

**How Everything is Connected to Everything Else  
and what it means for Business, Science, and  
Everyday Life**

*Albert Iászló Barabási, 2014*

Proposal for a Hot Spot (or Multidisciplinary Research Programme)

# “LINK”: Relational approach to Societal Challenges

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I am linked therefore I am

Gerken, 2009, p. 400

## 1. Introduction

This business plan for the hotspot LINK is set up and written after a number of different hotspots within the IMR were already established. Most of these hotspots distinguish themselves from others by demarcating a specific multidisciplinary field or domain, on which the respective research and valorisation activities are focused. The establishment of these hotspots was an important step forward in productively linking the research conducted in different disciplines within the IMR, to employ existing synergies to create centres of excellence. The hotspot proposed in this business plan is different in the sense that it does not take its starting point at a specific field or domain, but rather at a specific approach, applicable in many different, but related, fields and domains. It thus fits with the ambition of the IMR to productively bring together the research and valorisation endeavours of the different disciplines, and at the same time it also strategically enhances the already existing hotspots, by offering a research programme, which links the different fields and domains, and partly aligns the already existing hotspots along a specific enhancing theoretical and methodological approach, which, because of different *societal developments*, but also because of crucial *developments in social sciences* in general, are seen as very topical and urgently needed. This theoretical and methodological approach is, in the broadest sense of the word, denoted as 'relational approach', or better, as 'relational approaches' in plural, since it is actually a broad family of similar approaches, focussing on the complexity, multiplicity and multidimensional (as well as multi-disciplinary) aspects of current societal problems and the respective ways to theorise them. It therefore adds a meta-level of scientific reflection to the more field and domain oriented research already taking place within the IMR. Especially since the IMR has a declared policy of enabling researchers to become members of two different hotspots, to, on the one hand, make sure that a maximum of synergy can be realised, without, on the other hand, squandering and fragmenting our resources over too many different programmes, the hotspot proposed here does not have the objective to create another separate field or domain of research, but much more a programme for bridging and linking research, which partly is already taking place within other hotspots, and which partly is central for our IMR research, but for which no fully suitable hotspot has been created yet.

Therefore, this hot spot is driven by two major forces:

1. Increasing **complexity of societal developments**, demanding a more inclusive, integrative approach, **linking** different aspects of the current situation and developments, when addressing current societal problems.
2. A **relational turn<sup>1</sup> in social sciences**, suggesting new ways of **linking** scientific insights from different realms and domains as well as new ontological and epistemological approaches to deal with these complexities and current societal problems.

We therefore put these relational approaches in the broadest sense of the word at the core of our approach, and want to explore a number of these relationships, such as:

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<sup>1</sup> Emirbayer, M. (1997). Manifesto for a Relational Sociology. *American Journal of Sociology*. Vol. 103, No. 2, pp. 281-317.  
Prandinia, R. (2015). Relational sociology: a well-defined sociological paradigm or a challenging 'relational turn' in sociology? *International Review of Sociology: Revue Internationale de Sociologie*. Vol. 25, No. 1, pp. 1-14.

- relationship government/policy-civil society (e.g. in field of Spatial, Urban and Environmental policies) (new forms of governance, and grass-root policy making)
- relationship science-society (new forms of transdisciplinary knowledge production)
- relationship democracy-society (new concepts of democratic control and transparency)
- relationship business-society (responsible organisation, social responsible entrepreneurship)

The initiative for this new hot spot was jointly taken by researchers from the fields of Geography, Spatial Planning and Environment, Political Science, Economics, Public Administration, and Business Administration.

## 2. Thematic outline

### *Increasing societal complexity*

We live in times in which simple answers to the important societal questions that contemporary societies face no longer suffice. Globalisation, Diversification, Economic Crisis, Demographic Shrinkage, Environmental Degradation, Political Conflicts with the related 'Refugee crisis', etc. etc., are partly responsible for the perception of an ever increasing complexity and loss of control in current societies. It is argued that nowadays a mismatch exists between the expectations held by members of society and the nature and performance of the institutions and scientific and corporate organisations through which they seek to coordinate their individual activities and seek to create value and knowledge for society and to resolve their collective problems. This seems to be the case in the socio-economic domain, the political-administrative domain as well as the environmental domain, both domestically and internationally. Existing institutions are contested by societal groups and stakeholders and lose authority and acceptance; while new practices resulting in new institutions, of varying nature, only slowly develop.

In the face of these developments the number of stakeholders and groups to take into account has strongly increased and processes of mutual coordination and understanding have become more difficult. The hitherto rather stable positions, conditions and stakes of different groups and classes have become more fluid. We can for example think of increasing numbers of floating voters and related populist movements, the rise of freelancers ('ZZP'), increasing numbers of different ethnic groups, diversification of life styles and the related demands as well as shifts in power relations between these groups and stakeholders, which all are putting pressure on traditional institutional and organisational solutions and policies. These problems recur in discussions regarding identifying and involving the proper stakeholders in the international institutional, organisational and policy arrangements to resolve problems.

Scientific knowledge increasingly plays a role in these discussions: the debate on global warming is characterised by the contestation of existing and new knowledge in the public debate in the media. The debate regarding democratic institutions and the proper role for government is cast in disputes surrounding the knowledge of effects of deregulation and privatisation and presumed consequences of different conceptions and designs of the proper democratic political process. In a similar vein, especially in the framework of the economic crisis, scientific knowledge of the core economic mechanisms driving our society needs to be scrutinised and

has given rise to a search for new forms of economic exchange, economic arrangements and business models. This tendency underscores the disenchantment of traditional forms of knowledge and challenges science and society to come up with new forms of transdisciplinary knowledge production, overcoming the external view from the ivory tower perspective and embedding science in society itself.

This hot spot seeks to analyse the melting of current institutions, policies and arrangements, and to investigate the emergence of new ones. It not only seeks to describe and account for this (perceived) mismatch and its variations across time, space, and domain, but also to assess these developments from a normative perspective in order to identify alternative avenues to address the problem of mismatch. In doing so the hot spot seeks to contribute to building resilient democratic and environmentally sound societies.

Although it is sometimes contested whether these tendencies are that new, there is no doubt that they are experienced as such and that the current discourse clearly points in this direction and thus indeed creates a new reality. By consequence, many societal actors (government agencies, entrepreneurs, NGO's, civil society actors) urgently seek relevant knowledge which helps them to deal with these new realities. It is an explicit target of this hot spot to contribute to this knowledge (Valorisation).

In this situation, important mutual relationships between: government/policy, science, business, local material and environmental circumstances, and relationship between past- present- future and societal developments are questioned, which contributes to increased complexity of the problem.

### ***Relational turn in social sciences***

Relational approaches, are not at all new, but in the current situation, as described above, they recently have gained prominence in the social sciences and is now one of the most popular paradigms, and can be viewed as a 'research front'. This is partly due to the fact that older paradigms, based on reductive approaches, linear causal models and relatively static characteristics of causal factors, actors and situations, did not prove effective and sufficient in the current situation. The current societal conditions seem to be so different from earlier periods and seem to change at such great speed, that the established models can and will not suffice to offer real solutions to our most urgent problems. Partly, this simply means that models need to be expanded with more causal factors to take into account the increased complexity of the current situation and interrelatedness of different causal factors. Partly, this also implies that the models needed to be differentiated and adapted, given the specific spatial and temporal context in which they are applied, and thus lose their general validity and applicability. Increasingly, however, the assumptions with respect to the actors, attributes and situations, which were hitherto taken as more or less clear and stable, need to be questioned. The latter is often dubbed as 'the relational turn' (Emirbayer, 1997). The relational turn proposes to, not take actors and their attributes, nor the characteristics of a specific situation or institutional framework as (static) pre-given substances and then turn to the analysis of the (causal) relations between them, but rather to take a relational perspective on social action and historical change, and take the dynamic and unfolding relations, the actual complex and related processes taking place as a starting point, which actually constitute and modify the actors, institutions and situations as well as the relations between them. Here we notice that

this involves a different take on the ontological assumptions. Of course, one can easily dismiss this ‘talk’ about the differences in paradigms as part of the political-economy of science. But more crucial is, in view of our current societal situation, the acceptance of the dynamics and complexity of the relations and of the characteristics of the entities involved, and the focus on the inter-relatedness of the many different factors and aspects in understanding what is currently going on in our society. Taking into account the relationality of the phenomena under investigation also has effects on the kind of practical recommendations science can provide and, in general, the role science plays in society. So what we suggest as one of the core dimensions of this hotspot, is not just to think of the phenomena under investigation from a relational perspective, but also to think of science, and the different theoretical strands we develop, from a relational point of view. Thus bringing together and relating the different domains and the different theoretical streams of thought, as bundles of trajectories so far. This is not just a strategic objective of the IMR, but also a productive strategy for dealing with the current societal complexities we are faced with.

This strategic, open and very pragmatic approach, of course, does not exempt scientists from actively and productively debating the ontological, epistemological and methodological implications of these relational approaches, in its many different guises<sup>2</sup>. It would be too restrictive and pretentious to assume that these relational approaches will be the panacea for future social sciences, but given our current societal situation and the current societal dynamics, it certainly seems most appropriate and topical. So, the outcome of these debates cannot be predicted, but engaging in these debates in whatever way is certainly going to be a core element in this hot spot.

The relational turn, as such is not just something, which overcomes us or is derived from external developments in the social sciences. It is also firmly rooted in many of the hitherto research endeavours within our faculty. In a large number of research projects, relational approaches are already applied, and in others it is a logical next step. So, indeed, it is a core objective to bring these scientific trajectories together, to bundle them and put them in relation to each other, and to use relational approaches, and the further development thereof, as a joint source of (critical) inspiration, for future projects. The multi-disciplinary setting of our faculty actually gives us a unique position and opportunity to develop an international profiling competitive edge in research in this field.

### 3. Problem statement

The institutional framework that has held together the many spheres of modern democratic societies seems challenged by a variety of developments. In many domains this has provoked a debate about rebooting the set-up of our societies. In essence, research under LINK seeks to use a relational perspective to (a) describe such challenges, (b) account for different developments between various societal domains, (c) assess the likelihood and effects of different proposed institutional set-ups, and (d) critically evaluate from various normative perspectives the challenges, solutions, and their (expected) effects.

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<sup>2</sup> For an overview see also: Powell, C. & Dépelteau, F. (eds.) (2013). *Conceptualizing Relational Sociology: Ontological and theoretic issues*. Palgrave, New York and Dépelteau, F. & Powell, C. (eds.) (2013). *Applying Relational Sociology. Relations, networks and society*. Palgrave, New York but see also section 8 in this document.

### ***Challenges in different domains***

Modern democratic societies face challenges that are at the heart of their institutional make up. Members of modern democratic societies, in their role as citizens, consumers, producers, or as members of formal and informal associations, governmental and non-governmental organisations, increasingly express discontent with the institutional make-up of the societal spheres they engage with. This concerns two major intertwined elements: first, a feeling of reduced responsiveness – i.e., current institutions do not deliver what individuals expect them to deliver – and second, a feeling of being underrepresented – individuals feel that current institutions do not structurally represent their perspective. From the combination of unresponsiveness and underrepresentation emerges the danger that modern democratic societies are less and less resilient as their ability to deal with today's challenges is hampered. Their inability to do their job in a manner that fits with society's wishes, combined with unresponsiveness and underrepresentation will severely compromise the legitimacy of existing institutions. Consequently, incumbent elites will be searching desperately for acceptable solutions. LINK seeks to understand (the causes of) these feelings of unresponsiveness and underrepresentation and how they affect society's resilience, as well as the solutions both citizens, representative organisations, and incumbent elites are proposing. In this context it is important to note that knowledge regarding representation and responsiveness itself, in the way it is framed and communicated, has itself become a much debated topic. LINK explicitly seeks to put the production and use of such knowledge on the research agenda.

***Responsiveness.*** In various domains individuals in their different societal capacities express concern about the responsiveness of institutions, organisations and policies: clients are often dissatisfied with the services rendered by private and (semi-) public organisations, such as in the health care sector and the housing sector. It is becoming more difficult for government agencies to produce collective goods including reliable and affordable public transport, special education, a safe environment (earthquakes in Groningen), and employment. Businesses, banks, and government agencies are frequently portrayed as giving priority to narrow interests instead of focusing on the common good. Recent actions, such as changing the rules regarding pensions, result in citizens perceiving public and semi-public actors as unreliable and unresponsive to their needs. And finally, political parties and politicians (both at the local and national level) are constantly accused of being unresponsive, leading to political apathy and alienation or populism.

