a **decrease** in Sub Saharan Africa.
- Western Europe had the highest percent of people living in countries that were free, and Africa and the Near East had the lowest percent.

Lowest Freedom

Table 7
Countries with least freedom, 1980

Country	Region	Increase in freedom, 1980 to 2000
Afghanistan	Asia	None
Albania	Eastern Europe	LARGE
Angola	Sub-Saharan Africa	Very slight
Bulgaria	Eastern Europe	LARGE
Cambodia	Asia	Very slight
Ethiopia	Sub-Saharan Africa	Slight
East Germany	Europe	*
Guinea	Sub-Saharan Africa	Slight
Laos	Asia	Very slight
Mongolia	Asia	LARGE
Mozambique	Sub-Saharan Africa	LARGE
North Korea	Asia	None
Somalia	Sub-Saharan Africa	Very slight
Viet Nam	Asia	Very slight

- Countries with the lowest freedom were in Asia, Eastern Europe and Sub-Saharan Africa.
- Several of these countries showed a large increase in freedom, including Albania, Bulgaria, Mongolia and Mozambique.
- A few countries shows slight increases in freedom, including Ethiopia and Guinea.

* East Germany no longer exists as a separate country.

Highest Freedom

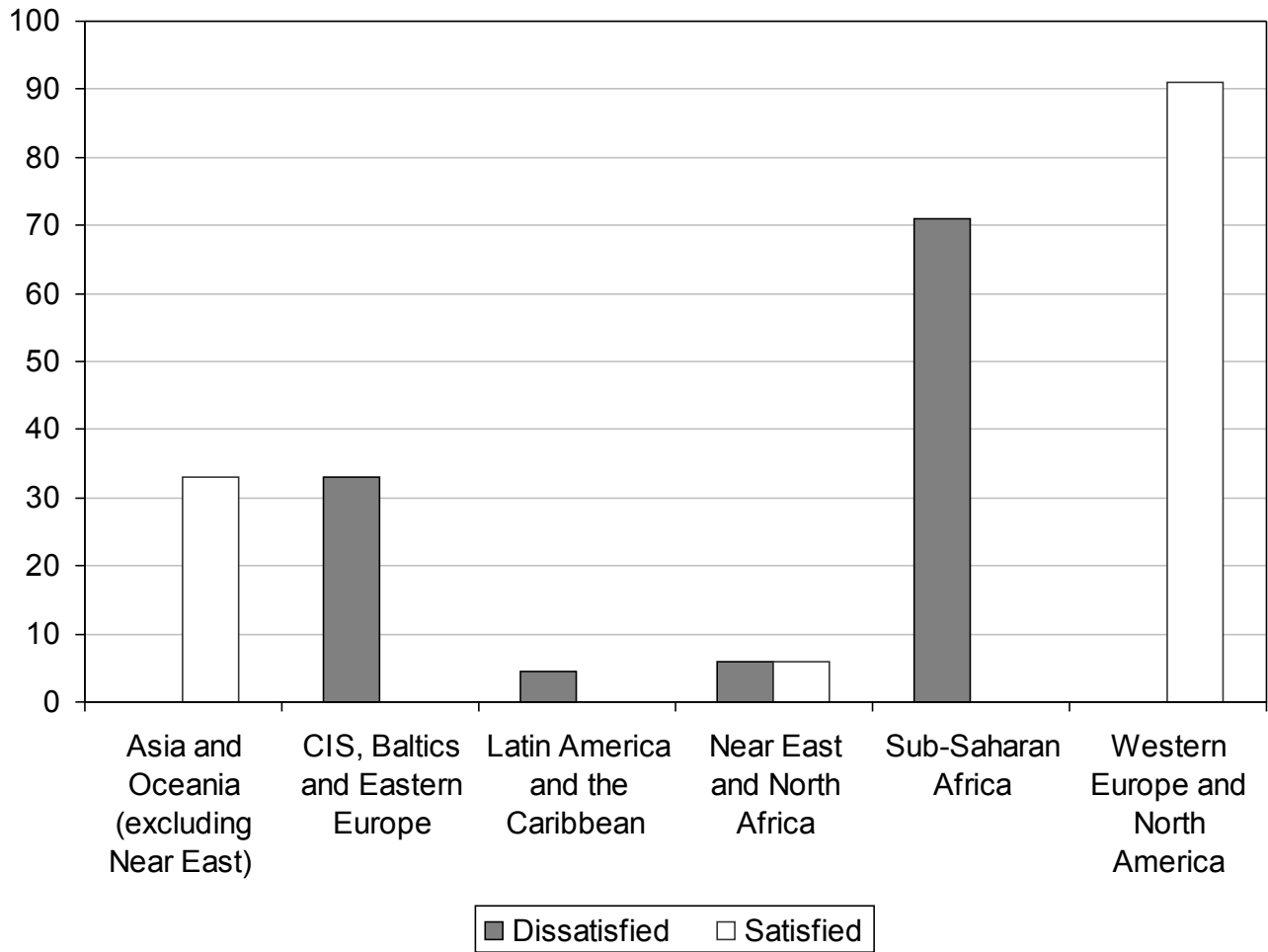
Table 8
Countries with most freedom, 1980

