



Linking sustainability and happiness. What kind of happiness?

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Abstract

Sustainability is part of the scientific mainstream; in the following paper we connect it with the phenomenon of happiness, which is becoming a discussed concept not only among researchers but also amongst public. This is due to the fact that today's society has become a consumer society. This knowledge has provoked criticism of the prevailing lifestyle. The unprecedented growth of prosperity in the second half of the last century and at the beginning of the 21st century was achieved at the cost of environmental devastation. This presented the urgent question of how to improve the quality of life or bring happiness to a growing number of people. At the same time, efforts to replace GDP as a general measure of development with quality of life began to grow. In connection with happiness, it is important that it is defined in two ways: hedonic or eudaimonic. The aim of the paper is to find out which form of happiness is sustainable on the basis of the analysis of relevant works. Happiness is understood as part of the subjective dimension of quality of life, it represents the highest level of well-being. The combination of sustainability and quality of life or happiness is not new, some authors consider quality of life as the fourth pillar of sustainability. A key criterion for assessing which happiness is sustainable and which is not is the following assumption: *The happiness of us – contemporaries – cannot be achieved at the expense of future generations*. The knowledge – which of the forms is sustainable – is the result of the analysis of both forms of happiness.

Keywords

Sustainability,
Happiness,
Quality of life,
Consumer society,
Sustainable
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Good society

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Highlights for public administration, management and planning:

- Theoretical foundation for nexus of sustainability and happiness is reviewed.
- The concepts of hedonic and eudaimonic happiness are discussed, and the implications of both for social, economic and environmental sustainability are outlined.
- It is shown that eudaimonic happiness should stand as a backdrop for sustainability debate.

1 Introduction

As society grows richer and transforms into a consumer's society, there is growing interest in public debate and researchers' interest in a part of the concept of quality of life, which is happiness personal well-being or satisfaction with life (Veenhoven 1996, 2012; Layard 2005; Grove 2012; Haybron (2013); Okulicz-Kozaryn 2015). Yet these terms cannot be considered synonyms. Quality of life contains affective and cognitive components, while happiness consists of only affective one (Cummins 2014). Nowadays, happiness is considered to be something desirable, something that everyone has the right

to have (Greve 2012). There is a growing interest in public debate and researchers' interest in a part of the concept of quality of life, which deals with happiness. Happiness is identified with quality of life, welfare, well-being.

Linking sustainability and happiness: What is the meaningfulness of this connection? We presume that this is a search for an answer to a question what type of happiness does it make sense to sustain? Because happiness can exist as eudaimonic (originates in experiences of meaning and purpose) but also hedonic (originates in experiences of pleasure and enjoyment). In the current society of mass consumption hedonic happiness prevails, According to Vinney (2020) „in American culture, hedonic

happiness is often championed as the ultimate goal"

The knowledge that happiness is not unitary but has two forms is the first and key point in formulating the answer to the question posed in the title of the paper: what kind of happiness is sustainable?. At first glance, it may seem that sustainability and happiness nothing connects. The difference is that sustainability is focused on future, happiness at present. What meaning does this connection have? In spite of that connection sustainable happiness has its meaning, which is substantial. Although sustainability is being connected practically with everything including economic growth, *sustainable happiness* is meaningful because it is focused on people also being happy in future. It means that happiness or quality of life is the real happiness or quality of life only when it is not at the expense of the future. To put it bluntly, it comes when happiness or quality of life are sustainable. In this article we deal with sustainability of happiness, coming from assumption that not every happiness is sustainable. The basic criteria of what happiness is sustainable in the context of Kantian maxim are: our contemporary happiness cannot be achieved at cost of future generations.

While it might seem that environmental protection problems are being addressed and development is moving in the right direction, the reality is different. There is a mismatch in acceptance of essential and enforceable decisions at country-level that would mean a major slowing down of negative trends in environmental degradation. The first encyclical *Laudato si'*, which was written by Pope Francis on this topic, has also testified on the seriousness of the problem of environmental pollution. He considers air pollution and waste production associated with 'throwaway' culture as the biggest problem. Other problems are water, it lacks and pollution, loss of biodiversity and climate change as a global problem. We must ask, the Pope writes, what is the meaning of life on Earth, what key values are and what our goal is. Without asking these questions dealing with environmental issues will not yield the expected results. The solution is integral ecology, which in addition to environmental deals with human and social problems (Francis 2015).