***Representation.*** These feelings of unresponsiveness are closely tied with feelings of underrepresentation in municipal councils, provinces, and parliament and feelings of not being heard or acknowledged in informal ways. Additionally, bankers and leading industrialists are perceived to be self-serving as their actions show they are only interested in increasing their own profit margins – at the cost of the environment and the majority of citizens. The increased flexibility of labour, for instance, was largely implemented at the request of business associations, leaving many citizens in a bind as they are hardly able to survive as flex workers. Another example is the tendency of citizens to perceive the justice system and police as failing to protect them. Consequently, citizens feel they are not properly represented by these government actors, business- and opinion leaders. Such feelings surface in many modern democratic societies

**Resilience.** Government's inability to properly represent and respond to citizens' and environmental concerns and as public services tend to be hollowed out implies that citizens feel that they have to fend for themselves. These feelings are exacerbated as government is shifting responsibilities to citizens as their participation in society is demanded. This requires a lot of resilience on the side of citizens and other societal actors: if something happens, they can count less on government to save them. More and more, they need to draw on their own strength and ingenuity to deal with any unfortunate events. Resilience, however, does not only concern citizens, but also society as a whole. As society is facing a multitude of challenges (e.g. safety, security, financial uncertainty, and flooding), it becomes imperative to be able to respond to these challenges and mitigate their negative effects in order to return as quickly as possible to a situation which can be deemed normal. In current times such responses are often expected to be formulated at the greatest possible speed. Failure to do so may result in societal upheaval and decreasing legitimacy of governance institutions, both public and private. How can government facilitate social resilience besides broadcasting a commercial saying that citizens should care for their neighbours and have an emergency kit at home for when disaster strikes? What can companies do to ensure that their operational processes are resilient? How can non-governmental actors, such as the Red Cross and church organisations, become embedded so that government knows what help they can provide when needed? How can government ensure that the government pressure for individual resilience does not result in citizens feeling abandoned by their government institutions? For resilience to become a true solution instead of a panacea, we need to understand how actors can become resilient – an aim which can only be achieved by working together (be it within a single organisation or as a partner in a collaboration).

**Responses.** From the reactions of the elites one can observe that some of them are concerned that existing institutions may not be sufficient to cope with such feelings of societal anxiety. Partly, this is evidenced by the many blame games that take place whenever major hiccups occur in the public or private domain: the occurrence of such blame games is an indicator that elites are aware that certain expectations regarding responsiveness and representation have to be met. Businesses seek to develop programmes to become more responsive to their clients; intermediary institutions (such as SER and Stichting van de Arbeid) are under attack for their presumed underrepresentation although no alternative model has surfaced yet; the steering relationship between governmental and implementation agencies is under constant revision in order to improve their effectiveness and responsiveness; the elite also seeks to reinvent the democratic process e.g. by debating the role of the Senate, by introducing a corrective referendum, or, locally by increasingly making use of citizens' juries. Also the role of science in society is partly re-invented and new forms of knowledge creation like 'citizens science' and experiential and more context-dependent knowledge gain importance. Meanwhile, discontented citizens seek to organise themselves in different ways: via social media, through specific consumer or producer groups, as protestors (against or in favour of asylum centres), and via parties at the fringes of the political system (PVV, 50+, PVDD). Again, such phenomena occur in different intensity in various modern democratic societies.

As stated in the introduction, we need to understand how actors interact if we are to understand where these societal challenges come from, how they can be solved and/or can be understood. In addition, we have become aware, that this is not just about interaction between actors but also is about interaction with the physical and material elements of our spatio-



temporal situation<sup>3</sup>. What all researchers thus share is a relational perspective: a focus on the relationships that link these actors. The hot spot thus creates a platform for researchers interested in investigating these three societal challenges (responsiveness, representation, and resilience) from a relational perspective.

In agreement with the relational approach, and its bottom-up focus on the emergence of actors, institutions, situations and their relations, in this hot spot we are very reluctant to prescribe a single specific and detailed research programme, but rather seek to develop this jointly bottom up in direct relation to practice organisations in the field. Nevertheless, we, of course, do not start from scratch, but explicitly link up with existing and established fields of expertise within our faculty. As such, we start off with specific (multidisciplinary) sub-themes, or fields of expertise as described in Appendix A. This is, however, certainly not ‘business as usual’, since the problems addressed in this hot spot explicitly address the issue of current societal complexities and in addition seek to explore the relationality of all the different aspects involved.

### ***Relations of different sub-fields to Responsiveness, Representation and Resilience***

	<b>Responsiveness</b>	<b>Representation</b>	<b>Resilience</b>
<b>Responsible Organisation</b>	Environmental and social aspects such as: Consumer activism Flex labour Blame games Network sensitivities Consumerism (care, education)	Internal and external Representations and Awareness Involvements Alienations Organisations Communities User-entrepreneurship	Environmental and social sustainability Avoiding disasters Crisis management Strategic practices Hybrid organisations Employability Spirituality in organisations
<b>New Role of Science</b>	Economic and Financial Globalisation (Dis)Trust in science Complexity Independence, Integrity, Accountability Risk, Unpredictability Anthropogenic climate change, Future generations, Non-humans	Norms regarding Accountability Role of Experts Role of advising institutions (e.g. Planbureaus) Role of Scientific Party Councils (esp. Northern Europe) Democracy versus Epistocracy	Joint and Shared Knowledge Production Network Science Incremental Science Reflective Rationality Participatory Monitoring Valorisation Value rationality
<b>Assembling Urban Development</b>	Dynamics and Complexity Network Sensitivities Sensitivity to global challenges Emergent and Contingent Realities New Urban Materialities	Multicultural Cities Real Estate Markets Bordering and Ordering Claiming the City Housing corporations Gated Communities Public-/Private Space	Hybrid Cities Urban Networks (Metropolitan Regions) Public and Government Participation Policy Learning Grassroot development Crisis management Smart Cities

<sup>3</sup> In relational approaches, one usually makes a distinction between the traditional ‘self-action’ and ‘inter-action’ between pre-given entities, and the new focus on the dynamics of ‘trans-actions’ between emerging and thus developing and not pre-given entities, which are also ontologically embedded in spatio-temporal contexts (Dewey & Bentley, 1949, p. 108). Here we stick to the term ‘interaction’ but explicitly include these ‘trans-actional’ aspects.

	<b>Responsiveness</b>	<b>Representation</b>	<b>Resilience</b>
			Ontological turn
<b>Rethinking Democracy</b>	Personalisation of Politics Rise of Populism Effects of Social media Deliberative Democracy Blame games Europeanisation and Globalisation	Neo corporatist institutions Direct Democracy vs. Representative Democracy Global & European democratic deficit	New electoral rules New political institutions New criteria for democratic legitimation
<b>Governance, Sustainability and Planning</b>	Climate Change Diversification of Life Styles Europeanisation and Globalisation Economic crisis affecting Private Actors Informality Government Effectiveness Blame Games	Deliberation Semi-Government Housing corporations NGO's Entrepreneurs Creative Class	Crisis Management Networks in Water Management City Labs Smart Cities Community based Initiatives Participatory Monitoring

Further details are given in Appendix A.

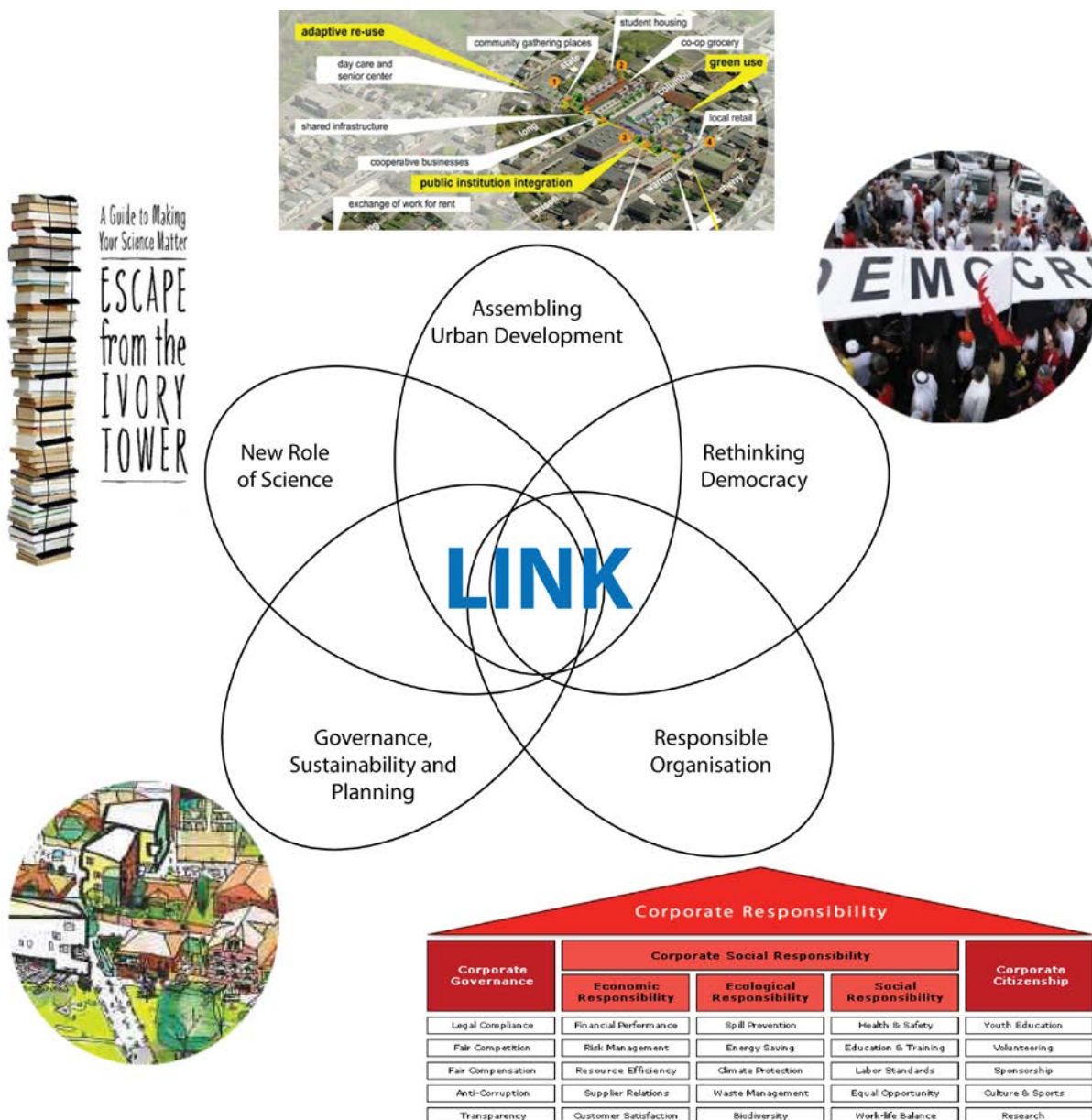
#### 4. Guiding questions

The societally relevant question underneath the hot spot is whether de-institutionalisation and re-institutionalisation of institutions, policies and arrangements in these domains strengthen or weaken the resilience of democratic societies.

Therefore, overall this hot spot seeks to

1. describe and account for the strains on present institutions, policies and arrangements that constitute the public domain in the light of changing state-market relations (**Responsiveness**);
2. describe and account for the reaction of stakeholders to such dysfunctionality and de-institutionalisation (**Representation**);
3. describe and account for the nature of new emerging institutions (**Resilience**);
  - a. in particular, it seeks to take into account the role and use of expert knowledge and experiential and context-dependent knowledge in this process of de- and re-institutionalisation;
  - b. and it is particularly focusing on the domains of the environment, the urban space, the politico-administrative sphere, and the socio-economic sphere.

### 5. Different related sub-themes



### 6. Added value

This hot spot is different from other hot spots as it does not cut out its own ‘domain’ or ‘field’ of empirical objects to focus on. Instead it seeks to link the research done in different fields and hot spots, in the face of the current societal situation and challenges, which seem to demand a more comprehensive approach linking and contextualising the many different aspects in an innovative way, so that we can better grasp the complexity of the current situation, and provide more nuanced solutions to current problems. A whole package of different relational approaches provides us with a strong conceptual toolbox to bring together these different branches of research. At the same time this hot spot attempts to combine different methods to bring the relationships to the fore.

