

“1997-2017: 20 years after the Oviedo Convention on Human Rights and Biomedicine:

What are the achieved gains and its potential?”

First announcement

Date: 8 – 9 December 2017

Venue: European University Cyprus (Nicosia)

Introduction

The Convention on Human Rights and Biomedicine (commonly referred to as the Oviedo Convention) defines a general framework for the protection of fundamental rights and freedoms with regards to the applications of biology and medicine. It lays down a series of principles and prohibitions concerning bioethics, medical research, consent, rights to private life and information, organ transplantation, genetics, etc.

Since the opening of the Treaty in 1997, only 35 member-states of the Council of Europe have signed it, 29 of which having also ratified it. For the remaining member-states of the Council of Europe signature and ratification are still pending. During the decade 1998 and 2008 and under the provisions of article 31 of the Convention, 5 Additional Protocols have been drawn up to expand the range of its general principles. What has happened since? Has the Convention and its Protocols really strengthened individual rights in the healthcare setting?

20 Years after the opening, academics and professionals from different perspectives (law, medicine, ethics, sociology, and economics) will meet, discussing the main and latest developments in Biomedicine during a two-day conference. Topics open for discussion include:

A. General

- What is the impact of the Convention on national legislation and practices as well as its impact on the case law of the European Court of Human Rights
- How do member states apply the Convention’s reservations
- Why is it that ‘only’ 29 member states have ratified the Convention, since it was open for signature in 1997?
- What is the impact of the five Additional Protocols today?

B. Equal Access to Health Care

- What is the relevance of the Convention when introducing austerity measures limiting equal access to health care services and goods;
- Privatization of health care services and equal access
- Health care rationing and the notion of progressive realization
- The justiciability of the Convention’s right to health care

C. New Reproductive Technologies (NRTs)

- How does the Convention affect innovations in reproductive technologies?

- Divergence of regulatory systems on NRTs and the European fertility market
- Surrogacy contracts: Is there a market for outsourcing pregnancy?
- What is the interface between medically assisted reproduction and genetics, including preimplantation genetic diagnosis (PGD) and preimplantation genetic screening (PGS)?
- Direct to Consumer Genetic Tests and Reproduction

D. Embryo Research and Genome Editing

- Ethics of embryo-editing research
- CRISPR-Cas9, human germline modification
- Is the Convention's ban on modifying the human genome sustainable?
- How will the Convention face future challenges such as germ therapy, stem cell research, etc. threatening human rights?

E. Organ Transplants

- The concept of consent (esp. opt-in vs opt-out systems in national legislations)
- Does the Convention adequately protect the living donor and the recipient?
- Prohibition of financial gain arising directly out of the donation
- Medical Organ 'tourism'
- Convergence of quality and safety standards of human organs intended for transplantation

Keynoters:

Dr Christian Byk, Judge at the Court of Appeals (Paris)

French delegate to the European Bioethics Committee (1983-1991) and Advisor to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe responsible for drafting the European Convention on Biomedicine (1991-1993). Since 2002 he has been a member of the French Commission for UNESCO, where he chairs the Committee of Ethics of Science. As such, he participated in the Intergovernmental Group of Experts mandated to elaborate the Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights (2005). In 2008 he was appointed as a member of the Prime Minister Committee in charge to review the French Bioethics legislation and since 2013 he has been representing France at UNESCO Intergovernmental Bioethics Committee for which he acts as vice-chair. He is also Secretary General of the International Association of Law, Ethics and Science, in addition to being a member of several other organizations such as the Sino-French Biolaw Society and the French Society of Comparative Law. In the field of law and ethics, he is the author of 10 books and more than 200 articles as well as the General Editor of the International Journal of Bioethics and Ethics of Science and the Law, Health and Society Review.

Prof. John Harris

John Harris is a Lord Alliance Professor of Bioethics and Director of the Institute for Science, Ethics and Innovation at the School of Law of University of Manchester (UK). He was elected a Fellow of the UK Academy of Medical Sciences (FMedSci) in 2001, a Fellow of The Royal Society of Arts in 2006 of the Society of Biology in 2011 and he is a Member of Academia Europaea (The Academy of Europe) since 2011. He was one of the Founder Directors of the International Association of Bioethics, a founder

member of the Board of the Journal Bioethics and a member of the Editorial Board of the Cambridge Quarterly of Healthcare Ethics and many other journals.

