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THE SOCIAL QUALITY APPROACH: A HOLISTIC FRAMEWORK FOR FAIR DEVELOPMENT

United Nations 64th Commission for Social Development (CSocD, n.64)

Side Event, February 6, 2016

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PREFACE

The Value of a Precedent. To better understand the significance and positive prospects opening up with this Side Event initiative, promoted in collaboration with the United Nations Commission for Social Development (CSocD64), we believe it is appropriate to recall the significance of an important international scientific conference held in Rome, Italy, on July 1, 2025, precisely in preparation for the Second United Nations World Social Summit (Qatar, November 2025). The Rome conference was promoted in collaboration by the National Research Council – Department of Human and Social Sciences, Cultural Heritage CNR-DSU and the EURISPES Foundation, Institute of Political, Economic and Social Studies, and was attended by numerous public and private actors: public authorities, representatives of trade unions and civil society organizations, experts and academics, both Italian and foreign.

The value of a perspective. The preparatory conference in Rome was very useful in defining the ideas and proposals that were subsequently transmitted to the United Nations and which form the basis of this Side Event, organized in collaboration with the Commission for Social Development (CSocD64), as a follow-up to the commitments defined at the Second World Social Summit in Doha. These ideas and proposals, we add, aim to promote the dissemination within the community of States of a scientific and political approach based on the "social quality" of development, as specified in the title of this iniziative - "The Social Quality Approach: A Holistic Framework for Fair Development" - and illustrated in the Concept Note as well as in the speakers' presentations published in this Report.

This Side Event was organized by the **International Diplomatic Institute (IDI)**, based in Rome, an Organization in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) since 2019.

The speakers who joined the initiative and are presenting their contributions are Italian and international representatives of the scientific community: the National Research Council, Dept. Human-Social Sciences, Cultural Heritage, CNR – DSU (Italy), International Association of Social Quality – IASQ (The Netherlands), EURISPES FOUNDATION (Italy), Institute of Public Policy, National Law School of India (India), Institute for Economics and Forecasting – IEFNAS, National Academy of Science of Ukraine (Ukraine), Social Statistics Sapienza University of Rome (Italy), and the Italian Association for Quality-of-Life Studies – AIQUAV.

This Report presents the Concept Note underlying the initiative, the Program, the transcripts of the speakers' interventions, and the Recommendations developed as a contribution to improving social policies promoted by the UN and the governments of member states. The original video recording of the interventions was transmitted to the United Nations. It is published on the official platform of the IDI Institute and can be viewed by opening the following link:

IDI Institute - Side Event (Feb. 6, 2026), official website
YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vPX3s6ge6_E

Further information and documents on the Side Events session organised by the Commission for Social Development (CSocD64), in the period 2-10 February 2026 can be collected by opening the following links:

Commission's official webpage:
https://social.desa.un.org/csocd/64th-session
Official CSocD64 Side Events Programme and featured on the CSocD64 website:
https://bit.ly/view-csocd64-events

This Report is being forwarded by the IDI Institute to the relevant United Nations authorities, particularly the Commission for Social Development and the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

The International Diplomatic Institute and the community of experts who participated in the UN Side Event of February 6, 2026, confirm their full availability to exchange information and documents as well as to collaborate on analyses and in-depth studies deemed of mutual benefit.

Paolo GIORDANI
The IDI President

CONCEPT NOTE

The topic of the Side Event proposed to **United Nations 64th Commission for Social Development (CSocD64)** by the International Diplomatic Institute - IDI (Rome-Italy) aims to provide a contribution of ideas and proposals to support the commitment made by the community of States that participated in the *SecondWorld Social Summit* held in Qatar (November 4-6, 2025),

In the light of increasing challenges of the world, also in the context of increasing climate change denial, intolerable consequencdes of current wars, negation of global agreements on justice, trade, and a manifold of rules with which to make daily circumstances just and fair, a Second World Summit is very much to be welcomed. But the '*Doha Political Declaration of the "World Social Summit*" (UN, 80/5, Nov.4, 2025) in particular encourages us to hopefully give this summit a different twist (See Editorial IJSQ, 14.1, Amsterdam, 2025).

This initiative is a proposal from the international scientific community aimed at preventing politics and policies, both public and private, from being insufficient or inadequate to effectively address the profound concrete transformations underway globally in various societal systems. The unsubstantiated concept of "social development" for underlying new politics and policies prevents the realization of the UN's fundamental aims to create fair and dignified circumstances for all people on the planet. It proposes a review and in-depth analysis of the theoretical context to which the term "social" must refer. This concerns the conceptual framework, which provides a key condition for comparative research between communities worldwide, based on the outcomes of the application of the analytical framework.

Specifically, the Side Event offers an in-depth exploration of the value and the contemporary "*Basic Principles*" of the Social Quality Approach as a perspective for understanding societal transformation (www.socialquality.org). A particular reference is given to theoretical definitions of the concept of "***the social***" as ontological foundation of the social quality theory. It is an outcome of the dialectical based relationships between processes of self-realization of people and processes of the formation of collective identities.

At a heuristic level, the need to analyze societal transformations must be predicated on yoking together theoretical and practical knowledge about societal

change. There is a need for expressions of the underlying philosophical principles and hereupon based ground-patterns of thought on which such an analysis of societal disjuncture should be based (see *Ossowski* 1962; *Giddens* 1971; *Vanberg* 1975; *Bhaskar* 1978; *Berting* 1985; *Gollobin* 1986; *Van der Maesen* 1987, inter alia). This assumption had been worked out since the beginning of the development of the "social quality perspective" since 1995 with the publication, resulting into the "*Amsterdam Declaration on Social Quality*", signed by 1000 European scholars (Beck et al. 2001). In other words, at that time the seed was laid for the alternative of the social development orientation" the UN's First World Summit.This theme has been deepened afterwards in the third social quality book published by Macmillan 2012 (*Van der Maesen, Herrmann and Walker*, 2012: 94-116)with an explanation of the application of social quality indicators in 25 countries (in Europe and Asia).

Arguably, any failure to conceptualize such theoretical constructs implicitly leads to a vacuum which can be exploited by malign societal forces.

Our contention is that the conceptual framework provided by the social quality perspective departs from the standard ontological view of "the social". That perspective views society as the outcome of the interaction between people - constituted as agents who are "societal beings" - and the constructed and natural environment. Its subject matter refers to the outcomes of people's interrelated productive and reproductive relationships (*Herrmann* et al. 2012). This refers also to the principles of relationality and processualism as discussed by for example *Margaret Archer* (1995: 66), *BertellOllman* (1976: 14-15) and *Roy Bhaskar* (1979: 68), thus differing from classical "dialectical materialism".

