



# Reinventing the Body of Knowledge of Social Work Education in the Netherlands

EASSW conference Paris 2017

Dr. Raymond Kloppenburg [Raymond.Kloppenburger@hu.nl](mailto:Raymond.Kloppenburger@hu.nl)  
Dr. Ed de Jonge, [Ed.deJonge@hu.nl](mailto:Ed.deJonge@hu.nl)

# Aims and overview

## *Aims*

- ❖ Boundary crossing through exchange, critical reflection, inspiration & collaboration.

## *Composition workshop: Tryptich*

- ❖ Part one: **Reason**
  - ❖ Positioning of the profession
- ❖ Part two: **Development**
  - ❖ Positioning of knowledge
- ❖ Part three: **Implementation**
  - ❖ Positioning of education

# Advanced Organizer



What is the most important challenge concerning the body of knowledge of social work education in your university?

# Part 1: position of the profession 1



## *Social Policy: Transition*

- Participation society, big society, small state
- Decentralisation, local policy, public tenders
- Against expertocracy, promoting civil initiatives
- Blend of ideological and economic motives

# Part 1: position of the profession 2



## *Changing Position SW*

- Ambivalent challenge: take responsibility but don't take over
- Inter-professional cooperation in district teams, dealing with different stakeholders in the public and private domain
- De-professionalization combined with increasing legislation and registration,

# Discussion part 1

What are the main challenges for social workers in your country concerning the position and profile of the profession?

## Part 2: position of knowledge

The call for a stronger body of knowledge for social professionals comes from society.

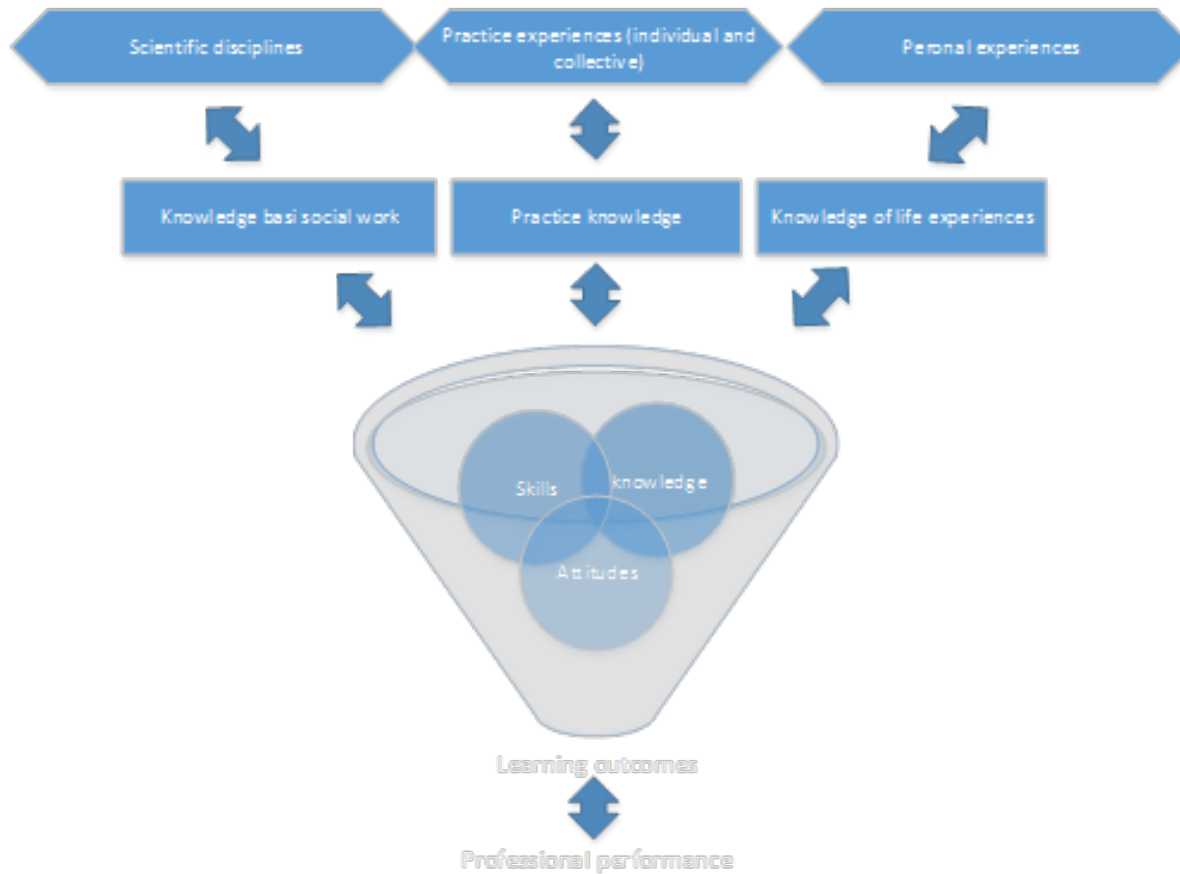
Ministry of health, wellbeing and sports (2014):

- The application of new knowledge in practice in social work is insufficient.
- For a sustainable quality improvement a functioning knowledge system is needed

National Advisory Commission (2014)

- While maintaining the vocational nature of the training, social work education should focus on the body of knowledge of the social sciences.