Our paper is based on an analysis of the relevant literature, we focused on the connection of sustainability and happiness, and the importance of its content. This association is not new as there have been many researchers studying the same, or similar - the association of sustainability and quality of life, or well-being in the last decades (Chiras & Corson 1997). The aim of the article is to anal-

yse approaches to a combination of sustainability and happiness as a basis for deciding which happiness is sustainable. Eudaimonic or hedonic? We explore this connection not only for theoretical reasons but also attempt to explore findings that can be used in public policy making.

2 Initial state

Exploration of sustainability of happiness takes place in context of the most serious challenges that the humanity currently faces. The problem is that there is no consensus about their acceptance, not to mention their solutions. According to the Population Division UN the number of people on Earth will reach 10–12,5 billion and then the growth stops and begins to fall slowly (UN 2019). Others reject their expectation and say that the population will grow all the time. We consider the first opinion as more likely, relying on the study of demographic processes known as 'the second demographic transition'. With the rise in the standard of living, birth rates have fallen everywhere, in the West for decades under a conservation rate of 2.1 children per woman. This is also the case for women from the category of countries classified by the UN in the Human Development Index as 'low level of development'. Their birth rates after moving to the West countries are significantly decreasing compared to birth rates in their native countries.

Contemporary developments on a global scale bring about a rise in the standard of living, which takes the form of reducing the number of people living in absolute poverty in the poorest countries to an unprecedented growth in living standards of the majority of the population in Western countries, which becomes a hedonic consumer society. According to some researchers, the eventual increase of living standards in developing countries to those currently in place in Western countries would mean twenty times higher impact of human activity on the environment (Valerio 2016). This is beyond real imagination.

The British Joseph Rowntree Foundation calculates the minimum income standards considered to be the lowest income in society, allowing a socially acceptable quality of life (Bradshaw et al. 2008). Druckman et al. (2011) dealt with the ecological footprint of people with this minimum income standard, and they concluded that lowering revenue standards is needed to reduce the environmental footprint. Based on that Valerio (2016) states that economic growth is not necessary.

Exploring the quality of life and related concepts of well-being, happiness or satisfaction with life has been flourishing on since the end of the 20th century, happiness currently being the most popular phenomenon related to the quality of life in the academic environment and in the public. The UN in 2012 proclaimed the 20th March as the International Day of Happiness *"recognizing the relevance of happiness and well-being as universal goals and aspirations in the lives of human beings around the world and the importance of their recognition in public policy objectives"* (UN, Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2018). By bringing happiness to public debate, the concept has often been discussed, though without a clear grounding. The fact that we can be happy has incorporated happiness among social values (Greve 2012).

There is a consensus among scientists that sustainability goals can only be achieved by changing values, as was already stated in Meadows et al. (1972) in 'Limits to the Growth'. Values play a key role in understanding and anticipating human behaviour (Rohan 2000). The issue of values appears to be very important in the analysis of sustainability and happiness. The reason is that the problem of sustainability and the quality of life is a problem of values (Rapley 2006). Kohák (2006) calls the ecological theory as environmental ethics.

New trends in development do not only emerge in psychology, but also naturally in exploring quality of life and related sustainability and nature protection. These include accepting its cross-cultural or cultural-geographical dimension in philosophy and religion (Ambrozy et al. 2019; Zalec & Pavlíková 2019), strategic environmental assessment and decision support for planning (Belčáková 2016; Slámová & Belčáková, 2019), landscape planning (Bezák et al 2017; Izakovičová 2000; Pechanec et al. 2015; Petrovič & Muchová 2013), land ownership (Muchová & Raškovič 2020; Muchová & Tárniková 2018), landscape development trends (Boltižiar et al. 2016; Druga et al. 2015; Michaeli & Boltižiar 2010) or landscape revitalization (Chrastina et al. 2019; Klusáček et al. 2018).

