

**[The public interest and the common good - Mancept Online Workshops in Political Theory, 9-11 September 2020 - Deadline for Abstracts Extended](#)**

Announcement published by daniele santoro on Monday, June 8, 2020

Type:

Call for Papers

Date:

September 9, 2020 to September 11, 2020

Subject Fields:

Law and Legal History, Philosophy, Political Science, Public Policy, Social Sciences

**Call for abstracts: The public interest and the common good. Historical and contemporary use of contentious concepts**

MANCEPT Workshops in Political Theory

9th to 11th September 2020

Organizers: Daniele Santoro (CEPS, UMinho), Eric R. Boot (Hoover Chair, UCLouvain)

**Notice: The workshop has been moved online**

**Extended deadline for abstracts: 28th June**

Appeals to the public interest in fields such as politics, law, and healthcare ethics are commonplace. Government policies are often justified by public interest considerations, but at the same time can also be criticized for contravening the public interest. A whistleblower's violation of government secrecy laws is deemed justified because her disclosures are in the public interest, but whistleblowers are also accused of threatening the public interest of national security. Rights violations are sometimes justified when a particularly weighty public interest (public safety, public order) is at stake. Biobanking can promote the public interest, but concerns related to the privacy of

Citation: daniele santoro. *The public interest and the common good - Mancept Online Workshops in Political Theory, 9-11 September 2020 - Deadline for Abstracts Extended*. H-Announce. 06-08-2020.

<https://networks.h-net.org/node/73374/announcements/6183560/public-interest-and-common-good-mancept-online-workshops>

Licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivative Works 3.0 United States License.

health data seem to run against it. The problem is that such appeals are made without clarifying what the public interest is and how it can be determined. Often this leads to judicial idiosyncrasy, threatening legal certainty. In the public sphere, moreover, generic appeals to the public interest lead to public contestation and political factionalism that muddle the public debate. Despite much-needed analysis and moral reflection, political philosophers seem to have largely ignored the issue in the past few decades. The workshop aims to remedy this neglect by providing a conceptual clarification of the public interest that can help to disentangle the issues arising in the above-mentioned fields, among others.

The workshop welcomes contributions of scholars from different disciplines.

- Historians of thought might wish to clarify how the concept of the public interest has been conceptualized within the philosophical canon, e.g., by Aristotle, Cicero, Rousseau, and Bentham, and how it is related to cognate concepts such as the common good, general interest, public good, etcetera;
- Contemporary political philosophers might want to clarify how public interest (and cognate concepts) are understood in more recent work in democratic theory, distributive justice, and public policy.
- Scholars working in applied or legal philosophy might want to discuss the uses of public interest arguments in bioethical controversies, in the laws governing expropriation, or in whistleblower protection legislation;
- Those especially interested in conceptual analysis might be interested in clarifying the relation between the public interest and related concepts, such as “justice,” “the common good,” and “the general interest.” For instance, is the public interest a distinctive notion? How does it differ from justice?
- Democratic theorists might be interested in explaining the role of public and private interests in democratic decision-making, whether the public interest is an aggregative or a procedural concept, and what political process, if any, is most likely to yield the public interest.
- Political theorists may be interested in the role that public interest arguments play in the justification of public safety and national security;
- Scholars working on civic virtues might wish to engage with the question of what measures might be taken to encourage citizens to act in the public interest, rather than to give precedence to their private interests.

### Abstract Submission

To present a paper, please submit an abstract of no more than 500 words to [publicinterest.mancept2020@gmail.com](mailto:publicinterest.mancept2020@gmail.com)

New deadline for submissions: 28th June.

Applicants will be notified in early July.

Paper presentations should not exceed 30 minutes. Each presentation will be followed by a Q&A of 20-30 minutes. In case you wish to share a full paper, please send them two weeks prior to the panel to ensure pre-circulation.

### **Practical information**

The workshop has been moved online due to the persistence of the Covid-19 outbreak. All participants are still required to register to attend, but the Mancept organizers have kindly agreed to either waive the fee or substantially reduce it to no more than £15 to cover basic organizational costs. For further questions regarding the registration process, contact the MANCEPT organizers at [manceptworkshops@gmail.com](mailto:manceptworkshops@gmail.com).

For any other questions regarding the workshop organization, contact the conveners at [publicinterest.mancept2020@gmail.com](mailto:publicinterest.mancept2020@gmail.com).

Contact Email:

[publicinterest.mancept2020@gmail.com](mailto:publicinterest.mancept2020@gmail.com)

URL:

<https://mancept.wordpress.com/public-interest/>