

***Ethics, Technology and Governance : Condition for efficiency of ethical reflexivity in technological project - Investigating contextual proceduralism - from European lessons to South American application***

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Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) have a growing impact, including ethical and social impact, on all aspects of life today. The potential for ethical impacts increase as ICT becomes more complex and invisible to the user, as envisioned in the concepts of ubiquitous and ambient intelligence, and converge with other new and emerging technologies. It appears important to consider potential ethical issues before and during information technology development, even if the ability to anticipate these effects by the proposers of the technology projects can be more difficult due to the complexity and convergence issues.

EGAIS and ETICA are two European research consortiums funded by the European Commission under the Seventh Framework Programme (FP7). The main aim of the ETICA research project is to identify ethical issues arising from information and communication technologies in the coming 10 to 15 years. ETICA is funded by the European Commission under the 7th framework programme.

The EGAIS project is a 3 year project funded by the European Commission under the Seventh Framework Programme (Science and Society) taking an interdisciplinary approach (philosophy, organisation science, technology and information science) to integrating ethical considerations within technical development projects through governance mechanisms.

One of the problems investigated by our projects EGAIS and ETICA is how and when 'ethical reflexivity', the consideration of the potential ethical aspects of the technology, could be incorporated into the research and technology development culture. This research objectives requires an articulation between theoretical and practical investigations in order to better understand the complexity of the relationship between norms and contexts as well as the possibility of frame reflection and shift in the governance of technology.

This presentation is concerned with the extent to which the ethical governance of technology can be grounded upon the sole procedural approach that gives priority to the use of arguments and to the quest for consensus. The procedural approach to norms as developed by Rawls and Habermas has been criticized over the past years by several streams of philosophy, ethics and epistemology that pointed out the contextual limits of proceduralism.

Among these critiques, that of Lenoble and Maeschalck emphasises the limits of rationality, as suggested in the problem raised by the disjunction between the

justification and the application of norms. It concentrated on the conditions for reflexivity, and in particular on the function of the context reflection and transformation for the adjustment of norms to contexts, in order to guarantee their relevance and effectiveness. The context here is to be understood not as a mere 'situation', an 'environment' or a 'milieu', but as the complex relationship - usually unconscious or implicit - between the background frames of the individuals or communities and some aspects of the world that are interpreted precisely as being part of the context.

In the line of the critiques to procedural approaches, this conference seeks to investigate contextual proceduralism' seeks to present further the option of a contextual adjustment of procedures. The way of 'contextual proceduralism' suggests one basic question: *how far can a procedure be adjusted to the context of individuals or groups so that it can produce (a) a shift in their cognitive and normative framing (b) a new relationship to the norms and to the stake of normativity (c) an integration of values in the process of elaboration of norms?*

It seeks to present new way of conceiving a governance arrangement that could ensure efficiency of ethical reflexivity into technological development program and project. This paper will rely on the results of two European project ETICA and EGAIS and will present to the attendees the state of European situation and context and the lessons that could be taken from this situation for South American development.

The European Union is committed to the ethical governance of emerging technology. In this, it hopes to provide a basis for responsible, democratic and above all morally sound development of technology such that the values of human beings are not compromised by the untrammelled march of science.

The lived lives of people are inextricably connected with the subjective engagement with history, culture, religion etc. meaning that value is an ineliminable part of understanding another human being *qua* person. Where there is plurality among the experiences of peoples in terms of culture, history, language etc. there is a task for governance.

Governance has to be sensitive to values as well as norms, effectively resynthesising them, if it is to be both efficient and representative. This must be done via a reappraisal of the idea of reason itself, extending it beyond the notion of argumentation, or the logic-centred view currently prevailing. Alongside this conception must be recognised the narrative, interpretive and reconstructive aspects of life-experience in order to account fully for the motivations and ethical views of people.

Only by engaging with the perspectives of real people, their values and norms, can real governance of research be expected to have legitimacy and efficiency for them.

By reconceptualising reason, the ETICA and EGAIS projects open the door to genuinely ethical governance based on a normative approach sensitive to value. Without such an approach, the danger is a domination of society by rational sub-

routines, not themselves representative of human experience. The stakes are ethics and progress.

Given the cultural and ethnic mix of South American peoples and nations, the models developed in Europe can provide useful templates for governing research in those areas. Progress that arbitrarily leaves people behind is no progress. Not only is ethical governance of research good for inclusion of diverse stakeholders, and so for sustainability, but also economically. Given the real commitment to ethical research in Europe, globally Europe must seek similarly ethically-minded trading partners. Ethics can thus provide added value for trading commercial products based in ethical research.

#### Biographies

**Philippe Goujon**, Professor, University of Namur, Belgium; Director of LEGIT Lab, Institute d'Informatique; Legit has long been involved in governance research and analyzed the so-called participative approach as a new approach allowing to achieve ethical governance. It will bring to the project its expertise in the governance and ethical approaches and help to the framing concerning the methodological governance and ethical issues related to the project (in particular the methodology and epistemological issues related to participative approaches used in the project).

Prof. Goujon is also a member of the Cellule Interdisciplinaire de Technology Assessment; Member of the EGAIS project: "The Ethical GovernAnce of emergIng technologieS – New Governance Perspectives for Integrating Ethics into Technical Development Projects and Applications"; ETICA WP 4 leader

**Stephen Rainey** has a First Class honours degree and a Master's degree with distinction in philosophy. He obtained his PhD entitled *A Pragmatic Conception of Rationality* in 2008 from Queen's University, Belfast. He has published articles on topics related to the philosophy of language, group identity, understanding and rationality. Dr. Rainey is a consortium member of and contributor to both the FP7-funded research projects ETICA and EGAIS which each seek to clarify the nature and role of ethics in technology development and European policy-making.