

ECO-INNOVATION



Research is based on data of 28 European countries

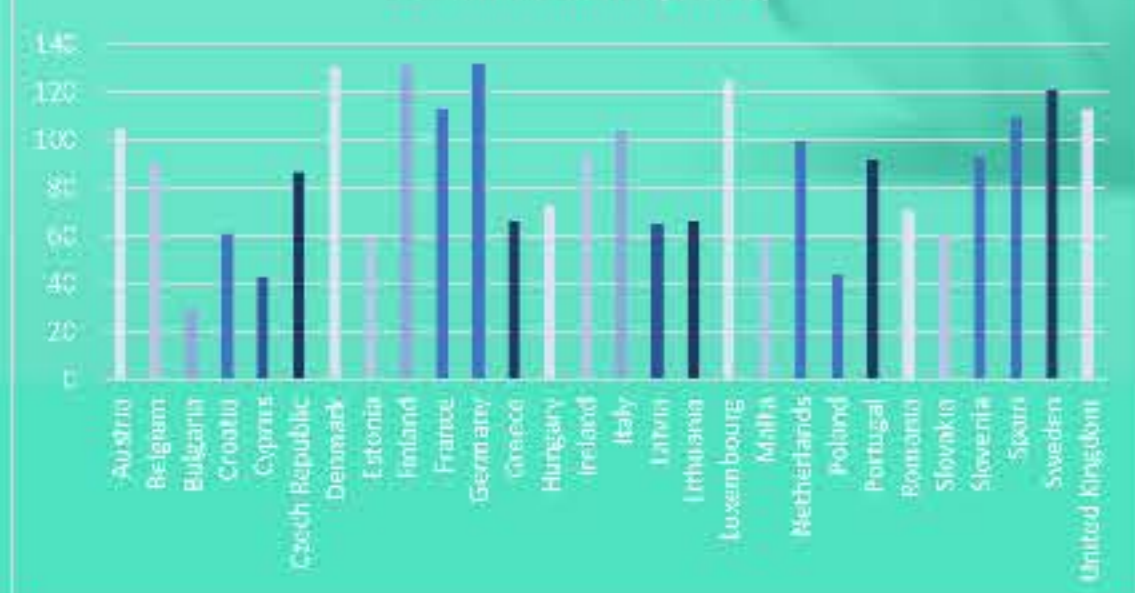
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Eco-Innovation (2015)



Happiness (World Happiness Report, 2015)



Connection Happiness and Eco-Innovation

From Maslow's pyramid of needs it is visible that happiness increases the higher an individual is located within the framework. Only at the highest tier, self-actualization, eco-innovation will take place as it is a vision of individuals that they will only try to realise as soon as their other needs are satisfied. Moreover, there is generally more time which can be spent on being creative and looking for more efficient alternatives.



Happiness

Happiness refers to the state of well-being of a group or an individual, or in other words life satisfaction. It can be best described by the state of feeling good and enjoying life.

Economic Eco-Innovation

There has to be a balance between collectivistic and individualistic wealth-maximisation in eco-villages. This is in strong contrast to the rational self-interest principle of Adam Smith which says people are only rational if they act egotistically. However, if eco-innovation results in higher individual utility, collectivistic thinking can de facto be egoistic. Sustainable housing in ecovillages has four goals, namely energy efficiency, reduction of non-renewables, local sourcing, and enabling the recycling of such things like water, energy, and waste. Domestic sourcing does not only reduce the global emissions but also minimizes supply chain inefficiencies because of the distance cutback of product transportation and cultural similarity which facilitates, according to Hofstede, doing business.

Social Eco-Innovation

It is evident that the communal effort for more sustainable development in a neighbourhood creates closer interpersonal contact within the community. Furthermore, shared facilities and the use of shared services, such as car-sharing, trigger 'peer pressure' among the inhabitants in so far that sustainable behaviour is even intensified and the freerider problem can be reduced. A feeling of belonging to the respective places is reinforced. Intentional communities are also often comprised of a very interesting 'internal' mix of different social groups in the same project, like young and old, families and single, and different nationalities. Resulting mutual support and social contacts are alleviating the isolation and loneliness that is often experienced in ordinary neighbourhoods which has direct positive implications on the individual well-being.

Connection Positive Peace and Happiness

There is a close connection between positive peace and happiness. The two concepts overlap primarily due to the fact that some of the indicators and measurable factors of the two concepts are similar. The countries in Europe with higher measures of positive peace tend to be happier than those with a lower positive peace score. The reasons for this are most likely the overlapping indicators as well as the inextricable link between the two concepts. The positive correlation is significant at an alpha of 5%.

Eco VILLAGES Case Study

Eco-Innovation

Eco-innovation is the invention of processes or products which are less environmentally harmful than its alternatives because of a more efficient use of resources. It can be differentiated between economic, organizational, and social eco-innovation.



Connection Eco-Innovation and Quality of Life

Eco-innovation is becoming a more integrated part of national innovation systems and contributes to an improved resource productivity and lessened environmental effects. Enhanced productivity then directly leads to a higher GDP per capita. Although it is debatable whether GDP per capita, often referred to as the standard of living, and quality of life are interchangeable terms, it surely holds that GDP per capita is one of the major determinants of quality of life. The statistics indicate a strong positive correlation. Furthermore, the result is significant at the 1% level which means a positive relationship cannot easily be rejected and there is little evidence against our initial hypothesis.

