



Basic Needs: Normative Perspectives

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In recent years the debate on basic needs and their place in normative theories of ethics and politics has been rekindled. This controversial concept has finally been openly adopted by authors who adopt different approaches to discuss issues of social justice. There are good reasons for this.

As a currency of justice, needs have several advantages. First, in contrast to preferences, desires, and some other currencies, basic needs are fully objective, i.e., whether a person has a basic need for a certain thing is independent of her own or anybody else's mental attitudes towards that thing. A second important reason for preferring basic needs as the currency of justice is that they are also universal, although their definition might be culturally influenced. Thirdly, basic needs are intrinsically morally demanding: that P has a basic need for O by itself entails that P ought to be able to have, be, realize, etc. O. Finally, basic needs also have an important advantage in the particular context of sufficientarianism. One of the main objections against sufficientarianism is that it is unable to provide a plausible substantive specification of its threshold of sufficiency. The concept of basic needs, in contrast, essentially entails the idea of a qualitative difference. Being able to fulfill such needs takes precedence over being able to fulfill non-basic needs and desires. Moreover, it distinguishes a life that has a certain minimum quality from a life that lacks this quality.

We invite authors to explore these and other aspects of the concept of basic needs and its use for normative theories of social justice, including intergenerational justice.

Submissions can be in **English, Italian, German, and French**, and they should be no more than 8.000 words in length (including notes and references).

Please, submit your manuscripts to lukas.meyer@uni-graz.at and alessandro@cfh.ufsc.br

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