



CIFAR

CANADIAN INSTITUTE
for ADVANCED RESEARCH

Measuring, Understanding and Using Subjective Well-Being

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CIFAR and UBC

**CSLS-ICP Conference on the Implications of SWB research
for Public Policy in Canada**

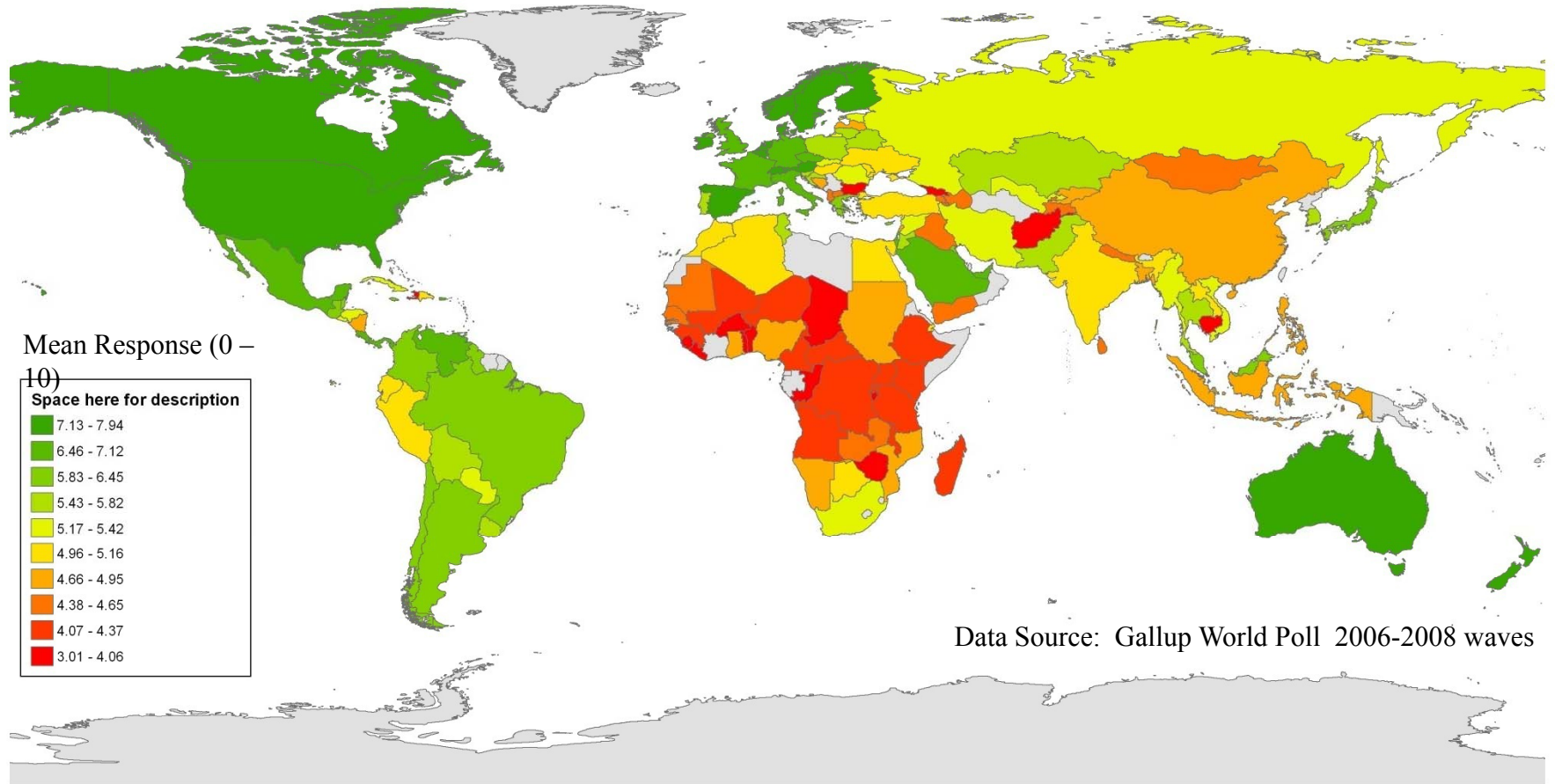
Chateau Laurier, Ottawa, December 1, 2010

With the collaboration of Chris Barrington-Leigh, Anthony Harris, Haifang Huang, Jian Mardukhi and Shun Wang

- Data: individual observations using global, national, local, even clinical samples assessing life evaluations and emotions
- Findings: Positives>Negatives, Social>Material, Context>Content
- Policy Applications: Using SWB data and findings to reform cost/benefit analysis

How is your life today? (Cantril ladder)

Life Today - Ladder



Mean Response (0 – 10)