3 Contemporary consumer society

We consider the period of late modernity from the 1990's as present. Many adjectives can be given to contemporary society, e.g. information, knowledge, expertise, or creative society, Podzimek (2019) considers it a narcissistic society. Other characteristics of contemporary society are presented by Petrušek (2007). Along with the aims

of this paper, we will refer to the contemporary society as the consumer society. Most Westerners, including post-transition countries in Central and Eastern Europe, are experiencing unprecedented welfare growth. There is an increase in the number of middle-class members not only in the most populated countries of the world - China and India, but also in other developing countries. Worldwide, the number of people living in absolute poverty has declined; in all countries the average life expectancy and the literacy rate are rising, and the child mortality rate is decreasing. Residents of countries at the top of the Human Development Index are content and happy. So, what is the problem? Despite this, the growth of prosperity is not without problems.

Axiological knowledge based on the knowledge that 'the problem of happiness and quality of life is a problem of values' (Rapley 2003) and of 'ecological ethics' (Kohák 2006) can be used to solve the problems posed by the growth of prosperity. Inglehart (2016) describes postmaterialism as a value orientation of people who prefer intangible values, including quality of life, over material values, represented primarily by prosperity. Murgaš (2012) deals with the problem of axiology of quality of life.

It is in the fact that modern society has not reached the level of saturation of material needs and does not want more because it does not need it more, but according to the hedonic principle treadmill wants more and more. Miles (1998) captured the reality at the end of the 20th century in the title of his work: 'Consumerism: As a Way of Life'. The emergence of consumerism is closely related to the fact that in the context of the prosperity growth of most Westerners, a function of 'a consumer' has appeared for the first time in history in the 1960s. A major critic of the consumer society Bauman (2008, 2010) understands the present as liquid modernity, of which consumerism is the core, culture based on the need to buy ever-increasing amounts of goods. The only phenomena that are rising with the growth of well-being are the phenomena of social pathology. The feeling of unspecified uncertainty, omnipresent, and thus more depressing and dispiriting (Bauman 2008) is also increasing. According Murgaš and Klobučník (2016a) contemporary society of mass consumption is dominated by value-free understanding of quality of life, which in the short term can mean 'sunny side of quality of life' in which life is joyful and beautiful. We no longer live our lives, but we enjoy it, we wish each other to 'enjoy it'. Of course, life is so often like that in many corners of the Earth. But the sole orientation on such a life that can only be enjoyed,

but not lived through, is heading into empty, valueless living. In today's consumer society, the desire for good, quality life is replaced by the desire for happiness (Bauman 2008). Buying something necessary, which brought buyers satisfaction and, in the case of more expensive items, was only possible after a shorter or longer saving, has changed for a large part of the contemporary society into shopping based on debt. *"The idea of happiness is imperceptibly shifting from the expected bliss after buying towards the actual act of shopping – which is an action that is bursting with joyful anticipation, joyful for the original, unblemished and incessant hope"* (Bauman 2010: 19).

Kohák (2006: 65) is also critical of consumer society, according to him *"adore consumption in contemporary consumer society takes the form of affluenza epidemic, a deadly epidemic of excess. It is the idea that the only purpose of life and almost a moral duty to citizens is to accumulate and consume more and more tangible assets. Is it the desire for 'more' natural? No, but it satisfies the conditions of the consumer society, which fashionable thinkers like to refer to as 'postmodern' – a distracted, fickle society that still hungers for something new, and now again only in the context of the assessment of good and evil"*.

The analysis of the works of the cited authors shows that a significant characteristic of today's society is consumer society. This is the second point in finding an answer to the question posed in the title of the paper: what kind of happiness is sustainable?. In response to the problem of the unsustainability of the described consumer life, the need for a fundamental change arose in the form of sustainable consumption. Its definition was adopted at the Oslo Symposium in 1994: *"the use of services and related products, which respond to basic needs and bring a better quality of life while minimizing the use of natural resources and toxic materials as well as the emissions of waste and pollutants over the life cycle of the service or product so as not to jeopardize the needs of further generations"* (UN, Division for Sustainable Development Goals, on line). In an effort to approach the issue of sustainable consumption, Earth Overshoot Day is being celebrated, a day when we are pumping out sustainable natural resources that can be restored to Earth. The Global Footprint Network calculates it based on the ecological footprint. In 1990 the day was December 1, in 2019 it was July 29 (Global Footprint Network). The third point in constructing the answer to the question *"what kind of happiness is sustainable?"* is knowledge of the concept of sustainable consumption.

