

**QUALITY-OF-LIFE**  
**in**  
**COMPETITIVE SOCIETY**

Ruut Veenhoven  
Erasmus University Rotterdam, Netherlands

presentation at  
**Europe-Asia Young Leaders Forum**  
Nice, June 2-5, 2005

# Quality-of-life in competitive society

- Views on effect of competition on QOL
- Quality of life
  - Concept
  - Measurement
- Observed relation with competitiveness

# **Views on effects competition on QOL**

# Views on effects competition on QOL

## **Negative**

- Rat race
- More losers than winners
- Poor family life
- Damage to health
- Moral decline
- Environmental degradation

# Views on effects of competition on QOL

## **Positive**

- Creation of wealth
- Social progress
- Best men on best place
- Challenge
- Chances

# Quality of life

# Four qualities of life

	<i>external</i>	<i>internal</i>
<i>chances</i>		
<i>outcomes</i>		

# Four qualities of life

	<i>external</i>	<i>internal</i>
<i>chances</i>	<b>Livability</b>	<b>Life-ability</b>
<i>outcomes</i>	<b>Utility</b>	<b><u>Satisfaction</u></b>

# Four kinds of satisfaction

	<i>Passing</i>	<i>Enduring</i>
<i>Part</i>		
<i>Whole</i>		

# Four kinds of satisfaction

	<i>Passing</i>	<i>Enduring</i>
<i>Part</i>	<b>Pleasure</b>	<b>Domain satisfaction</b>
<i>Whole</i>	<b>Top experience</b>	<b><u>Happiness</u></b> (life-satisfaction)

# Measurement of happiness

# Measurement of happiness

## **Best practice in direct questioning**

- global self estimate
  - single question for large scale surveys
  - multiple questions
- multi-moment average for small scale follow-up

Measurement of happiness

## **Example of a survey question**

**Taking all together, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your life as a whole these days?**

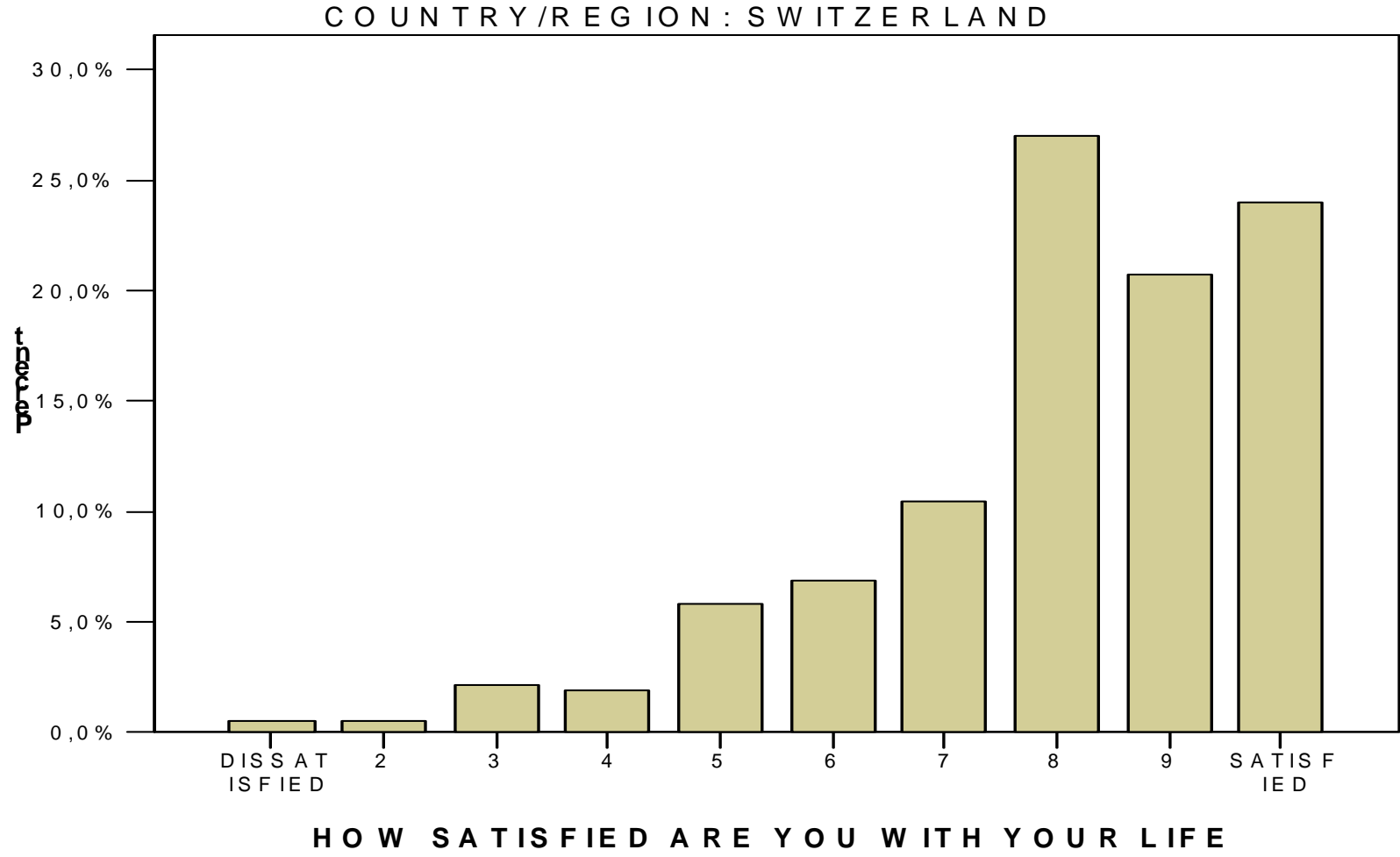
**1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10**