Country	Region	Change in freedom, 1980 to 2000
Australia	Oceania	None
Austria	Western Europe	None
Barbados	Latin America/Caribbean	None
Canada	North America	None
Costa Rica	Latin America/Caribbean	Very slight decrease
Denmark	Western Europe	None
Iceland	Western Europe	None
Ireland	Western Europe	None
Japan	Asia	Very slight decrease
Luxembourg	Western Europe	None
Netherlands	Western Europe	None
New Zealand	Oceania	None
Norway	Western Europe	None
Sweden	Western Europe	None
Switzerland	Western Europe	None
United Kingdom	Western Europe	Very slight decrease
United States	North America	None

- Countries with the highest freedom were in Western Europe, North America, Oceania, Latin America/Caribbean, and one in Asia.
- Most countries showed no change in freedom. A few had very slight decrease.

Life satisfaction

Figure 6
 Percent of countries in which people are satisfied or not satisfied with life, 2005
 Life satisfaction estimated from a set of nine predictors.



Source: The Economist Intelligence Unit.

- People in Sub-Saharan Africa and the CIS are, on average, most dissatisfied*.
- People in Western Europe, North America and Asia are, on average, most satisfied.

*Data for Sub-Saharan Africa is based on 7 countries but these countries have 38% of Africa's population.

Least Satisfied.

Table 9
Least Satisfied

Country	Region	Level of Satisfaction, 2005
Zimbabwe	Sub-Saharan Africa	3.9
Haiti	Latin America and Caribbean	4.0
Tanzania	Sub-Saharan Africa	4.5
Nigeria	Sub-Saharan Africa	4.5
Tajikistan	Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)	4.8
Uzbekistan	CIS	4.8
Russia	CIS	4.8
Botswana	Sub-Saharan Africa	4.8
Kyrgyzstan	CIS	4.8
Turkmenistan	CIS	4.9
Uganda	Sub-Saharan Africa	4.9
Belarus	CIS	4.98

- People in less developed countries, and in the former soviet union, are, on average, dissatisfied.

Most Satisfied.

Table 9
Most Satisfied

Country	Region	Level of Satisfaction, 2005
Ireland	Western Europe	8.3
Switzerland	Western Europe	8.1
Norway	Western Europe	8.1
Luxembourg	Western Europe	8
Sweden	Western Europe	7.9
Australia	Oceania	7.9
Iceland	Western Europe	7.9
Italy	Western Europe	7.8
Denmark	Western Europe	7.8
Spain	Western Europe	7.7
Singapore	Asia	7.7
Finland	Western Europe	7.6
United States	North America	7.6
Canada	North America	7.6
New Zealand	Oceania	7.4
Netherlands	Western Europe	7.4
Japan	Asia	7.4
Hong Kong	Asia	7.3
Portugal	Western Europe	7.3
Austria	Western Europe	7.3
Taiwan	Asia	7.3

- People in most of the developed countries are, on average, more satisfied.

Relationship among quality of life indicators.

In general, many of the quality of life indicators are fairly well related.

Table 10
Correlations among basic indicators

	Infant Mortality Rate	GDP Per Capita	Literacy Rate	Freedom
GDP Per Capita	-0.52			
Literacy Rate	-0.69	0.32		
Freedom	-0.53	0.48	0.2	
Satisfaction	-0.73	0.79	0.3	0.67

Data from International Database, Unesco, Freedom House and Economist

In this table, freedom is reverse scored.

Freedom correlates positively with GDP per capita and literacy rate,
and negatively with infant mortality rate.

Unesco literacy data are only for developing countries.