4 Sustainability and sustainable consumption

Sustainability is currently mutually interchangeable with sustainable development. Sustainability is defined as *"availability and continuity of a certain quality of life"* or *"the quality of being able to continue over a period of time"* (Cambridge Dictionary, online).

We agree with O'Brien (2010) in his understanding of the meaning of sustainable happiness which is *"happiness that contributes to individual, community or global well-being and does not exploit other people, the environment, or future generations"*. According to Ayers (2017) *"the objective of sustainable development is therefore to increase quality of life by improving all of the components of human well-being"*. Some researchers connect sustainability and quality of life in one concept sustainability and quality of life (Chiras & Corson 1997).

One of the principles of sustainability is to prioritize the intensive development of a society, focused on improving the quality of life over in the past predominantly extensive development of the society, orientated on the growth of living standards. Another principle of sustainability is the effort of decoupling, i.e. the separation of improvement of quality of life and economic growth from negative impact on environment. Decoupling is the fourth point important for answering the question: what kind of happiness is sustainable?.

Dasgupta (2005) calls the current level that is needed to maintain sustainable society principles 'productive base' and measures it as an indicator of the wealth of society. It consists of industrial assets, human capital in the form of education, human capital in the form of health, the natural capital of ecosystems and institutions (government and civil society). According to the previous economic mainstream, the GDP per capita in purchasing power parity indicator represented the level at that time. Later, a more comprehensive Human Development Index was added. Currently, these measurements are known – the Economist Intelligence Unit's Where-to-be-born Index, the OECD Better Life Index, the Legatum prosperity Index, the World Happiness Report or the ecologically focused Happy Planet Index. It follows from the above that the conformity on what represent a measure of the achieved development is not even approximate.

Two facts are obvious – happiness and quality of life are not expressed in GDP per capita, the second is the need for measurement at the global

level, therefore the measurement of only one group of countries, such as OECD or European Social Survey is not applicable. The most valid results come from the worldwide measurements of the American institutions Pew (Poushter 2017) or Gallup (Clifton 2017).

Consumption factor is an important part of sustainable development, statisticians publish data on the country's economic growth based on household consumption. In the context of sustainability, this logically raises the question of how to change current consumption to be more sustainable? There are two possible solutions - the first is a top-down approach, i.e. in the form of regulations and ordinances. An example of this approach is the European Union or the Office of the Government of the Kingdom of Sweden, which published in 2016 a Strategy-for-sustainable-consumption (Government Office of Sweden). Its focus is on food, transport and housing. The second is a bottom-up approach, based on the change of the hedonic way of life of a large part of society to the eudaimonial way. Its axiology is based on ecological ethics (Kohák 2006). Part of the bottom-up approach is the spontaneously emerging movement of people living in voluntary modesty. This approach to life is a response to the vanity lifestyle found in much of Western society.

We identified sustainable consumption as the third point in constructing the answer to the question "what kind of happiness is sustainable?". There are two ways to change current consumption to sustainable - a top-down and bottom-up approach. This is the fifth point in finding the answer to a question in the title of the paper. We believe that the intention to change current consumption to sustainable will be successful only if it is identified by most of humanity and the bottom-up approach will be taken on its own. Regulation as a top-down approach will only be an add-on.

We believe that the intention to change current consumption to sustainable one will be successful only if it is identified by most of the humanity and the bottom-up approach will be taken for its own. Regulation will only be an add-on.

5 Happiness and related concepts of quality of life, satisfaction with life, and well-being

In addition to the notion of quality of life, people use the terms of well-being, happiness, or life satisfaction to which they add different attributes

as subjective quality of life or economic well-being. Analysis of the relationship between sustainability and happiness requires first to explore the relationship of happiness and quality of life as well as happiness and related phenomena of well-being and satisfaction with life. In public debates and among researchers, this relationship is not clear, the concepts of quality of life, well-being, satisfaction, and happiness are considered interchangeable, or one superior, without explaining what superiority relies on.

