



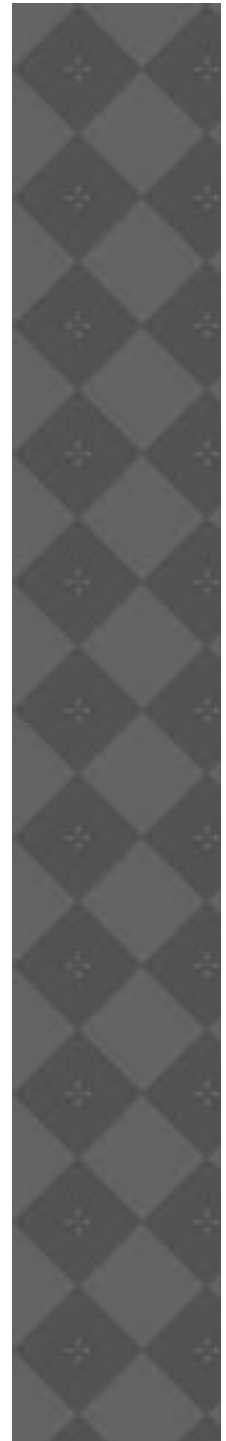
Laboratory for comparative social research

**HAPPINESS AND LIFE  
SATISFACTION AS INDICATORS  
OF SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING:  
COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE**

# Key question:

What are the differences in happiness-life satisfaction relationships in different groups of countries?

How country-level characteristics influence happiness-satisfaction relationship at the individual level?



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# Object of the research:

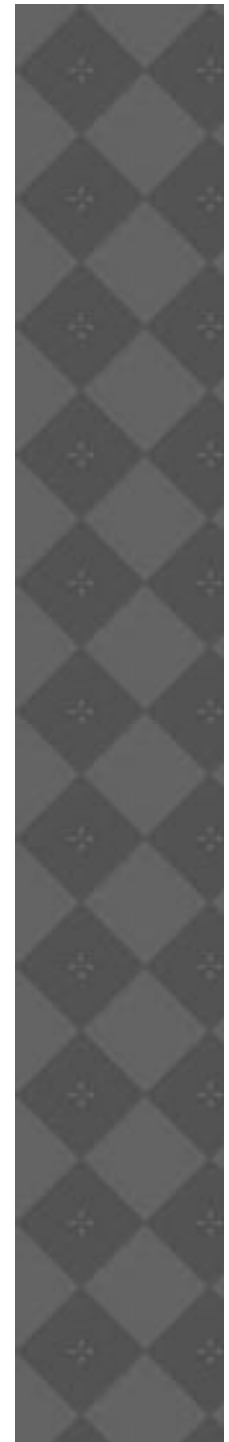
the categorization of countries according to 2 features, including:

- 1) cultural zone a country lies in (according mostly to dominating religion and relative cultural peculiarities);
- 2) level of human empowerment.



# Categorization of countries:

CULTURAL ZONE	SUFFER ZONE	STATE OF HUMAN EMPOWERMENT			THRIVE ZONE
		TRANSITION ZONE	LOWER	MIDDLE	
ISLAMIC EAST					
INDIC EAST					
CINIC EAST					
ORTHODOX EAST					
CATHOLIC WEST					
PROTESTANT WEST					
NEW WEST					
RETURNED WEST					
SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA					
LATIN AMERICA					



# Goals of the research:

- to study links between happiness and life satisfaction on the individual level;
- g to explore how links between happiness and life satisfaction change with time;
- g to examine how the country-level characteristics (economic welfare, political regime, level of development of human capital and human potential, character of relations between individual and society, features of culture and religion) influence happiness-satisfaction relationships at the individual level.

# Indicators: studying happiness-satisfaction on the individual level

## Independent variables:

groups of countries (the variable “Country/region disaggregated by cultural zones, levels of human empowerment, waves of WVS).

