




# **HOW 'EUROPEAN VALUES' UNITE AND DIVIDE**

## **IDENTITY AND MORALITY POLITICS IN THE EU**

**21<sup>RST</sup> OF NOVEMBER 2019**

**Final Conference of the ValeUR project**  
Cevipol/Institute for European Studies  
Université libre de Bruxelles, av. F. D. Roosevelt, 39, room Kant



According to the ValeUR project, references to values may have **three incentives**. Firstly, it may be a call to identity, memory and communicative resources in a quest for legitimization (governing through values). Secondly, it may come from the *necessity to deal with ethical issues calling for normative policy choices (governing values)*. Thirdly, *values may cause legal and political conflicts and challenge established balances of powers and regulation (governed by values)*. A first book<sup>1</sup> focused on the two first scenarios (governing through values and governing values). The purpose of this conference is to develop more specifically the third one (governed by values) and to emphasize the **competitive and/or conflictual dimension of “European values”**.

The research investigates the labeling of political arguments as “values”; the incentives to use such a repertoire of action; the content and meaning of these values, how and why they are used. A leading hypothesis is that **values are an answer to the generalization of “risk politics”**, to face uncertainties about deliverables of public action, implementation of fundamental rights, and quest for legitimization, identity and memory questions. However, values have increasingly created uncertainties on their own due to oppositions on their content. The EU is no exception as these trends exist at national level in the member states as well. But controversies are raging all the more at the supranational level regarding the absence of strong European identity and political tradition to frame and contain dissensus. The EU appears as the maximization of these political evolutions, a paradigmatic “risk polity”.

#### *Governed by values? Resistances and divisions*

The “democratic deficit” is more and more understood as a “value deficit” threatening the sustainability of European integration and preventing from gaining support from the citizens. Values were originally thought as a solution but have more and more become the problem. The EU is relatively united to advocate its values and subsequent norms to be exported abroad, significantly less on the ground when the time comes for implementation in external action. The block is even much more divided about the definition, content and role of values in domestic politics. Competition and conflicts take place at elite level for the ownership of “European values” as a symbolic resource to be used in a top-down logic to justify the European polity and policies. Meanwhile, in a bottom-up perspective, some values have created cultural and social backlash, fueled resistances to some European policies or clashed with counter-values and may even create divisions threatening the very existence of the European political community.

#### *The US as model and significant other for European values politics*

The European configuration of values politics is better understood through comparative lenses. The US offers a stimulating touchstone of the specificity (or not) of the European case. American politics frequently provide role models, ready-made repertoire of discourses and strategies to political entrepreneurs mobilizing values to gain influence and/or recognition in the EU. Besides, analytical patterns to make sense of value-loaded conflicts come more often than not from American scholarship, be it “culture wars”, “multiple modernities”, “morality politics”, “neoconservatism”, etc. The US is freely used as a case for empirical comparison, as a source of literature and of different framings of values politics.

The conference addresses the role, effects and meanings of values at the crossroads of politics, culture, market and law. It documents the circulation and shaping of values between the different spheres of the European multi-level governance (local, national, supranational, transnational). It investigates the EU as a container of values politics as well as its interactions with external entities (Council of Europe, UN, rest of the world). A secondary purpose is to map the research using values as an exploratory framework of wider transformations of politics, policies and polities in Europe. Leaders of scientific projects having developed such agendas in recent years figure among the contributors.

