Livability in Europe, lessons for advancing economies in the future
The future of Europe will depend upon the solutions mankind realizes after the demise of the “project called modernity”.
Europe as we know it was modern before all other contenders, global regions, empires or great nations. Now that modern is dead, the void left will have to be filled.
In search for a core value Europe can share, build a reinforced identity around and teach the rest of the world is livability.
Livability ebbs and tides with history and is now globally jeopardized. A liveable Europe shall be strong enough to defy all the megatrends that create social, cultural and built environments unsuitable for living. These megatrends include endemic poverty, social polarization, unsustainable megacities, aimless trade and consumption as well as the saturation of armaments for most global regions in the arena of development.
Europe is home to many heartening initiatives that contribute to livability, and the same time public discourses on growth, financial stability, the liberal freedoms, security and employment rule the day.
Present essay defines livability based on our present knowledge of human functioning and flourishing and then reviews briefly the initiatives and the intrinsic conceptual limitations of mainstream economics and development policies applying livability as a yardstick. Finally the odds of a more livable yet politically tenable Europe are analysed.