## Dependent variables:

happiness and life satisfaction

# Indicators: studying how the country-level characteristics influences happiness-satisfaction relations at the

g Independent variables: links between happiness and life satisfaction in different groups of countries and at different WVS stages at the individual level (received in the course of realization of the previous research phase).

g Dependent variables: economic welfare, political regime, level of development of human capital and human potential

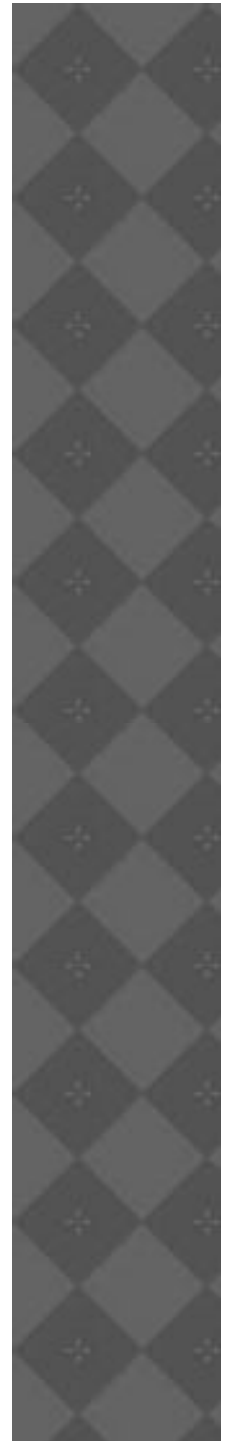


# 1st stage of the research

Analysis of the linkages between happiness and life satisfaction

in different countries (taken accordingly to cultural zones they belong to)

in the comparative perspective



# Logic of the analysis

## Subsample 1

4 variables → geographic zones: East, West, Latin America, Sub-Saharan Africa.

## Subsample 2

20 variables → 4 groups of countries (East, West, Latin America and Sub-Saharan Africa) + the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th waves of WVS.

## Subsample 3

10 variables → 10 cultural zones: Islamic East, Indic East, Cinic East, Orthodox East, Catholic West, Protestant West, New West, Returned West, Latin America, Sub-Saharan Africa.

## Subsample 4

50 variables → 10 cultural zones (Islamic East, Indic East, Cinic East, Orthodox East, Catholic West, Protestant West, New West, Returned West, Latin America and Sub-Saharan Africa) + the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th waves of WVS.

# working with data: main procedures → part 1

- comparing levels of happiness and life satisfaction in 4 groups of countries;
- comparing correlations between happiness and life satisfaction for every of 4 groups of countries;
- analysis of dynamics of happiness and life satisfaction in 4 groups of countries during 1981-2007 (all WVS waves);
- comparing dynamics of happiness and life satisfaction in 4 groups of countries during 1981-2007;

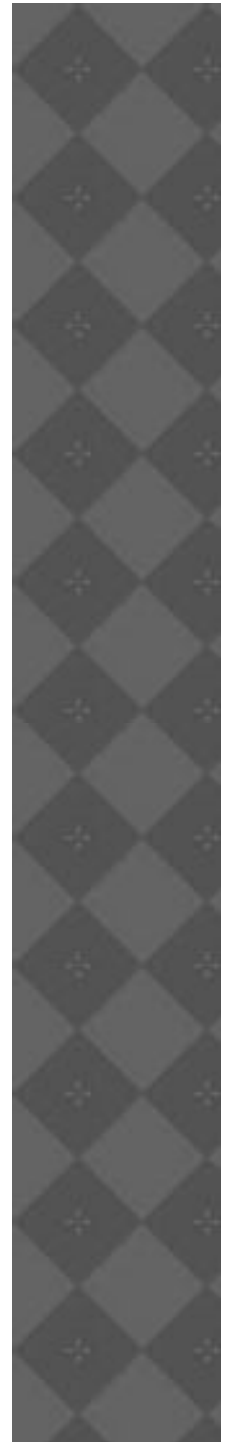
# working with data:

## main procedures → part 2

- comparing levels of happiness and life satisfaction in 10 groups of countries;
- comparing correlations between happiness and life satisfaction for every of 10 groups of countries;
- analysis of dynamics of happiness and life satisfaction in 10 groups of countries during 1981-2007 (all WVS waves);
- comparing dynamics of happiness and life satisfaction in 10 groups of countries during 1981-2007;

