A photograph of a woman and two children sitting in front of a mud-brick house. The house has a white tarp roof and a dark doorway. The woman is wearing a colorful patterned dress and a headscarf, and is holding a baby. The child next to her is wearing a green tank top and a white skirt. The background shows a field of tall grass under a clear sky.

2018

Global Emotions

GALLUP®

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Mohamed S. Younis
Gallup Managing Editor

Letter From Gallup's Managing Editor

For more than a decade, Gallup has been asking people worldwide about their lives, their work and how they are feeling — which is the main focus of this *2018 Global Emotions Report* that you are about to read.

We ask and report on questions like these because at best, classic metrics and logistic models can only serve as proxies or estimate how people are truly living their lives, but in reality, people themselves are the only true experts on this topic. This is true for people in every community and whether they are rich or poor, young or old, highly educated or illiterate.

This research is important because, despite the particular political system of any given country, leaders cannot effectively lead their societies, seek better opportunities for their citizens and ensure that future generations will live better lives than previous ones without closely tracking how citizens evaluate their lives and understanding the local realities they face.

On a global level, the world's emotions took a negative turn in 2017. In fact, the score of 30 on the Negative Experience Index is the highest Gallup has ever recorded. Collectively, the world is more stressed, worried, sad and in pain today than we've ever seen it.

Regardless of where a country may fall on the Positive or Negative Experience Indexes or where it ranks in terms of specific positive or negative experiences, all leaders need to be monitoring the emotional temperature of the people they lead.

Our research over the years has taught us that tracking how people are experiencing their lives is arguably more important than what their overall score is in one single year. Although developments on a national and global level tend to dominate news headlines, capturing the trends of hope — or despair — at the individual level provides the most valuable intelligence.

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Younis'.

Mohamed S. Younis
Gallup Managing Editor

Global State of Emotions

Gallup's Positive and Negative Experience Indexes measure life's intangibles — feelings and emotions — that traditional economic indicators such as GDP were never intended to capture. Each index provides a real-time snapshot of people's daily experiences, offering leaders insights into the health of their societies that they cannot gather from economic measures alone.

The *2018 Global Emotions Report* presents the results from Gallup's latest measurements of people's positive and negative daily experiences based on more than 154,000 interviews with adults in more than 145 countries in 2017.

Positive Experience Index Questions

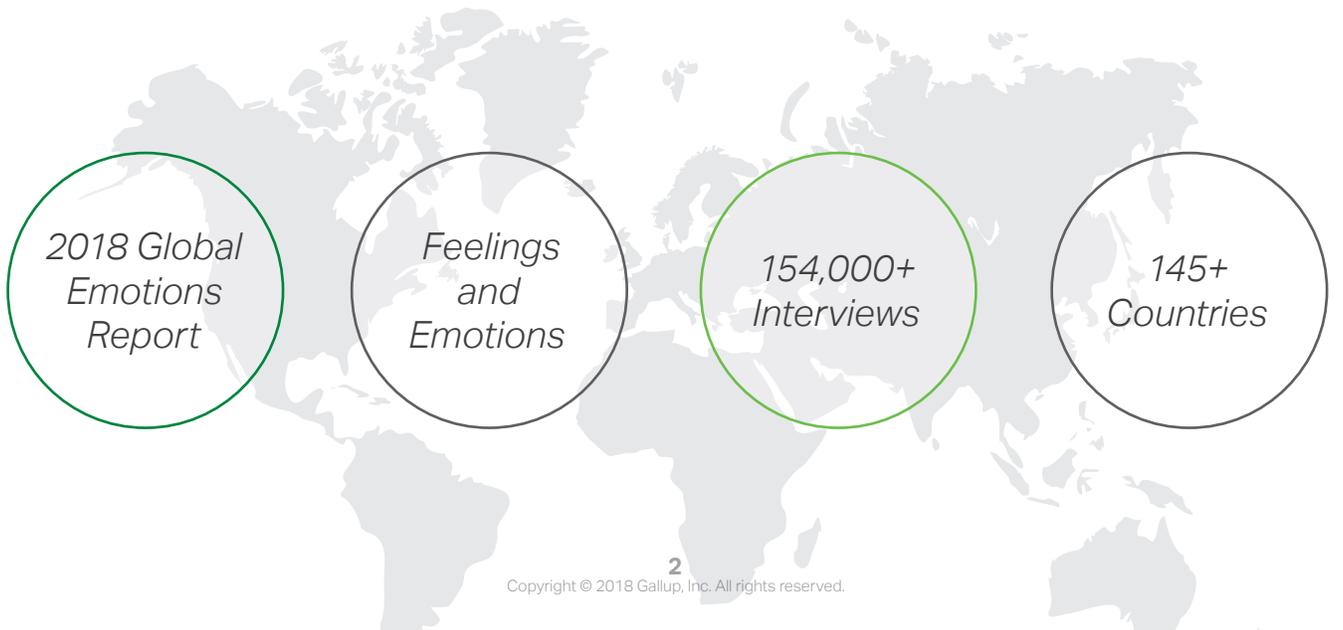
- *Did you feel well-rested yesterday?*
- *Were you treated with respect all day yesterday?*
- *Did you smile or laugh a lot yesterday?*
- *Did you learn or do something interesting yesterday?*
- *Did you experience the following feelings during a lot of the day yesterday? How about enjoyment?*

