

# The UK is a nation of happy couples

February 14 2011

---

Researchers at the Institute for Social and Economic Research asked both individuals in the couple to rate their happiness on a seven point scale; from the lowest score of 'extremely unhappy' to the middle point of 'happy', the highest point being 'perfect'. The self-reported happiness rating revealed that 90 percent of married women and 88 percent of cohabiting women are happy in their relationships. Ninety-three percent of married men and 92 percent of cohabiting men said they were happy in their relationship.

The findings indicate the happiest [couples](#) are those in which both are educated to degree level, have no children, have been together for less than five years and the man is employed. Factors such as being married or cohabiting, age of the individuals and duration of the partnership all have an effect on the level of [happiness](#) in a [relationship](#).

Professor John Ermisch, one of the authors of a book due to be published later this month that showcases a range of findings from the survey, commented: "Understanding Society has opened up many new avenues of research in studying both [marriage](#) and family life across the UK's population and will continue to do so over the years to come."

The study also showed that after taking into account a variety of factors, including age, gender, number of children, relationship duration, employment status and education married people are happier than their cohabiting counterparts.

One of the unique strengths of this study is that the researchers are able

to study all members of a household. This means that both partners' responses can be matched up with one another to give a richer and more detailed analysis than if the information was collected for only one of the partners.

**More information:** The findings above are taken from chapter 2 of 'Understanding Society: Early findings from the first wave of the UK's household longitudinal study'. Chapter 2 'Family Relationships" by John Ermisch, Maria Iacovou, and Alexandra Skew. This focuses on family relationships analysing the relationship between partners and parents and their children.

Provided by Economic & Social Research Council

Citation: The UK is a nation of happy couples (2011, February 14) retrieved 23 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2011-02-uk-nation-happy-couples.html>

<p>This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.</p>
--