POLICIES FOR HAPPINESS

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Policies & Happiness

In **Policies for Happiness** (2016), Stefano Bartolini, Ennio Bilancini, Luigino Bruni, and Pier Luigi Porta presents an anthology setting out the case for happiness research to be taken seriously for policymaking purposes; the policies around social capital, values and education that should be taken seriously; and the link between public happiness and relational goods that is often forgotten by traditional economics and policymakers.

The **Policies for Happiness** village of the Economy of Francesco develops these by exploring new and more happiness-friendly ways of assessing, measuring and pursuing well-being in worldwide practices and public policies both from macro and microeconomic perspectives.

As Policies for Happiness Villagers, we ask that all beings have the opportunity to fully flourish: to dream and to bring joy to others. We, as people, families, communities, and citizens of the world, believe that "we cannot make ourselves happy without making others happy as well." (Genovesi, 1762) We can achieve this by adopting new metrics for the common good and by encouraging civil institutions to provide the time and space necessary to build meaningful relations.

INCLUSIVE MAPPING

Maps are powerful tools to tell stories. How the story of a place is narrated can influence social life and social inclusion. Typically, when asked to describe a map, what generally comes to mind is the representation of territorial divisions: countries on a global scale, smaller administrative units within a country, or streets, blocks, and empty space (which are usually nature and greenspace).

However, maps do not generally tell what is happening between those physical elements: the "life between buildings" (Jan Gehl, 1971) that brings to life the characteristics, assets, needs and resources of human communities.

Participatory, inclusive mapping turns this on its head: instead of mapping divisions, it is about mapping connections, by empowering communities to tell their stories through local and interactive tools that connect people whilst stimulating social interaction.

Such storytelling tools enable communities and groups to narrate their own stories of place, which brings to light the local stories which are hidden, ignored or invisible. These can include mapping and evidencing local connections, networks, and resources; stimulating unity and a sense of belonging via positive narratives.

Examples can include the participatory mapping of:
- relational goods;
- common spaces and green spaces;
- shared community experiences; and
- barriers to happiness.

Key underlying principles to inclusive mapping include:
- hybrid maps that brings together the spatial (places) and relational (people);
- playful mapping using technology to stimulate interaction;
- collaborative knowledge and data production; and
- taking on a cultural dimension combining art and poetry.
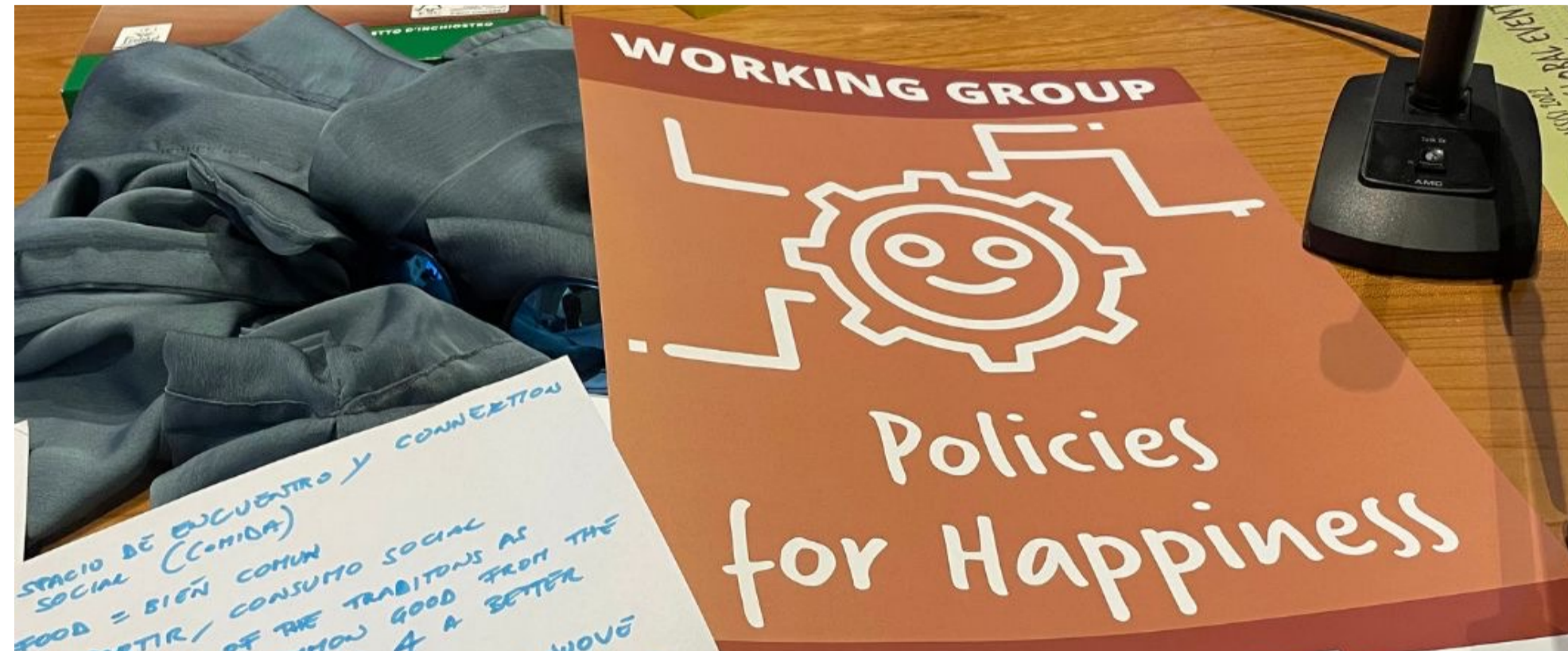
PENGUIN MODEL FOR HAPPINESS IN FLOURISHING CITIES

