

Korean's Happiness: An International Comparison

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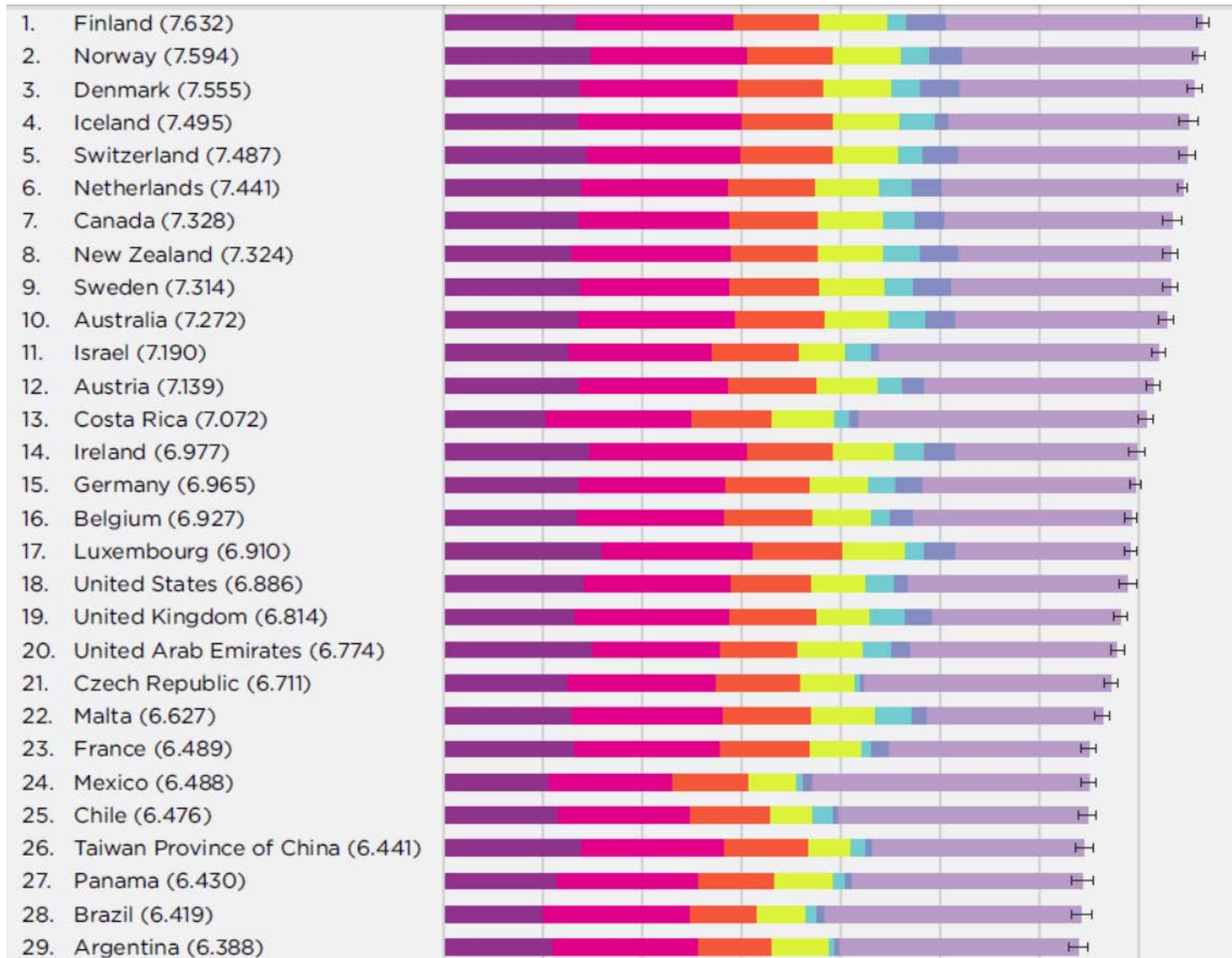
The Future of Well-being
6th OECD World Forum
on Statistics, Knowledge and Policy
27–29 Nov. 2018, Incheon, Korea

Measurement of Happiness

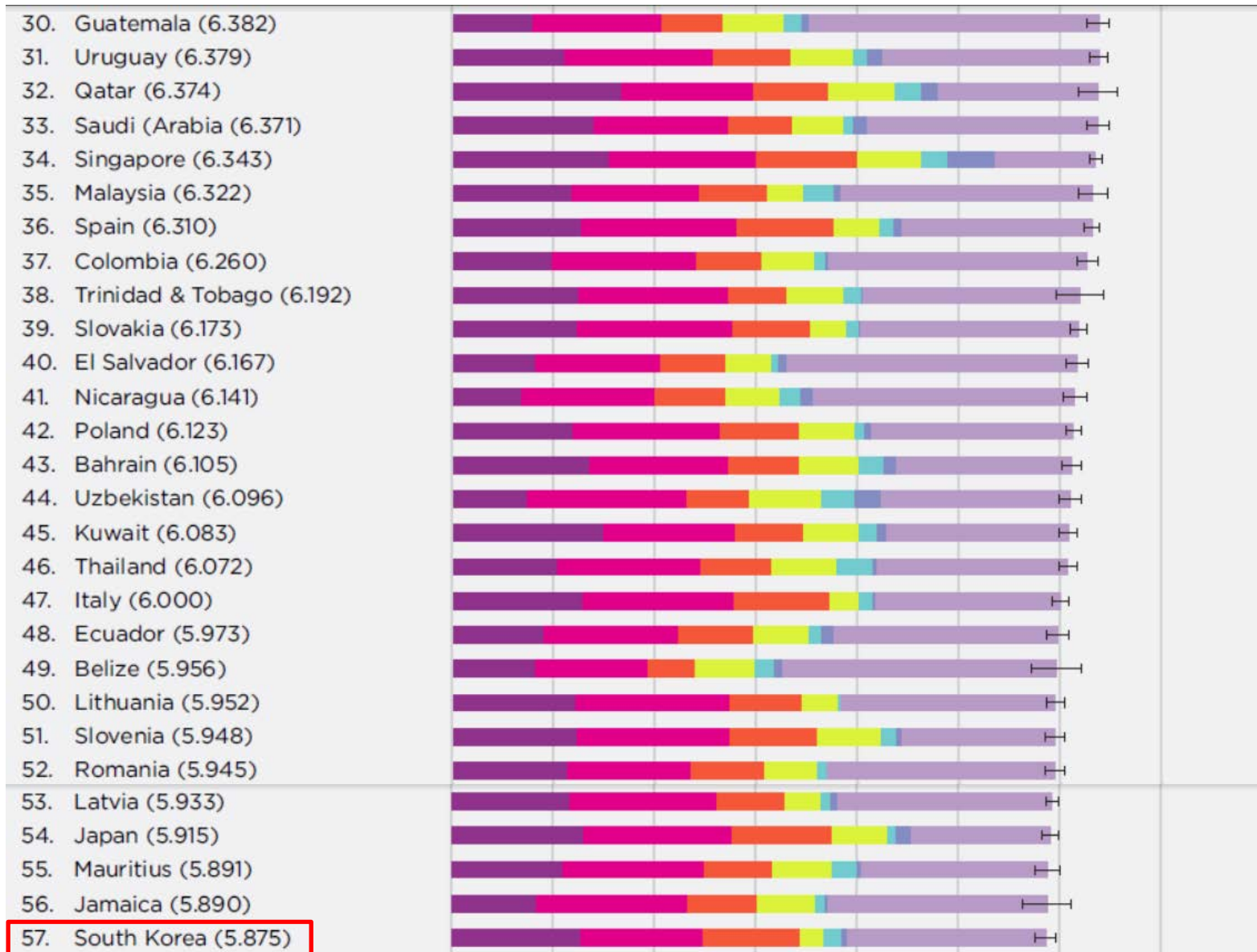
- *Cantril Ladder*: asking respondents to value their lives on a 0 to 10 scale, with the worst possible life as a 0 and the best possible life as a 10.