**Dissatisfied**

**Satisfied**

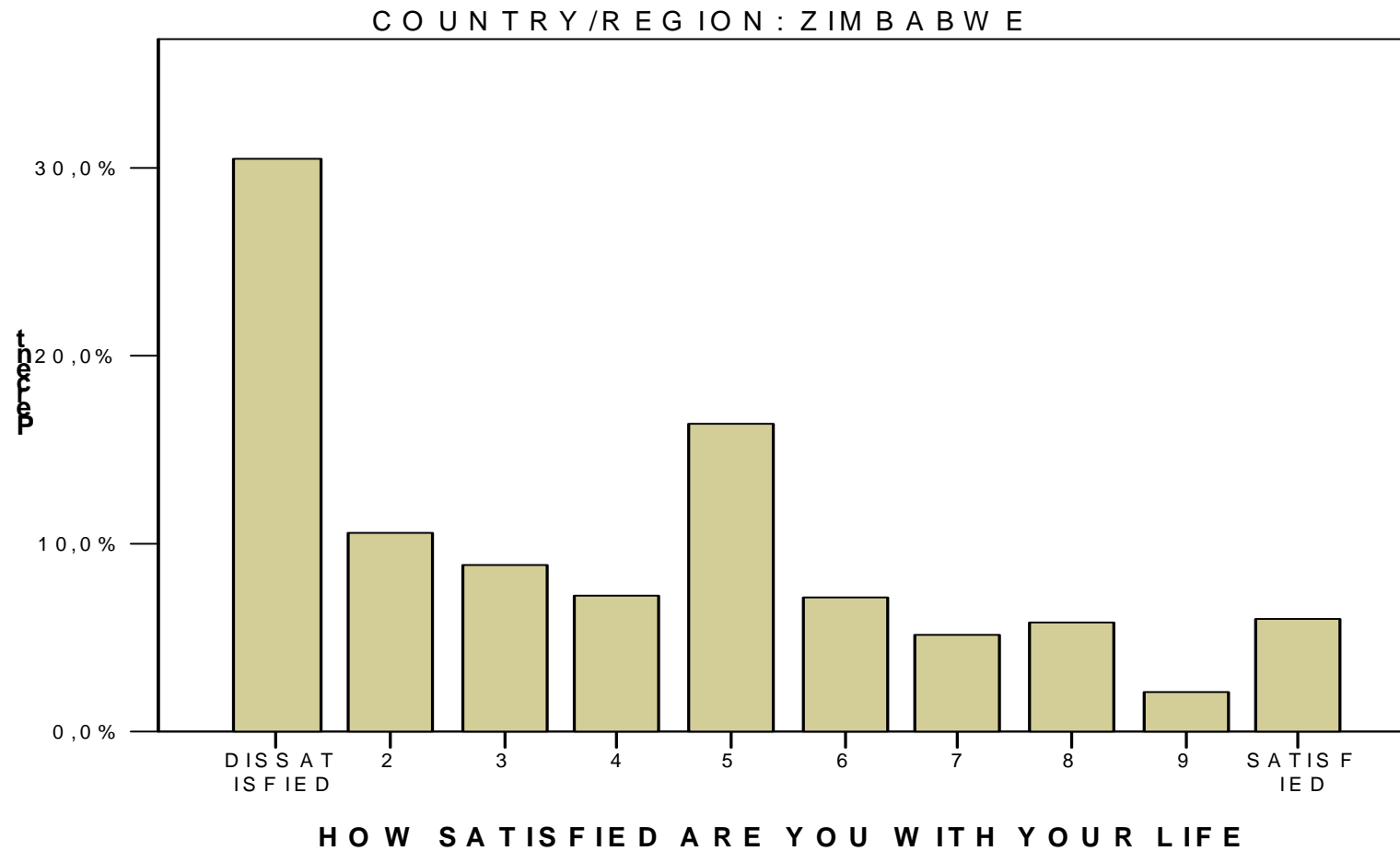
# Measurement of happiness

## Switzerland 2000

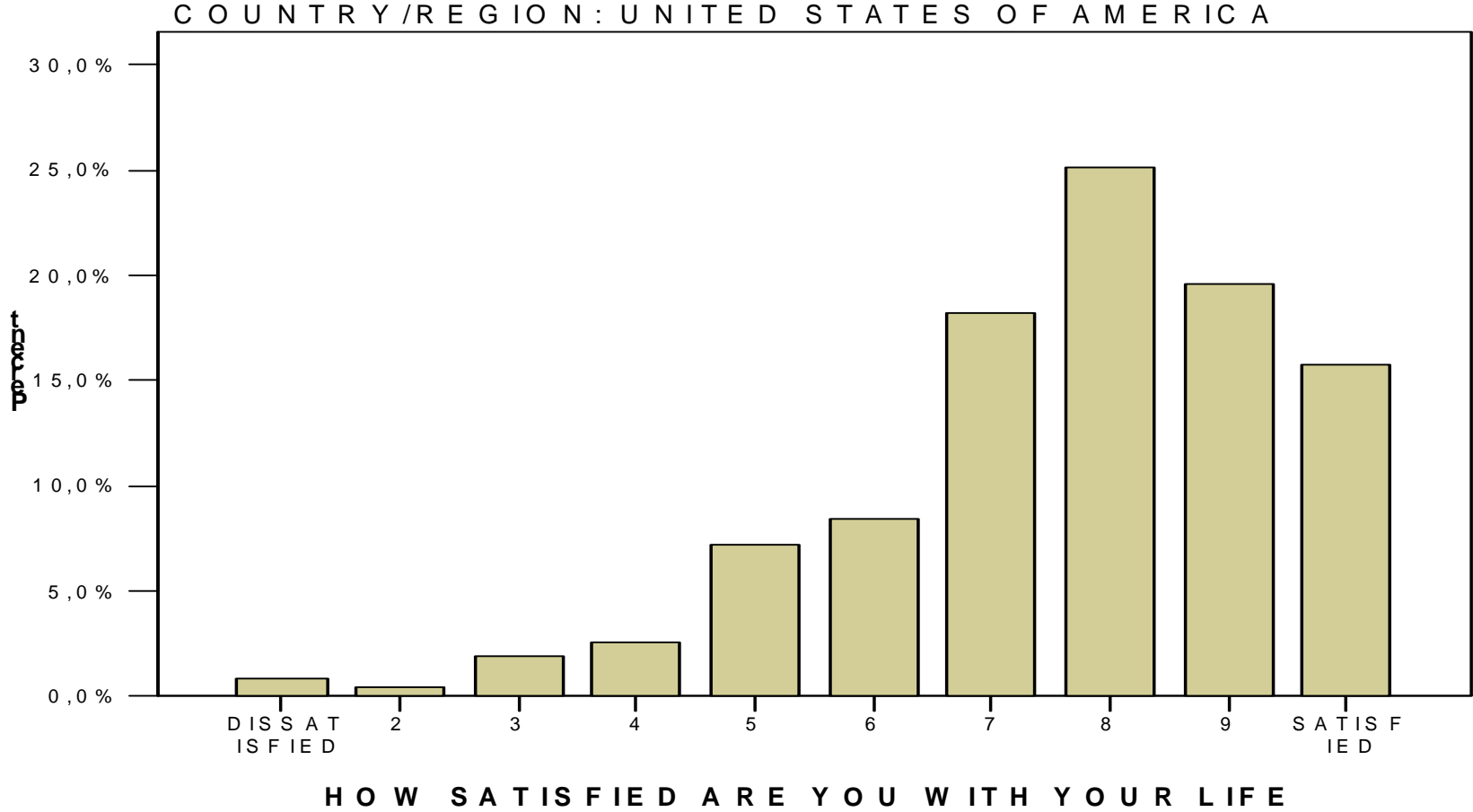


# Measurement of happiness

## Zimbabwe 2000



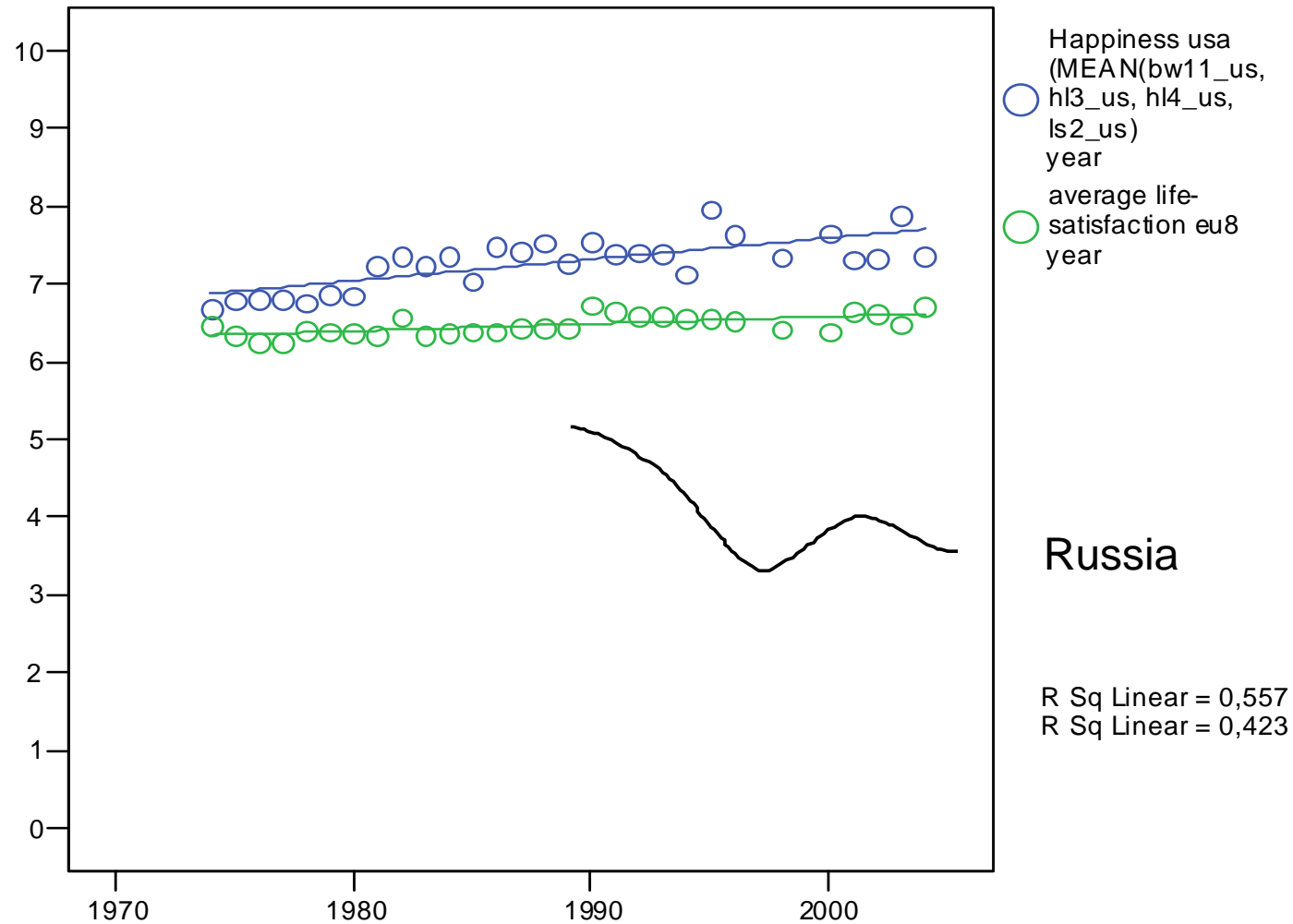
# Measurement of happiness USA 2000



## Happiness in nations in the 1990s

- Switzerland 8,0
- USA 7,4
- Germany 7,1
- France 6,6
- Japan 6,2
- South Korea 5,8
- Russia 4,4
- Zimbabwe 3.3