The Positive Experience Index score is the mean of all valid affirmative responses to these items multiplied by 100. Country-level index scores range from zero to 100. Higher scores mean that positive emotions are more pervasive in a country. These scores strongly relate to people's perceptions about their living standards, personal freedoms and the presence of social networks.

Negative Experience Index Questions

- *Did you experience the following feelings during a lot of the day yesterday? How about physical pain?*
- *Did you experience the following feelings during a lot of the day yesterday? How about worry?*
- *Did you experience the following feelings during a lot of the day yesterday? How about sadness?*
- *Did you experience the following feelings during a lot of the day yesterday? How about stress?*
- *Did you experience the following feelings during a lot of the day yesterday? How about anger?*

The Negative Experience Index score is the mean of all valid affirmative responses to these items multiplied by 100. Country-level index scores range from zero to 100. The higher the score, the more pervasive negative emotions are in a country. People's experiences with health problems and their ability to afford food are predictive of higher negative scores.



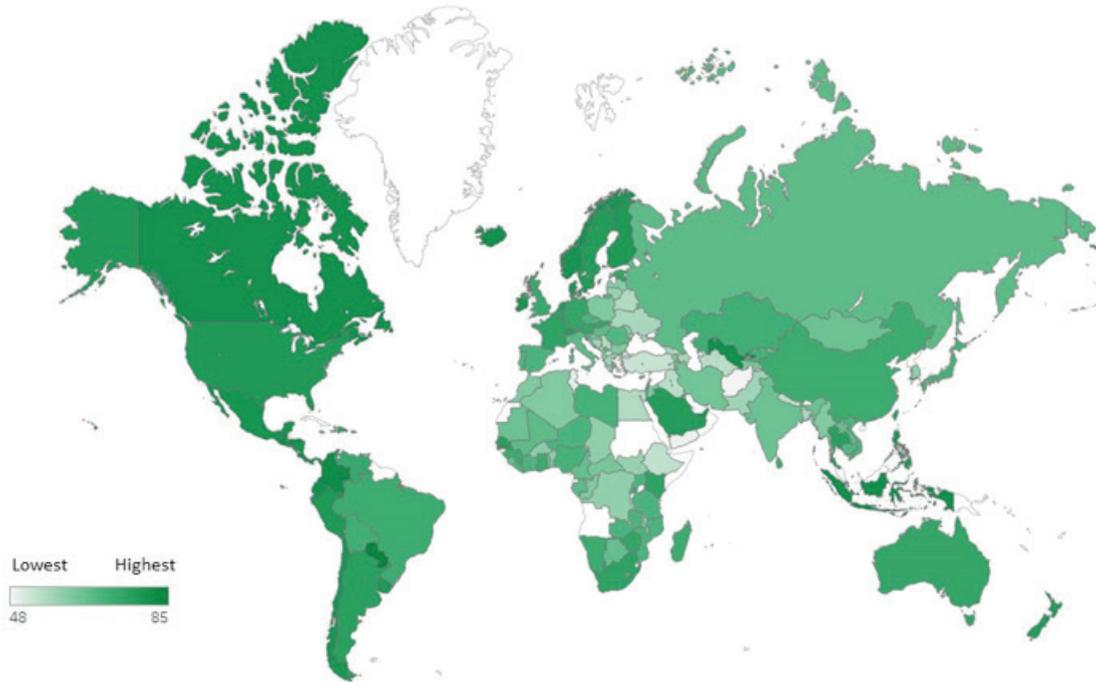
*2018 Global
Emotions
Report*

*Feelings
and
Emotions*

*154,000+
Interviews*

*145+
Countries*

Positive Experience Index Worldwide 2017

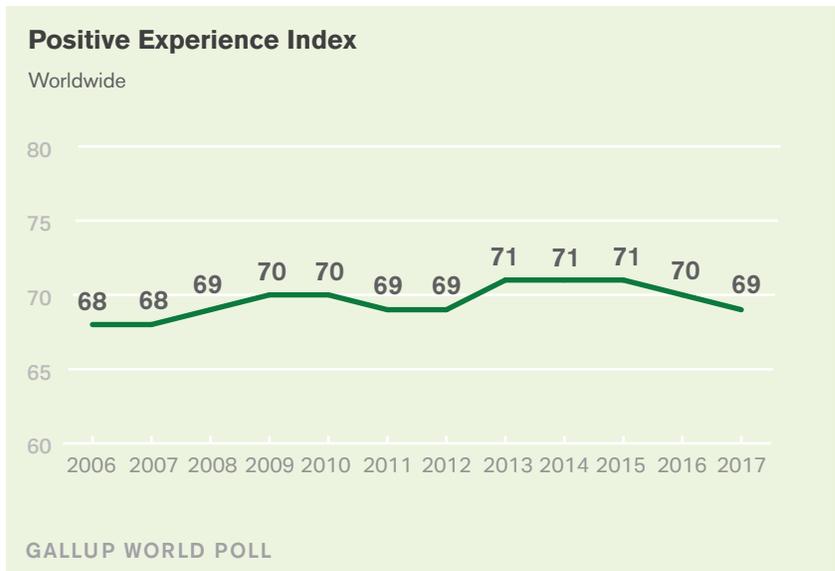


Positive Experience Index Edges Down in 2017

Gallup asked adults in 147 countries in 2017 if they had five positive experiences on the day before the survey. At least 70% of people worldwide said they experienced a lot of enjoyment, smiled or laughed a lot, felt well-rested, and felt treated with respect. People were far less likely, as is typically the case, to say they learned or did something interesting the day before the interview — but in 2017, less than half of the world (46%) experienced this.

Gallup compiles the “yes” responses from these five questions into a Positive Experience Index score for each country. The index score for the world in 2017 is not out of line for scores in the past decade, but it edged downward for the second consecutive year to 69.