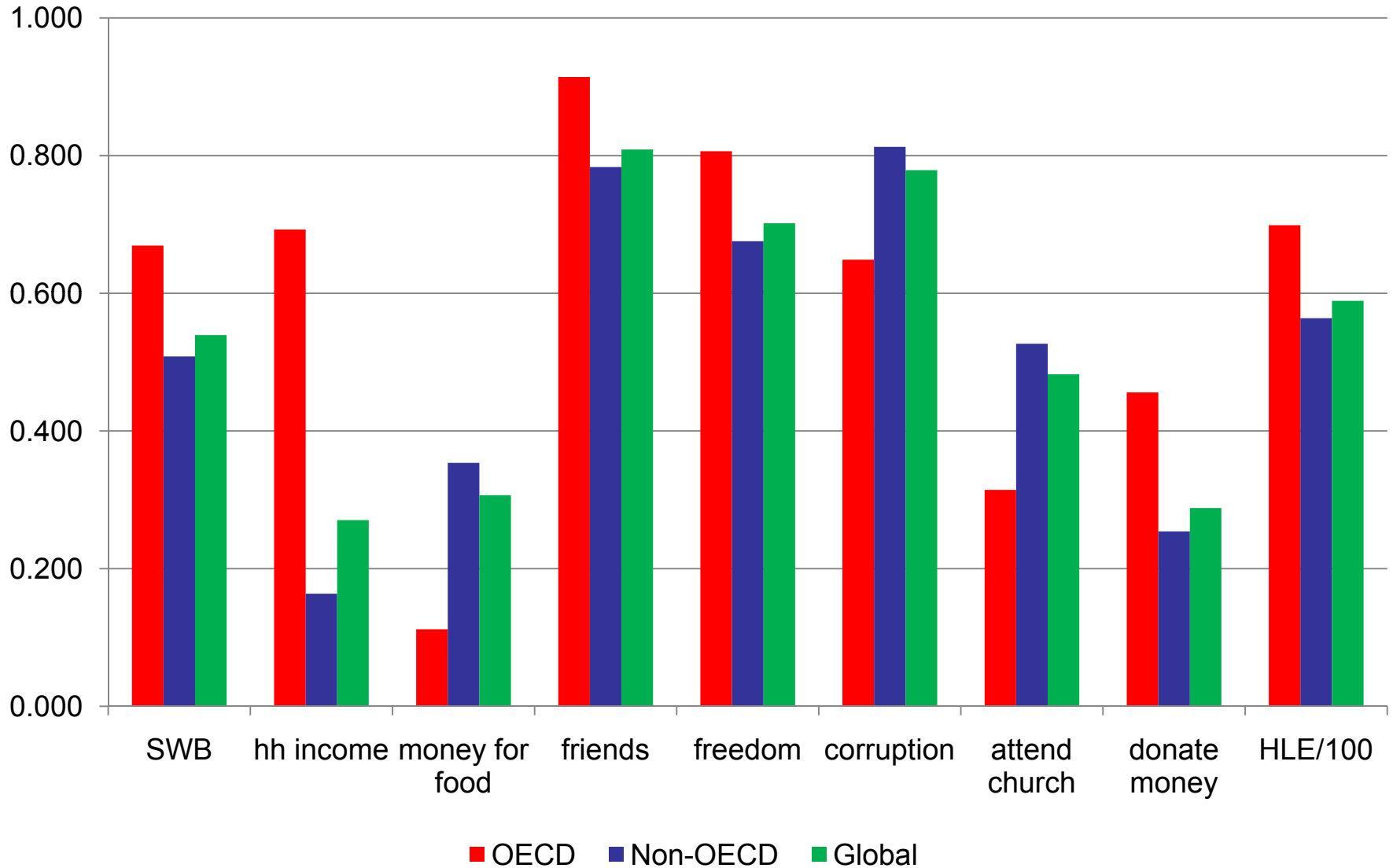
Space here for description

- 7.13 - 7.94
- 6.46 - 7.12
- 5.83 - 6.45
- 5.43 - 5.82
- 5.17 - 5.42
- 4.96 - 5.16
- 4.66 - 4.95
- 4.38 - 4.65
- 4.07 - 4.37
- 3.01 - 4.06

Data Source: Gallup World Poll 2006-2008 waves

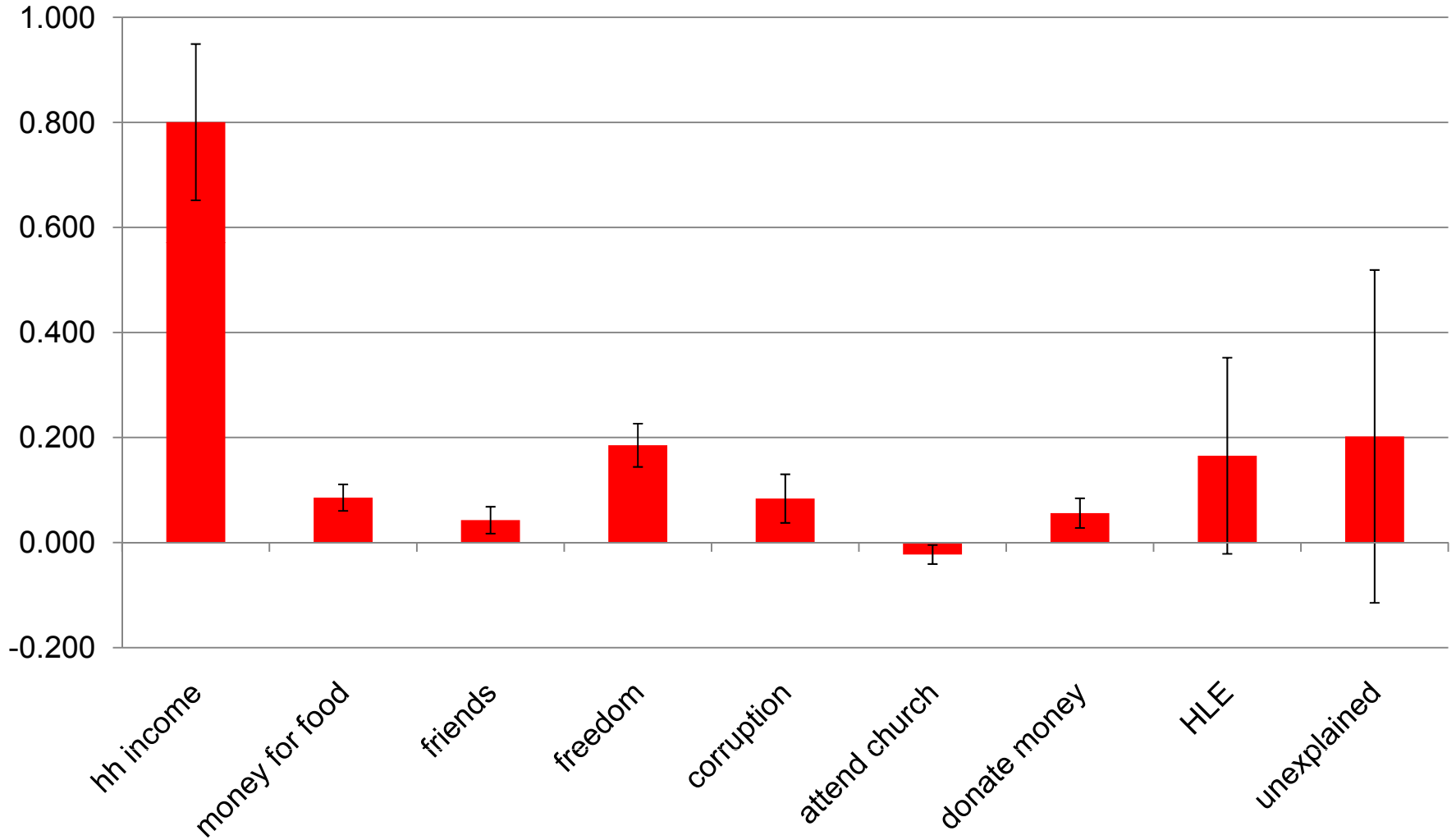
Comparing Life in the OECD and non-OECD countries

