

# Working with Summaries in MAXQDA

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Summaries in MAXQDA allow you to work at a more abstract level by summarising data segments that have already been coded and then view, display and analyse your summaries. They can be useful for many different purposes. The MAXQDA Help Menu provides additional information about the idea behind Summaries, as well as instructions for generating and working with them.

[MAXQDA 2022 Online Manual: Summary Grid: Create and Edit Summaries - MAXQDA](#)

## Summary features in MAXQDA



- Summary Grid – allows you to summarise coded-segments in a grid display
- Summary Tables – allow you to display your summaries together with Variables
- Summary Explorer – allows you to compare summaries according to cases or groups
- Overviews of Summaries – allows you to retrieve summaries you have written from different levels within the Document System

## Working with Summary Grids

Clicking on the Summary Grid button (in the Analysis Menu) opens the Grid which displays all Codes in rows, and all Documents in Columns (Figure 1). The blue squares in the Grid indicate the presence of coded segments for each Document/Code intersection. Clicking on a blue square displays those coded segments in the middle panel. The right-hand panel is the place where you can write your summary of the displayed coded segments.

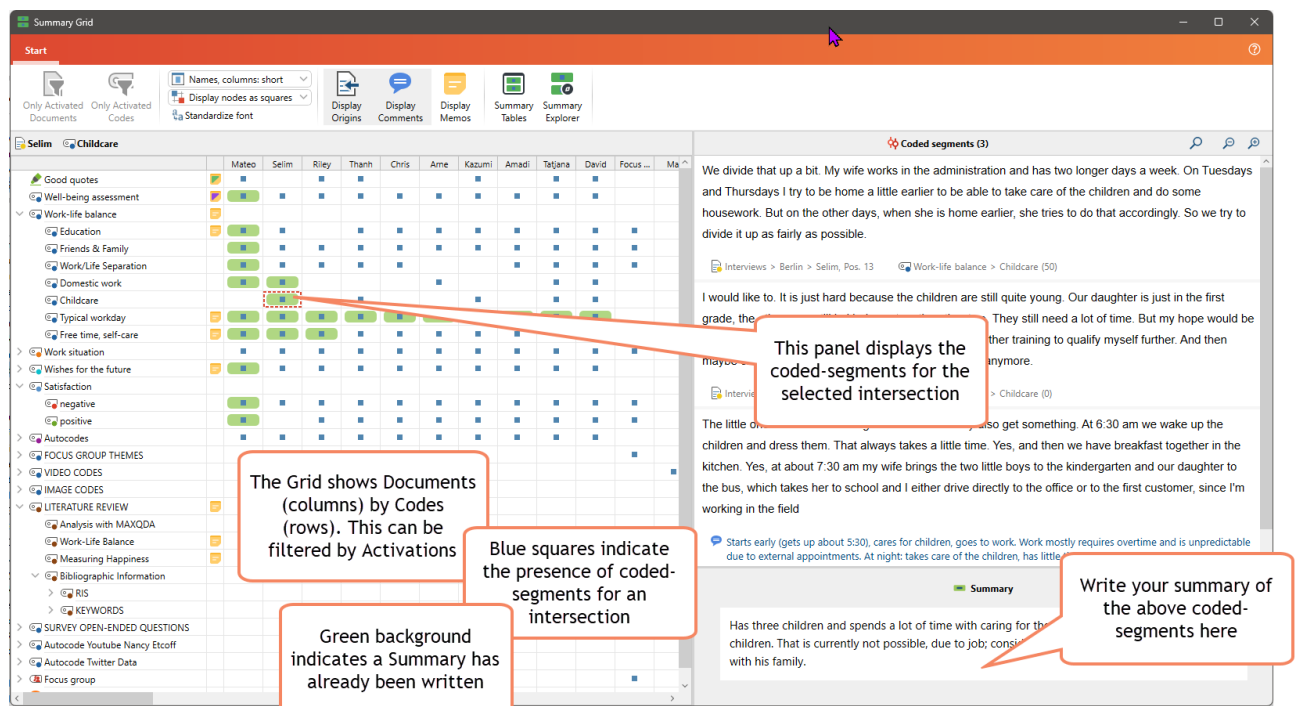
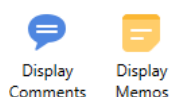


Figure 1. Summary Grid displaying all Documents (columns) by all Codes (rows) and the presence of coded segments

If you have selected Documents and/or Codes activated, you can filter the Grid to generate a more focused display using the two icons at the top left of the Summary Grid window.



