

Press release 15 May 2019

## Recipe for happy neighbourhoods

**Walkable and safe neighbourhoods close to green areas. That's the recipe for having satisfied and happy neighbours. This is shown in the results of the Happy Quest survey, in which Bonava asked 8,582 people what they regard as important in their neighbourhoods. The insights will be used to develop the residential areas of the future.**

**Finland is the country where most people feel happy and that they belong in their neighbourhood. Sweden moves down from first to third place, compared with 2017, which was due to an increase in Denmark and Finland.**

The survey shows that people living in an area that facilitates a healthy lifestyle are happier and feel in better physical and mental shape. Proximity to nature and areas where neighbours, family and friends can socialise are the principal factors in the neighbourhood that influence our perceived health.

Of those who indicated they were satisfied with their physical health, 7 of 10 live close to parks and green areas. Among those who are dissatisfied with their physical health, fewer have access to green areas. Of those who are dissatisfied with their mental well-being, only 2 of 10 socialise with their neighbours, while 6 of 10 of those who are satisfied with their mental well-being live in areas where neighbours have good relationships.

### **Safety is most important for satisfaction in a neighbourhood**

Safety, a good atmosphere and proximity to a food store are the most important factors for creating a sense of happiness in a neighbourhood. 8 of 10 rank security as the most significant factor that determines how happy they are where they live. Other important factors are that the area is walkable and bikeable and that it is close to parks and green areas.

### **Rankings: Most important for happy neighbourhoods**

1. Feels safe to be in, 82%
2. Good vibe and atmosphere, 73%
3. Conveniently located to grocery/shopping, 71%
4. Walkability/bikeability, 67%
5. Parks/green areas, 67%

### **Finns most satisfied – overtake Swedes in first place**

Finns are not only the world's happiest people, they are also the most satisfied with their neighbourhoods among the eight countries that Bonava studied. Finland achieved 82 out of 100 in the Happy Index, an increase of 9 compared with 2017. As a result, Finland replaced Sweden in first place.

Germany, St. Petersburg, Denmark, Norway, Estonia and Latvia also increased their degree of happiness in their neighbourhoods in 2019, compared with 2017. The only country that goes against the trend is Sweden, where the happiness index declined from 79 to 78.

### **Rankings: These countries are happiest in their neighbourhoods (Index 0–100)**



1. Finland 82 (73)
2. Denmark 79 (74)
3. Sweden 78 (79)
4. Germany 77 (74)
5. Norway 77 (73)
6. Latvia 76 (72)
7. St. Petersburg 73 (66)
8. Estonia 73 (65)

**Quote:**

“The insights from Happy Quest will be used in our core business: creating neighbourhoods where people feel they belong and, ultimately, happiness. Based on the results, we have developed a model, inspired by Maslow’s needs pyramid, which guides us in the right direction. We have our own method and a structure for developing our neighbourhoods,” says Joachim Hallengren, CEO of Bonava.

“The basis for satisfaction is that people can navigate their daily lives in practical terms. But if we want to build strong and happy neighbourhoods, what is also necessary is a feeling of safety, interaction between neighbours and a good atmosphere, which in turn gives the area a good reputation,” says Clara Westman, Head of Customer Insight at Bonava.

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**About the Happy Quest survey:**

The Happy Quest survey was conducted by Cliente on behalf of Bonava. The results are based on questionnaires completed by 8,582 people in Germany, St. Petersburg, Sweden, Finland, Denmark, Norway, Estonia and Latvia. The respondents comprise a representative section of the population aged 18 years and older. The results are from 2019 and are compared with results from 2017.

**About Happy Index:**

Happy Index defines and measures the degree of satisfaction in neighbourhoods. The index makes it possible to compare the degree of satisfaction between different countries. The index has been devised by Bonava and is statistically reliable.

**About Bonava:**

Bonava is a leading residential development company in Northern Europe. Bonava has been creating homes and neighbourhoods since the 1930s. Bonava has 2,100 employees and operates in Germany, Sweden, Finland, Denmark, Norway, St. Petersburg, Estonia and Latvia, with sales of SEK 14.0 billion in 2018. Bonava’s shares are listed on Nasdaq Stockholm.

**For more information about Happy Quest:** [www.bonava.com/en/about-us/happy-quest](http://www.bonava.com/en/about-us/happy-quest)