



Call for papers - Special Session on **Happy communities; direct and indirect effects of social interaction**

We are pleased to invite you to contribute papers for a Special Session on **Happy communities; direct and indirect effects of social interaction**, which we will organize at the 11th RSAI World Congress on April 25-28, 2016. The RSAI World Congress will take place in Istanbul (Turkey) and will be a major international event.

Motivation and aim

Wellbeing is becoming more and more acknowledged as an affluent characteristic of (economic) systems. For individuals to experience wellbeing within their (daily) environment social interaction is regarded as being of key importance. As such, social networks are the key to a healthy and resilient society as they are channels of information, values and behaviors (Golub and Jackson, 2010). They carry information about products, jobs, and other places of residence; but also influence decisions to move out, volunteer, become educated; and they drive (political) opinions and attitudes towards other groups.

Social interaction effects wellbeing in many different ways, both directly and indirectly. Social interactions can affect the successfulness of the participatory society. An important question is how much and which forms of interaction and participation are available and supported by (local) citizens (Arnstein, 1969) and how will these levels of agency lead to more happy communities?

Another important question is where social interaction is initiated and takes place. Public spaces, well managed and maintained, can increase social interaction and social capital (Lenzi et al., 2013). What is the relationship between local public services and facilities and active social interaction in a neighborhood or town?

For example, in ageing and care, how are the levels of social interaction determined by the number of amenities and functionalities within their daily living environment and does this have e.g. an effect on the amount of (informal care) needed, ceteris paribus, how does the same phenomenon effect happy communities in areas of population decline. Does decline in the amount of social interaction have an effect on the happiness of communities?

In this session, we want to elaborate on the importance of social interaction in providing happy communities, such as neighborhoods and towns. Apart from looking at direct effects on happiness and satisfaction, we also encourage submissions on indirect effects such residential mobility and civic engagement.

Related topics

- Declining populations
- Ageing society

- Participatory society
- Bottom-up activities
- Public services
- Social networks

Session Organizers:

Aleid E. Brouwer, Faculty of Spatial Sciences, University of Groningen, the Netherlands

Eveline S. van Leeuwen, Department of Spatial Economics, VU University, the Netherlands

Submitting an abstract

Please submit an abstract (400-500 words) indicating title; authors(s), affiliations and emails (indicate the corresponding author); three keywords; and two potential topics to the session Organizers, by sending an e-mail to a.e.brouwer@rug.nl and e.s.van.leeuwen@vu.nl.

Abstract submission deadline: December 15, 2015

Details about the Conference: <http://2016worldcongress.regionalscience.org/>