

Welfare Economy and Investing in Well-being

EuroHealthNet Seminar:

Tackling health inequalities in a fast changing world

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SOSTE

SOSTE Suomen sosiaali ja terveys ry

SOSTE Finlands social och hälsa rf

SOSTE Finnish Federation for Social Affairs and Health

Welfare Economy

- A new concept for Finnish public discussion introduced by SOSTE and the NGOs of social and health sector
- Motivation:
 - economic arguments have become dominant in public discussion in recent decades – welfare perspective should be strengthened
 - new tools needed to analyse the production of well-being
 - relationship between economic development and social welfare has gathered a lot of interest in recent years

SOSTE's welfare economic activities

- Building the vision of Welfare Economy
 - foresight work with NGOs
 - Welfare Economy as a future economic model
- Evaluation and measurement of cost-effectiveness of NGO's work
 - showing the social value (ie. Social Return on Investment evaluation - SROI)
- Promoting investing in well-being
 - welfare investment as progressive concept
 - policymakers need encouragement to invest in well-being → gains in the long term

Investing in well-being (1)

- The concept of Welfare Investment
 - Welfare defined as a human state that builds on sufficient individual resources (health, social relations, trust, critical consciousness) and participation (possibility to influence and to develop living environment), synonym for well-being
 - Investment defined as using inputs today to get greater output in the future
 - Welfare Investment = using inputs (money, time, work, commodities) today to get more welfare (well-being) in the long term

Investing in well-being (2)

- Welfare investments can be implemented by individuals, NGOs, local authorities, general government, firms...
- The scale of welfare investment can vary substantially
 - a large structural reform as welfare investment (social and health reform in Finland)
 - a change in individual's way of life as welfare investment (quitting smoking)
- positive gains of welfare investment usually actualise in the longer term
 - investing in well-being requires faith in these gains
 - evaluation and research needed to promote faith