You can also choose to alter other aspects of the display, including to display comments and/or memos



The coded-segments displayed in the Summary Grid are interactively connected to the underlying data (Figure 2). This is helpful if you want to use surrounding data context and/or other applied codes to inform the writing of summaries.

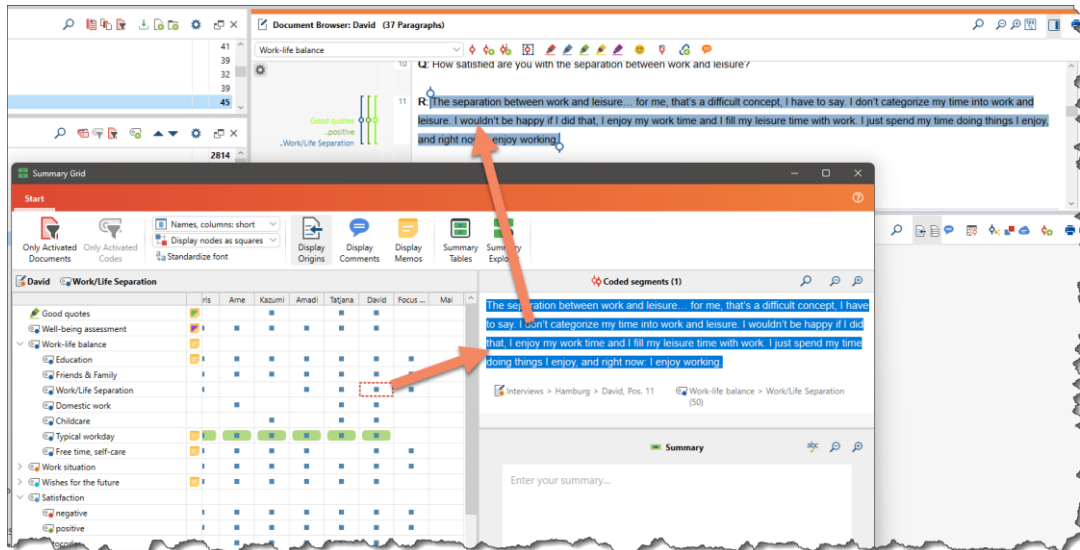


Figure 2. Interactivity between Summary Grid and source Document

## Working with Summary Tables

Having written Summaries in the Grid, you can use Summary Tables to display and compare summaries. You build your own Summary Tables (as many as you need) by selecting the Documents and Codes to display and any relevant Variables (Figure 3.)

