

WORLD DATABASE OF HAPPINESS

Archive of research findings on subjective enjoyment of life

Annual Report 2021

Aims

Accumulation of scientific knowledge on happiness, in order to provide a basis for informed decisions by individuals and organizations.

Approach

- Gathering *all* the empirical research findings on happiness and presenting these in an easy to overview standardized way.
- Updating this collection continuously, thus providing a basis for ongoing research synthesis.
- Using the collection for synthesis of research findings on happiness and particular topics, such as private wealth, and updating these reviews periodically.

Technique

Findings are described in a standard format and terminology on electronic *finding pages*. These pages are stored in an online *findings-archive* where they can be selected and sorted in various ways.

The technique allows for a new way of research reviewing, in which links to online pages with full detail are used.

Example: [Will happiness-trainings make us happier? A research synthesis using an online findings-archive](#)

Collections

The World Database of Happiness consists of the following collections, which can be browsed on the website: *Contents by January 19, 2022*

- Bibliography: **15571** publications in Bibliography of happiness, of which 8045 report an empirical study that is eligible for inclusion in the findings archive
- Measures of happiness: **2.880** measures of happiness, mostly single survey questions varying in wording and response scale.
- Distributional findings: **20.439** distributional findings in the general public, of which 19.818 in 204 nations and 3813 findings in 2.877 regions and cities in nations.
2349 findings in 193 special publics
- Correlational findings: **21.987** correlational findings observed in 2900 studies, excerpted from 2051 publications.

Reports

The following reports are generated automatically

- *Publication reports*: Selection of publications on a particular subject. [Example income](#)
- *Nation reports*: Selection of all findings in a particular nation. [Example Netherlands](#)
- *Public reports*: Selection of all findings on a particular group [Example Retired](#)
- *Correlation reports*: Selection of correlational finding on a particular topic [Example age](#)

Website

<https://worlddatabaseofhappiness.eur.nl>

Uses in 2021	since start in 1998	added in 2021
• Visitors website	1.6942.210	251.766 ¹
○ Unique visitors		38.104
○ From N countries		160
• Citations (Google Scholar)	3.720	199
• Media mentions (Nexis Uni)	571	16
• Datafiles provided on demand (StatesOfNations, TrendsInNations)	1.728	40

The number of visits to the website has triple since 2020 (72.228), which seems to be largely due to the use of links to finding pages in the database used in publications, in particular in recent reports of research syntheses.

Additions in 2021:

• Publications in bibliography	15.571	756
• Studies using a valid happiness measure ²	16.369	1.600
• Measures of Happiness used in these studies	1.499	148
• Distributional findings		
○ In places (nations, regions)	20.439	7.734
○ In publics other than general	3.149	99
• Correlational findings	21.987	2.179
• Categories in classifications		
○ In bibliography	2.045	44
○ In correlational findings	4.529	492
○ In publics other than general	231	20

¹ Estimate based on count for July-December 2021..

² Earlier reports mentioned the number of publications that report a study in which a valid measure of happiness was used. Since many publications report more such studies than one, the actual number of studies is substantially higher.

Re-design website.

- The new website was launched in August 2020 and was further improved in 2021. Redesign continues in 2022
- Introductory texts to collections were revised
- The start page was revised. Short descriptions in different languages added

Publications in 2021 based on the database

- [Effect van de COVID-19 pandemie op geluk in Nederland](#)
- [Happiness in nations: Pursuit of greater happiness for a greater number of citizens](#)
- [Daily happiness: How well we feel most of the time](#)
- [Will healthy eating make you happier? A research synthesis using an online findings-archive](#)
- [Is gelukstraining effectief? \(Is happiness training effective?\)](#)
- [World Database of Happiness](#)
- [Geluk: economische perspectieven](#)
- [Happiness and consumption: A research synthesis using an online findings archive](#)
- [How to construct a trend when survey questions have changed over time: The case of happiness in Japan 1958-2007](#)

Under review (available as EHERO working paper)

- [Happiness and personal wealth; An updated research synthesis using an online finding archive](#)
- [How to complete the rank-list of happiness in nations in the 2010s: Estimating overall happiness in nations from components of happiness using mixed-effect models](#)
- [Does urban greenery add to happiness? A research synthesis using an online finding archive](#)

People: Less activity of local volunteers in 2021 due to Corona pandemic and closure of university building. Extension of involvement of external research associates who work on distance.

- **Home team**
 - 16 persons of which 14 volunteers.
 - Together about 3 fte. in 2021.
 - 2 volunteers could not work this year due to illness (Joop Mulder, Piet Ouweneel)
- **External associates**
 - 31 of which 16 were active in 2021
 - 9 new associates were recruited in 2021
- **Guests:** No guests in 2021 due to Corona19 pandemic
- **IT support:** Redesign of the website by 3 members of Erasmus IT department (Phillip Brands, Ferry de Groot, Omar Gabriel-Tellers)

Planning for 2022

- Completion of the new website
 - Adding 'reports', which are now still on the old website
 - Adding 'States of nations' datafile which is also still on the old website
- Trial paid entry:
 - Invitation to authors of promising papers once their paper is included in the Bibliography
- Recruiting sponsors for particular sections of the database (with Erik Bemelmans)
 - Indirect using seminars for sectors. Unsuccessfully tried in 2021 for health insurance and pension funds in the Netherlands. Aim for 2022: housing sector in The Netherlands.
 - Direct mailing of sponsor proposals. Unsuccessfully tried in 2021 for sex-industry and dating sites based in The Netherlands. Aim for 2022: approach of other parties in the sectors tried in 2021
- Recruiting associates who take responsibility for a particular section of the database
 - Call in publications about the database and at conferences
 - Invitation to researchers who seem to focus on happiness
- Revision of the instructions for entering research findings in the Access database. Next to the textual manual a visual demonstration
- Presentation of the database and applications at international conferences. Signaling of the database in newsletters of research associations
- Application of the database on particular subjects, together with research associates

Happiness in publics

- Happiness of *transgenders* (Jos Veenhoven)
- Happiness of *house wives* (Shoirakhon Nurdinova)

• *Happiness in places*

- Happiness in *regions* (Dimitriz Ballas)
- Happiness in *Croatia* (Maja Tadic)
- Happiness in *Kazakhstan* (Shyryn Tlenchiyeva)
- Happiness in *Indonesia* (Yuffi Adriani)
- Happiness in *Romania* (Sergiu Baltatescu)
- Happiness in *South Africa* (Elizabeth Bothma)
- Happiness in *Uzbekistan* (Shoirakhon Nurdinova, Rauf Salahodjaev)
- Why are the *Danes happier than the Dutch* (Jeroen Boelhouwer SCP, Sasqia Chin Hon Foei, Ruut Veenhoven)

Determinants of happiness

- Effect of *public policies* on happiness (Serkan Akilli, Bekir Celic)
- Effect of societal *modernization* on happiness (Paul Thomas)
- Effect of *city design* on happiness (Sahar Samavati)
- Effect of perceived *meaning of life* on happiness (Yomna Morsej, Yasmine Hersham)
- Effect of *retirement* on happiness (Susan Hu, Sunny Huang, Jenny Hsu)
- Effect of sporting on happiness (Sajadeh Mortazavi)
- Effect of use of stimulants on happiness (Valerie McGaha, Chloe Rodgers)
- Effect of urban green on happiness (Ruut Veenhoven, Jan Ott)

Consequences of happiness

- Effect of happiness on *social bonds* (Shruty Agrawal)
- Revision of the list of statistics used in correlational findings and the related introductory text (Teije Euverman)
- Update of finding reports for correlational findings, storing in [RePub](#)