

CAPABILITIES AND HAPPINESS

Call for papers

2nd workshop on
"Capabilities
and Happiness"

Milano / Bicocca
16-18 June 2005

The Keynote Speakers include:

Amartya Sen
Harvard University

Edward L. Deci
University of Rochester

Ed Diener
University of Illinois

Richard Easterlin
University of Southern California

Carol Graham
Brookings Institution, Washington

Robert Sugden
UEA, Norwich

Richard Ryan
University of Rochester

Carol Ryff
University of Wisconsin-Madison

Scientific Committee

Martha Nussbaum
University of Chicago

Amartya Sen
Harvard University

Ed Diener
University of Illinois

Enrica Chiappero
University of Pavia

Flavio Comim
St. Edmund College, Cambridge

Luigi Pasinetti
Catholic University, Milan

Pier Luigi Porta
University of Milano-Bicocca

Stefano Zamagni
University of Bologna

Organization Committee

Luigino Bruni
University of Milano-Bicocca

Stefano Bartolini
University of Siena

Enrica Chiappero
University of Pavia

Flavio Comim
St. Edmund College, Cambridge

Pier Luigi Porta
University of Milano-Bicocca

Maurizio Pugno
University of Trent

Proposals have to be sent to
happiness.conference@unimib.it
not after December, 31 2004



Capability and
Sustainability Centre

Capability and Sustainability Centre,
St. Edmund College, Cambridge



CFS and ESAS-CD,
University of Pavia



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Researches on the "Economics and Happiness" are increasingly taking a considerable place among the interests of social scientists: quality of life, the relationship between goods and well-being, relational goods, intrinsic motivations, and the impact of basic need and relational satisfactions to motivation and wellness. These inquiries overlap with the "Capabilities Approach", which very much directs attention to these issues. In March 2004 the CSC (Capability and Sustainability Centre, St. Edmund College, Cambridge) organized in Cambridge the 1st workshop "Capabilities and Happiness", and the participants were persuaded that the connection capabilities-happiness can be extremely stimulating and potentially able of opening a very promising new field of research, an idea shared also by the Capability Network. This second workshop is also a by-product of the researches on happiness undertaken at the Department of Economics of Milano-Bicocca. The workshop itself is a follow up to the first International Conference on the Paradoxes of Happiness in Economics at Milano-Bicocca 20-23 March 2003.

The Capabilities approach is unequivocally focussed on the objective dimensions of good life, and considers happiness as a good indicator of the quality of life only if accompanied with a wide capability set, which goes well together

with Amartya Sen's critique to happiness as a possibly misleading concept in human development. The Happiness approach, yet, today includes two methodologically quite different strands. On one side, we have theories of a "subjective" nature which emphasize self-reported feelings, pleasure, satisfaction, focused in particular on the measurement of the corresponding variables. Examples of this subjective approach are manifold in cognitive researches of happiness. That approach also falls within the mainstream of current economic studies on happiness, and has continuity with the Benthamite theory of happiness as utility. The other strand focuses on "objective" analyses of happiness, conceived of as human flourishing. In this strand scholars are interested in intrinsic motivations, civic commitment, relationship status and quality and personal growth as indicators of a happy life. This approach to happiness – that has supporters in economics, sociology and psychology – is fully consistent with the capabilities approach, and has been influenced by a rediscovery of Aristotle's eudaimonic conception of happiness, as discussed in the work of philosophers such as Martha Nussbaum. The principal aim of this interdisciplinary workshop is to gather together scholars of all the different methodological strands for a rich encounter.