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To all interested in Social Quality

4th IASQ Info letter:
Working paper 15 and IJSQ 4/2

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Dear all,

In March and April the IASQ completed Working Paper Series nr. 15 outlining four global research-projects for understanding the interdependencies of **three essential** fields in our work: analysing societal complexities, sustainable urban circumstances and overall sustainability. Since the development toward overall sustainability is globally accepted as a main challenge for mankind, the 'social quality project' should also contribute to this field. This challenge transcends the ecological or environmental dimension, as it also concerns the effects of transformations of societal complexities in urban circumstances. This therefore demands new policies aiming at 'sustainable urban development' in order to ensure 'overall sustainability'. The proposals concern:

- To explore leading research and policies concerning 'overall sustainability' from a 'social quality perspective' in order to contribute to main global meetings on sustainability. It concerns a follow-up of the IASQ's contribution to the Rio+20 conference in 2012.
- Comparative research work from a social quality perspective of sustainable urban circumstances of six European and six Asian cities/metropolises and connecting it with the sustainability debate,
- To explore the role of trade unions to change ideas and practices with regard to production relations, as aspect of societal complexities,
- To further enhance the theory and methodology of the social quality project to analyse and understand the main **four dimensions** of societal life: the economic, the political, the cultural and the environmental dimensions. This will increase our knowledge of the interdependencies of urban sustainable development, overall sustainability and societal complexities.

These four research proposals will be elaborated with scholars connected to the European (EU) Observatory on Social Quality in statu nascendi and the Asian-Pacific Observatory. Recently explorations were made in Russia to establish a Russian Observatory on Social Quality as well. More news about these explorations is forthcoming.

Volume 4/Issue 2 of the **International Journal of Social Quality** has recently been launched (see www.journals.berghahnbooks.com). The articles consider approaches like human development and human security addressing societal issues: governance, the rejection of state-proffered entitlements and provisions, the Greek crisis, or innovation. The confrontation with a societal issue gives a better understanding of the approach in question, and contributes to its testing and enrichment. These exercises add to the target of the social quality project to explore the most adequate approaches analysing the interdependencies of societal complexities, urban sustainable development and overall sustainability, by appreciating the changes of the interrelations of the four dimensions – economic, political, cultural and environmental - of societal life.

With best wishes,

Laurent J.G. van der Maesen