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## ***Justice, migration and sustainable urban development: the case of Laak (North), neighbourhood of the City of The Hague***

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in project collaboration with

**iSS**

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Institute of Social Studies**

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# ***Justice, migration and sustainable urban development: the case of Laak (North), neighbourhood of the City of The Hague.***

## ***DRAFT***

***A working-paper on behalf of the  
15<sup>th</sup> International Metropolis Conference 2010,  
based on the work by the social quality project team  
of the Institute of Social Studies (ISS) and the  
European Foundation on Social Quality (EFSQ)***

***L.J.G. van der Maesen cs, The Hague, 30th September 2010***

## ***1. Introduction***

### ***1.1. The conference's workshop in Laak (North)***

This working paper will present general background information about new initiatives in the neighbourhood of Laak (North) of the Dutch City of The Hague on behalf of a workshop of the 15<sup>th</sup> global Metropolis Conference and for a broader audience. It will address a connection of concepts used in the title as well as related activities resulting into so-called 'social innovation'. The focus on the urban context - thus also of this neighbourhood - is becoming more interesting since this context will determine the daily circumstances of an increasing part of human beings due to current global trends.<sup>1</sup> These circumstances are highly important for the outcomes of migration as one of the consequences of actual trends as well. And this is especially the case for the neighbourhood of Laak (North). At the moment its inhabitants originate from over 50 countries, which reality is only implicitly acknowledged and not really appreciated as a reason to change public policies to cope with this silent transformation. This neighbourhood is generally viewed to be a problematic part of The

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<sup>1</sup> European Commission (1998), *The Europe of the Cities: Communitarian Actions in Cities* (Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications).

Hague. The reason is a relatively high extent of different forms of exclusion, poverty, cultural deprivation, low levels of micro-economic activities and inadequate housing circumstances and low levels of educational achievements and sport, due to this silent transformation. This had a negative influence on the health conditions of the population.<sup>2</sup> It is also a relatively isolated neighbourhood, bordered by a canal and busy roads.

Recently a group of associations, together with the people of the neighbourhood and assisted by a project team of the Institute of Social Studies (ISS) and the European Foundation on Social Quality (EFSQ), have begun to work together to bring about greater socio-economic, social cohesion, social inclusion and social empowerment. These are the four conditional factors of social quality (see figure-2). The aim is to increase societal dynamics, a sense of togetherness and responsible citizenship. The focus is to develop an alternative for recent strong pleas for a total assimilation of new comers. It concerns the creation of possibilities to evolve balanced societal dynamics based on the existing capabilities referring to a differentiated heritage of old settlers and new comers. With this in mind this neighbourhood forms a strategic case for a renewal of (i) urban oriented processes, (ii) urban governance, and (iii) urban scientific approaches to underline new processes and governance. It concerns the heart of the discourses on migration and justice as well. In 2009 this project team contributed to the production of a first working-paper to discuss Laak (North) circumstances and the nature of strategies to transcend traditional and mostly fragmented urban approaches.<sup>3</sup> The current working paper builds on the previous one and will accentuate the aspect of the 'urban methodological framework' to create knowledge-based strategies for this change. A consensus on this framework is lacking in The Netherlands but also in other European countries and beyond (see below).

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<sup>2</sup> Dienst OCW (2007), *Laak Noord/Molenwijk in perspectief: Een kwantitatieve inventarisatie van problemen, ontwikkeling en oordelen van bewoners en stakeholders* [Laak/Molenwijk in perspective: a Quantitative Inventory of Problems, Developments and Judgements of the Population and Stakeholders] (The Hague: Municipality).

## 1.2 *The content and a final remark*

To prepare ourselves for our journey on the road to an adequate urban methodological framework' we will make the following steps:

- To present a preliminary introduction of aspects of Laak (North) and the concept of the urban space,
- to connect this introduction with current issues concerning sustainable urban development,
- to present some elements of the social quality approach which are functional for this exercise,
- to reconsider the reflection on sustainable urban development – based on the third step - to address the following theme,
- namely the question of migration in order to fix related policies in the context of sustainable urban development, and
- to connect these considerations with the actual information about the case Laak (North) as a new urban (and societal) laboratory to explain a new orientation on urban processes, new forms of governance and scientific underpinning, and
- to open a new horizon for reflection on sustainability to change the restricted focus on 'research and development' into 'research, strategies and development' of sustainable urban conditions to enhance the position of migrants (and other urban subcategories) as well.

A final remark should be made since the position of migrants – also in Laak (North) – is contested. From a political oriented populist perspective, migrants should totally assimilate with the cognitive, cultural and ethical orientation and attitudes of their new

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<sup>3</sup> L.J.G. van der Maesen (2009), *The experimental urban space of Laak North of the City of The Hague as part of the Dutch Delta Metropolis: an adequate international frame of reference?* (The Hague: EFSQ, **Working Paper Series nr. 2**,

country or city (as The Hague and its neighbourhood Laak). This assimilation implies a denial of their original identity as 'newcomer', which will undermine their dignity and their equal value compared to longer-settled residents. Such a political perspective will destroy the sources of 'togetherness' as a condition for sustainable urban daily circumstances. This working-paper does not address the important issue of what would be an acceptable quantity of migrants in neighbourhoods. It starts with the final outcomes of migration processes as a first reality and the question how to cope with these outcomes to realise the four ethical standards, namely social justice, solidarity, equal value and human dignity. It will be argued that as a consequence of this aim it will contribute to policies which increase the sustainability of the urban space. A second reality is that the outcomes in for example Laak (North) reconfigures not only their population but also societal wholes as communities, creating new categories and combinations of identities.<sup>4</sup> A logical consequence is that the translation of the ethical standards of social quality to the praxis of daily circumstances will change; not the essence of these standards. In the context of the social quality approach migration is not a danger but a challenge to renew this translation. A total assimilation to past circumstances is a regressive form of policy and will split communities and obstruct reasonable societal dynamics, destroying identities and dignity. The four ethical standards mentioned above are decisive for this anti-populist position.

## **2.     *The neighbourhood Laak (North)***

### **2.1     *The first initiatives for change***

Some important elements of the change process since 2006 are the following. The first is the focus on education as a key turning point for change with regard to perspectives and

lifestyles. In line with this reasoning an innovative school (Esloo Praktijkonderwijs) was developed in the centre of the neighbourhood, functioning as a fulcrum of learning – not only with regard to the official curriculum (where attention is given to those who need special support) but also as a place of learning for practice in their daily lives, and being closely linked to the activities of the neighbourhood (such as cleaning the area).<sup>5</sup> As we will argue, this new school functions as a source for a complex of other activities – concerning micro-economic initiatives, extramural health and social care, cultural activities, sport, community participation – as points of departure for urban processes.

The second aspect of these innovative experiments at the neighbourhood level is to explore new forms of urban governance that recognise the need to broaden the notion of ‘the social’ and to promote what is termed by innovators as ‘social quality’, namely: *‘the extent to which people are able to participate in the social and economic life under conditions which enhance their well-being, capacity and individual potential’*. Activities within this framework take on a more integrated nature and form, and are the outcomes of deliberation at the neighbourhood level.<sup>6</sup>

The third aspect of these innovative experiments refer to alternative forms of collaboration with scientific institutes to underline new urban processes and modern forms of governance scientifically. In the beginning of 2009 a start was made with ‘The Hague Academic Coalition for Sustainable Urban Development’ (Hacu) to orchestrate research in such a way that it will be functional for integrating all aspects of the urban development of Laak (North).<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> D. Gasper and T-D. Truong (2010), Movements of the ‘We’: International and Transnational Migration and the Capabilities Approach, *Journal of Human Development and Capabilities*, 11 (2) , 339-57.

<sup>5</sup> (1) J.F. Westbroek and R. Gordijn (1997), *Bouwen aan Lifelong Learning. Esloo-Design: Een ontwerp voor het digitale multisectorale VMBO* (Voorburg: Scholengroep Esloo), (2) J.F. Westbroek (1999), *The Esloo-Design for the Digital Elementary and Secondary Education* (Voorburg: Scholengroep- Esloo), (3) Adviespartners voor Organisatie en Huisvesting (2004) *Voorzieningshart Laak-Noord: Esloo Praktijkonderwijs, Florence Zorg, Wijksteunpunt, Stichting Welzijn Laak* (Amersfoort: M3V).

<sup>6</sup> W.A. Beck, L.J.G. van der Maesen and A.C. Walker (eds) (1997), *The Social Quality of Europe* (The Hague, London, Boston: Kluwer Law International).

<sup>7</sup> On behalf of the initial stage of the Hacu seven plenary meetings have taken place by mid 2010 (extensive notes have been published by the EFSQ). Thanks to the outcomes, the Department OCW of the municipality of The Hague decided to assist the

This initiative aims transcend the existing fragmentation of scientific research oriented on urban development. One of the purposes is to stimulate collaboration between research departments of the municipality with other semi-public and private knowledge-institutes. During the preparatory stage of the Hacu some associates were already enabled to pave the way for a study on actual practices of local governance in four quarters of The Hague, Laak (North) as well.<sup>8</sup>

The aim of this paper is to assist a broader audience to get an idea of the rational of these experiments to promote commitment among its inhabitants. It intends to deliver a background to better understand the importance of the current urban activities, ideas for new governance and the coordination of research activities that will contribute to active citizenship and well-being in deprived urban spaces.

## *2..2 The significancer of the urban space and its development*

The policies of the municipality of The Hague in the past decades for the elaboration of the housing conditions which resulted into the so-called 'city renewal' of neighbourhoods like Laak, Schildersbuurt, Stationsbuurt etc. are well-known and appreciated. This specific 'renewal' does not parallel urban development which goes beyond the structure and nature of streets, houses and other buildings. Urban daily circumstances – or the urban space - concern the condensation of the interconnections 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

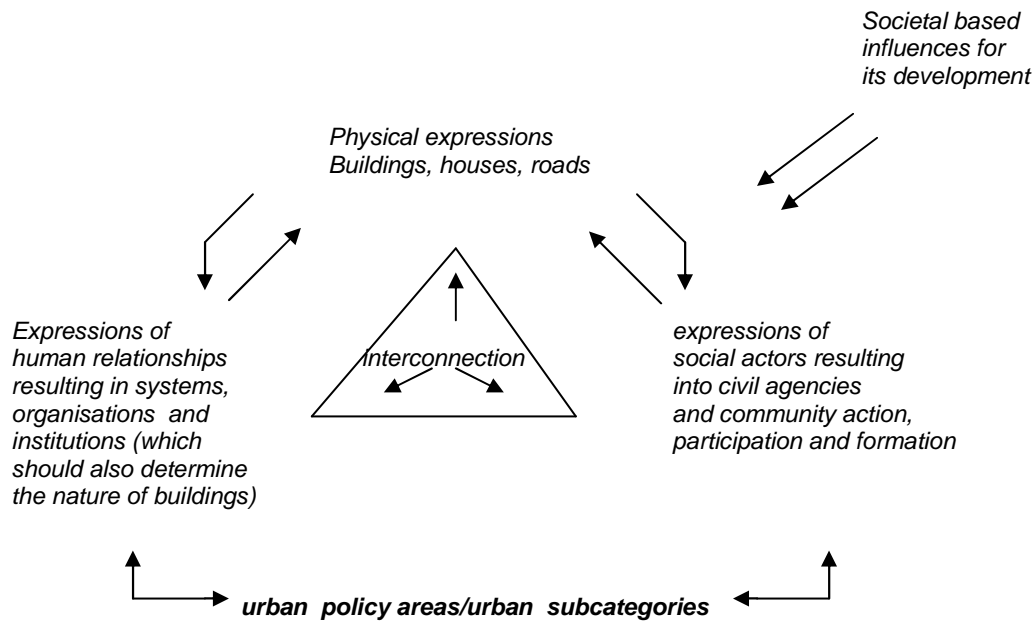
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Hacu to prepare itself for the following stage to orchestrate different research-activities, comprehensively underlining the urban development of this neighbourhood.