The Social Quality Approach: A Comprehensive Framework for contributing to afair change of contemporary societal circumstances

In the pursuit of a renewed paradigm for going beyond the unsubstantiated concept of "social development", Social Quality Approach (SQA) has gained particular significance since the past 25 years in Europe, Asia, Australia and Africa(www.socialquality.org). Developed by the founders of the International Association on Social Quality (IASQ) - coordinated by Dr *Laurent van der Maesen* and Prof. *Alan Walker* - this interdisciplinary concept transcends sectoral or categorical thinking. It offers a comprehensive framework for understanding societal well-being as an *integral attribute of the human environment*, which defines the capacity of individuals to realise themselves in ways that are dignified, secure, and inclusive.An urgent challenge is to improve this human environment so that it comes into balance with and supportive to the non-human aspects of Nature. Without this the UN's main goal cannot be achieved at all.

The SQA is built around the understanding of the reciprocity of processes between four societal dimensions, perceived as the procedural framework:

1. ***The Socioeconomic and Financial Dimension***: this encompasses access to employment, housing, basic resources, and economic security. It emphasises not only the availability of aid but also the capacity of individuals to achieve self-sufficiency through decent work, lifelong learning, and social mobility.
2. ***TheSociopolitical and Legal-Institutional Dimension***: this pertains not only to the formal recognition of rights but also to their enforceability, institutional protection, non- discrimination, and the predictability of government action.
3. ***The Sociocultural Dimension***: this reflects the level of societal trust, cohesion, civic participation, and shared identity - the conditions under which people feel part of a community capable of collective action and the relevance for domains as education, sports, health and societal care, cultural provisions and neighbourhood crystallization points in the urban context.
4. ***The Environmental and Ecological Dimension***: this is interpreted as a responsibility for spatial and intergenerational sustainability - from access to safe and healthy environments to equitable infrastructure and climate justice.

The interdependency of the three above mentioned frameworks provides gradual access to exploring four essential societal thematic fields, as well as the connections between processes and outcomes within these fields. This creates the perspective of the social quality approach for recognizing transformational processes and the nature of politics and policies regarding these four fields. This makes this approach incomparable to existing approaches in the world and highly functional and meaningful for the most fundamental aim of the United Nations. It also delivers a substantiation of the aim formulated by the BRICS-countries to support the increase of the quality of the world.

1. Development and application of communication technologies,
2. Welfare in the broad sense of the word,
3. Urbanization, see the Declaration for a paradigm-shift by PAGUSManifesto (IASQ, Amsterdam 2024),
4. Overall Sustainability, see the Declaration of 400 scholars about a new role for the Academia (IASQ, Amsterdam 2015).

The uniqueness of this approach lies in its capacity to view politics and policies not as a patchwork of tools but as a **coherent system of interrelated coordinates**. It provides a paradigm capable of balancing human and societal needs, institutional accountability, and personal empowerment.

Conclusion

Any ambiguity and obscurity about the theoretical, conceptual meaning of the term “social” allows the risk that the UN efforts as well as that of the state-members promote initiatives that stay away from the reality of changes that shape the circumstances of daily life in practice.

SPEAKERS' CONTRIBUTION

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Introduction

The theme we propose addresses a central issue that calls for a profound correction of the growing and widespread social imbalances affecting all States – I repeat, all States – as explicitly affirmed in paragraph 2 of the *Final Declaration* adopted at the United Nations World Social Summit held in Doha on 4 November 2025. **The issue concerns how to define the term "social" in an adequate and shared manner, on the basis of appropriate theoretical references, and how to address effectively the processes of transformation that in our time lie at the root of increasing injustice and social exclusion**.

Our objective, therefore, is **to contribute to the work of the United Nations Commission for Social Development and to the many public and private bodies within the international community engaged in the effort to build a more just and balanced global system**.

We aim to do so by presenting **a proposal centred on the Social Quality of Development** as a common platform of reference, and by organising around this strategic theme a network of institutes, academics and experts capable of opening a new perspective in both the theoretical and practical approach to social issues.

To this end, the International Diplomatic Institute declares from the outset its full willingness to play an active role in this new process, making available to the promoters the value of its position as a permanent member with consultative status within the United Nations Economic and Social Council – ECOSOC.

The contributions to our proposal come from a panel of experts, both Italian and international, in the following order: *Professor Salvatore Capasso*, Director of the Department of Human and Social Sciences of the National Research Council (CNR-DSU); *Laurent J. G. van der Maesen*, Director of the International Association on Social Quality (IASQ) in Amsterdam; the sociologist *Mariarosaria Zamboi*, researcher at the EURISPES Foundation; Professor *Sony Pellissery*, Director of the Institute of Public Policy at the National Law School of India University; *Valeriy Heyets*, Director

of the Institute for Economics and Forecasting of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine; Professor *Filomena Maggino*, Professor of Social Statistics at Sapienza University of Rome; the conclusions will include the remarks by *Marco Ricceri*, Secretary General of the EURISPES Foundation.

I would also like to clarify that the contributions of these expertsare not coincidental but the result of an ongoing and active collaboration among the individuals involved and their respective institutions. Working on a voluntary basis, they have committed themselves to defining the foundations of a new path for addressing contemporary social issues.

The **Concept Note** that underpins this conference summarises, in a concise yet clear manner, the essential elements of our proposal. It highlights, first of all, the need to overcome the conceptual limitations contained in the commonly used expression "social development" and the negative effects that such limitations have had on the effectiveness of related policies.

The term "**social**", according to our approach to the issue, refers above all to the essential value of qualitative elements, particularly the dynamic relationship between processes of individual self-realization and processes of interaction among individuals, which together form the basis for the development of collective and community identities.

Working within the **Social Quality Approach** allows us to reach the true essence of what is meant by "social", opening the way to a deeper understanding of the value and significance of the transformations currently taking place within our societies. On the basis of this understanding, it becomes possible to develop policies genuinely capable of addressing social imbalances and processes of exclusion.

The Social Quality Approach, which requires a clearly interdisciplinary and shared effort, ultimately offers the possibility of building a comprehensive framework capable of promoting a just and balanced development of our communities.

Before concluding and opening the proceedings, I feel it is my duty to thank the *IDI team* that has worked to organise this conference in close synergy with the team of the United Nations Commission for Social Development. My sincere thanks go to *Valeria Rinaldi*, Secretary General of IDI, and to the valuable collaborators *Federica De Angelis* and *Lavinia Mazza*.

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Moving from "social development" to "societal transformation": a new theoretical and practical approach to imrove policies and strengthen the role of the United Nations

The **Second World Summit on Social Development** has been an important milestone. It reaffirmed shared commitments to dignity, inclusion, and sustainability, and it sent a clear signal that social issues remain central to the global agenda, not secondary to economic or environmental concerns.

Yet moments like these matter not only for what they conclude, but for what they open. This is the opportunity to look beyond negotiated texts and ask how the concepts we use shape the policies we design and the outcomes we ultimately achieve. In this spirit, I would like to focus on a question that remains partly unresolved even after the Summit: whether our understanding of "the social" is sufficiently clear and robust to guide action in a world undergoing profound and accelerating change.

The Second World Summit rightly acknowledged the interconnection of today's challenges. Inequalities, demographic shifts, climate pressures, technological transformations, geopolitical tensions, and institutional fragilities do not operate in isolation. They interact and reinforce one another, shaping societies in complex and often unpredictable ways. However, in many policy frameworks, the notion of social development still functions as a broad and implicit category, one that brings together diverse objectives without fully articulating the processes through which societies actually change.

