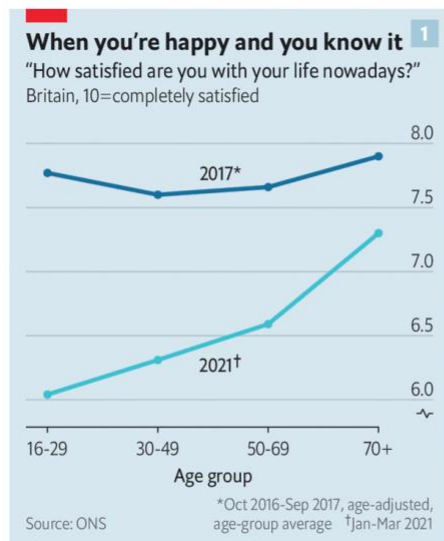


International

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It might seem crazy

The pandemic has changed the shape of global happiness



The Economist

In Britain, a country with excellent happiness data, everyone has slipped, but some more than others (see chart 1). There, and in other rich countries, the age profile of happiness before the pandemic struck was roughly U-shaped when plotted on a graph. People began their adult lives in a cheerful state. They became glummer in middle age. Then, after about the age of 50, they started to become happier again. If they made it to a very advanced age, however, they fell back into the doldrums.

Today the pattern is an upward slope. The young are less satisfied than the middle-aged, who are less satisfied than the old. That might be put down to