(Helliwell, J.F., H. Huang, **S. Wang**, & H. Shiplett (2018). *International Migration and World Happiness*. In Helliwell J.F., R. Layard, & J. Sachs (eds.), *World Happiness Report 2018*. <http://worldhappiness.report>)

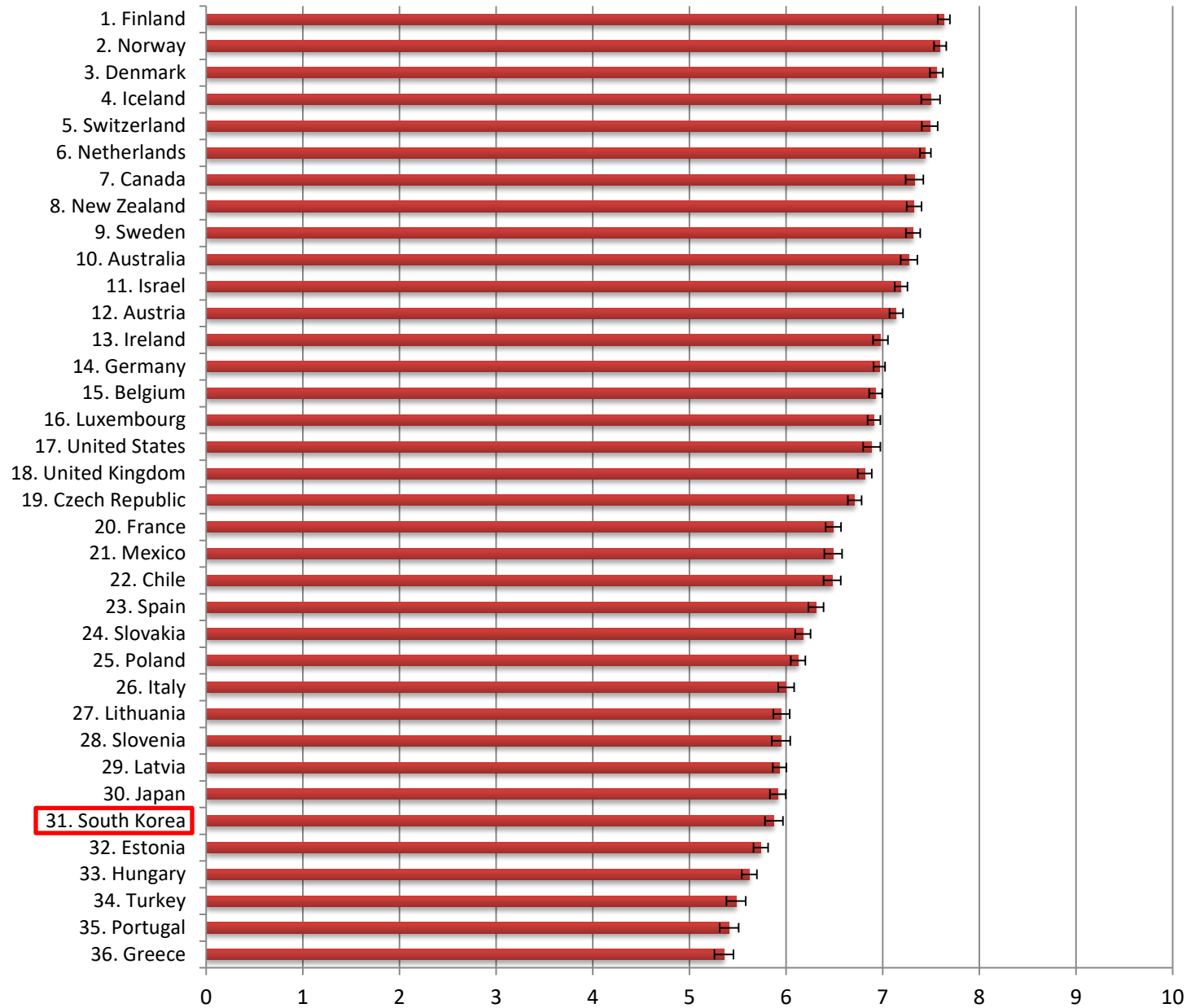
International Ranking



International Ranking



Ranking within OECD Countries

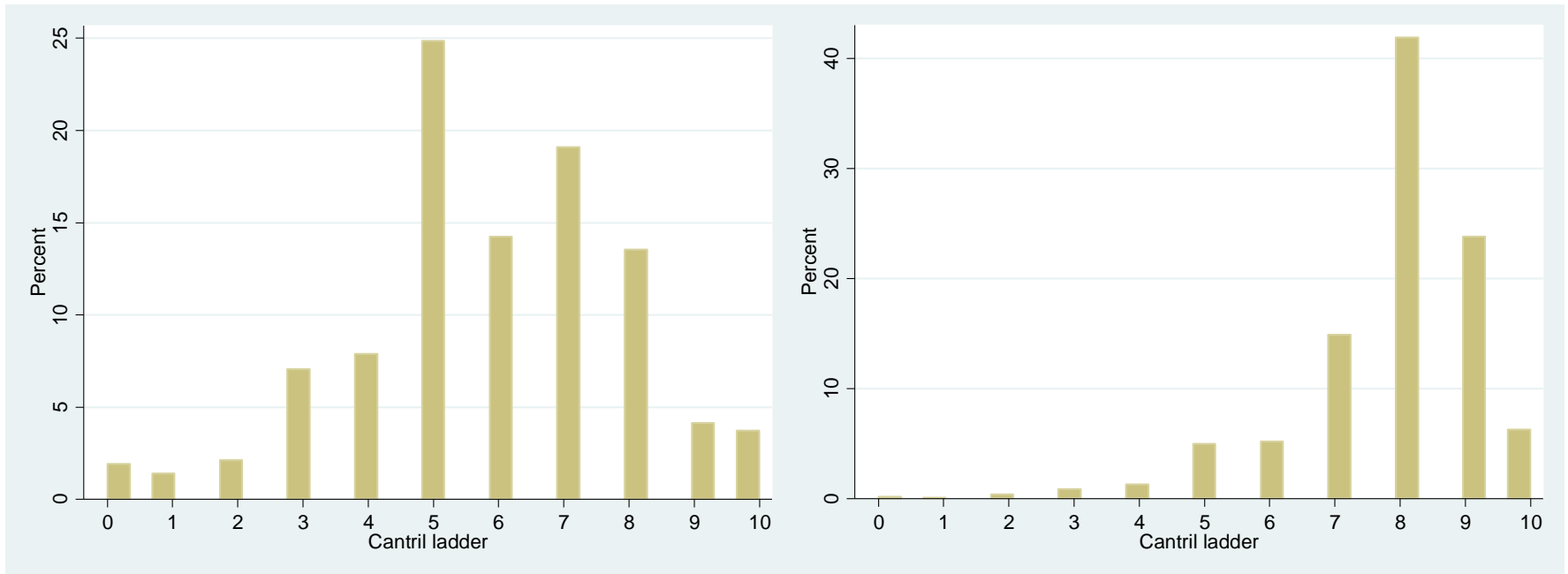


Happiness Distribution (2017)