When the social dimension remains underdefined, it risks becoming a container rather than a compass. Policies may multiply, commitments may deepen, yet the underlying coherence needed to translate intentions into lasting change can remain elusive. This is not a question of ambition or goodwill, but of analytical clarity. Without a solid conceptual foundation, it becomes difficult to compare experiences across countries, to learn systematically from different contexts, or to evaluate whether interventions genuinely improve people's capacity to live dignified and secure lives.

It is here that **the distinction between social development and societal transformation becomes particularly relevant, especially in a post-Summit context**. Societal transformation directs our attention away from isolated outcomes and toward the deeper processes that reshape relationships between individuals,

institutions, economies, cultures, and the environment. It invites us to look not only at what changes, but at how change unfolds and how its effects are distributed across societies.

Societal transformation is not an abstract or distant phenomenon. It is experienced daily in the stability or precarity of work, in access to rights and services, in trust toward institutions, and in the ability to participate meaningfully in collective life. Focusing on transformation means acknowledging that progress in one domain can be undermined by regression in another, and that fragmented approaches are often ill-suited to addressing systemic challenges.

At this point, it is important to stress that **conceptual reflection is not an academic exercise detached from policy realities. On the contrary, theory plays a crucial role in shaping what we see, what we measure, and what we consider possible**. Policy without theory risks being reactive and short-sighted, while theory without policy remains sterile. In a global institution such as the United Nations, where diversity of contexts is the norm, a shared analytical language becomes indispensable.

The **Social Quality Approach** offers such a language by explicitly theorizing the social as the outcome of the dynamic interaction between individuals as social beings, collective identities, institutional structures, and both the human and natural environment. From this perspective, social well-being is not treated as a residual outcome of economic growth or environmental protection, but as an emergent property of how societies are organized and governed. **This approach does not replace existing UN frameworks; rather, it strengthens them by providing a coherent lens through which commitments can be interpreted, compared, and evaluated**.

One of the strengths of this perspective lies in its integrated view of societal dynamics. It draws attention to the ways in which economic security, political and legal institutions, cultural cohesion, and environmental responsibility are deeply interdependent. Economic opportunities lose their meaning when rights are unenforced, institutional trust erodes when social cohesion weakens, and environmental sustainability becomes unattainable when social inequalities persist. **Understanding these interconnections is essential if policies are to be effective in the long run**.

Reflecting on these issues after the Summit is not a purely intellectual exercise. It is an urgent task. **Ambiguity about what we mean by the social can weaken implementation, dilute accountability, and open the door to short-term or symbolic responses to deep structural transformation**s. At a time when trust in institutions is fragile in many parts of the world and societal tensions are increasingly visible, the quality of our conceptual frameworks becomes a condition for democratic resilience and global stability.

The Second World Summit has successfully renewed political attention to social issues and reaffirmed shared values. This is a significant achievement. The

challenge that now lies ahead is to ensure that these commitments are supported by analytical tools capable of grasping the complexity of societal transformation and of guiding coherent, integrated action. **Moving from social development to societal transformation is not a matter of changing terminology. It is about aligning our policies more closely with the realities people experience every day and with the systemic nature of the challenges we seek to address**.

If we are able to do this, the United Nations can continue to serve not only as a forum for coordination and consensus, but as a reference point for fair, meaningful, and sustainable societal change in an increasingly complex world.

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The new orientation on the "social quality perspective" as an added value to the UN's approach to "social development"

Introduction

The key point of the outcomes of the Rome conference, July 1st, 2025 - which aimed to contribute to the UN Second World Summit for "Social Development" of November 3 and 4, 2025 - is to explain the importance of the orientation on the "social quality perspective". **We argue that the "social quality perspective" would add value to the UN's approach to "social development"**. With its configuration of logically connected frameworks, it provides vital starting points to monitor and evaluate the outcomes the Second World Summit. For five reasons, the existing social development approach is not adequate for this purpose.

1. *Five reasons for applying a new orientation to understand societal changes*

First, the roots of social development lie in the distinction between rich (developed) countries and poor (developing) countries. It is based on the implicit premise that human goal is to live in rich countries as a synonym for developed countries.

Second, this divide is based on the absence of recognition of the interconnectedness of all countries. This lacuna stimulates the increase in the divide between rich and poor and necropolitics in many countries.

Third, the existing social development approach lacks theoretical substantiation. The adjective "social" is taken to be a self-evident concept, which functions as an inevitable source of confusion.

Fourth, the most urgent subject matter of the elaboration of the Second World Summit should be societal processes and their transformative outcomes. This implies strong ontological and epistemolological points of departure, missing in the social development approach.

Fifth, the absence of a theoretical framework means that the much-needed comprehensive oriented research for policy-making – for example to understand consequences of climate change for millions of people - is impossible. This benefits the currently rich, entrenches divisions between rich and poor and ignores future generations.

2. ***To understand the consequences, see Annex about the configuration of the SQP***

First, the dialectic between processes related to the four societal dimensions – the ***third layer*** of the configuration - falls outside the purview of the divided and fragmented human sciences. It concerns the sociopolitical/legal, socioeconomic/financial, sociocultural and socio-environmental/ecological dimensions.

Second, the outcomes of this dialect need to be known to analyze the changes in the daily circumstances of people, namely the constitutional, conditional and normative factors governing these circumstances - see ***second layer***. This issue also appears in other contributions of this Side-Event. This framework is necessary to determine changes in the social quality of people's daily lives.

Third, both forms of understanding are a main condition for understanding comprehensive types of transformations in and between four essential thematic fields, namely communication technologies, welfare in the broad sense, urbanization and changes in sustainability. This concerns the ***fourth layer*** of the configuration. This most crucial topic is at this stage not a subject of human sciences, nor of the social development approach.

Fourth, this blocks any connection of human sciences with natural sciences to address all encompassing (mostly unforeseen) forms of transformation, which implies a common denominator of both types of sciences. From the perspective of the SQP a first step is made to explore the desirable denominator, published in the *International Journal of Social Quality* (www.socialquality.org). This issue appears explicitly and implicitly in the contribution from India and Ukraine in this Side-Event.

Fifth, the thesis derived from the SQP is in other words, that all important issues – discussed during the Second World Summit – remain on isolated from each other due to the absence of a conceptual framework (the **first layer**). This prevents a comprehensive understanding of the changing world we are living in.

Sixth, we need new intellectual instruments to make all forms of sciences more proper for politics, with which to enhance the dignity of all people on earth, which will imply a new allocation of resources which do not violate the all-encompassing laws of nature. According to *Baruch Spinoza*, human life is intrinsically intertwined with these laws of nature.

Seventh, in contrast to all other existing approaches (quality of life, social capital, social development, human security, capability, human development etc.) the SQP started by exploring its conceptual framework as point of departure for the other frameworks.This concerns the ontological starting point of people as soci(et)al beings, which has affinity with Aristotelian principles.