<sup>8</sup> R. Duiveman, H. Wagenaar, H. Kruiter (2010), *Wijken in Uitvoering: Onderzoek naar Wijkgerichte praktijken in Den Haag* [Quarters in Execution: Research on New Practices for the Development of Quarters in The Hague] (Den Haag: Universiteit van Leiden/Campus Den Haag/Gemeente Den Haag). Preparatory work for this study was carried out by the municipality of The Hague, the European Foundation on Social Quality and DISQ.

of policy areas and urban subcategories, see figure-1. Citizens especially experience the nature of the interwovenness, not the fragments an sich. Physical expressions are an aspect of the interwovenness of the urban space; they are not identical with the urban space as usually supposed in literature on urban development.

**Figure-1: The triangle of the urban space<sup>9</sup>**



The principles underlining figure-1 have been applied in different documents, written to prepare for new approaches of Laak (North).<sup>10</sup> A main point of this working-paper is that the social quality approach – and see the third section - delivers instruments to understand processes leading into the interconnections of the triangle of the urban space.<sup>11</sup> Urban development concerns the development of the threefold interactions according to a general vision, or some technical principles or specific economic interests. A main aspect of the social quality approach is its emphasis on achieving ethical standards of its four normative factors, namely as social justice, solidarity, equal value and human dignity (see figure-2). It

<sup>9</sup> This figure is derived from: L.J.G. van der Maesen, **Working Paper Series nr.2**, see note-3. It has been further elaborated.

<sup>10</sup> L.J.G. van der Maesen, H.G.J. Nijhuis (2009) *Draft for a Methodological Framework to identify Responsibilities and Research Issues for Sustainable Neighbourhood and Urban Development and International Comparative Research and Cooperation* (The Hague: Municipality/EFSQ).



may be appreciated as a crucial aspect of its vision.<sup>12</sup> Traditional urban development - also called urban planning – mostly only implicitly focuses on the threefold interaction as illustrated in figure-1. Furthermore it usually implicitly focuses on a vision how to steer their interconnections.

### 2.3 *A focus on sustainable urban development and the paper's content*

We suppose that at least three characteristics may explain this 'restricted' renewal of this city and in fact all other Dutch cities recently. With regard to the **urban policy areas**, the first characteristic is a strong fragmentation of bureaucratic policy-making by responsible actors of different departments of the municipality and other societal organisations for education, housing, health care, social care, cultural activities or sports. This obstructs an interwovenness or a comprehensive approach of different policy areas and all other aspects of the urban space based on the threefold interaction as illustrated in figure-1.<sup>13</sup> With regard to the **urban subcategories** as migrants the second characteristic is in fact a lack of attention to comprehensively address their needs and to translate the insights in an orchestrated way into different urban policy areas, also to operationalise a threefold interaction. To a lesser extent this is also the case for other urban subcategories as older people, handicapped people, youth or people living in relative poverty. The third characteristic refers to a lack of communication and facilities to learn from experiences in other cities. With the arrival of thousands of new comers from Suriname, soon followed by people from many other countries in the new South-East part of Amsterdam since the early 1970s, important

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<sup>11</sup> L.J.G. van der Maesen, P. Herrmann and A.C. Walker (20010), Local Welfare Arrangements favouring Sustainable Cohesiveness and the Urban Case of Laak North of the City of The Hague (The Hague: EFSQ, **Working Paper Series nr.5**, [www.socialquality.org](http://www.socialquality.org)).

<sup>12</sup> W.A. Beck, L.J.G. van der Maesen, F. Thomése and A.C. Walker (eds) (2001) *Social Quality: A Vision for Europe* (The Hague, London, Boston: Kluwer Law International).

<sup>13</sup> During the start of the new South-East suburb of the City of Amsterdam in the late 1960s a strong endeavour was made to transcend the existing fragmentation with support by the 'communication centre for urban development': (1) L.J.G. van der Maesen (1969) *Werkmodel SCAB in opbouw* (Den Haag: Staatsuitgeverij), (2) L.J.G. van der Maesen, H. Vogelesang (1983) *Naar het Jongste Verleden gekeken: over de opbouwfase of de Zuidoostlob van de agglomeratie Amsterdam* (Amsterdam: SISWO). It was an endeavour to address the specific characteristics of the urban design of Amsterdam South-East, which was

experience has been gained with processes – in terms of the social quality approach – leading to social cohesion, social inclusion and social empowerment, which had not been noticed for years in other cities and national political circles.<sup>14</sup>

The dominant economic focus especially on the physical expressions of urban development (planning) is strengthened by urban functionalism and underpins both first characteristics and their reciprocity. They are not typically for The Hague or other Dutch cities but common for the nature of urban development all over Europe. Supposed is that this will result into unsustainable circumstances. With this in mind the past upheavals in the suburban areas of Paris<sup>15</sup> and the recent one of Grenoble<sup>16</sup> should be explored as important examples of unsustainable urban conditions. As will be argued this focus will also prevent strategies to improve sustainability as such. To go beyond this state of affairs implies the start of a real sustainable urban development, which implies a strong understanding of what we mean with sustainability. Two years ago a search started by participants of the Hacu in The Hague (see above) to change both characteristics on behalf of the neighbourhood Laak (North). This takes place with the help of the new European and recently Asian endeavours to elaborate the social quality approach. The working-paper's thesis is that compared to other approaches - and see for example the quality of life, social capital, human development or the capabilities approaches - this approach disposes of a particular functionality to connect the themes as mentioned in the paper's title. In a technical sense this means that according to this thesis the social quality approach disposes of a heuristic meaning to address the 15<sup>th</sup> Metropolis Conference's main topic in the context of sustainable development, by delivering

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strongly stimulated by the French oriented vision of the city planners at that time (Le Corbusier cs.), connected with the Dutch New Style Movement (Van Doesburg cs) and the German Bauhaus (Gropius cs): see the international CIAM-conferences.

<sup>14</sup> G. van Tillo (1998), *Levenskunst in de Bijlmer: Mozaïek van een multiculturele samenleving [Art of Living in the Bijlmer (South-East Amsterdam): Mosaic of a multicultural society]* (Amsterdam: Edmund Husserl-Stichting).

<sup>15</sup> (1) D. Bouget, F. Salladarré (2005) Social Quality: The French Case, *The European Journal of Social Quality*, 5 (1&2), 86-103, (2) J. Berting, C. Villain-Gandossi (2001) Urban Transformations, *The French Debate and Social Quality*, in W.A. Beck, F. Thomése, L.J.G. van der Maesen, A.C. Walker (eds) *Social Quality: A Vision for Europe* (The Hague, London, Boston: Kluwer Law International), 173-94.

<sup>16</sup> News Report (2010), Riots erupt in Southeast France: A violent weekend in a Grenoble suburb after deadly shootout, *International Herald Tribune*, July 19, 3.

instruments to understand the threefold interaction as illustrated in figure-1. It will be a condition for urban development which will address their main ethical standards.

### **3. Discourses on sustainable urban development**

#### **3.1 European initiatives and a recent UN's initiative**

Ten years ago, the European Commission 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'.<sup>17</sup>*

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 to understand what we mean with sustainable societies and their cities. These topics have also been 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 to stimulate the development of sustainable cities was the 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.<sup>18</sup> In line with this important work, the outcomes of the second UN's Steering Committee meeting of the 'world urban campaign on goals, strategy and principles'

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<sup>17</sup> Expert Group on Urban Environment (1996), *European Sustainable Cities: Report* (Brussels: EC).

seems to be important for our exploration.<sup>19</sup> We will mention three issues which should be taken on board in this working-paper. The first refers to the Committee's problem statement, namely that the first decades of this century has been marked by overwhelming challenges including food crises, an energy crisis, a financial crisis and a growing number of consequences of climate change. Failure to accommodate this megatrend has resulted in unsustainable forms of production and consumption, poverty and social exclusion and pollution. The Committee supposes, that while cities are part of the problem, they are also primary victims and they must be part of any solutions. This conclusion is the issue here. Metropolises deliver the daily praxis of production, distribution and consumption. They are 'realised' in mostly the urban space. To suppose cities are also the victims seems to be confusing. This is relevant because it immediately concerns the policies to cope with the different crises. Second, the Committee supposes, we should create tools to achieve creative, resilient and sustainable cities and communities and to establish benchmarks to monitor progress and share knowledge worldwide.

In our opinion, in order to develop these tools it matters if the cities are victims themselves or the real context for the realisation of the way we produce, distribute and consume and why. Finally the Committee claims that sustainable urbanization (or urban development) is understood by all partners as a process which promotes an integrated gender-sensitive and pro-poor approach to the social, economic and environmental pillars of sustainability. This tripartite approach has been accepted widely, including the OECD<sup>20</sup> and the European Commission<sup>21</sup>. In practice however, it is the ecological and economic that dominate and the trade-offs between them. Lehtonen concludes, that as a result of its subordinate position the

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<sup>18</sup> Charter of Aalborg, Denmark, signed on 27th May 1994. This, and following European charters are discussed in L.J.G. van der Maesen et al, see note-11, **Working Paper Series nr.5**, [www.socialquality.org](http://www.socialquality.org).

<sup>19</sup> UN/Habitat (2009), *For a better Urban Future* (Paris: UN).

<sup>20</sup> OECD (2001), *Sustainable Development Critical Issues* (Paris:OECD).

<sup>21</sup> European Commission (2001), *The Social Situation in the European Union* (Luxembourg: Office for Official Publication of the European Communities).

social dimension remains undefined<sup>22</sup>. In the final section we will come back to what we mean exactly with the 'social dimension'.

### 3.2 *The problems of the state-of-the art (and state-of-affairs)*

In many metropolises actions have been taken for a more sustainable urban development without really articulating a theoretical urban methodology to analyse and to compare them. Many of these actions on behalf of the so-called sustainable urban development take place at small scale in urban regeneration projects, in particular neighbourhoods (eco-quartiers of 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. For logical reasons the different elements of 'sustainable development' have not been developed in a well balanced and integrated approach.

Again for logical reasons, for the local professionals of urban development often a trade-off is felt between sustainable infrastructures and achieving more sustainable societies. But it remains rather implicit.<sup>23</sup> Tension between the two may arise when infrastructural projects are designed to meet certain environmental protection or resource efficiency criteria without, however, sufficiently taking into account other 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.<sup>24</sup> A recent survey of the UK Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs indicated that a majority of respondents currently is not prepared to change their daily behaviour and routine in support of apparently more sustainable

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<sup>22</sup> M. Lehtonen (2004), The Environmental: Social Interface of Sustainable Development: Capabilities, Social Capital, Institutions, *Ecological Economics*, 49 (2), 199-214.