In some places within the Netherlands similar attempts are made for example in the field of science studies in Maastricht: The Netherlands Graduate Research School of Science, Technology and Modern Culture (WTMC)<sup>4</sup> with the participating Department of Philosophy and Science Studies of the Radboud University<sup>5</sup>, in the field of Complexity research in Spatial Planning at the University of Groningen<sup>6</sup>, Practice approach in sustainability research at the University of Wageningen<sup>7</sup>, and distributed applications of Actor Network Theory at several Universities and disciplines but none of these research centres connect such a broad spectrum of different disciplines, fields, aspects and domains. For each of the subthemes of this hot spot (see also Appendix A) the value added of this hot spot is as follows:

### **Governance, Sustainability and Planning**

Research on sustainable society and development can take different roads. It connects to discussions on Corporate Social Responsibility of Corporate Sustainability pointing at stakeholder management and societal and environmental care of business. With regard to the turn towards (civil) society a wide variation of community-based initiatives can be identified that are relevant for contemporary societal problems – and solutions. In the domain of renewable energy, civil initiatives around all sorts of renewable energy resources are recently mushrooming (Oteman, Wiering & Helderma, 2014). This leads to discussions on alternative local systems of energy supply and their contribution to the foreseen transition from fossil to renewable.

This wave of new societal initiatives and innovations in turn leads to new ideas on governance and (invitation-) planning, participatory knowledge production, monitoring and geo-informational practices and new questions e.g. in relation to new forms of democratic practices.

The research on new forms of spatial planning builds on a strong past performance in the field of governance studies but now seeks to extend this expertise by focussing explicitly on new forms of governance involving participation, civil society, self-organisation and grass root initiatives. This implies that governance is not conceptualised as limited to policy making but rather also integrating societal developments as source and target of governance. In this field the Radboud University has an almost unique niche and competence.

### ***Assembling Urban Development:***

Taking a broad look at urban development and the development of the urban from a relational perspective is internationally a topical issue but hardly covered in the Netherlands. The unique clustering and reciprocal fertilisation of research projects in Nijmegen gives it a special position and visibility in the Netherlands and abroad. Especially also the expertise in a multiplicity of different but related theoretical relational approaches is a strong asset of this research endeavour. The relational perspective is employed here to shed light on the juxtaposition and intersection of different ontological strata in the urban domain, emphasising (De Haan, et al 2013):

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.wtmc.eu/>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.ru.nl/science/isis/about-isis/organization/philosophy-science/>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.rug.nl/staff/g.de.roo/>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.wageningenur.nl/en/Expertise-Services/Chair-groups/Social-Sciences/Environmental-Policy-Group.htm>

- the prominent role of outcomes, targets and impacts in measurable forms
- the mobility of key interpretative and policy concepts, such as social mix, creative clusters, mainports, etc.
- the proliferation of everyday and institutional practices underpinning the way people live, work and use the city, how businesses and other organisations work, as well as the routines of city planning and coordination; these practices provide a rich source of experiential knowledge and perspectives.

Across these levels, a basic tension emerges that lends itself for analysis as well as engagement through relational work. On one side of this tensions sit the more 'top down' aspects of urban governance and planning, that is, the use of more standardised, often quantified methods of analysis and planning, and the communicative processes grounded in prevailing, somewhat elitist discourses on urban prospects. On the other side, the more 'bottom up' world of practices, some of which fitting with prevailing policy modes and communication, others providing alternative or even just emergent scopes and practices. A key question is how to tension can be approached, how it can be made productive, and how negative consequences, such as the widening gap between citizens and urban elites. What novel forms of urban governance and democracy can play a role? What other forms of ('smart') information gathering, knowledge development and sharing? How does better alignment between 'top down' and 'bottom up' processes contribute to urban responsiveness and resilience?

### ***New role for Science:***

The new role of science endeavour is different from other research projects due to its focus on 'unpractical' value-rational analysis, and on empowering through self-critical analysis. It does not so much address a concrete problem (except for a lack of rationality in action) but seeks to develop a different approach to defining, detecting, understanding and addressing problems. It is also different from research programmes and projects elsewhere due to its aim of learning to use philosophical approaches and questions by the discipline itself, i.e., by empirical social scientists and experts themselves rather than outsourcing the work. Finally, it differs in offering something only academia can produce. Any consultancy firm, any professional university-lector and any engineer can design ad hoc solutions to organisational problems, can assess solutions in terms of efficiency and effectiveness, and can suggest repairs. Academics have little in store to improve on this type of goal-rational research. Perhaps we can do it a little bit better, with a little bit more support from scientific theories, but the difference is and will always be gradual. What universities can add, uniquely and exclusively, is a goal-rational or reflectively rational analysis of organisations and organisational change. It is through reflective reason that on the one hand social scientific theories are made and improved, and that on the other hand qualitatively different – decidedly better – contributions can be made to society's sustainability broadly construed. This implies that we move from a technocratic kind of science towards a more reflective kind of science, taking in account the values and purposes, as experienced by citizens and scientists in society. It puts science back into society again. This is e.g. also addressed by concepts such as 'citizen science' or 'grass-root knowledge production'.

### ***Rethinking democracy***

With respect to newly emerging forms of democracy, we will monitor the changes occurring in the nature of contemporary democracies. In doing so it will be able to help shape the future organisation of society as it will be able (a) account for the variation in dissatisfaction with

current practices and performance (b) to understand which key factors help maintain resilient democratic practices in different social domains.

This hot spot research on democracy differs from other democracy research within the Netherlands because it (1) incorporates other domains than the 'classical, narrow democratic institutions' (by extending it to socio-economic sphere and the geographical sphere) (2) it incorporates the effects of policy implementation (whereas other democracy research is narrowed down to the 'input-side' of the political system (sometimes even just electoral behaviour) (3) it extends the problematic to European and global phenomena which tends to be a neglected factor in traditional democracy research.

The hot spot research on democracy adds to, but differs from other hot spots in the IMR because it poses the questions of representation and legitimacy, whereas Europe is confined to policy processes (and only those which are sparked by EU regulation), and Gender and Power because the latter focus on the position of social groups in society without focusing on the political institutional environment.

### ***Responsible organisation***

The research on responsible organisation from a relational perspective builds on a long tradition of the Nijmegen Business School, for which it has always been well known. This tradition was originally focused on business organisations not just as systems of social relations, but as socio-technical systems. In these systems, on the one hand turbulent environments, as we are confronted with now again, play an important role, while on the other hand the intricate relationality between technological development and the development of the system of social relations on which industrial organisations are built has changed (Emery & Trist, 1960)<sup>8</sup>. From this tradition of having a multi-dimensional look at how organisations work, the Nijmegen Business School, as a logical step forward has moved on to the current relational approaches (Jarzabkowski & Spee, 2009; Vaara & Whittington, 2012)<sup>9</sup>.

## **7. Research programme**

### *Rethinking Democracy*

- NWO projects on contagious conflict (discussing changes in socio-economic sphere and relation economics-politics) (Akkerman, Lehr)
- GAK project on pension choices (Delsen)
- NWO project on democracy (with History, Arts faculty) (Leyenaar)

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<sup>8</sup> Sociotechnical refers to the interrelatedness of social and technical aspects of an organisation. Sociotechnical theory is founded on two main principles:

- One is that the interaction of social and technical factors creates the conditions for successful (or unsuccessful) organisational performance. This interaction consists partly of linear 'cause and effect' relationships (the relationships that are normally 'designed') and partly from 'non-linear', complex, even unpredictable relationships (the good or bad relationships that are often unexpected). Whether designed or not, both types of interaction occur when socio and technical elements are put to work.
- The corollary of this, and the second of the two main principles, is that optimisation of each aspect alone (socio or technical) tends to increase not only the quantity of unpredictable, 'un-designed' relationships, but those relationships that are injurious to the system's performance.

Therefore, sociotechnical theory is about joint optimisation.

<sup>9</sup> See also: Alexander von Humboldt Lecture by Prof. David Seidl on 'Applied science as (productive) misunderstanding' January 13, 2014: <http://youtu.be/qFK8ZCjmfw>

- Discon survey (two waves so far; third expected) – data on populism (Akkerman, Zaslove)
- VIRAL data set collection on political use social media (Jacobs)
- public–private arrangements (Brandsen)

#### *Governance, Sustainability and Planning*

- PhD-project ‘Between Vision and Strategic Action - an analysis and interpretation of vision making exercises as arenas for new governance approaches in European metropolitan spaces’ Promotor: Peter Ache, financed by the IMR.
- Innovation-project ‘Smart Urban Regions of the Future’ (financed by innovation programme Dutch provinces), Erwin van der Krabben.
- Ongoing research Linda Carton on citizen sensors and air quality in Nijmegen.
- Citizens Initiatives and renewable energy (Oteman, PhD and Wiering – Leroy – Helderman)
- JPI-CC Mobilising Grassroots Innovations (Wiering- Lagendijk- Kooij- Oteman-Veenman)
- New models in economy and New Business models ( GPM- Bedrijfskunde)

#### *Assembling urban development:*

- JPI project Urban Europe on Gentrification 2.0 with PhD project of Freek de Haan and contributions by Huub Ploegmakers (post doc), Rianne van Melik, Huib Ernste, Arnoud Lagendijk
- PhD project of Simone Pekelsma about Gated Communities
- PhD Project of Marlies Meijer about Informality in Spatial Planning
- PhD programme with University of Bologna (political sciences) (1 PhD fits this hot spot)
- Participation in various Stadslab initiatives in Gelderland (Kooij, Lagendijk, Hospers)
- VIDI project (Roos Pijpers): Caring for diversity: employing practice, institutional and justice perspectives
- JPI-CC Mobilising Grassroots Innovations (Wiering, Kooij, Oteman, Lagendijk) using a relational approach to study and foster local capacities for sustainable energy transitions.

#### *New role of science*

- Participation in Templeton Foundation programme “The Good Market” (Floris Heukelom together with Eelke de Jong)
- PhD project on elites vs grassroots in council communist revolutions (Gaard Kets, Marcel Wissenburg, Joost Rosendaal)

#### *Responsible organisation:*

- PhD project of Henk Willems, on globalising alternative business models: The example of Mondragon (supervisor Prof. Huib Ernste)
- PhD Project on Management of Projects in Public and Healthcare Services (Supervisors: Allard van Riel, Kristina Lauche)
- PhD Project on Inter-organisational Project Management competences (Supervisors Allard van Riel, Bas Hillebrand)

## 8. Theoretical and methodological approach

A relational approach encompasses a broad set of perspectives, such as specific versions of Social Network Theory, Complexity Theory, Practice Theory, Actor-Network Theory, Assemblage Theory, and a diverse set of research methods. In general terms, they have a number of aspects in common (Reckwitz, 2002):

1. They all have the ambition, to come up with a less reductive and more holistic picture of the current complex societal situation, including a number of factors which hitherto have been neglected. They assume that the phenomena under investigation, are the result of not just a few main causal factors, but of a multiplicity of contingent factors and elements and circumstantial conditions enabling the interaction between these entities. They therefore do not privilege specific aspects, such as strategic decisions, or regulative institutional setting, or general discursive meanings above others, such as external events, enabling conditions, path-dependencies, imaginations or visions of a future to come, personal attributes, or informal settings. All these elements are not expected to be generated by or to derive their identity from their functionality in this process. Rather, they are expected to have a 'relation of exteriority' with the phenomenon under investigation, and thus are exchangeable by other elements or events having similar kinds of effects. This makes the phenomena under investigation to rather circumstantial 'assemblages' (DeLanda, 2006; MacFarlane, 2011a) of many diverse elements, in which small coincidental aspects can have great effects. This thus also questions the traditional roles of specific entities in the process. So citizens might not just be 'participants' for consultation by powerful decision-makers, but might as well present, in line with current interest in 'smart' (sic) governance, the origin, rather than the target, of professional action and self-organisation. Accordingly, such thinking invites us to study phenomena like cities, the environment, borders, public space, and real estate markets in a more contextualised manner.
2. As mentioned before, all crucial elements, are expected to 'emerge' from an ongoing process, an ongoing 'practice', and are not as such with all their attributes 'pre-given'. They are seen as always 'becoming'. So it will be difficult to clearly distinguish cause and effect as two separate categories, and the causal relationship between them as a stable general causal force. What often is seen as a constant factor is from a relational perspective seen as a dynamic property, which changes its character, depending on the relations with other factors. In this constant process of change, path-dependency limits the possibilities for future trajectories, but does not determine future courses, since also choices, distinctions, and differences made with respect to the multitude of options, in view of visions and imaginations of the future, contribute to the development of the phenomena under investigation. Outcomes are thus difficult to predict, and recommendations are bound by a degree of uncertainty. The main challenge is to comprehend the conditions of possibility, key triggers and processes of leverage producing turning minor events into major movements and innovations. With respect to the role of the state and policy-making, one should focus on how embryonic ideas and practices of governance evolve into dominant modes of governance or 'governmentalities' (Burchell, Gordon & Miller, 1991). Relational thinking, accordingly, has a fundamentally different take on how to achieve effective policies and interventions. Rather than the search for generic conditions and instruments of change, the approach prompts a 'hands on' engagement with relevant practices. The latter includes the use of reflexive



processes such as ‘learning by monitoring’ (Sabel, 1993) and ‘institutional bricolage’ (Buitelaar, Jacobs & Lagendijk, 2005).

