

European Foundation on Social Quality

Social Quality and the Component of  
Socio-economic security

Discussion Paper on behalf of the European Network on Indicators of Social Quality

Fourth draft

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# 1 Introduction

In this fourth draft of the paper on socio-economic security we tried to develop in a very consistent way the steps from theory to indicators. Thanks to the discussions during the meeting of assistants, the following national comments and the rethinking of the relationship and overlaps between socio-economic security, social cohesion, social inclusion and empowerment, we could formulate the subject matter and definition of socio-economic security in a more profound way. We also spent a lot of time on the thinking about the essence of a domain, a sub-domain and an indicator and how they relate to each other. This goes back to the discussion on the trinomial nature of the conditional factors (see the paper on Social Quality and its four Components by Alan and Laurent of September). One should interpret this new proposal for domains, sub-domains and indicators for socio-economic security as an input for the final discussion on indicators during the coming meeting of 11-13 February. During this meeting we will have to make decisions on the final list of indicators for the conditional factors of social quality.

For the time being we did not work on the sections about the scientific debate and the policy debate related to socio-economic security as we did in the third draft. We therefore left these sections out of this paper. These sections will however be further developed with help of Professor Dave Gordon.

This paper on socio-economic security and the sections on the scientific and policy debate will be rewritten after the meeting into chapter four of the final report of the ENIQ project (see the outline for the final report sent by Laurent in January). The sections presented in this paper will thus become section 4.4 and 4.5 of the final report.

## 2 Social Quality and Socio-Economic Security

### 2.1 Introduction

In the second book on social quality and in previous papers on socio-economic security the subject matter of socio-economic security was described referring to the (i) diminishing risks and (ii) enhancing of chances as supposed core elements of this subject matter<sup>1</sup>. The question was raised if both should be conceived exclusively as an aspect of this conditional factor. According to some national reports, both are related with all four conditional factors. They can indeed be conceived as related with a higher purpose as presented in the Amsterdam Declaration on Social Quality.<sup>2</sup> With this in mind we will redefine the subject matter based on comments of the national reports and debates with the authors of the papers about the four conditional factors. But first we will present some etymological considerations.

### 2.2 Etymology and the subject matter of socio-economic security

Going back to the etymology gives us the basic meaning of words. By understanding this basic meaning, we are able to present an interpretation of the terms we use. The Foundation's second book proposed to change the concept of 'social security' in 'socio-economic security'. The dominant accent on income transfers, the growing underestimation of other resources and the 'statist approach' stimulated this change. How to interpret 'social security'? The noun 'social' regards the Latin word 'sociales' and means 'what is common'. The English word 'security' regards in fact the Latin word 'securas' what means 'free from worry'. So the Latin connotation of social security seems to be something like 'commonly being free from worry'.

In modern circumstances social security systems refer to income transfer systems of all types, personal social services and medical care for workers (original German approach) or for the public (original British approach), thus more or less for the 'communitas'.<sup>3</sup> The English term 'social security' refers to safety. In for example the Netherlands the concept of 'sociale zekerheid' refers to certain conditions, not to security or safety. However, it is translated into social security. In German it means

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<sup>1</sup> L.J.G. van der Maesen and M. Keizer, 'Social Quality and the component of socio-economic security. Third draft.' Amsterdam: EFSQ, September 2003, p. 5.

<sup>2</sup> 'Amsterdam Declaration of Social Quality'. Amsterdam: EFSQ, June 1997. This Declaration is published in the Foundation's second book as well, see note-1.

<sup>3</sup> D. van der Werff, 'The Social Face of the Euro'. Utrecht: International Books/2000 Plus BV, 2003.

'Sicherheit'. In Belgium not the Flemish/Dutch word 'sociale zekerheid', but 'sociale bescherming' is applied. This Flemish/Dutch word refers to protection and it is translated into 'social protection' according the French connotation. That should mean that social security is synonym to social protection, but that is contestable. It is only a demonstration of the confusion of applied concepts in different Member States.