Scores worldwide ranged from a high of 85 in Paraguay to a low of 48 in Afghanistan. Paraguay also led the world in 2015 and 2016. Afghanistan took war-torn Yemen’s spot at the very bottom of the list in 2017, because Afghanistan’s score dropped a full 10 points from 58 in 2016. Yemen was second to last with a score of 49 — which is two points lower than the country’s score of 51 the previous year.



Latin American Countries Still Lead in Positive Experiences

As they do year after year, Latin American countries dominate the list of countries in 2017 where adults are reporting a lot of positive emotions each day. The only countries outside this region that top this list are Canada, Iceland, Indonesia and Uzbekistan.

The high percentages reporting positive emotions in Latin America at least partly reflects the cultural tendency in the region to focus on life's positives. The single variable that Gallup finds predicts results on both the Positive and Negative Experience Indexes is country of origin, suggesting some cultural bias exists in how people answer these questions.

Countries in Conflict Post Some of the Lowest Positive Index Scores

Nearly all of the countries with the worst scores on the Positive Experience Index are experiencing some type of ongoing internal or external conflict.

In 2017, war-torn Afghanistan and Yemen posted the lowest scores in the world — and the lowest scores for those two countries in the past decade.

Afghanistan's appearance at the bottom of the list is evidence of the deteriorating conditions in 2017 in the country, which suffered its deadliest bombing attack in recent years.

In Yemen, which the United Nations recently called "the world's worst humanitarian crisis," the security situation was so dangerous that more than 50% of the interview population was either substituted or excluded.

Highest Positive Experiences Worldwide

	Positive Experience Index
Paraguay	85
Colombia	82
El Salvador	82
Guatemala	82
Canada	81
Costa Rica	81
Ecuador	81
Honduras	81
Iceland	81
Indonesia	81
Panama	81
Uzbekistan	81