(Scaled Gallup World Poll wave 1-4)



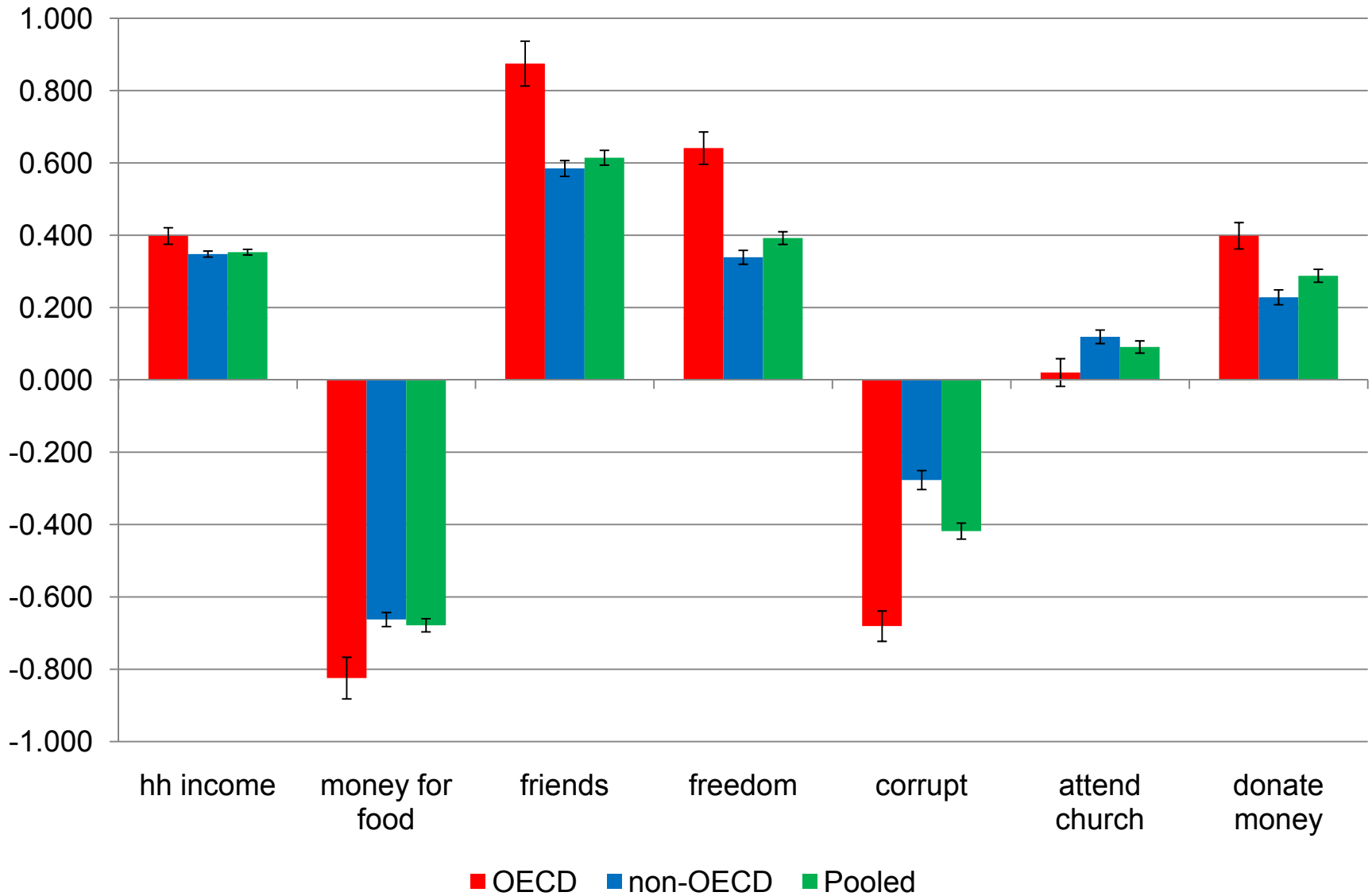
Why is SWB (Life Today) higher in the OECD than non-OECD countries?