With this in mind we can explore the social quality interpretation of socio-economic security, leading to a description of the subject matter of socio-economic security. It implies some essential differences with social security. First, the concept of 'the social' does not mean in the social quality approach 'what is common'. It regards processes of self-realisation within a context of collective identities. Secondly, we introduced 'economic' referring to the Greece word 'oikos' or household, meaning to co-operate together in order to cope with daily circumstances. Especially this interpretation will fade away the one-sided statist approach. Thirdly, security in the social quality approach differs from the idea to live without uncertainties or worries. Human life is pregnant with uncertainties. In the social quality approach it refers to looking after oneself and relatives or nearest as household members, with help of community groups, the municipality, and national institutes etc. Looking after concerns all aspects of human existence and not only biophysical and mental questions. The subject matter of socio-economic security in the context of the social quality theory means *'realising oneself in a context of looking after each other and cooperating in social relations like households, families, (community) groups, municipalities, enterprises, national institutes and NGOs in order to cope with the uncertainties and risks of daily life'*.

### 2.3 A New Definition

In this section we will connect the new definition of socio-economic security with the original definition (see section 2.1 of the third draft paper on socio-economic security) and the description of the subject matter in the section above. This new definition of socio-economic security reflects the subject matter in a more abstract way.

The original definition focused on socio-economic security as prevention from risks by welfare provisions on the one hand side and the enhancement of chances on the other hand side. This reflects the two sidedness of the social quality theory. Social quality is about social relations and not about top down forms of welfare provisions and social security. However, as said before, this original definition is not exclusive enough for expressing socio-economic security. Preventing risks and enhancing life chances are aspects also of relevance to the other three conditional factors of social quality. In a sense it is a higher goal.

Looking at the etymology of socio-economic security we came to a description of the subject matter of socio-economic security that is very close to the principles of social quality. The 'social' in the social quality approach is reflected very well in this description and a reference is made to the aspect of prevention of risks of the original definition of socio-economic security. For a short and understandable working definition we however need to define the essence of socio-economic security on a more abstract level. The question is what do people need to be able to realise themselves in a context of looking after each other and cooperating in social relations in order to cope with the uncertainties and risks of daily life. Answering this question we come to the following definition of socio-economic security:

*Socio-economic security is the degree to which people have sufficient resources over time.*

Some elements of this definition need to be explained.

- The use of the term 'people': we would like to reflect socio-economic security on the individual level. We are not talking about the socio-economic security of a household or a family, but of the individual.
- 'Resources' is the key term in this definition. One needs resources for coping with risks and enhancing ones chances. Resources in a material and an immaterial sense. But what is the meaning of the term resource in the context of social quality and especially socio-economic security? With resources in the context of socio-economic security we mean resources that enable social actors to actually take part in the social environment they live in. In a sense it are these resources that are a condition for people's empowerment. In the context of the subject matter of socio-economic security, the resources are the means people need to realise themselves while looking after each other and cooperating in social relations to cope with the uncertainties and risks of daily life. It thus concerns resources in a social context, not interpreted as economic factors to produce capital.
- We add 'sufficient' in the definition, because otherwise one could imply that only rich people (people with a lot of resources) have socio-economic security: the more resources, the more security. This could be true, but it is not were we are interested in. The aspiration of the social quality approach is towards higher standards rather than a minimal social floor<sup>4</sup>. However adding 'sufficient' is also a normative aspect within the definition. Who decides what is 'sufficient'? It is the social actor himself who decides what is sufficient.

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<sup>4</sup> J. Baars, W. Beck, P. Herrmann, L.J.G. van der Maesen and A. Walker, 'Social Quality: A Sustainable Project for Europe. Briefing paper for the Round Table of the EC.' Amsterdam: EFSQ, November 2003, p. 17-18.

- 'Over time' is an addition to state that socio-economic security should not be evaluated at one certain moment in time. People should have socio-economic security as long as they live. In a way it is a reference to the aspect of the life cycle.

## 2.4 Socio-Economic Security and the Social Quality Quadrangle

This section reflects on socio-economic security within the construct of social quality and in relation to the other conditional factors.