Based on Gallup World Polls, 2017

Lowest Positive Experiences Worldwide

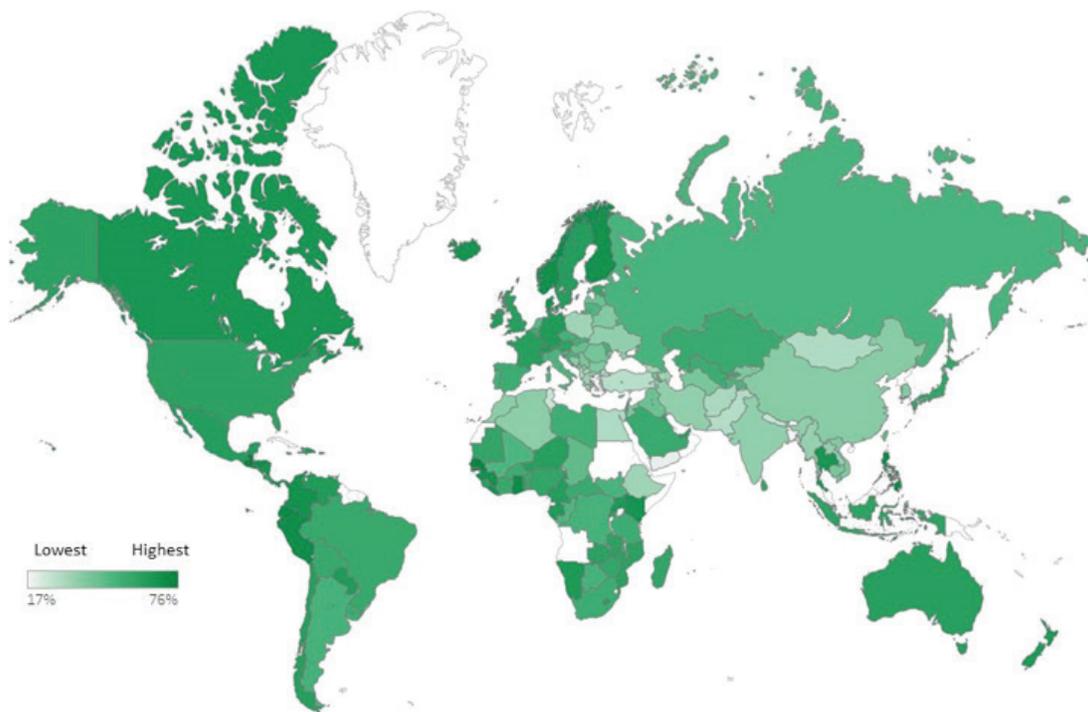
	Positive Experience Index
Belarus	56
Egypt	56
Montenegro	56
Serbia	56
Iraq	55
Macedonia	55
Turkmenistan	55
Ethiopia	54
Nepal	54
Turkey	53
Tunisia	50
Yemen	49
Afghanistan	48

Based on Gallup World Polls, 2017

Less Than Half of Adults Learned or Did Something Interesting

Solid majorities reported experiencing four of the five items that make up the Positive Experience Index, but less than half of people worldwide (46%) say they learned or did something interesting the day before the interview in 2017. While this percentage is lower than it has been in the past several years, it is not the lowest on record. In 2007 and 2011, the figure dropped to as low as 43%.

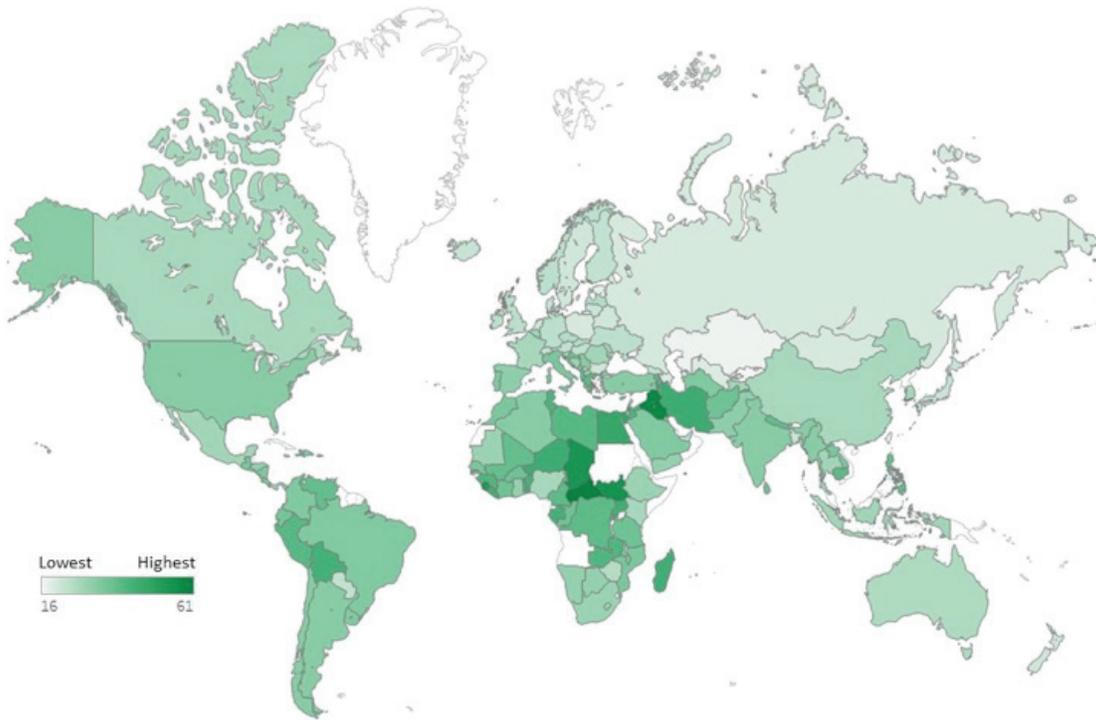
Learned Something Interesting the Previous Day in 2017



