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**The experimental urban space of Laak Noord
of the City of The Hague as part of the Dutch Delta Metropolis:
an adequate international frame of reference?**

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The European Foundation on Social Quality was established during the Dutch Presidency of the European Union in June 1997. The current aim is to develop networks of scientists to design and to apply the new theory on social quality, to prepare for comparative research of daily circumstances in Europe, Asia and other continents. This comparability presupposes a new conceptual framework, applicable at global level, as a condition to address the current fundamental international issues related to economic, socio-political and environmental aspects of global sustainability.

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1. **Introduction: the objectives of the working-paper¹**

The main objective of this working-paper is to present the work carried out to approach the urban space or quarter of Laak Noord of the city of The Hague as part of the Dutch Delta Metropole (also including Amsterdam, Rotterdam and Utrecht).² It has been written for representatives of public and non-public organisations, interested in the city of The Hague, engaged with urban development issues in the broadest sense of the word. For Laak Noord a lot of work has already been carried out and this working-paper will present an overview of all related documents published recently. In order to understand the current state of the debate and planned actions concerning Laak Noord this overview may function as a support to underline these actions and to deliver new starting points for to develop effective strategies. The actual plans for developing this urban part of the city were presented in a document of the Municipality in March 2009.³ This working-paper may be seen as background information and could be a help to understand these plans.

This working-paper has also been designed for an international audience. The question is if the approach on behalf of Laak Noord - referring to the new theory of social quality - could function as a start for a scientific and policy frame of reference to analyse processes in other global cities in the world as well. Recently a proposal has been prepared for the European Commission (FP7) to use this frame of reference for approaching and comparing other global cities, namely: Bangkok, Nanjing, Hong Kong, Delhi, Taipei, Seoul, Johannesburg, Porto Alegre, Naples, Lyon, Lisbon, Antalya and Moscow.⁴ The preliminary ideas for developing this proposal have been articulated by representatives of the European Foundation on Social Quality (Foundation) and the international Institute of Social Studies (ISS), and central players in the quarter of Laak Noord. In July 2007 both organisations – the

¹ The author contributed to the urban development of Amsterdam-Southeast in the seventies, a new sub-urban part of 125.000 inhabitants. The physical aspects are based on some principles of the French architect Le Corbusier. At that time the author coordinated (i) community organisation and participation, (ii) the preparation of systems for education, health care, social care, churches, cultural facilities, welfare provisions, sport, as well as (iii) the preparation of the construction of related physical expressions/buildings, see: L.J.G. van der Maesen, *'Communication strategies for developing Amsterdam South-East (the Bijlmermeer) [in Dutch]'*, The Hague: Governmental Publication (Staatsuitgeverij), 1969. Furthermore he was engaged in some aspects of the urban development of Almere in the eighties [community organisation, health care, social care, welfare provisions], to urban aspects of the Northern part of Rotterdam in the nineties [community organisation, health and social care, preparation of the construction and content of a community hospital] and Maastricht [concerning the application of the McMaster University example from Hamilton, Canada]. His thesis concerned the transformation of health care in The Netherlands: L.J.G. van der Maesen, *'Transformation of the Dutch Health Care System in The Netherlands between 1974 and 1986 [in Dutch]'*, Assen: Van Gorcum, 1987. Later he made explorations abroad and published articles (for example a booklet, published by the WHO) and working-papers about related topics in London/Lambeth, Liverpool, South-East Toronto and South-East Montreal. Conclusions are that strategies for communication are necessary for urban development but not sufficient. Needed is a modern theory for urban development, operationalised with the help of communication strategies.

² J.F. Westbroek, L.J.G. van der Maesen, H.G.J. Nijhuis, 'Financial plan for developing Laak-Noord as part of the urban space of The Hague', The Hague: Municipality/EFSQ, September 2008.

³ Municipality of The Hague, *'Laak Noord matters (Laak Noord Scoort: Aanvraag van de gemeente Den Haag bij het ministerie van WWI vor het preventiebudget 40+ wijken betreffende de wijk Laak Noord'*, The Hague: Department of OC&W, March 2009 [in Dutch]

⁴ K. van Dijken, L.J.G. van der Maesen, H. Verkleij, *'A proposal for DG Research of the European Commission (FP7) about the sustainable development of fourteen global cities'*, The Hague: NICIS/EFSQ, January 2009. Sixteen documents were presented from all participating global cities and members of the proposed Steering Group in order to complete the proposal.

ISS and the Foundation - signed a Memorandum of Understanding for a project-collaboration including the strategic development of Laak Noord as an international frame of reference.⁵ In order to develop this case as a scientific and policy frame of reference, both decided to build on the applied strategies in this urban space by the Foundation since 2004 in collaboration with the municipality of The Hague, the School Group of Esloo and other organizations. These strategies imply the application of some basic principles of the social quality approach for developing a new vision and related strategies for enhancing the urban space of this city. In this working-paper we present information about our impressions what already has been carried out on behalf of Laak-Noord, why and what this means for this supposed international frame of reference. With this in mind the working paper's aim is to articulate new ideas (see the assumptions and theses) based on the interpretation of the work done in Laak-Noord. In this way it tries to stimulate a discussion about the supposed nature of a 'urban methodological framework'. According to the Dutch Institute for Urban Development, NICIS, in the European Union and in The Netherlands such a framework is missing to-day.⁶ A related question is, if the current conceptual framework of the social quality approach may deliver points of departure for the elaboration of an adequate 'methodological framework'? This is also relevant for Laak Noord as well as for Dutch governmental policies strengthening quarters in cities with major problems, the so-called 'power-quarters'.

1.1 The general work carried out by the Foundation

In the early nineties a start was made to develop and apply the social quality theory. In 1997 representatives of several European universities established the European Foundation on Social Quality. The rationale for this has been explained in its first main study.⁷ Since then the results of the first study have been confronted with policy areas of social security, public health, social cohesion, employment, ageing in order to elaborate the theory. This resulted into the Foundation's second main study, which study functioned as a starting point to develop a connection between European policies for flexicurity in employment and the social quality approach.⁸ This project carried out by nine European universities was financed by the European Commission and the results have been published in the European Journal of Social Quality.⁹ It also prepared for a project by fourteen European universities and two European NGO's to develop social quality indicators. This was also financed by the European Commission (FP5). The results, namely the construction of a first

⁵ 'Memorandum of Understanding', The Hague: ISS/EFSQ, July 2007.

⁶ K. van Dijken, M. Grisel, W. Hafkamp, 'Levers of public action for the development of sustainable cities: A European study on request by the French Government', The Hague: NICIS, November 2008.

⁷ W.A. Beck, L.J.G. van der Maesen, A.C. Walker (eds), *The Social Quality of Europe*, The Hague/London/Boston: Kluwer Law International, 1997.

⁸ W.A. Beck, L.J.G. van der Maesen, F. Thomése, A.C. Walker (eds), *Social Quality: A Vision for Europe*, The Hague/London/Boston: Kluwer Law International, 2001.

⁹ F. Nectoux, T. Korver, L.J.G. van der Maesen (eds), 'Flexibility and Security in Employment: a Social Quality Perspective', *The European Journal of Social Quality*, Vol. 4, Issues 1&2 (2003), 260 pages (www.berghahnbooks.com).

consistent set of social quality indicators, were applied in fourteen European countries, and the results of this application have been published in the European Journal.¹⁰ This work already stimulated three Asian conferences on social quality, namely in Japan (March 2006)¹¹, in Taiwan (March 2007)¹², and in China (October 2008).¹³ At the second Asian conference a start was made with the application of the social quality indicators in seven Asian countries.¹⁴ Especially the results of the recent Asian scientific journey will be explained in the Foundation's third main study.¹⁵ This book in statu nascendi already functions as a main pillar for this working-paper. The Asian results will be discussed in the fourth Asian conference in Thailand, December 2009. As a result of the collaboration with Asian universities and the project-collaboration with the ISS it was felt as an urgent need to make a comparison with the human security discourse as stimulated by the United Nations and many countries. A first study has recently been published as well. It will also function as an important pillar of this working-paper.¹⁶

1.2 The working-paper's content

In the second section we will provide some preliminary arguments why the exploration and elaboration of the urban space is of interest for the social quality approach. We will formulate our assumption on the significance of the urban space as starting point for the following sections. With this in mind we will present the reasons for the Foundation's focus on the city of The Hague in the third section, as well as the work carried out on behalf of Laak-Noord, namely: (i) the new start in 2006, (ii) some aspects of the locality, (iii) ideas for a new approach, (iv) the position of two relevant departments of the municipality, (v) the construction of the Centre of Urban Governance Studies, (vi) the development of connections with community groups in Laak-Noord, (vii) the project migration and citizenship as a preliminary exploration, and (viii) our comments on the approach or lack of approach to enhance this part of the urban space of the city. We used the most relevant documents oriented on

¹⁰ D. Gordon, L.J.G. van der Maesen, H. Verkleij (eds), *Indicators of Social Quality: Applications in Fourteen European Countries*, *The European Journal of Social Quality*, Vol. 5, Issue 1&2 (2005), 250 pages.

¹¹ T. Ogawa, L.J.G. van der Maesen, 'Outline of the first Asian conference on Social Quality in March 2006: Human Welfare and Social Policy under Social Justice, Equity and Democratic based relationships. Asian challenges for establishing sustainable welfare societies', Tokyo-Chiba/Amsterdam: Chiba University/EFSQ, October 2005.

¹² L Wang, L.J.G. van der Maesen, T. Ogawa, 'Proposals Concerning the Second Asian Conference on Sustainable Welfare Societies and the Social Quality Approach as its Conceptual Framework', Taipei/Amsterdam/Chiba: National Taipei University/ EFSQ/ Chiba University, October 2006.

¹³ K. Lin, L.J.G van der Maesen, 'A Background- paper on behalf of the International Nanjing Conference on Social Quality and Social Welfare', Nanjing/The Hague: Nanjing University/EFSQ, September 2008.

¹⁴ See for the application in Asia and Australia for example: (i) A.S.Oishi (Chiba University), 'Indicators of Social Quality in **Japan**', *International Journal of Social Quality*, Vol. 1, Issue 1 (2009) [forthcoming], (ii) D. Mitchell, J. Temple (Australian National University), **Australian** Measures of Social Quality', *International Journal of Social Quality*, Vol. 1, Issue 1 (2009) [forthcoming], (iii) Y-T Wang, P-S. Yang, L-R. Wang (National Taiwan University), 'Measuring Social Quality in **Taiwan**', *International Journal of Social Quality*, Vol. 1, Issue 1 (2009) [forthcoming] (iv) J.Yee, D. Chang, 'Transparency Key to Improve Social Cohesion in the **Korean** Context: Application of Social Quality Indicators', Seoul: Seoul National University, October 2008, (v) K. Lin, K.K. Gabe, 'Social Quality Indicators for **China**: a Presentation for the Second Asian Conference on Social Quality in March 2007', Nanjing: Nanjing University, March 2007, (vi) B. Thawilwadee (eds), 'Social Quality Indicators in **Thailand**: a Presentation on the Second Asian Conference on Social Quality', March 2007', Bangkok: The King's Institute for Policy Studies, March 2007, (vii) R. Ngan, 'Social Quality Indicators in **Hong Kong**: a Presentation on the Second Asian Conference on Social Quality, March 2007', Hong Kong: Hong Kong University, March 2007.

¹⁵ L.J.G. van der Maesen, A.C. Walker (eds), '[working-title] Sustainable Welfare Societies and Social Quality Indicators', to be published by Kluwer Law International.

¹⁶ D. Gasper, L.J.G. van der Maesen, T. Truong, A.C. Walker, 'Human Security and Social Quality: Contrasts and Complementarity', The Hague: ISS (EFSQ), Working Paper Series no. 462, November 2008 (www.iss.nl).

Laak-Noord for the preparation of this section.¹⁷ The fourth section is dedicated on preliminary reflections on how to proceed, namely theoretically, methodologically and strategically in order to contribute to the development of the urban space of Laak and Laak-Noord as an interesting case. In this section we will elaborate other assumptions, connected with the work done in this urban quarter. In the fifth section we present our proposals for using Laak Noord as an international frame of reference, since it delivers the starting points for our theses concerning an 'urban methodological framework' as condition for analyzing and contributing to urban development. This section will conclude with some tentative remarks and the meaning of the recent decisions by the municipality of The Hague about Laak-Noord.