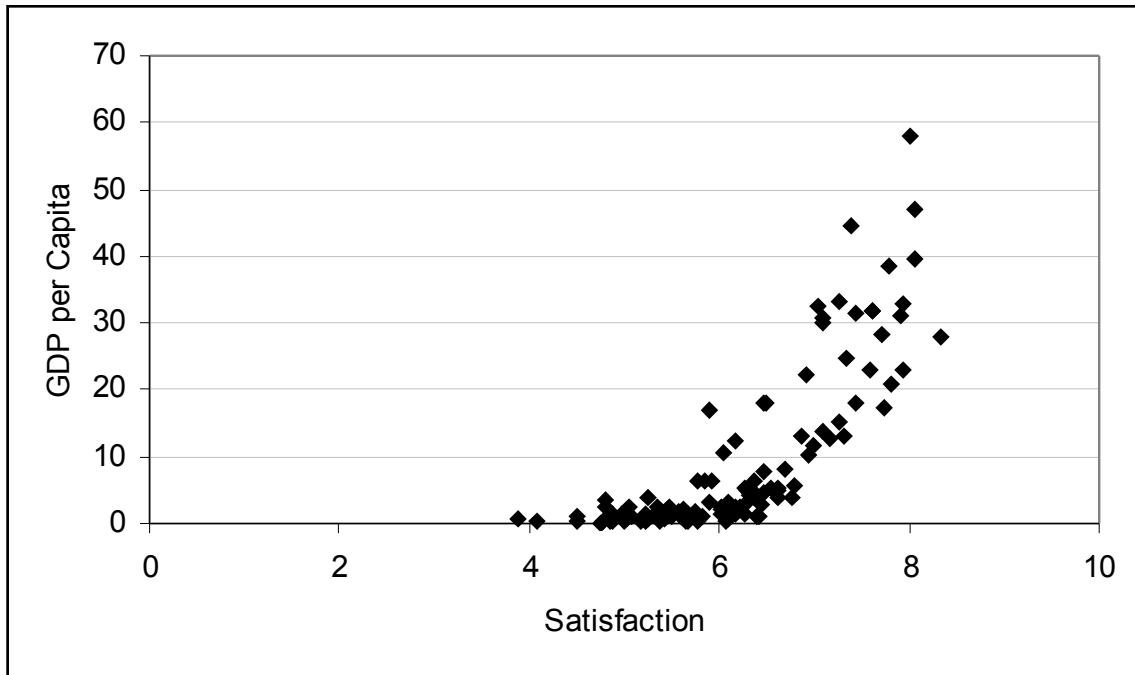
Strong relationships

- Infant mortality rate is strongly related to other quality of life indicators.
- Life satisfaction has a strong relationship to freedom and GDP per capita.

Weak relationships

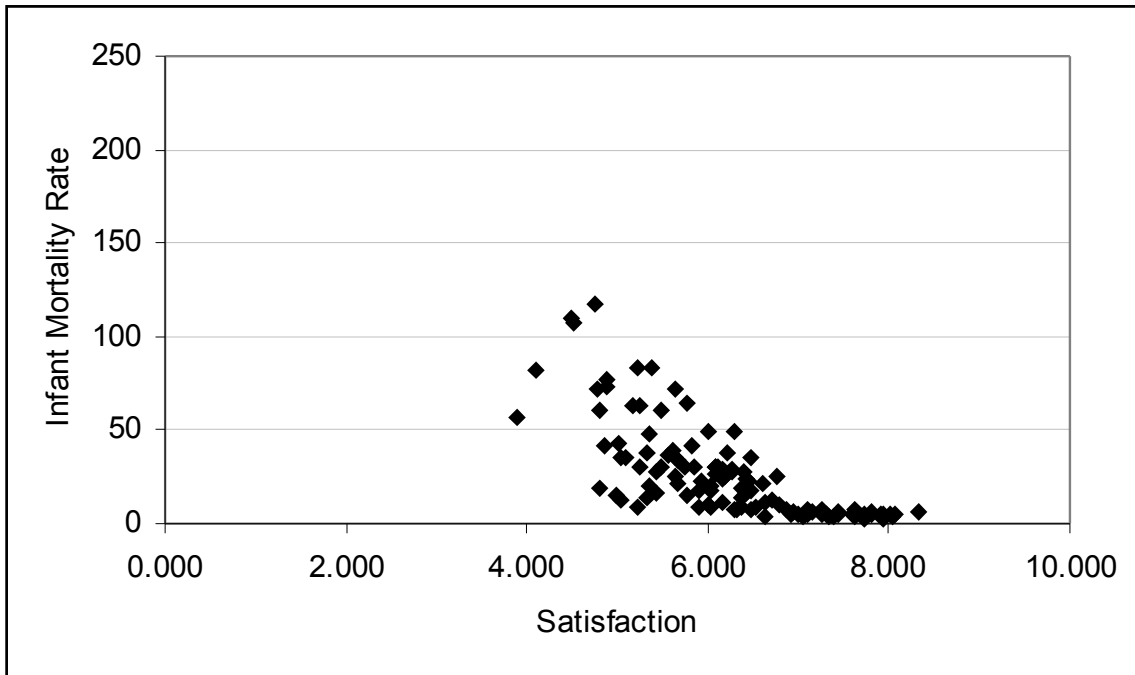
- Among developing countries, literacy rate has low relationship to economic well being, freedom and life satisfaction.