Dr. George Serghides, Cypriot Judge at the European Court of Human Rights (Strasbourg)

He holds a Ph.D. in Private International Law (University of Exeter, 1984), a Ph.D. in Comparative Administrative Law (National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, 1998), a Ph.D. in Comparative Family Law (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, 2007) and a Ph.D. in the European Convention on Human Rights and Comparative Constitutional Law (Democritus University of Thrace, 2015). He served as Judge (1990-1999) and then as President (1999-2016) of the Family Court in Cyprus, as well as an International Hague Network Judge for Cyprus in abduction of children cases (2000-2016). He was an Adjunct Law Professor at the University of Cyprus (2009-2012) and a visiting Associate Law Professor at Frederick University in Cyprus in 2014. He is the editor and main author of the series "Studia Juris Cyprii".

Dr. Rita Vassena

She received a DVM and PhD from the University of Milan, Italy, with studies involving the evaluation of oocyte developmental competence in large animal models. She completed her postdoctoral training at the Fels Institute for Cancer Research, Philadelphia, where she focused her work on the early events of chromatin remodeling after somatic cell nuclear transfer. From 2007 to 2011 she was at the Center of Regenerative Medicine in Barcelona-Spanish National Stem Cell Bank, where she studied developmental competence of human embryos, as well as pluripotency in embryonic and induced stem cells. Since 2011 she has been the Scientific Director of Clinica EUGIN, a European reference center for the treatment of infertility, where she coordinates research in the area of human IVF and directs the basic research laboratory.

CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

The conference has a multidisciplinary approach inviting academics, professionals, students and other interested persons to participate and submit an abstract for presentation, addressing the above mentioned issues. The Conference main objective is to explore different perspectives on the themes above and exchanging ideas.

Those who wish to present should send an abstract (max. 300 words) of their proposed presentation to the Conference organisers. A short bibliography may be attached on additional pages (optional). The abstracts will be subjected to a peer review process by the Conference's Scientific Committee. Submissions will be reviewed on a rolling basis (each submission will be reviewed within a short period from its reception). Those who are selected are expected to present their paper at the Conference. They will be given 12 minutes to present, plus 5 minutes for debate.

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: 1 JULY 2017.

A separate session for young researchers is included.

Location: Nicosia, Cyprus

Date: 8-9 December 2017

Publication: Conference book

Conference participants will receive a Book of Abstracts. Submitted papers will be considered for publication in the proceedings of the conference.

Organisers:

European University Cyprus (Nicosia)

iBMG/Erasmus University Rotterdam (Netherlands)

GRIDES/Foundation Marqués de Velecilla-University of Cantabria (Spain)

Conference Directors:

Theodoros TROKANAS, European University Cyprus (Nicosia)

Joaquin CAYÓN, GRIDES/FMV-University of Cantabria (Spain)

Andre DEN EXTER, Erasmus University Rotterdam (Netherlands)

Info: available soon

Contact:

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Scientific Committee:**Chairs:**

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Martin BUIJSEN, EOHL-Erasmus University Rotterdam (Netherlands)

Joaquin CAYÓN, GRIDES/FMV-University of Cantabria (Spain)

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Paula LOBATO DI FARIA, New University of Lisbon (Portugal)

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Theodoros TROKANAS, European University Cyprus (Nicosia)

Organising Committee:

Theodoros TROKANAS, European University Cyprus (Nicosia)

General Conference structure:

Start: Friday 1 pm – 7 pm

Keynote session I; keynote session II, session A + B

Saturday: 10 am – 3 pm

Keynote session III and IV; session C + D + E

Poster session in between

Conference registration fee

The registration fee is €60 and includes conference attendance, lunch and book of abstracts. For (PhD) students, the conference is free of charge.

Payment methods

Payment should be made by bank transfer.

European University Cyprus

Account number: available soon

For paying by bank transfer, you will receive an invoice including all payment details via e-mail. All bank charges have to be covered by the delegate.

The registration for the conference is only valid after receipt of the registration fees.

Access

Access to capital city Nicosia is available from either Larnaka International Airport or Paphos International Airport. The transfer from/to both airports can be made either by coach or by taxi.

Air companies flying from/to Larnaka International Airport are in alphabetical order: Aegean, Blueair,

Air companies flying from/to Paphos International Airport are in alphabetical order: Ryanair,

Hotel accommodation

The Conference Organization will recommend hotels, close to the University premises, but reservations will be made on an individual basis. For detailed information, please visit the official website.

Conference venue:
European University Cyprus, Cultural Center
6, Diogenes Street
Engomi, Nicosia
Cyprus