3. In search of more comprehensive and holistic explanatory models, relational approach do not just take many different social relations into account but also include natural, material and physical conditions as crucial agential elements in the complex assemblage of the phenomena under investigation (Latour, 2005). It also does not reduce (social) actors to their mental aspects, but sees their role as practically ‘embodied’. ‘A practice is thus a routinized way in which bodies are moved, objects are handled, subjects are treated, things are described and the world is understood’ (Reckwitz, 2002, p. 250) and ‘practices’ proliferate through the co-evolution of materialities, human competencies, and discursive and institutional formations (Shove, Pantzar & Watson, 2012; Schatzki, 2012).

### **Methodological**

Relational Approaches allow the application of a broad spectrum of research methods, as its main purpose is to link the different components relevant for the emergence of the phenomenon under investigation. In this respect, both qualitative and quantitative methods can and will be used. However, since one of the basic principles in relational approaches, is the fact that the phenomena emerge and gain their contours and identity from the relationality, the network or the practice, it cannot be assumed that the categories and variables, we want to look for are already known in advance or could be formulated in a deductive model. At best they can be formulated as hypothetical, but what is crucial in the methodology of these relational approaches is the principle of openness for unexpected relations, conditions and situations. Relational approaches therefore have the ambition to *re-construct* the dimensions, categories, variables, conditions, and dynamics to grasp the contingent complexity of the situation. Therefore, a rather exploratory ethnographic approach is often used to analyse the cases and situations under investigation. In the practice of applying specific methods this ‘openness’ is always very relative as selections, prioritising, and focussing is always needed to keep the research feasible. In this framework, it can very well turn out that certain variables and relationships are indeed relevant and to a certain degree generalisable and as such could also be formulated and analysed in quantifiable models or could even be used to simulate the dynamics of the process under investigation. As such the methodology used in these relational approaches is of a very pragmatic non-exclusive nature, or as Nicollini (2012), calls it: ‘a tool box approach’ (see also Shove, Pantzar & Watson, 2012; Gherardi, 2012; Li, 2007). Nevertheless there are also specific additional methods, which may become useful to explore the complexity of relationships, such as network-analysis (Oerlemans & Knobens, 2006) and network approaches based on special web crawlers such as used in our study of the slow-food movement<sup>10</sup>. In general the trick will be to use all of these methods in a useful combination, so that we really can get a full picture of the complexity of the phenomenon under investigation.

## **9. Societal and policy relevance**

### **Assembling Urban Development**

Interested societal partners	Funding sources
Municipality of Eindhoven	
Municipality of Arnhem	JPI

<sup>10</sup> <http://rumovements.org/slowfood/>

Provincial Government Brabant	Leefbaar Platteland Programme
Provincial Municipality Gelderland	
Planbureau voor de Leefomgeving	
Platform 31	Ad hoc funds for events
Province of Gelderland	Energy transition

### ***Rethinking Democracy***

<b>Interested societal partners</b>	<b>Funding sources</b>
Raad voor Openbaar Bestuur	NWO
Raad voor Maatschappelijke Ontwikkeling	EU
ProDemos;	Ministeries
Ministerie BZK	
Kiesraad	
WRR	
Netherlands institute for multiparty democracy	
Montesquieu institute	
Employers organisations and trade unions	

### ***Governance, Sustainability and Planning***

<b>Interested societal partners</b>	<b>Funding sources</b>
Municipalities	JPI's
Water authorities	STW
Provinces	Interreg Europe
National government	NWO
Citizen initiatives	Horizon 2020
Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency	

### ***New Role of Science***

<b>Interested societal partners</b>	<b>Funding sources</b>
Ministry of the Interior, civil service	Ministries' budgets
EU-regions	Funds outside of NWO, e.g. Templeton Foundation, Volkswagen Stiftung, etc.
Transnational organisations	
Producers	VNO-NCW
NGOs	SOeP (Stg Oeconomische Politiek)

### ***Responsible Organisation***

<b>Interested societal partners</b>	<b>Funding sources</b>
Rijnstate Hospital	Province,
UWV	

## 10. Global networks

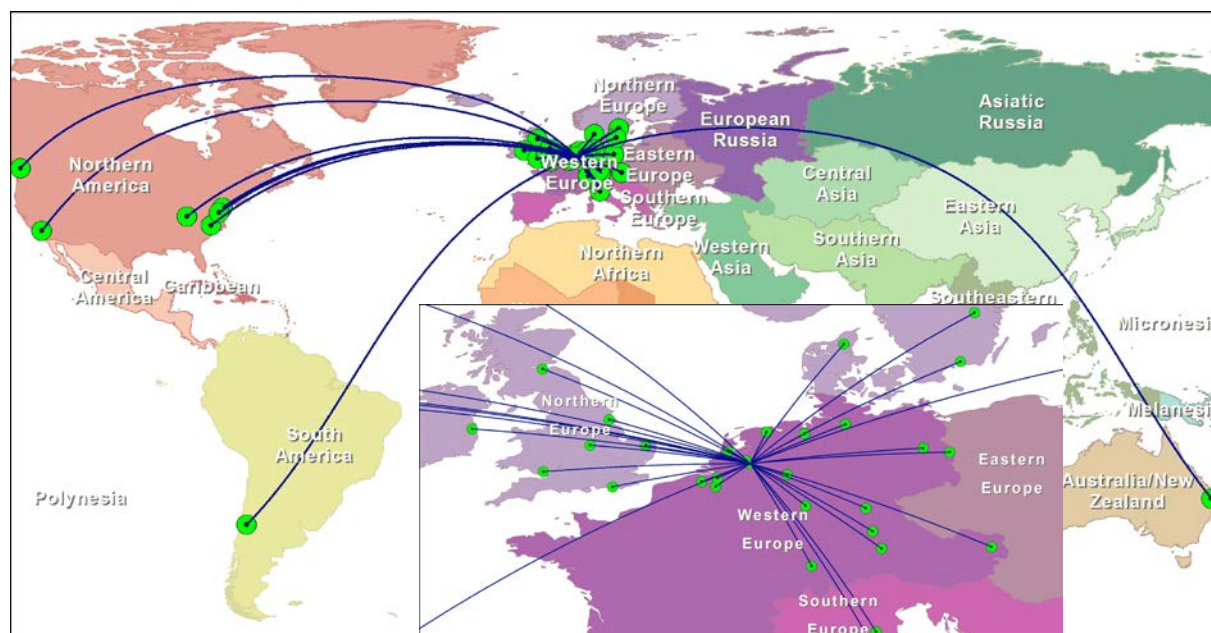


Figure 2: Map of linkages between Nijmegen and other places on the globe

### National and international research partners

#### Assembling Urban Development:

- Department of Spatial Planning, University of Groningen (Gert de Roo)  
<http://www.rug.nl/frw/organization/medewerkers/basiseenheden/planologie>
- Department of Environmental Policy, University of Wageningen (Gert Spaargaren)  
<http://www.wageningenur.nl/en/Expertise-Services/Chair-groups/Social-Sciences/Environmental-Policy-Group.htm>
- Department of Sociology, University of Amsterdam (Don Weenink)  
<http://www.uva.nl/en/disciplines/sociology/organisation/scientific-staff/soca/soca/folder/w/e/d.weenink/d.weenink.html?page=2&pageSize=50>
- Department of Geography, University of Zurich (Benedik Korf & Martin Müller)  
<http://www.geo.uzh.ch/en/units/pgg/about-us/staff/korf-benedikt/>  
<http://www.geo.uzh.ch/en/units/space-organization/about-us/martin-mueller/>
- Department of Architecture, Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (ETHZ), Zurich (Christian Schmid) <http://www.soziologie.arch.ethz.ch/de/prof-dr-christian-schmid2>
- Department of Geography, University of Leicester (Loretta Lees)  
<http://www2.le.ac.uk/departments/geography/people/professor-loretta-lees-1>
- Department of Geography, Durham University (Colin McFarlane)  
<https://www.dur.ac.uk/geography/staff/geogstaffhidden/?id=4570>
- Munich Center for Technology in Society, Technical University of Munich (Ignacio Farias) <https://www.mcts.tum.de/personen/professuren/ignacio-farias/>
- Department of Geography, Universität Bamberg (Mark Redepenning)  
<https://www.uni-bamberg.de/geo1/mitarbeiter/prof-dr-marc-redepennig/>
- Department of Mobility and Spatial Planning, University of Gent (Luuk Boelens)  
<http://planning.ugent.be/nl/over-ons/management/>

- Department of Urban and Regional Sociology, Humboldt Universität Berlin (Talja Blokland) <https://www.sowi.hu-berlin.de/de/lehrbereiche/stadtsoz/mitarbeiterinnen/a-z/talja-blokland>
- Department of Criminological Social Research, Universität Hamburg (Christine Hentschel) <http://www.wiso.uni-hamburg.de/en/professuren/kriminologie/team/academic-staff/prof-dr-christine-hentschel/>
- Department of Philosophy, University of Kentucky (Ted Schatzki) <https://philosophy.as.uky.edu/users/schatzki>
- Department of Geography, University of British Columbia, Vancouver (Derek Gregory) <http://pwias.ubc.ca/people/distinguished-professor/derek-gregory/>
- Department of Sociology, FernUniversität Hagen (Frank Hillebrandt) <https://www.fernuni-hagen.de/soziologie/team/lg1/frank.hillebrandt.shtml>
- Department of Sociology, Johannes Gutenberg Universität Mainz (Stefan Hirschauer) <https://www.theorie.soziologie.uni-mainz.de/universitaetsprofessor-dr-stefan-hirschauer/>
- Department of Comparative Cultural Sociology, Europa-Universität Viadrina, Frankfurt an der Oder (Hilmar Schäfer) <https://www.kuwi.europa-uni.de/de/lehrstuhl/vs/kulsoz/mitarbeiter/schaefer/index.html>
- Department of Sociology, Lancaster University (Elizabeth Shove) <http://www.lancaster.ac.uk/staff/shove/>
- Department of Comparative Cultural Sociology, Europa-Universität Viadrina, Frankfurt an der Oder (Andreas Reckwitz) <https://www.kuwi.europa-uni.de/de/lehrstuhl/vs/kulsoz/professurinhaber/index.html>
- Institute of Sport Science, Carl von Ossietzky Universität Oldenburg (Thomas Alkemeyer) <https://www.uni-oldenburg.de/thomas-alkemeyer/>
- Department of Sociology, Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt (Robert Schmidt) <http://www.ku.de/ggf/soziologie/soziologie3/personen/schriftenverzeichnis-robert-schmidt/#c94209>
- Department of Socio-ecological Transformation, Institute for Advanced Studies, Vienna (Michael Jonas) <https://www.ihs.ac.at/about/people/michael-jonas/>