The key to understanding the relationship between quality of life and happiness is the knowledge that the quality of life includes cognitive components, but happiness has only affective component (Cummins 2014). The quality of life and happiness cannot be the same because quality of life is an assessment and is cognitive. Happiness is a positive emotion (Seligman 2002) and is affective. In contrast, McMahan and Estes (2010 in Greve 2012) state that happiness has a cognitive component focused on life satisfaction and an affective component. The fact that the quality of life and happiness cannot be the same, empirically confirms measurements within the European Social Survey. *"Hedonism (happiness) and eudemonia (flourishing) are both important components of individual wellbeing and are present to varying degrees across Europe"* (Vanhoutte 2013: 5). In nearly all measured countries, the quality of life and happiness reach different values (Ortiz-Ospina & Roser 2013).

Another reason for refusing to identify happiness and quality of life is that happiness does not have an objective, spatial dimension, but the quality of life does. Okulicz-Kozaryn (2015) strictly formulated his disagreement with identifying happiness and quality of life: *"happiness is not the quality of life"*. Another group of the authors considers happiness to be part of satisfaction with life (Layard 2006). On the other hand, it makes no sense either to separate the quality of life and happiness, because like yin and yang together create a circle, so well-being and ill-being, happiness and misery, joy and suffering together create life. In this chapter, in line with many other authors (Bartram 2012; Seligman 2002; Okulicz-Kozaryn 2015), we consider happiness to be part of the quality of life, representing the highest degree of well-being.

Murgaš and Klobučník (2016c) consider quality of life as a multidimensional concept which can express emotional and cognitive assessment of life on a good — bad scale. The researchers agree that the quality of life is made of two dimensions — subjective, by psychologist called well-being and objective, for which Murgaš and Klobučník (2016b)

Table 1 Structure of quality of life and its measurement

Concept	QUALITY OF LIFE (Satisfaction with life)		
Dimensions	SUBJECTIVE Personal		OBJECTIVE Quality of place
Domains	WELL-BEING	ILL-BEING	AMENITIES
Measuring of subjective quality of life on Cantril's scale 0-10 (x)	10 — Happiness		EDUCATION
	9		EMPLOYMENT
	8		
	7		ENVIRONMENT
	6		
	5 - neither wellbeing nor ill-being		HEALTH
	4		
	3		RELIGIOSITY
	2		
	1		SAFETY
	0 — Suffering		

(x) Measurement on a 5- or 7-point Likert scale is based on a similar principle. There are many measurements of the objective dimension of quality of life, some described by [Stimson and Marans \(2011\)](#).

use the term quality of place. Each of the dimensions is made up of indicators, which are quantifiable variables and domains formed by a grouping of indicators. The position of happiness in the structure of quality of life and its measurement is in [Table 1](#).

When considering conceptualization of quality of life, we proceed from the fact that when we find the quality of life, we find satisfaction with it. Quality of life and satisfaction with life are therefore synonyms. Expression of life satisfaction is well-being, expressing dissatisfaction is ill-being.

A specific view of happiness was brought by the King Jigme Singye Wangchuk, who in 1972 set a Gross National Happiness (GNH) as a goal of policy in his country, based on the idea that happiness is more than GDP. The GNH domains are psychological well-being, health, time use, education, cultural diversity and resilience, good governance, community vitality, ecological diversity and resilience, and living standards. The ideas of GNH gradually entered the agenda of some countries and were accepted by the UN. In developed countries, Icelandic Prime Minister Katrin Jakobsdottir is the leader in bringing happiness to the political agenda, and Scottish First Minister Nicola Sturgeon and New Zealand's Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern are also active in this sector.