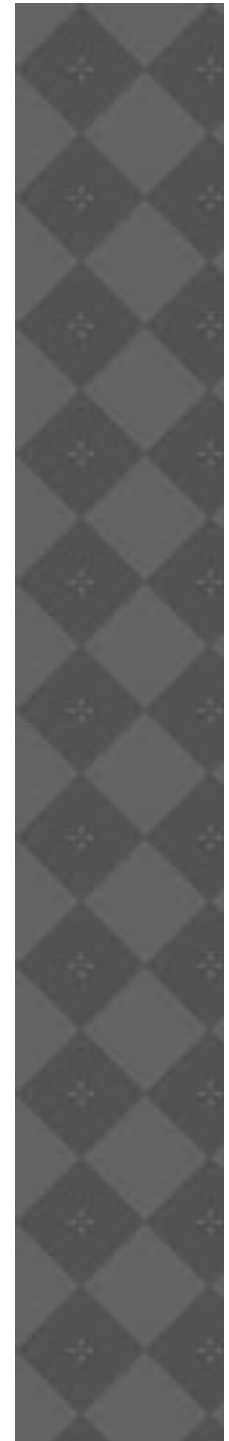
# Main conclusions

- levels of happiness and life satisfaction substantially differ from one group of countries to another;
- high/low happiness levels not always and not directly lead to high/low levels of satisfaction with life;
- correlations between happiness and life satisfaction substantially differ in different groups of countries;
- high happiness and satisfaction levels are not a precondition of strong correlations between happiness and life satisfaction;



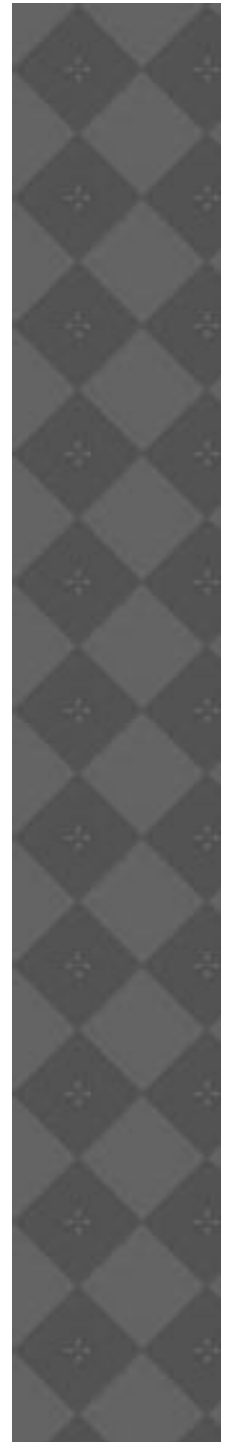
# RESULTS BY COUNTRIES

CULTURAL ZONE	LEVELS OF HAPPINESS AND LIFE SATISFACTION	STRENGTH OF HAPPINESS-SATISFACTION CORRELATION	STEADINESS OF HAPPINESS-SATISFACTION CORRELATION
NEW WEST PROTESTANT WEST	HIGH/HIGH	STRONG	QUITE STABLE
LATIN AMERICA	HIGH/HIGH	WEAK	NOT VERY STABLE
RETURNED WEST	LOW	STRONG	UNSTABLE
INDIC EAST	MIDDLE	WEAK	NOT VERY STABLE
ORTHODOX EAST	LOW	MIDDLE	NOT VERY STABLE
SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA	MIDDLE/LOW	WEAK	QUITE UNSTABLE
CATHOLIC WEST	LOW/MIDDLE	MIDDLE	NOT VERY STABLE
ISLAMIC EAST	LOW	MIDDLE	NOT STABLE



# PERSPECTIVES FOR THE FUTURE

- to revise civilization theories (Huntington), theories of human capital and human potential (A. Sen and oth.);
- to continue the analysis of the links between happiness and life satisfaction at the individual level □ to examine the selected samples of countries in a new dimension: state of human empowerment;
- to make the cluster analysis of countries chosen for the research by the correlation between happiness and life satisfaction □ to check whether clusters received coincide with the categorization initially used. Is it



**THANK YOU  
FOR YOUR  
ATTENTION!**