Figure 7
Relationship between GDP per Capita and Life Satisfaction



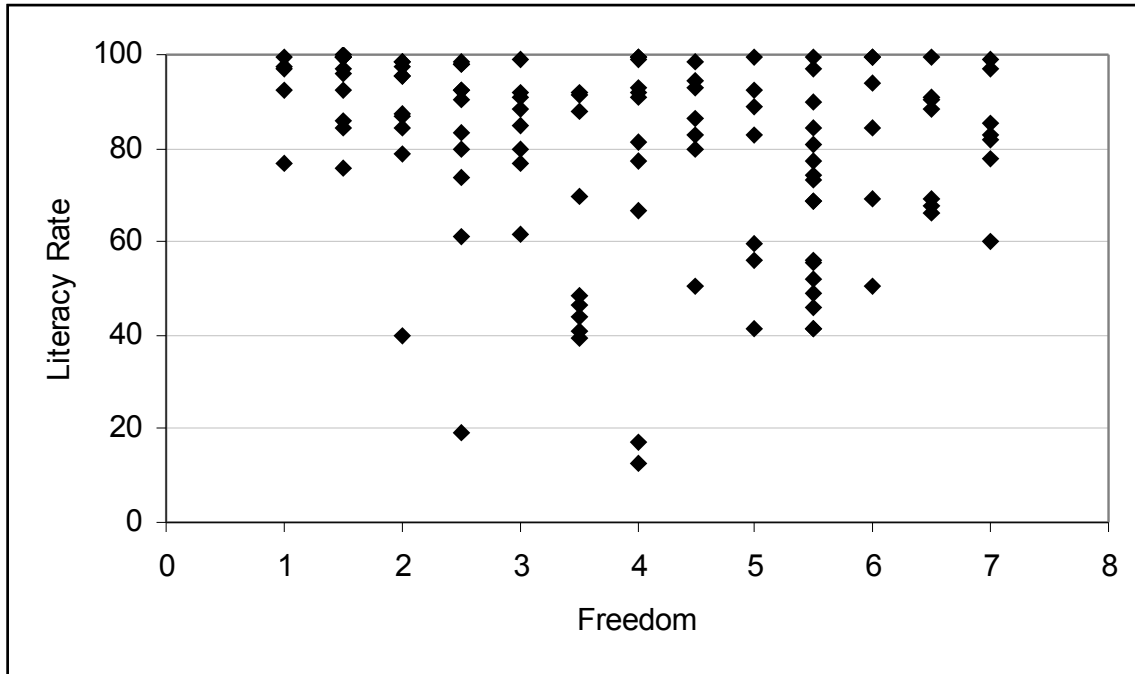
- In general, when economic wellbeing is higher, life satisfaction is also higher.

Figure 8
Relationship between infant mortality rate and life satisfaction



- In general, when infant mortality is lower, life satisfaction is higher.

Figure 9
Relationship between Literacy Rate and Freedom



Among developing countries, there is little relationship between literacy rate and freedom. That is, countries with high literacy rates are no more likely to have more freedom than are countries with low literacy rates.

When World Factbook data are used, which includes developing and developed countries, the relationship does not change. There is still little relationship between literacy rates and freedom.

There is also little relationship between literacy and life satisfaction, and between literacy rates and economic wellbeing.

How to understand this report (and any others like it).

What this report can tell you.

This report can be a good **overview** of or **introduction** to quality of life throughout the world.

This report can be a good **starting point**, to help understand where to look next for more information.

But there are **limitations** to this report and others like it because of:

1. Problems with indicators.
2. Reporting indicators by region or by country.
3. Whether indicators measure quality of life.

These limitations are described in the following pages.

Because there are limitations, the best way to view this report is to look at general patterns, and to look where different indicators tell the same story.