Interest in the phenomenon of happiness is archetypal, [Ballas and Dorling \(2012\)](#) place its beginnings in the Far East in the 6th century BC. Although

happiness is experiencing a boom at the present time, the claim that a person is doing everything toward personal happiness is twenty-four centuries old, as written by Aristotle (2009). Happiness, in the traditional understanding of the translation of the word eudaimonia from ancient Greek, means a good life. Aristotle distinguished between happiness as experienced joy, which he called hedonic and the happiness in the form of living well, which he called eudaimonia. English philosopher Jeremy Bentham, who lived at the turn of the 18th and 19th century, formulated the idea of securing the greatest happiness of the greatest number of people. Happiness has been considered a virtue in the past, which was reflected in a good life, at present it is an umbrella term for all manifestations of joy in life. The boom of interest in happiness has been demonstrated in recent decades in the social sciences not only by the growing number of published scientific outputs, but also by its association with new terms such as 'economy of happiness' ([Frey 2018](#)) or 'sustainable happiness' ([O'Brien 2010](#)).

The fact that we can be happy has incorporated happiness among social values ([Greve 2012](#)). Happiness has become something that can be achieved here and now, so everyone wants to be happy. The problem with today's society is the approach to the desire to be happy. People are controlled by the idea that they have the right to be happy, and the duty of the state is to secure this for them.

Happiness is - as well as quality of life — hardly objectively describable, nor does it have a definition that would be generally accepted. Some authors think that happiness cannot be defined (Haybron 2013). The consensus is at least in that happiness is based on a subjective perception of man rather than an objective assessment. In his World Database of Happiness Ruut Veenhoven understands happiness as „the degree to which an individual judge the overall quality of his/her own life favourably”. In other words, how much one likes the life one leads (Veenhoven 2012). These definitions make it clear that for Veenhoven happiness is a degree. While Haybron (2013) considers it a state of mind, in my opinion, both are true, happiness is the emotion expressing the highest level of satisfaction with life, meaning so, a state of mind that can be measured.

According to Oishi and Diener (2001) there are different types of happiness, which are preferred by different nations, depending on whether they are collectivists or individualists. According to the authors, the collectivist nations prefer quiet happiness, in contrast, people from Western, individualist nations mostly prefer heightened state of happiness.

Great discussions with contradictory results are being held about the topic of the effect of money on happiness (Murgáš & Böhm 2015). Seligman (2002) states that money affects experienced happiness to the extent that they are important to us.

From the conceptualization of happiness one that is well known is Seligman's, who described his concept in his work Authentic Happiness (Seligman 2002). The concept of authentic happiness is based on three theories- hedonism theory, desire theory and objective list theory. „Happiness, based on Seligman's interpretation of hedonism, is a matter of maximizing feelings of pleasure and minimizing feelings of pain. Hedonism has its modern conceptual roots in Bentham's utilitarianism and its manifestation in American consumerism” (Sirgy & Wu 2013). Di Martino et al. (2017) provide an overview of theories and models of happiness.

The short conceptual framework of happiness is made up of the following statement:

- Happiness is an emotion, forming an affective component of quality of life. We define it as the highest achievable satisfaction with life.
- Happiness can be hedonic, short-lived, or eudaimonic, long-lasting, usually associated with life wisdom. Hedonic happiness is often accompanied by external manifestations, such as cries or waving hands. Eudaimonic happiness cannot be obtained by pursuing it, be-

cause it is by-product of a well-lived life. Eudaimonic happiness is the “goal of human being” (Frey 2018).

- Happiness can only be related to an individual, not to society. There is no happy society (or unhappy), there are only happy people in society (Veenhoven et al. 1996).
- Differences in perceived happiness are forty to sixty percent determined by genetic inheritance (Frey 2018).
- Happiness is a part of well-being; it represents its highest value (as misery is a part of ill-being).

6 Discussion

In order to answer the question of what kind of happiness is sustainable, we analysed the relevant resources devoted to happiness and sustainability. The paper is based on the basic premise: The happiness of us – contemporaries – cannot be achieved at the expense of future generations. The following basic statements emerged from the analyses:

1. Happiness is not unitary but has two opposing and complementary forms — hedonic and eudaimonic
2. The term sustainability is future-oriented, the term happiness refers to the present. Combining sustainable happiness makes sense because it focuses on making people happy in the future.
3. A distinctive characteristic of today's society is that it is a consumer society.
4. In response to the previous statement, the concept of sustainable consumption arose.
5. One of the principles of sustainability is the effort to decouple, i.e. the separation of improving the quality of life and economic growth from the negative impacts on the environment.
6. There are two ways to change current consumption to sustainable – a top-down approach and a bottom-up approach.