3. *Therefore, a following Action Plan*:

First to give the current International Association on Social Quality as the cradle of the social quality perspective an anchor place within a new *International Academic Forum* (IAF), to be established in Rome. Proposed is the National Council of Research as anchor place.

Second, to pave the way for many *National Academic Fora* for adapting and applying the social quality perspective at a national level, and to function as pillars for the International Academic Forum.

Third, to stimulate communication between national and international levels about the outcomes of process in the four dimensions of daily societal life and their expressions in four thematic fields: communication technologies, welfare in the broad sense of the word, urbanization and overall sustainability (*see Annex*).

Fourth, continue and elaborate the collaboration with *Berghahn Publishers* in New York, for the instrumentalisation of the current International Journal of Social Quality in this way.

Fifth, the logic of this will be derived from a text of the Editorial Volume 14.2 of this Journal referring to the input by the Academy of Sciences of Ukraine:

It was argued by the Academy of Sciences of Ukraine during the Rome Conference - with its orientation on the challenges of the post-war recovery of Ukraine (and Gaza) - that the “social quality perspective” is emerging as a new paradigm, in which:

(i) The individual is not merely seen and approached as a recipient of all kinds of provisions, but as an active agent in politics and societal transformation, as well as reconstruction.

(ii) Communities of citizens are not a dependent object, but a co-driver of innovative societal transformation.

(iii) The state, reaching beyond its traditional roles, creates conditions to enhance an emancipated political voice of citizens and communities in processes of transformation.

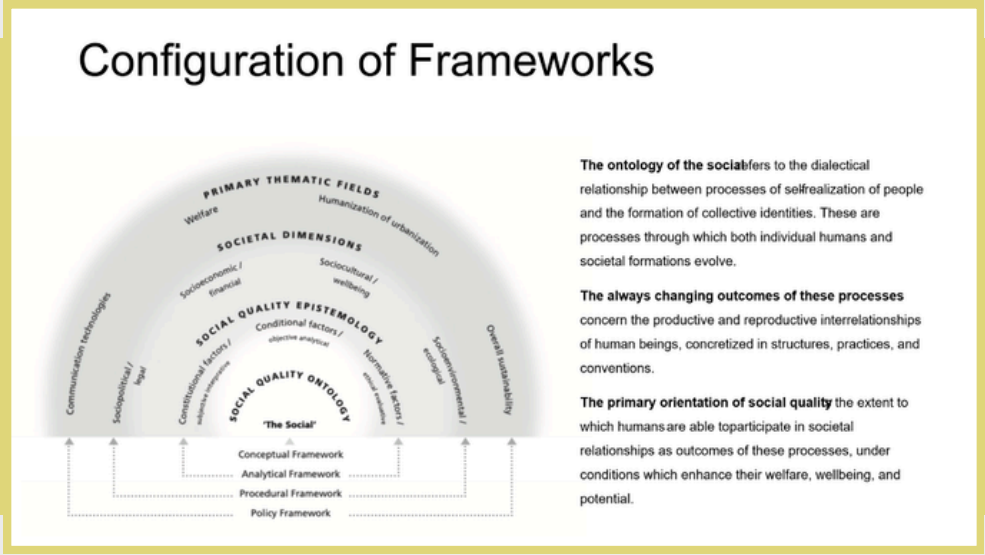
(iv) To achieve this, frameworks to perceive and realize the required societal relationships need to be deployed.

In conclusion:

To understand existing transformations within and between the four thematic fields (see the fourth layer of the configuration), it is inevitable to pave the way for politics at both the international and national levels that, considering these transformations, enable a dignified life for all people worldwide. This requires an innovative scientific system of logically aligned frameworks. The "social quality perspective" proposes this approach based on intensive theoretical and empirical research conducted over the past 25 years on almost every continent of the world.

The significance of this perspective is particularly because it implies an explicit ethical compass based on its conceptual framework, referring to the five normative factors of the "social quality perspective".

Annex: The Four Frameworks Underpinning the Social Quality Perspective



The conceptual framework of the SQP is anchored in the (i) Western/Aristotelian foundational pattern of thought, namely "dialectical relationism/critical theory". This represents a decisive variant of dialectical materialism (K. Marx). This variant stemmed also from the work of Damodar Dharmananda Kosambi, explained by P.N. Pannikkar during the Indian History Congress of 2009. He recognized the dialectical relationship between base and superstructure with relative autonomy for the latter (the sociocultural dimension).

Other foundational theories are: (ii) mechanical utilitarianism (V. Pareto), (iii) constructive voluntarism (M. Weber), (iv) structural functionalism (E. Durkheim). Theorists who paid attention to (aspects of) the distinction in four foundational patterns include Karl Marx, Roy Bhaskar, Bertell Ollman, Jerry Cohen, Goran Therborn, Stanislaw Ossowski, Giovanni Satory, George Sabine, Margareth Archer, Ira Gollobin, Anthony Giddens, Victor Vanberg, Jürgen Habermas, Erich Fromm, Jan Berting and Laurent van der Maesen etc.

The epistemological orientation of the SQP is based on its ontological points of departure. Usually, in contemporary human sciences the intertwining of the ontological assumptions and epistemological orientations is ignored, leading toe muddled forms of reasoning.

With the SQP's analytical framework the consequences of processes in the four societal dimensions for daily circumstances can be understood. This will pave the way to understanding and interpreting the expressions of these consequences in the four thematic fields. The analytical framework functions as an intermediary

between the societal dimensions and these thematic fields. Relevant is to realize, that the sources for making this distinction between the four “Western” foundational patterns of thought can be found in the first one, mentioned above.
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The Exclusion Index
Measuring inequalities in territories

Introduction

This proposal represents an important initiative and an opportunity to contribute to what I regard as a strategic work: **defining concrete objectives and credible instruments to effectively address the widespread and growing inequalities and social injustices** we face, in line with the commitments undertaken by the community of States at the *World Social Summit* (Doha, 2025), within the framework of the *Social Quality Perspective* (SQP).

The document that brings us together today — *our Concept Note* — poses a fundamental challenge: **to move beyond the generic notion of "social development," which is often neither measurable nor assessable, and to define robust theoretical and practical framework capable of interpreting real transformations and guiding coherent and verifiable policies**.

The Social Quality Perspective teaches us that social development is not merely an economic outcome but is also intrinsically linked to the quality of the human environment - that is people's ability to live and fulfil themselves in a dignified, safe, and inclusive manner, while interacting with others and thus contributing to the construction of collective identities. In this sense, the **SQP opens new perspectives for understanding social transformations, while also providing a practical insight: if the object of evaluation is the "human environment"**, then policies cannot consist of a series of disconnected interventions. They must be coherent and interdependent.

1. The Exclusion Index

Choosing to present an *Exclusion Index* in this context addresses a central question of the Concept Note: how can we move from shared theoretical principles to operational, verifiable, comparable, and publicly debatable coordinates.
There are at least two common traps discussing the "quality of development".

