

ETHOS Newsletter

ETHOS Project
Newsletter 03/2019



1. What is ETHOS?

ETHOS is a multi-disciplinary research project funded by the European Commission under the Horizon2020 programme. The ETHOS project seeks to provide building blocks for the development of an empirically informed European theory of justice and fairness. In the project, we strive to refine and deepen our understanding of justice, in order to answer questions about: What is 'justice'? How is justice understood and experienced? Who is entitled to justice? Who is responsible for securing justice?

The project will inform a wide range of stakeholders about different understandings and experiences of justice with a view to supporting attempts to reverse inequalities and to promote justice.

Six institutes work together on "themes" (or thematic focal points). ETHOS is coordinated by the Utrecht University (the Netherlands) and has partners in Austria (European Training and Research Centre for Human Rights and Democracy, Graz), Hungary (Central European University, Budapest), Portugal (Centre for Social Studies, Coimbra), Turkey (Boğaziçi University, Istanbul) and the UK (University of Bristol).

ETHOS is a 3-year research project which started in January 2017 combining the disciplines of philosophy, social policy, sociology, law, economy, and political science.

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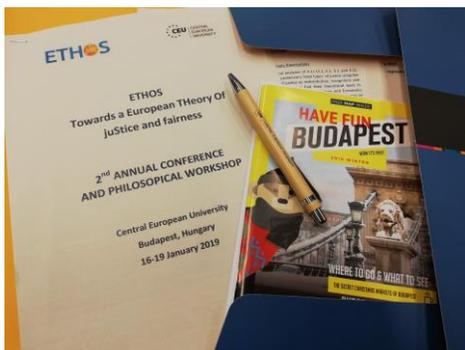
2. Second Annual ETHOS Conference in Budapest, Hungary

The second Annual ETHOS Conference took place from 16th-19th January 2019 at Central European University (CEU) in Hungary. ETHOS Researchers, Advisory Board members, as well as invited guests and policy makers joined to discuss the research progress. The three-day event featured several keynote lectures, namely by **Andrea Sangiovanni** (EUI), **Philippe van Parijs** (KU Leuven and EUI) and CEU President and Rector **Michael Ignatieff**. Alongside the thematic input given, the conference revolved around three focal points.

First, a policy workshop was held on two core ETHOS themes; ‘Footloose Europeans’ and ‘Categorizing dependency and vulnerability’ in which ETHOS researchers and invited policy-makers and NGO representatives participated. The workshop sessions were followed by a plenary session on “Justice in policy-making: redistribution, recognition and representation”, which touched on citizenship, dependency, and vulnerability. Based on the outputs, provisional recommendations for policy makers were formulated. It was noted that storytelling might be a unique and nuanced manner in which vulnerability and other themes, relevant to individuals and groups, could be addressed.

Second, ETHOS researchers presented and discussed their extensive country-specific and comparative reports, covering legal, social, political and economic aspects of justice. Particular focus was placed on finding synergies between normative and empirical conceptions of justice in order to proceed with the development of a European theory of justice and fairness. The national reports conducted in six countries act as the foundation for comparative reports, which in turn, make up the empirical basis of the building blocks of the theory of justice and fairness developed by the project.

Third, the second Annual ETHOS Conference took place in conjunction with an extensive philosopher’s workshop under the title of “Justice and beliefs about justice in Europe”. The aim was to explore how philosophers and theorists of justice in Europe should take people’s attitudes and beliefs about justice into account in non-ideal theorizing about justice in Europe.



3. Towards a European Theory of Justice and Fairness

In the third and final year of the ETHOS project, efforts are increasingly focused on combining theoretical and empirical building blocks, yielded from two years of research across six countries in various domains. The European theory of justice and fairness seeks to be normatively sound, reflective of European values, and responsive to empirical data about citizens' views on justice and experiences of injustice. During the Budapest conference, the progress made in the methodological framework was outlined by Trudie Knijn, Dorota Lepianka and Tom Theuns. Concretely, four integrative models on how to combine theory and practice were discussed, which constitute possible routes along which the theory of justice and fairness can be further developed:

Provisory policy-recommendations: Policy recommendation should not take the form of “justice requires X”, but rather “reform X would further the ideal-type of justice as representation” or “reform Y would take us away from the ideal-type of justice as recognition”. This approach is in line with the integrative perspective and comprises ideal-types of justice furthered by a ‘reflective equilibrium’ of theoretical and empirical conceptualizations of justice.