The analysis of the basic premise and assumptions gives a clear answer to the question posed in the title of the paper: sustainable happiness is eudaimonic happiness. A hedonic form of happiness offering a never-fulfilled desire for more, better

and nicer products has turned people into consumers and society into individualistic and vain. Hedonian happiness is therefore not sustainable.

This article focuses on linking sustainability and happiness, the meaning of this link is the answer to the question of what happiness makes sense to sustain? A large part of the society in the post-transition countries of Central and Eastern Europe connects happiness with the sudden acquisition of a large amount of money and quality of life with a high standard of living, an ownership of luxury living, status objects and holidays in distant parts of the world. They consider recycling their waste as their contribution to environmental protection.

As we have already described, happiness is short-term, hedonic, and long-lasting, eudaimonic, with hedonistic, unsustainable happiness largely prevalent. How do we achieve the change towards the predominant eudaimonic happiness? In general, there are two options — to order the change and to change it by changing the way people think. Directing change happens by regulations, at international level, in the form of a ban on smoking, a ban on disposable plastic trays, cutlery, or a ban on the production of diesel cars. At the local level, it takes place in the form of a ban on the entry of motor vehicles into city centres or the ban on the sale of pod coffee machines.

Managing change in thinking towards eudaimonic happiness may seem beyond human power, but it can be achieved by education, accompanied by other measures. [Kohák \(2006\)](#) sees change in the classification of ecology between values and the creation of environmental ethics. Pope Francis considers the goal of integral ecology, dealing with not only environmental but also human and social problems ([Francis 2015](#)). This is in line with the identification of three parts of sustainable development — ecological, social and economic.

We know examples of cities or entire civilizations from the past that have disappeared because they have lost the ability to provide people with basic needs in the form of food, water and shelter. However, all the old civilizations did not perish, some have been able to respond to the threat of ecocide. We have proven that only the eudaimonic form of happiness is sustainable. On the contrary, the other, hedonistic form of happiness, is a part of processes of devastation of the human environment. The application dimension of this knowledge lies in providing valid information to support decision-making at all levels of public policy, as well as in informing the public on the part of scientists. The world known report of the Stiglitz Commission ([Stiglitz et al. 2010](#)) named the inevitabil-

ity to replace GDP as a measure of human development by measuring the quality of life and this was accepted. So, as Freedom Day became known widely, Earth Overshoot Day, which is calculated by the Global Footprint Network, should be known. The media all over the world mention when the UN annually issues the Human Development Index, there is a number of links to TED talks on sustainable happiness on the Internet.

The problem of sustainable development and the problem of sustainable happiness are not isolated problems. They are part of a process that is 'above' or 'behind', and this is the process of creating good societies ([Christofersen et al. 2014](#)) as a purpose of public policy. The goal of public policy should be to create conditions for a content, sometimes happy, long and sustainable life, lived in health. We identify with [Aristotle \(2009\)](#) in his definition of good society, according to which it is a society that allows a good life.

In the Aristotelian sense, it is a sustainable happiness that comes as an added value to a well-spent life. Better focus on happiness would be to focus on the sustainability of quality of life, as the concept of quality of life better meets the need for sustainability as a phenomenon of happiness. Sustainable quality of life should not have a hedonic form of 'at any price' ([Pol et al. 2016](#)) but it should with its emphasis on the socio-economic and ecological quality of the place ([Murgaš & Klobučník 2016a](#)) contribute to a good life in good society.

7 Conclusion

The aim of the article was formulated as an analysis of approaches to linking sustainability and happiness as a basis for a decision what happiness is sustainable. Happiness is a part of the quality of life, representing the highest degree of well-being, and therefore, like the quality of life, it has its hedonic and eudaimonic form. In the current consumer society, there is a desire for hedonistic happiness that is unsustainable. The need for a fundamental change in the form of sustainable consumption came about in response to the problem of unsustainability of consumer life. This can be achieved through a top-down approach, in the form of regulations and bans by the decision-making sphere, or by a bottom-up approach based on the acceptance of sustainability values by society. Acceptance of sustainability values must be accompanied by up-bringing.

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