- The first is reducing everything to economic growth and a few macro indicators, assuming that everything else will follow.
- The second is using value-laden concepts - like dignity, inclusion, and equity - without tools capable of measuring their reality in everyday life.

The Social Quality Perspective overcomes both of these limitations: it tells us that values must be translated into concrete conditions and into institutions that make rights enforceable.

The Exclusion Index was designed precisely with the aim of "making visible" where and how the human environment fails. It was developed by the Eurispes Foundation according to a fundamental choice: to anchor the measurement not to subjective preferences, but to public rights and duties.
In the Italian case, this anchoring is explicit: rights are not abstract "aspirations", but commitments defined in the Constitution of the Italian Republic. **Reference to a state's constitutional law - I might add - that is, to legislative instruments recognized by international law, can allow the Exclusion Index we are discussing to be applied to other states as well, thus contributing to a homogeneous experience**.
A fundamental element guiding the definition of the Index is its *multidimensionality*, and here the dialogue with the Social Quality Perspective becomes direct. **Exclusion is not a single condition but a system of constraints that often reinforce each other**. For this reason, the Index is articulated across seven areas describing the essential conditions of concrete citizenship:

- Work
- Economy
- Social rights
- Access to services
- Health
- Education and knowledge
- Cross-cutting rights (including environment, institutions, and security)

This structure stems from the idea that **inclusion, exclusion, and quality of development cannot be captured through partial indicators:an integrated reading is needed capable of revealing cycles of disadvantage and complex territorial profiles**.
The *Exclusion Index* uses 149 indicators divided into the seven areas and applies the *Mazziotta-Pareto* methodology: a technique for synthesizing heterogeneous information, managing the variables that move in different directions (those that either improve or worsen exclusion), and providing comparable measures across territories.

2. Correcting the "Average-Based" Interpretative Practice

In my opinion, the most interesting aspect for this context is that **the Index does not look only at the *average* level of critical issues but introduces a penalty related to internal dispersion**. In practice, a territory may display a non-dramatic

average level but be highly unbalanced - excelling in one area while collapsing in another. And that imbalance is itself a form of fragility, making the quality of development unstable, unequal, and vulnerable to shocks.

Imagine two territories with the same average economic well-being. The first offers relatively homogeneous - though not exceptional - conditions across all spheres of life: work, public services, education, environment. The second has a strong economy but poor services, high employment but low educational quality, high incomes but environmental degradation.

The averages may be identical, but the *quality of life* - and thus *quality of development* - is radically different.

The Exclusion Index captures this fundamental difference. This reflects the idea that coherence across different dimensions of life is itself a component of social quality, and that no single dimension—if deficient—can be compensated for by good results in others.

In this way, the Index serves less as a *ranking tool* and more as a *diagnostic* one:

- It identifies where exclusion is widespread and systemic.
- It detects where exclusion is selective and therefore addressable with targeted policies.
- And, above all, it signals when policies risk becoming an uncoordinated patchwork.

If we take seriously the idea that the object is not just well-being as an "outcome," but as the capacity for self-realization and therefore as the quality of the human environment, then the **Exclusion Index measures *enabling conditions*: not what a territory produces, but what makes a dignified life and social participation possible**.

And in this sense, it can be said that t**he index interacts very well with the four dimensions of the Social Quality Approach (socio-economic, socio-political-institutional, socio-cultural, and socio-environmental)**. The seven areas can be read as empirical and territorial articulations of these dimensions. And here is a point I consider central: the index does not reduce social quality to a single variable but helps us see the interdependencies between different areas of intervention. For example:

- When we measure early school leaving, we are not only counting students who drop out: we are measuring how the education system fails to guarantee that continuous learning which is a condition for self-realisation.
- When we measure access to public transportation services, we are not evaluating infrastructural efficiency, but the capacity for mobility - physical, social, economic - which is a precondition for participating in community life.
- When we measure the quality of the urban environment or the availability of public green spaces, we are measuring the responsibility for spatial and intergenerational sustainability which constitutes the ecological dimension.

- When we measure trust in institutions—from justice to public administration—we are measuring the enforceability of rights, the predictability of public action, and the stability of the democratic pact.
- Likewise, when we observe marked differences in cultural and sports participation, in participation itself and in social networks, we are not talking about "leisure time," we are measuring the quality of relationships, the construction of social capital, and the ability to identify with a community

Each indicator is therefore a piece of an integrated vision of development, and only as a whole can we profile a region's capacity—or inability—to ensure the dignified fulfillment of its people and guide policies that are not sectoral and disconnected.

3. Addressing Systemic and Multiplicative Social Exclusion

Without going into the numbers, the Italian application of the Index shows that the quality of development is not homogeneous and that fractures are not only economic. In some territories exclusion is sectoral: a few dominant criticali issues, therefore more “amenable” to targeted policies. In other territories exclusion is systemic: it's not just a lack of work, or income, or even a single service. There's a simultaneous lack of quality of work, economic resources, availability and accessibility of services, educational opportunities, social cohesion and often even trust in institutions.
And **when exclusion is systemic, its consequences extend beyond material deprivation: it weakens social bonds, erodes participation, undermines trust, and makes democracy more fragile**.
The index shows how "development" can advance in some aspects and lag behind in others, generating unequal paths. And above all, it highlights that some exclusions are becoming *multiplicative*. I'm thinking, for example, of the digital divide: it's no longer a secondary issue, it's a *gatekeeper*. As access to essential services and opportunities increasingly relies on digital technologies, the lack of skills and equipment creates a barrier that amplifies exclusion from employment, education, healthcare, and participation. In this sense, the index enables us to view digital dimension not as a "sector," but as an infrastructure of citizenship.

4. The Contribution of the Exclusion Index to the Social Quality of Development

How can the index developed by Eurispes contribute to the objectives of the SQP?
First, it gives *operational substance* to the concept of “social developmentopening perspective for better understanding social transformations. It reduces ambiguity by forcing explicit choices, definitions, and priorities. If I don't clarify what I mean by "social" and how I measure it, I risk slogans or fragmented policies. An index requires conceptual transparency.

Second, it enables *comparability and mutual learning* among communities. An index built on replicable criteria allows not only levels but also structures of exclusion to be compared - where it originates, how it combines, which enabling conditions are missing, and which succeed.

Third, it *guides integrated policy*. Penalizing internal imbalances signals when policies improve "pieces" but leave behind fundamental dimensions. It helps avoid the patchwork effect and pushes for coherent intersectorial interventions.

Finally, it introduces *accountability* and *evaluation of change*. If the goal is fair development, tools are needed to verify whether living conditions are truly improving in terms of dignity, security, inclusion, and sustainability.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, presenting the Index in this context is not because it "explains everything", but because it can serve as a bridge between the theoretical strength of the Social Quality Perspective and the political and institutional need to define verifiable trajectories toward more equitable and balanced development.

If *social quality* is the capacity of individuals to fulfil themselves in a dignified, safe, and inclusive way, then exclusion is what concretely prevents this. Measuring it in a multidimensional and comparable way means giving substance to a concept of development that is not limited to economic results but looks at the conditions that make societies more equitable, resilient, and democratic.