# Trend Happiness in nations in the USA, the EU and Russia

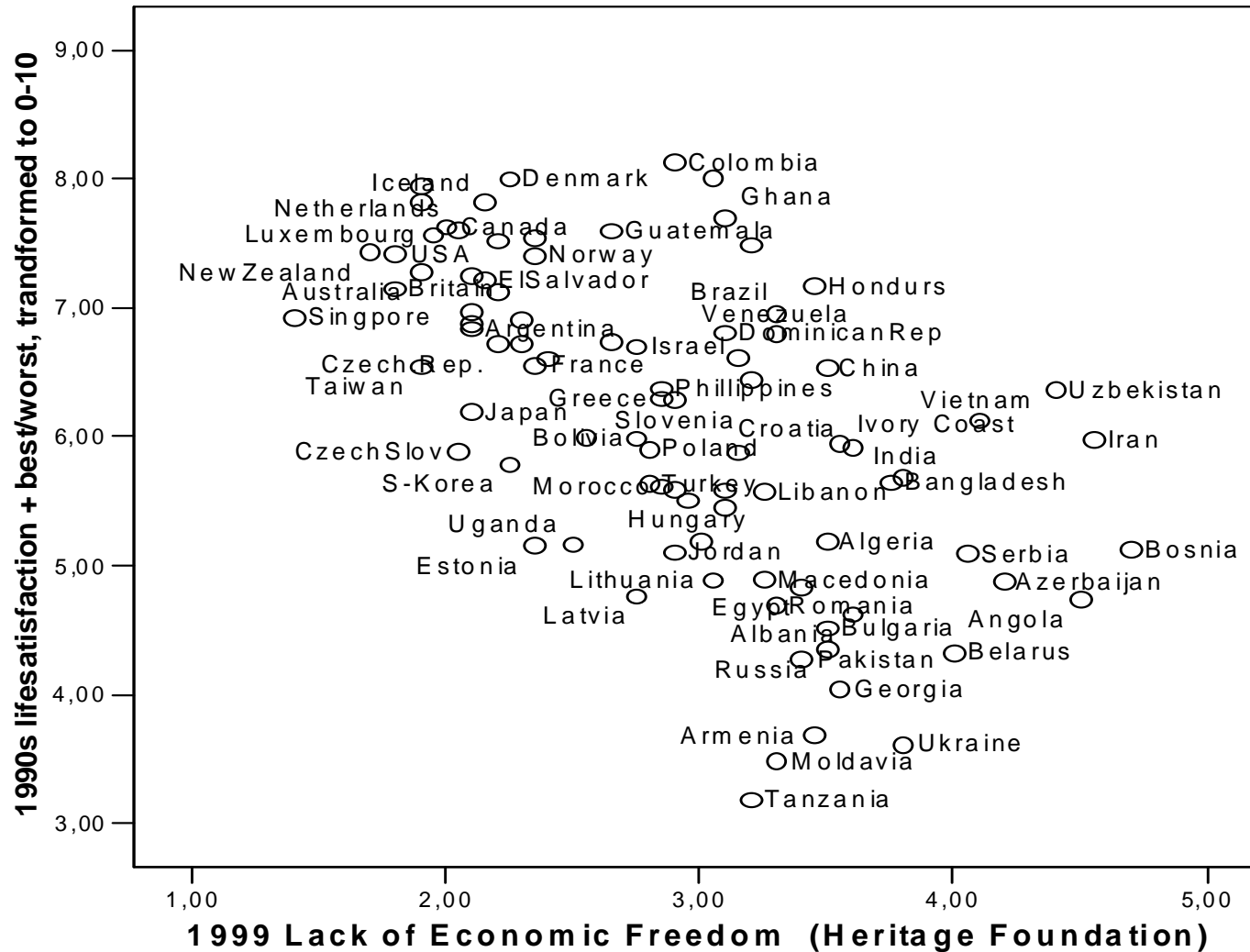


# **Competitiveness and happiness in nations**

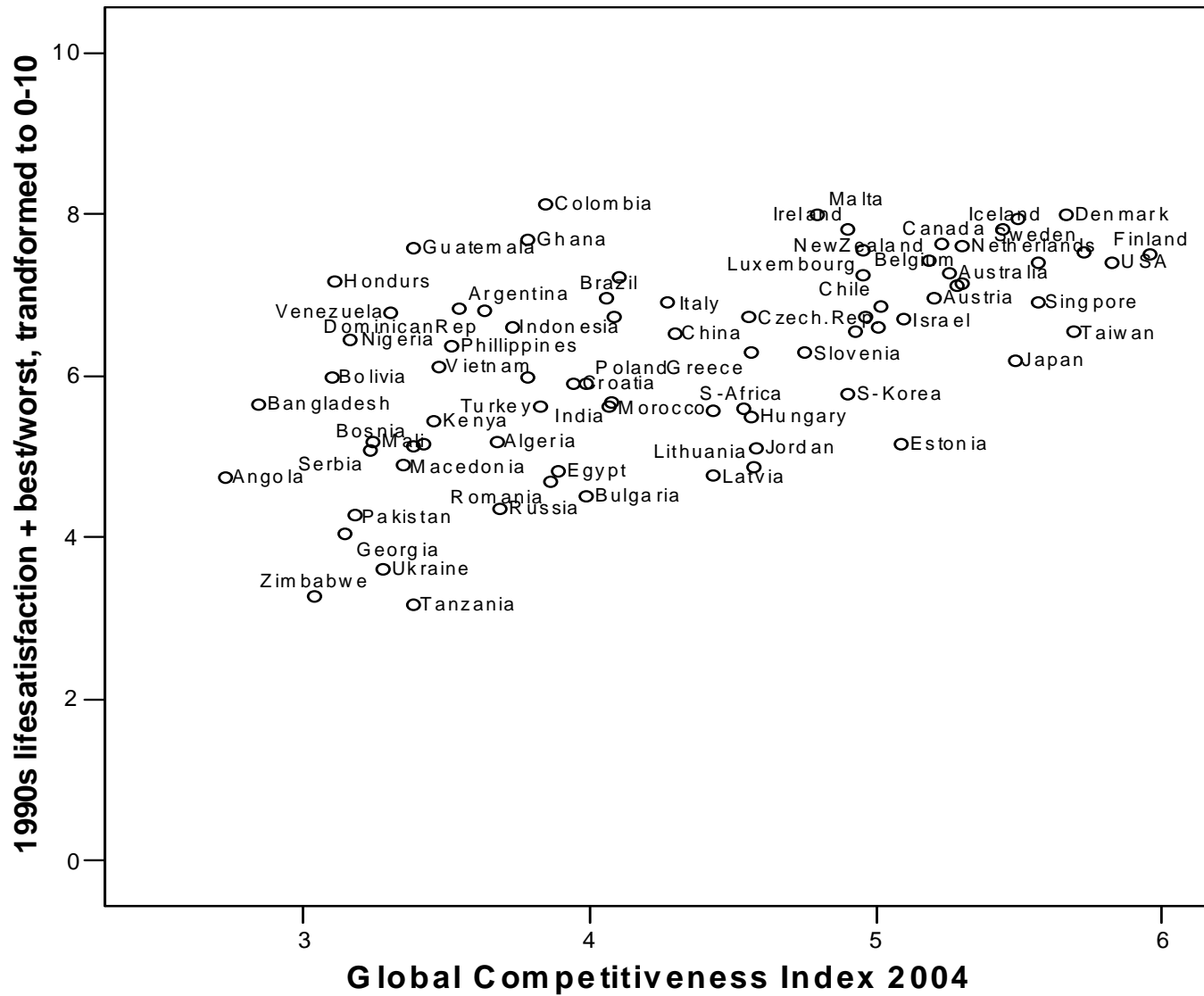