<sup>23</sup> See for example the series on publications of sustainable urban development of Routledge and the many case studies in the context of the European 'Framework 6 Programme Demonstration projects'.

environmental development.<sup>25</sup> As Van Dijken claims, eliciting public support and legitimacy for public policy poses a considerable challenge for an effective implementation of initiatives developed in the name of sustainability. It suggests the need for careful attention to the issue of user needs and behaviour in the design of sustainable projects, and a consideration of incentives and policies to elicit a positive public response and commitment to policy targets.<sup>26</sup>

Many countries use urban planning models, transition plans, urban development models, territorial planning, multi area agreements, sustainable urban management plans, et cetera. Sustainability is becoming the new norm for practitioners.<sup>27</sup> It is of interest to note, that according the European Commission, in spite of these tools, instruments and practices new methods are needed **to analyse afresh** the complex dynamics of social change within our societies in order to be able to judge the relevance and appropriateness of current policies and to develop a solid base for the future. It concludes, that we have been confronted with an unprecedented change in family patterns, new patterns of mobility and diversity and due to globalisation processes, technological progress and economic developments the way we live.

### 3.3. *Two studies which demonstrates the state of the art*

According to NICIS in The Hague, recently it became clear in international meetings with representatives of countries and with experts that more and new instruments are needed to

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<sup>24</sup> K. van Dijken, L.J.G. van der Maesen, H. Verkleij (2009), *A proposal for DG Research of the European Commission (FP7) about the Sustainable Development of fourteen Global Cities* (The Hague: NICIS/EFSQ/ISS).

<sup>25</sup> D. Adams (2007), Millions say it is too much effort to adapt greener lifestyle, *The Guardian*, Wednesday August 15<sup>th</sup>.

<sup>26</sup> K. van Dijken cs, see note-24.

<sup>27</sup> Ian Cooper and Martin Symes (eds.) (2008), *Sustainable Urban Development, vol. 4 Changing Professional Practice* (London: Routledge).

successfully implement and execute *integrated* sustainable urban development policies or *integrated* urban planning models. On request by the French Government this institute analysed the way how forty European cities try to pave the way for such sustainable development of their local level. It concluded that the main problems are the overall incapability to execute really integrated development policies, to diminish the influence of silo-thinking and sectoral interest groups, to enhance the capacity, skills and knowledge of professionals and to increase the participation of the poor and marginalized groups in decision-making and implementation. Furthermore, each city applies its own non-theoretically based interpretation of sustainability. The significance of this concept is quickly fading away. Consensus about a methodological framework is lacking everywhere in Europe. One of the problems is also that there are no adequate financial models for financing integrated urban policies. Financial flows and budget lines are often linked to sectoral policies (housing, transport, welfare, education etc.). These budget lines have their own criteria of selecting projects and their own obligations of accountability and in fact strengthen the existing fragmentation between municipality departments and societal organisations responsible for these different policies.<sup>28</sup>

Another example of the missing of more integrated approaches is the recent study about 'Liveable Cities and Towns', made on request by Eurocities. It concerns a comparison of nine cities in the European Union, in order to explore the policies for improving sustainability.<sup>29</sup> According to the authors, 'liveable cities' are characterised by a high standard of 'quality of life'. According to them, 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. In this study the concept of 'quality of life' is not conceptualised but taken for granted. For analysing the outcomes of their manifold of important suggestions for increasing the sustainability of cities,

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<sup>28</sup> K. van Dijken, M. Grisel, W. Hafkamp (2008), *Levers of public action for the development of sustainable cities: A European study on request by the French Government* (The Hague: NICIS).

<sup>29</sup> A. Creedy, C. Zuidema, G. Porter, and G. de Roo (2007), *Towards Liveable Cities and Towns: Guidance for Sustainable Urban Management* (Brussels: Eurocities). This study is co-funded by EC GD Environment and the Dutch Ministry of Housing.

we need indeed indicators. How to derive these indicators without a further elaboration of this concept and how to cope with its highly individualistic orientation? Finally, how to reflect upon the urban space as a comprehensive totality on the basis of this individualistic orientation?<sup>30</sup>

We miss a theoretically grounded explanation of the concept of sustainability and its meaning for policies to improve daily circumstances in cities. Therefore, it is difficult of impossible to understand their advises and suggestions for national and local governments. They also conceive the question of sustainability as exterior to health care systems, education, housing, cultural facilities, juridical structures and conventions. In logical sense, they therefore bloc ex ante the elaboration of the interrelatedness of the three forms of sustainability. Third, they do not reflect on the differences between the qualification of 'liveable cities' and, for example, 'sustainable cities'.<sup>31</sup>

### 3.4 *A final remark*

The economic drive behind most societal processes – economical based optimisation of the production and distribution of material and immaterial goods – influenced the modern urban space decisively. We may notice an impoverishment of the living conditions in modern neighbourhoods, due to the draining of a manifold of provisions (and urban functions) for education, sport, cultural activities, health care etc. More and more the accent is laid on housing 'an sich'. We recognise an institutionalised dullness as a consequence of a fundamental mono-functionalism which causes a lack of challenges and happenings. Especially from a socio-cultural perspective this paves the way for unsustainable relationships. For example in China this economic drive it is quite logical for addressing the enormous stream of migrants coming from rural areas. For Europe it is a consequence of

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<sup>30</sup> This theme is discussed in: (1) A.C. Walker, L.J.G. van der Maesen (2004), 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), pp. 13-31; (2) D. Phillips (2006) *Quality of Life: concept, Policy and Practice* (London: Routledge), (3) D. Phillips (2008) *A Comparative Study of Quality of Life and Development Approaches, Including Social Quality and Human Development* (Sheffield: University of Sheffield).



adjusting living conditions to the dominant Western economic approaches.<sup>32</sup> In the late sixties the idea that 'a town is not a tree' may be seen as a critical anticipation of modern urban planning strategies.<sup>33</sup> This mono-functionalism and big-scale approaches prevents community building as a context for social-empowerment and social cohesion, two important conditional factors of social quality. This stimulate forms of individual isolation especially for urban subcategories with specific needs. This will stimulate at the end loneliness and prevents processes leading into the minimal forms of integration as condition for the necessary extent of 'togetherness'.<sup>34</sup>

#### **4. Social quality approach.**

##### **4.1. A start with social quality thinking in the city of The Hague**

Since 2000, the European Foundation on Social Quality (EFSQ) is rather active with the exploration of urban development. The first outcomes are published in 2001.<sup>35</sup> This also stimulated the start of contributions to an alternative approach of urban development in the Dutch city of The Hague as explained in the Foundation's Working Paper Series nr.2.<sup>36</sup> On request by the Department of Urban Development of this municipality, the Foundation commented on its new vision paper called 'The Hague as a World City on the Sea', with which to contribute to the city's conference on this vision paper in September 2004.<sup>37</sup> One of the main comment was that the vision-paper is dominated by economic strategies for

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<sup>31</sup> The problematic of the 'quality of life approaches' is further discussed in the Foundation's **coming third study** by L.J.G. van der Maesen and A.C. Walker (eds), to be published by MacMillan in the UK (forthcoming).

<sup>32</sup> I. van Staveren (2004), Caring for Economics, in A. K. Giri (ed) *Creative Social Research: Rethinking Theories and Methods* (Lanham: Lexington Books).

<sup>33</sup> C. Alexander (1966), *A Town is not a Tree* (Berkeley: College of Environmental Design).

<sup>34</sup> A. K. Giri (2010), Rethinking the Human and the Social: Towards a Multiverse of Transformations, *The International Journal of Social Quality*, 1 (1), forthcoming.

<sup>35</sup> W. Beck (2001), *Towards European Cities of Social Quality* (Amsterdam: EFSQ).

<sup>36</sup> L.J.G. van der Maesen, see note-3, **Working Paper Series nr.2**, [www.socialquality.org](http://www.socialquality.org).

<sup>37</sup> Dienst Stedelijke Ontwikkeling (2003) *Wereldstad aan Zee: Ambitie en opgaven voor Den Haag (Structuurvisie Den Haag 2020)* (The Hague: municipality The Hague).

strengthening the economic position of The Hague in a European context, addressing the ideas of the Lisbon Strategy.<sup>38</sup> On the basis of this contribution the Foundation published in collaboration with the Department of Education, Culture and Well-being (Health) of The Hague a document on urban development of The Hague for going beyond this one-sided approach by connecting aspects of the 'vision paper' with some principles of the social quality approach and experiences with the development of the South-East suburban part of Amsterdam in the sixties and seventies of the past century.<sup>39</sup> Preparatory work was already done from the side of the Department of Education, Cultural and Well-being. It discussed the increase of different lifestyles in The Hague, the strengthening of the one-sided economic approach, the increase of bureaucratic and instrumental processes of policy-making and the strong accent on market instruments for steering processes in daily circumstances.<sup>40</sup>

These conclusions as inspiration for looking at a new perspective refer to the outcomes of interviews with key persons in the health and social care systems in The Hague in the early 2000s. This happened from the perspective of modern public health compared to the traditional and new modern public health approaches.<sup>41</sup> These interviews demonstrated a lack of a collective vision about how to steer and to develop health care systems, in relation to other societal systems and community groups, in such a way that the health conditions of people will be improved. Those interviewed explained at that time that no common ideas and practices exist in The Hague for creating coherent strategies, to contribute to the sustainable development of this city.<sup>42</sup> Thanks to the document on the urban development of The Hague (see above) the Foundation was invited by the municipality to interview the main players in

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<sup>38</sup> European Council (2000), *Presidency conclusions* (Lisbon: Press Release SN 100/100 EN).

<sup>39</sup> L.J.G. van der Maesen, H.G.J. Nijhuis (2004), *Stedelijke Ontwikkeling in Den Haag en de Operatie Sociale Kwaliteit [Urban Development of The Hague and the Social Quality Approach]* (Amsterdam: EFSQ).

<sup>40</sup> H.G.J. Nijhuis (2004), *Operatie Sociale Kwaliteit Den Haag: Kompas voor de ontwikkeling van de (sociale) kwaliteit van de stad Den Haag* (Den Haag: Office of Public Health).

<sup>41</sup> L.J.G. van der Maesen, H.G.J. Nijhuis (2000), Continuing the debate on the philosophy of modern public health: social quality as a point of reference, *International Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health*, 54 (2), pp. 134-42. This article may be seen as an elaboration of the following study: D. Kaasjager, H.G.J. Nijhuis, L.J.G. van der Maesen (1989) *The New Public Health in an Urban Context: Paradoxes and Solutions* (Copenhagen: WHO Healthy Cities Papers No. 4).

