

Main Research Interests

An enduring interest of Albert Steenge concerns the way economies find answers to ever-changing internal and external conditions. A considerable part of his work focuses on the 'middle range', i.e. the 'meso-level' of inter-industry and inter-sectoral relations, with extensions into micro-foundations and macro-economics. Input-Output analysis and inter-industry economics, with their variants and extensions, provide main sources of methodological inspiration. Some of the issues Albert Steenge is currently working on are:

Dynamic modeling and scenarios

The story of the dynamic Leontief model is a fantastic one and still a bit of a mystery. Developed in the early 1950's, for years this model was plagued by deficiencies, such as a lack of price-quantity symmetry, and the fact that its predictions appeared to be going nowhere. Steenge & Thissen (Journal of Economics, 2005) may contain some of the answers. But the story continues...

History of multi-sector analysis

History is important, precisely in times of rapid change and alteration. And sometimes the tools used are remarkably different from the tools we use today. Studying them is most interesting and, often, rewarding. One example is Francois Quesnay in pre-revolutionary France. He used a peculiar arithmetic, the so-called 'zig-zags', which virtually nobody understood. In fact, the debate on the meaning of Quesnay's model continues until the present day, some proposing that it is inconsistent. I could never really believe this, and in an article co-authored with Richard van den Berg (forthcoming in JHET) we prove that this intuition was correct. In addition, the Tableau is a very nice example of the classical tradition, with its focus on the main themes. This way of doing multi-sector work may be the way we should go.

Catastrophe input-output theory and its applications

What happens if a country is hit by a very big disaster, either a natural one, such as the 1953-February flood in the Southwestern Netherlands, or a manmade one? One way of looking at it is by interpreting the catastrophe's impact in terms of imbalances or disproportions between the elements that make up society. Doing that, we are rapidly confronted with far-reaching issues of interdependence, flexibility and substitution, and the role of markets and hierarchies in the recovery programs.

Institutional economics

Of the classical triad 'property rights', 'externalities', and 'transaction costs', Albert Steenge first became interested in the second sub-field, i.e. externalities and in particular the role of cost allocation schemes such as 'the polluter pays'. Most interesting is the link with debates in national accounting such as the issue of green accounting, and modern topics where it all seems to come together, such as in international tourism.