



To the Members  
of the ISA Research Committee 54  
“THE BODY IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

*Newsletter November 2014*  
About the RC54 Embodiment Global Lab

Rome, 4 November 2014

Dear Colleagues,

over the past few years initiatives on Embodiment have been growing in number and scope in both EU and US, with substantial public and projects. Assessing the impact of Embodiment applications and sharing lessons learned, the RC54 Embodiment Global Lab [from this moment EGL], formally founded at the XVIII World Congress of Sociology, is oriented to show that the capacity of adaptation and common flexibility will eventually constitute a major trend for building a new global culture, supported by a tangible community of peoples embodying shared values and practices emerging from the contextual use of the body. In order to strengthen the ongoing scientific collaboration between the sociology of the body and a systematic promotion of innovative best practices, it intends to develop a set of tools, techniques and strategies aiming at producing a *dynamic sample of culture* as negotiating across collective practices and behaviours. From such a negotiation, culture should emerge as an *acting in context by real existing social groups and their members*. A strong support by an empirically based research will be the essential prerequisite to pursue the following articulated strategies:

- *to invent* an innovative grammar by mapping identities and solidarities within the practices of embodiment;
- *to conduct* a series of case-studies on contemporary practices, expectations and perceptions, embodying in praxis the shared values of cultural diversity, recognition and solidarity;
- *to create and share new methodologies* for the study of the human body that meet the challenges of entirely new ways in which the issue of embodiment is now appearing in the contemporary world;
- *to provide an avenue of communication* between scholars and practitioners in fields such as medicine, nutrition, sport, urban planning and technology development, and to communicate findings of research, currently too often trapped within the academic community, to policy makers, planners and the public;
- *to promote the aims and results in progress* by organizing seminars, workshops and international conferences in every country participating to the World Lab;
- *to stimulate* fresh research on the subject of the body in society and nature along the following lines:

- a. *Technology*;
- b. *Medicine*: [a special attention will be paid to genetic manipulation, organ transplants, artificial organs, therapeutic interventions physical and psychological, between diet and health, anorexia and obesity];
- c. *Travel (and tourism) as motors for development*;
- d. *Urbanism*: [city life and its interactive aspects of urban living];
- e. *Performance*;
- f. *Sport*;
- g. *Sexualities, fashion and gendered codes*;
- h. *Food and the “civilizing process”*;
- i. *Religions and Rituals*;
- j. *Trauma: new forms of social suffering*;
- l. *Cross-cultural communication*.

The EGL will work, shortly, to intervene socially for a successful integration focusing on the factors that shape and constrain the development of wide-ranging public policies and civil initiatives more embedded in habitus, bio-social equilibrium, sense and perception, *in order to reclaim the social changes through embodied practices*.

By “reclaiming the social” along lines involving bodies and practices and concrete social situations, the route from theory to actual research and application entails direct spin-off in terms of applicable knowledge for professionals.

Among the possible initiatives on these topics, we propose the following for the imminent future:

**1. CANCELLED due to organizational reasons 28/11/2014**

**an International Conference as starting point of the RC54 EGL to be held at ISCTE-IUL [Lisbon University Institute, Av. das Forças Armadas, 1649-026 Lisboa, Portugal] on the next May 2015. The exact date will be communicated as soon as definitively agreed**

**2. a specific RC54 website fully devoted to the activities in progress of the EGL around the world.**

In waiting for your active and prompt feedback,  
kind regards,

Bianca Maria Pirani