#### *Rethinking Democracy:*

- VUB Brussels (Kris Deschouwer) <http://poli.vub.ac.be/team/kris-deschouwer>
- Scuola normale superiore Florence (Donatella Della Porta) <http://www.sns.it/ugov/persona/donatella-dellaporta>
- University of Sussex (Paul Taggart) <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/profiles/2609>
- University of Edinburgh (Eve Hepburn) [http://www.pol.ed.ac.uk/people/academic\\_staff/hepburn\\_eve](http://www.pol.ed.ac.uk/people/academic_staff/hepburn_eve)
- WZV Berlin Social Science Center <https://www.wzb.eu/en>
- National Center of Competence in Research (NCCR) Democracy in the 21st century, University of Zurich <http://www.nccr-democracy.uzh.ch/>
- Griffith University Brisbane (Haig Patapan) <https://www.griffith.edu.au/business-government/centre-governance-public-policy/staff/professor-haig-patapan>
- American University, Washington DC (James Thurber) <http://www.american.edu/spa/faculty/thurber.cfm>

- University of Amsterdam (Sarah De Lange) <http://www.uva.nl/en/about-the-uva/organisation/staff-members/content/l/a/s.l.delange/s.l.delange.html>
- Documentation Centre Dutch Political Parties (DNPP) University of Groningen (Simon Otjes) <http://www.rug.nl/staff/s.p.otjes/research>
- Santiago de Chile (Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser) <http://www.cristobalrovira.com/en/>
- University College Dublin (David Farrell) <http://www.ucd.ie/research/people/politic-sintrelations/professordavidfarrell/>
- University of Bologna (Political Sciences) <http://www.politicalsciences.unibo.it/en>
- LUISS, Rome, Italy (Mario Telo) <http://docenti.luiss.it/telo/>
- University of Nice Sophia Antipolis, France (Gilles Ivaldi) <http://urmis.unice.fr/?lvaldi-Gilles-21&lang=fr>

#### *Governance, Sustainability and Planning*

- Cardiff University, <http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/cplan/study/postgraduate/spatial-planning-and-development-msc>
- Blekinge Institute of Technology, [http://www.bth.se/dsn/dsn\\_eng.nsf/](http://www.bth.se/dsn/dsn_eng.nsf/)
- Deltares, <https://www.deltares.nl/en/>
- Research group on Environmental Governance, Utrecht University <http://www.star-flood.eu/partners/university-utrecht-environmental-governance/>
- Flood Hazard Research Centre at Middlesex University, London <http://www.star-flood.eu/partners/middlesex-university/>
- Institute for Environmental and Energy Law of the Faculty of Law of the KU Leuven <http://www.starflood.eu/partners/ku-leuven/>
- The Division of Social Sciences at Luleå University of Technology, Luleå University of Technology (LTU) <http://www.starflood.eu/partners/lulea-university-of-technology/>
- Institute for Agricultural and Forest Environment (IAFE) of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Poznan <http://www.starflood.eu/partners/institute-for-agricultural-and-forest-environment/>
- Research Centre CITERES University François Rabelais of Tours <http://www.star-flood.eu/partners/university-of-rabelais-de-tours/>
- GRONTMIJ <http://www.starflood.eu/partners/partner-1/>
- European Center for Flood Risk Prevention (CEPRI) <http://www.starflood.eu/partners/cepri/>
- University of Hull (Rüdiger Wurzel) [http://www2.hull.ac.uk/fass/politics/staff/professor\\_rudiger\\_wurzel.aspx](http://www2.hull.ac.uk/fass/politics/staff/professor_rudiger_wurzel.aspx)
- University of East Anglia (Andy Jordan) <https://www.uea.ac.uk/environmental-sciences/people/profile/a-jordan>
- University Antwerpen (Ilse Loots, Ann Crabbé) <https://www.uantwerpen.be/nl/personeel/ilse-loots/onderzoek/> <https://www.uantwerpen.be/nl/personeel/ann-crabbe/>
- Sustainable Energy Planning Research Group, Aalborg University, [http://vbn.aau.dk/en/persons/frede-hvelplund\(0e7e6b36-1e4e-483b-a317-3438f30029d6\).html](http://vbn.aau.dk/en/persons/frede-hvelplund(0e7e6b36-1e4e-483b-a317-3438f30029d6).html)
- Department of Technology and Social Change, Linköping University <http://www.tema.liu.se/tema-t/medarbetare/rohracher-harald/hem?!=en&sc=true>

### *New Role for Science:*

- Departamento de Ciencia Política, Universidad de Málaga (dr. Manuel Arias Maldonado)  
<http://www.uma.es/facultad-de-derecho/info/37897/departamentos-cpolitica-internacionalp-procesal/>
- Statsvetenskapliga institutionen, Stockholms Universitet (prof. dr. Ludvig Beckman)  
<http://www.statsvet.su.se/forskning/v%C3%A5ra-forskare/ludvig-beckman/ludvig-beckman-1.119977>
- Facultad de Derecho, Universidad de Desarrollo, Santiago de Chile (Prof. mr. Raul Campusano Droguett)  
<http://derecho-scl.udd.cl/persona/raul-campusano-droguett/>
- Prof. dr. Andrew Dobson, free agent  
<http://www.andrewdobson.com/>
- Geesteswetenschappen, Rijksuniversiteit Utrecht (Prof. dr. Marcus Düwell)  
<http://www.uu.nl/medewerkers/MDuwell>
- Politieke Wetenschap, Universiteit Leiden (dr. Marius de Geus)  
<http://www.universiteitleiden.nl/medewerkers/marius-de-geus>
- Department of Philosophy, University of Liverpool (dr. Simon Hailwood)  
<https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/philosophy/staff/simon-hailwood/>
- Departamento Geografía, Universidad de València (dr. Carme Melo Escrihuela)  
<http://www.uv.es/uvweb/departamento-geografia/es/profesores-investigadores/profesorado-personal-investigador/unidad-docente-del-departamento-1285858445556.html>
- Department of Philosophy, University of Eastern Finland (dr. Markku Oksanen)  
<https://www.uef.fi/web/oikeustieteet/yliopistonlehtorit-tutkijatohtorit-ja-yliopisto-opettajat>
- Sciences Po, Université de Lille (dr. Mathilde Szuba)  
<http://www.sciencespo-lille.eu/enseigner/la-recherche/nos-enseignants-chercheurs>
- Vakgroep Politieke Wetenschappen, Vrije Universiteit Brussel (dr. Mihnea Tanasescu)  
<http://poli.vub.ac.be/team/mihnea-tanasescu>

We intend to find partners (a) in Academia, with a broad experience in research with social impact (e.g. LSE for economics, University of East Anglia for environmental and political sciences, University of Edinburgh for both); (b) organisations promoting reflective rationality (e.g. Stichting Socrates, Wellcome Trust, Soros Foundation, various German Science Foundations funded by large corporations); (c) Dutch research institutions aiming for social impact (Rathenau Institute, Planbureau voor de omgeving, scientific bureaus of political parties, etc.)

### *Responsible Organisation:*

- Copenhagen Business School (prof. Jan Mouritsen)  
<http://www.cbs.dk/en/research/departments-and-centres/departments-of-operations-management/staff/jmom>
- Bocconi University, Milano (prof. Ileana Steccolini)  
<http://faculty.unibocconi.eu/ileanasteccolini/>
- City University London (prof. Laura Cabantous)  
[http://bunhill.city.ac.uk/research/cassexperts.nsf/\(smarturl\)/L.Cabantous](http://bunhill.city.ac.uk/research/cassexperts.nsf/(smarturl)/L.Cabantous)
- Instituto de Empresa, Madrid, Spain (prof. Mahmoud Ezzamel)

[http://www.ie.edu/business-school/faculty-research/faculty/mahmoud-ezzamel/?\\_adptlocale=en\\_US](http://www.ie.edu/business-school/faculty-research/faculty/mahmoud-ezzamel/?_adptlocale=en_US)

and Cardiff University, Great Britain

<http://business.cardiff.ac.uk/people/staff/mahmoud-ezzamel>

- The University of Sydney (prof. Wai Fong Chua)  
<http://sydney.edu.au/business/staff/waic>
- United Arab Emirates University, Al Ain (prof. Habib Mahama)  
<http://www.cbe.uaeu.ac.ae/en/departments/accounting/profile/habib%20mahama.shtml>
- University of Innsbruck (prof. Martin Messner)  
<https://www.uibk.ac.at/iol/controlling/team/martin-messner.html>
- University of Zurich (Prof. David Seidl)  
<http://www.business.uzh.ch/en/professorships/om/team/staff/seidl.html>
- University of Warwick, Coventry (Prof. Davide Nicolini)  
<http://www.wbs.ac.uk/about/person/davide-nicolini/>
- University of Trento, Italy (Prof. Silvia Gherardi)  
<http://web.unitn.it/en/rucola/18371/silvia-gherardi>

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## Appendix A: Sub-themes and synergies

### A.1 Assembling Urban Development

Cities have always been intriguing phenomena and focal points of all kinds of developments. Urban phenomena have also been investigated and theorised from many different angles, each coming up with different core aspects and factors explaining them. At the same time we have also experienced the limitations of each of these attempts in face of the increasing complexity of the urban environment. On the one hand this can be seen as an epistemological problem of insufficient knowledge of the specific urban phenomena. On the other hand, hitherto research of urban phenomena also does not fully conceptualise the specificities of the 'urban', e.g. by assuming the urban only to be a container or stage in or on which social and economic processes take place, while not fully taking into account the materiality and material forms of the urban environment (Hubbard, 2006 and 2015). This raises questions about the ontological assumptions and hence triggers a much more ontological approach to the study of urban developments. Urban development can therefore not sufficiently be addressed by pre-conceptualised abstract models or described by pre-given general categories and conceptualisations, but emerge from the unfolding and contingent realities, from the processual everyday practicalities of urban life and urban policies, through which urban development assembles itself:

*'Urbanism is produced through relations of history and potential, i.e. of the multiple and interrelated temporalisations of capital, social relations, cultures, materials, and ecologies that produce the city, but that have been and continue to be resisted and subject to alternative possibilities. Here, assemblage does not separate out the cultural, material, political, economic, and ecological, but seeks to attend to why and how multiple bits-and-pieces accrete and align over time to enable particular forms of urbanism over others in ways that cut across these domains, and which can be subject to disassembly and reassembly through unequal relations of power and resource.'* (McFarlane, 2011a, p. 652)<sup>11</sup>

To address urban development in this way, on the one hand epistemologically it is highly valuable for policy makers and society in general to gain a more comprehensive picture of the urban metabolism – the complex system of a great variety of in- and outgoing flows that connect urban life with nature. To date, little is known about these flows and in particular their interdependencies that make urban governance a 'messy problem' to tackle. Within this hot spot a broad understanding of the functioning of urban spaces will be gained by studying the interdependencies of these complex flows of people, firms, money and investments, goods and services, information etc. This will help us to understand key questions fostering or hampering urban development: what do cities live on in terms of people, resources, information, what do they 'absorb' in terms of water, food, energy and what do they emit. Moreover, current and future challenges and opportunities of urban flows are addressed and their implications for urban planners, who try to provide supportive infrastructure required for sustainable and resilient urban spaces now and into the future. On the other hand the ontological problem will be tackled by means of relational approaches, reaching from Complexity Theory inspired by the work of Prigogine and Stengers (1984, see also Portugali, 2006), Actor Network Theory (ANT) building on the work of Latour (1987 and 2005), Callon (1986) and Law (Law & Hassard,

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<sup>11</sup> Prof. Colin McFarlane is going to be Alexander von Humboldt guest early 2016, Jan. 11.

1999; Law & Bijker, 1992) and represented by Annemarie Moll<sup>12</sup>, Deleuzian Assemblage Theory (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987; Delanda, 2006)<sup>13</sup> or of what is now known as Practice Theories or praxeological approaches in the tradition of Bourdieu (1977, 1992), Giddens (1984) and Schatzki (2001; 2012)<sup>14</sup>, are very helpful and are widely used in our research at Radboud University Nijmegen, making Nijmegen to a knowledge hub for relational approaches in the spatial sciences in general and in urban research in particular.

