

The unexpected crisis: social injustices and public decisions tested by the Covid-19 pandemic

Edited by Paolo Monti, Cristina Rebuffo and Davide Sisto

The global impact caused by the Covid-19 pandemic has immediately shown some latent weaknesses of the contemporary society, mostly due to political choices and socio-economical transformations that in the last decades have often distributed resources and built projects in line with priorities that have made those societies particularly vulnerable when facing this kind of challenge. Therefore, the emergency context has put a spotlight on a multitude of pre-existing systemic injustices of which the current crisis is highlighting new aspects. For example, in the economic field, new injustices connected to income, job insecurity or to uneven resources distribution; in civil society, ethnic, cultural, religious and gender discrimination, or various kind of vulnerability connected to domestic violence, drug addiction or detention.

At the same time, it becomes essential that our public decision-making – both over the short term health crisis and in the long term – is based on an increasing awareness of the social injustices and vulnerabilities that the pandemic has shown and worsened. Therefore, the Covid-19 pandemic has been an unexpected stress test for political, social and economic institutions and their ability in making and justifying decisional processes during an emergency, where such decisions must be connected both to efficient solutions and shared criteria of justice. On the other hand, over the months, the ability of such institutions to guide the social and economic development by undertaking innovative paths has been increasingly questioned.

In the Humanities and the Social Sciences, some early research frameworks have been established to articulate about these questions. These analyses cross various issues such as the discussion of dilemmas in the field of Clinic Bioethics when facing together health emergencies and a lack of resources, new interpretations of the idea of a corporate social responsibility within the context of a systemic crisis, the critique against criteria used to attribute value to education and welfare in the context of global capitalism, the debate on the balance between individual liberties and the safeguard of the common good, the concerns about the risks of a permanent state of emergency policy, that necessarily collides with a deliberative and participatory model of democracy.

Within this preliminary framework, the Humanities and Social Sciences – and especially the philosophical fields of Public Ethics and Political Theory – are now called to investigate the impact the crisis is having on the concept of justice and the strategies to face the various forms of injustice and discrimination that the pandemic has revealed. Above all, it is necessary to look beyond the emergency phase and investigate more deeply the systemic gaps illustrated by the current crisis, to try to understand what the moral-political inquiry might learn from this problematic season.

In such context, our review is looking for contributions that might deal with the following research areas:

1. Medical ethics and bioethics, with a focus on the analysis of the dilemmatic choices in the clinic sphere and at the resources rationing during an emergency (priority criteria, deontological and utilitarian models, principles of justice in the healthcare systems).
2. Sociological and socio-philosophical area, with a focus on the analysis of the conceptions of vulnerability and poverty after the pandemic (the role of educational institutions engaged in the construction of citizenship, the role of the so-called digital divide, the collapse of the third sector, the meaning of care in the services oriented to isolated children and disabled persons, the level of justice granted under conditions of detention, unfair housing conditions during lockdown).
3. Social ethics area, with a focus on policies in the job organisation and the connected forms of injustice (ethnic and gender disparities, effects of the job insecurity, responsibility towards stakeholders).

4. Thanatological and philosophy of religion area, with a focus on the analysis of suffering and grief as public questions (the elderly's role and their assistance within the society, end of life religious rituals, the defence of the freedom of worship and the equality of religious minorities).
5. Philosophy of science and communication, with a focus on the relationship between truth and public decisions ("infodemic" and anti-social behaviours, ambivalent contribution of social media and scientific communication).
6. Politics and economics, with a focus on public choices on the prioritization and allocation of resources (the tension between decision and deliberation during an emergency, the distribution and privatisation of common goods, the balance between individual liberties and collective safety).
7. Philosophical political area, with a focus on global justice facing health and environmental crises (populisms and globalisms in the face of the challenge of global interconnectedness, international solidarity and global governance, paradigms of a global justice facing the risks connected to environment, climate change and pandemics, responsibilities towards future generations).

The academic journal "Lessico di Etica Pubblica" will dedicate issue 1/2021 to these questions. This issue will host guest contributions that will propose answers to such reflections and that will be selected by this call for paper. The issue will host articles collected through this call for papers as well as a selection of invited papers written by national and international experts.

All essays must be submitted no later than **12th April 2020**, at the Editors' e-mail addresses (paolo.monti@unimib.it; rebuffocristina@gmail.com; davidegiovanni.sisto@unito.it; redazione.eticapubblica@gmail.com). The manuscripts must conform to the editorial guidelines that can be found on the website: <http://www.eticapubblica.it/>.

Both Italian and English texts are accepted (the latter, if accepted, will be translated into Italian). The maximum allowed length is 35.000 characters (including spaces, footnotes and an abstract of max. 150 words to be written in English and Italian – if the language of the article is Italian), prepared in anonymous form to be compatible with the blind review process. In a second file attached to the same e-mail, authors will specify their name and surname, e-mail address, title and abstract of the paper.

The publication will be edited by Paolo Monti (Università degli Studi di Milano Bicocca), Cristina Rebuffo (Lessico di Etica Pubblica), Davide Sisto (Università degli Studi di Torino).