# **Competitiveness and happiness**

- Competitive conditions
- Competitive performance
- Competitive values

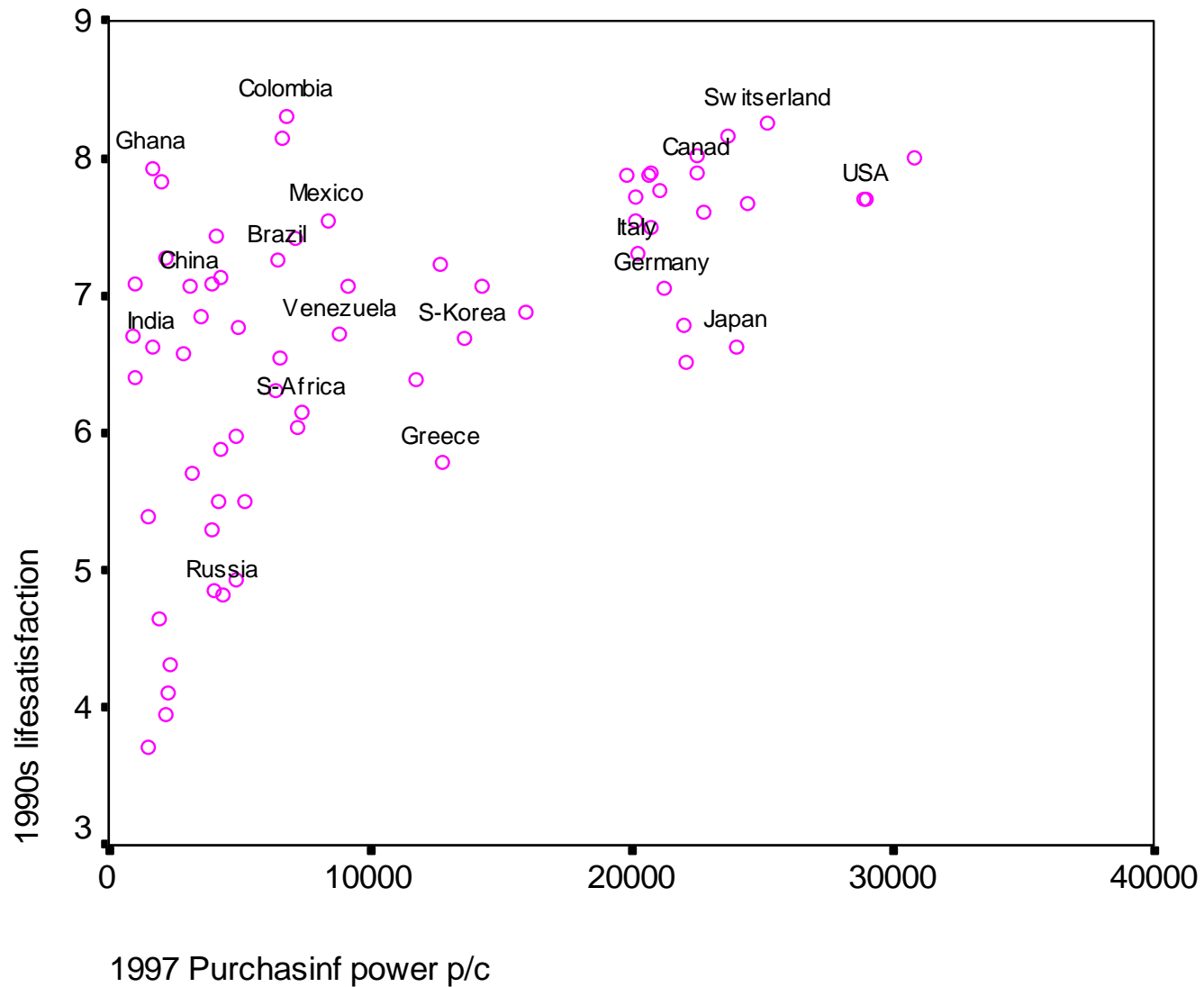
# Economic freedom and happiness in nations