<sup>42</sup> L.J.G. van der Maesen, H.G.J. Nijhuis (2000/2001) Actuele knelpunten in de Haagse gezondheidszorg in het licht van moderne maatschappelijke tendensen: dertien gehouden en geïnterpreteerde interviews [Actual problems in the societal health and social care of the city of The Hague approached from the perspective of modern societal tendencies: thirteen interviews and their interpretations], *Epidemiologisch Bulletin*, 3 (4) and 1 (2), pp. 1-64.

the city for education, health and social care, housing, well-being and sport about the vision paper and the role of their organisations in a orchestrated development of the city. It was found that these main players do not have forms of communication to develop a comprehensive vision about the future of the city. They operate in a completely separate way. Ideas about the outcomes of their policies for socio-economic security, social cohesion, social inclusion and social empowerment (see the four conditional factors of social quality) for communities and citizens in The Hague are not existent.<sup>43</sup> In fact these outcomes underpinned ex ante the conclusions by NICIS in its study about the ideas and practices of sustainable urban development of forty cities in Europe.<sup>44</sup> With this in mind it is of interest to refer to Castells' conclusions on the consequences of the one-sided accent in also urban strategies and the lack of comprehensive strategies:

*'the informational [economic oriented] revolution causes a growing schizophrenia: global networks of instrumental exchanges selectively switch on and of individuals, groups, regions and even countries, according to their relevance in fulfilling the goals processed in the network, in a relentless flow of strategic decisions. It follows a fundamental split between abstract instrumentalism, and historically rooted particularistic identities'*<sup>45</sup>

In the 1960s the famous urban researcher, Louis Wirth, concluded already that:

*'Planning in a democracy, therefore, cannot be regarded as the mere sum of physical planning, economic planning, and social planning. If, in view of the possible reluctance on the part of some, instead of using the term 'planning', we may speak of intelligent foresight and rational ordering and direction of appropriate means to given social ends'*.<sup>46</sup>

In line with his contemporaries he used a 'small and also undefined' concept of the social. It remains a residual concept next to the economic, juridical, cultural, political or environmental aspects of daily circumstances. By going beyond the 'small' interpretation of 'the social' the social quality will be enabled to overcome the one-sided economic accent of traditional urban development. Thanks to the increase of collaboration with Asian and Australian scientists,

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<sup>43</sup> L.J.G. van der Maesen (2006), *Rapport van interviews met vertegenwoordigers van vijftien niet op winst gericht organisaties over de aard van de recente stedelijke ontwikkeling, de aard en consequenties van actuele vormen van lokaal bestuur en het vraagstuk van een visie voor de ontwikkeling van stedelijke leefomstandigheden in de stad Den Haag* [Report of interviews of main representatives of fifteen non-for-profit organisations about the nature of the recent urban development, the nature and consequences of actual forms of local governance and the question of a vision for renewing the urban circumstances of the City of The Hague (Amsterdam; EFSQ).

<sup>44</sup> K. van Dijken et al, see note-29.

<sup>45</sup> M. Castells (1996), *The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture, Volume 1: The Rise of the Network Society* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers), p-3

the attention is enriched to 'sustainability' of urban development.<sup>47</sup> To approach the neighbourhood of Laak (North) 'as a case' for sustainable urban development – strengthening social justice and addressing outcomes of migration 'productively' as well – implies acceptable contours for comparative research. In other words the nature of this approach and the outcomes of its hereupon based explorations should be understandable for other places in the world.<sup>48</sup> This will demand the application of a conceptual and related methodological framework which paves the way for a well-founded comparison.<sup>49</sup> In this section we will introduce some elements of the **social quality approach** with which to realise such a conceptual and methodological framework.<sup>50</sup>

#### 4.2 Some characteristics of the theory of social quality

The essence of the idea of social quality is the 'social nature' of human beings. This is reflected in its definition, presented in section-1.1. Although the definition emphasises individual well-being and potential, it means that these are derived from interrelationships. Thus the focus is on the extent to which the quality of interrelationships promotes both participation in societal development and individual human growth and development. Starting from the assumption that people are essentially 'social beings', rather than atomised economic agents, it is argued that self-realisation depends on social recognition. It is obvious, that a person's self-realisation is derived from their interaction with others in a world of collective identities (families, communities, companies, institutions), see figure-2.

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<sup>46</sup> L. Wirth (1964) *On Cities and Social life* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press), p. 206.

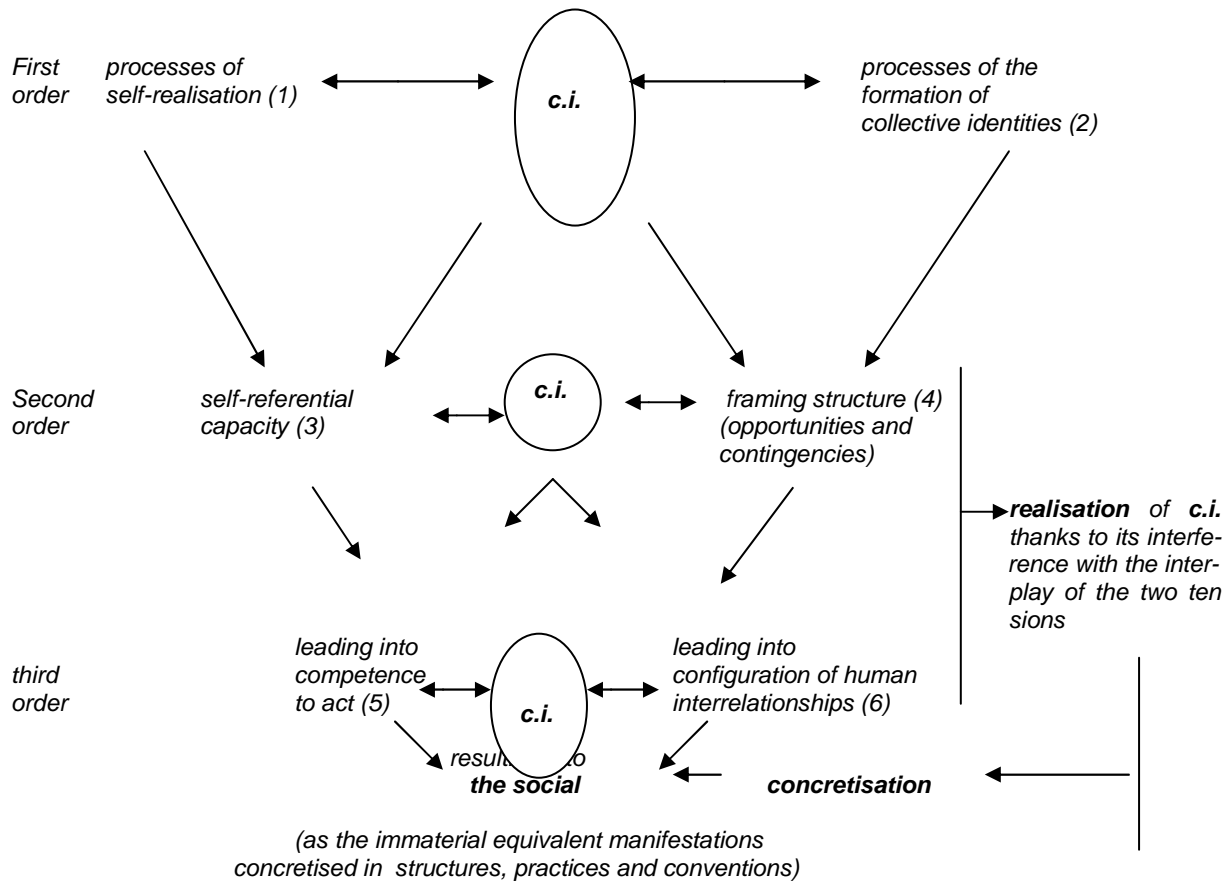
<sup>47</sup> (1) L.J.G. van der Maesen, H. Verkleij (2009), *An Overview of strategies to development social quality approach in Europe and Asia during 2007 and 2008* (The Hague: EFSQ, **Working Paper Series nr.4**, [www.socialquality.org](http://www.socialquality.org)), and (2) L.J.G. van der Maesen, see note-3, **Working Paper Series nr. 2**, [www.socialquality.org](http://www.socialquality.org).

<sup>48</sup> Ka Lin (2008), The prototype of the Social Quality Theory and its Applicability to Asian Societies, in Ka Lin (ed) *International Nanjing conference of social quality and social welfare* (Nanjing: Nanjing University), 525-46.

<sup>49</sup> A start of its development is made in the Foundation's second main study (see note-12) and elaborated extensively in its third study (note-32).

<sup>50</sup> For getting a first overview of the similarities and differences with the human security discourses see: D. Gasper, L.J.G. van der Maesen, Th-D Truong, A.C. Walker (2008) *Human Security and Social Quality: Contrasts and Complementarity* (The Hague: ISS/EFSSQ, **Working Paper Series no. 462**, [www.iss.nl](http://www.iss.nl))

**Figure-2: The constitution of the Social based on the constitutive interdependency (c.i.)**



In other words, figure-2 illustrates firstly, that individuals may develop their self-referential capacities to participate in the praxis of collective identities. These capacities and openness for collective identities (families, communities, movements etc) are conditions for playing different roles. This will change the nature and diversity of collective identities in the long run and, therefore, the nature of conditions for processes of self-realisation. In other words, this part concerns the first order constitutive interdependency between processes of self-realisation (1) and processes concerning the formation of collective identities (2). This will contribute to the self-referential capacities of human beings (3) and the framework of potentials and contingencies, here labelled the 'framing structure' (4). This paves the way for the second order constitutive interdependency between self-referential capacities and the framing structure, contributing to the competence to act (5) and the configuration of human

interrelationships, as organisations, and institutions, companies (6). The third order constitutive interdependency will contribute to **the social** as people's productive and reproductive relationships. We tentatively accentuate the interdependency instead of dependency, because it concerns the totality of constitutive relationships.<sup>51</sup> This presentation may be appreciated as an endeavour to incorporate Bhaskar's supposition of 'critical realism', arguing that a societal totality must be regarded as:

*an ensemble of structures, practices and conventions which individuals reproduce or transform, but which would not exist unless they did so. Society does not exist independently of human activity (the error of reification). But it is not the product of it (the error of voluntarism) (...) It is important to stress that the reproduction and/or transformation of society, though for the most part unconsciously achieved, is nevertheless still an achievement, a skilled accomplishment of active subjects, not a mechanical consequence of antecedent conditions.*<sup>52</sup>

In figure-2 not the concept of societal totality but the concept of 'the social' is used as an expression of the always changing totality as a open process. In this figure we make a distinction between the working of the conditions – processes of self-realisation as condition for the self-referential capacity etc – and the threefold constitutive interdependency. The circles symbolize the first, the second and the third order constitutive interdependency. As we will argue later, this goes beyond the dominance of human actions as outcomes of individual motives, drives or instincts (utilitarianism), the duality between agency and structure (voluntarism), or the dominance of collectivities (structuralism).