### *Socio-Economic Security and the Quadrangle Constituting Social Quality*

As described in the theory of social quality, there are two essential tensions that impact on the four conditional factors for social quality<sup>5</sup> and so also on socio-economic security. These tensions should be interpreted as fields of action, where the social actors interact with each other. These two fields of action are:

- Societal processes versus biographies (or biographical processes): this is the tension between the macro level of societal development versus the micro level of biographical development or life-courses of the social actor (the individual).
- Systems, institutions and organisations versus communities, groups and families: this is the tension between the world of systems, based on rationally (or rather politically) motivated exchanges of interests (Vergesellschaftung) versus the world of more or less spontaneously developed forms of living together, based on subjective and affective feelings (Vergemeinschaftung)<sup>6</sup>.

With regard to socio-economic security these two fields of action can be demonstrated (see figure 1).

- Socio-economic security and the vertical tension: On the one side the European societies have developed a sense of social justice resulting in a system of redistribution of resources on a societal level. On the other side people also provide for themselves by developing themselves in their biographies (or biographical processes). They go to school, look for a job and gain their own income.
- Socio-economic security and the horizontal tension: On the one side the resources are redistributed by welfare state systems and organisations based on rational (or political) rules. On the other side it is not only the state and its systems and institutions that supports people by

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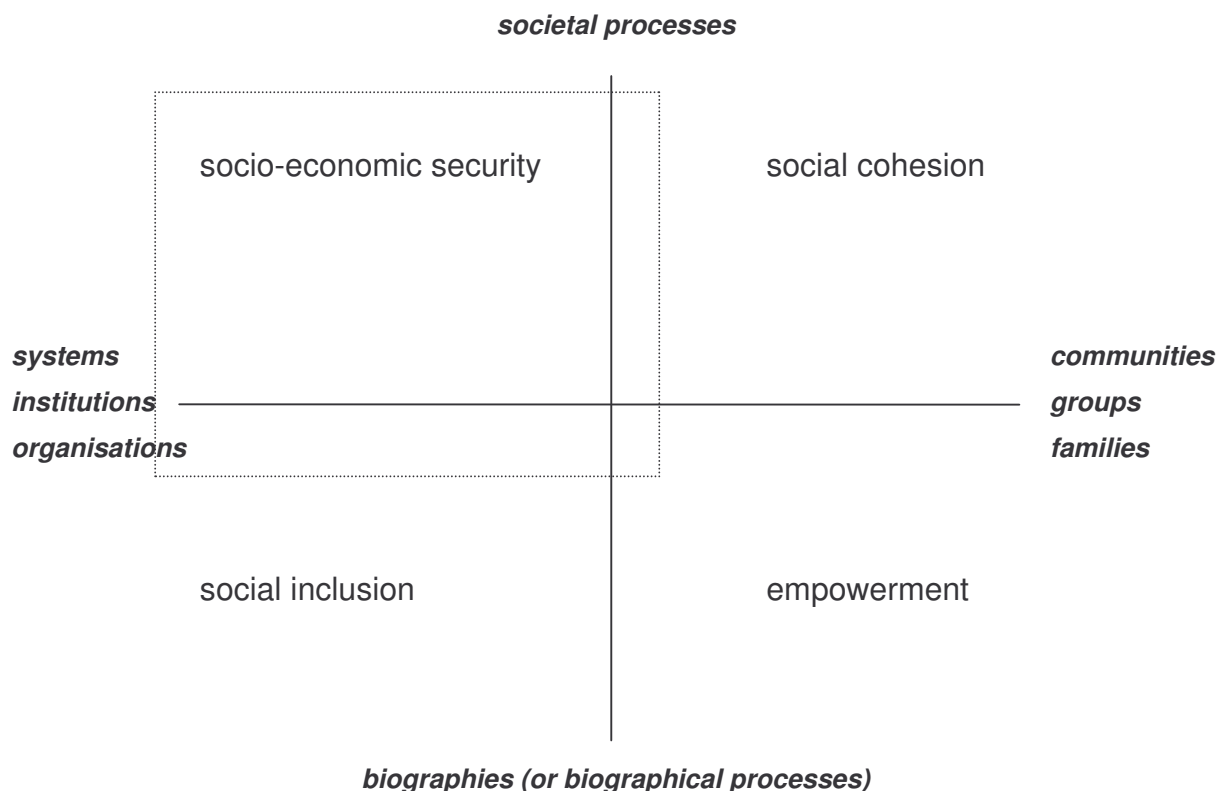
<sup>5</sup> This will be explained extensively in the second chapter of our final report, therefore I refer to this topic only briefly here.

