

15 Inequality and Happiness

[Get access >](#)

Bernard Van Praag, Ada Ferrer-i-Carbonell

<https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199606061.013.0015> Pages 364–383**Published:** 18 September 2012

Abstract

This article deals with happiness and inequality. Section 2 gives an explanation of the neo-classical negative attitude towards happiness as an operational concept, differentiating between ordinal and cardinal happiness. Section 3 introduces the happiness economics literature and the so-called Leyden School, which can be viewed as a forerunner of present-day happiness economics. Section 4 concentrates on the effect of income inequality in a given country on the individual's feelings of happiness. Section 5 considers current attempts to characterize the inequality of the distribution of happiness and how that may be decomposed. Section 6 concludes.

Keywords: [happiness](#), [ordinal happiness](#), [cardinal happiness](#), [Leyden School](#), [happiness economics](#), [income inequality](#)

Subject: [Labour and Demographic Economics](#), [Health, Education, and Welfare](#), [Economics](#)

Series: [Oxford Handbooks](#)

Collection: [Oxford Handbooks Online](#)

You do not currently have access to this chapter.

Sign in

[Get help with access](#)

Personal account

- Sign in with email/username & password
- Get email alerts
- Save searches

Institutional access

[Sign in through your institution](#)[Sign in through your](#)

- Purchase content
- Activate your purchase/trial code
- Add your ORCID iD

[Sign in >](#)

[Register](#)

[institution](#)

[Sign in with a library card](#)

[Sign in with username/password](#)

[Recommend to your librarian](#)

Institutional account management

[Sign in as administrator](#)

Purchase

Institutions

Flexible purchasing options

[Browse products >](#)

Individuals

[Recommend to your librarian](#)

[Buy on Amazon >](#)