Thus there is **interdependency (=  $\alpha$ )** between processes of self-realisation and those of collective identity formation. Of course, in order to participate in these processes people must have the capacity for self-reflection and the collective identities they interact with must be open. It is here, in these interdependent processes, that '**the social**' is emerging and permanently changed. The field in which these interdependent processes take place is that represented by the **interplay (=  $\beta$ )** of two critical tensions: the horizontal tension between the formal world of systems and the informal life-worlds of families, groups and communities; and

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<sup>51</sup> This complex theme will be elaborated in the Foundation's third study, see note-32.

the vertical tension between societal development and biographical development. It results into the *interaction of  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$* .<sup>53</sup>

### 3.3 *Three set of social quality factors*

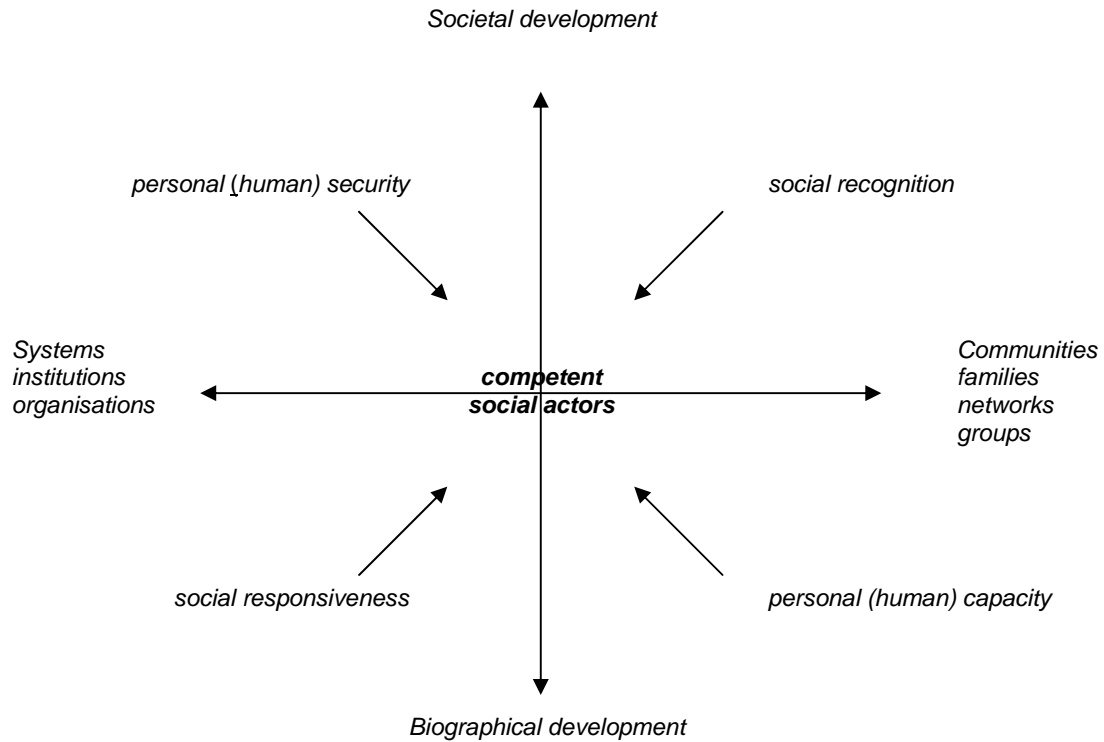
According the social quality theory the nature and outcomes of this integration may be analysed by determining the nature and changes of three sets of factors, namely the constitutional, the conditional and the normative factors. The ***constitutional factors*** are, first, personal (human) security, concerning the institutionalisation of the rule of law. Second, social recognition concerning interpersonal respect between members of the community. Third, social responsiveness concerning the openness of groups, communities and systems. Fourth, personal (human) capacity, concerning the individual's physical and/or mental ability. Each factor is also mainly influenced by two aspects of the interplay between the two main tensions and is, therefore, especially situated in one part of the quadrangle of the constitutional.

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<sup>52</sup> R. Bhaskar (1978), *A Realist Theory of Science* (Sussex: The Harvester Press), p. 45.

<sup>53</sup> (1) W.A. Beck et al, see note-12, Chapter-XV11 and XV111, and (2) this point is elaborated further in the Foundation's third book, see note-32.

**Figure-3: The Quadrangle of the Constitutional Factors based on the two main tensions<sup>54</sup>**

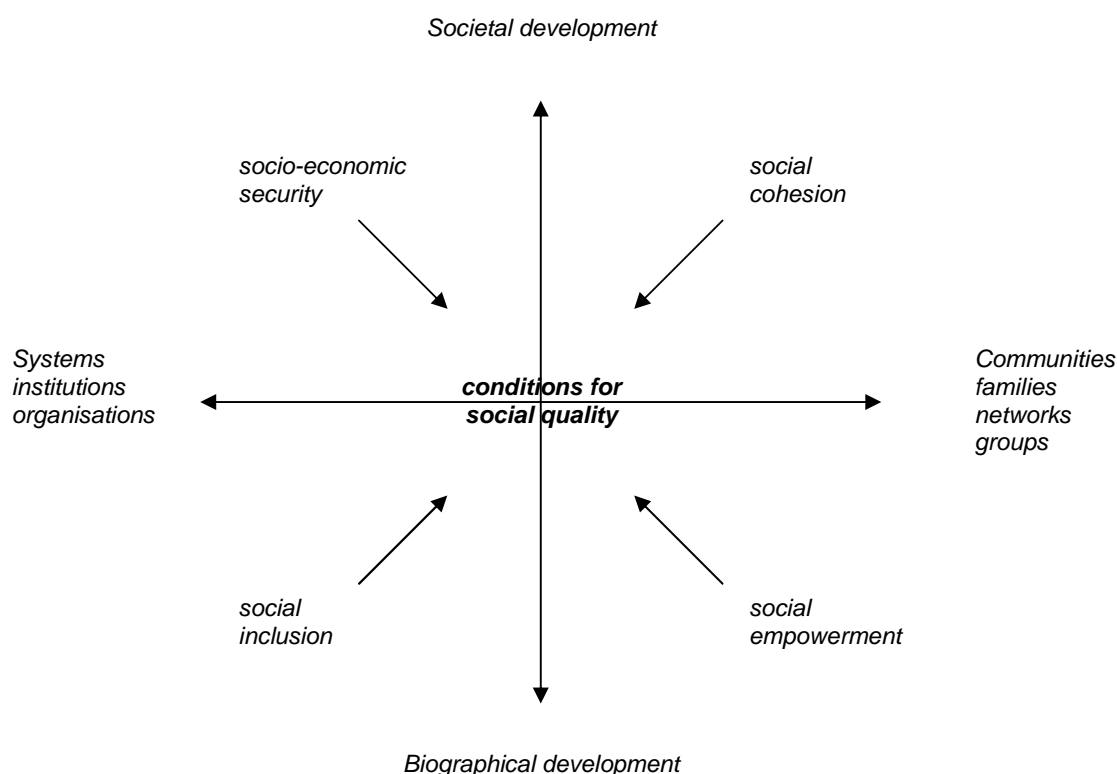


Once competent actors are constituted , the opportunities for and outcomes of social quality are determined by four **conditional factors**. The first says, that people have to have access to socio-economic security in order to protect them from poverty and other forms of material deprivation. The second says, people have to experience social inclusion in, or minimum levels of social exclusion from, key social and economic institutions such as the labour market. The third says, people should be able to live in communities and societies characterised by social cohesion. And the fourth says, that people must be to some extent autonomous and socially empowered in order to be able to fully participate in the face of rapid socio-economic change. Each factor is an outcome of processes concerning the formation of a diversity of collective identities, strongly influenced by the interplay of



processes of self-realisation across two main tensions and is, therefore also situated in one part of the quadrangle of the conditional factors, see figure-4.

**Figure-4: The Quadrangle of the Conditional Factors**<sup>55</sup>



These conditional factors have been operationalised via a series of domains and sub-domains into 95 indicators which have been trialled in fourteen EU countries.<sup>56</sup> Full national reports are available as well.<sup>57</sup> At present the indicator set is being reviewed for an East Asian context and the revised set is being piloted during 2009 in Taiwan, Hong Kong, Thailand, Japan, mainland China, South Korea, and Australia.<sup>58</sup> Phillips says that in comparison to this multidisciplinary theoretical construct on the quality of societies, many

<sup>54</sup> (1) W.A. Beck et al, see note-12, Chapter-XV11 and (2) the Foundation's third book, see note-32.

<sup>55</sup> (1) W.A. Beck et al, see note-10, Chapter-XV11 and (2) the Foundation's third book, see note-29.

<sup>56</sup> D. Gordon, L.J.G. van der Maesen (eds) (2005), Indicators of Social Quality: Applications in Fourteen European countries, *The European Journal of Social Quality*, 5 (1 & 2), 290 pages.

<sup>57</sup> See fourteen National Reports on Indicators of Social Quality, published in 2005: [www.socialquality.org](http://www.socialquality.org).

<sup>58</sup> D. Phillips, *Social Quality: indicators from Europe and their implications for Asia*. Paper presented at National Taiwan University Workshop on Social Quality (Sheffield: University of Sheffield).

welfare and 'quality of life' measures in present use are ad hoc lists of disparate unconnected elements.<sup>59</sup> Or they are rather narrowly based on needs without taking account of other elements of the 'good life'.<sup>60</sup> Furthermore, others are more conceptually robes based on, for example, capabilities or prudential values.<sup>61</sup> Notwithstanding this they do not have definitive measures, relying instead on a process of deliberation to arrive at consensual measures in specific settings.<sup>62</sup>

Thirdly, a set of **normative factors** are used to make judgements about the appropriate or necessary degree of social quality, based on linking the constitutional and conditional factors at a specific place and a specific time. The normative factors are: social justice, in relation to socio-economic security; solidarity, connected to social cohesion; equal value, as a criterion in relation to social inclusion; and human dignity, in relation to social empowerment.

The theory says, that these three sets of factors do not determine or influence trends in societies, but that with help of analysing the change of the nature of these factors we are enabled to explore the working and effects of these trends and to judge the outcomes for people. In other words the effective use of social quality analysis began as a first decisive step with the development of indicators of social quality that measure or recognises the change of the conditional factors. In other words, priority was given to the 'hardware' of social quality, the conditional factors which express the primary dimensions of the social. However, while measuring the outcomes of complex societal processes is a critical step, it is also necessary to analyse and understand how, in different countries, regions, cities and

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<sup>59</sup> (1) M. Hagerty, R. Cummins, A. Ferriss, K. Land, A. Michalos, M. Peterson, A. Sharpe, J. Sirgy and J. Vogel (2001), Quality of Life Indexes for National Policy: Review and Agenda for Research, *Social Indicators Research*, 55, 1-96. and (2) T. Fahey, B. Nolan and C. Whelan (2002), *Monitoring Living Conditions and Quality of Life in Europe: Developing the Conceptual Framework: Final Report* (Dublin: European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working conditions).

<sup>60</sup> F. Stewart (1996), Basic needs, capabilities and human development, in A. Offer (ed), *In Pursuit of the Quality of Life* (Oxford:OUP).

<sup>61</sup> A. Sen (1993), Capability and well-being, in M. Nussbaum and A. Sen (eds) *The Quality of Life* (Oxford: Clarendon).

<sup>62</sup> D. Phillips (2008), *A comparative study of quality of life and development approaches, including social quality and human development. A paper presented at the conference of the Human Development and Capability Association* (Sheffield: University of Sheffield).

communities these processes lead to social quality. In other words the ways in which the constitutional and the conditional factors are connected (referring more or less to respectively the left and right side of figure-2). For example, the meaning of family differs enormously across Europe. This is also the case with interpretations of national regional or local governmental bodies and their political representatives. This has consequences for the way people operate as social actors in the context of the conditional factors. The linking of both sets of factors, together with the application of the normative actors, is required in order to understand the production of social quality. Figure-5 gives an overview of the three sets of factors: the 'social quality architecture'.