<sup>6</sup> W. Beck, L.J.G. van der Maesen, F. Thomése, A. Walker, 'Social Quality: A Vision for Europe' p. 325.

redistributing resources, people can also fall back on people in their community (family and friends etc.).

This is why socio-economic security should not be regarded only in the upper left corner of the quadrangle. Socio-economic security borders to both tensions. However with socio-economic security the emphasis will be placed on the societal and systems, institutions and organisations end of the two tensions. With socio-economic security we will in other words focus mostly on the rational (or politically motivated) distribution of resources at the societal level. This means that we will only marginally focus on resources individuals have thanks to irrational, subjective feeling of belonging to communities, groups and families.

**Figure 1**      **Quadrangle: The Conditions for Social Quality**





### *Socio-Economic Security and the Other Conditional Factors*

In this section we will try to clarify the relationship between socio-economic security and the other three conditional factors.

#### *Socio-economic security and social inclusion*

socio-economic security is about having resources, while inclusion is about the integration in or the access to society and institutions that are 'actors' in the field of action for resources. This means that overlap between inclusion and socio-economic security is manifest, but the border of socio-economic security is the status of having or not having sufficient resources while inclusion is more about the process of gaining resources. Inclusion is the integration of the social actor in systems, institutions and organisations.

#### *Socio-economic security and empowerment*

Between socio-economic security and empowerment an overlap is visible as well. Empowerment has to do with the way people make use of their resources for their self-realisation. But it is the socio-economic security that provides the social actor with resources he or she needs for participation in society. Herewith socio-economic security creates the conditions for empowerment.

A concrete example of possible overlap between socio-economic security and empowerment is the domain of education. However with regard to socio-economic security the supply of education (of different sort) can count as resource. The empowerment aspect of education is on the level of knowledge, information and capabilities, which enable people to act and the way they use this knowledge, information and capabilities for self-realisation.

#### *Socio-economic security and social cohesion*

The overlap between socio-economic security and cohesion is there as well. An aspect of overlap is perhaps the quality and societal norms and values with regard to social relations, especially family, as resource for socio-economic security. Family or social networks could be seen as an immaterial resource for socio-economic security. If ones own resources are not sufficient one can hopefully count on family and friends. In this way social networks are a resource for the prevention of risks. However the inclusion in social networks and the quality of these networks are regarded in the conditional factors of social inclusion and social cohesion.

## 3 Domains and sub-domains of socio-economic security

### 3.1 Introduction

In the introduction of this paper we promised to try to justify the choice of domains, sub-domains and indicators in a more consistent way. The process of selecting domains, sub-domains and indicators until now was mostly based on intuitive reasoning. In this paper however a lot of effort is put into expressing the basis of choice for domains and sub-domains by formulating first for what kind of domains, sub-domains or indicators we are looking in the light of the subject matter and definition of socio-economic security.

If the sections about the scientific debate and EU policy debate of socio-economic security are finished we are able to compare our choices to the choices of other research work and point out where social quality has a different perspective thanks to the focus on social relations and the focus on resources in the context of the 'social'.

### 3.2 The domains

In the trinomial nature of the conditional factors the domains are connected with the characteristics. In abstract sense domains are defined as manifestations of the characteristic of the conditional factor. With regard to socio-economic security the characteristic is 'resources', so the domains are the assignments of resources people need to realise themselves and to be able to cope with the uncertainties and risks of daily life.

We started with this thinking about 'resources' from the econometrist approach of the assets of the production function<sup>7</sup>. The assets were labour (time, health, human capital), physical capital (housing), financial capital (savings, insurances), social capital (family, social networks) and public goods (forms of income guarantee). These assets however refer to what is needed for production, for the accumulation of capital. In economic reasoning capital means the value of accumulated goods, or net worth. While social quality is not interested in this kind of capital, but in the enforcement of social life. Therefore the discussion about 'social capital' is of more interest. How does this discussion relate to the social quality discussion about 'the social' and the role of social networks? In their paper on 'Social

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<sup>7</sup> Chris de Neubourg introduced this thinking at the second meeting of the Network, referring to the work of the World Bank.

