

When Less is more: a cognitive and experimental approach for public policies and normative implications

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Abstract: Orthodox economic thought is based on the assumption *More is more*. However, there are some situations in which the availability of a greater quantity of goods and services fails to respond to people's requirements and cognitive nature. The thesis of this article is that the mainstream economic premise presents some limitations in both the micro context of consumer behaviour and the macro context of social policies. It is the heuristic *Less is more*: because of the cognitive limitations of human beings an environment which offers less complex choices may respond more suitably to the requirements and mental nature of individuals. Given the cognitive phenomenon Less is more, there is a chance that a cognitive and experimental approach to human decisions could offer new arguments for theory and development of public policies.

Keywords: Less is more, Cognitive sciences, Behavioural economics, Public policy, Social policy.