For example:

Most of the indicators in this report show that there has been improvement in quality of life.

Also find out where this report says the same thing as do other reports. (Or where other reports have findings similar to findings of other reports.)

Limitations of indicators: measurement problems.

- Infant mortality rate is infant deaths per 1,000 births.

Problem: In developing countries, infant mortality is often not well reported¹.

- GDP is “a measure of total production of goods and services in an economy”².
GDP per Capita is the GDP divided by the population.

Problem³: GDP per Capita doesn't include underground economy (e.g., illegal activities, not reporting incomes or payments to government, etc.). In some countries, underground activities can be very substantial.

- Literacy is the ability to read and write.

Problem. Literacy in developing countries is often self declared, and often underestimates illiteracy⁴. People may not admit illiteracy.

1 Advisory Committee on Indicators, Indicator name: Infant mortality rate by sex.

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/indicatorfoc/indsearchpage.asp?cid=1&inedit=Go> says “Many developing countries lack reliable registration systems and obtain data on mortality based on indirect estimates. Even where a fairly good registration system is in place, many infants dying during the first weeks of life are not registered as having been born.”

2 Nouriel Roubini and David Backus, Lectures in Macroeconomics, Chapter 1: Monitoring Macroeconomic Performance. <http://pages.stern.nyu.edu/~nroubini/NOTES/CHAP1.HTM>

3 This and other problems are summarized in “Major economic trends” <http://gsociology.icaap.org/report/econ/econsum.html> Shackman G, Liu Y and Wang X. 2005.

4 United Nations Human Development Report, Selected measurement issues. <http://hdr.undp.org/statistics/understanding/measurement.cfm> section on measuring literacy in the 2004 report.

Limitations of indicators: measurement problems.

Different measures of the same thing **may** also show different outcomes.

For example, among developing countries, UNESCO literacy rate is nearly the same as World Fact book literacy rate (correlation = 0.97), and Energy Information Administration (EIA) GDP per Capita is close to the same as World Fact book GDP per Capita (correlation = 0.89).

However, literacy and GDP per capita are more closely related when using the World Fact book indicators than they are when using the UNESCO and EIA indicators.

Table 11
Correlations of literacy rate with GDP per Capita

	Literacy Rate UNESCO	Literacy Rate World Fact book
GDP per Capita (EIA)	0.32	
GDP per Capita World Fact book		0.51

That is, different reports can have different conclusions, because of use of different data.

Limitations of indicators: reporting indicators by region or by country.

Describing quality of life by world “region” is useful as an **overall** indicator. However, any single country may be very different from it's region.

For example, in Asia:

Japan and Hong Kong have **very low** infant mortality rates.

Afghanistan and Bhutan have **very high** infant mortality rates.

So quality of life in a **region** doesn't necessarily show quality of life in a **country** in that region.

Similarly, describing quality of life for a country doesn't necessarily show the quality of life for everyone in the country. Some groups may have better conditions, and some groups may have worse.

Limitations of indicators: whether indicators measure quality of life.

- GDP per Capita doesn't account for change in quality of goods¹. If computers, air conditioners, refrigerators, get better, they are still the same “product”, so GDP per Capita doesn't change, but quality of life is better.
- More problems in a country (e.g., more crime, more disease) leads to more spending to fight those problems, which results in a higher GDP per Capita, but perhaps worse quality of life².
- As shown in this report, in the Commonwealth of Independent States and Eastern Europe, literacy is very high but other indicators show low quality of life. So literacy may not be an indicator of quality of life in those areas.
 - In the Commonwealth of Independent States and Eastern Europe, literacy may be used by the government to **oppose** quality of life (e.g., freedom), for example, by controlling what people read, learn, know³.

1 Doepke, Matthias. Lecture notes for Econ 202 at Chicago (intermediate macroeconomics). "Chapter 2 - NIPA and the Measurement of Inflation" Retrieved from <http://www.econ.ucla.edu/doepke/teaching/resources/index.html> on March 23, 2005

2 Schenk, Robert.2004. Cyber Economics. <http://ingrimayne.saintjoe.edu/econ/> See Limitations of GDP Statistics in Overview: Measuring the Economy section.

3 Suggested by Rudy Rummel, personal communication with Dr. Shackman, December 31, 2005. Dr. Rummel researches Freedom, Democracy, Peace; Power, Democide, and War, at <http://www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/welcome.html>

Appendix

A. Other reports with similar information.

Here we list other reports that show similar trends..

