

Socio-Economic Determinants of Happiness in the European Societies. Results from the European Quality of Life Survey 2016

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The purpose of the study is to outline the determinants of happiness as a component of the subjective well-being of the people in the European countries. Data from the European Quality of Life Survey of Eurofound from 2016 are used. Descriptive statistical analysis and multilevel analysis is applied. The results show that there is a significant variation in the percentage of happy people in the European countries. Women tend to be happier than men. Aging is in negative relationship with happiness. Having partner and child/ren is another key determinant of happiness. The analysis highlights also significant socio-economic disparities on an individual and on a country level. On an individual level, happiness increases with the education and income. On a country level, the socio-economic disparities between the countries, measured by GDP per capita, translate into differences in the share of happy people. By controlling for the influence of the optimism about own future and the life satisfaction, the effect of the educational and the income differences decrease on an individual level, while on a country level the effect of GDP becomes insignificant. The psychological characteristics are important determinants of happiness but even after controlling for them the effect of socio-economic disparities on an individual level still remains significant.