(SWB is on a 10 point scale, vertical lines show 95% confidence range, Gallup World Poll wave 1-4)



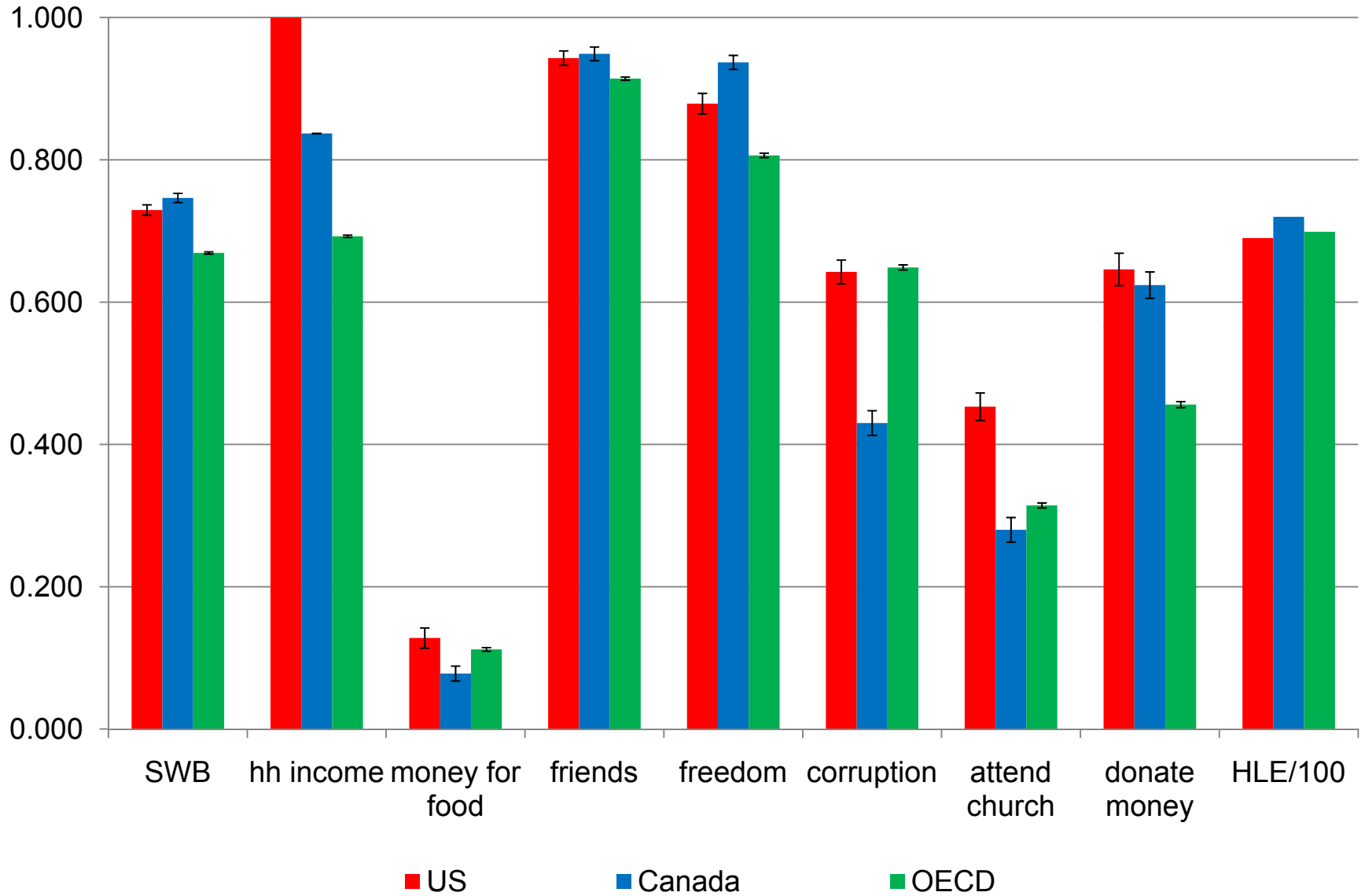
Coefficients in the OECD and non-OECD countries

(Gallup World Poll waves 1-4)