Declining rates of lasting happiness can be seen in modern metropolises around the world, with increasing number of people self-reporting feelings of loneliness, anxiety and depression. The way in which modern cities are designed have created a built environment that contributes to and compromises to human flourishing. By redirecting resources towards creating thriving small-and-medium-sized cities, we can give space to reshape mega-cities to foster human flourishing and protect our common home.

Penguins build sustainable colonies, and not only survive, but thrive as a community in the most inhospitable and challenging environments. If a goal of society is to maximize happiness for the greatest number of people, those responsible for economic policy should prefer the path of integral human and ecological development, rather than the easiest path of short-term economic growth. This path can inspire sustainable development – biomimicry – taking in consideration how cities can be conceived to be the place for promoting human flourishing and planetary health through a local, social, cultural and economic life that is vibrant.

Inspired by the way penguins build sustainable colonies in the most inhospitable and challenging places, we can re-design our cities to create environments that promote rather than constrain human flourishing. This can be by promoting small-to-medium-sized cities instead of megacities; or by ensuring essential services and spaces are made available in local neighbourhoods, to help people find meaning in their everyday lives, enable people to connect with one another, and to live sustainably and in harmony with the natural world.

CHILDREN'S FLOURISHING INDEX

The purpose of the children's flourishing index is to incentivise decisionmakers to implement policies that support and enable children and future generations to flourish. Five decades of studies show that happiness depend on genuine human connection: once people have the basics to live a decent life, it is their relational wellbeing rather than their material wellbeing that becomes the primary source of their happiness.

The composite index is intended to measure the progress of present and future generations, so that we can guide policy-makers to think beyond the utility of the current generation – but on the flourishing of our children and future generations.

Recognising relational wellbeing, the index will go beyond a reductionist, individualist understanding of happiness – to allow us to consider the extent to which a policy or intervention make a positive impact on dimensions like nature, environment and beauty – and even in urban areas, are there common spaces for relationships to blossom; giving time to build quality family bonds, love and parental relationships; the ability to remain curious and to have the right to dream big; and equality between all race, ethnicities and genders.

Considerations developed for picking appropiate metrics include:
- availability for comparison across different places;
- relevance to the intended goal (to be worked out with subject-matter experts); and
- timeliness.

francescoeconomy.org/policies-for-happiness/

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