

# Meaning and Well-Being in the Lebanese Context

Organized by the Institute of Political Science at the Université Saint Joseph Huvelin, Walid Ben Talal Amphitheatre Building A, 5th floor

**Date:**

June 21st, 16.00-18.00

The panel discussion will be followed by drinks and a networking session.

Please RSVP to: [rjo@voluntas.com](mailto:rjo@voluntas.com)

Explore the insights from our Global Meaningfulness Index:



**Meaningfulness in life**

At Voluntās, everything we do is to make more lives more meaningful.

We aim to realize human potential through providing fact-based analysis and policy recommendations to inform decision-makers at large.

**Speakers:**



**Niklas Kabel Pedersen**  
Partner & COO, Voluntās



**David Matta**  
President of the Lebanese Association of Mindfulness



**Dr May Merhej Sayegh**  
Associate Professor of Management and Information Systems, USJ



# Meaning and Well-Being in the Lebanese Context

This event, jointly hosted by **Voluntas** and the **Institute of Political Science at Saint Joseph University**, will discuss the findings of a recent global study examining how individuals across the globe experience meaning in their daily lives.

The **Global Meaningfulness Index (GMI)** surveyed 18,000 respondents across 24 countries, including Lebanon, asking questions relating to four key drivers: belonging, leadership, personal growth, and purpose. The report reveals some fascinating insights:

- Countries that typically score higher on the human development index (HDI), including Germany, The Netherlands, Norway, and Sweden, score lower on the GMI, while countries that generally score lower on the HDI, such as Ethiopia, the Philippines, and Nigeria, score higher on the GMI;
- Young people under the age of 25 experience lower levels of meaning compared to those over 25;
- Leadership is the lowest scoring driver in 22 out of 24 countries;
- Women experience lower levels of meaning compared to men

Overall, the survey aims to **challenge conventional thinking around how we measure societal progress**. Globally, wealth and material prosperity have never been higher, yet anxiety and depression are on the rise. Depression is one of the leading causes of disability and suicide is the fourth leading cause of death among 15 to 29 year olds. While current indices generally focus on objective factors such as economic growth and access to services, the report argues that these measures fail to provide an understanding of how individuals are actually feeling about their lives. UN Secretary General, Antonio Guterres, recently highlighted the limitations of measuring economic growth and called for metrics to "more fully recognize what matters to people, the planet, and our future."

By measuring meaningfulness, the **GMI aims to better grasp what matters to individuals and what this means for societal well-being**. Research suggests that individuals who experience less meaning in life have greater need for therapy, higher levels of depression, anxiety, suicidal ideation, and substance abuse, as well as other forms of distress. Higher levels of meaning, meanwhile, are positively associated with greater work enjoyment, life satisfaction, and happiness.

With Lebanon facing multiple crises, this event will **explore these ideas in the Lebanese context** and touch on themes including economic and political challenges, migration and emigration, youth, and work.