# Part 2: types of knowledge





# Part 2: BoK: demarcation and criteria



Demarcation BoK: The whole of scientific knowledge of social work to be possessed by all graduates of the bachelor courses for social work.

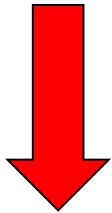
## Criteria

- Practice based
- Science based
- Education based
- Sustainability

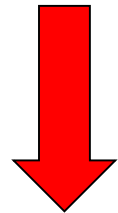
# Part 2: BoK: structure and function



Two possibilities for structuring a Body of Knowledge

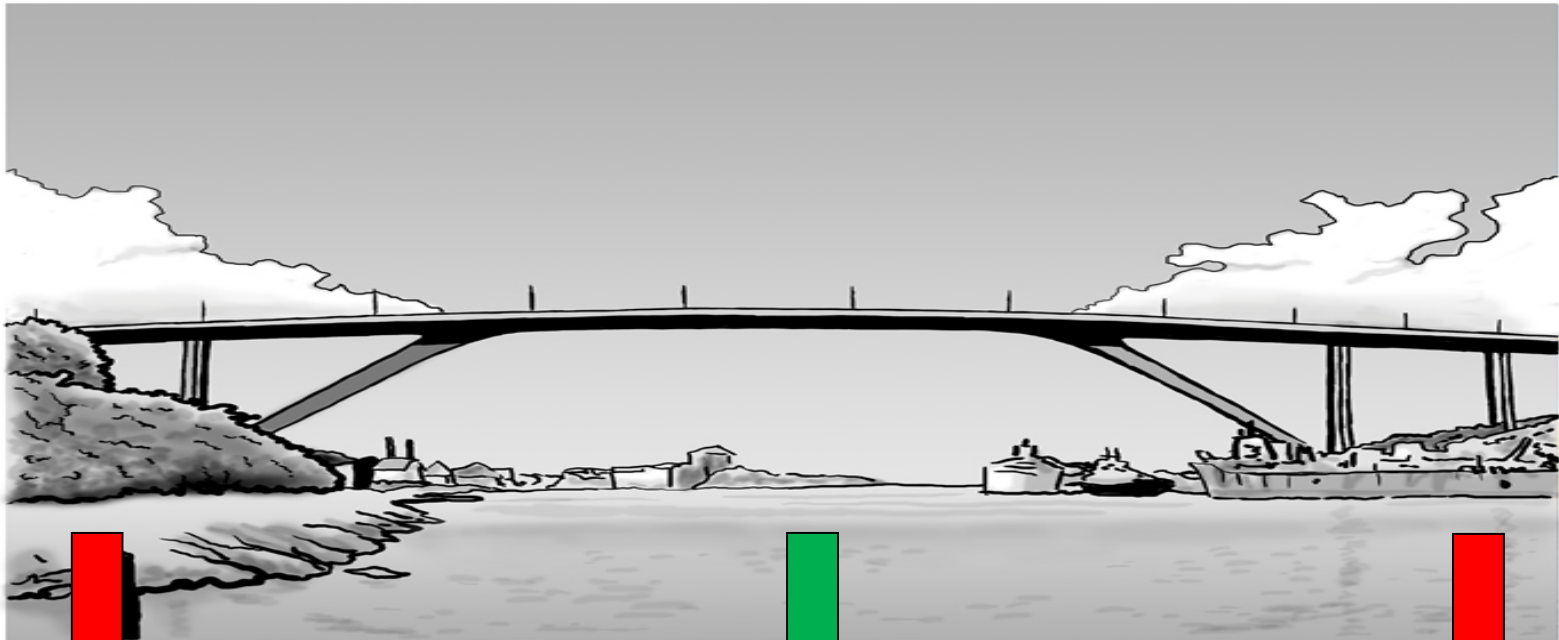


**THEORY**  
(disciplines)



**PRACTICE**  
(competencies)

# Part 2: BoK: structure and function

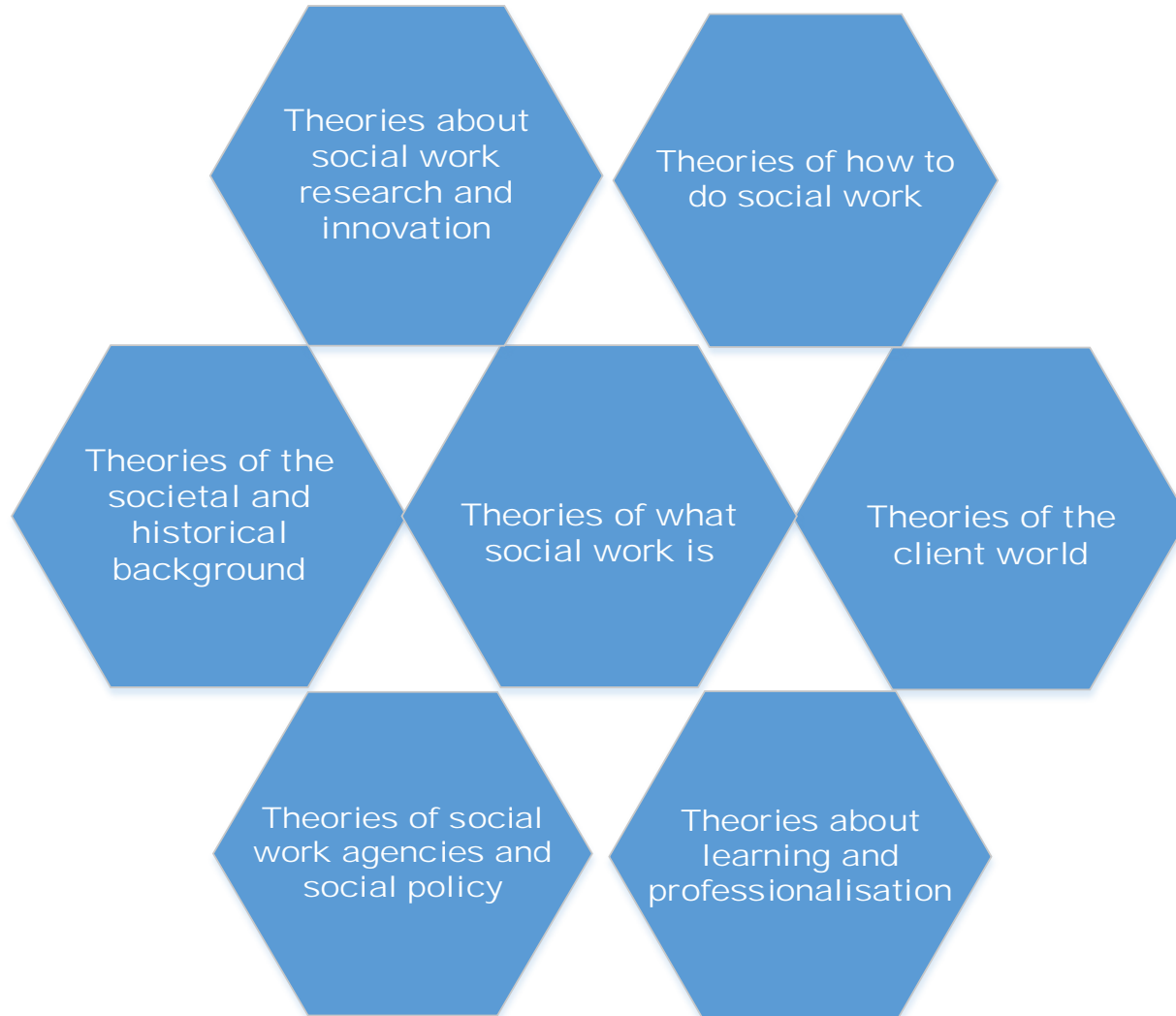


**THEORY**  
(disciplines)

**MEDIATING**  
(building blocks)  
see next slide

**PRACTICE**  
(competencies)

# Part 2: BoK: structure



# Part 2: BoK: Central themes 1

## Social work

- Core values and mission
- Central tasks and basic forms of professional performance
- Legitimizing and positioning

## Part 2: BoK: Central themes 2-3

### Service users

- Social quality of living together
- Social functioning of individuals, groups, communities
- Social development and individual lifespan

### Societal context

- (National) politics, policy and law
- Historical context
- Global context

# Part 2: BoK: Central themes 4-5

## Methods

- Theory of practice approaches
- Working methodically
- Normative and world view

## Organization

- Social map
- Policy and governance
- Social work organizations and social entrepreneurship