Percentages worldwide range from as low as 17% in Bangladesh — the lowest in the world for the second consecutive year — to as high as 76% in Guatemala.

46% OF PEOPLE WORLDWIDE say they learned or did something interesting the day before the interview in 2017.

Negative Experience Index Worldwide in 2017

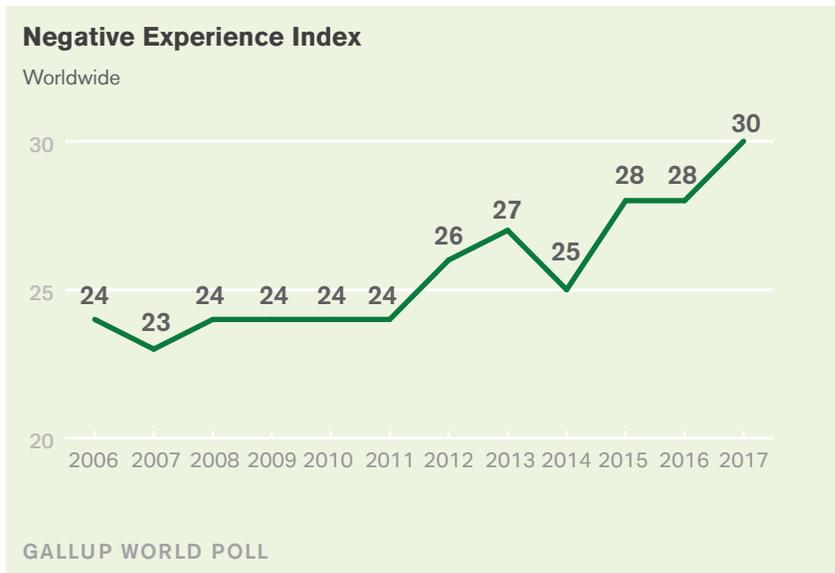


Globally, Negative Experience Index Reaches New High in 2017

Gallup asked adults in 146 countries in 2017 if they had five different negative experiences on the day before the survey. More than one in three people said they experienced a lot of worry (38%) or stress (37%), and three in 10 experienced a lot of physical pain (31%). At least one in five experienced sadness (23%) or anger (20%). Overall worry and stress levels increased two percentage points from the previous year, while sadness and physical pain were each up one point. Experiences of anger remained unchanged. Scores worldwide ranged from a high of 61 in Central African Republic to a low of 16 in Kyrgyzstan and Taiwan.

Gallup compiles the “yes” responses from these five questions into a Negative Experience Index score for each country. The higher percentages on most of the index items pushed the overall score to a new high of 30 in 2017.

Scores worldwide ranged from a high of 61 in Central African Republic to a low of 16 in Kyrgyzstan and Taiwan.



Central African Republic Replaces Iraq as Most Negative Country in the World

Renewed fighting between armed groups in Central African Republic (CAR) forced tens of thousands from their homes in 2017, and the insecurity prevented Gallup from interviewing people in a number of prefectures — representing about 40% of the population. The Negative Experience Index of 61 in CAR shows the remaining population in crisis. This score was not only the highest in the world in 2017, but also the highest Gallup has recorded for any country in the past decade.

Negative experiences spiked in 2017 in CAR, with 76% of residents experiencing physical pain and nearly as many (74%) reporting that they worried a lot the previous day — both percentages are the highest on record for any country in the past decade.

Scores like these in CAR vaulted the country ahead of Iraq, which up until 2017 had the highest Negative Experience Index scores for four years in a row. With a score of 59, Iraq continued its streak of being among the top five most negative countries in all years since 2008. The next-highest country on the list is South Sudan, where the score stayed at 55 amid its civil war. Insecurity kept Gallup from interviewing in areas that represented about 44% of the population.