1.3 A short intermezzo about a relevant question

Especially in the context of the United Nations debates and explorations about sustainable urban circumstances are an important international issue. Supposed is, that without a real engagement of local communities, sustainability will be undermined. With this in mind, the UN summit of 1992 adopted 2500 action items of which two thirds are related to local authorities. The action items are known as 'Agenda 21'.¹⁸ The related movements were very constructive for Europe. The specific attention for so-called social policies (social security, social protection, social cohesion, employment) – see the traditional welfare-state idiom – is changing into an attention for policies, oriented on the comprehensive theme of urban space as source of development, change, stability or stagnation. These traditional themes should be approached as aspects of the urban space as a comprehensive totality. This implies a theoretically grounded elaboration of these concepts as well. Ten years ago, the EC stimulated a group of experts of a 'European Sustainable Cities Project'. The group argues that '*a sustainable city is more than simply a city with a clean environment (...) indicators for local sustainability must therefore go beyond traditional environmental indicators. They must also go beyond the sectoral approach, where 'sustainability' indicators are taken to mean indicators that are organized under the individual themes of environment, economy and social aspects, without reflecting the linkage between these themes*'.¹⁹ In other words the authors not only made a plea for grounding all relevant concepts, but also for a theoretical connection of the relevant aspects of sustainability. Both desiderata are a condition sine qua non for understanding what we mean with sustainable societies and their cities. These topics are also connected with the discourse on human development and human security. As a consequence of the initiatives by the UN – see its Agenda 21 – an important step in the European history of stimulating the development of sustainable cities was the

¹⁷ These documents also refer to the work carried out by Harry Nijhuis from the municipality of The Hague and Jaap Westbroek, originally from the School Group of Esloo and now director of DISQ (Design and Innovation Social Quality) in The Hague.

¹⁸ 'Rio Declaration on Environment and Development: a Local Agenda 21', New York: UN, 1992. Furthermore, International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives, 'A Study of Response by Local Authorities and their National and International Association to Agenda 21', New York: ICLEI, 1997. Finally the report by: UN, 'Committing to Action: Achieving the Millennium Development Goals', New York: UN, July 2008.

¹⁹ Expert Group on Urban Environment, 'European Sustainable Cities: Report', Brussels: EC, March 1996. As a result of the three Asian conferences the social quality approach has been connected with the human security approach and with the idea of 'sustainable welfare societies' and also with the issue of overall sustainability.

first European conference on sustainable cities and towns, which took place on 27 May 1994 in Aalborg, Denmark. The Aalborg Charter adopted a Local Agenda 21 Campaign at this conference, signed by more the 2500 European local governments from more than 40 European countries.²⁰

In a recently published European wide research by NICIS – carried out on request by the French Government on behalf of the past French Presidency of the EU - it was concluded that the manifold of aspects of cities are approached in a fundamental fragmented way, presenting these aspects as entities standing on their own, as education, physical arte facts, health care, housing, etc. As a consequence, many cities nowadays declare themselves 'sustainable', without realising the necessary paradigm shift to overcome the fragmentation (see note-6). The state of affairs of the city of The Hague as such does not differ from other comparable European cities. The danger is, that the inspiring, motivating and challenging concept of sustainable cities tends to lose its power in Europe. In the light of this development ministers responsible for spatial development and urban policy in the member states of the European Union adopted the recommendations of the '**Leipzig Charter on Sustainable**

European Cities', during their meeting on 24th May 2007.²¹ Two of the recommendations are (i) to explore the possibility of achieving an integrated urban development programme for cities, and (ii) to create new forms of local governance to realise these programmes in collaboration with a manifold of stakeholders and communities. The Leipzig Charter may be seen as a logical result of the work carried out after the acceptance of the Aalborg Charter.

2. The interest of the urban space

2.1 The report on cities of social quality

Since 2000 the Foundation has started to apply the first design of its theory on social quality to question of the urban space; its policy areas and urban categories. It published a study on request of the Dutch Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport in August 2001. One of the questions was, whether the concept of social quality could offer a new perspective on urban processes to constructively support the sustainable development of cities, the increase of multiculturalism and also the need for new forms of governance to strengthen the position of citizens.²² This study is used for research activities and explorations in The Hague as will be discussed below. At this stage it is of interest to refer to related conclusions by the European Commission, underlining the Aalborg Charter and explaining the rationale for addressing the topic of urban space from a new perspective. This may stimulate the application of the social quality approach for understanding processes concerning the

²⁰ Charter of Aalborg, Denmark, signed on 27th May 1994, see note-14, page-4.

²¹ 'Leipzig Charter on Sustainable European Cities', Brussels: EC, November 2007.

²² W. Beck, 'Towards European Cities of Social Quality', Amsterdam: EFSQ, August 2001.

urban space. According to the EC, transformation processes – economical, political, cultural, juridical, demographic etc – are indeed realised or materialised in the urban space, the main context of 80% of citizens of the EU Member States. The complexity of mechanisms underlying these processes will create an ever changing comprehensive totality or configuration. The European Union is the most urbanized part of the world. It consists of 21 cities with more than 1 million citizens. Large cities are places for international and local oriented companies, advanced technology and international competition. They are the sources of global economy, knowledge, and concentration of technology. They are also places for unacceptable poverty, crime, traffic problems and pollution. In 1995 it was concluded that the air is too polluted for its citizens in 70 à 80% of the large cities at least once a year. The EC claims that especially in large cities traditional forms of solidarity are decreasing. The inequality between the rich and the poor is growing. We notice this in Naples, Lisbon or Lyon. It regards the main current paradox of European cities. To address these negative phenomena is the most urgent challenge of modern times.²³

In a more recent EC document suggestions are made for an 'urban method' to cope with this paradox. Eleven localities have been chosen to address their long-time unemployment, poverty and exclusion, their high level of ethnic diversity, crime and lack of education.²⁴ A manifold of so-called good practices have been presented, however, without articulating a theoretical urban method to choose and to compare them. In many global cities actions are taken as well for a more sustainable urban development. On a small scale many of these actions take place in urban regeneration projects, in particular neighbourhoods (eco-quartiers or eco-towns) or in the development of new neighbourhoods and cities. Often one particular element of sustainable urban development (e.g. housing, transport infrastructure, ecology, social cohesion) is dominant. Seldom, the different elements of sustainable development are developed in a well balanced and integrated approach for a whole global city.²⁵ For the local professionals of urban development often a trade-off is felt between sustainable infrastructures and achieving more sustainable societies. Tension between the two may arise when infrastructural projects are designed to meet certain environmental protection or resource efficiency criteria, however, without sufficiently taking into account other social criteria, both in terms of how these projects may affect the lives of individuals and communities, and in terms of the needs and behaviour of the people using related services. A recent survey of British people indicated that a majority of respondents currently is not prepared to change their daily behaviour and routine in support of apparently more sustainable environmental development.²⁶ Eliciting public support and

²³ EC, *The Europe of the Cities: Communitarian Actions in Cities*, Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications, 1998, pp. 4-7.

²⁴ EC, *Partnership with Cities: the Communitarian Initiative Urban*, Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications, 2003.

²⁵ See e.g. the series on publications of sustainable urban development of Routledge and the many case studies by FP6 Demonstration projects, Energie-Cities, ICLEI, Local Sustainability, SURBAN, ManagEnergy tc. See also K. van Dijken cs, note-2 and K. van Dijken cs, note-18.

²⁶ Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) survey results reported in The Guardian "*Millions say it is too much effort to adapt greener lifestyle*", by Davis Adam (environment correspondent). London: The Guardian, Wednesday August 15th, 2007

legitimacy for new policies poses a considerable challenge for the effective implementation of initiatives developed in the name of sustainability. It suggests the need for careful attention to be paid to the issue of user needs and behaviour in the design of sustainable projects, and the consideration of incentives and policies to elicit a positive public response and commitment to policy targets.

2.2. The first assumption about the urban space

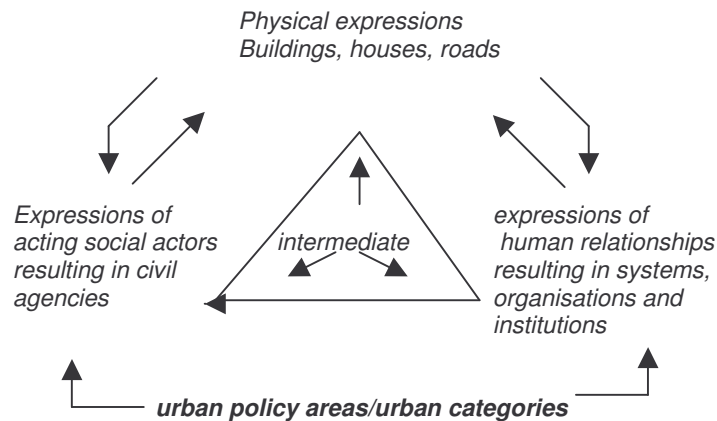
In order to understand current activities concerning the urban space of the city of The Hague and especially Laak-Noord we present our first assumption about the urban space. It incorporates a manifold of interwoven policy areas (education, health care, social housing, employment, etc) as well as a manifold of interwoven urban categories (children, young people, handicapped, women, lower income groups, elderly, migrants etc) and their physical expressions. Due to the interwovenness, the subject has a comprehensive character. Especially this point concerns the new essence of the Social Agenda of the European Commission. In a recent communication it argues that *'European societies are changing fast: Europeans are living longer lives, facing unprecedented changes in family patterns, making progress towards gender equality and adjusting to new patterns of mobility and diversity. Globalization, technological progress and economic developments are affecting the way we live and work, with new work opportunities, and demand for new skills and an increasing pace of change. The associated benefits and risks are not evenly shared and some parts of the population have difficulty adapting and run the risk of unemployment and exclusion.'*²⁷ The EC summarises different specific changes in the Member States and concludes by saying that the purpose of the social reality stocktaking is to analyse afresh the complex dynamics of social change within our societies as to be able to judge the relevance and appropriateness of current policies and to develop a solid base for the future. Thus we may conclude that according to the EC, all investments – for example the millions of euro spent on the quality of life research – are not really adequate or sufficient for analysing the complex dynamics.

This plea indeed implies an interdisciplinary as well as an integrated approach for research, teaching and interventions in order to fully understand aspects of the subject as a 'comprehensive totality'. The necessity of the interdisciplinary approach implies the application of a meta-theoretical conceptual framework. Our first assumption is, that the concept of the urban space may be defined as the condensation of interactions between (i) physical expressions, (ii) (material and immaterial) expressions of human relationships (and related systems) and (iii) the expressions of social actors (and related civil agencies), realising the interwovenness of policy areas and urban categories. This will result into processes, relations and structures. Physical expressions are an aspect of the urban space; they are not identical with the urban space as usually supposed in literature on urban

²⁷ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, The European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, *'Opportunities, access and solidarity: towards a new social vision for the 21st century Europe'*, Brussels: COM (2007) 726 final, November 2007, p.3.

development. The principles of figure-1 have been applied in a manifold of working-papers written on behalf of five meetings of the think-tank Laak-Noord, discussed in the following section. The intermediate of this figure refers to the concept of the conceptualisation of 'the social' as discussed and explained in a recent article about the complementarity of the human security discourse and the social quality approach.²⁸ The assumption may be illustrated as follows, see Figure 1:

Figure-1: The first assumption: the triangle of the urban space



2.3 Attention for The Hague for applying the theory and its methodologies

The Foundation's 2001 study on cities inspired to invest in the city of The Hague as a praxis to confront, to apply and to elaborate upon the theory on social quality and its methodology. One of the arguments was the work already carried out by the Foundation and its predecessor for contributing to the health and social care provisions in the centre of this city. In the nineties this resulted into the construction of STIOM for the central quarters of The Hague, a project-organisation for renewing local health and social care in this city.²⁹ The rationale of this project-organisation has further been underlined in a **first series** of interviews with directors of health and social care institutes in The Hague. These directors were rather critical on current national tendencies. The increasing scale of these institutes as well as the emphasis on the commodification of health care 'products' stimulated a devaluation of the territorial context for health and social care strategies. In policies by the local government and health organisations people seem to be more and more detached from their

²⁸ See note-16. Explained is that for example physical expressions are also an aspect of 'the social'.

²⁹ In the nineties Harry Nijhuis (municipality) and Laurent van der Maesen (SISWO/Foundation) published and contributed to a manifold of documents and articles about the rationale, the nature and the work carried out by STIOM. See for example: H.G.J. Nijhuis, L.J.G. van der Maesen, J. Klijnsma, 'Moderne Public Health in the city of The Hague [in Dutch]', Den Haag: Dienst OCW, 1999. Furthermore, 'Five years STIOM: Experiences on the border of health and social care and welfare [in Dutch]', Den Haag: AMRIT, 1999.

³⁰ H.G.J. Nijhuis, L.J.G. van der Maesen, 'Recent problems in the health and social care of The Hague seen in the context of modern societal tendencies: interviews with directors of health and social care institutions [in Dutch]', *Epidemiologisch Bulletin*, Jrg, 35-36, 2000-2001, nummer ¾ en ½, 64 pages [**first series of interviews**].

territorial context and conceptually reduced to consumers of health and social care products operating in an individualist way.³⁰ The results of these interviews were connected with the international discourse on traditional epidemiological approaches (biophysical and individualistic) versus a renewal of public health by accentuating the relevance of a new understanding of 'the social'.³¹ In collaboration with representatives of the municipality – and inspired by the activities by the project development organization for health and social care (STIOM) - the Foundation explored the actual significance of the territorial orientation to renew health and social care provisions in the centre of The Hague.³²

As a result of its work in The Hague, the Foundation was invited to contribute to the debate on the ambitions of the municipality with regard to its urban development (c.q. the physical development of the city) as presented in a document by its Department for Urban Development (UD), about 'Global City on the Sea'.³³ The Foundation published a report about its reflection on the results.³⁴ An essential point concerns its comments on a non-grounded distinction between the so-called 'physical dimension' of the urban space and its 'social dimension'. Such a distinction denies the reciprocity between the parts of the triangle of the urban space (figure-1) and the nature and the role of the intermediate and legitimises the fragmentation of urban policy areas and urban categories. Another key-question concerns the neglect of the role of local communities and daily circumstances for the transformation of the urban space, as well as the fundamental fragmentation of systems and institutions in this city (as is common practice in Western European cities as well).³⁵ This refers to a lack of communication strategies and a comprehensive theory of the urban space, to be operationalised by new forms of communication.