Korea

versus

Finland



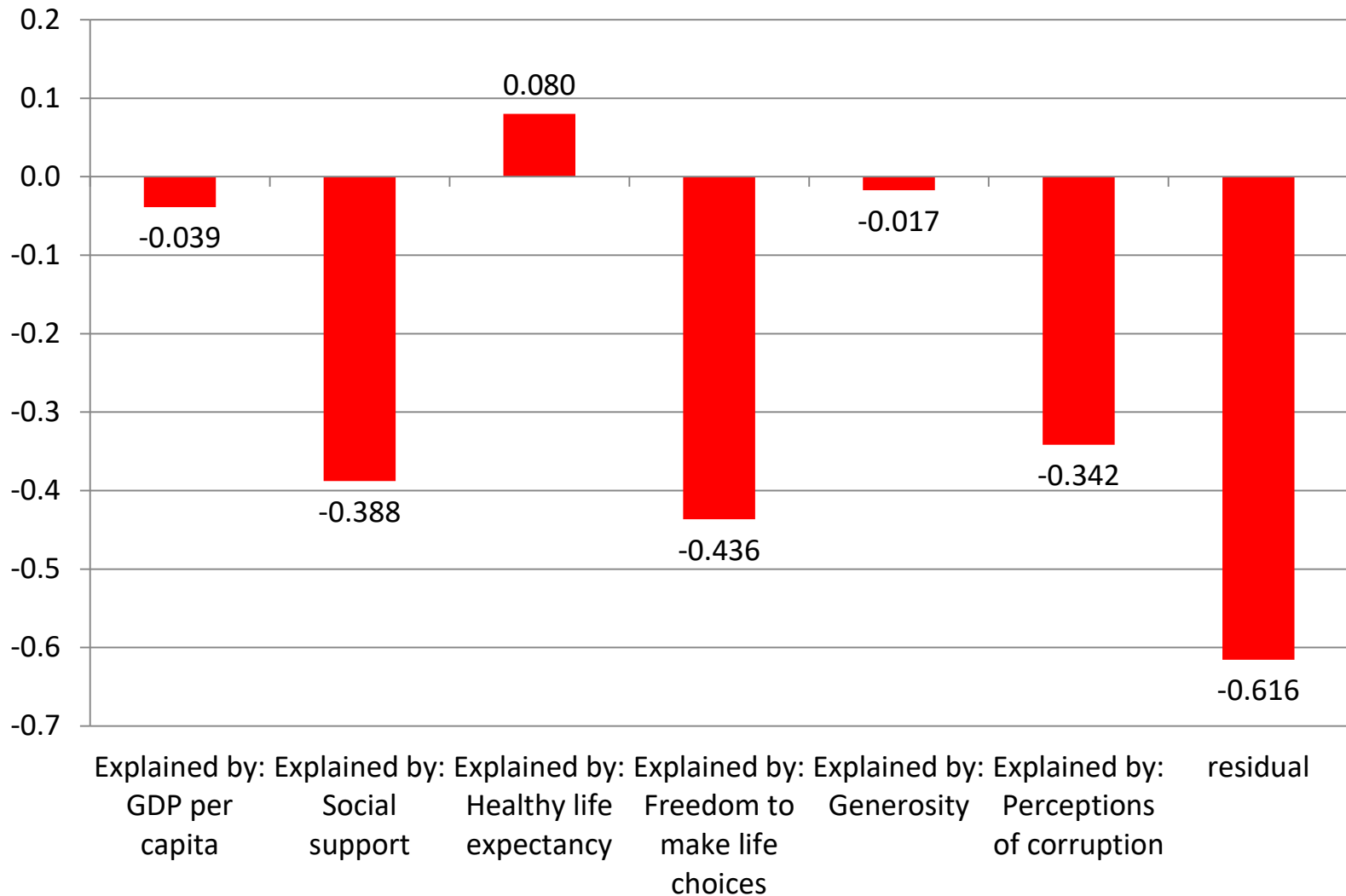
Explaining the International Differences

Table 2.1: Regressions to Explain Average Happiness Across Countries (Pooled OLS)

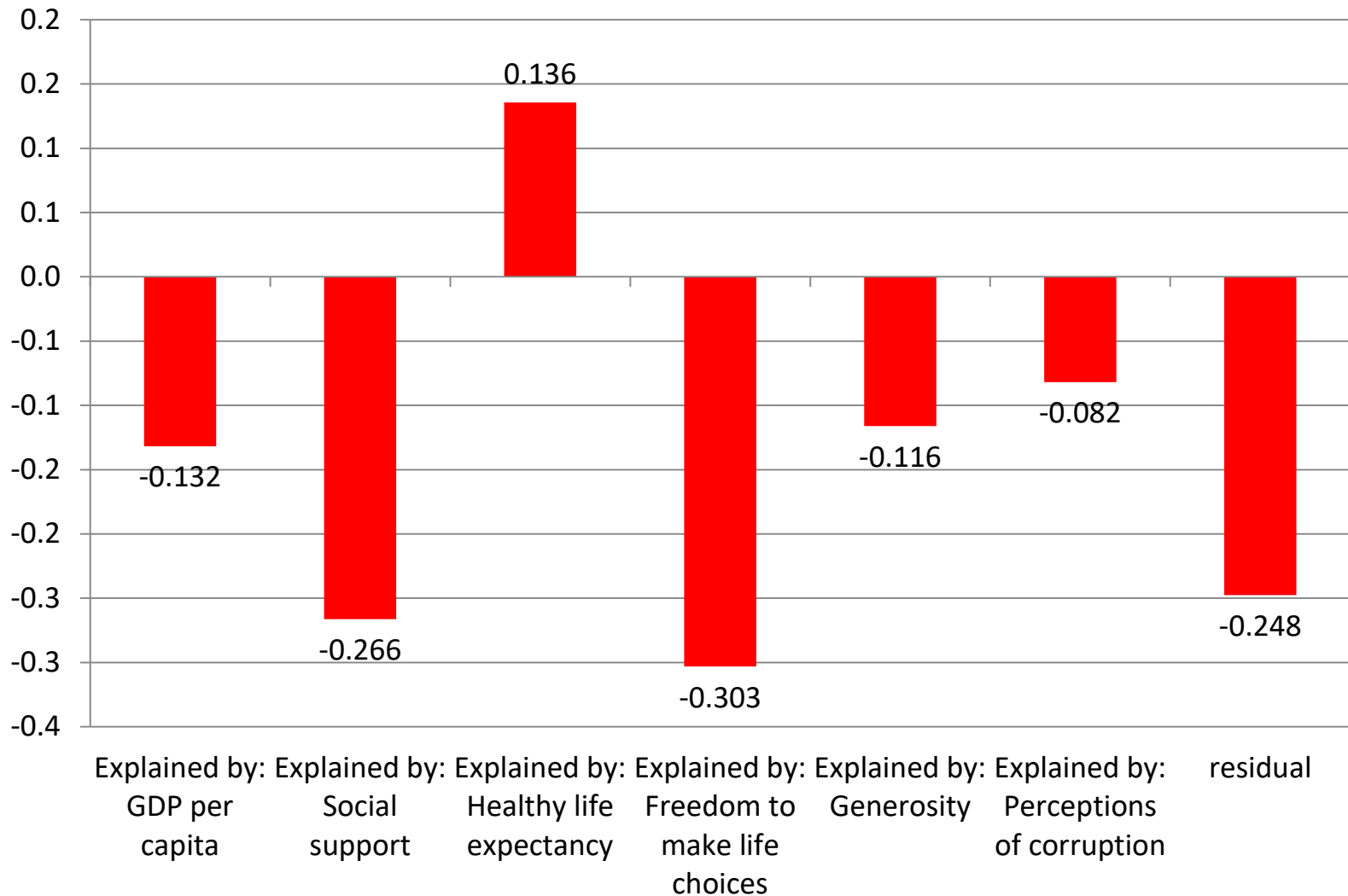
Independent Variable	Dependent Variable			
	Cantril Ladder	Positive Affect	Negative Affect	Cantril Ladder
Log GDP per capita	0.311 (0.064)***	-.003 (0.009)	0.011 (0.009)	0.316 (0.063)***
Social support	2.447 (0.39)***	0.26 (0.049)***	-.289 (0.051)***	1.933 (0.395)***
Healthy life expectancy at birth	0.032 (0.009)***	0.0002 (0.001)	0.001 (0.001)	0.031 (0.009)***
Freedom to make life choices	1.189 (0.302)***	0.343 (0.038)***	-.071 (0.042)*	0.451 (0.29)
Generosity	0.644 (0.274)**	0.145 (0.03)***	0.001 (0.028)	0.323 (0.272)
Perceptions of corruption	-.542 (0.284)*	0.03 (0.027)	0.098 (0.025)***	-.626 (0.271)**
Positive affect				2.21 (0.396)***
Negative affect				0.204 (0.442)
Year fixed effects	Included	Included	Included	Included
Number of countries	157	157	157	157
Number of obs.	1394	1391	1393	1390
Adjusted R-squared	0.742	0.48	0.251	0.764

Notes: This is a pooled OLS regression for a tapered panel explaining annual national average Cantril ladder responses from all available surveys from 2005 to 2017. See Technical Box 1 for detailed information about each of the predictors. Coefficients are reported with robust standard errors clustered by country in parentheses. ***, **, and * indicate significance at the 1, 5 and 10 percent levels respectively.

