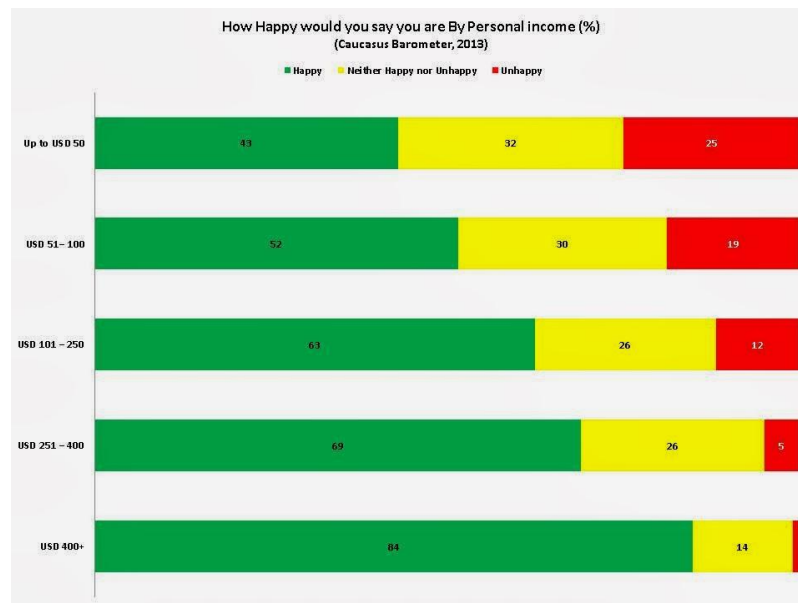


## Happiness in Georgia

Happiness is an issue that has been the subject of philosophical and social science reflection at least since the ancient Greek philosopher Democratis (460 BC -370 BC) [said](#), “Happiness resides not in possessions, and not in gold, happiness dwells in the soul.” This oft cited sentiment frequently comes with the suggestion that home and family are more important than material wealth. This blog post will take a look at these sentiments and examine how happiness relates to personal income, settlement type, and marital status in Georgia.

Economists have been debating whether money can “buy” happiness for decades, if not centuries. Douglas J. Den Uyl and Douglas B. Ramussen in their 2010 article have [argued](#) that Adam Smith, author of the famed book, *The Wealth of Nations* “was the first ‘happiness’ theorist in economics.” Interestingly, the 2013 Caucasus Barometer shows that in Georgia, individuals with higher incomes are also more likely to say they are happy.



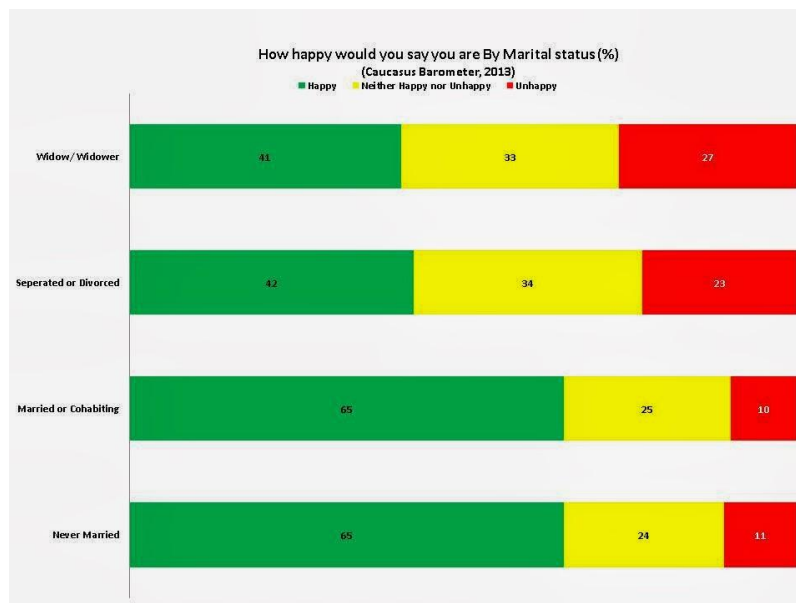
Note: The question, “Overall, how happy would you say you are,” was asked using a 10-point scale which was recoded to a 3-point scale (Unhappy, Neither Happy nor Unhappy, and Happy).

Although self perceptions of happiness in Georgia appear to increase with personal income, the [Easterlin Paradox](#) holds that happiness will increase with income, but only up to the point where needs and wants are met, and where having more money becomes superfluous. Judging whether the Easterlin Paradox applies in Georgia is not possible from an examination of data from the Caucasus Barometer. However, Lia Tsuladze, Marine Chitashvili , Nani Bendeliani , and Luiza Arutinovi write more about income, economics and happiness in their 2013 [article](#).

Settlement type also seems to be related to how happy Georgians consider themselves to be. Georgians living in urban areas (66%), including Tbilisi (67%), are more likely to consider themselves to be happy than those living in rural areas (56%).



Marital status is a third factor related to happiness in Georgia. Alfred Lord Tennyson's 1850 poem, *In Memoriam: 27*, states, “Tis better to have loved and lost/ Than never to have loved at all.” Despite these lines’ continued prominence today, at least in Georgia, it appears that it is better to have loved and not lost, or to have never loved at all. Georgian widows, widowers, the separated and divorced report being unhappy more than twice as much as Georgians who are married, cohabiting or who were never married.



Personal income, where one lives, and marital status appear to be related to perceptions of happiness in Georgia. We encourage you to explore the data further using our [ODA](#) tool. We also recommend reading this blog post which examines [happiness in Azerbaijan](#).