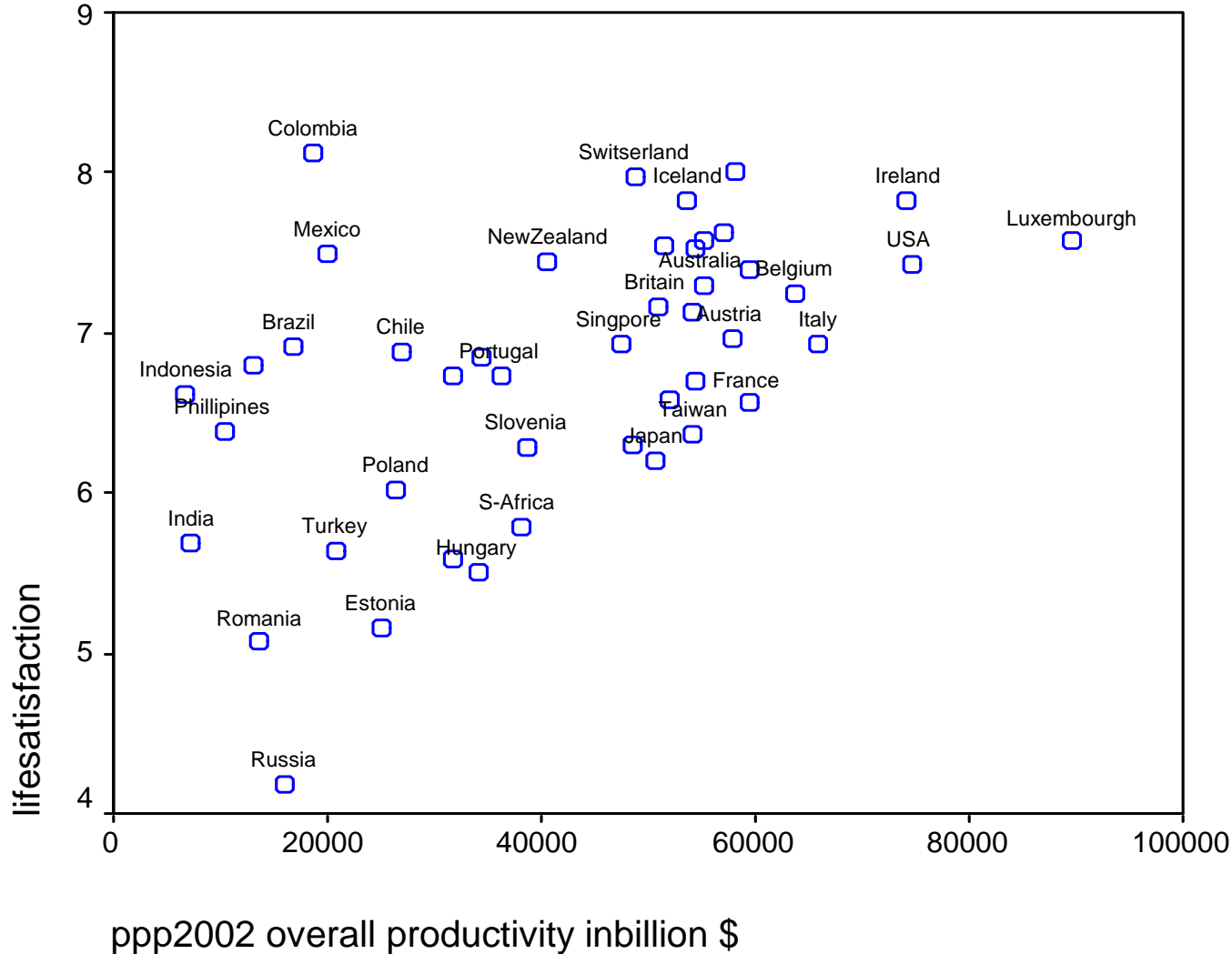
# Competitive index and happiness



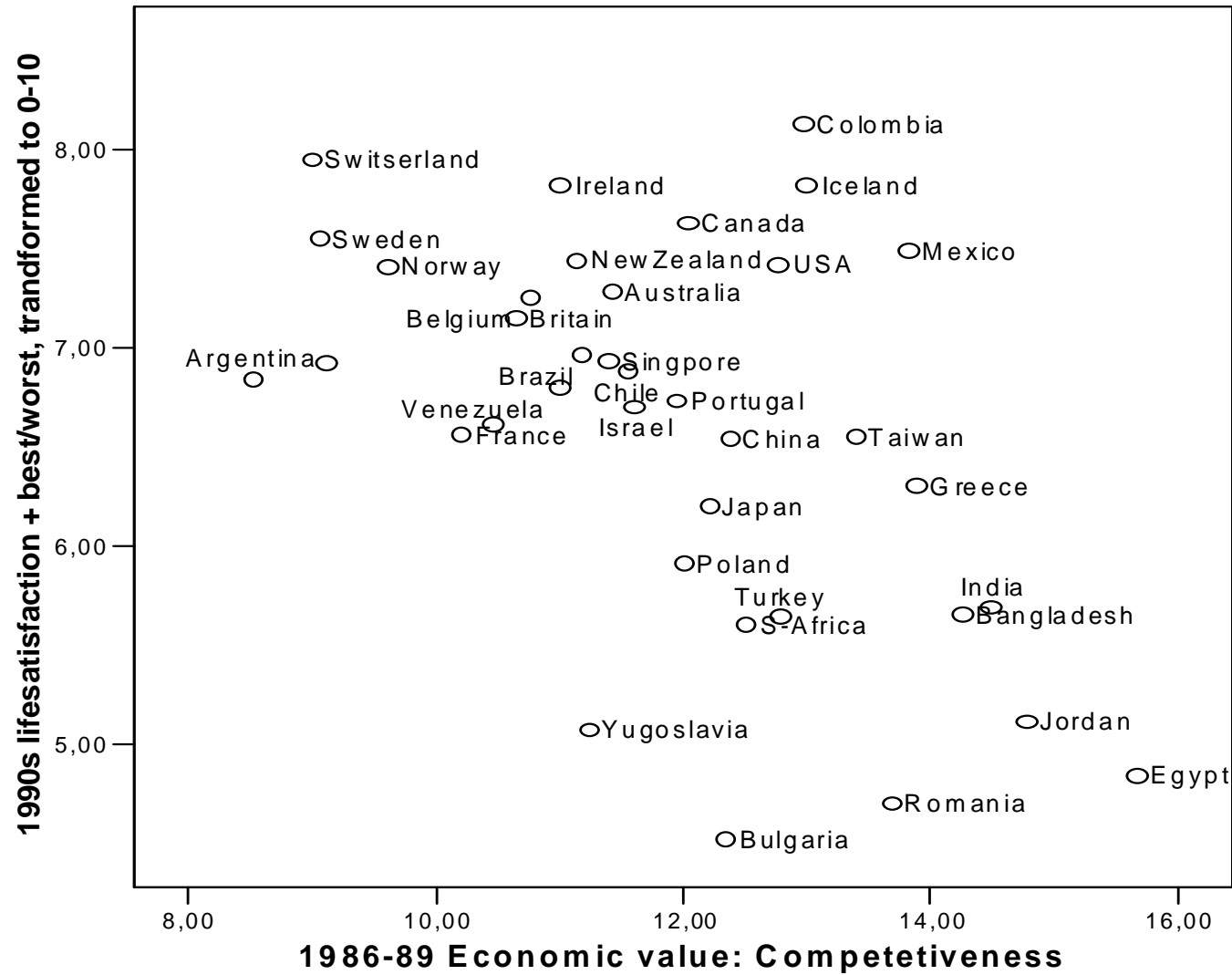
# Affluence and happiness in nations



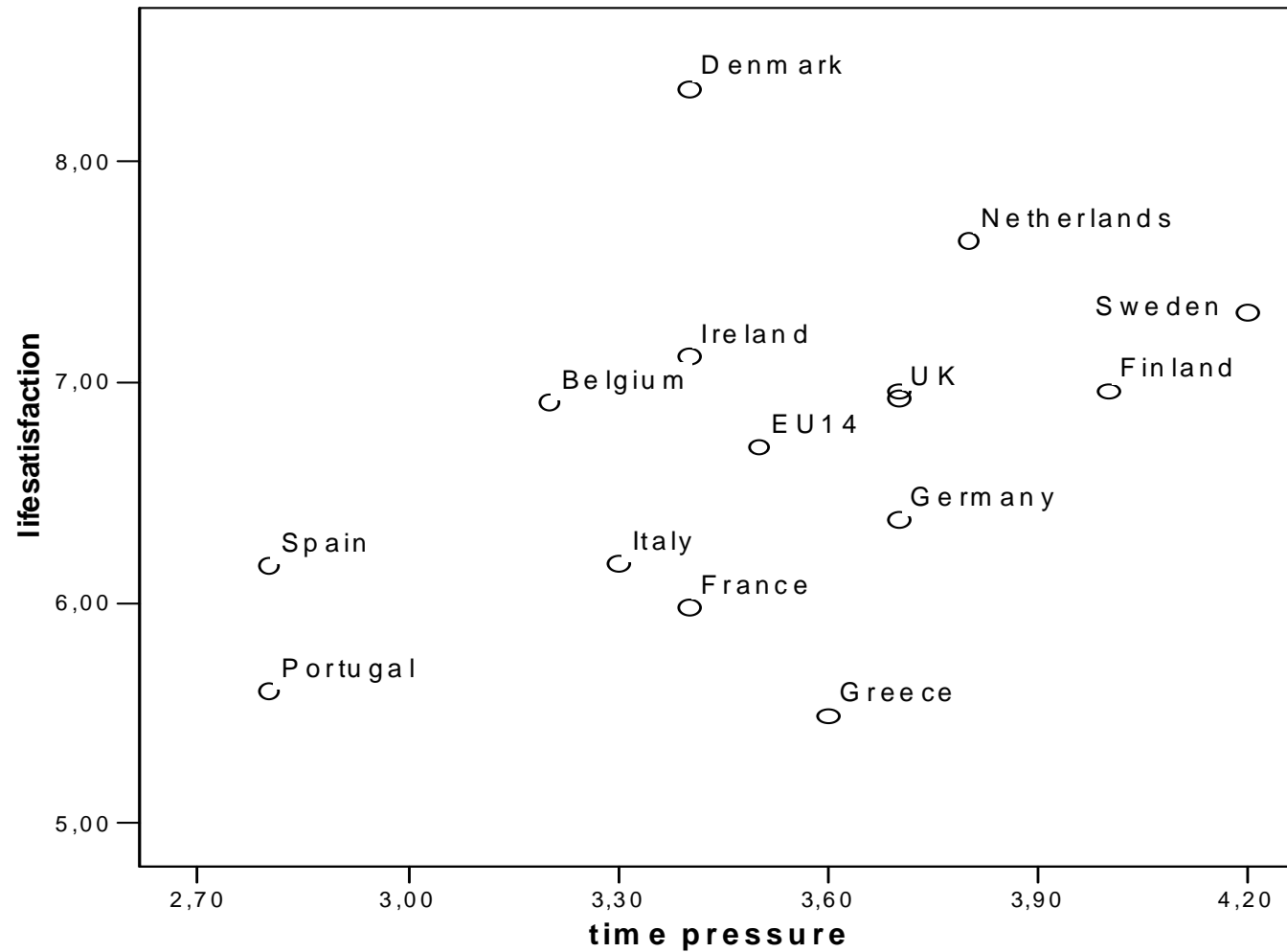
# Worker productivity and happiness



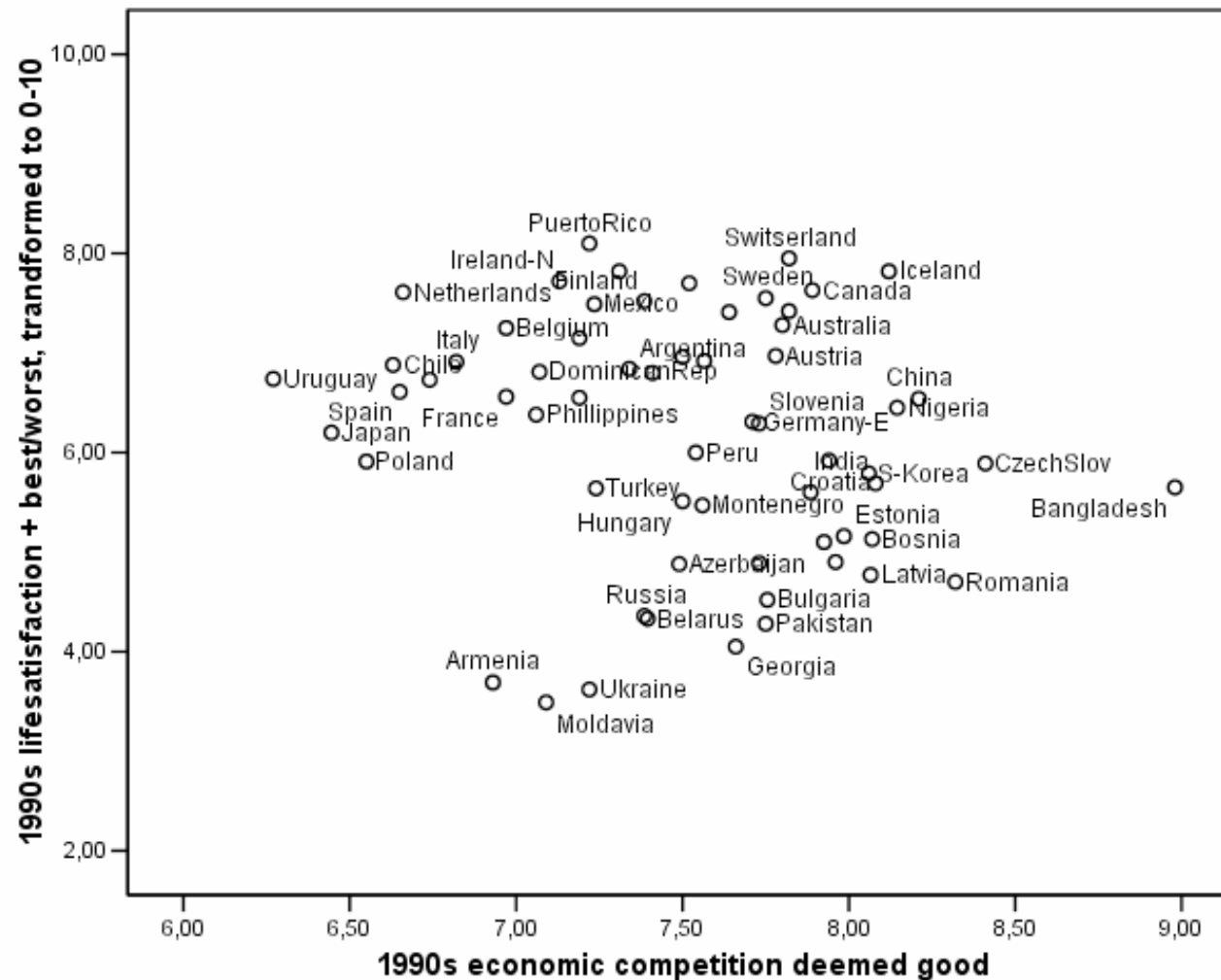
# Competitive values and happiness



# Time pressure and happiness in nations



# Attitude to economic competition and happiness in nations



# Indicators of competitiveness and happiness in nations

	<i>raw correlation</i>	<i>wealth controlled</i>	<i>N</i>
Economic freedom	+ .59	+ .32	73
Economic competitiveness	+ .53	- .00	66
Acceptance of economic competition	- .17	- .01	63
General valuation of competition	- .50	- .37	42

# Happiness in competitive society

## **Conclusions**

# Happiness in competitive society

## **Conclusions**

- Happier in nations that allow economic competitions
- Happier in nations that compete well economically
- Not happier in nations that value competition very much

# More about happiness

- **World Database of Happiness**

[www.eur.nl/fsw/research/happiness](http://www.eur.nl/fsw/research/happiness)

- **Journal of Happiness Studies**

[springerlink.com](http://springerlink.com)