Organizational Eco-Innovation

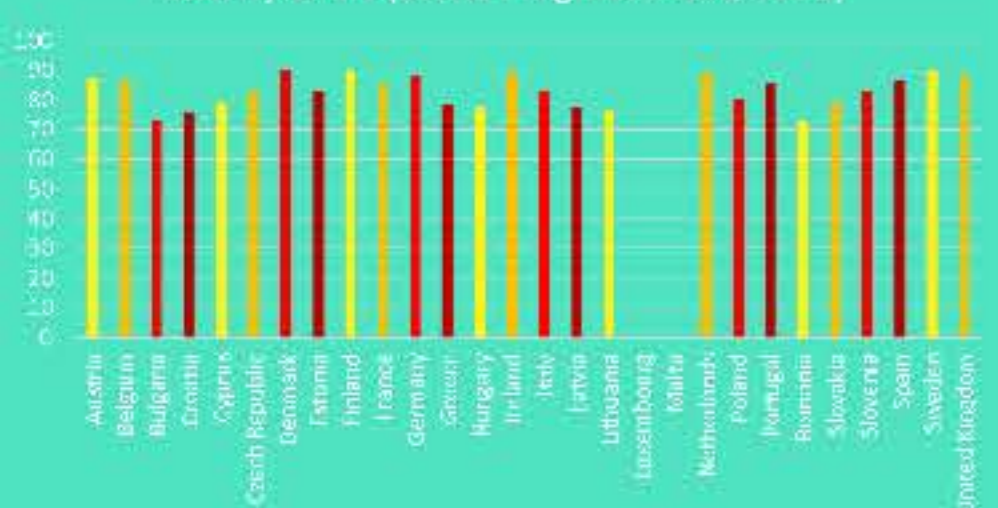
Conflict resolution and decision making are intrinsically linked: if people are/feel more included in the decision-making less conflict tend to arise. It has a preventive effect. Solving discord is an important component of well-being. Social innovation is essential to achieve a sustainable transition, good systems of governance and of conflict resolution reinforce the feeling of community which is crucial to avoid mental and physical dysfunctions (loneliness and relationships deficits). It could be inferred that people are happier because they are listened to which leads to social sustainability and therefore to sustainable peace. However, some limitations do exist in terms of existing empirical studies and literature: further research is needed to fully understand the impact of the eco-villages decision making procedure and conflict resolution on the happiness of people.

Quality of Life

Quality of life is the individual's perception of their position in life in the context of the culture and value systems in which they live and in relation to their goals.



Quality of life (Social Progress Index, 2015)



Connection Quality of Life and Positive Peace

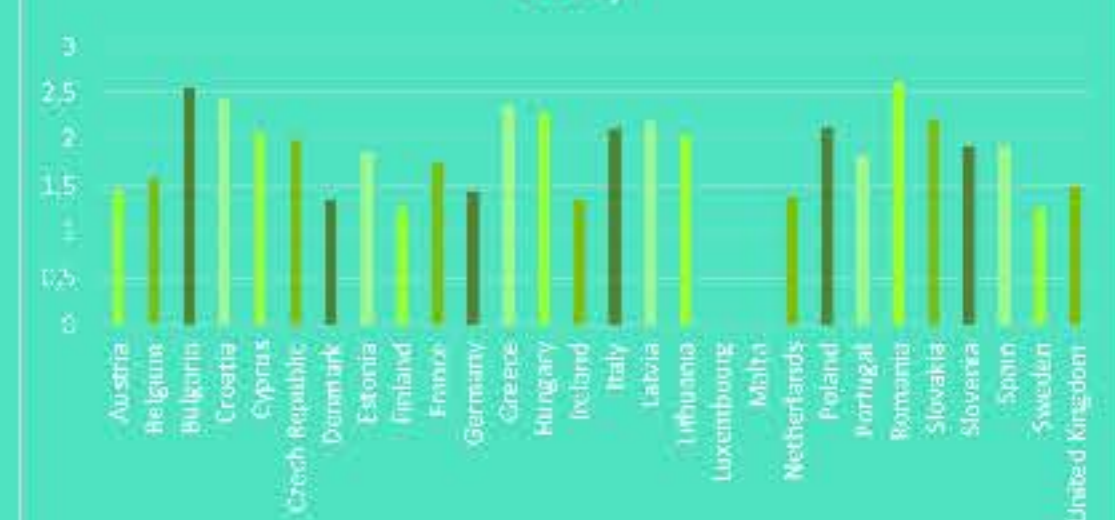
Logical connections can be drawn from the factors determining quality of life and positive peace. Material living conditions, physical safety, as well as governance and basic rights are factors which account for a high quality of life. However, we can also say that they contribute to the establishment of peace because they are important for the absence of violence. Poor material living conditions are likely to stipulate conflict and good conditions are thus fostering peace. The positive relationship is significant at 1%.



Positive Peace

Positive peace is construed as the absence of structural violence as opposed to negative peace which was defined as the absence of direct violence. Structural violence was meant to conceptualise violence that is integrated into the structure of society such as inequalities, corruption and injustices.

Positive Peace (Institute of Economics and Peace, 2015)



RECOMMENDATIONS

01

Create Eco-Innovation Awareness

Eco-Innovation Skills Course (4ECTS)
UM with the cooperation of UNU-MERIT

02

Eco-Campus

a) Food Sharing b) Library of Things