## Part 2: BoK: Central themes 6-7

### Professionalization

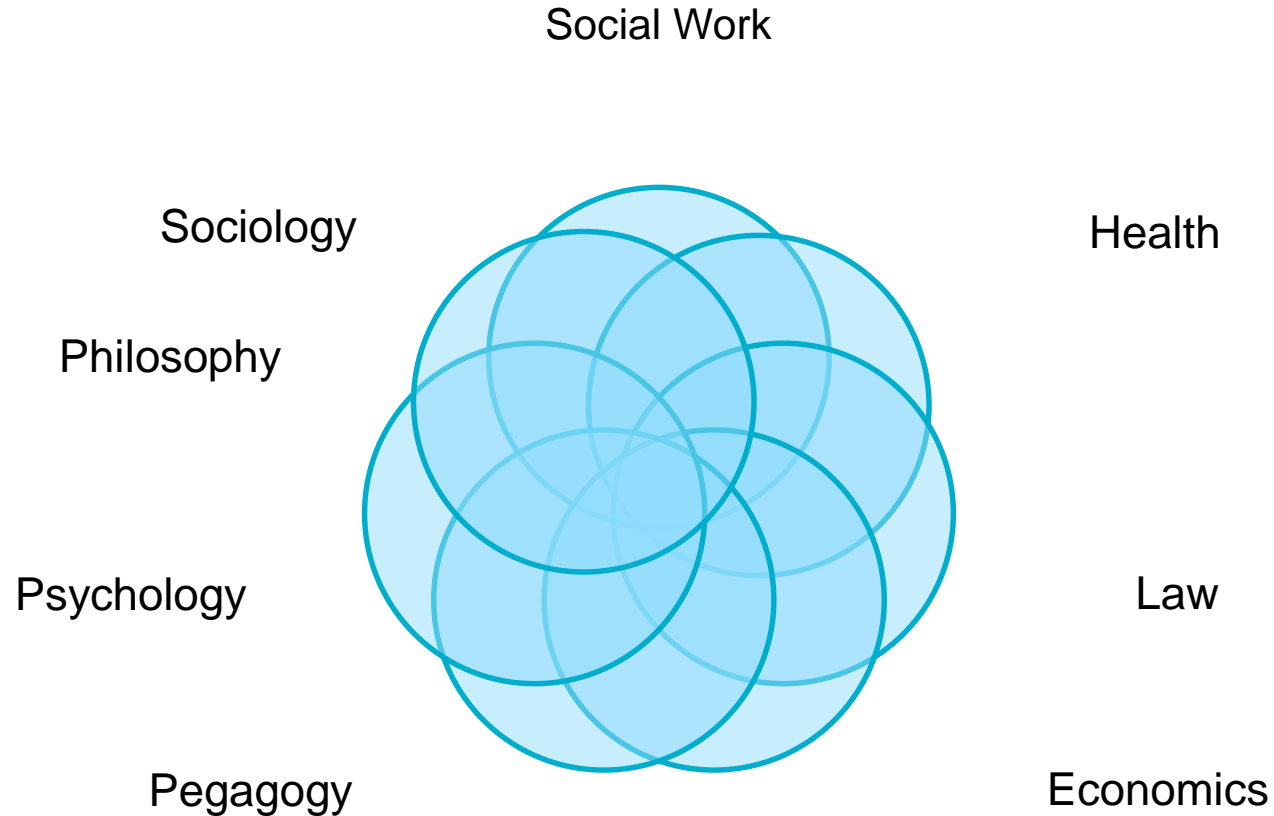
- Learning ability
- Competence and crafts(wo)manship
- Career development and employability

### Research and Innovation

- Practice based research
- Methods of research
- Innovation



# Part 2: Integrating perspectives





## Discussion Part 2

What are the basic principles of the body of knowledge in your curriculum?

What are important challenges?

# Part 3: position of Education 1

Implementation of knowledge, from highlands to swamp:

- Stakeholders and interests
- Conflicting principles
- UAS: “dimensions of development”

## Part 3: position of Education 2

Stakeholders and interests/preferences:

- Lecturers: individual expertise
- Professors: focal point of research
- Students: personal interests
- Social workers: practice based knowledge
- Service users: experience based knowledge
- Management: policy based knowledge

# Part 3: position of Education 3

## Conflicting principles

- Profession: evidence based expertise versus democratic professionalism
- Knowledge: scientific based knowledge versus practice based knowledge versus experience based knowledge
- Learning: social constructivism (learning process) versus realism (assessment demands)
- Curriculum: isolated modules or coherent whole (integrated, blended, concurrent, concentric)

## Part 3: position of Education 4

UAS HU: “dimensions of development” (excerpt)

- Co-creation with professional practice
- Connexion between practical challenges and expert knowledge (state of the art, based on practice research)
- Independent modules; independent assessments
- Experiential and blended learning
- Self-control of learning and development
- Learning teams
- Stimulating research capability

# Discussion part 3

Is there currently a debate about the body of knowledge in your university?

If so, what is it about and what can be learned from its outcomes?