3. The City of The Hague and its urban space of Laak-Noord

3.1 Exploration of the problematique

Indeed, since the nineties, organizations for social housing, health care, social care, etc have increased their autonomous position in the Netherlands as a result of national policies to stimulate the privatization of non-for-profit organisations. The role of local government (in this case the municipality of The Hague) changed logically without a national reflection on the political consequences. With this

³¹ L.J.G. van der Maesen, H.G.J. Nijhuis, 'Continuing the debate on the philosophy of modern public health: Social Quality as a point of reference', *International Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health*, Vol. 54, nr. 1 (2001), pp.134-142. This study refers as well to: H.G.J. Nijhuis, 'Conditions for the renewal of public health: a scientific and societal perspective [in Dutch]', Den Haag: Elmar BV, 1994. This theme has further been elaborated by: P. Ward (eds), Social Quality and Modern Public Health: Developing a Framework for the 21st Century, *The European Journal of Social Quality*, Vol. 6, Issues 2 (2006), 167 pages.

³² R. Duiveman, 'Analyse van de Proeftuin maatschappelijke gezondheidszorg in Den Haag: Verkenning en vervolg. Een studie in opdracht van de Dienst-OCW and STIOM', Amsterdam: EFSQ, 2005.

³³ 'Global City on the Sea' [Wereldstad aan Zee: ambities en opgaven voor Den Haag: Structuurvisie Den Haag 2020], Den Haag: Dienst Stedelijke Ontwikkeling, 15 maart 2003.

³⁴ L.J.G. van der Maesen, H.G.J. Nijhuis, 'The Urban Development of the city of The Hague and the operationalisation of the social quality approach [in Dutch]', Amsterdam/Den Haag: EFSQ/ Bureau Public Health, 7 October 2004. This report also refers to experiences with urban development of Amsterdam-Southeast, Almere and Rotterdam-North (see note-1).

³⁵ See note-6.

in mind and stimulated by the results of the report 'Global City on the Sea' by the Department of UD of the municipality, the Department for Education, Culture, Health and Well-being (ECHW) invited the Foundation to interview leading executives of these organisations about their ideas concerning the future of the city as sketched in the report and their opinion about new forms of collaboration (or the lack of them) for an adequate urban development of The Hague. This resulted in a **second series** of interviews. In other words, this department of the municipality took the initiative to explore aspects of the 'problematique' of current urban development as well as the conclusions of the executives about the consequences of privatization.

The findings were, first, that these organizations were not involved in the preparation of this report by the Department of UD for exploring the current 'problematique'. Second, the connection between these organizations and between these organisations and departments of the municipality – of the political-administrative system - is decreasing because the current privatization. As a logical consequence a coherent public debate on the nature and future of the city needs a new form of governance because the changed circumstances the past relationships are not effective anymore. Third, the city is becoming a complex of institutions, organisations and companies with an increase of their own local, regional, national and sometimes international networks. For example, the nature and results of the health and social care in The Hague as a complex of intramural and extramural systems is under actual circumstances too less a political question of the municipality. As an outcome of new forms of governance the policy-making processes may play a new and inspiring role in the transformation of the city. Fourth, a new form of governance may also pave the way for citizens to play an active role in the coming transformation in order to express their responsibility for daily existence. Fifth, the document 'Global City on the Sea' prioritizes the physical expressions of the urban space without connecting all aspects of the 'problematique'.³⁶

In fact these second series of interviews confirmed the national and local bottle-necks as explored in the first series of interviews regarding the health and social care tendencies.³⁷ Also inspired by the outcomes of the interviews, the municipality took the initiative to pave the way for the start of the '**Forum**' of a manifold of semi-public organizations in order to prepare communication and collaboration to renew forms of local policies by the municipality, these organizations, companies and/or community groups. The Foundation played an active role in the preparation and start of the Forum for strengthening these forms of communication.³⁸ The Foundation's argument for its creation is derived from the history of the urban development of Amsterdam-South East, namely the work carried out by the Centre of communication for connecting (semi) public institutions.³⁹

³⁶ L.J.G. van der Maesen, 'Report of fifteen interviews about the urban vision of The Hague on request by the municipality of The Hague [in Dutch]', Amsterdam: EFSQ, februari 2006 [**second series of interviews**].

³⁷ See note-30.

³⁸ M. Keizer, L.J.G. van der Maesen, 'Raakvlakken van maatschappelijke organisaties in Den Haag: Een verkenning ter voorbereiding van het Forum te Den Haag', Amsterdam: EFSQ, maart 2006.

³⁹ This topic – the connection of communication strategies and the theory of social quality - is discussed in the report 'Urban Development', see note-34, and it refers to the history of strategies for urban communication systems as applied in Amsterdam-South East, see note-1 and the theory's current state-of-affairs, see note-15.

3.2 From the city to Laak-Noord

As a result of this second series of interviews the recent activities by the School Group Esloo in Laak-Noord became more important for the debate on the urban space of The Hague. In the beginning of 2000, Esloo took the initiative to start with a new practical training school in Laak-Noord for young pupils with learning difficulties. Thanks to its new vision it is oriented on the reciprocity between the community and the school(system). According to Esloo, *'education has an ethical and a social aspect. It should give our youth the possibilities to become citizens who are able to do their work in society. But they also should be good citizens who are constantly raising societal questions about the developments going on.'*⁴⁰ In this way it tried to address traditional approaches which increasingly isolate the school system from daily circumstances. The purpose was to build a new school in such a way, that educational activities and all other activities in the building would have a relation with a manifold of other aspects of daily circumstances in Laak (Noord): health care, social care, cultural activities, community work, sport, and micro-economic relations. A good school pre-supposes a good community. As a result of this proposed reciprocity young pupils may be assisted to become good citizens. The school was meant as an integral part of a new 'Urban Heart of Provisions for Laak-Noord' (Voorzieningshart). Esloo stimulated managers from the extramural health care sector (STIOM), for health and intramural elderly care (Florence), from social housing corporation (Staedion) and from the welfare organization (Laak Mooi) to develop and to operationalise the idea of the 'Urban Heart' as an instrument to stimulate new emergent processes. The new school was meant to play a stimulating role in these processes. In spite of the demonstrated enthusiasm and support by consultants, the idea of the 'Urban Heart' was not fully conceptualized. At that stage it remained rather eclectic. The results of the development process by connected managers have been published in two reports.⁴¹ In the end, one sub-department of the Department of ECHW of the municipality, responsible for financing school-buildings, could not agree with the proposals thus far concerning new forms of physical and non-physical integration. No exploration was made about the rationale of its conclusion and therefore no solutions for this problem was created. The process for preparing a new 'Urban Heart' thus stopped. However, the school has now been constructed in such a way that it can be connected with other parts of the proposed 'Urban Heart' in a later stage.

The second series of interviews resulted in an invitation by the Department of ECHW of the municipality to the Foundation to interview managers involved in past activities to develop the urban space of Laak-Noord and its 'Urban Heart'. There was a large disappointment felt in this **third series** of interviews that this process was discontinued. The managers were stimulated – with the Esloo initiative in mind – to reflect on six critical points as results of the second series of interviews with

⁴⁰ The start was in the late 1990s, preparing the Corbulo College of this Group, see: J. Westbroek, R. Gordijn, 'Bouwen aan Lifelong Learning. Esloo-Design: Een ontwerp voor het digitale multisectorale VMBO', Voorburg: Scholengroep Esloo, 1997. Furthermore: J. Westbroek, *The Esloo-Design for the Digital Elementary and secondary education*, Voorburg: School Group Esloo, 1999.

⁴¹ Adviespartners voor Organisatie en Huisvesting, 'Voorzieningshart Laak-Noord: Esloo Praktijkonderwijs, Florence Zorg, Wijksteunpunt, Stichting Welzijn Laak', Amersfoort: M3V, July 2004. Furthermore: J. F. Westbroek, J. Warmerdam, M. Verhaar cs, 'Huisvestingsvisie Esloo Praktijkonderwijs: Ongekende bronnen aanboren', Amersfoort: M3V, July 2004.

fifteen leading executives.⁴² Recognized was, first, that except the School Group of Esloo no new visions had been developed by organizations for social housing, for health care in the community, for social care or cultural activities, or micro-economic relations in this quarter in order to renew and to adjust their provisions in a multicultural world, etc. Second, due to this lack of ideas and the absence of ideas how to cooperate with groups in the community a general vision about Laak-Noord as urban space logically remains impossible and this again explains the first point. Third, due to this, all sub-systems reproduce their own intrinsic logic. Fourth, an overall problematic of Laak-Noord as starting point for renewing provisions has not been formulated. The report formulates theoretical proposals for a new start of communication and dialogue to renew the urban space of Laak-Noord. After all it was disappointing that very few representatives of the municipality were interviewed in order to get an overview from this side of the spectrum of ideas about and experience with the history of Laak Noord. There has been too much focus upon managers from the non-public organisations. As can be demonstrated with the help of Figure 2, a one-sided accent was laid upon the Oikos.

3.3 About the locality

The initiative by Esloo undertaken in the beginning of 2000 was explainable. It was felt something new should be created in order to change the isolated position of schools as closed systems into open systems which are enabled to contribute to emergent processes of the community.⁴³ At the moment Laak (Noord) consists of some 20.000 inhabitants. The largest part was built up as a so-called 'blue collar area' in the beginning of the last century. In other words, it was designed to house blue collar workers in (semi) public employment: postal workers, municipal workers, transport workers on HTM, railway workers and highway and park workers. There was not a lot of prosperity of the people living there, but there was a certain pride in their profession and in their regular employment.⁴⁴ After the Second World War, and following the 1950s, housing became an acute need everywhere, and many of these workers' children moved out in into new town areas the course of the 1960s. As the original families moved out, their places in this area were taken by those from the other quarter, namely 'Schildersbuurt', nearby where 'problem' families had been located, and from the quarter 'Spoor' area around the Holland train station. Socially deprived families had been housed here under dreadful conditions.

The original inhabitants, the proud and neat professional workers and the sub-proletariat, came into contact in the streets and clashed, drawing up new battle-lines. Their different life styles caused friction in public spaces. After the independence of Surinam in Latin America in 1975, things

⁴² R. Duiveman, L.J.G. van der Maesen, J.F. Westbroek, '*Renewal of the urban development of Laak Noord: thirteen interviews and a theoretical based comment [in Dutch]*', Amsterdam/The Hague: EFSQ/School Group Esloo, November 2006 [**third series of interviews**].

⁴³ Laak-Noord is part of the quarter Laak (= Laakkwartier, Laak=Noord, Spoorwijk), located between: the Northside the canal Trekvljet, Eastside the Paets van Troostwijkstraat and Boekslootkade, the Southside the railway, and on the Westside the railway.

⁴⁴ This explanation is based on the report by: St. van Schuppen, '*Research Idea Laak-Noord*', Den Haag, May 2008. This report will be discussed further in section-3.7 on community groups in Laak-Noord.

complicated further due to a new stream of Surinam immigrants. Again from the late 1980s, there was a renewed movement into the area of Turkish and Moroccan people. Around 80 percent of them succeeded to unite their families, leading to an increase of migrants. In the second half of the 1980s urban renewal programmes started in Laak-Noord. The lion's share of the housing stock was demolished and renewed at this time. New buildings were constructed in place of those demolished. And as this physical aspect of the urban space got underway, it led to the removal, or departure of a larger part of the original inhabitants of blue collar workers, as well as of the new class of socially disadvantaged white (autochtoon) families. In the beginning of 1990, with this aspect of the urban renewal programme more or less complete, around 20 percent of the population consisted of the so-called white Dutch people.