As in past years, people in most of the countries with the highest negative scores in 2017 were contending with some type of turmoil, and many at the top of the list last year have been there for several years. Egypt, Palestinian Territories, Madagascar and Niger were the only countries or areas on the list in 2017 that were not on the list the previous year.

Highest Negative Experiences Worldwide

	Negative Experience Index
Central African Republic	61
Iraq	59
South Sudan	55
Chad	54
Sierra Leone	52
Egypt	47
Iran	45
Niger	45
Palestinian Territories	45
Liberia	44
Madagascar	44
Uganda	44

Based on Gallup World Polls, 2017



Mix of Countries at Bottom of the Negative Experience List

Countries with the lowest negative scores do not necessarily have the highest positive scores. Many of the countries with the lowest scores on the Negative Experience Index in 2017 also appeared on the list in 2016 and 2015. This list includes Russia and several of its former republics and countries within its sphere of influence.

It is worth noting again that country of origin is related to results on this index, suggesting cultural bias exists in how people answer these questions.

Lowest Negative Experiences Worldwide

	Negative Experience Index
Belarus	21
Bulgaria	21
Mauritius	21
Netherlands	21
New Zealand	21
Sweden	21
Mongolia	20
Poland	20
Russia	20
Azerbaijan	19
Uzbekistan	19
Estonia	18
Kazakhstan	17
Kyrgyzstan	16
Taiwan	16

Based on Gallup World Polls, 2017



Mongolia



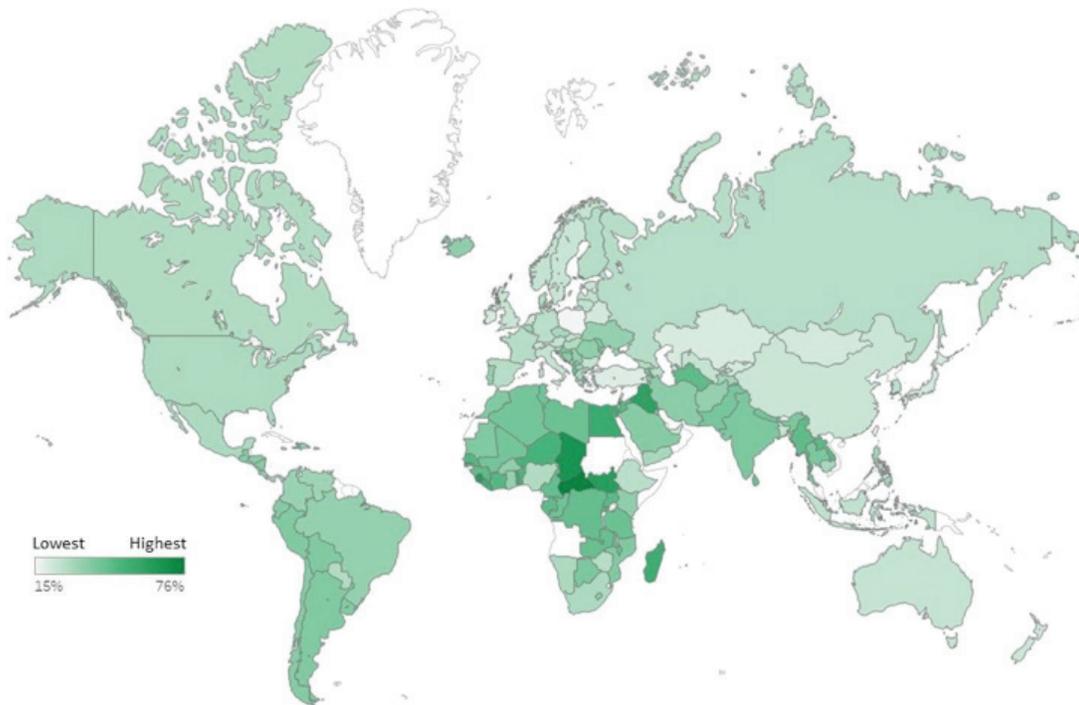
Mauritius

Three in Four in Central African Republic Experienced Pain the Previous Day

The Negative Experience Index score in Central African Republic is largely attributable to the extremely high — often record-breaking — percentages of people who experienced each of these negative emotions or experiences. About three in four CAR residents said they experienced physical pain (76%) and felt worried (74%) during much of the previous day — both record highs for any country in the past decade. A majority (60%) also said they felt sadness, which essentially ties with Iraq for the record high.

