



Public lecture

Tuesday, March 19th, 2024

7:00 – 9:00PM

Live-Stream via Zoom

Happier and Sustainable: The neo-humanist path to post-growth societies

Speaker:

Dr. Francesco Sarracino

The SWIPPA «Ringveranstaltungen» on the theme of "The Good Life"

For more than 20 years, positive psychology has empirically studied the foundations of what constitutes a "good life". The central question is: What do people and communities do differently who describe themselves as happy despite the stresses and strains of everyday life, compared to people who suffer and complain about their lives? Positive psychology has now developed a wealth of knowledge about which actions enable and deepen human happiness. One of SWIPPA's aims is to "promote the transfer of knowledge to the general public". The SWIPPA events therefore aim to disseminate research findings to the general public in such a way that this knowledge is easy to understand and can be used to shape people's lives. Two to three events on important topics in positive psychology are planned each year.

Happier and Sustainable: The neo-humanist path to post-growth societies

Neo-humanism is a cultural movement to prioritize people over markets by re-orienting social and economic activities. Research on subjective well-being provides valuable insights to promote sustainable development in modern societies, a target that has proved to be elusive so far. Neo-humanism offers a unifying narrative and indicates that it is possible to decouple consumption from subjective well-being, creating conditions for socially and environmentally sustainable high-quality lives. On one hand, evidence suggests that it is possible to promote a virtuous cycle in which investing in subjective well-being, through policies for social relations, reduces the need to consume and supports collective action, which is necessary to protect the environment and to improve subjective well-being. Higher well-being, on the other hand, contributes to efficiency gains that can be used to reduce working time, and to decouple income (and consumption) from subjective well-being. This decoupling will contribute to high quality of life, and to a socially and environmentally compatible economy; an economy that is driven by creativity not conspicuous consumption. Neo-humanism calls for a new definition of progress, such as one that reflects societies' ability to transform resources into high quality of life. Neo-humanism does not argue for de-growth but refutes the agenda of growth at any cost. The evidence suggests that economic growth is compatible with subjective well-being growth only under certain conditions, such as full employment, generous social safety nets, strong social relations, and limited income inequality. Under these conditions, the economy might grow slowly, but slow or near-zero economic growth could actually signal systems that better support quality of life.

Dr. Francesco Sarracino

Francesco Sarracino is head of the research unit on subjective well-being and entrepreneurship at STATEC Research, the Research Division of the National Institute of Statistics of Luxembourg. His work aims at identifying evidence-based policies to promote socially and environmentally sustainable development, and people's well-being. In his spare time, he also contributes to methodological survey research. He holds a PhD in development economics from the University of Firenze (Italy). He is a member of the World Wellbeing Panel, and of the Executive Committee of the International Society for Quality-of-Life Studies. His articles appeared on journals such as World Development, Ecological Economics, Oxford Economic Papers, Social Indicators Research, Journal of Happiness Studies, Applied Research in Quality of Life and PlosONE.

Time and place

Tuesday, March 19th, 2024 from 7:00 to 9:00PM
Virtual event: Online via Zoom

Registration

Please register for digital participation by March 13th, 2024 using the following link
<https://www.swippa.ch/de/veranstaltungen/ringveranstaltungen.html>

Participation fee

CHF 20.00

For SWIPPA members free of charge