

## Canada takes top spot in best countries list

By Mark PavilonsEditorLocal Journalism Initiative

Canada has usurped its Scandinavian counterparts to claim the number one spot as the best country to live in. The 2021 Best Countries Report, compiled by U.S. News & World Report, ranked Canada as first overall. The rankings evaluate 78 countries across 26 rankings drawn from a survey of more than 17,000 global citizens, measuring 76 dimensions that have the potential to drive trade, travel and investment and directly affect national economies. The report was formed in partnership with BAV Group, a unit of global marketing communications company VMLY&R, and the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania. Canada excelled in several areas to put them on top. Our country placed first in terms of quality of life and social purpose. Canada placed third in 'agility' and being 'open for business.' We placed sixth in entrepreneurship. In the quality of life, we excelled in things like affordability, a good job market, economic stability, being family friendly and having political stability. We also received high marks for our public health and education systems. Our sense of 'social purpose' included things like our passion for human rights, social justice, racial equity and religious freedom. Surprisingly, we faltered a bit in the environment (score of 80.2) and climate goals (87.4). Helping our position as being 'open for business,' Canada enjoys transparent government practices and a favourable tax environment. Our 'agility' includes factors like being adaptable, modern and responsive to change. Interestingly, we ranked 12th in terms of 'power.' This included being a leader, economically influential and having strong international alliances. Canada ranked 14th in terms of cultural influence and 19th in terms of 'adventure.' Our tourism, scenic nature and friendly population are big hits among visitors and tourists. Canada ranked number 2 in terms of racial equality. The phrase 'A country is stronger when it is more racially and ethnically diverse' reflected Canada's nature. Canada placed 4th in terms of education, based on the attributes 'having a well-developed public education system, whether people would consider attending university there and if that country provides a top quality education.' We live in the best country in the world 'a global leader in quality education, entrepreneurship, human rights promotion, and inclusion. Ontario proudly is a leader at home and abroad when it comes to quality education, however, we know we must continue to invest in Ontario's students,' said Education Minister and King-Vaughan MPP Stephen Lecce. 'It is why we have announced a \$700 million increase in public education for the coming school year, because after an extraordinary year of difficulty, we want students to succeed in the fundamentals ' from literacy to numeracy and life and job skills. Our focus remains on reforming Ontario's education system and making it work for students, which is why we have announced a new math curriculum that mandates coding and financial literacy.' Canada also ranked 4th in terms of 'best countries for women,' in terms of human and gender rights, income equality and progress. We made the top 5 (placing 5th) 'in terms of being a good country in which to raise children. Education, health care, safety and being 'family friendly' all contribute to this status. The 2021 Best Countries to Headquarter a Corporation ranking was a compilation of nine attributes: being connected to the rest of the world, corrupt, economically stable, having an educated population, a favorable tax environment, is a place I would live, is safe, has well-developed infrastructure and well-developed legal framework.' Canada placed 2nd in this category. Being transparent 'having open business and government practices ' is a big plus. Canada took second in this category, with high levels of trustworthiness and low corruption. Canada was 9th in the world for 'green living.' This category reviewed being health conscious, innovative and caring for the environment. Our nation did place 6th in terms of a 'comfortable retirement.' This category measures affordability, pleasant climate, property rights and public health. 'Canada owes its success to our most valuable resource, our people. People who believe in the strength of our diversity. People who strive to live up to our shared values of peace, equality and compassion,' said King-Vaughan MP Deb Schulte. 'Throughout this pandemic, we've been there for one another because that's what it means to be Canadian. We're neighbours helping neighbours. Small businesses that are there for their community. Women and men in uniform protecting the most vulnerable. Doctors and nurses keeping our families healthy.' What makes our country so special is not the belief that we are the best country in the world, but knowing that we can build it together.' King Mayor Steve Pellegrini echoed those sentiments, pointing to King's rural beauty. 'There is no surprise that Canada was chosen as the top rated country when it is comprised of so many gems; in particular, King. We are a unique and special place that prides ourselves on its natural heritage and scenic beauty, its agricultural lands, its rich local and rural history and its rural traditions of farming, mills and a vibrant quality of life; however it's our people that truly make King great. Over 98% of King Township is within the Greenbelt area of which 65% of King's area is contained within the Oak Ridges Moraine. The Moraine is a famed geological formation created by a retreating glacier in the last ice age. King

Township is one of nine local municipalities that make up the Regional Municipality of York. It encompasses the villages and hamlets of Ansnorveldt, Kettleby, King City, Laskay, Lloydtown, Nobleton, Pottageville, Schomberg and Snowball. An important asset of King Township is its strong rural economy and agricultural sector, which depends upon the Holland Marsh's deep fertile soils and rich growing season. About 60% of the Holland Marsh, also known as 'Ontario's Vegetable Basket' is located in King.