Real-world political philosophy: Such philosophy can bridge the gap between empirical observations and normative analysis. In other words, normative theories of “ideal” justice do not limit possibilities for improving injustice.

Critical perspective: Ideal types are not normative ideals, but rather, heuristic ideals that help us to understand justice in Europe. Hence, understanding how Europe understands justice can shed light on what the demands of justice are and which, to some extent, constitute norms. Such ideal-types may reflect prejudices and exclusions as much as they reflect aspirations.

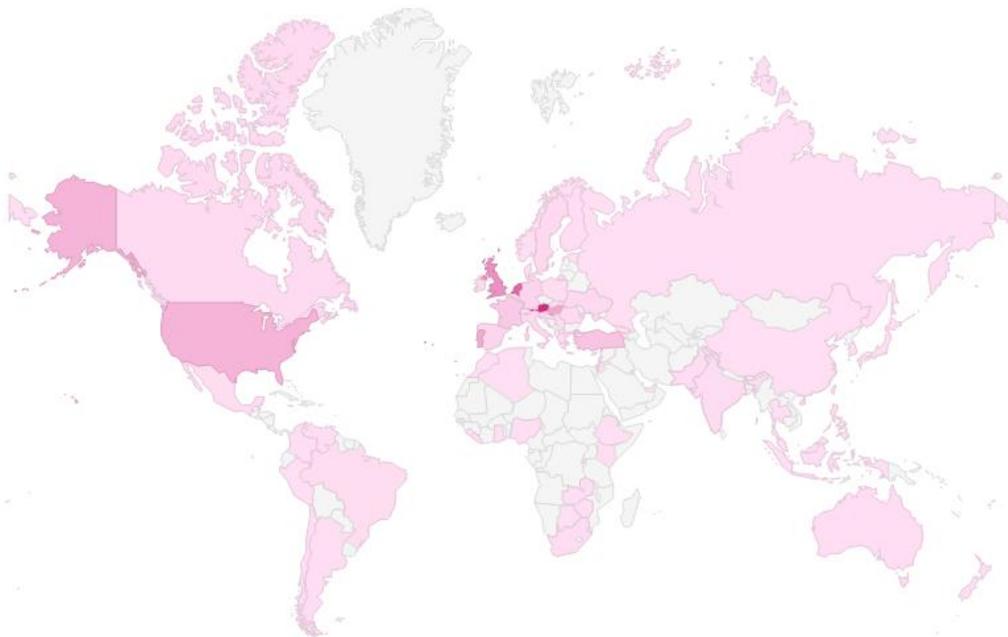
Constructive perspective: The way in which empirical data and normative theory intersect is an open philosophical question in its own right. Hence, ETHOS takes no general position, but interactively combines theoretical and empirical research continuously to build a dynamic theory, which bridges the various constructivist positions in the debate.

4. ETHOS goes global!

One of the flagships of the ETHOS dissemination strategies is the multi-layered and multi-targeted approach to bringing research findings to the public. In addition to publishing classical research findings in the form of publications, these are transcribed into easy-to-read blogs with accompanying infographics as a visual tool capturing the most vital points. This strategy has proven successful in addressing audiences of all ages and background, who engage with and share content in their respective networks. The ETHOS Blog, which is available at www.ethosjustice.wordpress.com, has attracted visitors from across the globe. While the ETHOS project seeks to create a European theory of justice and fairness, project findings have shown to be of interest to readers far beyond European borders.

As can be seen on the map below, followers of the blog come from all over the world. In fact, the blog boasts over 4500 unique visitors from 68 different countries, showing that the public is indeed highly interested in research on justice and fairness.

Stats for All Time



5. Current project outputs

ETHOS researchers continually produce a number of reports based on theoretical and/or empirical investigations. Read the summaries and download the ever-growing collection of papers here <https://ethos-europe.eu/publications> and <https://www.ethos-europe.eu/working-papers-country-reports>