In these approaches we can distinguish between a purely descriptive use, in which it is described how different elements fit together in the phenomenon or object under investigation, and a more processual use focused on the dynamic and emergent alignment and realignment of the different components out of which the objects or phenomena under investigated are contingently constituted (Phillips, 2006). This addresses also the political and policy relevant aspect of how cities can be thought 'otherwise' in the play between the actual and the possible (McFarlane, 2011b). From this perspective Farías<sup>15</sup> and Bender (2009) show how these relational approaches serve as a basis for conceptualising the city and urbanism as an alignment of a multiplicity of processes of becoming, socio-technical networking, and heterogeneous collectivity and as localised substantiations of travelling conceptualisations, categorisations and policies (McCann, 2012; Healey, 2013). So, the major contribution of these relational approaches is to refrain from the use of broad predefined categories such as 'social determinations', 'regulations', 'institutionalisations' or 'market forces'. These categories are cannot serve as sufficient explanatory factors. Instead relational scholars tend to focus on the idiosyncrasies of the functioning of a specific institution and discern what makes it tick. Institutions such as planning laws, professional practices, scientific knowledge, and emerging research themes are conceptualised as cognitive frames, rule systems, discourse coalitions or organisational configurations. From this perspective one will attempt to unveil networks of actors and 'actants' thus producing allegedly better explanations than traditional social science. The type of questions guiding this kind of research concerns how certain technologies, practices, rules, ideas and structures have (or have not) come about, how they are made possible, thanks to what and to whom, and finally what the effects are of these workings (cf. Boelens, 2010).

In the field of urban research in the IMR we specialise in investigating a number of different but related issues:

#### *Urban Public Space:*

Public Space literature often one-sidedly focuses on the supply side of public space, where one observes a shift from local government towards increased privately owned and managed 'public spaces' suggesting 'the end of public space'. But what seems to be a universal concept is in reality substantiated in various contexts in rather different ways (van Melik & Lawton,

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<sup>12</sup> Recent Alexander von Humboldt guest of our faculty ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O\\_WSQQNuAQc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O_WSQQNuAQc)) and NWO Spinoza Prize winner.

<sup>13</sup> and from the field of Spatial Planning see also Wezemael, J. van (2008) The Contribution of Assemblage Theory and Minor Politics for Democratic Network Governance. *Planning Theory*. Vol. 7 pp. 165-186.

<sup>14</sup> For an overview see also Reckwitz (2002), see also the Alexander von Humboldt Lecture by Theodore Schatzki (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lma5bDq8uNk>)

<sup>15</sup> Farías recently presented his views in the framework of an IMR minisymposium in 2014 (see: <http://www.ru.nl/gpm/@937446/pagina/>) but see also the upcoming Alexander von Humboldt Lecture, at Monday, November 23, 2015.

2011), and needs to be conceptualised in a much more multi-dimensional way, consisting of ownership, management, accessibility and inclusiveness (Langstraat & van Melik, 2013). To fully grasp the complexity on the urban phenomenon of 'public space', we even need to go beyond the supply side and in addition need to look at the demand side, researching the use, experience and meaning of public space for different user groups, including older people living in ageing communities (van Melik & Pijpers, submitted) and young women of immigrant descent (Spierings et al., forthcoming) or minority groups with specific sexual orientation (Malipaard, 2015). Following this track further the different forms of co-production of public space by government, market and civil society needs to be investigated in different spatial contexts (van Melik & van der Krabben, forthcoming), focussing on travelling policies and the translations taking place on the way as derived from relational theory as its main focus. To fully understand the assemblage of public urban space, one also needs to investigate the role of the physical and material design and the differing way these are experienced by different groups of inhabitants and users. Especially the latter aspects can turn public space in to heavily contested space, as e.g. in gentrifying neighbourhoods. This calls for research dealing with different physical appearances and their resulting relationship with private space. Hitherto thinking along binary lines of public and private has 'paralysed' the academic debate in producing either 'bright' or 'gloomy' camps and disregards the contextual differences of the meaning of public and private and fuels hyperbolic argumentation which the relational approach to public space seeks to overcome. Finally also the discursive element in the assemblage of urban public space needs to be addressed for example by focussing on the 'mythification of the public', problematising the disaggregation of the public from the private and putting them in a more relational perspective (Merry<sup>16</sup> & van Melik, in preparation).

#### *Urban real estate markets:*

In the field of urban policy making, it traditionally has been a categorical question if urban development can be best organised by hierarchical steering or should be left to the market (Davies; 2005). Both approaches are however too limited in scope to represent how in real urban life change literally takes place (Swyngedouw<sup>17</sup>, Moulaert & Rodriguez, 2002). In this framework soon a more relational mode of governance in the form of policy networks were suggested. From there it was only a small step to also frame the market mechanism in a more relational way, by addressing the emergent institutional setting of these markets (Webster, 2008)<sup>18</sup>. Especially for real estate markets, this opens the possibility, to intervene in urban development indirectly by setting up the 'right' institutional framework for these markets, as traditional models of land governance do not seem to work anymore (Needham, 2007; Buitelaar, 2010; van der Krabben, 2011; Heurkens, 2012). But as Webster (2008), following Hayek, stated, markets are not given, but emergent social phenomena, which need to be viewed as contingent assemblages. They are the emergent properties of interrelations between specific situational conditions and dispersed activities of large ensemble of agents (Hens IV & Schenk-Hoppe, 2009, p. 210). Especially the real estate market represents an assemblage of forces that work together to produce space in the inner city, for which no single actor is responsible and which differs from case to case (Lloyd, 2008, p. 48). Especially the contingent conditioning

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<sup>16</sup> Michael Merry is also one of the recent Alexander von Humboldt lecturers (see: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dUNU1I6-vVs>)

<sup>17</sup> See also his Alexander von Humboldt lecture: 'Let the People Govern? Civil Society, Governmentality and Governance-Beyond-the-State' (see: <http://www.ru.nl/gpm/onderzoek/alexander-von/past-lectures/>)

<sup>18</sup> See also Alexander von Humboldt Lecture <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HOL5L3UjdII>

and emergent properties of these markets and the relationship to the institutional framing, is an important focus of a relational approach to urban real estate markets. This is not just topical in relation to urban real-estate markets but also in relation to local and global markets for e.g. micro-finance as an important instrument for local development.

*Bordering and ordering urban space:*

As already noted under the heading of Urban Public Space, cities are important meeting places for diverse groups of people. Cities as such are an important hub, stage and resource for the manifold interactions in our society. At the same time they can also create frictions, conflict and displacement. To address these complex relationships, we need to conceptualise the urban as an assemblage of multi-ethnic, multi-class and multi-cultural trajectories (Angell, Hammond & van Dobben Schoon, 2014; Mills, 2014), instead of just from one or the other group perspective. This issue is directly addressed in the current JPI project on Gentrification 2.0 (de Haan, Ernste, Lagendijk & van Melik, 2013), but also by the comparative research project on gated communities (Simone Pekelsma<sup>19</sup>). In both cases comparative research in gentrification and gated communities research is conducted. Drawing on assemblage theory, these projects use interdisciplinary methods to understand how different social, economic and spatial processes coalesce in shaping neighbourhoods in different cities. In case of the Gentrification project a multilayered framework is developed discerning three levels: 'metrics', 'interpretations' and 'practices'. While many comparative gentrification studies focus on different spatial outcomes of gentrification (or 'metrics'), we – following the relational logics -- instead argue that focussing more on interpretations and especially practices would enhance our knowledge of gentrifying neighbourhoods (Lagendijk, et al., 2014). Thus, we try to approach gentrification as an 'open concept', without testing certain pre-defined prepositions but instead regarding it as an assemblage of practices in process. In both cases these urban phenomena are directly related to how urban space and how the 'bordering' within the urban realm is experienced/interpreted and practiced by the respective groups (Ernste, 2014; 2015) and how these phenomena and their conceptualisations emerge from the broader context.

*Urban Policies:*

In all above endeavours in urban research from a relational perspective of the IMR finally the question needs to be posed what can be learned from these cases for urban policy making in the current economic, demographic and societal situation. Given the conditions, which can be characterised by a high level of complexity, uncertainty, austerity, demographic shrinkage, and heavy reliance on the civil society, urban policy makers as well as civil society actors are urgently seeking new ways for policy making. Hitherto simplistic policy recipes are largely outdated and ineffective and need to be re-thought from a relational perspective, taking into account the many different dimensions, actors, and contexts (Healey, 2006; 2007). These more comprehensive aspects are e.g. addressed in the research conducted by Marlies Meijer on informal aspects of spatial planning under conditions of demographic shrinkage. This project studies informality within spatial planning: how (besides governmental organisations) civil society is capable of making and implementing plans for the future of their living environment. This research focuses on three European regions faced with depopulation: the Achterhoek region in the Netherlands, Galicia in Northern Spain and Southern Sweden. This project is linked to the PhD projects of Janneke Rutgers (demographic shrinkage in the Achterhoek) and Maja Roçak (demographic shrinkage and social capital in European manufacturing cities) and

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<sup>19</sup> <http://simonepekelsma.nl/index.php/research-2/>



the research and consultancy work of Prof. Gert-Jan Hospers (Hospers, 2012; 2014; Haase, Hospers, Pekelsma & Rink, 2012; Hospers & Reverda, 2015). Given the complexity and relationality of urban policy making and of the circumstances in which this needs to take place in near future, urban policies cannot be conceptualised as purely instrumental, but rather as reflexive, experimental and at best advancing in small marginal steps (Hillier<sup>20</sup>, 2011; Palermo & Ponzini, 2015).

*Main research questions:*

- What makes urban phenomena like gentrification, gated communities, urban development, urban real-estate markets, integrative public space, possible? How do relational networks of actors and ‘actants’ create the conditions of possibility of these phenomena? How are they constituted or ‘assembled’ from what different components?
- What are the path dependencies in the emergent urban processes? How do future-oriented imaginations and envisionings, focused on the discrepancy between the actual and the possible, influence the evolution of these urban phenomena through articulation, performance and enactment? What provides them with power and ‘agency’? Specifically, how do urban policies evolve and what makes them effective under these circumstances?
- What are the contingencies and relations of exteriority of the different urban assemblages? What does the comparison between different cases tell us about how these phenomena can be thought ‘otherwise’, providing alternative possibilities? What is the role of the situational material and embodied circumstances in the production of the urban assemblages?
- How are these urban assemblages conceptualised and practiced? And how do the respective categorisations, identities, roles, expectations and metrics evolve from these practices? What does this teach us about alternative conceptualisations?

## ***A.2 Rethinking Democracy***

The end of the Cold War did not produce the clear-cut victory of liberal democracy that was anticipated by writers such as Francis Fukuyama (Fukuyama, 1992). Of course, the third wave of democracy, extending liberal democracy to central and Eastern Europe, and, subsequently, to many former third world countries, seemed testimony to the democratic turn. Indeed, at first, the rise of regional organisations, themselves partly a response to the waves of economic and financial globalisation of the 1990s and early 2000s, particularly the EU and NAFTA but also AU, Mercosur, and ASEAN, seemed to embrace important principles of the rule of law and freedom of speech, themselves essential ingredients to liberal democracy: even if not all member states were full-fledged democracies, still their adoption of such values through their membership of an international organisation was bound to conduce them towards internalising and practicing such values in the long run. Even at the global level, there were signs that the pluriformity of global politics would finally be recognised by the small number of states that called the shots throughout the Cold war and might result in a restructuring of the global institutional framework: extending the number of leadership positions in international institutions (UN Security Council, IMF, etc.); incorporating societal interests (global civil society) into clubs previously exclusively run by states (e.g. WTO); and establishing, however, fragile, legal solutions for conflicts, as in the WTO and NAFTA trade panels and the attempts to create a stricter system of humanitarian law (through the ICC). All in all, it seemed that essential

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<sup>20</sup> See also Alexander von Humboldt lecture: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1rrjrWe0XAI>

elements of liberal democracy: representation of the plurality of interests, freedom of speech, and some kind of rule of law, was spreading across countries, globally, and into specific societal sectors.

Twenty-five years later, the optimism has gone. The new pessimism is expressed in various forms:

First, liberal democracy is mostly formally embraced, but is increasingly challenged as an idea: it may thus no longer be the only game in town (cf. Bilodeau, 2014); actually, new forms of government are even proposed, most obviously the illiberal democracy officially proposed in the Hungary of Orban's ruling Fidesz party, but also the 'new authoritarianism' of economically successful states in Asia. Also, the system of rule of law is debated, not only by social groups who would like a different system of law to operate alongside the democratic rule of law (e.g., Muslim groups favouring local sharia application), but also by champions of the rule themselves, e.g. those seeking to curb individual liberties for the sake of national security in an age of terrorism, or states like the UK who wish to withdraw from such supranational legal frameworks as the European Court of Human Rights.