**Figure-5: The social quality architecture<sup>63</sup>**

<b>Constitutional factors</b> (processes)	<b>conditional factors</b> (opportunities + contingencies)	<b>normative factors</b> (orientation)
<i>personal (human) security</i> <i>social recognition</i> <i>social responsiveness</i> <i>personal (human) capacity</i>	<i>socio-economic security</i> <i>social cohesion</i> <i>social inclusion</i> <i>social empowerment</i>	<i>social justice (equity)</i> <i>solidarity</i> <i>equal valuation</i> <i>human dignity</i>
<i>[outcomes will be qualified by profiles]</i>	<i>[outcomes will be measured by social quality indicators]</i>	<i>[outcomes will be judged by the application of criteria]</i>

In comparison to most 'quality of life' and 'social capital' approaches, the social quality theory distinguishes the three dimensions, as well as their respective methodological instruments.<sup>64</sup> The adjective 'social' is derived from the meaning of the substantive 'the social' as the concretisation of the stable structures, practices and conventions, which is strongly influenced by the linking of the constitutional and conditional factors in the context created by the interaction of the constitutive interdependency and the interplay between two main

<sup>63</sup> This figure is published for the first time in: D. Gasper et al, see note-51.

tensions. Therefore the adjective 'social' in, for example, social empowerment should be conceived of as a result of these processes and not as individually based. This is also the case with social inclusion and social cohesion. That is the reason why the elaboration of these concepts in the social quality theory differs from the mainstream interpretations of empowerment, cohesion, inclusion and social security.

#### **4. Sustainable urban development**

##### **4.1 An actual trend**

A main conclusion of section-2 is that we lack an acceptable conceptual and methodological framework for understanding sustainable urban development. According to Bhaskar this has to do with recent philosophy as well. He says, that

*Today, philosophy, for the most part, only reflects the superficial sheen of reality (there is no depth), normalizes the status quo ante (there was history, but, like ideology, it is no more), sequesters existential questions and legitimates the spread of more of the shallow same, treats relations as external and contingent (disconnecting, as it screens, contradictions and conflicts), and perpetuates the combination of a physicalistic reductionism and dualistic disembodiment (reification and voluntarism).<sup>65</sup>*

According to Giri this state-of-the-art results into the disconnection between the ontological characteristics (conceptual framework) and the epistemological characteristics. The necessity of this interrelatedness is serious but neglected in mainstream social research.<sup>66</sup> By referring to Connolly<sup>67</sup>, Giri criticises one of the assumptions of modernity reflected by social research, namely the primacy of epistemology. This results in a neglect of ontology which

*in the modernist mode, social research was considered only an epistemic engagement, a project of knowing about the world with proper procedure and scientific method. But this only embodies a questionable 'social ontology' which in its 'empiricist' version treats human beings as independent objects susceptible to representation, or at least, a medium in which the designative*

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<sup>64</sup> (1) A.C. Walker et al, see note-31, and (2) D. Phillips, see note-31.

<sup>65</sup> R. Bhaskar (1994), *Plato etc. The Problem of Philosophy and their Resolution* (London, New York: Verso), p.x.

<sup>66</sup> This topic is extensively discussed in the Foundation's third book, Chapter-4, see note-32.

<sup>67</sup> W. Connolly (2001), *The Ethos of Pluralisation* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press).

*dimensions of concepts can be disconnected rigorously from the contexts of rhetoric, action, evaluation in which they originate.*<sup>68</sup>

This introductory remarks are of interest because NICIS's conclusion about the lack of a European consensus with regard to an adequate 'urban methodological framework' may be connected with both considerations and the attention of the social quality theory for going beyond this state-of-the-art.<sup>69</sup> In this section we will dedicate our attention to the question of urban development. In the final section we will connect this with the question of sustainability. Of interest is to conclude, that NICIS – with support by the municipality of The Hague and the European Commission – will launch formally the start of the European Metropolitan Institute (EMI) in Brussels in October 2010. It aims to be the most important 'knowledge institute for European metropolitan areas' by distributing knowledge and stimulating knowledge development. The questions how to address the lack of consensus or 'knowledge based' support for an urban methodological framework for addressing also global trends and how to develop a heuristic conceptual framework as a condition for this methodology is not a topic at all of the formal EMI's announcement.<sup>70</sup>

#### *4.2 The four worlds of the urban space*

In the previous section we referred to some essential elements of the social quality's conceptual framework. This can be used for the elaboration of the urban methodological framework. In other words, is the social quality approach a heuristic instrument for this elaboration? It concerns one of the most essential questions of this working paper. Urban development regards the development of the urban space. The triangle of the urban space, see figure-1, can be connected with both social quality quadrangles as presented in figure-3 and figure-4. This connection results into the four worlds of the urban space as designed by

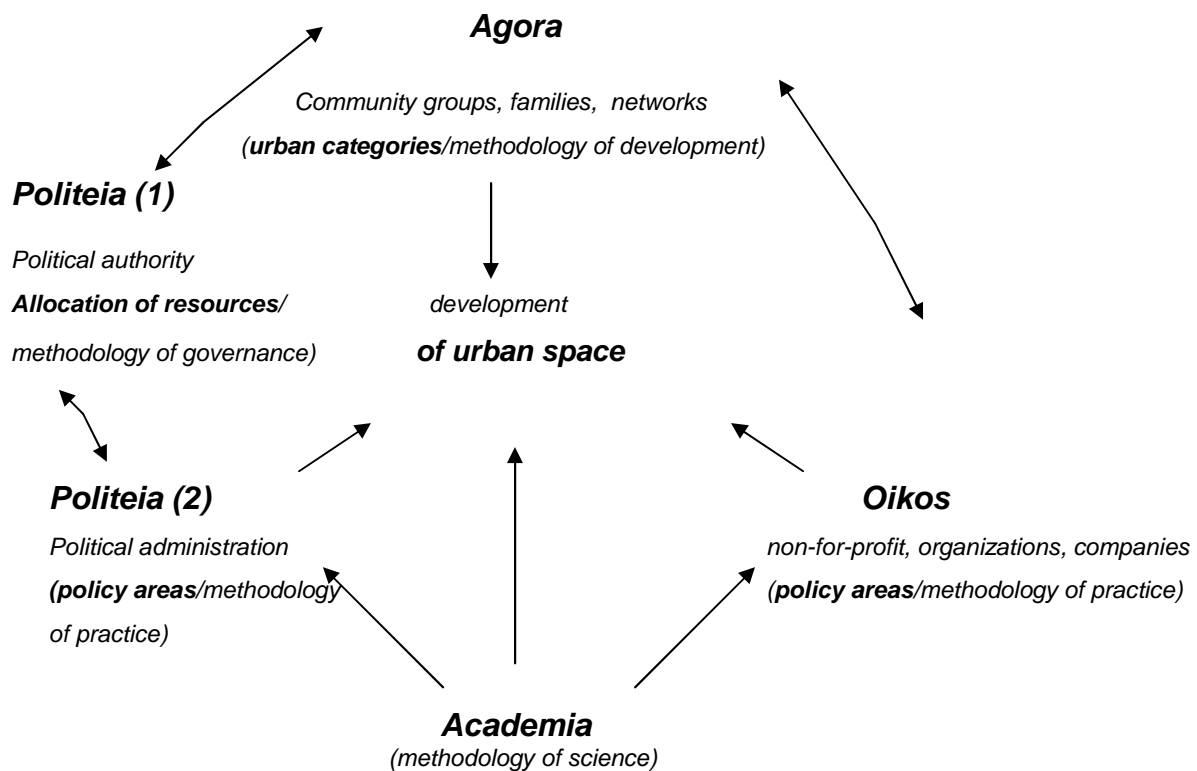
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<sup>68</sup> A. Giri (2007), *Creative Social Research: Rethinking Theories and Methods and the Calling of an Ontological Epistemology of Participation* (Madras: Madras Institute of Development Studies), p.2.

<sup>69</sup> (1) K. van Dijken et al, note-29, and (2) L.J.G. van der Maesen et al, see note-11, **Working Paper Series nr.5**, [www.socialquality.org](http://www.socialquality.org).

Nijhuis, Van der Maesen and Westbroek and based on their analyses of processes in Laak North in comparison to their urban studies elsewhere, see figure-6.<sup>71</sup>

**Figure-6 : The four worlds of the urban space<sup>72</sup>**



- the **Agora** is the world of communities, families, networks of citizens, expressing urban subcategories (life world)<sup>73</sup>,
- the **Politeia (1)** is the world of local politicians,
- the **Politeia (2)** and the **Oikos** are the world of public, semi-public and private organisations as well as companies oriented on policy areas (world of systems),
- The **Academia** is the world of scientists, analysing and contributing to public policies.

This figure is an elaboration of the assumptions, implicitly used in the previous section.<sup>74</sup> It concerns the four worlds of the urban space which aims to be rather universal. As already said, the Agora may be situated on the right side and the Oikos as well as the Politeia on the

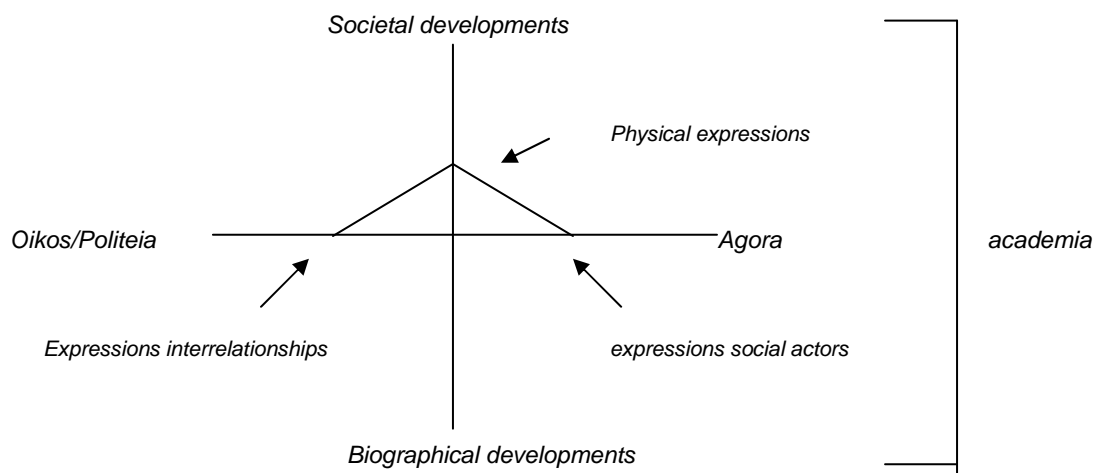
<sup>70</sup> M. Berkers (2010) Europese steden hebben baat bij EMI [European cities may profit from EMI] , *NICIS's City Journal Nieuwsbrief*, 3 (September) 10-1.

<sup>71</sup> This refers to the previous studies by the author in South-East Amsterdam, North of Rotterdam, Almere in The Netherlands, South-East Toronto and South-East Montreal in Canada and Lambeth in London and Liverpool in the United Kingdom.

