

Happy Planet Index (HPI)

Introduction

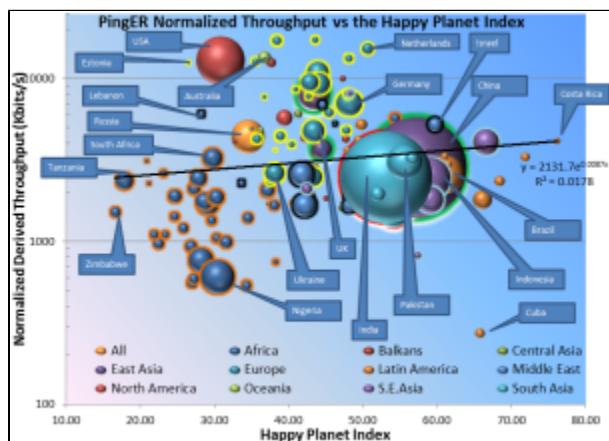
Zafar pointed us to an interesting TED talk on the [HPI](#) that gives an alternative take on measuring the progress of countries.

The Happy Planet Index (HPI) is an index of human well-being and environmental impact that was introduced by the New Economics Foundation (NEF) in July 2006. The index is designed to challenge well-established indices of countries' development, such as Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and the Human Development Index (HDI), which are seen as not taking sustainability into account. In particular, GDP is seen as inappropriate, as the usual ultimate aim of most people is not to be rich, but to be happy and healthy. Furthermore, it is believed that the notion of sustainable development requires a measure of the environmental costs of pursuing those goals.

From [Wikipedia](#)

Result

We [downloaded the HPI data from the web](#) and compared it with the PingER Normalized Derived Throughput for 2011. The result is seen below in the bubble plot with the bubble size being by country, and the bubble color identifying the region. To assist in distinguishing regions: European Countries are surrounded in yellow, East Asian countries are surrounded by green, and South Asian by red. The [spread sheet is found here](#). The correlation with Internet performance is not strong. This is probably since the countries with the best Internet performance tend to the more developed ones that also consume the most resources.



The ideal is to have high throughput and a high HPI (i.e. people live a long healthy life and the impact on the planet's resources are minimal). Thus the closer to the top right (shaded blue) the better. It is seen that Costa Rica has the highest HPI. In general Latin American countries fare better when measured by the HPI. African countries (blue with orange surround) tend to be the worst off (i.e. in the pink regions) in throughput, happiness and offending the planet. The best developed country in terms of HPI is the Netherlands. A big offender in terms of HPI appears to be the USA with Russia and the Ukraine not far behind.. On the other hand big producers like Germany and China have better HPI values.