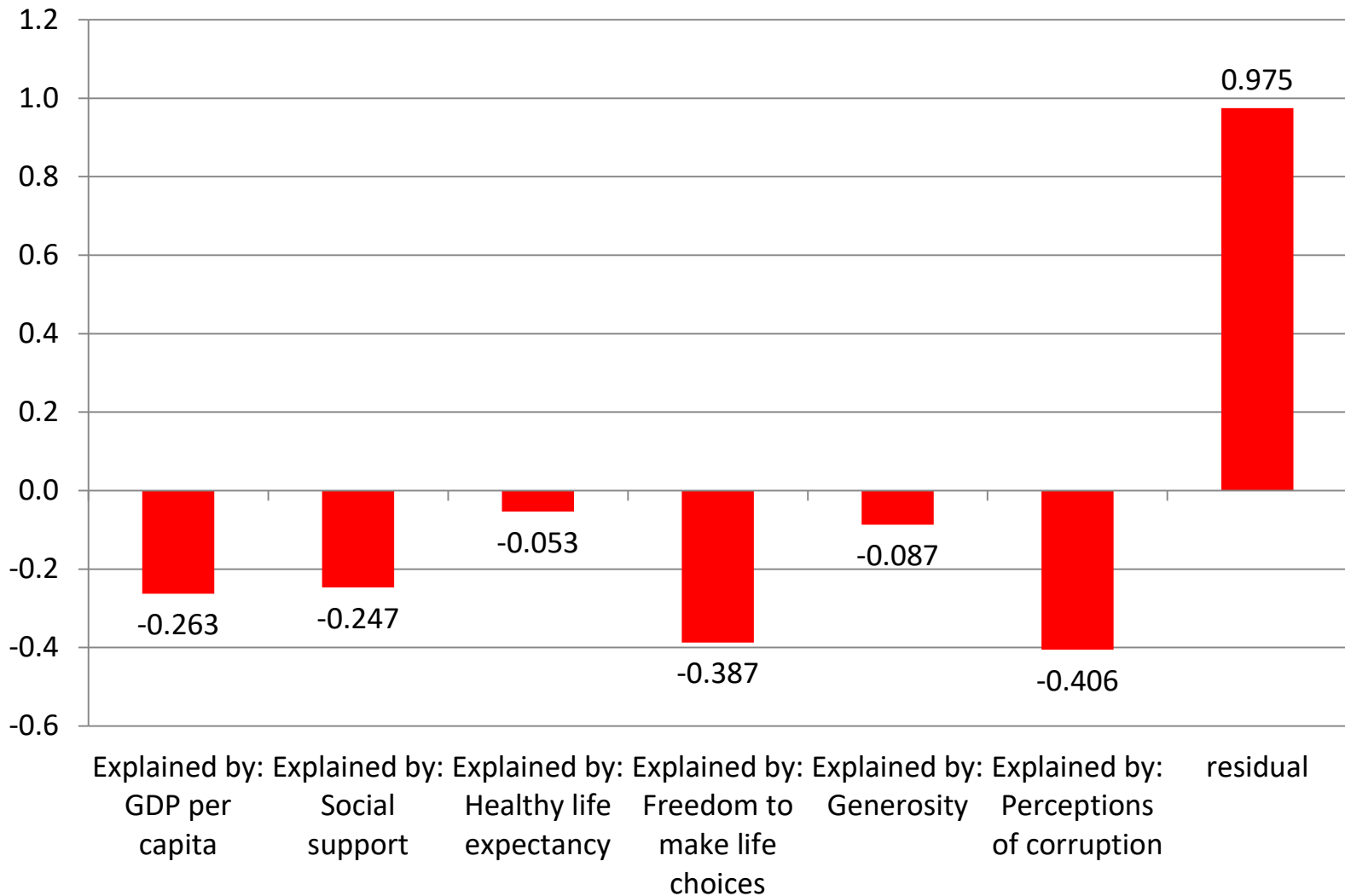
Korea versus Finland (-1.757)



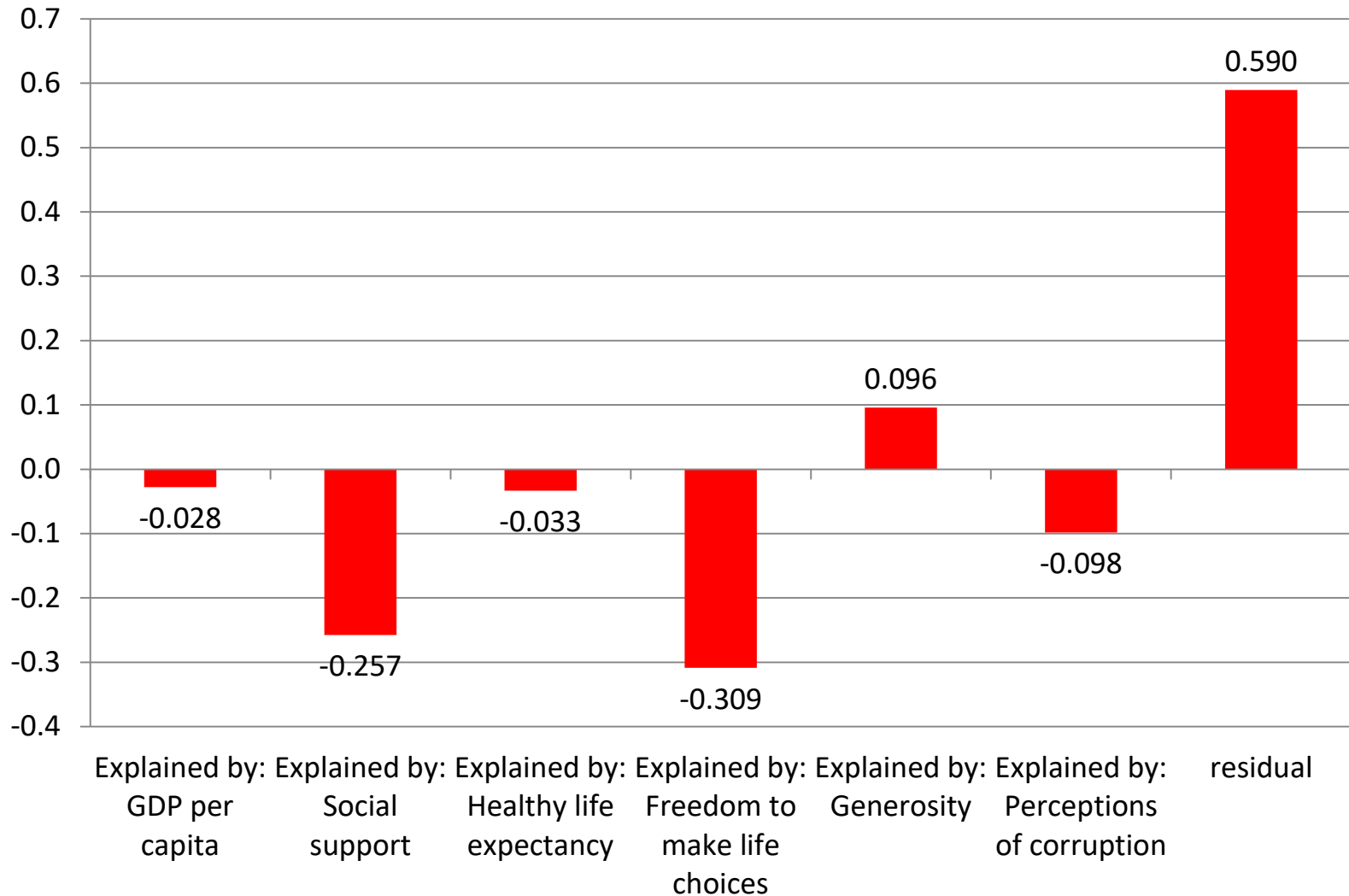
Korea versus United States (-1.011)