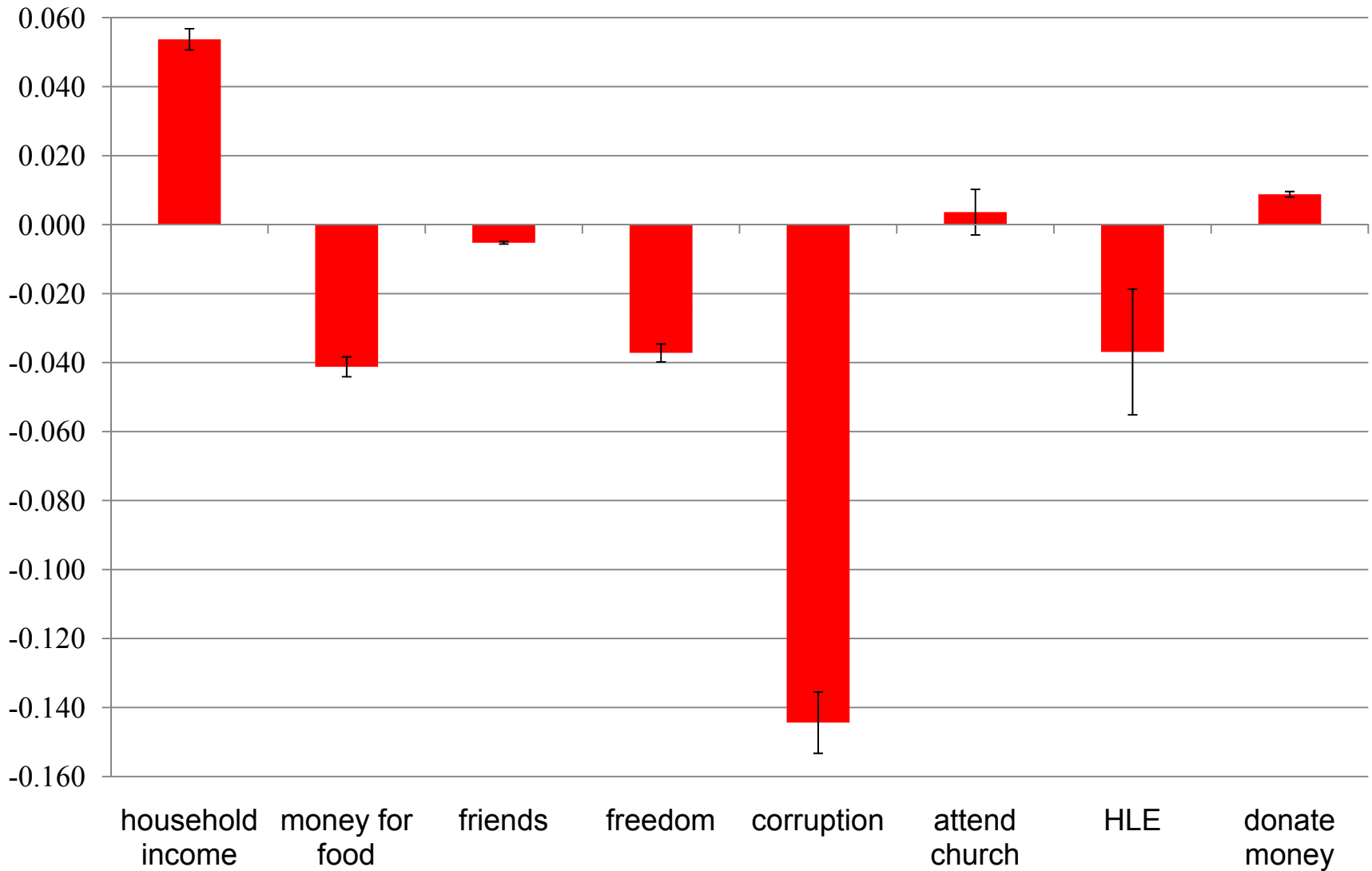
Comparing Life in the US and Canada

(Scaled Gallup World Poll waves 1-4)



Why is SWB lower in the US than Canada?

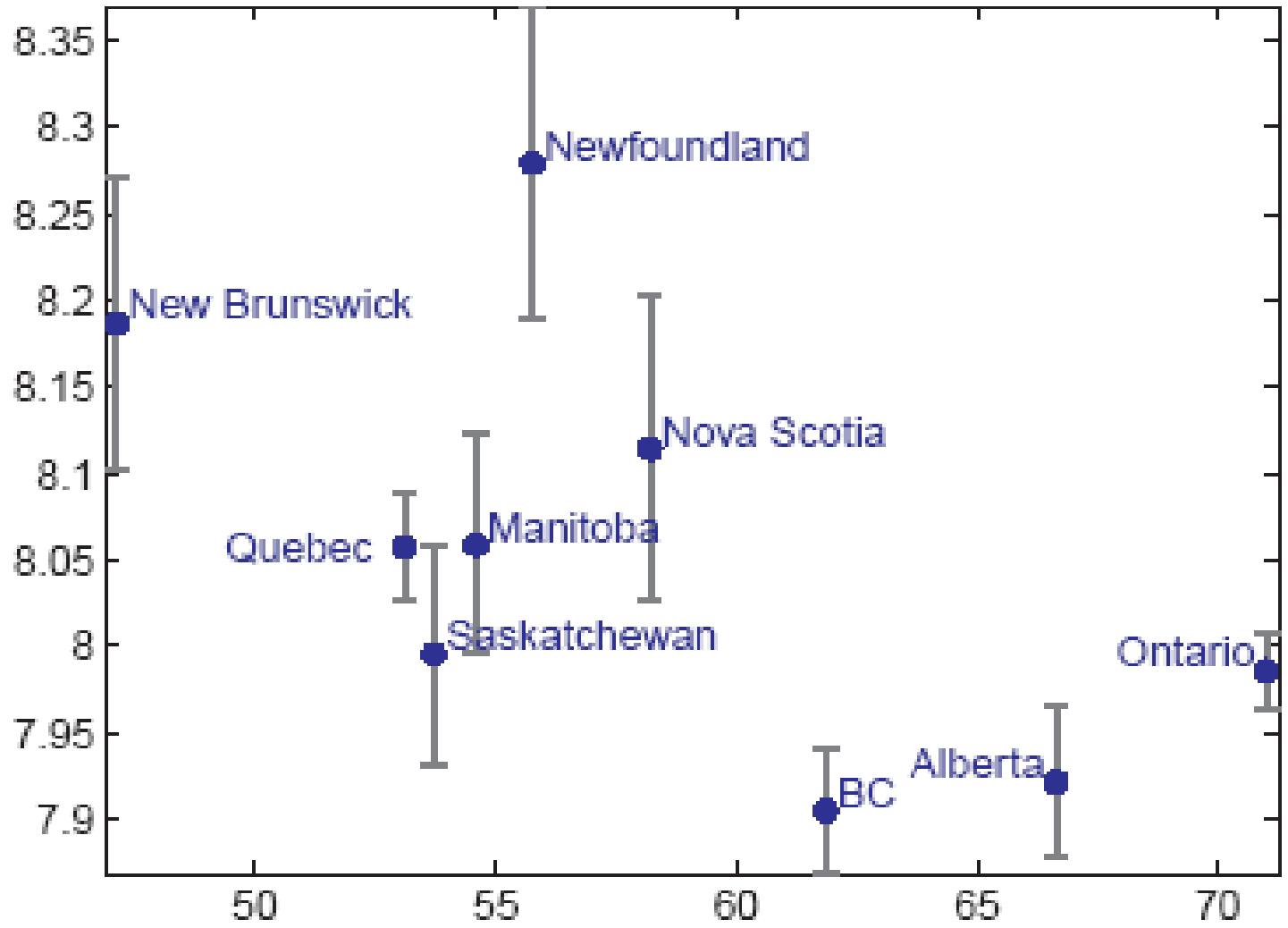
(Gallup World Poll waves 1-4)