Quality, Social Capital and Quality of Life', Alan Walker and Andrea Wigfield reflect on this thinking of social capital. They state that "*social capital is also seen by some as an important indicator of the wealth of a nation and as vital for economic growth (Jenson, 1998; Putnam, 1993). For example the World Bank encourages optimising social capital in developing countries arguing that it enhances economic growth and political stability (World Bank, 1998). Similarly Fukuyama (1999) argues that social capital is a major component of a nation's wealth and Putnam (2000) suggests that it is a precondition for both economic growth and effective government.*"<sup>8</sup> In other words, there is a constant relation between social capital and the production of wealth. Social quality however evaluates the social life itself. Social life does not have to lead to wealth, but to a better life of people.

The Network came intuitively to the following resources for socio-economic security: *financial resources, housing & environment, health & care, work, and education*. The first three resources – financial resources, housing (& environment), health (& care) – are basic needs of people. The choice for these resources do not need an extensive justification from a social quality perspective. The resource of 'work' needs perhaps more clarification. We first should clarify the use of the word 'work'. Why work and not labour or employment? We choose work, because with the term work we imply the relevance of self-realisation. This connotation is most captured in the word 'work'. While labour has especially the connotation of physical effort or strain. Furthermore work has a broader connotation than employment that is reflecting work in a contractual sense, or work deliver against payment. With regard to social quality, the domain of 'work' reflects on this broader connotation, because work without contract or payments can also contribute to self-realisation. It can be directly connected to the 'social'. Thanks to work people can realise themselves in the context of the formation of collective identities. Furthermore most often – in the case it is paid for – work provides income or in other words financial resources. The resource of 'education' follows the same line of reasoning. Education can be connected in the same way with the 'social'. Furthermore an education is a investment for access to work.

### 3.3 The sub-domains

The sub-domains could be conceived as the specification or concretisation of the domain. The sub-domains specify the aspect of the resource (domain) that is of relevance in the context of the subject matter of socio-economic security. At the level of the sub-domains the distinction between the conditional factors should be apparent (this is the mutual relationship of the trinomial nature). So for socio-economic security the aspect of having sufficient resources – the supply, the affordability and to

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<sup>8</sup> Alan Walker and Andrea Wigfield, *Social Quality, Social Capital and Quality of Life*, February 2003, p.4.

some extent the quality of the resources – is of relevance, while for social inclusion the access to or the integration in systems and institutions providing resources and for empowerment the use made of the resources for self-realisation is of relevance.

The choice of sub-domains therefore reflect mostly the aspect of ‘security’, meaning certainty or assurance, sufficiency and supply of the resource and the aspect of ‘quality’, in the meaning of the non-normative Latin word ‘qualitas’ or ‘qualis’ that means the inherent characteristic, property, nature, or status of in this case the resource.

This leads us to the following list of sub-domains:

<b>Domain</b>	<b>Sub-domain</b>
Financial resources	income sufficiency income security
Housing & environment	housing security quality of housing quality of environment
Health & care	security of health provisions quality of health cure services quality of health care services exposure to health risks
Work	employment security quality of work
Education	security of education quality of education

In the domain of financial resources we made a distinction between income sufficiency and income security, because in the first place we could like to know if the income people have is sufficient and in the second place we would like to know if people have some security with regard to income. This reflects social security or income support. Because of the specific connotation of the terms ‘social security’ and ‘income support’, we chose the term income security that fits in very well with our description of the relevant aspects of the domains for socio-economic security.

Within the domain of health we propose to add the sub-domain of 'exposure to health risks', this builds on the previous idea of lifestyle. Exposure to health risks is however expressing much better what we mean with this sub-domain.