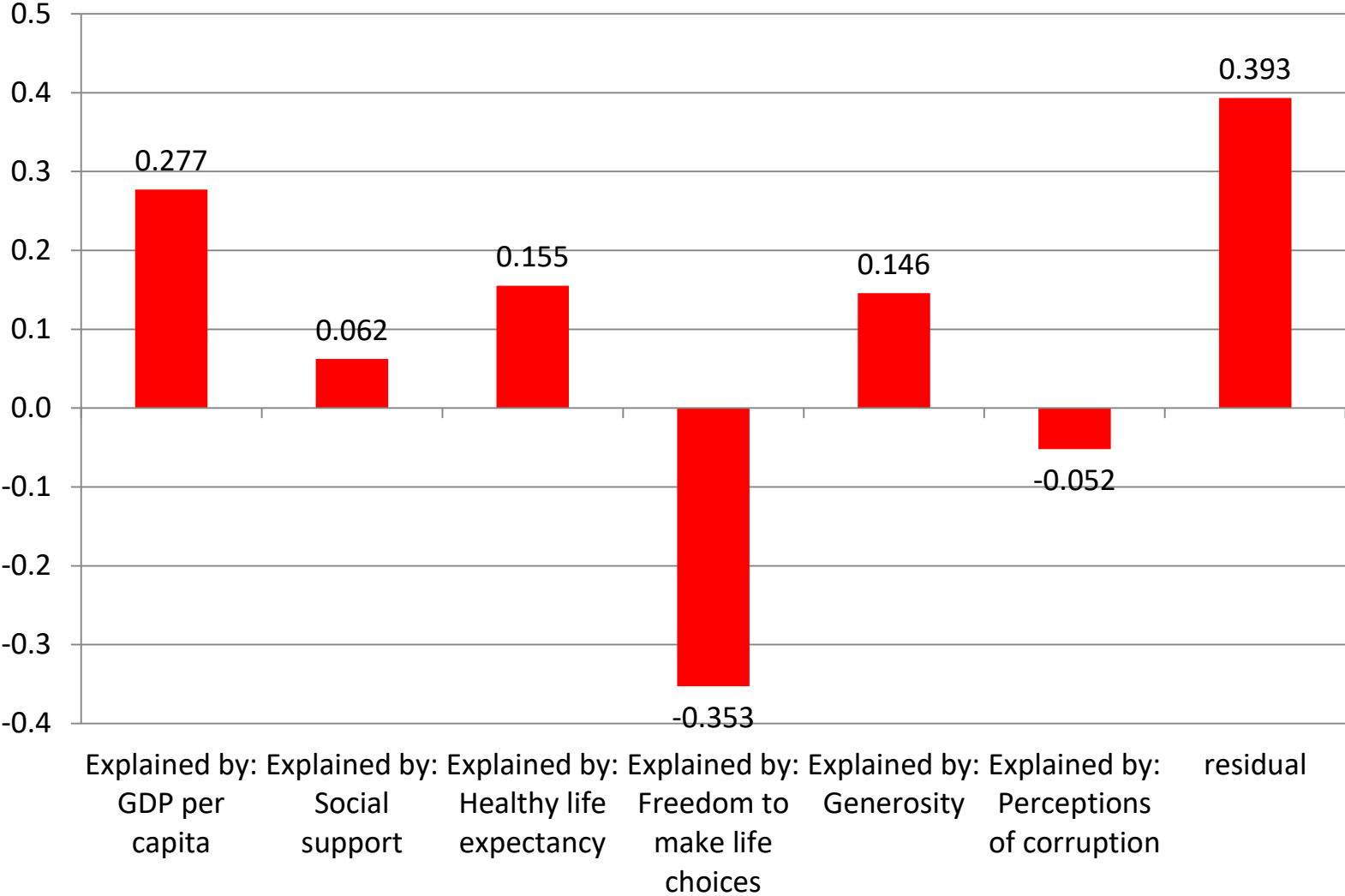
Korea versus Singapore (-0.468)



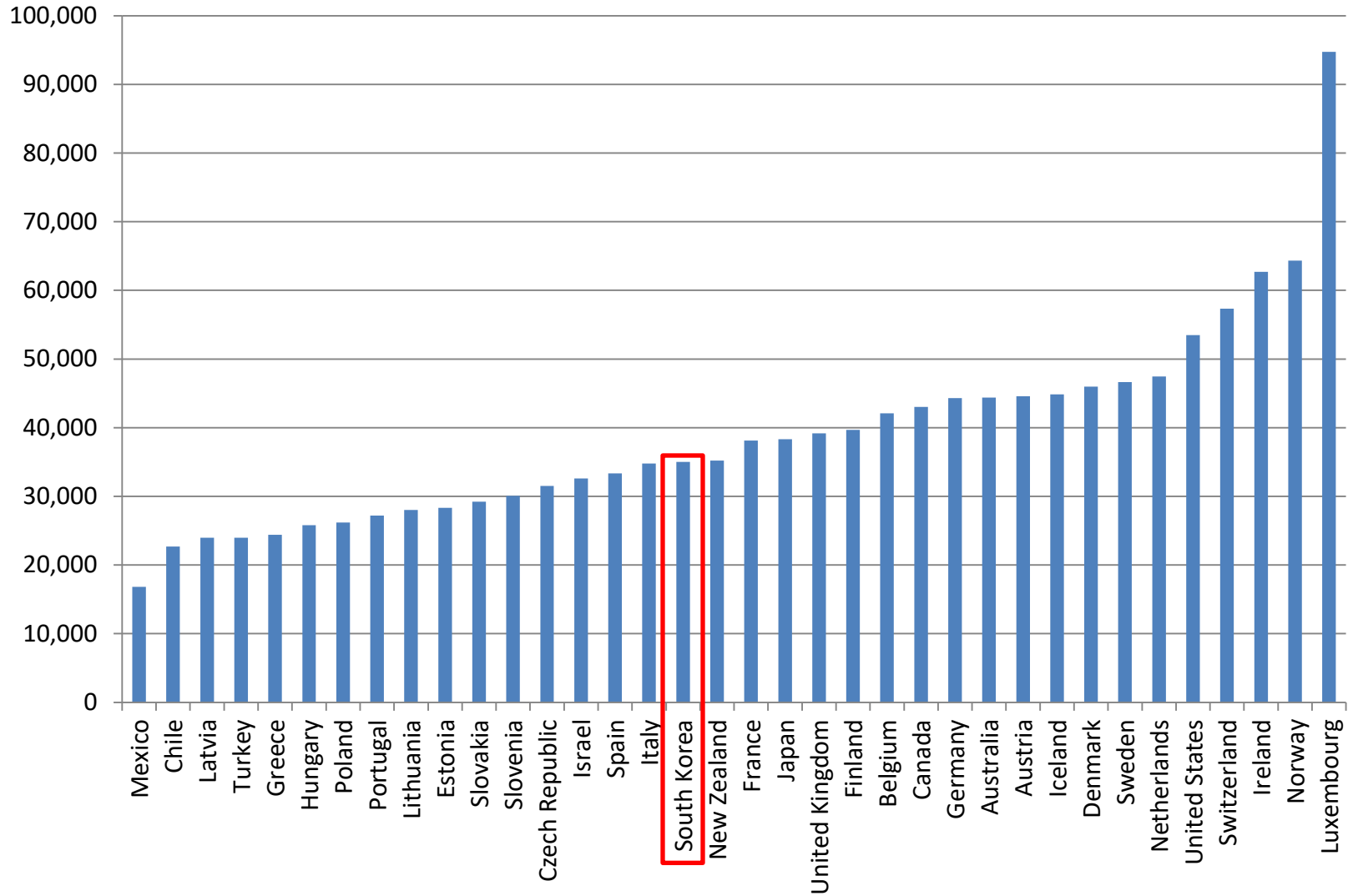
Korea versus Japan (-0.040)



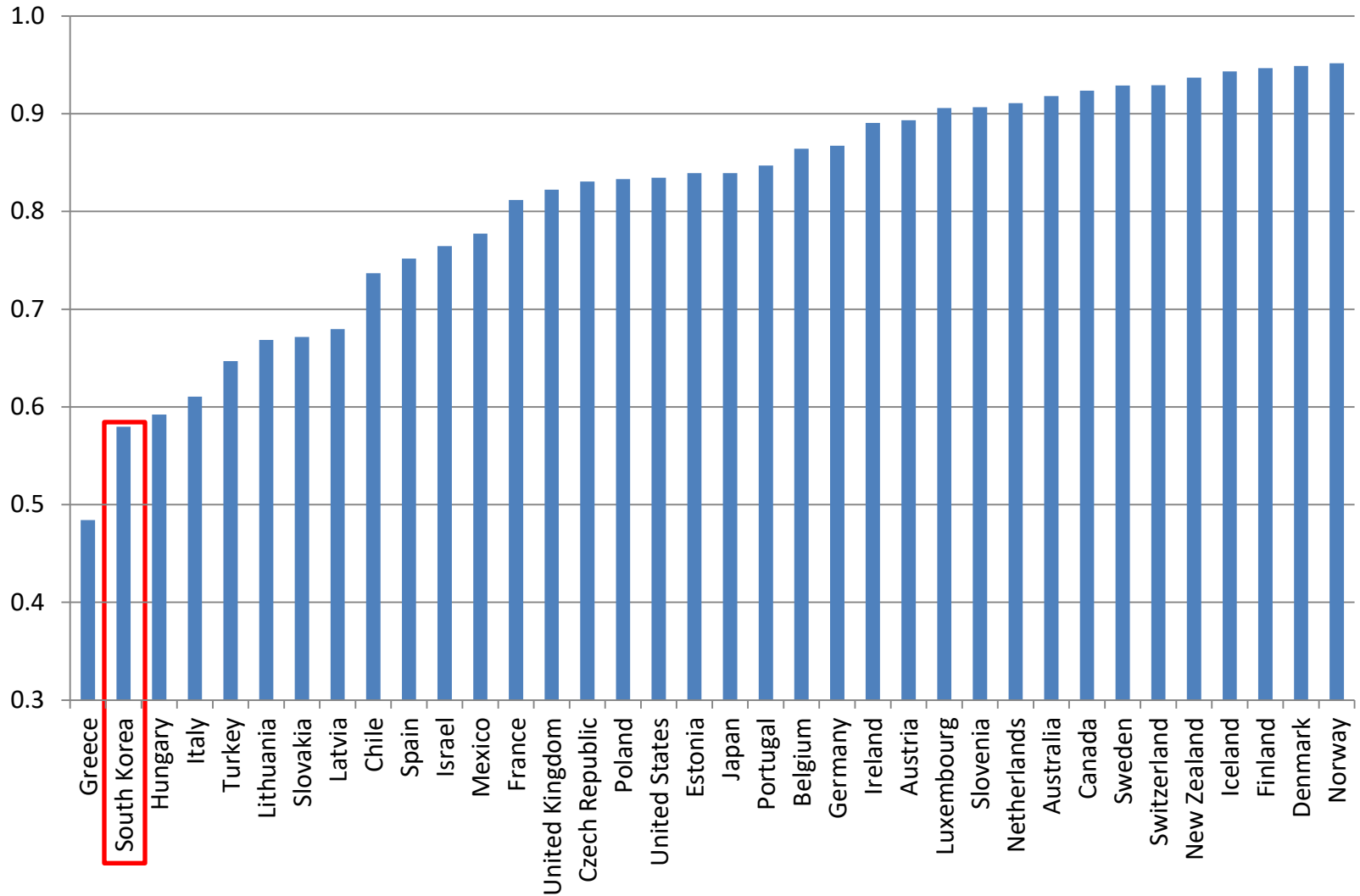
Korea versus China (+0.629)