State of the World's Children

at the Unicef Publications page <http://www.unicef.org/publications/>

the statistical tables are here <http://www.unicef.org/sowc05/english/statistics.html>

showing data by country and region.

Table 1. infant mortality rates, 1960 and 2003

Table 5. Adult Literacy Rates, 1990 and 2000, for male and female (but not for total)

Table 6 birth rate, death rate, life expectancy, 1970 and 2003

Table 10 under 5 mortality rates, 1960, 1990 and 2003, and rate of progress.

Beyond Economic Growth <http://www.worldbank.org/depweb/beyond/beyond.htm>

has descriptions of health, economics, education and many other trends.

Our Global Social Change Reports

<http://gsociology.icaap.org/reports.html>

include reports about major world demographic, social, political, economic trends, and also link to reports with similar information.

B. Additional Resources

Measuring First Nations Well-Being: The Human Development Index (HDI) and the Community Well-Being Index (CWB)

<http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/pr/ra/>

Includes a brief review of major indicators and scales.

Measuring quality of life using free and public domain data. Gene Shackman, Ya-Lin Liu and Xun Wang. Autumn, 2005. Social Research Update, <http://www.soc.surrey.ac.uk/sru/> Report number 47.

Includes a brief discussion on measuring quality of life, a bibliography of other reviews and research, and a description of many of the data sets used in this report.

Some of the references used in the SRU paper include

Camfield, Laura. (2005) Researching Quality of Life in Developing Countries. April 2005 Newsletter of the ESRC Research Group on Well being in Developing Countries. Retrieved July 3, 2005 from <http://www.welldev.org.uk/news/newsletter-april-05.htm>

Gasper, Des. (2004) Subjective and Objective Well-Being in Relation to Economic Inputs: Puzzles and Responses. Working paper WeD09, ESRC Research Group on Well being in Developing Countries. Retrieved July 3, 2005 from <http://www.welldev.org.uk/research/working.htm>

Giovannini, Enrico. (2005) Progress measuring progress. Retrieved June 1 2005 from http://www.oecdobserver.org/news/fullstory.php/aid/1515/Progress_measuring_progress.html

McGillivray, Mark. (2004) Towards a Measure of non-Economic National Well-being Achievements. ESRC Research Group on Well being in Developing Countries. Retrieved April 1, 2005 from <http://www.welldev.org.uk/news/hanse-papers.htm>

Sharpe, Andrew and Jeremy Smith. (2005) Measuring the Impact of Research on Well-being. Report number: 2005-02. Centre for the Study of Living Standards. Feb 2005. Retrieved June 20, 2005 from http://www.csls.ca/res_reports.asp

Veenhoven, Ruut. (2004) Subjective Measures of Well-being. Discussion Paper No. 2004/07. from The World Institute for Development Economics Research (WIDER). Retrieved March 20, 2005 from <http://www.wider.unu.edu/publications/publications.htm>

C. Data used in this report.

Data for this report are from **PD-Plus** at <http://gsociology.icaap.org/dataupload.html>

This data file includes descriptions of data and sources. All of the data in PD-Plus are included in the data set by permission. The data used in this report are also described in detail here

<http://gsociology.icaap.org/report/cqual.html>

The data sets used in this report are from:

International Database

<http://www.census.gov/ipc/www/idbnew.html>

Infant mortality rate and population

Energy Information Administration

<http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/international/other.html#IntlGDP>

Gross domestic product per capita

World Factbook

<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/index.html>

Infant Mortality Rate

GDP per capita

Literacy rate

The Freedom House ratings of freedom

<http://www.freedomhouse.org/ratings/index.htm>

Freedom is measured on a one-to-seven scale,

with one representing the highest degree of freedom and seven the lowest.

UNESCO literacy rates

Adult literacy rates, 1980 to 1995

http://www.uis.unesco.org/statsen/statistics/indicators/i_pages/IndLit.asp

Adult literacy rate, 1990, 2000-2004

EFA Global Monitoring Report, 2005

http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=35939&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

See <http://gsociology.icaap.org/report/cqual.html> for details on calculating data by region.

Econqual = The Economist Intelligence Unit's quality-of-life Index

http://www.economist.com/media/pdf/QUALITY_OF_LIFE.pdf

This level of life satisfaction is estimated by a set of nine predictors including GDP per person, life expectancy, political freedom, job security, political stability and others. The weights for each predictor was determined by regression analysis of the relationship between those factors and data from a 1999/2000 life satisfaction survey.