## 4 Indicators of socio-economic security

### 4.1 Introduction

What was lacking so far was the theoretical link between social quality, socio-economic security and the choice of domains, sub-domains and indicators. Thanks to the rethinking of the definition and subject matter of socio-economic security, we could make a step forwards in clarifying this theoretical link. This step forwards is determined by the thinking about resources. While thinking about indicators for socio-economic security, we should keep in mind that we are looking for *indicators that measure to which degree people (as social actors) have sufficient resources, specified to the aspects of security and quality of the resources as defined by the sub-domains*. In line with this reasoning the new proposal of indicators of socio-economic security is – in our opinion – more in line with the essence of socio-economic security as defined by the subject matter and the definition.

### 4.2 Criteria for indicators

We applied some criteria for the choice of indicators. First of all the indicators of socio-economic security should express the degree to which the individuals (social actors) have resources and more specific have sufficient security and quality of resources.

Secondly, the indicators for social quality are oriented on the individual level (they should not give an overall picture of the state of society). Social quality is oriented at the self-realisation of social actors. The indicators should therefore provide information about the conditions for social quality on the individual level. We will do this with national data, because we would like to compare the conditions for social quality in the different countries.

Thirdly, the indicator should be formulated in a positive way. We are looking at the level of socio-economic security, not at the lack of socio-economic security. If we know the percentage of people having resources, we also know the percentage of people not having the resources.

The aspect of who delivers the security of the resource: the state, private institutions (incl. charity) or family and friends (social networks) is a fourth criteria we introduced. In stead of nominating social networks as a separate domain, we think that in the context of social quality – where social relations are the core –, these social relations should be taken into consideration in every domain. With regard

to each resource we can ask ourselves, who is delivering this resource; or in other words, at which different levels – the societal, institutional or personal level – can people expect support. In this way we reflect that socio-economic security is bordering both tensions in the quadrangle and is not only located in the upper left side of the quadrangle.

Same criteria given by the Belgium team of the Network are highly important as well:

- *An indicator should identify the essence of the problem and have a clear and accepted normative interpretation.* There should be a general agreement that a movement in a particular direction represents an improvement.
- *An indicator should be robust and statistically validated.* An indicator should be measurable in a way that commands general support. A preliminary condition to achieve a broad consensus on how to measure a specific problem, is the existence of extensive methodological research on the subject. Furthermore, an indicator must also be statistically reliable over time and this in the sense that results must not be liable to unpredictable or inexplicable fluctuations.

### 4.3 The list of indicators

In this section is presented the new list of proposed indicators. We used all the suggestions made during the last two years, but we also invented new indicators. For many of the indicators data will probably not or not easily be available. We should keep in mind that in this stage we are working on an ideal list of indicators. We present the indicators per sub-domain and give a short clarification of the information we are looking for in each specific sub-domain and of the choice of the presented indicators.

#### ***Financial resources***

##### *Income sufficiency*

1. percentage income spent on necessities – food, housing, clothing – by household income.  
Indicator 1 gives information about the sufficiency of the income for basic needs of people.

##### *Income security*

2. relation between average level of benefit and minimum wages. For the following benefits: unemployment, disabled, pension, social assistance and widow(er)/ orphans.

3. percentage of people living above poverty level as a result of entitlement transfers.

Both indicators express the financial aspect of the benefit. The key question for socio-economic security is not how many people are dependent on a benefit, but if the level of the benefit guarantees income security.

### ***Housing and environment***

#### *Housing security*

4. percentage of people living in households receiving housing allowance.

5. percentage of people on waiting list for social housing.

6. percentage of people living in zero square meters (homelessness).

In this sub-domain we would like to measure if people are secured and can afford to live in a house that is in correspondence with their need. The difficulty is how to measure this in an objective and EU comparative way. This has much to do with the housing policy of governments, that makes indicators multi-interpretable (as already remarked in an early stage by some partners). Indicator 5 is also problematic with regard to pollution on waiting lists. Many people are inscribed on waiting lists for social housing although they have a decent house. In indicator 1 we already measured the financial burden of a house on the household income.

With regard to criteria four, we think that an indicator measuring 'living with family or friends in case of emergency' is probably of interest as well, but how to measure this?

#### *Quality of housing*

7. percentage of people living in house with minimum number of square meters per household member or more.

8. percentage of people living in houses with functioning basic amenities (water, electricity, gas, heating, lighting and sanitation).

9. percentage of people living in unsafe neighbourhoods.