Second, within firmly established democracies, many members of the polis no longer feel they are represented properly, or that their interest is systemically no longer weighed in a fair fashion by the political elite. The rise of populism in many countries is often linked to this general feeling of dissatisfaction, particularly in countries where contestation [the chance that elections bring regular changes in leadership] (Dahl, 1971) has been absent for a long time (e.g., Italy, Japan, Netherlands). However, this lack of representation is not limited to the political domain: in many countries employees feel their interests are underrepresented, especially in sectors that are heavily globalised. All the more so, for the numerous ex-employees who now run one person companies ('ZZP-ers').

Third, these feelings of relative deprivation have been reinforced by the perceived impact of economic and financial globalisation, especially since the advent of the crisis in 2007-8. Citizens increasingly feel that their lives are more dependent on external factors that are hard to get a grip on. In that sense democracies live a paradoxical situation: they presumably offer citizens the best option in terms of giving direction to their lives themselves, yet the vulnerability of democratic, open economies to globalisation reduces the perceived effectiveness and usefulness of democracy. This feeling will be the stronger, the more citizens feel democratic capacity to shape policies is diminished by the growing power of hard to grasp, supranational institutions like the European Union, even if the EU through comitology seeks to incorporate many different societal interests in different policy areas into its Byzantine-like decision procedures.

Fourth, we witness that certain portions of society seek to develop alternative ways to improve their capacity to shape their own lives. This is partly done by specific systems of networks in various policy domains, partly by organising new political movements (e.g. the Indigados) – often transnational in character. In some systems this is explicitly welcomed and encouraged by the government (e.g. through the notion of 'participatiesamenleving' in the Netherlands), sometimes the unintended consequence of privatizing and decentralizing specific public tasks, partly inspired by the notion of New Public Management. At the same time, it

remains unclear which societal interests are thus represented and which remain relatively excluded. Also, the notion of the public sphere may thus change to such an extent that political representation becomes increasingly devoid of its meaning.

We thus witness, possibly as a consequence, a desperate attempt to reinvigorate democracy by various ways: one is attempting to include more citizens in the classical system of representation, e.g. by introducing elements of direct democracy into the system. Another is the embracement of the new networks at the level of the various policy domains, although oversight and equality remain problematic. A third way is the endorsement of what seems a cry for leadership – in the public, private as well as public/private hybrid spheres – a development fed by the trend of personalisation not only of politics, but also of businesses and ‘good cause’ NGOs, itself originating from the mediatisation of society (networks; social media; television); a fourth way is to engage in a redefinition of what constitutes a political society’s identity and discussion on who is member or not of the polis.

Finally, these developments are clearly related to events in world politics. External shocks affect the public agenda and the terms at which political competition takes place. e.g. the end of the cold war discredited communism as a viable political alternative and thus bereft dominant parties of their traditional bogey man, thus ushering in their own downfall. Similarly, the embracement of democratic values internationally has locked democracies in when it comes to foreign policies: they must stay true to their principles, thus increasing the demand for humanitarian intervention, not only by states but also by private groups mobilizing for human rights causes.

It remains unclear however, why some political systems seem more affected than others, and why some respond in different ways than others. The hot spot wants to describe and explain such differences across time and countries

*This results in the following research questions:*

- Which different concepts of democracy compete with another? Which alternatives to democracy compete with democracy? How does this compare with historical eras in which democracy was not yet the only game in town and was heavily contested (interbellum; late 19th century)? Which solutions do societies propose and choose in competing claims over the rule of law?
- How to explain variation in dissatisfaction? How to explain differences in rise of (forms of) populisms? To what extent is such dissatisfaction mirrored in the socio-economic sphere (overlapping or crosscutting effect)?
- To what extent are dissatisfied citizens victims of globalisation and Eurosceptic? What explains the lack of knowledge of representation at the European level?
- What variation in alternative ‘governance’ and contestation modes do we find in different domains? How to account for the variation in governmental responses to such alternatives? How does this affect the dominant notion of the ‘public domain/the res publica’?
- What variations in different democratic repertoires exist? To what extent does the notion of leadership change over the years? To what extent is this notion borrowing from other domains than the political (e.g. business, sports); to what extent do we draw on historical notions of leadership? How are these notions reflected in the personalisation

of politics (and the civil society) e.g. through media? How does this feed into discussion of national identity and how does this translate into policies (domestic as well as foreign)?

- What is the exact relationship between the spread of democratic values internationally and the foreign policy behaviour of democratic states and their private citizens?

### ***A.3 Governance, Sustainability and Planning***

In relation to urban development an avalanche of project and initiatives can be mentioned reaching from city-labs, modern forms of neighbour-help to community practice projects. Also referring to migration policies the hospitality initiative can be valued as such an example. Within the realm of climate change -mitigation and -adaptation the concept of resilient communities is developed and leads to joint initiatives in flood protection, cooperatives in water resources management, green-roofing cities, etc. This wave of new societal initiatives and innovations in turn lead to new ideas on participatory knowledge production, monitoring and geo-informational practices and new questions e.g. in relation to new forms of democratic practices. A particularly intriguing question is to what extent planning cultures influence the balance between the space for practice development, the modes and intensities of selection, and the reach changes in practices have in society. E.g. what implications for urban and regional development does the recent evolution of spatial planning have from the classic conflict management approach to planning in a market economy towards a more collaborative approach? The current working title for the revised master can also be read as an indication of future orientations in research: managing SMART cities and regions. Our intention is to reflect on current and anticipate future developments, for instance expressed in a diversification of lifestyles, to work out opportunities for professional responses and actions. We see a clear challenge for professional conduct connected with this, with the planner becoming more and more a manager of spatial change. Planning understood as managing spatial processes emphasises the institutional and procedural dimensions of our professional actions. It further emphasises a growing interconnectivity with stakeholders across the entire spectrum, including SMART citizens who contribute to smart territorial development. In addition to actual strengths of our profile, an element of foresight to explore urban futures will be added. This is epitomised by the core research theme and project of the chair holder, the urban futures laboratory, but it will also be developed as an umbrella theme.

Therefore research in planning focusses on the concept of the smart citizen, and methods of participatory monitoring.

*This results in the following research questions:*

- What is the role of smart citizens in urban futures?
- How could professional planners facilitate (smart) citizen initiatives?
- How could methods of participatory monitoring strengthen citizen initiatives?

Sustainability finds its origins in the forest management of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century, developing concepts of 'sustainable yield' and a wise use of (forest) resources. It reached a wider public as part of the World Conservation Strategy (1980) referring mostly to the carrying capacity of natural systems and to issues of conservation of ecological systems. In 1987 the well-known definition of sustainable development by the UN World Commission on Environment and development (Brundtland report) was strategically placed to connect environment with

development, emphasising the balance between social and economic development (mostly emphasising the poor) with environment and ecology.

Sustainability (ignoring the misuse of the term to become 'everything that should be or is maintained') is nowadays broadened to become a search for a balance between ecology, economy and social equity. It is mostly referred to as the balance between three capitals: People, Profit and Planet. As 'Profit' is no end-value or capital in itself, but a means to other ends, we would rather prefer three categories of values: social values, values of prosperity and ecological values.

In food production there is a wave of stimulating food production close to home; as a consequence of climate change and related adaptation, people are organising themselves under the flag of transition towns and there is increasing attention paid to alternatives for our anonymous globalised economies and financial markets through seeking shared economy mechanism in taxi-driving, housing and tourism, to mention a few. The sharing economy is showing us new, sometimes disruptive technologies that change our ways of interacting and therefore changes specific domains of the economy (Uber/ AirBNB). Weconomy / new business models etc. (Jonker, 2014; Rotmans, 2014).

Within the realm of climate change -mitigation and -adaptation the concept of resilient communities is developed and leads to joint initiatives in flood protection, cooperatives in water resources management, green roofing cities, etc. In relation to urban development initiatives an avalanche of project and initiatives can be mentioned reaching from city-labs, modern forms of neighbour-help to community practice projects. Also referring to migration policies, the hospitality initiative can be valued as such an example.

This wave of new societal initiatives and innovations in turn leads to new ideas on participatory knowledge production, monitoring and geo-informational practices and new questions e.g. in relation to new forms of democratic practices.

*This results in the following research questions:*

- What is the role of societal initiatives in transitions (energy, food, climate proofing... )?
- What are interesting grassroots innovations and developments?
- What is the role of government in collaborative-instead of participatory- planning and governance?
- What are the side effects of increasing roles of Civil Society, representation etc.?
- Questioning Deliberative democracy in environmental domains/ Stakeholder management etc.

*These research questions are being addressed by:*

- JPI-CC Mobilising Grassroots Innovations
- Participatory monitoring
- New Business models

#### **A.4 New Role of Science**

The agenda of academic research is partly determined by the wants of society but (if it is to have any societal relevance) it should also and perhaps primarily address its needs. Self-re-

reflection on the fundamental assumptions, the aims and goals and ultimate telos of an organisation is rare, but at no time is it more needed and appropriate than when structural changes are taking place – the ‘relational changes’ and exceptional changes in the environment of governing institutions resulting in non-traditional, hybrid forms of organisation. An essential part of the ‘relational approach’ that the overall research programme tries to develop is the development of a ‘methodology’ for this essential type of (self-) reflective rationality, helpful both for organisations and environments in change, and for empirical social scientific research addressing change at best in goal-rational terms. We could call this endeavour the ‘(co-)creation of reflective rationality in hybrid organisations and environments’ In more concrete terms, this endeavour has two aims: (1) to collect, tests, organise and streamline existing experience in and guidelines for reflective rationality, resulting in protocols for both academic experts and ‘the’ field, thereby promoting the ‘mainstreaming’ of reflective rationality; and (2) to support and promote that academic products aimed at social impact (Dutch: ‘valorisatie’) can also be translated into, and be further used as, professional academic output.

It can be described as a study of sustainability, broadly construed. Nowadays, while all societies are faced with additional threats – most acutely in the wake of economic, political, religious and technological globalisation – the term is increasingly applied to every effort to protect the viability of our complex societies: a sustainable organisation is not just climate-neutral but at ease and peace with its physical, social, political and legal environment – and is ready to survive its present members. One remarkable trait of this quest for ‘broad’ sustainability is that it looks for answers to viability threats not in general recipes, strict schemes and monolithic models (as the Founding Fathers of the USA, the League of Nations, the UN did) but in ad hoc answers: unique, diverse, diffuse, cooperative, problem-focused responses. None of the institutions currently making up the EU, for instance, have a clear design, an identifiable precedent or a robust theoretical foundation; and most are based on simplistic notions of the rationality of citizens and the governability of their environment. None of the ways in which governance has taken shape in western societies is easily comparable across borders – or even within national borders. Like biodiversity was the cornerstone of environmental sustainability, organisational or cyber-diversity seems to be the cornerstone of sustainability ‘broadly construed’. And obviously, the most fundamental risk to such pragmatic, economic, in Weberian terms goal-rational design of policies, institutions and structures is that they do not deliver what is required of them because what Weber called value-rationality and we reflective rationality was ignored – because, more bluntly formulated, no one ever bothered to ask which unlikely assumptions were made and what goals were worth pursuing. This, we believe, calls for a new way of ‘doing science’, particularly applied social science: not as goal-rational efficiency research but as value-critical and contextualizing (and self-reflection guiding) work. We will show the need for this ‘new way of doing science’ (1) through ‘normal’ theory-guided research on two cases (humans’ bounded rationality in economics the emergence and implementation of economic liberalism in different political contexts, and ‘Earth Science’ as a suggested answer to the global environmental crises of the Anthropocene); as well as (2) by developing a protocol for the promotion of reflective rationality in (research on) the creation of hybrid organisations.

*Summarised in the form of research questions:*

- Can we develop a more precise vocabulary that brings together critical reflection on assumptions (e.g. rational homo oeconomicus) and on goals (value rationality) under the one heading of reflective rationality?

- What contributions to reflective rationality in hybrid organisations and environments do our academics actually make? What part of this is demand, what need? (Bounded rationality, Economic liberalism and Earth Science will serve as test cases here.)
- What makes hybrid organisations in hybrid environments more and less susceptible to invitations for reflective rationality?
- Can we standardise the type of questions that need to be included in goal-rationally oriented research projects to make them appropriately reflective?