CAR was one of 11 countries where the majority of the population was in a lot of physical pain the previous day. With the exception of Egypt and Iraq, nearly all of these countries are in sub-Saharan Africa.

Experienced Pain a Lot the Previous Day in 2017



Nearly half of CAR residents also said they felt stressed (48%) and angry (45%). Only Iraqis were more likely than CAR residents to say they felt angry the previous day, with 50% of their population feeling this way. CAR residents, however, by far were not the most stressed population. In fact, the 48% who said they felt stressed was about the same as in the United States (49%). Greeks, for the second consecutive year, were the most stressed population in the world, with 66% saying they experienced a lot of stress the day before the survey.

Negative Experiences Rise Across Sub-Saharan Africa

The Negative Experience Index has trended upward in several global regions over the past decade, but nowhere more so than in sub-Saharan Africa. From a low point of 20 in 2010, the index reached a new high point of 34 in 2017, second only to the Middle East/North Africa region (40).

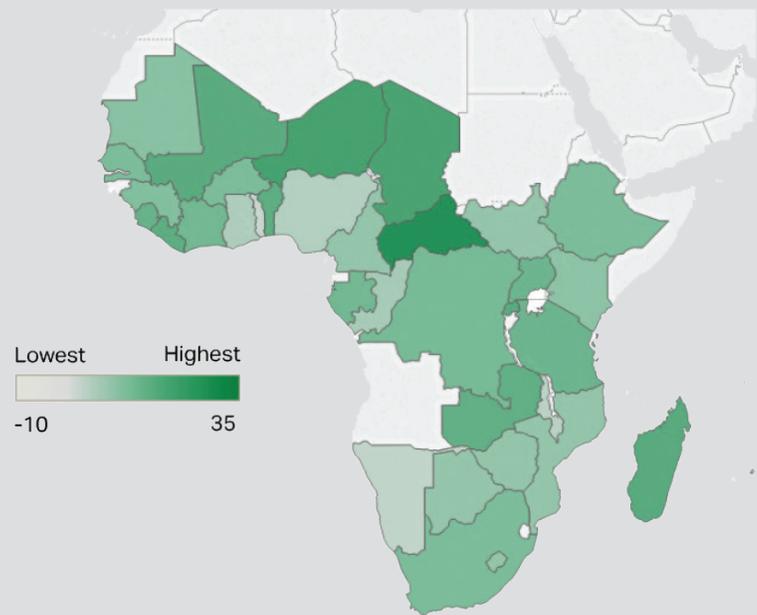
In 2017, the Negative Experience Index was at a 10-year high point in 24 out of 35 countries surveyed in sub-Saharan Africa. In 28 countries, the trend has risen by more than 10 percentage points since 2010 or the closest year for which data are available. In only one country in the region — the small island nation of Mauritius — has the index score fallen during that time.

Given that sub-Saharan Africa is such a large and heterogeneous region, no single explanation is sufficient to explain the rise in negative experiences. However, among many of the countries in which the index has risen the most, long-term conflict and instability have created growing healthcare crises.

The bulk of the countries worldwide with the highest Negative Experience Index scores in 2017 are in sub-Saharan Africa, including Central African Republic, South Sudan, Chad, Sierra Leone, Niger and Liberia. In each of these countries, a majority of residents say they experienced physical pain for much of the previous day; similar proportions say they experienced worry for much of the day. Not coincidentally, this list includes four of the countries in which residents are most likely to say they have health problems that prevent them from doing things people their age can normally do.

CAR has been plagued by sectarian violence since 2013, with clashes between armed groups surging in 2017. The conflict has destroyed many healthcare facilities in CAR and caused medical workers to flee, leaving many residents without basic care and allowing preventable diseases like malaria to spread unchecked. Many roads are unusable, and aid workers are often forced to negotiate with militia groups to get access to displaced people living in camps. In 2015, the United Nations said the situation in CAR was at risk of becoming “the largest forgotten humanitarian crisis of our time.” In 2017, a record-high and world-high 76% of people interviewed in CAR said they had experienced physical pain the previous day.

**Change in Negative Experience Index Since 2010
(or closest year for which data are available)**



However, deficient healthcare systems in several other countries of the Sahel and north-central African region have been increasingly unable to meet the challenges posed by disease and malnutrition. Chronic poverty, arid climates and a reliance on agriculture make the region's residents particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change. Severe droughts leading to water shortages cripple the livelihoods of millions of farmers.