<sup>72</sup> This figure may be seen as an elaboration of the same type of figure in the first study on Laak North, see note-3, **Working Paper Series nr. 2**, [www.socialquality-org](http://www.socialquality-org).

left side of the horizontal axe (the first tension) as illustrated in figure-3 and figure-4. They will be influenced by the vertical axe (the second tension) between societal and biographical developments. The academia has to analyse herewith related processes. We can make a new figure in order to express the interrelatedness of figure-1, 3, 4 and 6.

**Figure-7: The ontological based interrelatedness**



With help of the interpretation of figure-7 we will be enable to recognise the well-know fallacy of the duality between the physical and the social aspects of urban development. In for example the context of the local political system (Politeia 1 and 2) a distinction is made between the Department responsible for physical development (planning and construction) and the social development (planning and realisation). But according the new definition of 'the social' – see figure-2 – physical expressions are intrinsically related with expressions of interrelationships concerning the policy areas of education or health care and expressions of social actors. A building of a school expresses as well the physical, the interrelationships and the position (or non-position) of social actors. The artificial distinction in practices of urban

<sup>73</sup> The concept of 'life world' and 'world of systems' (see Politeia) refers to the theory of Habermas. The social quality theory goes beyond this theory thanks to its attention for the interplay of two tensions, see Foundation's third book, note-32.

<sup>74</sup> These assumptions are discussed in the Foundation's second book, see note-12 and in a more extensive way in the third book, Chapter-3, see note-32.

planning causes the inhuman aspect of the urban space is demonstrated in for example modern business oriented centres of cities.

#### 4.3 *Four related urban sub-methodologies*

For the development of the urban space – and see figure-1 – we need interventions and processes in its four worlds. They demand for a specific urban methodology, logical related with a consistent conceptual framework. For underpinning processes in the Agora we need the construction of a **methodology of (community) development** for strengthening the role of ‘responsible citizens’, thus implying a renewal of the position of urban subcategories. This should be related with ontological notions on the concept of ‘the social’, which will be realised in the interplay of both main tensions (the horizontal and the vertical one). Especially this methodology should be connected with the ontological questions of self-realisation, development of self-referential capacities and the increase of the competence to act (see figure-2).

To orchestrate the actions (investments) regarding facets of all local policy areas by the partners of the Oikos and Politeia (2) we need a **methodology of practice**, ‘how to score in a given game with given rules’.<sup>75</sup> The methodology of practice refers to the connection of the authentic function of aspects of policy areas and the effects as recognised and explored by the sq-architecture. As we will argue later, this will pave the way for understanding expressions of the comprehensive condensation and especially the nature of the position of urban subcategories. This methodology concerns processes of the formation of collective identities as point of departure for the construction of the framing structure leading into the configuration of human interrelationships (see figure-2).

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<sup>75</sup> G. Therborn (2001), On Politics and Policy of Social Quality, in W.A. Beck, F. Thomése, L.J.G. van der Maesen, A.C. Walker (eds) *Social Quality: A Vision for Europe* (The Hague, London, Boston: Kluwer Law International), 19-29.



Politeia (1) is responsible for politics, namely about 'the game to be played and about settling the goals and the rules of it'.<sup>76</sup> It is responsible for the allocation of resources concerning the conditional factors by the urban subcategories of the Agora, the systems of the Oikos and Politeia (2) according to acceptable ethical standards. Furthermore, the Politeia (1) is responsible for enhancing also the constitutional factors in order to support the capabilities of social actors in the Agora. In order to make a sharp distinction between politics and policies and to elaborate the politics under new circumstances we need new forms of governance, which implies a new **methodology of governance**. Both aspects of Politeia are not identical and imply new rules, since in the last decades the position of partners in the Oikos and Agora in European countries has seriously changed. This methodology should especially be focussed on the realisation of the normative factors for getting points of orientation.<sup>77</sup>

The change of the rules and the game implies a new role for scientific institutes as well. Actually we already see this in many cases: think tanks, expert committees, hearings etc. They have to be functional for the Politeia, Agora and Oikos in order to contribute to a 'comprehensive condensation' which guarantees the normative factors as social justice, solidarity, equal value and human dignity. This implies an adequate or encompassing **methodology of science** for designing effective interdisciplinary research with which to go beyond the traditional support of scientific institutes to isolated fragments of the urban space. The restriction to isolated fragments will prevent an understanding of the 'condensed comprehensiveness' of daily circumstances in the urban space. In other words for underpinning the elaboration of the condensed comprehensiveness of the urban space of, for example, metropolitan areas – we need next to specific and restricted methodologies oriented on separate aspects of the urban space an all encompassing methodology for

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<sup>76</sup> G. Therborn, see note-76.

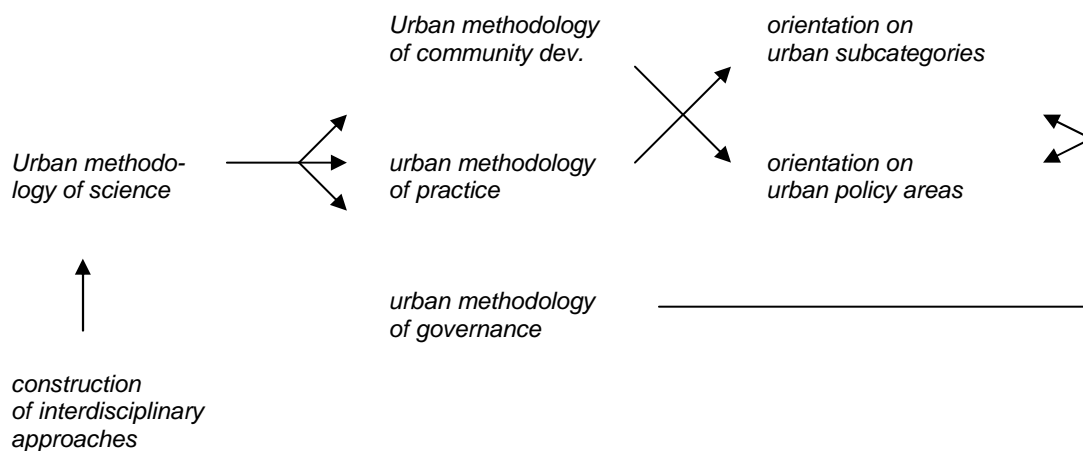
<sup>77</sup> At present this is highly underestimated as crucial; ideological based orientations are dismissed, See: Z. Bauman (1999), *In Search of Politics* (Cambridge: Polity Press).

understanding the nature and changes of the three sets of factors (figure-5). They will be functional for exploring and steering societal and biographical developments in a more coherent way.<sup>78</sup>

#### 4.4 A conceptual framework as point of departure

In fact the thesis is, that we may distinguish four related layers of the 'urban methodology framework': of (community) development, practice, governance and of science. Their interrelations - constituting the whole of the urban methodological framework - may be illustrated in the following way:

**Figure-8: The four layers of the urban methodological framework<sup>79</sup>**



This is the argument in The Hague to start with a coalition of academic institutes (the Hacu) for orchestrating research to contribute to the development of aspects of all policy areas and the exploration of the position of urban subcategories, as well as to deepen our understanding of the difference and consequences of the role of politics (Politeia 1) and policies (Politeia 2) in collaboration with elements of the Oikos and Agora. This implies the

<sup>78</sup> H.G.J. Nijhuis (2009) Een methodologisch kader voor duurzame stedelijke ontwikkeling [a methodological framework for sustainable urban development] (The Hague: Municipality).

<sup>79</sup> This figure is an elaboration of the comparable figure in **Working Paper Series nr.2**, L.J.G. van der Maesen, see note-3.

necessity of an addition of new forms of scientific research based on a strong connection of ontological and epistemological orientations and the reciprocity between deductive and inductive forms of analyses.<sup>80</sup> This again implies a coherent conceptual framework as a condition for also the 'urban methodological framework' and its different layers. We do not only miss in Europe a consensus about a coherent urban methodological framework (see NICIS), we also miss a consensus about a coherent and heuristic conceptual framework as a condition for a coherent methodological framework.<sup>81</sup> Therefore the Hacu also aims to stimulate the search for a conceptual framework to cope with the new challenges. The conceptual framework of the social quality approach seems to be an attractive candidate. Especially its sq-architecture as discussed in previous sections may deliver an effective heuristic instrument for these aspects of the urban methodological framework. These principles may be appreciated as challenges for developing the sq-approach for dealing adequately with the recent changes on regional, national and international (global) level.

During the past high level EC's conference on sustainability in May 2009 the question is raised how to come to a concept of 'sustainable development' as also a condition for supporting 'sustainable urban development'? The conclusion is that 'to create sustainable development will require an unprecedented integration of research and practice across disciplines and new modes of scientific and political discourses including socio-economic sciences and humanities'<sup>82</sup> New thinking and policy-making is urgent because *'probably around 70% of Europeans now live in cities and in urban agglomerations. But population and urbanisation are growing fast throughout the world and by 2030, 90% of the urban population will be in developing countries'*.<sup>83</sup> The nature of urban spaces are changing drastically and

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<sup>80</sup> This is an essential theme of the Foundation's third book as well, see note-32.

<sup>81</sup> This crucial point is not discussed in the European study by NICIS, K. van Dijken et al, see note-29. Neither it is seen as a challenge for the European Metropolitan Institute, see note-71.

<sup>82</sup> N. Lucas, D. Rosetti di Valdalbero (2009) *People, the economy and our planet: Sustainable development insights from socio-economic sciences and humanities* (Brussels: Directorate-General for Research), p-7.

<sup>83</sup> N. Lucas et al, see note-63, p-25.

demands for new approaches. This plea may be appreciated as an argument to focus our attention on the deepening of our understanding of as well the conceptual as well as the methodological framework and their reciprocity.

## **5. *Migrants as urban subcategories***

### **5.1 *Preliminary explorations important for Laak (North)***

In the preparatory stage of developing strategies for changing aspects of the neighbourhood of Laak (North) the European Foundation on Social Quality (EFSQ) and the Institute of Social Studies (ISS) started also – on request by the municipality of The Hague – a preliminary exploration of the position of migrants. The purpose was to contribute to a design of the ‘methodology of practice’ as well as to formulate proposals for a new ‘methodology of governance’ as discussed in previous section.<sup>84</sup> A first question was what we can learn from other cities? As explained earlier, it is rather difficult to learn from other cities because the absence of a common accepted (conceptual and methodological) frame of reference as *conditio sine qua non* for adequate communication. For example, unknown remained for this municipality the far-reaching experiences with a massive flow of migrants in the South-East part of Amsterdam, a new suburb for 125.000 inhabitants.<sup>85</sup> Rather unexpected thousands of migrants arrived in this new suburb since the early 1970s. The first came from Suriname as a consequence of the proclamation of its independency. People could make a choice for a Suriname nationality or a Dutch one and thus to stay in Suriname or to move to The Netherlands. At that time, in South-East Amsterdam there were enough new houses for these newcomers. Very soon migrants from other countries followed. At the moment more than 50 countries are represented in Amsterdam South-East, legal and illegal. The conclusions of the study on these experiences we already referred to is that the art of living

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<sup>84</sup> A presentation of the preparation of these explorations is discussed in: L.J.G. van der Maesen, see note-3, *Working Paper Series nr.2*, [www.socialquality.org](http://www.socialquality.org).

of inhabitants of South-East is rooted in their cultures, highly influenced by their religions. They determine their expressions, ideas and private choices concerning also collective formations (groups, networks, churches etc). These cultures and religions also determine the influences by other people. In order to reach a sustainable society this cannot be neglected; they form the points of departure for productive and creative processes leading into a plural society with the necessary forms of cohesion, inclusion and empowerment.<sup>86</sup> This Amsterdam South-East study has ex ante a lot of affinity with the conclusions of the recent study by the ISS, referred to above.