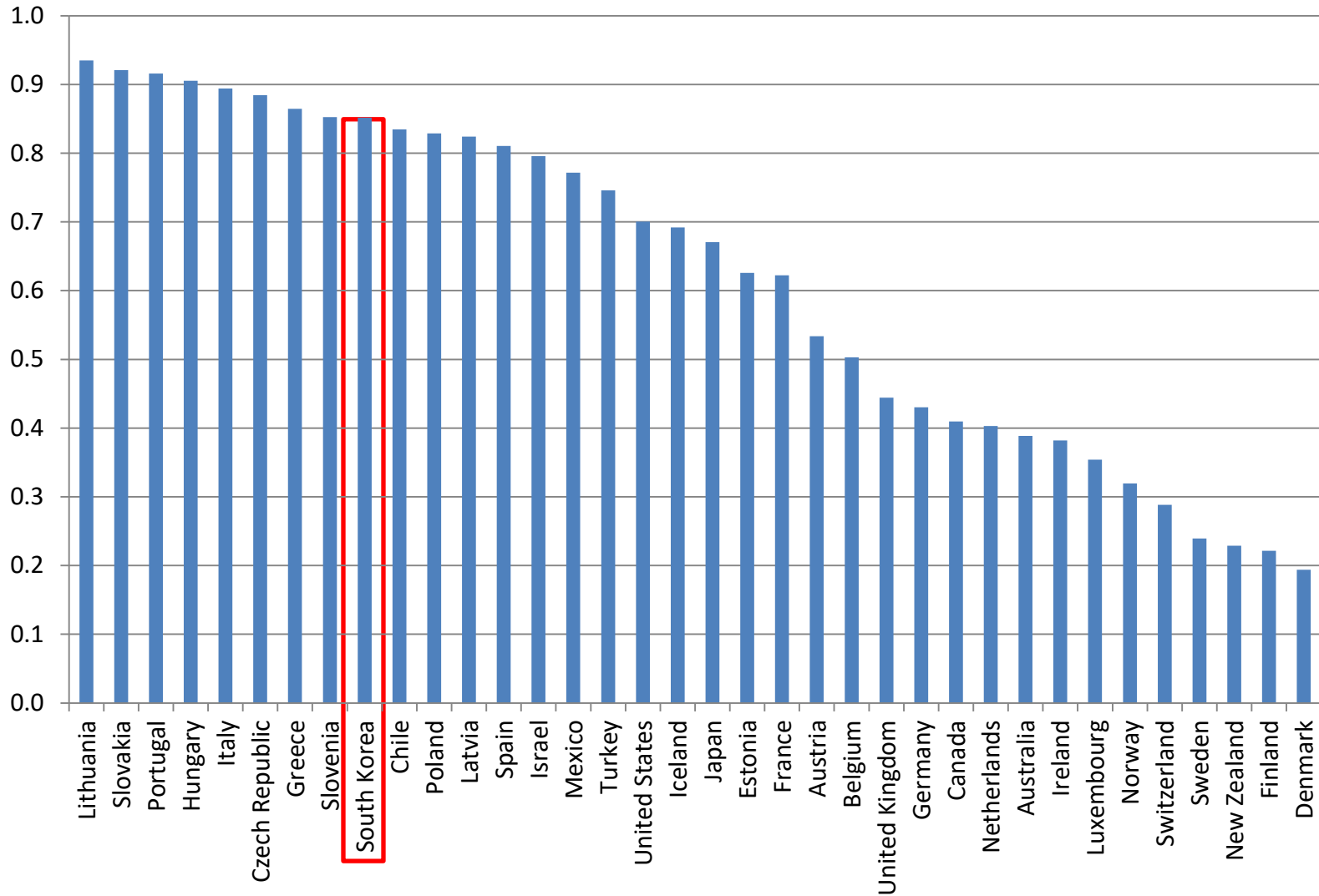
GDP per capita (2015-17)



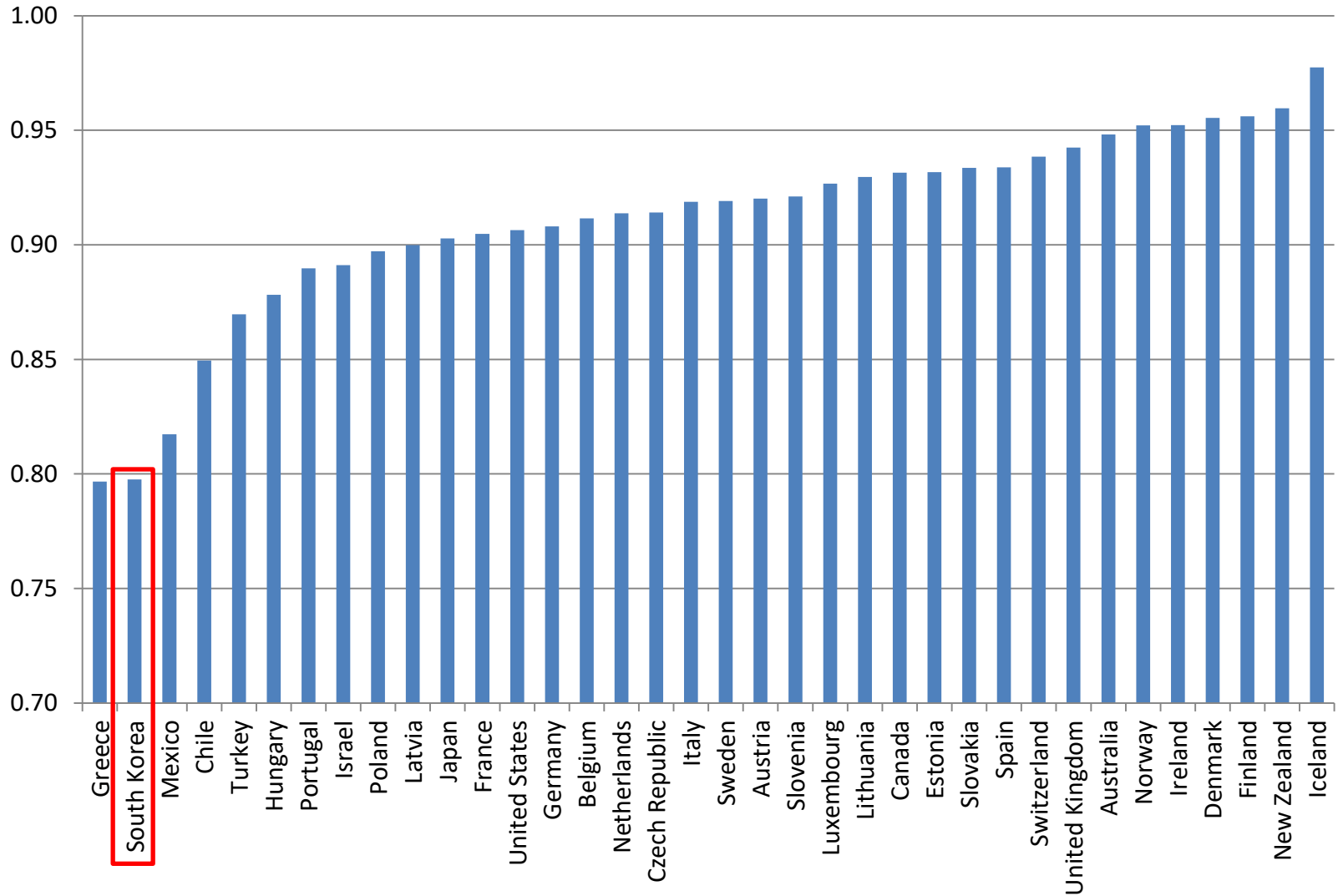
Freedom in Life Choice (2015-17)