As in CAR, violence and instability have incapacitated healthcare services, particularly in Niger and Chad where the struggle against Islamist militants Boko Haram has displaced many residents. Further, most of the countries with high Negative Experience Index scores are landlocked, which raises the costs of international trade and complicates efforts to provide aid in regions with poor transportation infrastructure.



Central African Republic



Central African Republic

The Most Emotional and Least Emotional Countries

Averaging the “yes” responses to the 10 questions that make up the Positive and Negative Experience Indexes provides a picture of the most and least emotional societies worldwide.

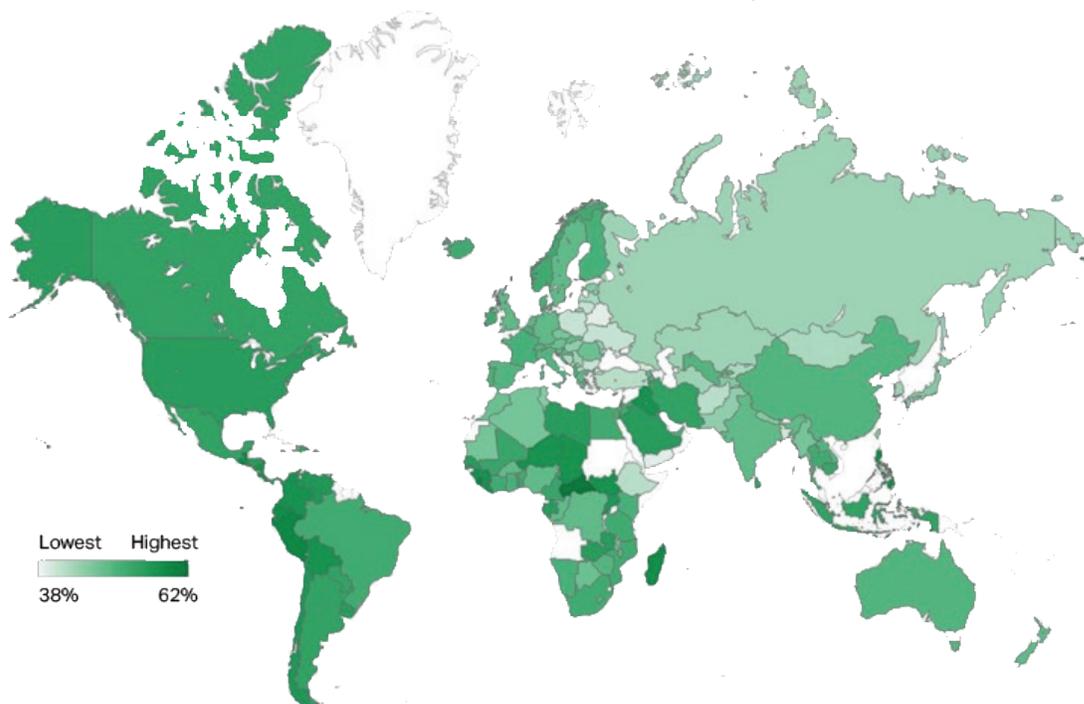
Central African Republic, Peru and Sierra Leone top the list of the most emotional countries in 2017. On average, nearly six in 10 residents in each reported experiencing positive or negative emotions the previous day. A mix of countries and regions make up the other end of the spectrum. In Yemen, Belarus and Azerbaijan, fewer than four in 10 residents reported experiencing any of these feelings.

Percentages range from a high of 62% in Central African Republic to a low of 38% in Azerbaijan.

Average of “yes” responses to all questions

	% Total Emotions
Central African Republic	62
Peru	59
Sierra Leone	59
Guatemala	58
Philippines	58
Madagascar	58
Ecuador	58
Iraq	57
Colombia	57
South Sudan	57
Chad	57
Bolivia	57
Nicaragua	57
Niger	57
Costa Rica	57
Guinea	57
Liberia	57
Rwanda	57

Total Emotions Worldwide in 2017



Based on Gallup World Polls, 2017

Methodology

Results for surveys in 2017 are based on telephone and face-to-face interviews with approximately 1,000 adults, aged 15 and older, conducted throughout the year in 147 countries and areas for the Positive Experience Index and 146 countries for the Negative Experience Index. For results based on the total sample of national adults, the margin of sampling error ranged from ± 2.1 percentage points to ± 5.3 percentage points at the 95% confidence level. All reported margins of sampling error include computed design effects for weighting.

For more complete methodology and specific survey dates, please review [Gallup's Country Data Set details](#).



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