International vs intra-national differences in social capital and well-being

- Differences among Canadian cities or provinces 1/10th as large as among countries
- And the ranking of variables is different too
- Across countries, incomes differ more than trust and social capital
- Across provinces or cities in Canada, trust varies more than incomes, although still much less than among nations

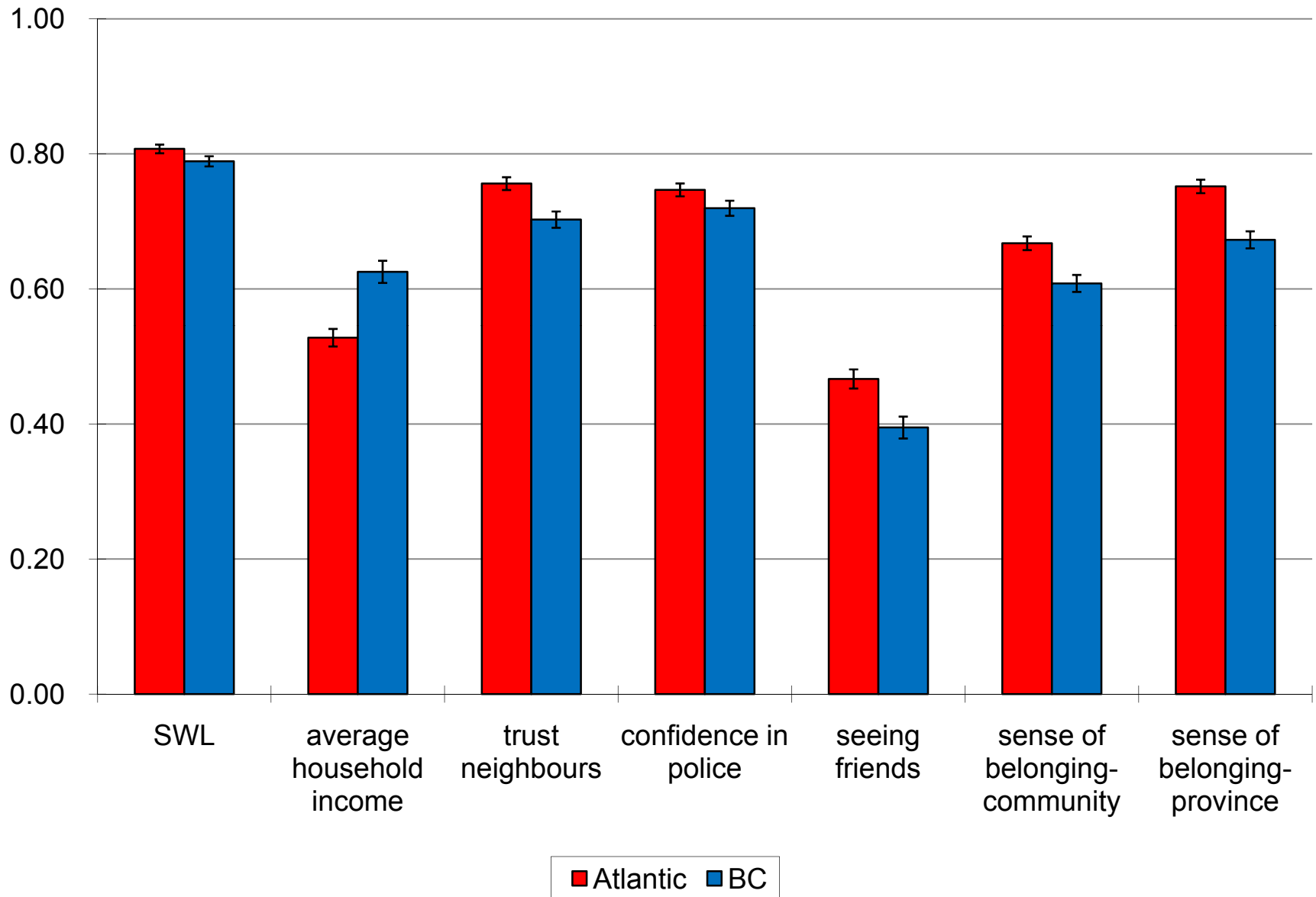
Life Satisfaction



Mean Income

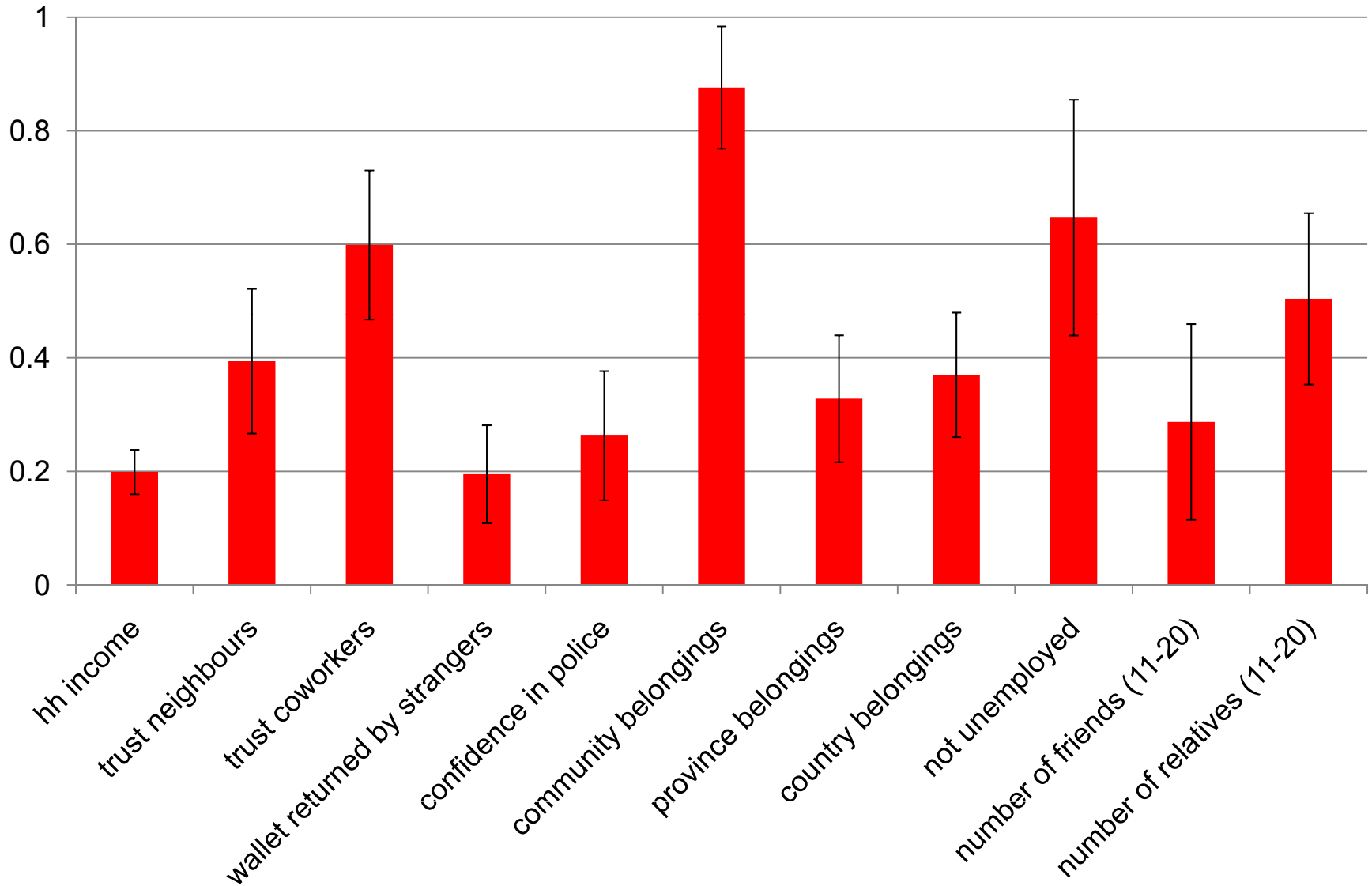
Comparing Life in the Atlantic Provinces with life in BC

(Scaled Canadian GSS17)