Notwithstanding this, the specific renewal did not result into a real 'urban development'. According to current trends in The Hague and other large cities, the micro-economy in Laak Noord shriveled due to processes of reallocation oriented on traditional interpretations of economic growth. Furthermore, community facilities (health and social care, education, welfare provisions, sport) reduced in this part of the city as a result of suppositions of efficiency, which lead to a centralization of these facilities in order to enhance a supposed optimisation. Finally, the ethnic composition of the population changed as a result of recent migration processes. The consequences of the increased multiculturalism have not been addressed but taken for granted. This will be highly influenced by the increase of the percentage of older people. Under the same circumstances (*ceteris paribus*) the reciprocity of these processes will result in a downwards spiral. Indeed it was demonstrated that for Laak-Noord/Molenwijk, (i) the percentage of unemployed people and people living in poverty is higher than average in the city, (ii) while 38 percent of households in The Hague need special attention, here it is 63 percent, (iii) the non-attendance of schools is twice as high as for the whole of The Hague, (iv) feelings of bad circumstances are higher than for The Hague as a whole, (v) the idea of a lack of cohesion is stronger, (vi) the need to move to other quarters is significantly higher etc.⁴⁵ As a result of recent initiatives by Esloo a new response may be formulated as an example for other parts of the urban space of this city (and other large cities as well). Laak (and Laak-Noord) may function as an interesting case for other quarters of the city, namely Mariahoeve, Duindorp and the so-called 'power quarters', as listed by the National Government.

The third series of interviews shows that representatives of non-public organisations (or non-for-profit organisations) are willing to stimulate a context for emergent processes in Laak Noord. This is also the case with a manifold of representatives of the municipality as is demonstrated in a recent document called 'Laak Noord matters' (see note-6). This outcome is in fact a result of the process going on in 2006 and 2008.

⁴⁵ Dienst-OCW (Department of ECHW), 'Laak-Noord/Molenwijk in perspectief: Een kwantitatieve inventarisatie van problemen, ontwikkeling en oordelen van bewoners en stakeholders', Den Haag: Gemeente, 30 oktober 2007.

3.4 A plea for a new approach for Laak-Noord and the second assumption

Both series of interviews (the second and the third series), are based on elements of the social quality approach as published in some documents about explorations of aspects of the urban space of The Hague.⁴⁶ The results stimulated a regrouping of relevant partners in Laak-Noord. On initiative and under the lead of the School Group of Esloo – and with assistance by the Foundation – a think-tank Laak-Noord started to reflect on the original ideas about Laak-Noord as urban space and the role of the 'Urban Heart'.⁴⁷ In a conference in June 2006 directors of Esloo stimulated its teachers to reflect on strategies to contribute to the proposed reciprocity between the open school system and the community.⁴⁸ One of the recent and interesting results of the think-tank is its '**Strategic Document**', published by (i) the School Group of Esloo, (ii) Stichting Mooi (for cultural and welfare provisions), (iii) Florence for intramural care and health and home care, and (iv) Staedion, one of the organizations for social housing. Its mission is to contribute to a sustainable development of this part of the urban space of The Hague in order to enhance the quality of daily circumstances of this community. Its vision is to start anew with a preparation of the 'Urban Heart' to develop a relationship between a manifold of provisions from different organizations. Its purpose is to answer needs and ambitions for the urban development of this part of the city from a comprehensive perspective.⁴⁹ Compared to the recent past, this report is a true mile-stone. Stimulated by the work carried out by the think-tank, these organizations decided to develop strategies in collaboration with departments of the municipality to go beyond the traditional and fragmented operations as usual in cities in The Netherlands (and abroad). A condition is of course, to develop a new understanding of current processes in the urban space as results of national and international influences. This was an argument for exploring current problems of urban development and the possibilities for change. This exploration functioned as background information for this strategic document.⁵⁰

Explicitly a second assumption was put forward, namely that a condition for a renewal of urban spaces as Laak (Noord) is to go beyond existing traditional approaches and relationships, which facilitate fragmentation and disengagement with community groups. This assumption will play an important role in Figure 5 (see below). According to this study, we need a paradigm shift to address current questions of the urban space.⁵¹ This means, firstly, that dialogue with the main partners in

⁴⁶ See notes-15, 29, 34 and 36.

⁴⁷ Jaap Westbroek (chair think-tank) and Laurent van der Maesen (secretary think-tank) published a document to explain the state of affairs at the end of 2007 and to present a plan for new actions: L.J.G. van der Maesen, J.W. Westbroek, '*Urban Development of van Laak-Noord: The state-of-affairs [in Dutch]*', The Hague: EFSQ/DISQ, November 2007.

⁴⁸ Conferentie Scholengroep Esloo: Een nieuwe school in Laak-Noord, Juni 2006. In this conference the role of the social quality approach for the integration of education and other policy areas in Laak Noord has been explained.

⁴⁹ Samenwerkende partijen Laak-Noord (stakeholders), '*Strategic Document Laak Noord: A believe in own possibilities [in Dutch]*', Den Haag: Staedion, Stichting Mooi, Florence, School Group of Esloo, maart 2008.

⁵⁰ J. Westbroek, '*The traditional Dutch approach of urban development [in Dutch]*', Den Haag, maart 2008. In fact, his interpretation is based on the recent experience with processes in Laak-Noord. In this study, Westbroek implicitly made a plea to operationalise the Leipzig Charter in The Netherlands and The Hague (note-21).

⁵¹ For realizing this paradigm-shift the report (note-50) refers to the new social quality approach. It also explains the meaning of emergent processes as mentioned in this working-paper.

Laak-Noord and the municipality should be renewed, also as a condition to start forms of cooperation with community groups. In fact, this point implies a critic on common reports by municipalities and the national government. The position of community groups became more and more detached from the operations by large organizations and institutions. Instead of delivering starting points to influence these organizations, many governmental documents have been published about strengthening civil society, supporting the ideology of social capital advocates as Putman cs for bonding and bridging people. Unexplained remains the nature and function of these concepts and how to bridge the current gap between large institutions and organizations and a manifold of community groups, as a consequence of the 'de-territorialisation' of systems for education, intramural health care etc. These documents are echoing the social capital advocates without reflecting the consequences for this school of social sciences, namely giving openings for dangerous forms of normative control.⁵² We will come back to this point in section-3.8. Secondly, this means an orientation on processes influencing the urban space as well as the development of new ideas on acceptable levels of the quality of daily circumstances of the urban space in the near future.

3.5 The position of the Department of Urban Development (UD) and the Department of Education, Culture, Health Care and Welfare (ECHW)

The think-tank Laak-Noord has organized five plenary meetings till 2009.⁵³ It was concluded that a connection should be made to develop the urban space of Laak Noord and direct surroundings, namely the rest of the quarter of Laak (on the east-side) as urban point of orientation for Laak-Noord and Binckhorst quarter, (on the west-side) which will be completely transformed into a modern business and living centre. Laak (and thus Laak-Noord) and Binckhorst are separated by a canalized waterway without any inspiration, namely 'The Trekvliet'. In the 17th Century it was an important and lively waterway, illustrated in many amazing paintings. When a proper connection is not created, both quarters will not stimulate each other and a new and inspiring role of the Trekvliet will not be possible. Therefore the think-tank at that time was highly interested in forms of collaboration between the Department UD - responsible for the urban (physical) development of Binckhorst- and the Department of ECHW, which is responsible for the development of the so-called social infrastructure of Laak (and Laak-Noord) and Binckhorst, as well as departments of the municipality responsible for the social-economic infrastructure. Are they creating the starting points for a comprehensive approach of Laak (and Laak-Noord), Binckhorst as well as their urban connection? A second main question concerned the possibilities for a comprehensive approach of the change or/and development of the social

⁵² This theme will be addressed in the Foundation's third main study, see note-12. A recent study explains social capital as opening the way for dangerous forms of normative control, designed (by the World Bank and accepted by the British Government) to repair the ideological resources of contemporary liberal states: D. Coole, *'Repairing Civil Society and Experimenting with Power: A Genealogy of Social Capital'*, London: Birkbeck College University of London, 2008 (forthcoming in Political Studies).

⁵³ The author of this working-paper published four extensive notes of these meetings: (i) on the first meeting in June 2006, on the second meeting in October 2006, on the third meeting in November 2006, on the fourth meeting in May 2007, reported in: L.J.G. van der Maesen, *'Verslag werkzaamheden en resultaten 2006 inzake het project Haagse experimenteervelden ten behoeve van de Dienst-OCW van de gemeente Den Haag'*, Amsterdam: EFSQ, maart 2007.

infrastructure in this part of The Hague. The Department ECHW of the municipality is responsible for education, health and social care, cultural activities and sport. It disposes of related different subsystems. We already referred to the problem of preparing the multifunctionality of the new school of the Esloo-group in Laak-Noord. But an even more difficult question concerns the main tendencies with regard to intramural health care and how to intervene in order to strengthen the extramural health care again in, for example Laak (Noord) This should take place with the help of the 'extramuralisation' of important aspects of hospitals in connection with the proposed open school system and new types of cultural provisions and new microeconomic practices to address the needs of the multicultural circumstances of Laak-Noord. This is of course an issue to be addressed by the rather independent organisations for health and social care, the local government and the national government. A final main question concerned the need for new forms of governance with all relevant partners in order to take initiatives for supporting community groups, families/households, small companies to organize new initiatives for micro-economic relations in Laak (Noord), to organise markets and festivals as essential manifestations for stimulating social cohesion and social inclusion as argued in the social quality theory (see Figure 4). As a result of this preliminary work of the think-tank, these issues could be placed on the agenda as demonstrated in the recent document by the municipality (see note-6)..

At the moment these new issues are in fact highly appreciated by the Department ECHW of the municipality at the moment, in order to rethink new strategies to enhance the urban space of Laak-Noord. It resulted in an agreement with different partners of Laak-Noord and the municipality to start the experimental development of the urban space of Laak Noord at the end of 2008.⁵⁴

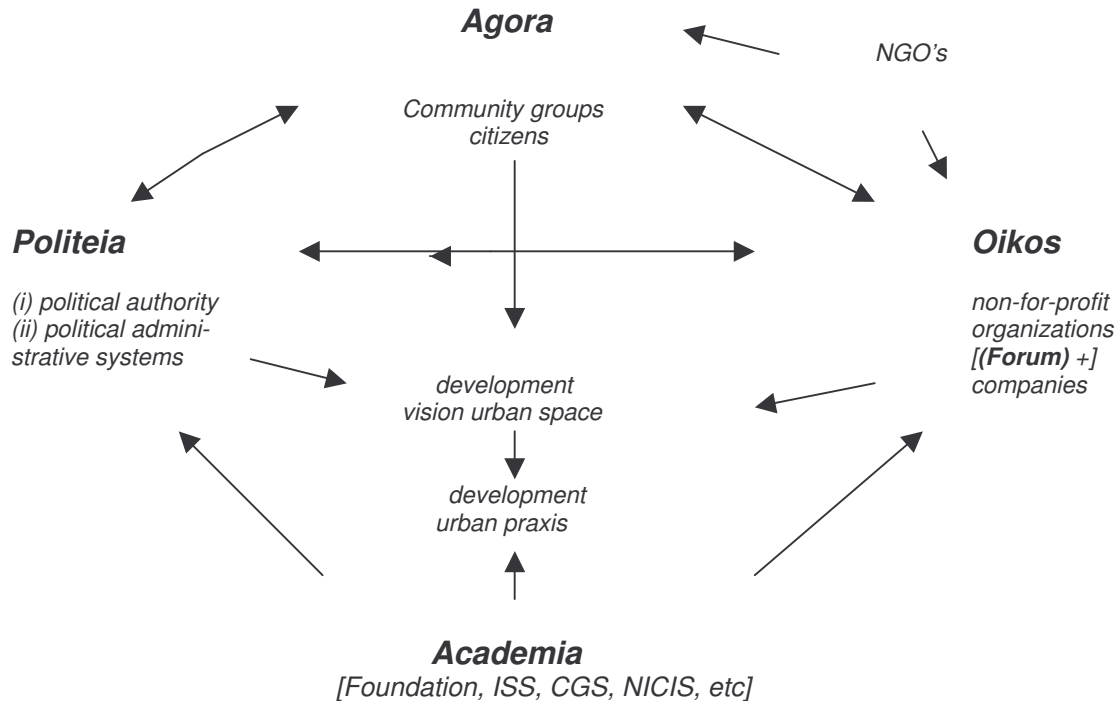
3.6 The Centre for Urban Governance Studies (CGS) and the third assumption

The collaboration of representatives of the Department ECHW of the municipality, Esloo and the Foundation – see their documents, referred to in the footnotes – prepared for ideas to start a centre of urban governance studies (**CGS**). Discussions started with representatives of the Campus of The Hague (a dependence of the University of Leiden) and the municipality. The main question was, whether the Campus as a general academic context for the CGS could contribute to new forms of local governance as a condition for the realization of the paradigm-shift to renew urban space. The Foundation was also engaged in the preparation of the CGS. A number of documents have been published to prepare its realization. In these documents the rationale of the proposed CGS has been explained on the basis of interpretations of explorations made with regard to The Hague and Laak-Noord, referred to above. If we need a comprehensive approach of institutions, companies, public organizations and community groups, new forms of local governance as well as strategies based on a new vision are also needed. The third assumption, formulated during the explorations in Laak Noord,

⁵⁴ See: J.F. Westbroek, 'First Newsletter Laak Noord [in Dutch]', The Hague: DISQ, December 2008

is that we may distinguish between four worlds, namely the Agora, the Politeia, the Oikos and the Academia, see Figure 2. The CGS may be an instrument to contribute to related processes⁵⁵

Figure-2: the third assumption about the four worlds in cities (or the urban space)⁵⁶



- the **Agora** is the world of communities, families, networks of citizens (life world),
- the **Politeia** is the world of local politicians and their departments,
- the **Oikos** is the world of semi-public and private organisations as well as companies (world of systems),
- The **Academia** is the world of scientists, analysing and contributing to public policies.

