

European Business and Economic Ethics: Diagnosis – Dialogue – Debate

Is There a European Business and Economic Ethics Approach?

An International Conference Organised by the Berlin Forum
Heidelberg, Germany

September 6 – 8, 2007

The “Berlin Forum”, a network of PhD and post-Doc students in the field of “business and economic ethics”, is organising a conference on the subject “European Business and Economic Ethics: Is there a European business and economic ethics approach?” The conference will take place from September 6 – 8, 2007 at and in cooperation with the *Heidelberg Academy of the Sciences and Humanities* in Heidelberg (Germany).

Economic reality in Europe today takes place not only at the level of nation-states but also increasingly at a regional, European and global level. With regard to trade, Europe is the major market for most domestic businesses. The same is true for the “economic ethical reality”: economic actors, non-governmental organizations, governments and also the scientific community need to take into account the scale of a unified Europe when tackling ethical issues.

With regard to academia, there are indeed some trans-national axes of academic discourse, of reference and of cooperation in Europe, such as the trans-national discourse in German speaking Europe or the close links between the British and the Dutch approaches to business ethics. However, thus far, the vast majority of cases of cooperation and communication in business and economic ethics still primarily occur within single countries. The landscape of business and economic ethics in Europe therefore remains scattered – parallels between different countries may exist, but are of a rather coincidental kind.

Considering this situation, the Berlin Forum is organising a conference on business and economics ethics, which aims at stimulating a dialogue between scientists from different European countries and at strengthening scientific cooperation in the field of *European* business and economic ethics. In this way, the possible profile of *European* business and economic ethics will be highlighted against the predominant US-American approaches to business and economic ethics. The focus of the conference will be academic rather than application-oriented. Consequently, the conference addresses *theoretical* perspectives on both economic *and* business ethics. The target group comprises scientists and researchers from various disciplines dealing with business and economic ethics.

Conference Programme

(a) Diagnosis

The conference will be opened by two high-profile keynote speakers, who will give a review of the state of theory building in European business and economic ethics.

Keynote Economic Ethics in Europe: Adela Cortina, Universidad de Valencia (E)

Keynote Business Ethics in Europe: Luc van Liedekerke, Katholieke Universiteit, Leuven (B) and president of the European Business Ethics Network (EBEN)

(b) Dialogue

The second part of the conference is devoted to a broad dialogue on specific topics from the conference's theme: *basic income theory, environmental ethics, state-economy relations, methodology in business and economics ethics, importance of the adjacent (social) sciences, corporate social responsibility (CSR) and ethical leadership.*

Different points of view will display the diversity of ethical traditions. Scientists from all fields in business and economic ethics are encouraged to contribute a presentation and thus take part in a trans-national dialogue on their specific research interest (see the *call for papers* at www.berlinerforum.org).

(c) Debate

The third part of the conference will be made up of various lectures where academics from different disciplines and countries debate the key coordinates that shape each approach in European business and economic ethics.

Marcel Hénaff, University of California, San Diego (USA/F) /

Stefano Zamagni, Università di Bologna (I) and Johns Hopkins University (USA):

Philosophical and religious traditions in European business and economic ethics

Bernard Perret, Laboratoire de sociologie du changement des institutions Paris (F) /

Michael Wohlgemuth, Walter Eucken Institut Freiburg (D):

The role of state-market relations in European business and economic ethics

Hans Joas, Max-Weber-Kolleg of the University of Erfurt (D)

and Committee on Social Thought, University of Chicago (USA) /

Jan Tullberg, Stockholm School of Economics (S):

European values

Junior researchers whose papers are selected for a session can apply for a grant if they can prove their neediness and if they do not get any financial support from their universities or similar institutions. Applicants from so-called developing countries and Eastern European countries will be given preferential treatment.

www.berlinerforum.org

Conference team: Dorothea Baur • Franziska Birke • Jochen Fehling

Dr. Bettina Hollstein • Dr. Mi-Yong Lee Peuker