This research on a new role for science will for the greater part be based on ‘piggybacking’: we re-use any ‘social impact’ work done by the academics elsewhere in this programme (consultancy reports, public lectures, panels, professional publications), we stimulate the production of more such output (by ourselves as much as by others), and we ask programme members to contribute ‘experience notes’ reflecting on the strengths and weaknesses of individual attempts to produce social impact. On the basis of these raw data, we will develop, in dialogue both with ‘practical’ users and ‘academic’ producers of products of value-rational reflection (using the now classic reflective equilibrium method in philosophy), to produce the protocol document mentioned above.

A second project to be conducted under this heading is an investigation into the transformation of ordoliberal economic ideas at three sites of translation: central banks, scientific bureaus of political parties, and media. The countries investigated are Germany, the Netherlands, and Switzerland. The period covered is 1945 through 1980. During the postwar period, ordoliberalism decisively informed economic policy making in these countries, and contributed to the rapidly rising levels of welfare in this period. In addition, ordoliberalism emerged as a principal contender to the dominant Anglo-Saxon political economy following the economic and credit crises of 2008 and beyond. The project investigates how the initially relatively general and broad academic ideas of ordoliberals in the 1930s – 1950s, were transformed into specific policy proposals at central banks, scientific bureaus, and major newspapers and magazines. We contrast and compare the mechanism of translation both across these three sites of translation and across the three countries – Germany, the Netherlands, and Switzerland. The project thus not only sheds light on the often overlooked mechanism of the transformation of ideas into policy proposals, but by doing so in addition informs current discussions of economic liberalism and economic policy making in Europe.

In collaboration with its director Niels Beugeling we currently explore the possibilities for an exhibition at the Dutch Permuseum towards the end of the project ([www.persmuseum.nl](http://www.persmuseum.nl)) and we are investigating collaboration with the program “Andere Tijden”. When these collaborations turn into fruition additional funds will be solicited with among others the Mondriaan Fund and the Foundation for Democracy and Media. We are also exploring collaboration with the Landelijke werkgroep economie-onderwijs (LWEO), to develop an elective “lesbrief” on the role of ordoliberalism in Dutch economic policy after the Second World War, that will built on research as well as exhibition. Finally, we currently explore together with the Max Planck Moral Economies Research School in Berlin, and with local contacts in Lausanne and Geneva the development of similar activities.

### **A.5 Responsible Organisation**

Management and accounting are not just the realm of business organisations but have penetrated deeply in both private and public organisations. Management, accounting may be conceptualised as actors in socio-material networks. The organisation is conceptualised as a fabric of relations that constantly move and change. This conceptualisation implies a shift in the unit of analysis from the individual actors or groups of actors within an organisation towards the associations, and in particular towards the interactions between involved human- and non-human actors, within and beyond the organisation. Social-material networks not simply and linearly develop from decisions taken by distanced managers. Changes are to a large extent uncontrollable and unpredictable emergent network effects. Socio-material networks are as such never completely guided and programmed from a managerial centre above or outside the network; their working is never the result of simple rational and programmable means-end relations.

From a relational view management and accounting exceed their traditional functional properties. A relational perspective does not fit with the conception of accounting artefacts (such as activity based costing, budgets, transfer prices) as the results of design activity by a managerial centre, nor does it fit with distanced cybernetic control with feed-back relations as they are so clearly a part of a functionalists approaches towards management accounting and control. Such distanced cybernetic control may to a certain extent regulate or modify the ongoing interactions in a network, but they cannot generate the interactions and interaction patterns themselves.

The adoption of a relational paradigm implies that management and accounting are not perceived as the result of 'outside' systems design and implementation. It is acknowledged that an organisation and its constituencies can never be completely controlled by a managerial centre. In a relational paradigm the involved material conditions and artefacts are perceived as, similarly important as human actors. They are shaped and enacted inside the network. In management and accounting the relevant artefacts, like 'the hard facts' of some performance parameters recorded in yearly reports are defined and generated in the network through multiple interactions. In a relational paradigm designers (who may take the identity of managers) are part of the network and may have more or less power. Their identities and powers are constructed through the network (that may be well extend beyond the boundaries of the firm or organization at hand). Research into how managerial strategies and accounting, routines come into being in large socio-material networks do *not* result in one-directional instrumental knowledge and advises. Much more the through this relational approach newly gained knowledge is *enactive* of nature. It expresses how reality is (re)created in concrete-contingent situations through interactions between multiple actors, both human and non-human. For instance, enactive knowledge expresses how a balanced scorecard is shaped and enacted in concrete contingent networks and how it is involved in power struggles between multiple actors. Contrary to instrumental knowledge that claims to be a-political, enactive knowledge expresses the ontologically political nature of management and accounting. Enactive knowledge does not prescribe managers what to do in certain situations, but expresses that what is done in concrete-contingent situations is always one version of the better and the worse, the right and the wrong, the appealing and the unappealing (see also Law, 2007). Things might always have been different. As such it provides a more realistic picture of what can (alternatively) be done or what cannot be done, and is open for creative re-combination



of the different components and aspects at stake. As such the relational approach towards management and accounting is focused on the dynamics of the processes involved and on *change*. At the same time it is especially interested in how certain practices are stabilised and territorialised (that is, it may help creating distinct spaces that are governed by specific managers).

Another aspect of the operation of an organisation or company is its relatedness to the outside world. In this respect we take the contemporary business organisation in all its relatedness and complexity as a starting point for our thinking, research and teaching. The globalising world in which we operate has substantially contributed to the increase of relatedness, complexity and turbulence. This exposes business organisations to many forces and situations, which cannot easily be controlled, and thus puts them in an increasingly vulnerable position. On the other hand, this volatile and environment offers many hitherto unknown opportunities. Business organisations, need to develop a sophisticated responsiveness and responsibility to successfully cope and take advantage of these developments.

In this framework a number of global issues such as governance, gender equality and other issues of justice and equality, financial crises, depletion of natural resources, growing numbers asylum seekers, etc. have re-enforced the urgency to (re-)evaluate the contemporary forms and modes of business organisation and to design and build new ones. The time has come to explore what new organisational concepts are needed to cope with this new situation and with the new complexity.

The traditional rather 'closed' and 'one-directional' concept of industrial organisation has come in its years, not to say is 'outdated'. Many new forms of organisation and of doing business have emerged although it is often still uncertain, which are best suited for the future in a specific context and which will survive on the long run. Organisations act more and more in projects, value-chains and networks. In order to survive and prosper business organisations, need to build new ways to relate to their business environment, and accordingly also needs to change its own internal organisation in a way which takes, these new complexities into account. This implies e.g. operating in collaborative networks, building mechanisms, which enable adaptation, responsiveness and innovativeness, but also simultaneously producing different social, ecological and financial values for different involved interest groups and stakeholders (share-holders, managers, employees, customers, local and global society, etc. etc.). This ground breaking idea of creating multiple-values is key to long-term survival. No self-respecting company can do without. Time has come to re-combine and elaborate these aspect of future corporate success in an integrated (holistic) manner. This requires new concepts, new idea and new theoretical and managerial approaches. Relational approaches are seen as key in this development. Our contribution is to identify tensions between the simultaneous realisations of values and provide roadmaps for implementation of multiple values research and the application of customized solutions.

In order to provide the required knowledge the collaboration between the different disciplines as foreseen in this hot spot and between various partners in the field, to address the issues at stake We like to share the knowledge and experience we create not only with our students but also with companies, academics institutes in our country, in international bilateral relationships, in institutional networks, with local, regional and national governments.

Our focus is to create especially lasting partnerships with and between companies since they are key to our research and teaching. These partnerships – formalised in networks and memberships – are leading to the co-creation of research and the application of customized and contextualised solutions. It should also lead to old and new forms of dissemination such as conferences, colloquia, publications, talks and keynotes, websites and blogs, twitters and YouTube's.

Within IMR, much research connecting sustainability and practice theory is done. For instance, on the theme of spreading sustainable practices within new product developments in businesses focusing on processes within and between organisations as part of the TOV project. In this regard, the particular focus is on middle manager who aim at raising attention, support and collaboration with external stakeholders for this cause. Also, an ongoing PhD project is looking into the influence of CSR ratings on management practices.

Another relevant stream of research is the connection between practice theory and strategy in management science, in which practice theory is applied to micro processes of strategies in the collaboration between hospitals to study how a professional body acts on external expectations.

An interesting new research line contributing to this hot spot could explore the spatial dimension in organisational studies more explicitly, for instance by studying grass-root movements in the context of the maker movement/FabLabs.

*This results in the following research questions:*

- How does 'modern' performance management' ('management by the numbers') come into shape in large socio-material networks and to what extent does it succeed in realizing its potentials?
- How is accounting performative in creating calculative and calculable men (*Homo Economicus*)?
- To what extent is it a performative mechanism for organizational economics?
- How may accounting, accountability and controls be performative in creating 'stewardship' in organizations (that is, how may it be a performative mechanism for stewardship theory)
- How may accounting and accountability be a socializing rather than an individualising or disciplining mechanism?
- How do control structures and governance structures (as for instance budgets and contracts) come to inscribe the interests of powerful stakeholders while neglecting the interests of others? What 'overflows' do such structures produce in terms of struggles between actors and to what extent do such overflows result in re-inscribing the structures?
- ...

### ***A.7 Connecting the sub-themes and creating new synergies***

Within IMR, many connections between the disciplines and research groups already exist or can be further developed as outlined below:

	<b>Assembling urban development</b>	<b>Rethinking democracy</b>	<b>Governance, Sustainability and Planning</b>	<b>New role of science</b>	<b>Responsible organisation</b>
<b>Assembling urban development</b>		Science and society as co-producers of urban development Participatory practices Living Urban Labs	Mobilising Grassroots Innovations Community-based initiatives, Transition towns Local cooperatives	Science and society as co-producers of urban development Combination of different forms of knowledge with respect to Urban metabolism and urban assemblage Participatory practices Living Urban Labs	Mobilising Grassroots Innovations
<b>Rethinking democracy</b>	Science and society as co-producers of urban development Participatory practices Living Urban Labs		Transparency as a concept on democratic control of civil society initiatives Relationship between formal and informal policy making Citizens' juries, new media Networks, transnational organisations, new media Democratic innovation	Democratisation of (participative) knowledge production.	Transparency as an important vehicle for external support and image of sustainable corporate activity
<b>Governance, Sustainability and Planning</b>	Mobilising Grassroots Innovations Community-based initiatives, Transition towns Local cooperatives	Transparency as a concept on democratic control of civil society initiatives Relationship between formal and informal policy making Citizens' juries, new media Networks, transnational organisations, new media Democratic innovation		Urban metabolism Participatory monitoring as example for the co-production of knowledge	Relationships between state and corporate governance New business models

	<b>Assembling urban development</b>	<b>Rethinking democracy</b>	<b>Governance, Sustainability and Planning</b>	<b>New role of science</b>	<b>Responsible organisation</b>
<b>New role of science</b>	Science and society as co-producers of urban development Combination of different forms of knowledge with respect to Urban metabolism and urban assemblage Participatory practices Living Urban Labs	Role of opinion leaders, media, international organisations and courts as experts	Urban metabolism Participatory monitoring as example for the co-production of knowledge		How to 'spread the new' about insights in new forms of corporate governance in collaborative networks
<b>Responsible organisation</b>	Mobilising Grassroots Innovations	Transparency as an important vehicle for external support and image of sustainable corporate activity	Relationships between state and corporate governance New business models	How to 'spread the new' about insights in new forms of corporate governance in collaborative networks	

This hot spot will produce knowledge that is useful to most other hot spots at IMR. Knowledge produced in this hot spot would inform other hot spots in IMR: in general, knowledge of the emergence of new networks will be valuable to scholars in the Gender and Power hot spot who study inequality; to EUROPAL scholars as these networks may prove important in the chain of downloading and reloading policies in Europeanisation; it may prove valuable to GAINS to the extent that networks are crucial to understand new health arrangements. More specifically elements of this hot spot will prove useful: Assembling Urban Development will inform GAINS about the feasibility of new health arrangements; Rethinking Democracy will contribute to EUROPAL's interest in the EU's perceived legitimacy problem; the New Role of Science will offer insights relevant to all of IMR hot spots. GLOCAL will gain important insights in the local (urban) contexts in which integration, differentiation or inclusion and exclusion take place, and will profit from new forms of democratic control and international governance.