

**Call for the special session “Regional and urban perspectives on individual wellbeing”**

Organizers: Camilla Lenzi (Politecnico di Milano), Philip S. Morrison (Victoria University of Wellington), Giovanni Perucca (Politecnico di Milano), Paolo Veneri (OECD).

Aim of the session. The interest towards the identification of measurements of social progress alternative to pure economic growth largely increased in the last years (Stiglitz et al., 2010). However, this topic involves several unresolved issues.

The first one is of conceptual nature, and it concerns the definition of the object under analysis. Terms like “happiness”, “well-being” and “life satisfaction” are not synonyms. Rather, they convey different meanings as they refer to different elements of prosperity. The latter can be either objective, as for instance individuals’ health status, education and job conditions, or subjective, as the level of satisfaction perceived by individuals. From the seminal work of Easterlin (1973) the relationship and the consistency between objective and subjective components is a matter of debate.

The second issue involves the role of the territory in explaining these patterns of social progress. A large evidence in the literature documented how both objective and subjective well-being are highly diversified across space. Nevertheless, we are still far from a full understanding of the mechanisms through which territorial characteristics have an impact on individuals’ happiness.

The present special session is aimed at promoting the discussion on these issues, adopting a regional and urban perspective. Given the extremely multidisciplinary nature of this topic (studied by economists and psychologists, geographers and planners), we consider the ERSA conference the ideal context where to confront different approaches, methods and advancements.

References:

Easterlin, R. A. (1973). Does money buy happiness?. *The Public Interest*, (30), 3.

Stiglitz, J. E., Sen, A., & Fitoussi, J. P. (2010). Report by the commission on the measurement of economic performance and social progress. Paris: Commission on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress.

Rules for the submission. Special sessions host a minimum of six contributions. In order to submit your paper to the present special session be sure to:

- 1) submit an extended abstract (1500 words including contribution, theoretical framework, empirical approach and /or first results) or a draft paper (between 5000 and 10,000 words) by February 10th 2017.
- 2) upload a full (draft) paper by June 9th 2017.