

# D

## Databook of Happiness



Ruut Veenhoven  
Erasmus Happiness Economics Research  
Organisation, Erasmus University Rotterdam,  
Rotterdam, The Netherlands  
Optentia Research Group, North–West  
University, Vanderbijlpark, South Africa

### Synonyms

[Database of happiness](#); [Happiness findings archive](#)

### Definition

The “Databook of Happiness” is a reference work that was published in 1984 by Ruut Veenhoven together with “Conditions of Happiness,” in which he reviewed the then available research findings on subjective enjoyment of life. It formed the basis of the present World Database of Happiness.

### Description

#### Aim

A complete overview of research findings on subjective enjoyment of life from 1911 to 1975 is presented in the Databook of Happiness, which

was published in 1984 (Veenhoven 1984b). This databook limits to facts. Contrary to common literature reviews, it does not consider interpretations of these research findings. The book served as the basis for a synthetic study reported in the book “Conditions of Happiness” that appeared simultaneously in 1984 (Veenhoven 1984a).

#### Scope

The databook limits to findings obtained using indicators that fit the concept of happiness as the “overall appreciation of one’s life as a whole.” The results of 245 empirical studies are reported. Together these produced 3621 separate findings, *distributional findings* on how happy people are in particular populations and *correlational findings* about things that go together with differences in happiness.

#### Technique

Findings are described in a standardized way, with details about measurement, sampling, and statistical analysis. The findings are then sorted on subject and within subjects by time and nation. The collection can also be searched using a fine-grained subject index. Page-precise references are used to guide users to further details in the original research reports.

#### Later Development

In the early 1990s, an update version of this Databook of Happiness was produced as a five-volume book series that covered the research

literature up to 1990. In the late 1990s, the collection was digitalized and made freely available on the internet as the World Database of Happiness (Veenhoven 2020).

### Cross-References

- [World Database of Happiness](#)

### References

- Veenhoven, R. (1984a). *Conditions of happiness*. Dordrecht/Boston/Lancaster: D. Reidel Publishing. ISBN. Still available at Springer Press.
- Veenhoven, R. (1984b). *Databook of happiness: A complementary reference work to 'Conditions of happiness' by the same author*. Dordrecht/Boston/Lancaster: D. Reidel Publishing. Digital version available at: <https://personal.eur.nl/veenhoven/Pub1980s/1984b.htm>
- Veenhoven, R. (2020). *World database of happiness: Archive of research findings on subjective enjoyment of life*. Rotterdam: Erasmus University Rotterdam. Available at <https://worlddatabaseofhappiness.eur.nl>