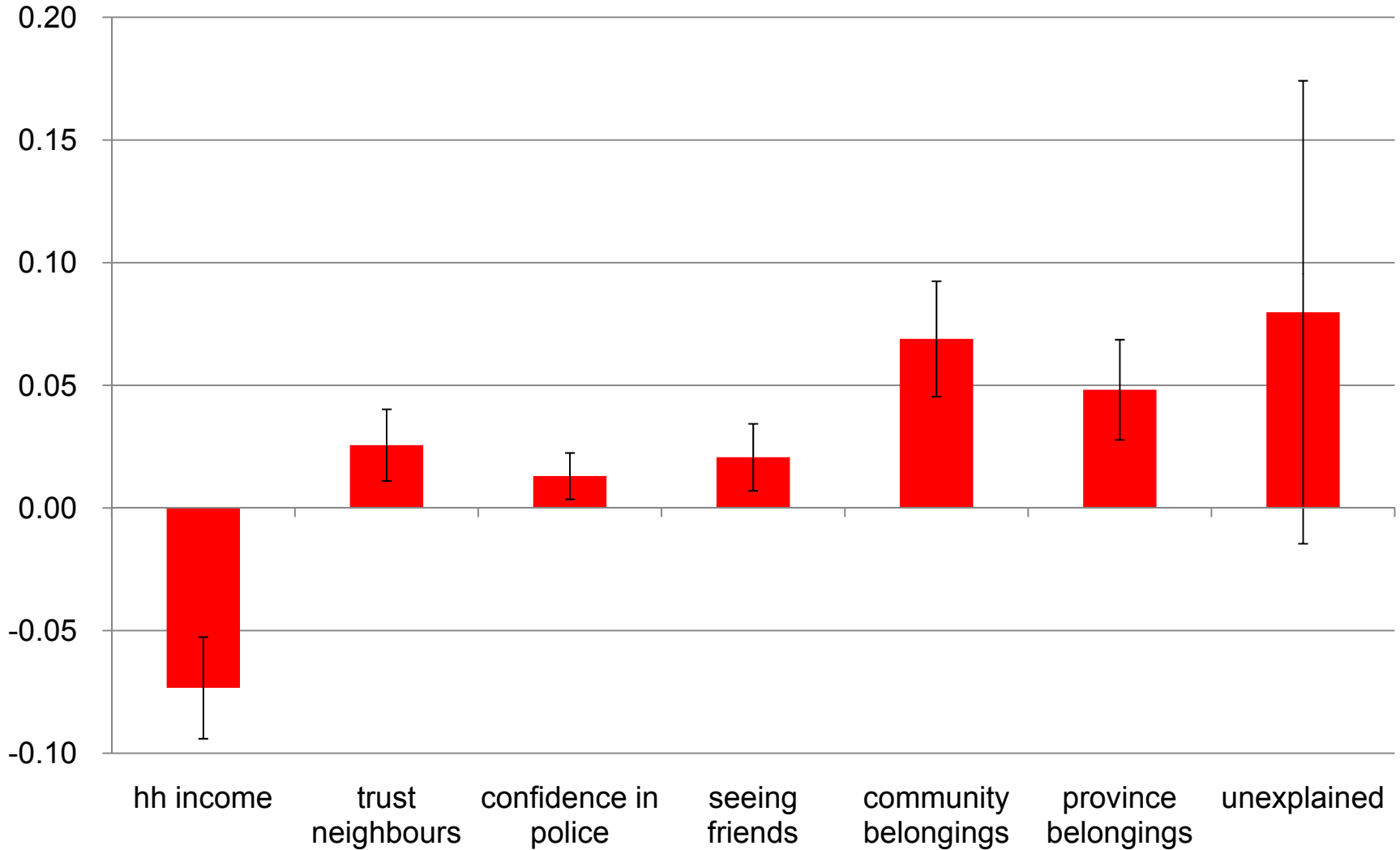
Effects on Life Satisfaction

(SWL is on a 10-point scale, Canadian GSS17)

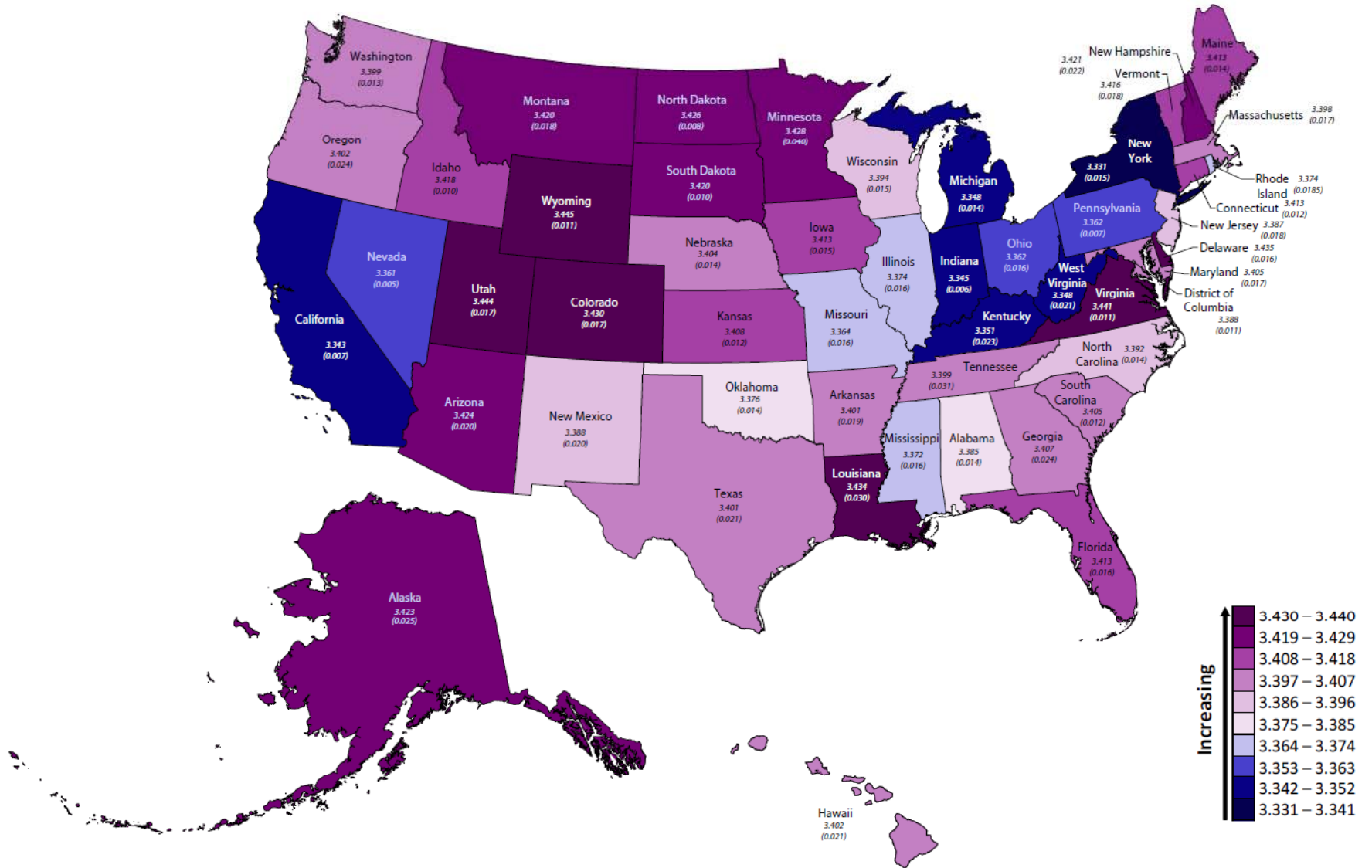


Why is average life satisfaction higher in the Atlantic Provinces than in BC?

(SWL is on a 10-point scale, Canadian GSS17)



US States Map of Life Satisfaction - CDC-BRFSS 2005-2009



Notes on Blinder-Oaxaca decomposition SWL in Atlantic provinces vs BC

- Differences are calculated using pooled coefficients
- Coefficients on all variables are insignificantly different between Atlantic and BC samples
- Atlantic income disadvantage more than offset by greater social capital there
- Immigrant share .05 in Atlantic Canada, .28 in BC; explains a small (.02) and insignificant part of the residual Atlantic advantage