In the ISS study noticed is about some crucial aspects of daily circumstances of migrants in Laak (North), that these processes (see above) at this neighbourhood level cannot be viewed as simple or tidy solutions to interethnic divides but as means of promoting multicultural and multiethnic dialogue, engagement and understanding between persons with equal claims. Therefore the shift in register from the language of policy fixes to that of democratic politics is important. First, because it will highlight the significance of questions of empowerment, rights, citizenship and belonging in shaping interethnic relations. Second because it will show that an open public realm helps to disrupt fixed cultural assumptions and to shift identities through cultural exchange. Third, because it reveals that living with diversity is a matter of constant negotiation, trial and error, and sustained effort, with possibilities crucially shaped by the many strand that feed into the political culture of the public realm from the entanglements of local institutional conflict, civic mobilisation and interpersonal engagement to national debate.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> L.J.G. van der Maesen, see note-13.

<sup>86</sup> G. van Tillo, see note-14. Argued is that by focussing on the heritage of the new comers and by starting a far-reaching dialogue with the settled people, as well as by organizing new facilities by the municipality and societal organisations a catastrophe could be prevented.

According to Kurian, these conclusions 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 neighbourhood 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..<sup>88</sup> These considerations have a lot of affinity with the South-East Amsterdam study. But how to use them for the new 'methodology of practice' and 'methodology of governance' for addressing the points of departure of these considerations?

## 5.2 *The example of Copenhagen*

The paper's argument is that for understanding complicated processes in neighbourhoods caused by flows of migrants we need coherent and well-founded analytical instruments, as well as an orientation. Supposed is that the application of the social quality architecture - and its conceptual and methodological aspects - may be very helpful. This can be concluded from the preliminary exploration of applied policies in different European cities by the EFSQ,

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<sup>87</sup> R. Kurian(2008), *Building Bridges in Neighbourhoods: Connecting Communities, Celebrating Diversity and Promoting Civic Citizenship at local levels: a first exploration on request by the Municipality of The Hague* (The Hague: ISS), 12.

<sup>88</sup> R. Kurian, see note-90.

referred to above as well. For delivering an example, we will refer to conclusions of the EFSQ's exploration about the City of Copenhagen. Copenhagen's ethnic diversity has changed over the last decade. In the midst 1990s non-Western immigrants accounted for just under 9% of the population. In 2007 they constitute approximately 14%. <sup>89</sup>The city has promoted an important perspective, namely, the promotion of processes by which groups from different cultures and religions adapts to and is accepted by a larger group, without the group being forced to adopt the culture of the majority': *being 'accepted' involves the majority showing respect of the minority's culture and traditions, as long as these do not contravene democracy and human rights, including the individual's right to make his or her own decisions*. The City aims to promote the active participation of all citizens democratic processes in society. It has formulated three principles: *(i) integration is a joint responsibility, (ii) integration requires diversity, (iii) integration must be attractive*. <sup>90</sup> Within this perspective some specific policies have been pursued:

- employment policies: the unemployment rate in the City is 6% for the Danes and 19,5% for the immigrants. The City plans to create 8500 more jobs for immigrants in especially the public services of the City.
- Education policies and training in order to close the performance gap between monolingual and bilingual pupils under the lead of the Children and Youth Committee,
- Housing policies for reducing the proportion of people in vulnerable housing areas by modifying housing allocation rules etc,
- Security policies to equalize the crime rate among young immigrants and other young Danes by combating socio-economic differences,
- Cultural/leisure policies according tot the actual successes with libraries in the City for migrants and by stimulating and supporting platforms for dialogue all over the City.

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<sup>89</sup> In The Hague, Rotterdam and Amsterdam the percentage is more than threefold.

<sup>90</sup> These aims are highly contested by the right-wing populist political party in Denmark as well as in The Netherlands. More than in the recent past the explicit articulation of the normative factors of the social quality architecture is crucial for coherent policy-making processes.

The City of Copenhagen organises interdepartmental collaboration (within the municipality) and the collaboration with relevant agencies, companies and community platforms in the city. It paves the way for this approach with help of 'sector overarching' (or comprehensive oriented) policies.<sup>91</sup> With these forms of collaboration Copenhagen goes beyond the traditional fragmentation by applying 'new forms of governance'. In other words this city presents a 'new methodology of governance' as discussed in the previous section.

For the other cities we could find more or less the same ambitions and policy practices. How to compare these practices and their outcomes? This question is also relevant for the neighbourhood of Laak (North) in order to compare it with other neighbourhoods in The Hague and in other Dutch and European cities. What happens and what can we learn from others for steering processes in such a way, that we will arrive at sustainable living conditions? In the case of Copenhagen we see activities addressing different aspects of the conditional factor of socio-economic security. Not mentioned are policies oriented on other conditional factors as social cohesion, social inclusion and social empowerment. But we suppose, that these policies are also operationalised for addressing the whole complex of the city's aims (see above). In other words, these and other parts of the social quality architecture (figure-5) may be very heuristic for analysing and comparing aims and policies which are explicitly articulated and aims and policies which remains implicit but nevertheless important for understanding what happens concerning the daily circumstances of migrants as well. This heuristic role goes beyond the analytical possibilities of for example the quality of life, the social capital and the capability approaches. By applying this architecture to different cities we will be able to compare what happens in Copenhagen, The Hague, Bristol, or Stuttgart etc. and to compare the outcomes for old residents and newcomers.<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> L.J.G. van der Maesen, H. Verkleij (2008), *A preliminary exploration of the position of migrants in different European cities: an exploration on request by the Municipality of The Hague* (The Hague: EFSQ).

<sup>92</sup> See conclusions of this exploration of thirteen cities by L.J.G. van der Maesen et al, see note-87.



### 5.3 Recent studies on migrants from the social quality perspective

Until now the attention of adherents of the social quality approach – in Europe and Asia – is especially dedicated to recognise the consequences of societal trends on the nature and change of the four conditional factors (figure-5). This happens by applying the recent social quality indicators. For Europe the first outcomes were published in the double issue of the *European Journal of Social Quality*<sup>93</sup> and fourteen national reports.<sup>94</sup> Recently a working-paper is published about the evaluation of these social quality indicators.<sup>95</sup> The application of the social quality indicators to daily circumstances in South Korea was awarded by the Third World Forum of the OECD as the best of the 200 studies about ‘social progress’. Demonstrated is that essential aspects of social cohesion (see its social quality definition) are decreasing in this society. For the long term this will produce unsustainable societal relations.<sup>96</sup> It will also be possible to be more specific. The studies referred to above concern the state-of-affairs of the conditional factors on national or regional level. But it is also possible to use this social quality framework for exploring the nature of the conditional factors for different urban subcategories, for example newcomers.

In the recent past a start is already made by Berman and Phillips. We will refer to their studies from 2001<sup>97</sup>, from 2003<sup>98</sup>, from 2008<sup>99</sup> and from 2009.<sup>100</sup> They argue, that the increase of the multiculturalism of cities may be seen as a consequence of global processes. Their relevance cannot be neglected at all. This increase will be stimulated by the

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<sup>93</sup> D. Gordon et al, see note-57.

<sup>94</sup> Fourteen national reports, see note-58.

<sup>95</sup> L.J.G. van der Maesen (2009), *Reflections on the first set of Social Quality Indicators from the European Network Social Quality Indicators* (EFSQ: The Hague, **Working Paper Series nr. 3**, [www.socialquality.org](http://www.socialquality.org)).

<sup>96</sup> J. Yee, D. Chang (2009), *Social Quality as a measure for social progress: a paper for the Third OECD World Forum* (Seoul: Seoul National University).

<sup>97</sup> Y. Berman, D. Phillips (2001), Social quality and community citizenship, *European Journal of Social Work*, 4 (1): 17-28.

<sup>98</sup> Y. Berman, D. Phillips (2003), Social quality and ethnos communities: Concepts and indicators, *Community Development Journal*, 38 (4), 344-57.

<sup>99</sup> Y. Berman, D. Phillips (2008), Social cohesion and the sustainable welfare society, *NTU Social Work Review*, 16, 1-45.

<sup>100</sup> Y. Berman, D. Phillips (2009), Social quality in post-industrial societies: the growth of migrant remittances in international social welfare, in J.L. Powell, J. Hendricks (eds) *The Welfare State in Post-Industrial Society: A Global Perspective* (New York: Springer).

revolutionary development of information-technologies and related mobility of people as well as fundamental changes of economic production systems. Estimated by the United Nations Population Division is that in the year 2000, 175 million people, 1 in 40 worldwide, were living outside of their country of birth or citizenship. Since that time this is increased as well. Wealthy countries have about 60 per cent of the world's recorded migrants.<sup>101</sup> Some migrants tend to cluster in a limited number of countries; for example, the number of resident Turkish citizens in Germany is 2.553,600 or 58.3 per cent of Turkish residents living outside Germany.<sup>102</sup> This information concerns migration between countries. But the question may be if the consequences of the huge movements from, for example, from the rural West to the urban East China are not even far-reaching as between Turkey and Germany. If that is the case, we have to extend the United Nation's quantitative information.

Berman and Phillips mention a second relevant point. The majority of migrants maintain a strong long-term link with their country of origin.<sup>103</sup> The most tangible evidence of this link is in the form of remittances, defined by Bascom as '*transfers made from earning and/or accumulated stock of wealth by individuals who are residents in a foreign country on a temporary or permanent basis to their countries of origin for dependent support, investment or any other purse*'.<sup>104</sup> Given that they are the second-largest source of external funding for developing countries after foreign direct investments it is clear that they form an extremely important element of international welfare.<sup>105</sup>

[forthcoming]

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<sup>101</sup> J. Hagen (2006), Migration and remittances, *UN Chronicle*, 42 (4), 12.

<sup>102</sup> N. E. Koksal (2006), *Determinants and impact on the Turkish economy of remittances* (Paris: Universite Paris 1 Pantheon).

<sup>103</sup> S. Salomone (2006), Remittances, overview of existing literature ([http://www.iue.it/RSCAS/Research/School OnEuro-MedMigration](http://www.iue.it/RSCAS/Research/School%20OnEuro-MedMigration)).

<sup>104</sup> W. Bascom (1990), *Remittances inflows and economic development in selected Anglophone Caribbean Countries* (Washington D.C.: Commission for the Study of International Migration and Cooperative Economic Development).

<sup>105</sup> H. de Haas (2007), *Remittances, migration and social development. A conceptual review of the literature* (Geneva: Social Policy and Development Programme Paper, nr. 34, United Nations Research Institute for Social Development).