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Emancipation through Public Interest Coding: Search for social quality in a technology-driven world[1]

Introduction

How do we reinvent the public in a world driven by technology? Most of the human interactions, and institutions that mediated interactions (e.g. democracy) have been shaped by technology in current times. The outcome has been an anxious world (*Haidt* 2024) and digital passivity (*Suzor* 2019). Led to limited participation of citizens, market structure has facilitated creation and preservation of inequality. The situation of "disappearance of table" around which we gathered, which *Hannah Arendt* (1958) indicated, happens more often today when technological giants block passwords, digital administrators dictate participation rules, and access to digital space is made conditional to compromising personal data. In other words, 'social' in a technology-driven world is understood little to be responded to.

This loss of agency is antithetical to a world of social quality. This speech is aimed at proposing and elaborating how public interest coding into technology could enable us to reinvent the quality public space.

1. Training to reinvent human judgment

Most of the technological systems tend to create 'users', 'data points' and 'behavioural targets. Let us consider platform use for consumption. We notice loss of human judgment at various levels. First, consumers are fed with review scores to lead the judgment. Different financial incentives offered on the platform further steer the decisions. Second, there is delivery personnel. An estimate by World Bank suggests 4.4-12.5% of global workforce is in the platform economy. This workforce is disciplined by technology, where time and wage is piece-rate in nature. Further, consumer feedback 'construct' the workers by rating the quality of service. Third is the nature of business decisions led by big data. As the number of participants go up, the big data that is generated about individual preferences, buying pattern,

[1] This is an improved version of the paper titled "Transformative Pathways through Public Interest Technology", presented at the Conference in Rome on July 1st 2025, organized by Eurispes and the Italian National Research Council

geo-codes, demographics become the key resource. Data is compared to oil in platform machine which is “to be extracted, refined, and used in a variety of ways” (Srnicek 2016: 40).This is where opaque nature of platform capitalism emerges through algorithmic control.

The regressive approach to human judgment creates what *Heidegger* (1954) calls a *world-logic* (Gestell or Enframing) that orders reality to appear only as something **on call, on demand, calculable, and controllable**. When institutionalized through regressing individual judgment, technology forces us to see only selective reality, and it loses its ability to reveal the world to new possibilities. In other words, openness to the future, required to achieve social quality, is snubbed.

2. Technology for Human Flourishing

Is it possible to design technology rooted on virtues? *Erich Fromm* in his 1968 classic on *The Revolution of Hope* provides clues for humanizing technology. He points out the need to nurture active hope, compared to passive false hope, rooted in reasoned actions and love. He identifies that current emphasis on control and efficiency limits spontaneity and love of life.

Therefore, coding virtues into technology requires us to design digital spaces that encourage dissent. Current technology is encouraging conformity, and thus herd mentality is nurtured through technology, which leads to extractive economy (from the herd with a promise to keep it as herd). This method of extractivism from digital participants is called as heteromation (*Ekbia&Nardi* 2017). Meaningful platforms with space for dissent would create communities rather than herd.

Alternative vision of technology facilitating human flourishing is based on total transformation through the principles of ***Eudaimonia***, where justice is the central value. Overall sustainability of human society could be visualized when ethical regeneration is imagined as social quality. Similar disembedding has happened in the question of technology. As Pope *Leo XIV* warned about AI, when values are absent from design, justice will be absent from outcomes[2].

3. Public Interest Coding of Technology

Public Interest Technology has a predecessor: Law. As the litigation processes excluded the poor marginalized community, an invention was required to expand the ambit of litigation. By relaxing the traditional rule of *locus standi*, a third party could take up the cause even if he/she is not affected.

[2]Ad Imaginem Verbi: First formal address to college of cardinals by Pope Leo XIV dated 10 May 2025.

This legal innovation was named Public Interest Litigation[3]. Soul of law was reinvented. As technology is alienating people through monopolistic tendencies (as explained in the first part of this speech), similar mission is required through Public Interest Technology – reinvent the purpose of technology by keeping human at its core.

Finding moral foundations of law/ technology is a function of bridging the gap between Demos & Nomos[4]. Social quality of institutions emerges when there is a convergence between the two. This challenge can't be dealt in isolated sectors. We need an all-pervading transformation[5].

Responses of multilateral organizations (for example, WTO), national level constitutional courts, and private legal practices are hugely skewed to benefit the private corporations. A good example is to look at the spread of competition laws. Until 1990 only 10 countries had competition laws. To win the economic competition legally, competition laws are imposed on almost all the countries today after neoliberal competition and structural adjustment programmes are introduced (*Waked* 2016; *Pistor* 2019).

Today, law is used as a tool in the fights for resources (more of private law). In the process moral foundations of law is destroyed. There is a need to look for ways to challenge this nexus between law and market forces. Law could challenge 'committed capitalism' when it could emerge as a moral code. Countries of Brazil, India and South Africa has 'transformative constitutionalism' (Pellissery et al 2019) which has shown this potential. Here, people's aspirations are encoded into law, rather than the contracts that the State and market wants to enforce.

Conclusion:

There are several examples of how innovation and technology brought human emancipation. Especially, technology was powerful to break the pre-capitalist feudal relations, and to bring quality to both human beings and environment. Yet, when technoscience, modelled after market, is emerging we see the character of the products of innovation itself without an emancipation purpose. This is where responsible technological innovation is demanded.

Coding technology with Eudaimonia is not only possible, but a necessity to achieve

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[3] This method prospered in India during 1980s, and landmark judgments came in pertaining to environment cases, eviction of slums etc.

[4] Tully (2007: 318) is credited to point out the widening gap between demos and nomos in current times: "...a structure of law that has a degree of separation or disembeddedness from the activities of those who are subject to it and it has the compliance capacity to structure or even 'constitute' the field of recognition and interaction of the people subject to it. If it did not have this degree of autonomy or 'formality' there would not be the 'paradoxical' relationship between the rule of law and constituent powers at its centre".

[5] This idea of Transformative Law is detailed in Pellissery et al (2019).

social quality for a crisis-ridden world. As outlined above, instituitonalising the public good into technology through law enables us to embed technology with public interest values.
Sony PELLISSERY

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A new social contract for the post-war recovery of Ukraine based on a Human-Centered Approach

The full-scale aggression against Ukraine has created a reality where traditional social policy tools have reached their limits. When the social fabric is systematically destroyed, old methods of distributing aid can no longer sustain societal resilience.

We are witnessing a **profound deformation of our entire social space**:

- **Demographic Shock**: Over **10 million people** are displaced. Our demographic pyramid now resembles a "shrunken base," where children aged 0–14 make up only **13%** of the population. This is a critical threat to the future labor force and social stability.
- **Poverty and Inequality**: Nearly **60% of our citizens** currently live under the pressure of poverty, many for the first time in their lives.
- **Infrastructural Decimation**: Thousands of hospitals and schools have been destroyed. In many regions, the social service infrastructure has been reduced to zero.

