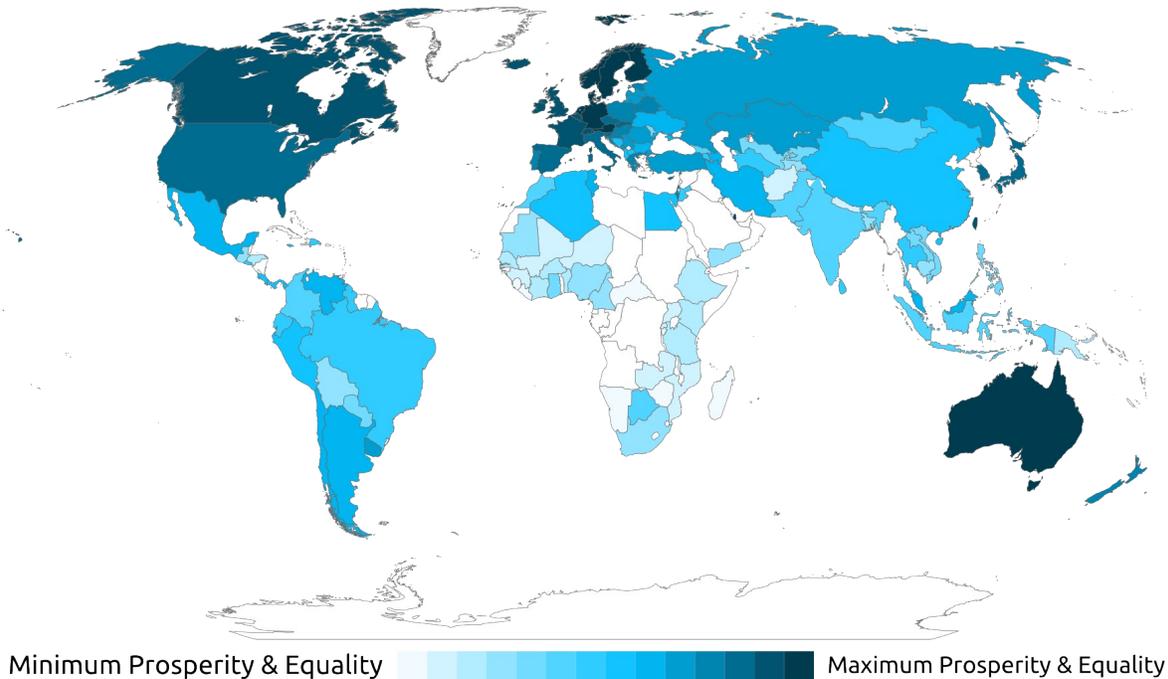


Economic Prosperity & Social Equality

Countries Colored by Prosperity & Equality



Prosperity

The [gross domestic product](#) (GDP) refers to the market value of all final goods and services produced within a country in a given period. Thus, it is a measure of **national economic activity**.

However, GDP does not account for differing sizes of nations, but the GDP per capita does: GDP can be stated as GDP per capita dividing it by the resident population on a given date.

GDP and GDP per capita are not a very good measurement of the standard of living or personal income in an economy because not all citizens benefit from their country's increased economic production. As a matter of fact, although living standards tend to move with per-capita GDP, it may increase while real incomes for the majority decline.

Equality

The [Gini index](#) is a measure of the inequality of distribution which is commonly used as a measure of **inequality of income** or wealth.

A value of 0 expresses total equality and a value of 100 maximal inequality. Worldwide, Gini index for income range from approximately 23 (Sweden) to 70 (Namibia) for the assessed countries.

Nonetheless, the Gini index provides no information about the absolute national and personal incomes. For instance, basic necessities may be available to all in a rich country, while in a poor country, even basic necessities are unequally available.

In addition, the Gini index is limited in the sense that it does not study the causes of income inequality.

Consequences

Thus, combining the GDP per capita and the Gini index we can get a sense of both the economic activity and the social equality of a country, as we can see in the previous world map and the following table.

Explaining **why it is important** to live in a country with a high GDP per capita is rather straightforward in advanced societies: the richer your country is the more likely you are to earn a good salary, which in turn should enable you to have things you think you like.

However, although often underestimated, it is equally important to comprehend the transcendence of the Gini index.

[Income equality](#) is directly linked to social cohesion, and it's been proven that in more equal societies, people are much more likely to trust each other, which in turn provides greater community involvement, and lower homicide rates. As a matter of fact, most of the countries on the first half of the next table not only are the ones with the most prosperity and equality, they are also among the most **secure countries** in the world. Furthermore, studies have linked the health level of a country to its income equality.

Finally, countries with good economic equality provide services such as **retirement, health care, and education**, which can be fostered by the government. While in countries without such public or semi-private services, those on lower incomes are excluded or have to take on debt, further increasing their economic instability.

Top Countries by Wellness Index

Country	GDP Per Capita (\$)	Gini Index	Wellness Index *
Luxembourg	84700	26	0.380
Qatar	102700	41	0.305
Norway	53300	25	0.244
Sweden	40600	23	0.194
Austria	41700	26	0.187
Netherlands	42300	31	0.169
Finland	38300	27	0.169
Denmark	40200	29	0.168
Germany	37900	27	0.166
Australia	40800	31	0.164
Ireland	39500	29	0.164
Iceland	38000	28	0.163
Switzerland	43400	34	0.161
Belgium	37600	28	0.161
Canada	40300	32	0.156
Taiwan	37900	33	0.145
Singapore	59900	48	0.138
France	35000	33	0.133
U K	35900	34	0.132
South Korea	31700	31	0.126
U S	48100	45	0.124
Slovenia	29100	28	0.123
Cyprus	29100	29	0.122
Spain	30600	32	0.119
Italy	30100	32	0.117

* norm(GDP Per Capita) x norm(100-Gini Index)

Data sources

[CIA's World Factbook GDP per capita](#)

[CIA's World Factbook GDP Gini Index](#)