In this sub-domain we measure if the houses people live in meet basic needs; the size, the basic amenities and the safety of the surrounding are in our opinion the most important.

#### *Quality of environment*

10. percentage of people living in unhealthy surrounding: air pollution, noise pollution, water pollution.



This sub-domain expresses in contrast to the previous sub-domain the environmental aspect of the living surrounding of people. Air, noise and water are in our opinion the most important.

### ***Health and care***

#### *Security of health provisions*

11. percentage of people covered by compulsory/ voluntary health insurance.

12. people financially assisted for long term medication [needs specification].

The indicators of this sub-domain should express the financial security of health provisions. With indicator 12 we would like to measure if people dependent on long term medication are financially assisted if this is necessary for them to continue their life in a proper way. The question is how to measure this precisely?

#### *Quality of health cure services*

13. number of clients per practitioner

14. the average waiting period for necessary medical treatment.

The indicators of this sub-domain are very close to indicators for social inclusion. The aspect of access to proper health cure services in time of need is the essence. Or are there other important aspects we should measure as well?

#### *Quality of health care services*

15. number of places at care facilities expressed as a percentage of people who may require care such as children below a certain age and elderly.

16. demand for home care (elderly, disabled, sick).

17. percentage of people taken care of by family or friends after hospital stay.

18. percentage of people making use of charity (public or private) for food distribution and shelter.

In this sub-domain we should look for aspects of care at different levels (societal, institutional and social network). Indicator 18 is indirectly linked to health, without food and shelter health is at stake.

#### *Exposure to health risks*

19. percentage of people addicted to alcohol or drugs.

20. percentage of people with obesity.

21. number of people with stress.

22. number of people injured through violence – domestic and outside on the street.

Not only the need of help in case of unhealthiness is relevant for social quality, also the health risks should in correspondence with the subject matter of socio-economic security be taken into consideration. The choice is pretty straightforward.

## **Work**

### *Employment security*

23. people having a paid job as a percentage of the labour force.

24. percentage of workers having a permanent job contract after probation.

25. percentage of work force that is illegal (estimation).

With these indicators the security of a paid job is intended. Indicator 23 firstly expresses if people actually have a paid job. Indicators 24 gives information on the permanency of a job. Indicator 25 is expressed in a negative sense, this is not in correspondence with criteria three, but expressing the number of legal workers as percentage all worker, legal and illegal, is very illogical. Measuring illegality is very difficult (there are only estimations, if data is available at all), but illegal workers are the most vulnerable.

### *Quality of work*

26. absolute use made of work leave for care, sabbatical, maternity, paternity [and others?] as a proportion of accessibility.

27. replacement rates of benefit when on care leave.

28. entitlement to work based training: the participation rate should be expressed as a proportion of the people employed by age / or sector.

29. percentage related injuries to category of work, including burn-out, RSI, orthopaedic problems etc.

30. number of people doing unpaid care work as a percentage of all those that work.

This sub-domain is called quality of work, because the aspects mentioned are broader than employment (contractual work). We also referred to the aspect of unpaid work. As aspects of quality of work are chosen work leave (incl. payment when on leave), training possibilities, health risks at work and the payment of work.

## **Education**

### *Security of education*

31. percentage of those in education that have taken a loan to fund their studies (primary, secondary and third education)
32. absolute costs of higher education per student (costs min grant).
33. percentage of students receiving study allowance from parents.

With this sub-domain we would like to measure if education is affordable. In most countries primary and secondary education is quite affordable for everyone, but this is different with regard to higher education. We therefore focussed with the choice of indicators on higher education. Indicator 33 is expressing criteria four (reliability on family).

### *Quality of education*

34. percentage pupils in compulsory education that go to school.
35. number of places for special education (mental and physical handicapped, troublemakers) in relation to demand.
36. supply of adult education. [needs specification]
37. percentage hours that computer science is taught in primary and secondary education.

This sub-domain should give information on the supply of different forms of education. Indicator 34 is meant to express in a positive formulation the pupils skipping or expelled from compulsory education. Indicator 36 needs specification. How can we measure adult education? Indicator 37 is of relevance, because of the growing use of computers at all levels in contemporary life.