

Happy Life Years in 67 nations in the 1990s

How long and happy people live

Top/bottom	Full list	Technical details	Cite as
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Top/bottom 5

<i>Top⁵</i> > 58 years		<i>Middle range</i> ± 41years		<i>Bottom</i> <30 years	
Switzerland	63,0	Philippines	43,7	Georgia	29,7
Iceland	61,8	Greece	41,4	Russia	27,8
Denmark	59,9	Turkey	40,4	Armenia	26,2
Sweden	59,9	Hungary	38,5	Ukraine	22,5
Ireland	58,4	Bolivia	37,5	Moldavia	20,5

Full list, alphabetic

<i>nation</i>	<i>enjoyment of life¹</i> (scale 0 - 1)	<i>length of life²</i> (in years)	<i>Happy life years³</i>
Argentina	6,8	72,6	49,1
Armenia	3,7	70,9	26,2
Australia	7,3	78,2	56,9
Austria	6,1	76,7	47,0
Azerbaijan	4,9	71,1	34,7
Bangladesh	6,0	56,9	34,2
Belarus	4,4	69,3	30,3
Belgium	7,3	76,9	56,4
Bolivia	6,2	60,5	37,5
Brazil	7,0	66,6	46,3
Britain	7,2	76,8	55,4
Bulgaria	4,3	71,2	30,5

Canada	7,7	79,1	60,6
Chile	6,9	75,1	52,0
China	6,7 ⁴	69,2	46,7
Colombia	8,1 ⁴	70,3	57,1
Costa Rica	7,9 ⁴	76,6	60,8
Croatia	5,5	71,6	39,6
Czecho-Slovakia	5,9	71,7	42,3
Denmark	8,0	75,3	59,9
Dominican Republic	6,8	70,3	47,9
Ecuador	6,4	69,5	44,5
El Salvador	7,4	69,4	51,7
Estonia	5,0	69,2	34,6
Finland	7,5	76,4	57,1
France	6,4	78,7	50,5
Georgia	4,1	73,2	29,7
Germany	6,7	76,4	51,4
Ghana	7,7 ⁴	57,0	43,9
Greece	5,3	77,9	41,4
Guatemala	7,2	66,1	47,3
Honduras	7,0	68,8	48,0
Hungary	5,6	68,9	38,6
Iceland	7,8	79,2	61,8
India	6,2	61,6	38,5
Ireland	7,6	76,4	58,4
Italy	7,0	78,0	54,6
Japan	6,3	79,9	50,0
Latvia	4,8	68,0	32,5
Lithuania	5,0	70,2	35,1
Luxembourg	7,8	76,1	59,2
Macedonia	5,2	71,9	37,6
Mexico	7,3	72,1	52,5
Moldavia	3,0	67,8	20,5
Netherlands	7,5	77,5	58,3
Nicaragua	7,6	67,5	51,2
Nigeria	6,3 ⁴	51,4	32,6
Norway	7,4	77,6	57,5
Panama	7,1	73,4	52,3
Paraguay	6,8	69,1	46,7
Peru	6,0	67,7	40,4
Philippines	6,5	67,4	43,7
Poland	6,2	71,1	43,8
Portugal	6,7	74,8	50,5
Romania	5,4	69,6	37,7
Russia	4,2	65,5	27,8
South-Africa	5,7	64,1	36,7
South-Korea	6,3	71,7	45,3
Slovenia	6,0	73,2	43,8
Spain	6,5	77,7	50,8

Sweden	7,6	78,4	59,9
Switzerland	8,1	78,2	63,0
Turkey	5,9	68,5	40,4
Ukraine	3,3	68,5	22,5
Uruguay	6,7	72,7	49,0
USA	7,4	76,4	56,9
Venezuela	6,4	72,3	46,0

Technical details

1. Average enjoyment of life assessed by means of surveys in general public samples. This list is based on responses to questions on life-satisfaction.
 - Most scores are based on responses to the following question:
"All things considered, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your life-as-a-whole now? 1 dissatisfied 10 satisfied".
 - This question is categorized as query type 122C, sub-type O-SLW/c/sq/n/10/aa. This classification is explained in section 4/3 of the introductory text.
 - Scores on this 1-10 scale were transformed linearly to range 0-10. This transformation is explained in the introductory text, chapter 7.3.
 - Scores of most Latin American nations are based on responses to a somewhat different question.
"In general, would you say that you are satisfied with your life? Would you say that you are...very satisfied (4), quite satisfied (3), satisfied (2) or not very satisfied (1)?"
 - This question is categorized as query type 121B, subtype O-Slu/c/sq/v/4/b. This classification is explained in section 4/3 of the introductory text.
 - Scores on this 1-4 scale were transformed to range 0-10 by means of expert weighing of response options. This so-called 'Thurstone procedure' is explained in chapter 4/3 of the introductory text.
 - Since the above 1-10 questions have also been used in five of these Latin American nations, we could check whether this transformation yields comparable results. The transformed scores appeared to be slightly higher and were therefore corrected by subtracting 0,5 point.
 - This combination of scores on two slightly different questions results in a list of 67 cases. The number of cases is smaller if one restricts to responses on identical questions. Restriction to a common question on 'happiness' (query type 111B) yields 60 cases and limitation to the above 1-10 life-satisfaction item (query type 1222C) 54 cases.
2. Life expectancy is estimated on the basis of civil registrations of birth and death. Source: Human Development Report 2001, table 1.
3. 'Years lived happy' is an estimate of how long and happy the average citizen will live in that nation in this era.
 - Computation: 0-1 enjoyment of life multiplied by expected length of life
 - Also referred to as: "Happy life-expectancy" or "Happiness Adjusted Life-Years" shortened as "HALY's (Analogous to Disability Adjusted Life Years, or "DALY's).
 - This variable is described in more detail in Veenhoven, R. [Happy Life Expectancy. A comprehensive indicator of quality of life in nations](#), in: Social Indicators Research,

1996, vol.39, pp. 1-58, that can be downloaded from:
<http://www.eur.nl/fsw/research/veenhoven/Pub1990s/96b-txt.rtf>. Further
argumentation of theoretical significance of this measure can be found in Veenhoven,
R. [The four qualities of life: Ordering concepts and measures of the good life](#), in
Journal of Happiness Studies, 2000, vol. 1, pp. 1-39
(<http://www.eur.nl/fsw/research/veenhoven/Pub2000s/200c-txt.rtf>).

- This measure scored highest in a scholarly review of indicators. See: Hagerty, M., et. al. 'Quality of Life indexes for national policy: Review and agenda for research', *Social Indicators research*, 2001, vol. 55, pp. 1-96.

4. Life-satisfaction scores may be inflated in some countries, due to under sampling of rural population or inexperience with anonymous interviewing. Dubious cases are China, Colombia, Costa-Rica, Ghana and Nigeria.

Cite as:

Veenhoven, R., *Happy Life Years in 67 nations in the 1990s*, World Database of Happiness, Rank Report 2002/2, Internet: www.eur.nl/fsw/research/happiness