

Robotics and Well-Being

Preface

In the twenty-first century, economists¹ have been claiming that the metrics for assessing the state of development of societies should be defined not in terms of their GDP², but in terms of their citizens' individual well-being. The collective state of well-being of a community must reflect what the OECD³ defines as the quality of life of every single individual. This involves more than the simple access to material resources, such as jobs, income, and wealth but comprehends physical and mental health, emotional satisfaction, and self-realization in a harmonious and sustainable environmental context. To achieve this, it is necessary that every individual has equitable and fair access to education and lifelong learning in order to develop and update the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values that enable people to contribute to and benefit from an inclusive and sustainable future where technology, namely automation and artificial intelligence, will play an important role. This education, this lifelong learning, will allow not only for the development of all types of literacy and skills necessary in the contemporary and future world, but simultaneously for the definition of an ethical consciousness toward technology. Raising collective and individual consciousness will be reflected in the attitudes and action of all stakeholders: (researchers, industry, consumers...) allowing for a real shift of paradigm where technological revolutions are not associated with unnecessary suffering by many but really contribute to the well-being of all. This book aims to be a modest contribution to the emergence of that consciousness.

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¹ Cf. Stiglitz et al. (2009) Measuring of Economic Performance and Social Development. Available at: [http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/118025/118123/Fitoussi+Commission+report+Measuring of Economic Performance and Social Development](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/118025/118123/Fitoussi+Commission+report+Measuring+of+Economic+Performance+and+Social+Development).

² Gross domestic product.

³ For well over a decade, the OECD World Forums on Statistics, Knowledge, and Policy have been pushing forward the boundaries of well-being measurement and policy. These Forums have contributed significantly to an ongoing shift in paradigm that identifies people's well-being and inclusive growth as the ultimate goals in the definition of policies and collective action