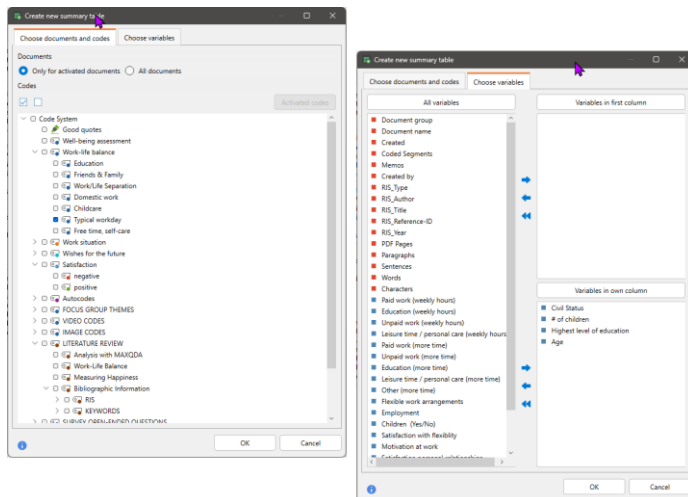
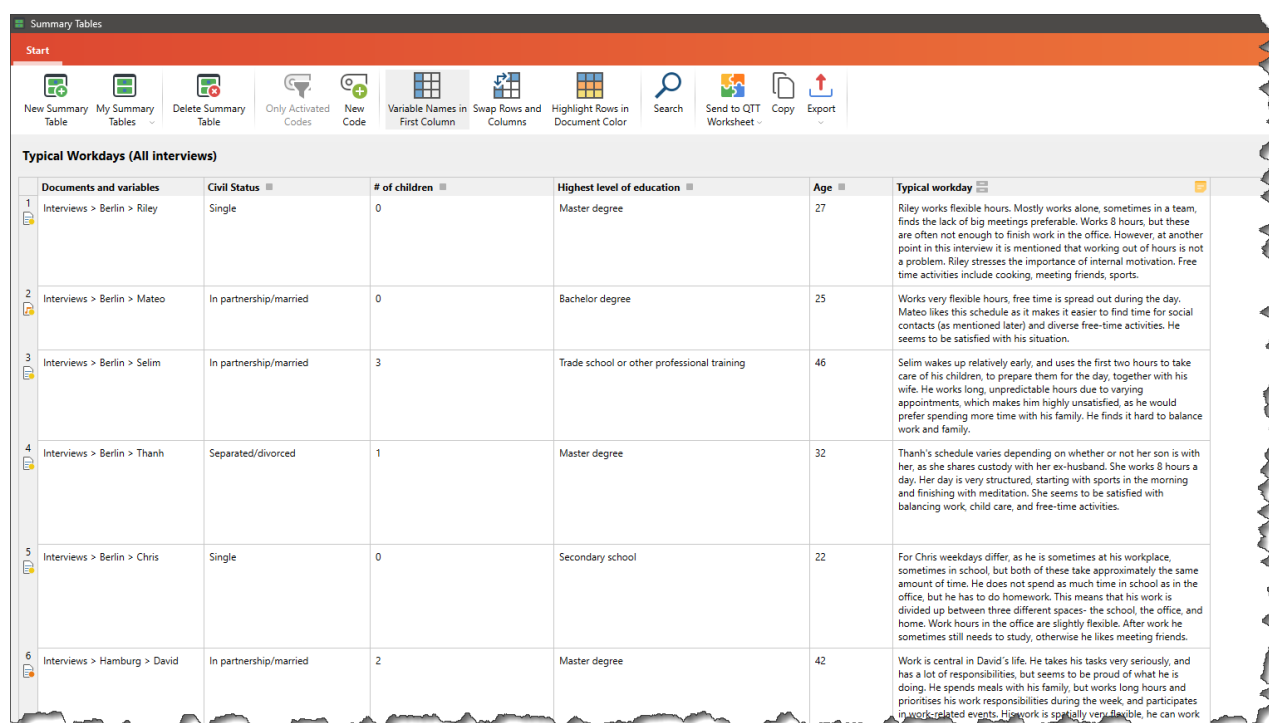


Figure 3. Creating a Summary Table – options for selecting Documents, Codes and Variables

The Summary Table displays the selected Codes (in the columns) by the selected Documents with Variable information (in rows) (Figure 4).



Documents and variables	Civil Status	# of children	Highest level of education	Age	Typical workday
1 Interviews > Berlin > Riley	Single	0	Master degree	27	Riley works flexible hours. Mostly works alone, sometimes in a team, finds the lack of big meetings preferable. Works 8 hours, but these are often not enough to finish work in the office. However, at another point in this interview it is mentioned that working out of hours is not a problem. Riley stresses the importance of internal motivation. Free time activities include cooking, meeting friends, sports.
2 Interviews > Berlin > Mateo	In partnership/married	0	Bachelor degree	25	Works very flexible hours, free time is spread out during the day. Mateo likes this schedule as it makes it easier to find time for social contacts (as mentioned later) and diverse free-time activities. He seems to be satisfied with his situation.
3 Interviews > Berlin > Selim	In partnership/married	3	Trade school or other professional training	46	Selim wakes up relatively early, and uses the first two hours to take care of his children, to prepare them for the day, together with his wife. He works long, unpredictable hours due to varying appointments, which makes him highly unsatisfied, as he would prefer spending more time with his family. He finds it hard to balance work and family.
4 Interviews > Berlin > Thanh	Separated/divorced	1	Master degree	32	Thanh's schedule varies depending on whether or not her son is with her, as she shares custody with her ex-husband. She works 8 hours a day. Her day is very structured, starting with sports in the morning and finishing with meditation. She seems to be satisfied with balancing work, child care, and free-time activities.
5 Interviews > Berlin > Chris	Single	0	Secondary school	22	For Chris weekdays differ, as he is sometimes at his workplace, sometimes in school, but both of these take approximately the same amount of time. He does not spend as much time in school as in the office, but he has to do homework. This means that his work is divided up between three different spaces- the school, the office, and home. Work hours in the office are slightly flexible. After work he sometimes still needs to study, otherwise he likes meeting friends.
6 Interviews > Hamburg > David	In partnership/married	2	Master degree	42	Work is central in David's life. He takes his tasks very seriously, and has a lot of responsibilities, but seems to be proud of what he is doing. He spends meals with his family, but works long hours and prioritises his work responsibilities during the week and participates in work-related events. His work is spatially very flexible, he can work

