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INTERUNIVERSITY CENTER FOR SOCIAL SCIENCE THEORY AND METHODOLOGY

25 YEARS
RESEARCH CENTER AND GRADUATE SCHOOL ICS

To Dirk Helbing and Steven Bishop
Coordinators of the EU Flagship Pilot FuturICT

Date
September 29, 2011

Ref. nr.
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Subject
Letter of support

Dear Sirs,

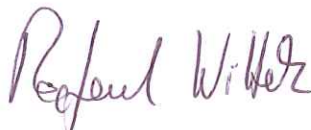
As Scientific Director and board members of the Interuniversity Center for Social Science Theory and Methodology (ICS) and as chairs of the departments of Sociology at University of Groningen and Utrecht University, we would like to express our strong support for the FuturICT FET Flagship initiative. The FuturICT vision to combine complexity science with extensive ICT tools to address fundamental as well as socially urgent socio-economic problems provides a pioneering new scientific paradigm for the 21st century.

The Interuniversity Center for Social Science Theory and Methodology (ICS) is a sociological research network with researchers from multi-disciplinary backgrounds including sociology, economics, social psychology, but also mathematics and computer science, who specialize in the research in various sociological fields. The ICS consists of senior researchers, post-doctoral researchers and PhD students. The main fields of research include cooperation, social networks, online networks, social inequality, social influence, collective decision making, migration. The scientific approaches to analyze these substantive research fields include theoretical approaches using game theory and other analytic methods, social simulation including evolutionary dynamics, social network analysis, and related approaches. In addition, the ICS has ample experience in a wide range of empirical methods including experimental and survey methods as well as in the statistical analyses of complex data structures such as longitudinal large-scale network data.

The ICS hosts currently about 60 PhD students, large number of staff members and has a broad international network. In the most recent national review of research departments in sociology in the Netherlands (QUANU, 2009), the ICS departments of Utrecht and Groningen Universities were ranked 1st and 3rd, respectively, out of 9 reviewed research departments.

The substantive fields addressed by the ICS as well as its theoretical and methodological expertise match very well with the FuturICT vision in seeking to provide new ways to combine complexity science with socio-economics, using ICT and technology for the social benefit. We, as well as our ICS colleagues fully support the FuturICT efforts in the Netherlands, in Europe as well as world wide and will be happy to cooperate within FuturICT in any way we can.

Yours sincerely,



Prof. dr. Rafael Wittek
Scientific director of the ICS
Chair of the Department of Sociology
University of Groningen



Prof. dr. ir Tanja van der Lippe
Board member of the ICS
Chair of the Department of Sociology, Utrecht
University