

Theme Social Transition and Behavioral Change

Societies, organizations, and individuals are subject to profound change. People can only experience true prosperity and security if they are agile and can adapt effectively. In doing so, they are partly dependent on the simultaneous changes in organizational models, markets, governance structures, and (eco)systems. The ecosystem perspective is particularly valuable here. It involves interacting actors at different levels (from the individual to society), who are often not managed hierarchically and who are united by social and economic interaction. Ecosystems add value because they enable actors to coordinate their multilateral dependencies so that adaptive and changing behavior is facilitated.

Such changes occur in many forms and at different levels. The changes can be episodic (e.g., economic depression, intergroup conflicts, divorce, unemployment, or illness) or structural and long-lasting (e.g., globalization, migration, deinstitutionalization, neo liberalization, aging, flexibilization, digitalization, and the concomitant changes in values, norms, and culture) and affect the "life chances" of the social actors involved who, as a result, must (learn to) cope with the changing realities they are confronted with. The adaptation responses are diverse and the challenges countless.

Understanding human behavior, resilient and agile organizations, and interorganizational networks are necessary for sustainable social transitions. Our research aims, first, to (better) understand the adaptive and maladaptive responses of social actors and the underlying mechanisms to these changes. Secondly, using the insights gained, we want to study whether interventions (policies, organizational interventions, (inclusive) human resource management practices, treatments, reintegration efforts, and the like) and subsystems within organizations aimed at improving the adaptability and resilience of actors are effective or not and do what they are supposed to do.

This requires further connecting multiple social science disciplines in interdisciplinary research. This research helps to identify and reinforce the connection between theory, methodologies, and insights regarding social issues, such as migration, social inequality, aging, and socioeconomic security. Collaboration among academics with backgrounds in sociology, organizational science, psychology, and human resource studies is, therefore, necessary to increase our knowledge of the challenges that societies, organizations, teams, and individuals face and how they can adapt to them to maintain or increase their individual, organizational, or societal resilience and well-being.

To make the step from insight to impact, collaboration with strategic partners is conditional. To this end, Tilburg University is establishing three academic collaborative centers; each with a focus on a specific societal transition. The Tilburg School of Social and Behavioral Sciences is the leader of the Academic Collaborative Center Inclusive Labor Market. In this Academic Collaborative Center, insights are elaborated into solutions and/or policies for, for example, intersectoral mobility between sectors in which jobs are disappearing to sectors with large personnel shortages.

Tilburg University will answer the research questions below.

- Why do some forms of cooperation between different actors take place in ecosystems and not in other forms, such as chains or alliances?
- What kinds of cooperative, coordinating, and adaptive behaviors can be observed within ecosystems, and what explains these behaviors?
- What does this mean for how interventions at these levels can be positioned in relation to each other?
- How can governance processes at different levels of innovation policy, organizational change, and behavioral interventions be meaningfully aligned to drive transition?
- How can we ensure that trust in organizations remains intact during these transitions?
- How can we ensure that transitions and behavior change happen in a way that is human-centered, and what are these principles?