In these conditions, Ukraine is forced to pioneer a new model: **Social Quality**. We believe that post-war recovery is not just about rebuilding bricks and mortar; it is about a **new societal contract**. We are moving away from the state as a mere "provider of benefits" toward a state as a "partner in development."

Social Quality is defined by four pillars that we propose to the global community:

1. **Socio-Economic Security**: We must ensure that reconstruction creates high-productivity jobs. In Ukraine, we see a massive mismatch: for instance, while we have a surplus in administrative sectors, the **construction sector faces a labor deficit of 1.35**, meaning we lack the hands to rebuild what was destroyed.
2. **Social Cohesion**: Our resilience is built on trust. The phenomenal Ukrainian volunteer movement has proven that horizontal social ties are more effective than any administrative vertical.
3. **Social Inclusion**: We are integrating **130,000 veterans with disabilities** back into the economy. This is not charity; it is the realization of their right to be productive members of society.
4. **Social Empowerment**: Through digitalization, specifically the **"Diia" ecosystem**, we have removed bureaucratic barriers for millions. Today, a displaced person can access state services in seconds—this is the new standard of dignity.

Distinguished Representatives! The world is facing a global "inflation of skills" and a crisis of trust. Ukraine's experience shows that the only way forward is a **Human-Centered Approach**. We propose three concrete steps for international action:

- **First**: Establish **"Social Quality" as a mandatory audit standard** for all international investments in Ukraine's recovery. Every dollar spent must strengthen social trust and human capital.
- **Second**: Support the **National Program "How Are You?"**. Mental resilience is the bedrock of national security. Without psychological recovery, economic recovery is impossible.
- **Third**: We invite the global scientific community to join the **International Scientific Forum (ISAF) in Rome**. Let us unite our intellectual resources to make Social Quality the cornerstone of modern societal transformations.

Ukraine today is a laboratory for the social model of the future. We are proving that even under fire, a society can choose the path of **quality, dignity, and inclusivity**. I invite you to stand with us, not just in solidarity, but in building this new global contract together.

In conclusion, I want to express my deepest gratitude to the entire progressive global community. Your unwavering support and solidarity are what allow us to keep fighting for a future where human dignity is the ultimate measure of progress.

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Promote the culture of social complexity and an adequate definition of assessment indicators for actions aimed at rebuilding the human dimension of our lives

I am a statistician and, as such, I am mainly involved in indicators construction and analysis. As we know, **indicators** are sensors of reality; they describe and are a stylization of the reality, they are not reality in themselves.

In this field, the principle to follow is simple: phenomena must be defined before they can be measured.

Consequently, indicators' effectiveness in describing reality will depend greatly on the **definitions** we make. I have been always dealing with this issue, particularly by linking the topic of indicators to that of overcoming the logic of GDP, i.e., indicators that allow us to go *beyond* GDP, as said in the international arena. For thirty years now, I have been working on defining something that allows us to move beyond this GDP logic. This is why I have committed myself to exploring issues related to well-being, quality of life and quality of societies and communities, etc. in particular.

What is clear to those who do this exercise is that **the biggest mistake one can make is to come up with fragmented definitions**: when you take a piece from here and a piece from there from the phenomena being studied, you immediately fail in this task.

Another mistake is to confuse the definition of social quality, quality of life, well-being, etc. with the emergencies that occur in our society. We can only identify emergencies after defining what social quality is and everything related to it. This is somewhat the mistake that is also made when Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) indicators (but not only) are adopted as a system that measures a country's well-being, as these indicators measure emergencies or defined goals and have no underlying definition of well-being. Furthermore, these indicators do not monitor social conditions and therefore cannot be adopted to monitor what is defined as social quality.

That said, when we try to explore the issue of social quality in greater depth, it becomes clear that all the most common and widespread definitions can be traced back to general concepts.

Others have already introduced the concept and definition of social quality which involve, quite clearly, the individual dimension as well as the community dimension.

1. The assessment of social quality and well-being

A very important aspect in assessing the well-being of a society is the fairness of its distribution, in territorial (comparison between areas, regions, etc.) and social terms (comparisons between groups defined at different levels, generations, gender, etc.).

The assessment of quality depends greatly on the correct and complete identification of the different levels to be monitored to understand the fairness of distribution. There is much talk, for example, of gender equality, but it should be noted that this is only one aspect, albeit a very important one, of social quality. Fairnesscan be assessed through comparison, but also by creating ad hoc indicators.

Quality assessment can also be carried out by verifying how correctly well-being is promoted in each country. None should pay because of the increasing of the level of well-being of others. In this perspective, many recall the concept of sustainability. However, the term 'sustainability', although attractive and interesting, remains vague and difficult to apply. For this reason, we should refer to concepts such as fragility, vulnerability and risk.

Monitoring a country system through these indicators, developed on the basis of systemic definitions, therefore also allows us to understand the critical points of rupture, the situations that can trigger crises that can no longer be stopped.

2. The importance of a participatory process for a shared definition

What has been described so far poses a problem: who has the social legitimacy to define social quality and consequently identify the indicators? The process leading to the definition of social quality and the development of indicators must bea participatory process. The Italian National Institute of Statistics (Istat) has already done this, creating the BES (Equitable Sustainable Well-being) indicator system with the help of a steering committee (composed by representatives from the society) and a scientific commission (composed by academics and researchers, of which I was a member). Of course, such a system must respect the dynamic nature of reality, and for this reason, opportunities for further discussion should be found within both commissions. There are also technical issues that I will not dwell on, which concern the indicators themselves and their statistical treatment (for example, their synthesis; previously has been cited *Mazziotta-Pareto* which is only one of the possible techniques that can be adopted in order tosynthesize)[6]. However, let me stress a crucial issue related to synthesize indicators: this exercise

[6] I would suggest the following volume F. Maggino (ed.) Complexity in Society: From Indicators Construction to their Synthesis, 2017, Springer.

is done in order to rank observations (countries, cities, etc.) I believe that this kind of exercise should be avoided: persons' and communities' lives are not championships.

3. Social quality and governance

The Italian BES project also led to the approval of a parliamentary bill requiring the government to conduct an impact assessment of the budget law, both ex ante and ex post. We haven't yet fully implemented this law, but the process must be restarted after the last few years of suspension.

Moreover, we have seen how **both the definition and measurement of social quality must take into accountand respect the complexity of reality**.

This is even more true when decisions need to be made in that reality. **At the national level, government decisions are not always characterized by respect for complexity**. For example, rather than offering a summary of open issues, the Council of Ministers ratifies the decisions of individual ministers. A complex reality requires a systemic approach, and the one applied within these institutions is not systemic. My three years of experience as advisor to the Prime Minister made me realize how much we need to promote a culture of complexity, especially at those levels. For this reason, I proposed establishing a control room for complex decisions related to the country's well-being. The creation of this control room confirmed the validity of the proposal. Therefore, we also need to reflect on the initiatives to be promoted in the field of *governance*.