As part of the Academia, its position (see documents) concerning the political-administrative systems (Politeia), and the Oikos (and its Forum) and the Agora may be clarified. The documents referred to above may be appreciated as an elaboration of the Foundation's 2001 study on cities⁵⁷ concerning a new leitmotiv for urban development, which is based on the study on new forms of communication in the neighborhoods and at city level.⁵⁸ This plan for realizing the CGS was finally accepted by the

⁵⁵ L.J.G. van der Maesen, 'Een plan voor de ontwikkeling van nieuwe vormen van 'local governance' in Den Haag. Een leitmotiv voor de vernieuwing van de dialoog, communicatie en operaties met ondersteuning van het Centre for Urban Studies van de Universitaire Campus Den Haag: een working-paper', Amsterdam: EFSQ, februari 2006. Further: H.G.J. Nijhuis, 'A Centre for Modern Urban Studies [in Dutch]', Den Haag; Dienst-OCW, augustus 2006. Finally: L.J.G. van der Maesen, 'Proposal concerning the mission statement of the interdisciplinary research institute of the University of Leiden for supporting the Centre of Modern Urban Studies in The Hague', Amsterdam: EFSQ, December 2006.

⁵⁶ In the seventies a comparable distinction is made for urban development in the South East part of Amsterdam, see note-1. Later Bauman made a comparable distinction between: (i) the Agora (private/public domain), (ii) ecclesia (or the site of politics) and the Oikos (the households), in: Z. Bauman, 'In Search for Politics', Cambridge: Polity Press, 1999, pp. 86-88.

⁵⁷ See note-22.

⁵⁸ See note-34.

municipality and the University of Leiden who will both finance it. In the beginning of 2006 the director of the Campus sent a letter (prepared by the Foundation) to different departments of the municipality and the members of the new Forum of semi-public organization as a part of the Oikos to announce the development of this Centre.⁵⁹ From the start the CGS has also participated in the think-tank Laak-Noord. See the illustration of the third assumption (Figure 2).

In fact nearly all parts of the political administrative systems are connected with parts of the Oikos. But for reasons of simplicity we locate them in the Politeia due to their top-down relations with the political authorities. The third assumption may be highly interesting and useful for a theoretical understanding of the urban development of cities. Formal and informal, cq hidden actors may prevent or stimulate the sustainability and by recognising and analysing their different roles we will increase our understanding of related processes. Of special interest is the nature and position of 'non-governmental organisations' (NGO's). Some of them may be highly formalised and are connected with systems and organisations (of the Oikos). Others may be highly informal and nearly similar with networks of citizens (of the Agora). Literature shows a lot of confusion on this topic and the significance for community participation in an urban context. It is of interest to notice that in the Chinese academic world this topic has recently been introduced.⁶⁰ But rather than being vehicles of empowerment and change in developing countries, NGO's cannot easily escape the logic of existing patronage either – sometimes stimulated by levels in governmental systems - which prevents the urban poor to escape.⁶¹

3.7 Plans to engage community-groups in Laak-Noord

The think-tank Laak-Noord discussed the position of organizations in Laak-Noord, of departments of the municipality (the political administrative system) and the role of the CGS. As explained, the first issue was addressed recently in a 'Strategic Document'.⁶² This delivered starting points for discussing the renewal of collaboration with departments of the municipality and all other relevant partners in Laak (Noord) concerning the development of the urban space of Laak-Noord with the directors of the Department of ECHW of the municipality. A new issue was the question how to engage representatives of the community of Laak-Noord as well. As said, unclear remains if the blue collar manual workers are still distinguishable in Laak-Noord. What is left of that component of the population? What of the new under class of autochtoons? Are these two groups still distinguishable? How did relative newcomers fare over the years – the less recent arrivals like the Surinamers, or the more recently arrived Turks, Moroccans and others? What are the related tensions and choices that

⁵⁹ J. De Vries, J.F. Westbroek, *Brief over de start van het Centre of Modern Urban Studies (MUS) in the Campus van Den Haag*, Den Haag: Campus Den Haag/Universiteit van Leiden, januari 2007.

⁶⁰ K. Lin, K. K. Gabe, *The Power of NGOs in An Authoritarian Regime: A Study on the Types and Functions of NGOs in Contemporary China: a presentation on the third conference on Social Quality*, Nanjing: Nanjing University, October 2008.

⁶¹ J. de Wit, E. Berner, *Progressive patronage? Municipalities, NGOs, Community-Based Organizations, and the Limits to Slum Dwellers' Empowerment*, The Hague: ISS, 2008. This is also the case in Europe, see: P. Herrmann, *Politics and Policies of the Social in the European Union: Looking at the Hidden Agendas*, New York: NOCA, 2006.

⁶² See note-49.

people face in this district? How do people negotiate and find their way between the community spaces, the political administrative system (Politeia) and the organizations (Oikos), their families and their individual identity, traditions and modernity, the lack of faith, and strong religious beliefs? These issues resulted in a proposal for research concerning the complexities of the Agora (see Figure 2).

Socio-economic emancipation of people is not sufficient to create a better society, or to improve a city, just as urban renewal does not automatically improve a neighborhood. Most social and policy research skims across the surface and does not dare to take on the cognitive, emotional (and philosophical) related factors involved.⁶³ We will come back to this topic in the following section. In terms of the social quality approach – and see also Figure 4 - the conditional factors are important but not sufficient for the social quality of cities. Constitutional factors also play a crucial role. In other words the research-proposal also addresses the question of the constitutional factors.⁶⁴ At this stage it is important to notice that as a result of the work carried out by the think-tank a proposal for research to develop new community strategies has been presented to all partners in Laak-Noord and the municipality.⁶⁵ Hypothesized is that for the operationalisation of the municipality's recent report 'Creating the City Together'⁶⁶ the essential role of citizens, community groups, networks of citizens, families/households for its operationalisation can be better understood by analyzing reciprocal processes between aspects of the Agora, the Oikos and the Politeia.

3.8 The preliminary project migration and citizenship

Since the beginning of 2006 - as a result of the second series of interviews⁶⁷ - plans have been developed to dedicate special attention to the position of migrants in The Hague concerning the urban space of Laak-Noord. These ideas could be enhanced as a result of the project-collaboration of the ISS and the Foundation, as decided in a Memorandum of Understanding.⁶⁸ In the summer of 2007 discussions with civil-servants of the municipality were initiated for a preliminary exploration of the position of migrants (as an important aspect of the Agora). This resulted into a short expert-meeting with civil-servants, leading to the idea of analyzing the results of current public policies to strengthen the position of migrants in the Hague. The proposals referred to new policies set up in order to strengthen the citizenship position of all residents.⁶⁹ Which results could be discerned and what are the benefits of the money spent on migrant community-groups for the social quality of this part of the population? Based on a general understanding of the position of migrants in Dutch and European cities, what could be changed in order to strengthen their position as responsible citizens of The

⁶³ See for the proposal, note-44.

⁶⁴ The conditional and constitutional factors will be discussed in the recent study, see note-15 and are discussed in the study from 2001 (note-8) and the working-paper published by the ISS (note-16).

⁶⁵ See note-44.

⁶⁶ Gemeente Den Haag, 'Creating the City Together [in Dutch]', Den Haag: Dienst-OCW, July 2005.

⁶⁷ See note-36.

⁶⁸ See note-5.

⁶⁹ See note-66.

Hague?⁷⁰ Two months later a preliminary exploration about similarities and differences concerning public policies for the urban category of migrants was presented to the municipality.⁷¹ This unexpectedly delivered the argument for the municipality to change the objectives of the project. It was felt that at the moment an exploration of the results of local governments' policies in comparable European cities was not relevant. From now on, the project should identify and examine 'best practices' elsewhere that have proved to be effective in building bridges between ethnic groups in neighborhoods. In other words, the social capital approach with its implicitly top-down governmental strategies was preferred.⁷² A reflection should be made on the relevance and potential for the city of The Hague in line with the new policy. It should also suggest future directions of policies and programmes. The project has been completed by the ISS.⁷³

Notwithstanding the municipality's ideological change, the final results deliver interesting starting points for the work for Laak Noord as well. Some recommendations are that it is important (i) to provide 'safe' spaces and opportunities for youth, (ii) to tap the spiritual resources in different religious groups through stimulating interaction and sharing, (iii) to take up the challenge of motivating women from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds to get involved in building bridges across these divides, (iv) to involve elderly in motivating multicultural understanding through volunteer work, sharing of experience, letting their voices be heard in public deliberation, (v) to motivate ethnic based organizations that play a role in providing a better understanding of the new cultural setting for refugees, (vi) to use the power of the media as a means of stimulating intercultural knowledge interaction and understanding, (vii) to further develop the links between multiculturalism and the environment, and see how this can involve different ethnic communities at neighborhood level in social, cultural and environmental projects, (viii) to prepare for a clear methodology of the work, preferably prior to the implementation of these programmes. The results of this report may be applied to analyze the results of the current citizenship policies of the municipality. It may also be used for the development of the approach of the urban space of Laak-Noord with its high percentage of migrants. In other words, it is a first step and it should be connected with the new research proposal to explore the position of citizens in Laak-Noord as explained above.

3.9 Laak-Noord: problems, challenges and the project-collaboration with the ISS

The start of the school according to the understanding of the Esloo group of schools meant a new approach of Laak-Noord. According to the school's representatives, the social quality approach functioned as a strong support to retake the initiative after the failure with other partners in Laak-

⁷⁰ L.J.G. van der Maesen, *Report of the expert-meeting with civil-servants about the purpose and proposed results of the project migration and citizenship*, The Hague: EFSQ, September 2007.

⁷¹ L.J.G. van der Maesen, H. Verkleij, *A preliminary comparison of public policies concerning the urban category of migrants in ten European cities*, The Hague: EFSQ, January 2008.

⁷² See for comments on this approach, note-51.

⁷³ R. Kurian, *Building Bridges in Neighbourhoods: Connecting Communities, Celebrating Diversity and Promoting Civic Citizenship at local levels*, The Hague: ISS, June 2008.

Noord in 2005 as described in the foregoing sections. In 2005 and 2006 the municipality, more specifically its Department ECHW, financed related activities to prepare a more comprehensive approach as illustrated in Figure 2. The outcomes were applied especially by the Esloo group of schools and the Foundation, resulting into the work carried out by the think-tank. In this context discussions took place about the distinction between the physical dimension and the social dimension in terms of the development of the urban space of Laak (Noord). As already argued, in formal terms, the Department UD is responsible for the so-called physical dimension and the Department ECHW of the municipality for the social dimension. This distinction refers to a classical supposition and differs from ideas behind the presentation of Figure 1.⁷⁴ The plea for a paradigm-shift to transcend this classical supposition may be derived from the first and the second assumption as discussed in previous sections. The so-called physical dimension implies new expressions of 'the social'. The so-called social dimension also implies expressions of 'the social', resulting in physical forms as well. This theoretical intervention by the social quality approach will not change the division of labour between the UD and ECHW, but it will change their approaches and interpretations of daily realities. Finally, the danger is that the strong municipality policy to strengthen the position of citizens in The Hague remains restricted too much to the world of the Agora, while not really addressing the complex reciprocal processes between the Agora, the Politeia and the Oikos, see Figure 2.⁷⁵ This is the challenge for new forms of governance as advocated in the second series of interviews. Notwithstanding this question the recent decisions by the municipality demonstrates that the debate for a shift is really accurate and open to-day.⁷⁶ The challenges summarized above may create interesting starting points for engaging students of the ISS and students of the Haagse Hogeschool (HHS) to play a role at community level. Discussions are currently taking place how to prepare the start of both groups of students in Laak-Noord.⁷⁷ Students from the ISS are familiar with migrant issues in a general sense and with the position of immigrants in The Hague in particular. However, they are not familiar with the Dutch language. They can be assisted with their explorations by students from the HHS. Vice versa, the ISS-students may assist the HHS-students on applying research methodologies to stimulate community development and engagement. Both roles can enrich the case of Laak-Noord as a challenge for The Hague.

4. *Approaching the urban space: Laak-Noord as an interesting case*

4.1 *A summary of applied methods*

The applied methods on behalf of Laak Noord since 2004 may be summarized as follows:

- With support by the Politeia (Department EHCHW) general explorations are made on the urban approach of The Hague and the experiences and impressions from the world of the Oikos,

⁷⁴ See reports note-34, 41, 47, 50.

⁷⁵ See note-66 and comparable documents by the municipality in the past years.

⁷⁶ See the document, referred to in note-3.

⁷⁷ J. F. Westbroek, 'Laak-Noord in progress: information about the plans to engage students', The Hague, May 2008.