Figure 4. A Summary Table – displaying selected Documents, Codes and Variables

The summaries displayed in the Table are also interactively linked to the underlying coded segments.

## Working with the Summary Explorer

The Summary Explorer allows you to abstract further by comparing the summaries you have written for selected Codes by Documents Groups or Sets as well as by individual Documents (as in Summary Tables). In the example shown in Figure 5, we first created Document Sets using the “Activate by Document Variable” - function (accessed by right-clicking on the top level of the Document System) and then chose those Sets (and selected Codes) in the Summary Explorer. Instead of comparing several selected Codes by individual documents (as is possible in Summary Tables), the Summary Explorer additionally allows focus on codes by groups – in this example – according to whether respondents have children or not

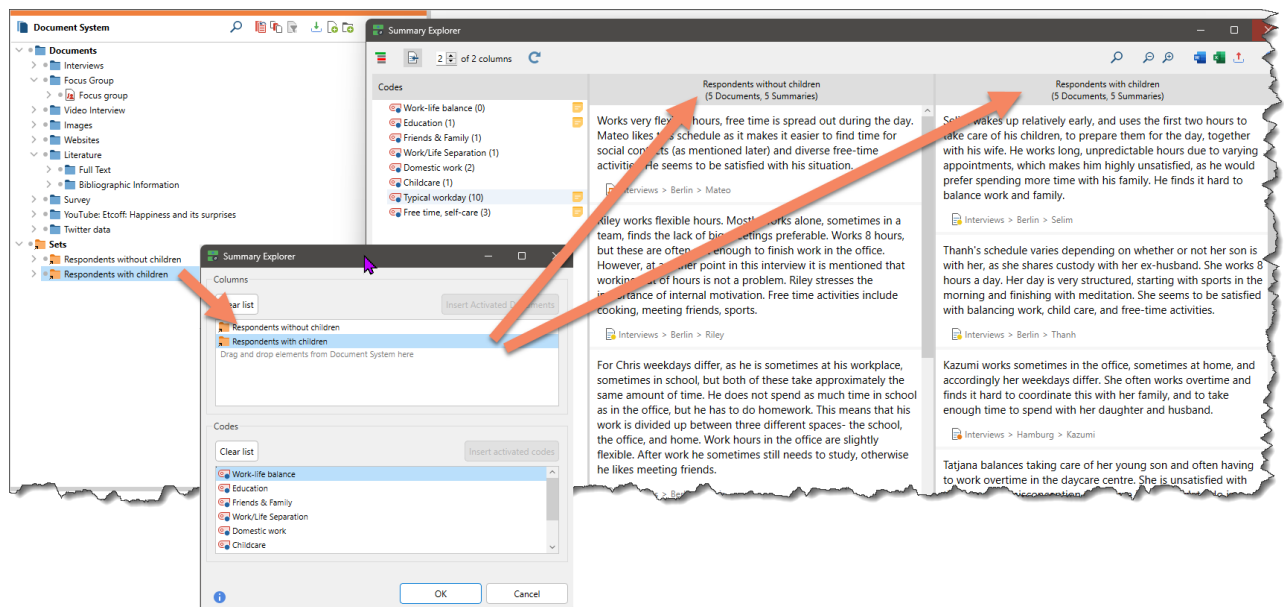


Figure 5. Comparing summaries by Document-Sets in the Summary Explorer

In addition, you can generate Overviews of Summaries from different levels within the Document System – all Documents, Documents within a Group or Set or for an individual Document (Figure 6).