4. Final remarks

We must put people, their lives, and their relationships back at the center. We cannot ignore the fact that we are living in a historic moment in which countries are exhausted due to ongoing structural changes and constant demands for sacrifice (this involves not only countries facing a war). All this is accompanied by the prophetic promotion of resilience, which in practice has turned out to be simply the ability to shoulder all problems and still remain standing. This is simply unacceptable. That is why I try to distance myself from the concept of resilience, precisely because it is linked to these implications. It is not possible to always govern in the name of emergencies and crises of varying severity, using only sacrificial measures that are accepted through fear. We should also reflect on this: if, as we have seen, we use an approach to promote an initiative that is justified by the fact that we are in an emergency, and which in fact triggers fears and anxieties, then doubts arise about the value of what we are promoting. It is an approach that has led to a general decline in trust in institutions and, even more seriously, in interpersonal trust. In Italy, the organization that enjoys the highest level of trust is the fire department, because firefighters risk their lives for our safety.

We need to rebuild the social foundation, which has become severely frayed and fragmented. We need to rebuild the human dimension of our lives, which is not only about work and the struggle for survival, but also about other things that enrich the spirit and mind and preserve health in all its forms.
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Conclusions

We have in mind that the commitments taken by the FinalDeclaration in the Second World Social Summit (2025) are very clear, andI summarize in some basic elements that we can use in the next future.

- **First**, the center role of ***Social Development Commission***. So, we shall make reference to this commission.
- **Second**, the second element that we keep in mind is to make reference to the date that was indicated and approved by the community of the states: ***2031***. This is the date, the temporary time that we have to try to adapt and adjust our policies.
- **Third**, the third element that we have to use it's the invitation by the United Nations to take contact with the ***UN regional agencies***. So, we as community working on a new social quality approach, we shall take contacts and promote cooperation with such bodies to activate this innovative approach system.

All this it's connected to the two main goals: to reinforce **multilateral system**, and to implement **UN Agenda 2030** on sustainability. We have a very interesting new elements in the FinalDeclaration over which we want to work. For instance:
i) to connect social development to a new political, economic, ethical, and spiritual vision (see Article 16);
ii) the indicators must go behind the Gross National Product (see Article 29, point k);
iii) to promote and intensify the intervention in some specific sectors, as, for instance, urbanization, (see Article40, point e). To act in this direction, we shall follow the indication of the, PAGUS Manifesto (2025), an important document elaborated to balance the development of rural and urban territory, already supported and signed by many members of international scientific community, including our community.

The experts that gathered to give their contributions have been committed for a long time on the social quality approach and the related indicators and are ready to go in the direction given by Professor *Salvatore* CAPASSO: the research must get out of the laboratory and become active in implementing new projects.

In the introduction by President IDI, *Paolo* GIORDANI, our commitment to act in suppor of the UN International community was clearly outlined. Other particular aspects concerning the social quality of development were highlighted in the contributions of the speakers. We shall work in the future in this direction.

To this aim, we have to implement a clear idea of what is social, what are the implications of this approach, and how to explain clearly the understanding of societal transformation. In this direction, for instance, the contribution by our Ukrainian colleague, prof. *Valery* HEYETS, gives support to create what has been defined a humanistic project. So, we are ready to put at disposal and to work with the international community the result of our experience, our research, and our thinking, which we consider quite innovative in comparison with the traditional approach to social problems.

In particular, we are at the disposal of the United Nations to create cooperation and research projects in this direction. We share the idea that what is clearly stated in the United Nations documents - that the increasing social imbalance and social exclusion processes in all the states of the world - requires a completely different approach.

We have brought this evening some examples as, for instance: the Exclusion Index elaborated by the EURISPES Foundation (see the contribution by *Mariarosaria* ZAMBOI); the indication of the areas in which to work in a complementary way to promote fair societal transformations, indicated by the International Association of Social Quality – IASQ (see the contribution by *Laurent Van Der* MAESEN); and the quality indicators by Professor *Filomena* MAGGINO.

All these elements are, in fact, quite innovative with respect to what we read in other documents signed by traditional approaches. We take this important occasion offered by UN to confirm that we are ready to create a new framework for effective social policies.

Let us start by providing a clear theoretical basis of reference and test the related practical approach. In our view that is the only way to create efficient social policies.

These are our conclusions: and we are ready and open to all contributions to create, as *Laurent Van Der* MAESEN proposed here, an International Academic Forum dealing with social issues.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Strategic Goal: To contribute to strengthening UN action

To innovate traditional social policy orientations, adopting the "Social Quality" perspective and related theoretical and practical approaches as a holistic framework within which to operate, in order to reduce the objective risks of misunderstanding the complexity of social phenomena and the ineffectiveness of interventions. Specifically, promoting the shift from an approach that focuses on "social development" to one aimed at understanding "societal transformation" is intended to add value and strengthen UN policies in this area of activity.

2. Specific Goals of the international scientific community

2.1 - The concept of "social". Promote in-depth exploration and theoretical sharing of the underlying concept - "social" - in order to move beyond generalities and define a robust theoretical and practical framework capable of interpreting the real transformations underway in communities and supporting public policies characterized by coherent, interrelated and verifiable systems of coordinates, operating on the basis of paradigms capable of balancing human and social needs, institutional authority, and human capabilities.

2.2 - Social Transformations. Promote the practice of analyzing the social quality of development based on the interrelationship between the processes of change that affect the four main societal dimensions: *the socioeconomic and financial dimension, the sociopolitical and legal-institutional dimension, the sociocultural dimension, and the environmental and ecological dimension*. This creates a valid and useful contextual framework for understanding the scope and implications of societal transformations, with reference to the constitutional, conditional, and normative factors that impact people's self-realization, their system of relationships, and the formation of collective identities (see: IASQ, www.socialquality.org).

2.3 - Social Quality Indicators. Promote an international initiative to profoundly clarify the value of indicators traditionally used in assessing processes of social transformation. This initiative aims to correct their current ambiguities and promote - based on a broad participatory process and full awareness of the complexity of social processes - an adequate, shared definition of assessment indicators for actions aimed at rebuilding the human dimension of our lives.

2.4 - Exclusion Index. Promote the dissemination of the Exclusion Index as a tool to better understand and highlight where and how the human environment fails. Drawing on the Italian experience, it was developed with a fundamental focus: to anchor the measurement not to subjective preferences, but to public rights and duties.

2.5 - International Academic Forum. Support the dissemination of culture and the study of social quality as a cornerstone of modern societal transformations by promoting the establishment of a permanent scientific body of reference, an International Academic Forum (IAF), possibly to be established in Rome, organized and anchored at a leading public scientific institution.

2.6 - Three specific proposals for Ukraine. Ukraine's experience shows that the only way forward for post war recovery is a Human-Centered Approach. We proposed three concrete steps for international action:
First: Establish "Social Quality" as a mandatory audit standard for all international investments in Ukraine's recovery
Second: Support the National Program "How Are You?". Mental resilience is the bedrock of national security. Without psychological recovery, economic recovery is impossible.
Third: We invite the global scientific community to join the International Scientific Forum (ISAF) in Rome. Let us unite our intellectual resources to make Social Quality the cornerstone of modern societal transformations.

CONTATTI

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