- This prepared for Esloo, the Foundation and the municipality the ground for designing a strategy for communication (see creation of the Forum and the think-tank) as point of departure to retake the development of Laak Noord,
- Together – the municipality, Esloo and the Foundation – strengthened an academic collaboration resulting in the Memorandum of Understanding with the ISS and the start of the Centre for Urban Governance Studies,
- The think-tank started to negotiate with representatives from the Politeia (municipality), and the Oikos (the relevant stakeholders), and from the Academia in The Hague,
- Suppositions on the relations (and reciprocity) between the Agora, Politeia and the Oikos have been formulated, referring to some basic principles of the social quality approach. This resulted in a Strategic Document of relevant stakeholders and a new plan for the 'Urban Heart' in Laak Noord,
- The first ideas for connecting community groups in Laak-Noord have been formulated and a plan is made for the involvement of students for assisting community participation in this part of The Hague,
- From the side of the Academia a first exploration has been made on the position of migrants and conditions for acceptable citizenship, for underpinning community action and participation in the future (Agora),
- A debate about renewing the relationship between both leading departments of the municipality (UD and EHCHW) may start as a result of the work carried out in Laak-Noord thus far,
- At the end of 2008 the municipality and relevant stakeholders decided to create a Steering-group and to appoint (and to finance) a project manager (director) for continuing and elaborating the applied methods under the lead of this Steering-group. The director will chair a new think-tank in collaboration with representatives of the Academia as well.

As a result of the applied methods since 2004, the contours of a new infrastructure for communication and collaboration to enhance Laak-Noord, have been created. In a practical sense a search has taken place, firstly, to finance the steering process by a think-tank for the development of Laak – Noord assisted by a project manager⁷⁸, and, second, for the start of the design of the 'Urban Heart' by relevant stakeholders as a heuristic instrument for the necessary paradigm-shift.

4.2 The study on active inclusion in the urban context

In order to fully contribute to a new and sustainable development Laak Noord we should also take on board the issue of the overall sustainability (and its economic, socio-political and environmental aspects) and related new programmes for going beyond traditional fragmented approaches for

⁷⁸ J.F. Westbroek, L.J.G. van der Maesen, H.G.J. Nijhuis, ' Financial plan for developing Laak-Noord as a part of the urban space of The Hague' , The Hague: Municipality/EFSQ, September 2008.

achieving an integrated urban development.⁷⁹ In an intellectual sense this implies the preparation of a paradigm-shift and to anticipate possible results. We will refer to two studies which address the sustainable development of European cities where this topic is really denied. It concerns a study which has been produced in the context of the Committee of the Regions of the EU. It aims to strengthen 'active inclusion' in urban circumstances in Europe. The rapporteur, the vice mayor of the City of The Hague, notices, that '*decentralised governments are the first to be confronted with the societal and financial consequences of economic and social exclusion. Decentralised governments are, moreover, the first to see that there is a widening gap between economically and publicly active people on the one hand, and citizens who are not, or insufficiently able to participate in society on the other (...) I have taken up the challenge and arranged for a number of practical examples of active inclusion to be collected by the NICIS Institute*'.⁸⁰ Strategies have been presented from Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Hungary, Poland, Sweden, The Netherlands and the United Kingdom.

In fact the strategies presented and discussed in this study, concern the creation of new forms of employment or, in the case of the presentation about the city of The Hague, the general prevention policy of young people dropping out, returning dropouts to school and to help young people in other ways.⁸¹ But 'participating in society' – see the main objective of this study - is much more than having a job. This broader perspective refers to terms as social inclusion and social cohesion as used in this study as well. They are used, but it is not clear why. Furthermore, no conceptual and related methodological framework has been introduced for the exploration of the different good practices. Therefore it is rather difficult to compare them, as well as to apply aspects of these practices in other circumstances. And in the case of The Hague we may ask, if this policy presented in this study is anchored in for example in the new orientation as developed by the School Group of Esloo, as discussed in the previous section?⁸² In other words, is it related to other relevant sectors, delivering a new perspective for the youth as an urban category?

Theoretical grounded preparatory work for comparative research and explorations is not always welcomed. In a well-known study about indicators of social inclusion by Atkinson and colleagues, the concept of social inclusion is not articulated explicitly for 'pragmatic reasons'. Therefore it remains impossible to understand what indicators of their unknown 'social inclusion' can be.⁸³ Also in the preparation of the Europe-wide quality of life studies by the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, the theoretical framework which underlines this work

⁷⁹ It is a serious mistake that without a far-reaching theoretical groundwork a paradigm-shift will be possible. And this shift is a condition sine qua non (see note-48). Also according to Giri, "*research is not just an epistemic activity: it also calls for cultivation of appropriate virtues transgressing the conventional boundaries between epistemology and ontology*". This implies a new meta-theoretical point of departure, see: A. K. Giri, '*Creative Social Research: Rethinking Theories and Methods and the Calling of an Ontological Epistemology of Participation*', Madras: Madras University of Development, 2008.

⁸⁰ H. Kool, 'Foreword', in: *Nine good practices on Active Inclusion in Europe*, The Hague: NICIS, June 2008.

⁸¹ See note-80, p.75.

⁸² This question is as relevant for the other good practices. How to interpret their interrelatedness with other relevant sectors in these examples?

⁸³ T. Atkinson, B. Cantillon, E. Marlier, B. Nolan, '*Social Indicators: The EU and Social Inclusion*', Oxford: University Press, 2002.

is rather weak and individualistic. Indeed, its researchers seem actively to be avoiding any in-depth theoretical discussion. For example, in their justification of utilizing an analytical as well as a descriptive approach Fahey et al. argue, that '*an analytical approach to social and economic processes can generate knowledge that contributes to the policy making process without the need to become bogged down in philosophical discussions of causality*'.⁸⁴

4.3 The report on Liveable cities

A second example concerns the study about 'Liveable Cities and Towns', a comparison of nine cities in the European Union, produced in the context of Eurocities.⁸⁵ Our question is what exactly is the applied urban methodology to compare these cities and whether this study addresses the need for integrated urban development programmes, based on a clear articulated urban methodology. With this in mind two comments seem to be adequate. Firstly, according to this study, 'liveable cities' have a high standard of 'quality of life'. The authors remark, '*this is a loaded term, covering all aspects which affect the quality of the environment such as noise, soil, air and odour pollution and external safety*'.⁸⁶ The concept of 'quality of life' has in fact been taken for granted. To analyse the results of the manifold of relevant suggestions to increase the sustainability of cities, we need indicators. How to derive these indicators without a further elaboration of this concept and how to address the individualistic orientation of 'quality of life' if the authors try to reflect upon the comprehensive totality of cities and towns? A second point concerns the theme of sustainability. According to the authors, '*managing cities and towns in more sustainable ways – making cities more 'liveable' - is focussed on achieving a balance between environmental, social and economic policies. In particular it is about protecting the environmental health of urban areas, putting in place effective policies to overcome issues such as poor air quality, high levels of car traffic, exposure to excessive, recycling, but recognising that policies to protect environment health cannot be separated from economic and social policies*'.⁸⁷ In order to understand this proposition we need a theoretical explanation of (i) economic, (ii) socio-political, and (iii) environmental sustainability, as well as their interrelatedness. This highly important theme is currently being discussed at global level. But the related 'problematique' - namely the actual lack of a theoretical interrelatedness of these three aspects – has not been mentioned in this study at all.

4.4 The fourth assumption about the conceptual framework

⁸⁴ T. Fahey, B. Nolan, C.T. Whelan, 'A proposal for the future activities on Living conditions and Quality of Life', Dublin: European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working conditions, 2002, p. 2. See furthermore: A.C. Walker, L.J.G. van der Maesen, 'Social Quality and Quality of life', in: W. Glatzer, S. von Below, M. Stoffregen (eds), '*Challenges for Quality of Life in the Contemporary World*', The Hague; Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2004, pp. 13-31. Further: D. Phillips, '*Quality of Life: Concept, Policy and Practice*', London: Routledge, 2006.

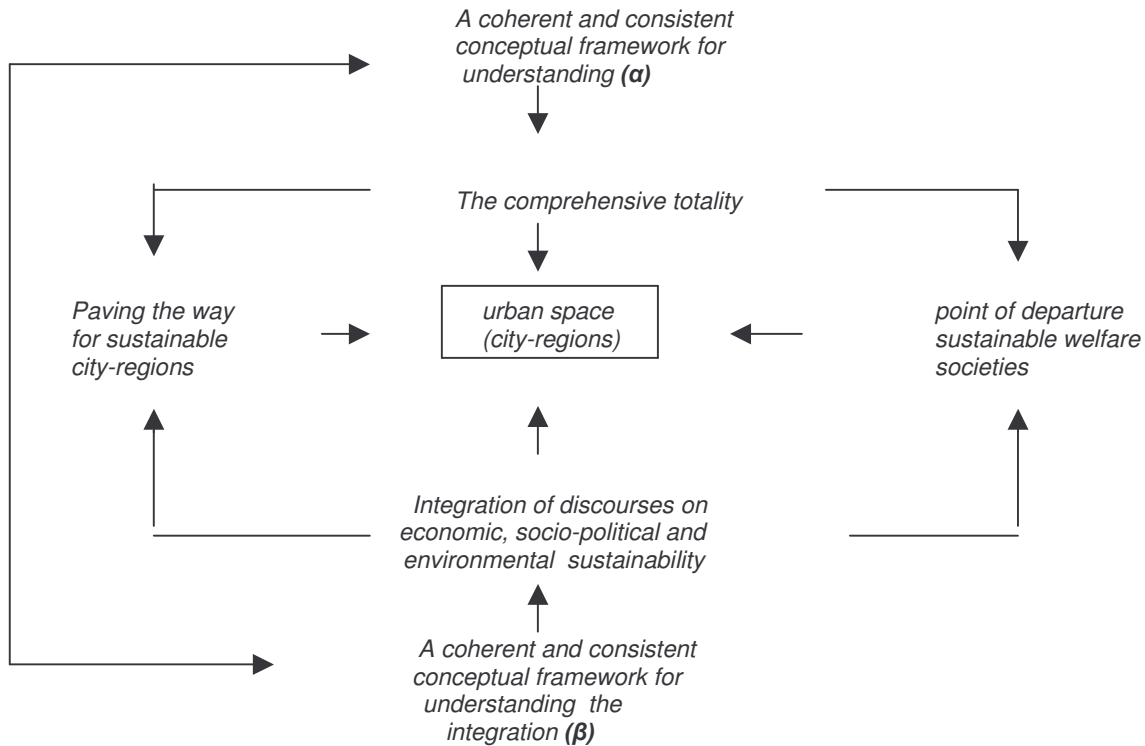
⁸⁵ A. Creedy, C. Zuidema, G. Porter, G. de Roo, '*Towards Liveable Cities and Towns: Guidance for Sustainable Urban Management*'. Brussels: Eurocities, 2007. This study has been co/funded by EC DG Environment and the Dutch Ministry of Housing.

⁸⁶ See note-85, p. 5.

⁸⁷ See note-85, p. 43.

If these comments make sense, they will explain our conclusion, that in both studies the urban methodology was not real issue for logical reasons. But therefore, it is difficult to understand their advices and recommendations for local and national governments. Extra work is a condition for strengthening the applicability of both studies. Needed is a thorough urban methodology to understand, to analyze, and to compare aspects of the urban space as a comprehensive totality, see following figure:

Figure-3: The fourth assumption about two conceptual frameworks



This urban methodology implies a meta-theoretical based conceptual framework (α) to develop this (epistemological) methodology.⁸⁸ Second, the development of the comprehensive totality should be sustainable. This implies a connection with well grounded ideas about the overall sustainability and the integration of its three aspects. This as well implies a consistent and coherent conceptual framework (β). The fourth assumptions says that $\alpha = \beta$. Some of the arguments are as follows. A consistent conceptual framework seems important for a reflexive understanding of the current transformation of urban spaces and the way the aspects of sustainability are theoretically and/or practically integrated or disintegrated. This transformation is caused by (i) a revolutionary change of technologies and new forms of communication based upon this, (ii) increasing mobility also as a result of these new technologies, (iii) a related strengthening of global mechanisms changing

⁸⁸ See Giri, note-78 and see for an extensive elaboration of this theme, the Foundation's forthcoming third study, note-15.

financial, production and distribution systems, (iv) an increase of migration in countries and between countries as an answer to these changes, and (v) related new forms of human exploitation and forms of other criminal behaviour at national and international level. These processes are not a logical result of a so-called 'natural development' or the 'globalisation' as a mechanism *sui generis*. They are strongly influenced by politically determined neo-liberal guidelines that aim to combine the principles of welfare with the rigidly unilateral principles of competition as condition for economic growth and welfare, thus laying the ground for the current interpretation of utilitarianism. It concerns a misleading adaptation of the demands of welfare to the demands of competition.⁸⁹ Based on these arguments we may illustrate the fourth assumption as follows:

4.5 *The social quality architecture and the fifth assumption*

According to the advocates of the social quality approach, in order to analyse transformation processes a distinction should be made between (i) conditional factors (resources for citizens), constitutional factors (the mental and cognitive possibilities for citizens as social actors) and normative factors (ethical based points of orientation to judge the results of the link of the conditional and constitutional factors).⁹⁰ For Laak-Noord as well as for other parts of the urban space of The Hague (and other cities) a vision is a condition *sine qua non* for a consistent urban development. Without this, societal processes cannot be steered. According to Friedman, this vision should be oriented on the 'city-region', because we can no '*longer treat cities separately from the regions surrounding them with which, in multiple way, they are entwined*'.⁹¹ With the help of the social quality approach we suppose to contribute to a vision of the urban space (or city-regions) from a more abstract starting point, namely by applying the elements of its conceptual framework. The fifth assumption says, that this conceptual framework resulting into the sq-architecture delivers an interesting point of departure for understanding the urban space as a comprehensive totality (α) as well as (see fourth assumption) for integrating the different aspects of sustainability (β). The three dimensions lead to the social quality-architecture, see following figure-4⁹²:

Figure-4: Overview of the three sets of factors concerning the fifth assumption

CONDITIONAL FACTORS <i>DIMENSION OF RESOURCES</i>	CONSTITUTIONAL FACTORS <i>DIMENSION OF HUMAN ACTIONS</i>	NORMATIVE FACTORS <i>DIMENSION OF ETHIC/IDEOLOGY</i>
<i>socio-economic security</i> <i>social cohesion</i> <i>social inclusion</i> <i>Social empowerment</i>	<i>personal (human) security</i> <i>social recognition</i> <i>social responsiveness</i> <i>personal (human) capacity</i>	<i>social justice (equity)</i> <i>solidarity</i> <i>of equal value</i> <i>human dignity</i>

⁸⁹ This concerns the common starting point of the human security discourse and the social quality approach, see note-16.