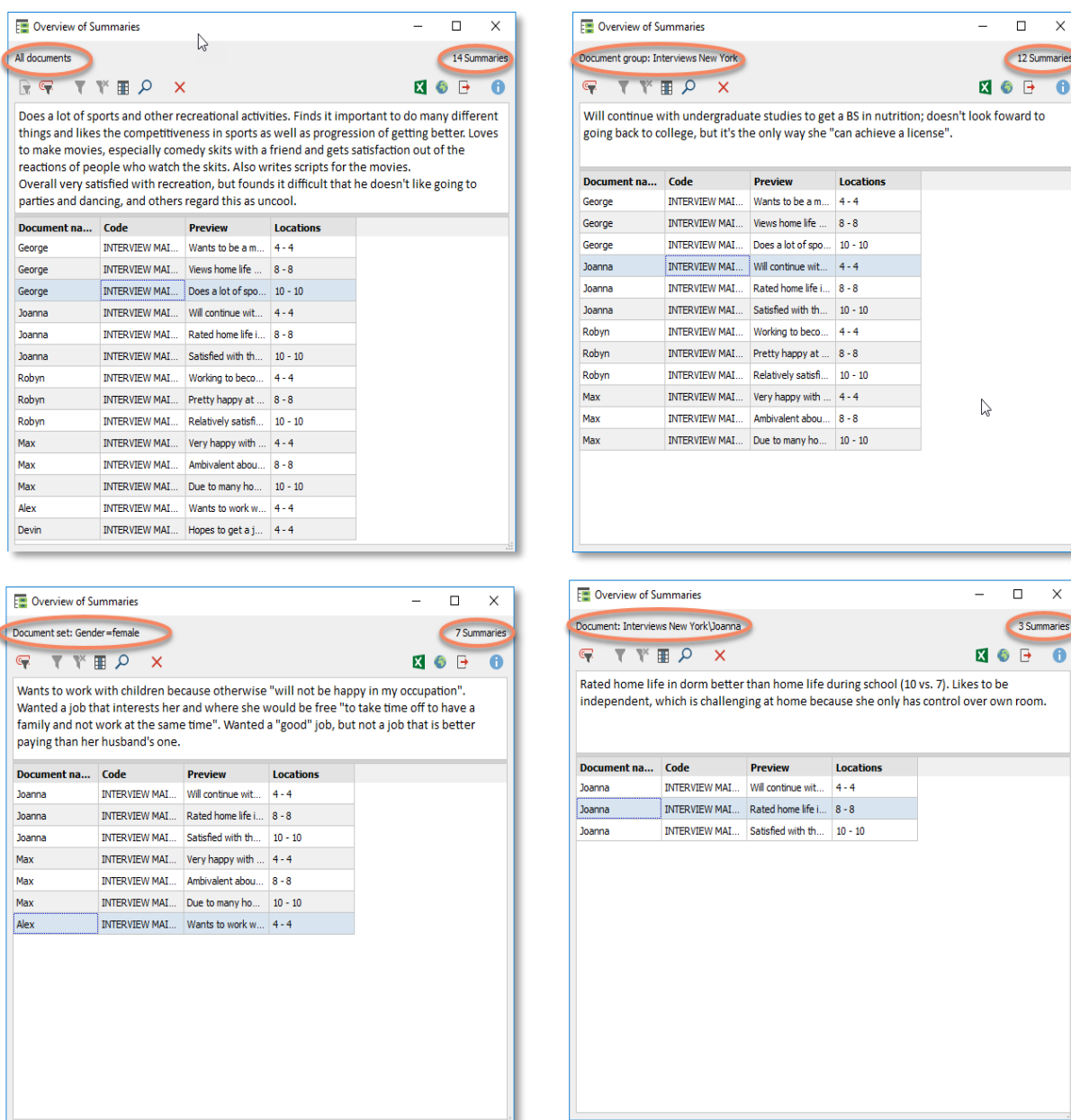


Figure 6. Summary Overviews across all Documents, by Document Group, Document Set and an individual Document