- [Comparative report on the types of distributive claims, interests and capabilities of various groups of the population evoked in the political and economic debates at the EU and at the nation state level](#) – by Maria Paula Meneses, Sara Araújo, Silvia Ferreira and Barbara Safradin. The report draws on six national case studies conducted by ETHOS researchers.
- [Multidisciplinary Perspective on Justice in Europe](#) – by Trudie Knijn, Tom Theuns and Miklos Zala
- [Justice care and personal assistance](#) – Bridget Anderson
- [Impact of the Social and EU Charters in times of crisis](#) – Sybe de Vries and Barbara Safradin
- [Report containing a conceptual framework for integration of findings](#) – Trudie Knijn and Dorota Lepianka
- [The effectiveness of social dialogue as an instrument to promote labour and social justice](#) – Sara Araújo and Maria Paula Meneses
- [Discourses on minorities \(and vulnerable groups’\) access to education, inclusionary and exclusionary aspects](#) - Ayse Bugra and Basak Akkan
- [Comparative report on Labour conflicts and access to justice: the impact of alternative dispute resolution](#) – Sara Araújo, Barbara Safradin and Laura Brito
- [Boundary lines between private and public care: Living independently at home or in a home](#) – Trudie Knijn

6. Recent blogposts

The ETHOS project actively seeks to make “science” accessible and understandable for people outside of the academic field. One mechanism used to achieve this goal is the blog, which hosts easy-to-read information about the topics covered by the publications and helps show where justice is represented in daily life. You can access the entire blog with over 45 posts here: <https://ethosjustice.wordpress.com>. You can also easily sign up for information about new posts directly to your inbox!

Reports:

- [The non-realisation of distributive justice](#) - by Maria Paula Meneses, Sara Araújo and Barbara Safradin
Country reports on Vulnerable Groups’ Claims for Redistribution:
 - Austria: [Are universal minimum wages an instrument to foster income redistribution?](#) by Veronika Apostolovski and Isabella Meier
 - Hungary: [Young women with caring responsibilities](#) and [Roma on public work contracts](#) both by Sára Hungler and Ágnes Kende
 - Portugal: [Vulnerable Groups’ claims for Redistribution](#)
 - The Netherlands: [Young women and non-Western migrants](#) by Barbara Safradin, Sybe de Vries and Roemer Sijmons
 - Turkey: [Young women in the labour market](#) by Basak Akkan and [People with disabilities in the labour market](#) by Volkan Yilmaz
 - United Kingdom: [Gender, austerity and the worker citizen](#) by Pier Luc Dupont and Bridget Anderson

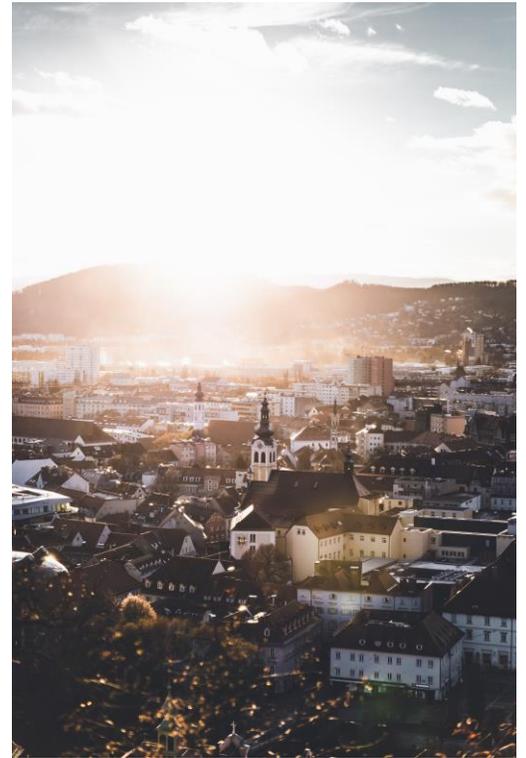
Other posts:

- 9th November 2018: [Justice in Europe – for everyone](#) by Trudie Knijn
- 15th November 2018: [How just is your world?](#) – by Livia Perschy
- 10th December 2018: [A cause to celebrate and contemplate – 70 years of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) – by ETC Graz
- 13th February 2019: [There is no such thing as free democratic transition](#) – by Tom Theuns

7. Coming up

The third and final ETHOS Annual Conference will take place in Graz, Austria in November 2019. The conference will not only gather the ETHOS Consortium and researchers, but also explicitly address media stakeholders, who will be advised on how to deal with justice in the media. More details about the conference topic, dates and venue will be announced soon!

In addition, project reports are put online on the ETHOS website <https://ethos-europe.eu/>, giving a comprehensive overview about the vast state of research conducted in six countries. ETHOS researchers are further putting efforts into publishing ETHOS findings in renowned journals and books.



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