⁹⁰ See the Foundation's second main study (note-8) and the forthcoming third main study (note-15).

⁹¹ J. Friedman, 'The Wealth of Cities: towards an Assets-based Development of Newly Urbanizing Regions', *Development and Change*, vol. 38 (2008), nr. 6, pp. 987-999.

⁹² This figure has been presented in an article about human security and social quality as well, see note-16.

At first glance a related vision on a specific urban space (see figure-1) does not concern attractive configurations but the way how to intervene in daily circumstances of the urban space at a specific time and the reasons why. According to social quality advocates, we should apply this architecture to contribute to policies for enhancing these circumstances in the urban space (for example, Laak-Noord). This application goes beyond the specific (and mostly fragmented) policies for enhancing social security, social cohesion, employment, health care or education, due to its openness for the comprehensiveness of daily circumstances and for the interrelatedness of these aspects in daily life.

The definitions of the twelve concepts of the sq-architecture are based on an ontological definition of the concept of 'the social' and therefore they are intrinsically related. This architecture is the foundation for the meta-theoretical conceptual framework which paves the way for the methodological framework. Herewith it delivers points of departure for preparing for a meta-theoretical position also to interdisciplinary scientific collaboration, as well for the integrated approach of different urban policy areas and urban categories. This is a new endeavour for economic, political and other social sciences to comprehensively approach parts of the urban space and this is rather unprecedented in the discourse in the context of the European Commission.⁹³

Based on this architecture an epistemological determination of the respective measurement instruments may be realised: social quality indicators to measure the nature of the conditional factors⁹⁴, the profiles for recognising the nature and consequences of the constitutional factors and criteria delivering the starting points for judging the results of the linking of the conditional and constitutional factors with the help of the normative factors.⁹⁵ For example, the social quality indicators are deductively based on the supposed nature of the conditional factors, their domains and their sub-domains. Therefore these indicators are related to the same conceptual framework. Furthermore, for the first time these indicators have inductively been tested in fourteen European countries.⁹⁶ Since the second Asian conference on social quality these indicators have also been tested in Asian circumstances.⁹⁷ In principle the elaboration of social quality indicators a question of the reciprocity between deductive and inductive approaches. A first outcomes of this reciprocity is already published.⁹⁸ This procedure differs from the applied procedure on behalf of (i) quality of life indicators, (ii) social indicators and (iii) social capital indicators.⁹⁹ We mention this, because indicators are essential to analyse the consequences of policies which are meant to change the reality of daily circumstances in urban space. Therefore the question is relevant which conceptual framework and methodology is applied for the construction and testing of indicators.

⁹³ This relevant topic will be discussed in the Foundation's third main study, see note-15.

⁹⁴ This architecture is first published in a study about the complementarity of the human security discourses and the social quality approach, see note-16. This study is important for understanding the argumentation, especially in section-5.

⁹⁵ See the Foundation's second main study, note-8 and the third main study, note-15.

⁹⁶ See the double issue of the European Journal of Social Quality, note-10.

⁹⁷ See note-12.

⁹⁸ D. Phillips, 'The testing of social quality indicators in Europe and Asia', Sheffield: Sheffield University, April 2008.

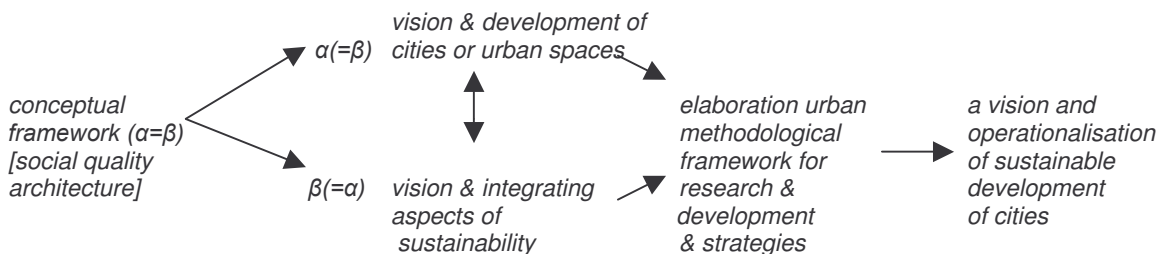
⁹⁹ This topic will be discussed in the Foundation's third main study, note-15.

5 Laak-Noord as a frame of reference?

5.1 The main challenges

In this section we present our two main theses on urban methodology to analyze processes in global cities. They are based on the five assumptions, described in the previous sections. These assumptions refer to the reflection of the results of the work carried out on behalf of Laak Noord as an interesting case. It is strongly influenced by the European discourse on sustainable cities and the Asian input, presented at three Asian conferences on social quality, preparing for a connection of figure-1, figure-3 and figure-4, leading into the following figure as point of departure for this section:

Figure-5: The connection of different discourses



As we may conclude from the European research by NICIS, at the moment no clarity exists about ideas on the nature of 'sustainable development of cities', and how to transcend traditional fragmented approaches.¹⁰⁰ As may be demonstrated in three other European explorations - about Partnership with Cities, Active Inclusion and Livable Cities¹⁰¹ - an explication is lacking of the applied conceptual framework and a theoretical connection with the problematique of overall sustainability. This explains the logical lack of the urban methodological framework and the related understanding of sustainable cities. During the November 2008 conference by Eurocities in The Hague, the ambition was to build on the results of the Leipzig Charter¹⁰². The focus is on innovative strategies to create "sustainable local systems of innovation, facilitating learning from practice through systematic city-to-city exchange, dialogue and scientific research. This will ensure the continuous emergence of good practice in local governance. We believe that this initiative is crucial to the implementation of the Leipzig Charter on sustainable European Cities. We recognise the need for effective, democratic and just approaches to local governance in the context of globalisation, new perceptions of citizenship, the significance of public-private partnerships and the changing roles of government".¹⁰³ In spite of the

¹⁰⁰ See note-18.

¹⁰¹ See respectively notes-22, 79 and 84.

¹⁰² See note-19

¹⁰³ Eurocities, 'Building Active Cities: Modern Citizenship and Integrated Governance: Conference Book', The Hague: Eurocities AGM, November 2008, page-34.

attractive ambition by Eurocities, the problematique or interrelatedness of aspects illustrated in figure-5 was not on the conference's agenda. The question of innovative forms of local governance is discussed outside a reflection of all embracing aspects of the urban methodological framework in relation with an acceptable conceptual framework. Logically, it therefore remains unknown what to understand with 'sustainable European cities' as the main topic of the conference. It concerns the main current challenge.

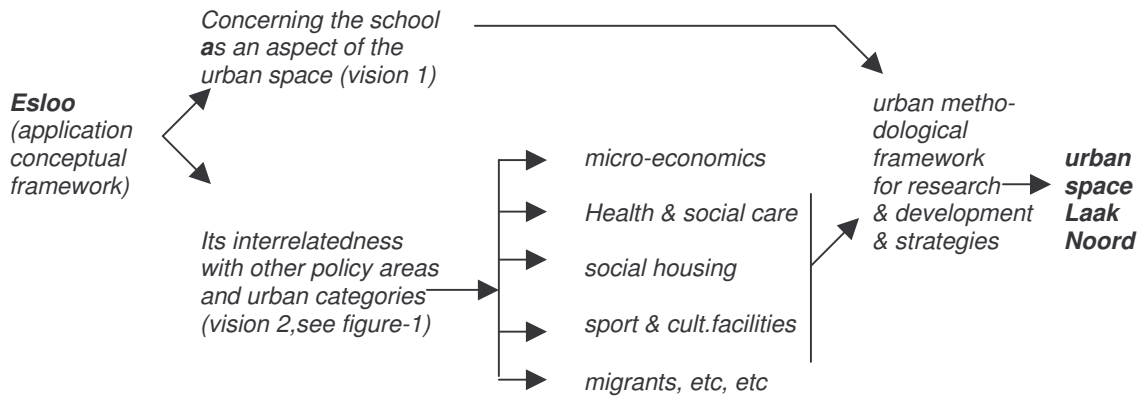
5.2 Conceptual framework

As explained in section-3.2, Esloo tried to develop an understanding of the position of education (and school buildings) as aspects of the urban space. It presented a vision on the nature of schools and their relation with other policy areas of the surrounding community, as health care, social care, sport, micro-economics, cultural and welfare facilities, its role for urban categories as migrants, as well as their position in the proposed 'Urban Heart' of Laak Noord. This ambition concerned and concerns the upper part of figure-5. This school for practical education of pupils between 12 and 18 years (and especially migrant children) should train them to play a role in small businesses in the community, supporting older residents capacities for independent living with technical facilities, to contribute to processes concerning community activities and safety in the neighborhood, etc. The school building should function as a place for meetings and cross-functional activities of the community (cultural, grand-café, supportive information to deal with red tape, starting-point for community festivals).

Due to the transformation of communication and production technologies, teachers should be trained to cope with the incessant chance for assisting pupils to apply new knowledge and facilities for the common good as well. This implies a new relation between, for example education systems and high-tech manufacturers. This demands for a complementary vision of all related subsystems, resulting into an overall or comprehensive vision for Laak Noord. And this was lacking completely: until 2005 Esloo remained rather isolated. The stakeholders of the Agora, Oikos, Politeia (see figure-2) did not find forms and methods to collaborate in such a way they were enabled to create a vision together for Laak Noord (and other quarters of The Hague). As a result of an implicit reinterpretation of the social quality approach (see the second and third series of interviews¹⁰⁴) and the creation of the think-tank for processes of communication and dialogue, Esloo could again take the initiative. It implicitly addressed the four conditional and the four constitutional factors as arguments, for stimulating a new vision for Laak Noord. This can be visualized as follows:

¹⁰⁴ See note-36 and 42

Figure-6: Operationalisation of a twofold vision



With this figure in mind, three questions are relevant. First, in which way may the Esloo initiative enhance education as well as modernize relations between teachers and pupils, and will this contribute positively to the conditional and constitutional factors of social quality related to the system of education in Laak-Noord? Second, in which way will the interrelation between Esloo school and for example the policy areas of social housing or health care contribute constructively to strengthen both types of factors in these policy areas? Both questions can be answered with the help of the application of the social quality indicators to measure the results of the conditional factors and with the help of the determination of the profiles of the constitutional factors. We can make a new step as well. Instead of the policy area of education (Esloo) as starting point we can take social housing as starting point, related to all other policy areas. The same questions should be raised, but than from the perspective of social housing. The third question is, if the work carried out by Esloo will contribute to sustainable learning conditions and sustainable interrelations with other policy areas and urban categories for contributing to the overall sustainable development of Laak Noord. This implies a confrontation with the sustainability discourse as referred to in the bottom part of Figure 5. Both first questions refer to the upper part of Figure 5.