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<sup>1</sup> Foret F., Calligaro O., (eds), “European values”. Challenges and opportunities for EU governance, London, Routledge, 2018

# 21<sup>ST</sup> OF NOVEMBER 2019

· **8h30-9:00** Registration and coffee

· **9h00-9h15** Room Spaak. Welcome by Ramona Coman, François Foret, François Heinderyckx (ULB)

Installation of each workshop in rooms Spaak and Kant

· **9h30-9h45** Room Kant: François Foret (ULB), *"Values in European identity and morality politics: uses, agency and limits. A short introduction"*

## **9:45-12h30 "EUROPEAN VALUES": IDENTITY POLITICS THROUGH OR AGAINST MARKET?**

Chair/Discussant: Amandine Crespy (ULB)

· **9h45-10h15** Frédéric Gonthier, Tristan Guerra (IEP Grenoble), *"Economic vs cultural liberalism: towards a clash of values in Europe?"*

· **10h15-10h45** Andy Smith, (Sciences Po Bordeaux), *"Values as conflictual linkages between the socio-economic, identity and politics"*

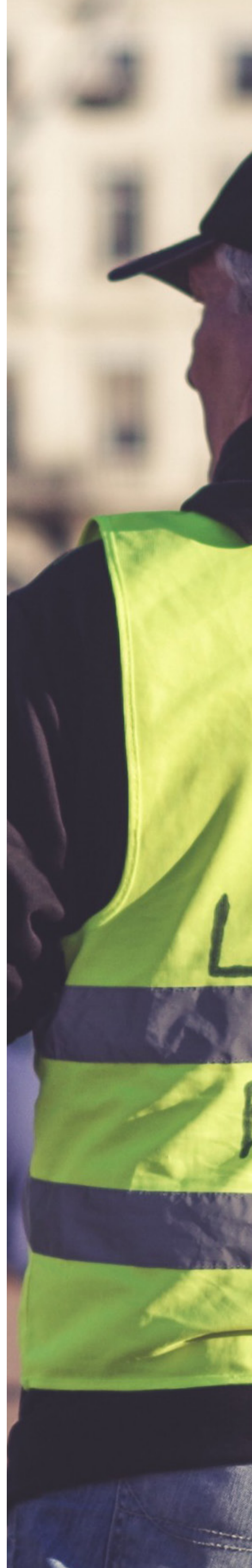
**10h45-11h** Coffee break

· **11h-11h30** Philip Schlesinger (Glasgow University), *"The European creative economy and the politics of cultural values"*

· **11h30-12h** Céleste Bonnamy (ULB), *"Market, cultural ethos and national identity. How the single market challenges copyright and what it says about European values"*

· **12h-12h30** Alvaro Oleart (VU Amsterdam): *"European values and neoliberalism: a strong EU policy partnership, but fragile in the public spheres"*

**12h30-14h** Lunch break. Buffet on the premises of the conference







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## 14h-18h “EUROPEAN VALUES” AND THE SHIFTING BOUNDARIES OF MORALITY POLITICS

Chair/Discussant: François Heinderyckx (ULB)

· **14h-14h30** Jana Vargovcikova (ULB), *“How to ‘moralize’ policies and politics by other means. Values and the governance by prizes”*

· **14h30-15h** François Foret, Fabio Bolzonar and Lucrecia Rubio Grundell (ULB), *“European values in morality politics: a common pattern? The example of prostitution and surrogacy”*

· **15h-15h30** Annabelle Littoz-Monnet (IHEID Genève), *“Bioethical expertise across institutional, policy and political boundaries”*

**15h30-16h** *Coffee break*

· **16h-16h30** Philip Gorski (Yale University), *“Secularizing alone? Values in the shaping of European and American contemporary modernities”*

· **16h30-17h** *Final discussion and conclusion*

## 18h POLICY PANEL - HOW TO SAFEGUARD EUROPEAN VALUES? LAW MEETS POLITICS

Panel organized with the support of the Erasmus+ program of the EU Jean Monnet Module - “Rule of law and mutual trust in global and European governance”

Chair: Ramona Coman (IEE, CEVIPOL, ULB)

Jean-Claude Scholsem, Professor of Law, *Université de Liège; Member of the Venice Commission of the Council of Europe*

Dragos Calin, Judge, *Appeal Court, Bucharest, co-president of the Romanian Judges’ Forum Association*

Bogdan Pirlog, Prosecutor, *Co-president of the Romanian Association Initiative for Justice*

A representative from IDEA, TBC

Heather Grabbe, Director, *Open Society European Policy Institute*