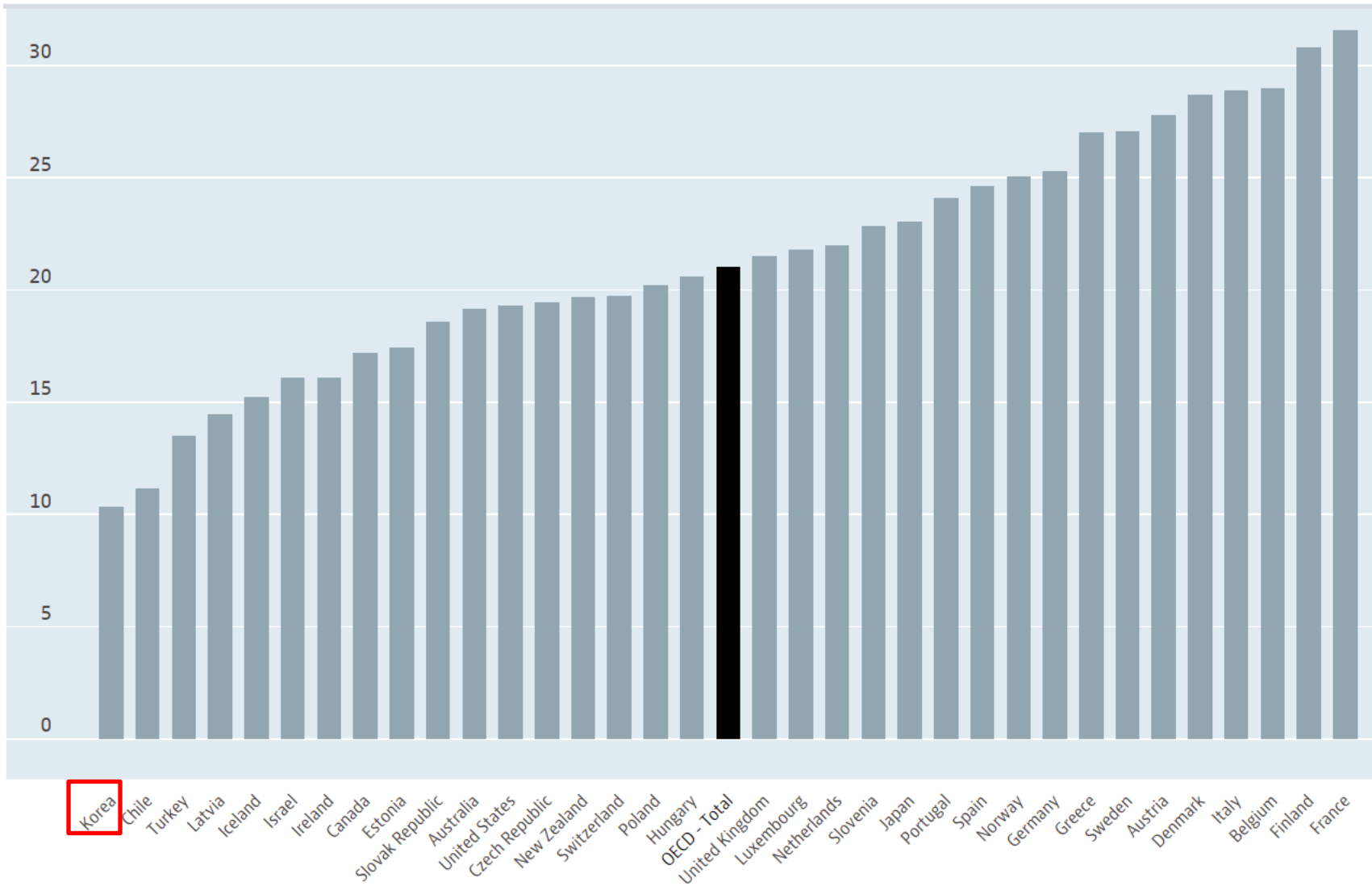
Perception of Corruption (2015-17)



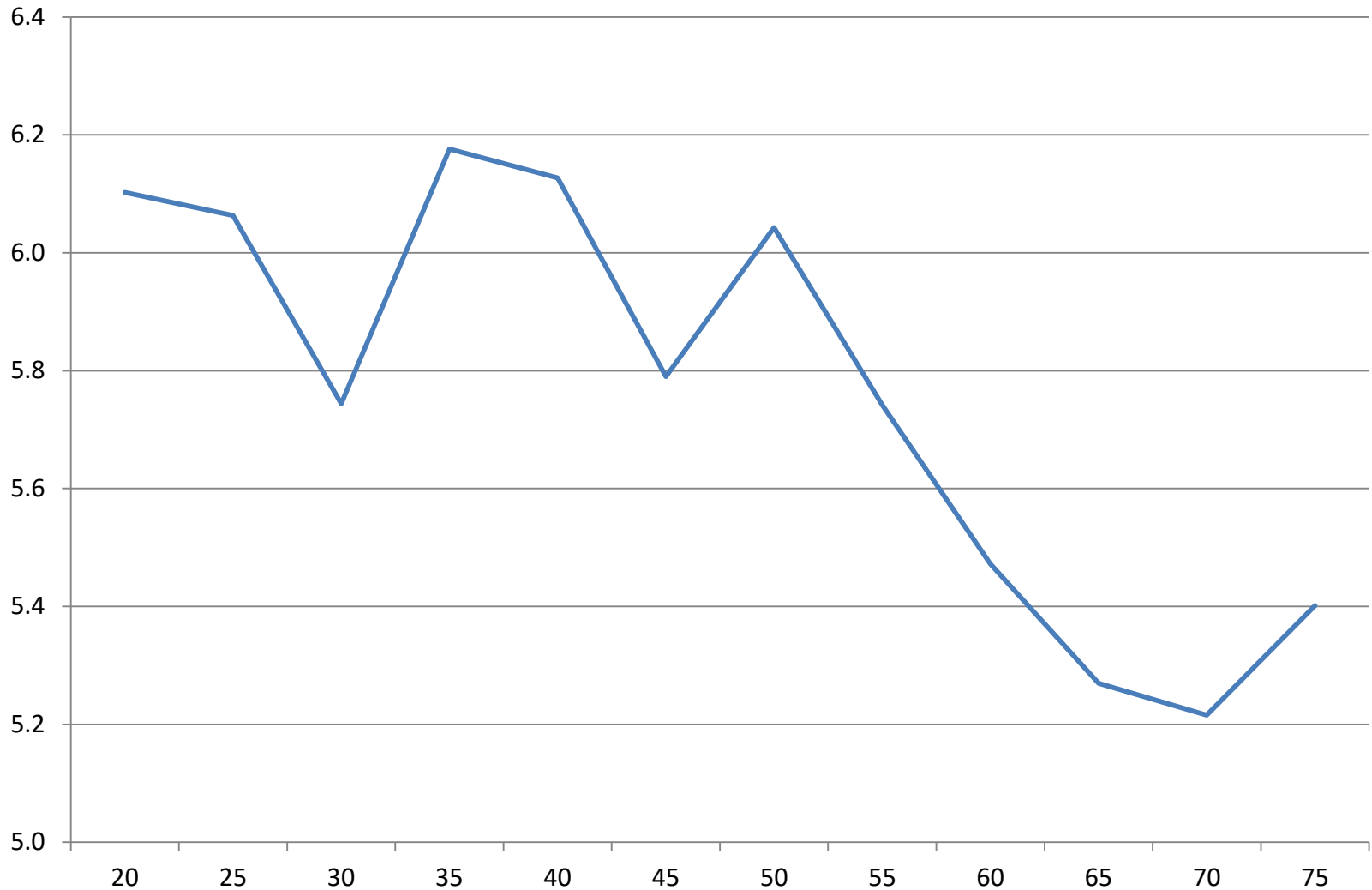
Social Support (2015-17)