5.3 The first thesis about the urban methodological framework

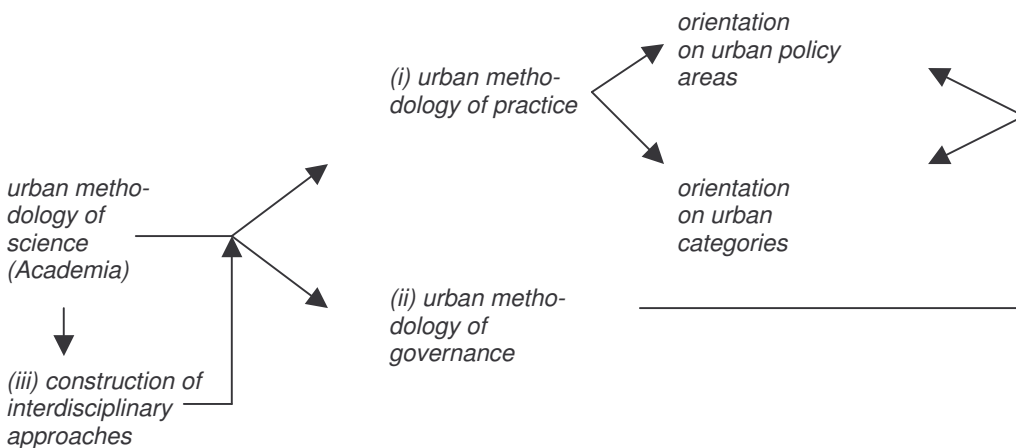
The sq-architecture concerns the outcomes of the connection of the sq's conceptual framework and its methodological framework. This complicated theme will be elaborated in the Foundation's third study. The proposed 'urban methodological framework' refers to a specific subject, namely the urban space as a comprehensive totality and differs from the social quality's methodological framework. It will or may also include aspects from other orientations as the human security approaches, the social harmony policies etc. Nevertheless, at this stage our interpretation of the 'urban methodological framework' has been inspired by the first experiences with Laak-Noord. With this in mind, the first thesis may be, that we should distinguish between **three layers** of the urban methodological

framework as a result of the connection of the third assumption (see figure-2), the first assumption (figure-1) and the fourth assumption (figure-3). This thesis may be seen as an extension of the essence of the new 'The Hague Declaration' by Eurocities as referred to above. The three layers are:

- the urban methodology of science (Academia),
- the urban methodology of practice (Oikos, and some elements of the Agora and of the Politeia),
- the urban methodology of governance (Politeia and some elements of the Oikos and the Agora).

The activities from the side of the Academia are or should be oriented on three issues: (i) an analysis of the nature, change and consequences of urban practices, (ii) an analysis of the nature, change and consequences of urban governance by a manifold of actors (local governance, companies, non-for-profit organisations etc), (iii) the elaboration of interdisciplinary research to transcend the disciplinary fragmentation to fully understand the diverse parts of the urban space as comprehensive totality. The application of the urban methodology of practice – by the Oikos and some elements of the Agora and the Politeia – concerns the essence of urban development. The arguments for innovative strategies by local authorities are derived from the renewal of the urban practice and not the other way around. Therefore, the governmental innovations (and by companies, organisations etc) should be understood in the context of the reciprocity between processes initiated by the Agora and the Oikos. Therefore, the layers of the urban methodological framework cannot be isolated from each other; they determine each other and together produce the urban space as a comprehensive totality. The first thesis may be illustrated as follows:

Figure-7: The first thesis: the layers of the urban methodological framework



5.4 The second thesis: the essence of the 'urban methodological framework'

The sq-architecture delivers a starting point for a common, interdisciplinary approach (namely the urban methodology of science) of interventions in urban policy areas and urban categories (as a consequence of the urban methodological practice) and a manifold of steering processes concerning

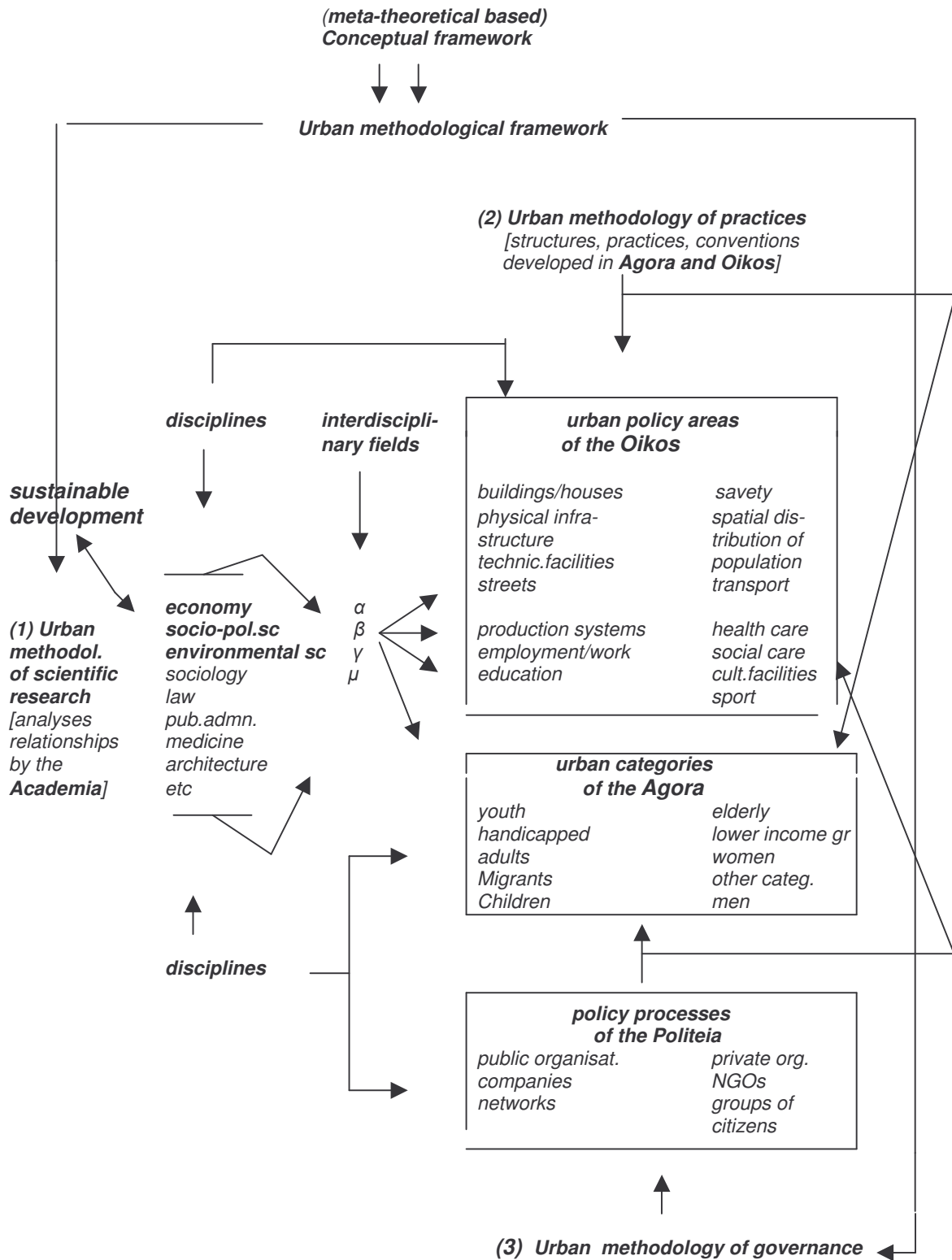
both fields (as a consequence of the urban methodology of governance), see figure-8 (below). From a practical/managerial point of view, professionals who are responsible for education, for health care, for constructing streets, houses or developing transport systems (the Oikos) can reflect on how their interventions affect the conditional factors and the nature of the constitutional factors. In other words, for the different types of professionals, this sq-architecture delivers a common tool to go beyond the classical fragmentation. As a result of the social quality architecture, we also dispose of new tools to change the traditional forms of governance, since we are enabled to apply measurement instruments which may be used in the new urban methodology of governance, as well as in both other urban methodologies. Therefore these tools deliver the starting points to create the interrelation of these three methodological layers (see figure-7) also as a condition for the innovation of forms of governance by local authorities, companies, private institutions and citizens, which and who are responsible for practical interventions in policy areas and urban categories as an aspect of the comprehensive totality of the urban space. It refers to a recent plea in the The Hague Declaration of Eurocities (see section-5.1). For example, as a consequence of the interrelatedness, people from different worlds (Agora, Oikos, Politeia, and Academia) could use the same indicators to determine (changing) conditional factors in the context of policy areas and urban categories. As a result of the application of the preliminary set of social quality indicators we may analyse the policy areas and urban categories from one logical perspective, as a result of the interrelatedness of the three layers of the urban methodological framework. This will be illustrated in Figure 8. (see below).

As explained earlier, the current set of social quality indicators will be elaborated especially in Asian countries to be made more appropriate for the respective circumstances. But this does not change the principle of approaching the urban space. The work that has been carried out thus far on behalf of Laak Noord may deliver the starting points for the elaboration and articulation of all aspects presented in Figure 8. In this way it may function as a heuristic frame of reference for the development of sustainable cities, if the urban methodological framework is also connected to strategies for integrating the three aspects of the overall sustainability (the lower part of Figure 5).

5.5 Final remarks and the new start in Laak-Noord

Section-4 opened with a summary of applied methods as aspects of the overall urban methodological framework in statu nascendi. By applying figure-2 (referring to the third assumption) - which illustrates the distinction between Politeia, Agora, Oikos and the Academia - this summary could be ordered. At least two remarks should be made. First, this distinction may function as an analytical tool for understanding the interrelatedness of parts of the Politeia, Agora and Oikos. As mentioned, parts of the Politeia (namely the sub-departments of the political administrative system) are strongly related with parts of the Oikos. Also the phenomenon of the NGOs causes difficulties, since some of them belong to the world of the Agora and others to the world of the Oikos.

Figure-8 The thesis of the 'urban methodological framework'



By elaborating the 'urban methodological framework' this distinction needs to be made more precise and also the significance of this distinction should be further explained. Second, the municipality as a local authority decided to accept Laak-Noord as an experimental urban space (see below). This is a result of many years of work carried out by people from the municipality, the Esloo-group of schools, the Foundation and other stakeholders. Their institutional contexts created the conditions for the work carried out so far. The personal collaboration created the inspiration to go beyond traditional operations, characterised by fragmentation. This in itself relates to a new theoretical issue. The incessant collaboration - supported by the respective institutional contexts - may have delivered the starting points for emerging processes which will finally be realised by a manifold of other stakeholders. Without these specific contexts this would not have happened. However, it was not the context itself which functioned as 'change agent'. The question is who these change agents are in emergent processes necessary to address new and mostly unforeseen circumstances in cities and societies?

These remarks are an invitation to discuss the interrelations of the three types of factors of the social quality architecture as illustrated in figure-4, since the element of 'change agent' is connected especially with the constitutional factors. Which processes change the nature of the constitutional factors, which enable policy-makers, professionals, citizens to develop themselves as responsible social actors? This important aspect of the social quality architecture should be elaborated. Until now, the priority has been given to discuss the conditional factors and their indicators. A second point is, that by applying the normative factors, a judgement is possible on whether the results of the linking of conditional factors and constitutional factors affect social justice, solidarity, equal value and human dignity. Ontologically and epistemologically this judgement is connected to the conditional and constitutional factors and is therefore related to the nature of daily circumstances (conditional factors) and the cognitive feelings of people (constitutional factors) about these circumstances. This complicated theme will be addressed in the Foundation's third study. It refers to the nature of the normative factors as essential aspects of the social quality theory.

Our understanding of this nature has to be elaborated in the near future as well. This will stimulate the question whether the function of the normative factors is too limited to judge the results of the linking of strategies concerning the conditional and the constitutional factors. Probably, their function may be also to deliver a specific perspective at each stage of operations to interventions and strategies resulting from a three-fold urban methodological framework (see figure-8). This may be concluded from the interventions and strategies on behalf of Laak-Noord in the last years. Exactly this point is highly relevant for emerging processes. This produces unforeseen results all the time. This demands a vision to act rightly, which implies the application of normative factors to know what is right under the specific circumstances. In other words, the work carried out in Laak-Noord is a challenge to further elaborate the social quality architecture and its significance for the sustainable development of cities.

In March 2009 the municipality of The Hague published a new document about 'Laak-Noord Matters' (Laak Noord Scoort). The document, based on a formal decision by the municipality, has been produced to convince the Dutch Ministry of (Social) Housing and Environment to support the new approach of Laak-Noord as a specific 'good practice'. The introduction explains that four organisations took the initiative for this approach: from the intramural health care (Florence), from the educational side (Esloo-group of schools), from well-being (Mooi) and social housing (Staedion). They were assisted by scientists, which is of course a milestone.¹⁰⁵ Explicitly the municipality argues that the investments and the results in Laak-Noord should be accessible to other cities.¹⁰⁶ In other words, hopefully it may function as a frame of reference.

¹⁰⁵ Municipality, *'Laak Noord Scoort: Aanvraag van de gemeente Den Haag bij het Ministerie van WWI voor het preventiebudget 40+ wijken betreffende Laak Noord'*, Den Haag: Gemeente Den Haag/Dienst Onderwijs, Cultuur en Welzijn, Maart 2009, p. 6.

¹⁰⁶ See note-105, p. 28.