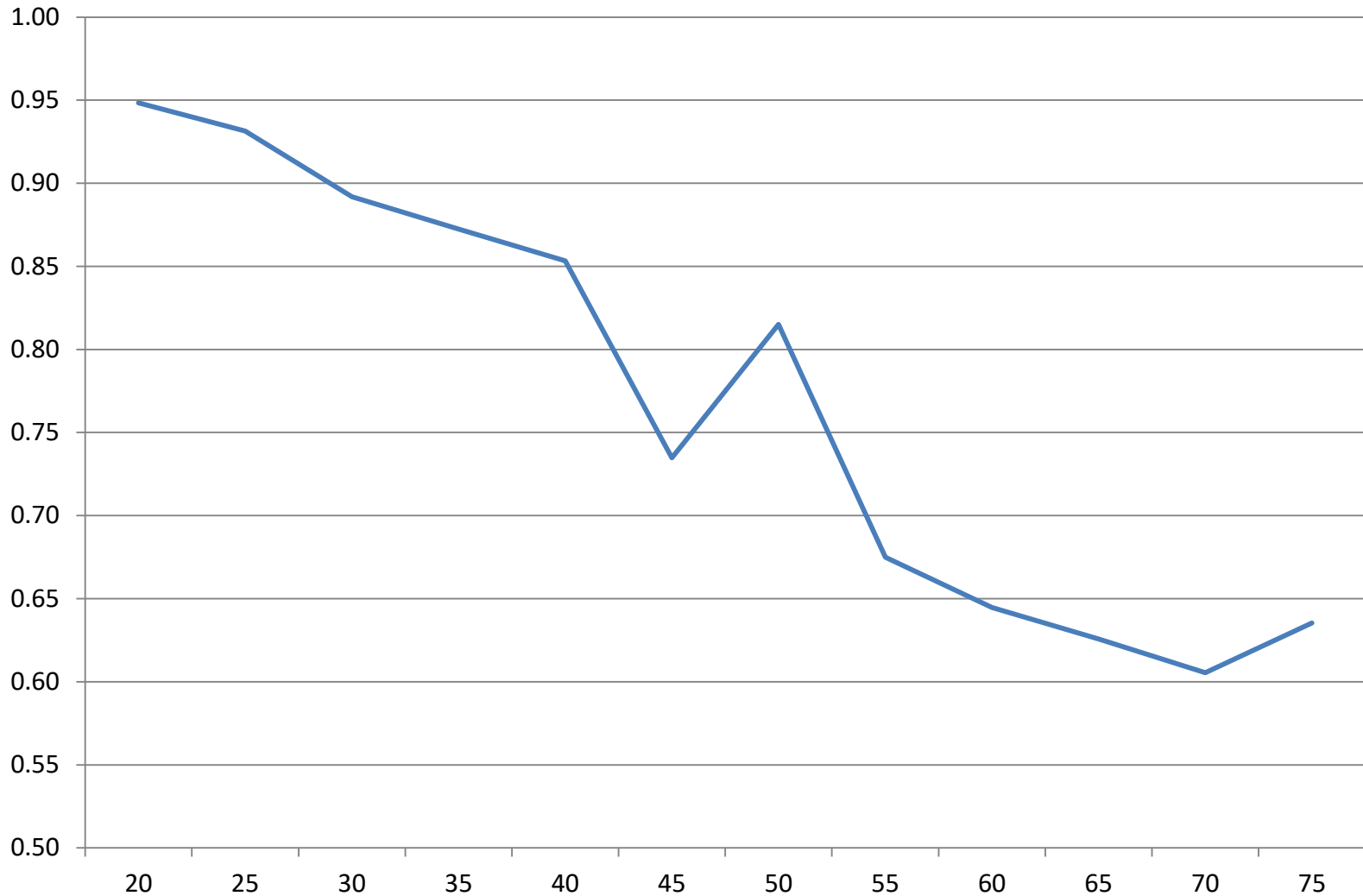
Social spending, % of GDP



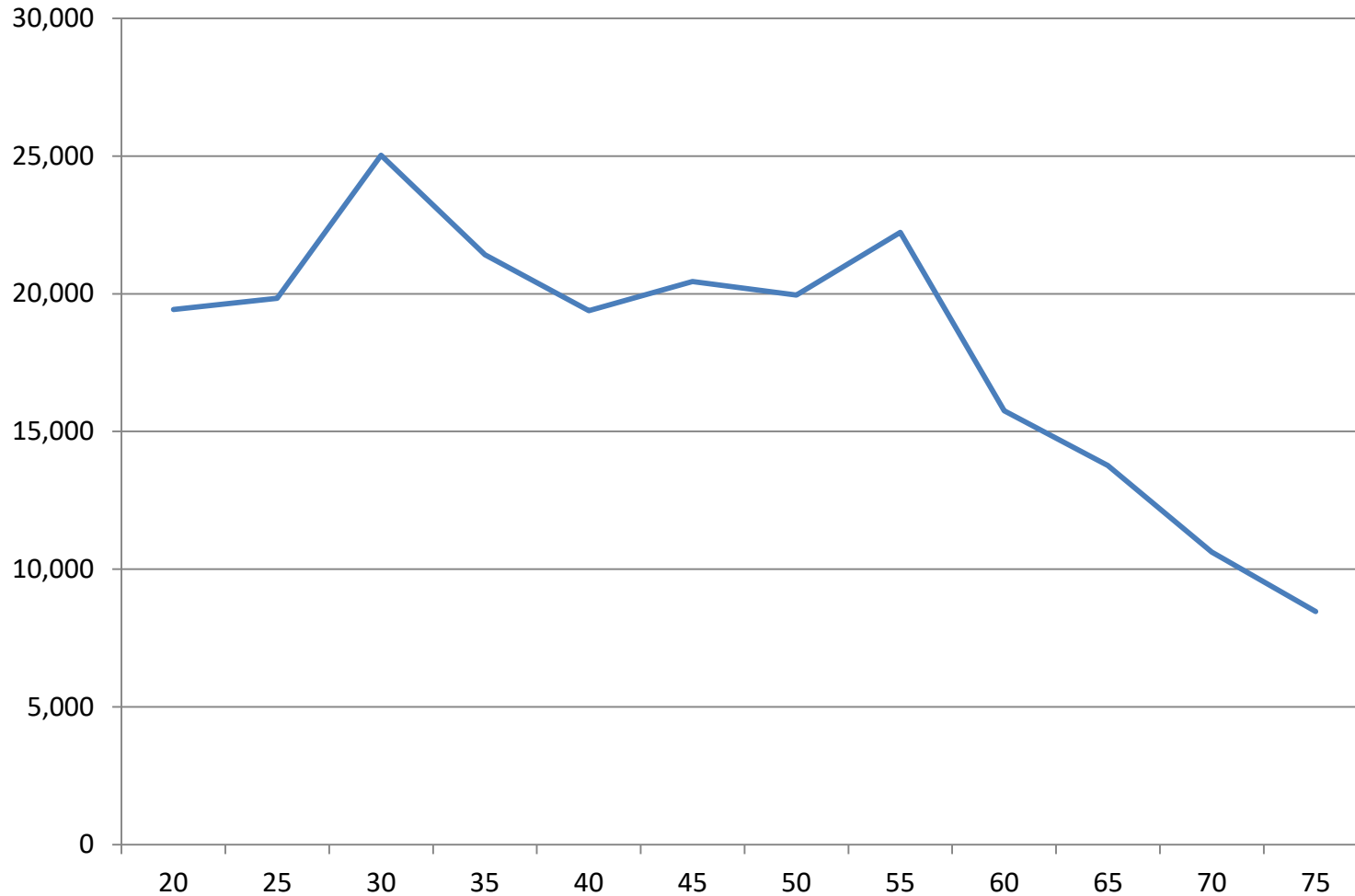
Ladder by Age Group (2015-17)



Social Support by Age Group (2015-17)



Per-capita Annual Income (\$) by Age Group (2015-17)



Summary

- The lower happiness level in Korea comparing to other OECD countries are mainly due to non-economic factors:
 - Social support
 - Freedom in life choice
 - Perception of corruption
- The seniors are particularly vulnerable