

**Casothèque éthique**

**Collection of Case Studies  
on Professional Ethics**

**Report to fph by  
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**Project of Globethics.net (GE) and  
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## Table of Content

<b>1. Introduction .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2. Goals and Target Groups of the Collection.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>3. Methods for the Collection.....</b>	<b>5</b>
3.1 Professional categories, environments and types.....	5
3.2 Sources .....	5
3.3 Categorization and copyright .....	6
3.4 Conclusion and further steps .....	6
<b>4. Theories of Case Methodology – an Ethical Reflection.....</b>	<b>6</b>
4.1 Definitions.....	6
4.2 Types of Cases .....	7
4.4 Cultural and thematic differences .....	8
4.3 Philosophical and theological approaches to cases.....	8
4.5 Value and limitation of the case approach in professional ethics .....	9
<b>5. Typology and Analysis of the Cases.....</b>	<b>11</b>
5.1 Introduction .....	11
5.2 Languages.....	11
5.3 Type of case study.....	12
5.4 Type of professional categories.....	13
5.5 Sectors .....	15
5.6 Issues .....	18
5.7 Geographical Regions covered.....	20
<b>6. Conclusions from the Analysis .....</b>	<b>21</b>
6.1 Enlarge Ethics Domains .....	21
6.2 Broaden Cultural and Historical Diversity .....	23
6.3 Broaden the Diversity of Ethical Values.....	23
6.4 Adding Teaching Modules of Ethics Cases .....	23
<b>7. Products, Availability and Copyright.....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>8. Recommendations and Follow up .....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Sources .....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Annex: List and metadata of Cases (table).....</b>	<b>26</b>

# 1. Introduction

The current financial and economic crisis is also a crisis of values and of professional ethics. The whole banking sector is being criticised – in some cases justified, in others not - for lack of responsibility, for greed and irresponsible speculation. Politicians are being criticised for lack of political guidelines and legislations to avoid the melt down. Over night virtues such as honesty, modesty, moderation, trust and transparency have become very important again.

How can one behave in a responsible way in ones professional and ones private life? How can professional ethics, especially of decision makers (cadres) be strengthened? How can individual behaviour be guided by structural measures, such as codes of conduct, legislations, positive and negative sanctions, corporate governance etc?

Cases and case studies are a useful and broadly used method and instrument to strengthen professional ethical behaviour especially in decisions with an ethical dilemma. A collection of cases and case studies is a tool for training and education. This is the frame for this project.

This project is part of and contributes to Fph's project "Casotheque de la responsabilité sociale des cadres" (case study collection of the social responsibility of managers). During two meetings between Fph and Globethics.net we came to the conclusion that both organizations are "interested in the collection of case studies and the exchange of experiences on the nature of ethical dilemmas which appear in various economic fields. Furthermore both organizations aim at developing a pedagogy of ethics on an international level especially focusing on further education based on such case studies." (paper Fph 24057).

We thank fph for its support of this Globethics.net project!

## 2. Goals and Target Groups of the Collection

*The goals* of this project are the following:

1. To collect about 200 cases and case studies from various sources mainly on professional ethics and the responsibility of decision makers but also of companies (collective behaviour of decision makers).
2. To make the cases available online and searchable in the fph collection of cases (fph casotheque) as well as in the global digital library of Globethics.net.
3. To analyse the cases in their methodology, ethical direction, context and field of ethics in order to categorize them.

The results then should help:

4. To start identifying trends, cultural differences and convergences as well as missing subjects for future developments of cases in professional ethics.
5. To encourage teachers and practitioners to work with the cases and case studies in order to improve professional responsibility and ethical behaviour.

Goals 4 and 5 go beyond this small project, but can become objectives for next steps.

*The target groups* of the collection are:

1. The partners of the fph casotheque project

2. The users of the casothèque and of the Globethics.net digital library on ethics
3. Teachers and trainers in professional ethics as well as decision makers.

### **3. Methods for the Collection**

This collection of case studies partly followed a random method and partly a systematic institutional approach. The underlying **objective** was to find case studies

- which would derive from a wide variety of sources,
- cover several geographical regions
- touch different aspects and issues of professional ethics
- and which are or can be made available online, in full text and for free.

Furthermore, the collection is seen as a pilot project with the aim of enlarging it later.

#### ***3.1 Professional categories, environments and types***

A primary aim was to collect cases which represent as many professional categories and environments as possible. Ethical dilemmas can occur in all professions and in all hierarchical positions and the result of a dilemma or decision taken can have implications on society, on a social group, on employees etc. With this in mind we were able to cover various professional categories such as medical staff, workers in the textile or the extraction industry, women workers, teachers, journalists, managers, bankers, farmers, HR managers etc. Furthermore, the collection covers various environments such as multinationals, NGO's, state owned companies, the public sector, trade unions etc. (see Annex 1 for more details).

A further objective was to cover different types of case studies. As described in point 4.2 various types of case studies exist. They can be differentiated not only by their length but also by their narrative style or scientific background. Some cases illustrate an individual behaviour, others the behaviour of a group or even a system. They can be problem focused cases, factual descriptions or descriptions of good or bad behaviour. Some cases are based on lengthy scientific analyses of a situation; others appear as a short story inviting readers to evaluate the ethical dilemma and propose an answer to a question. Either type of study can be useful educational material depending on the context. In order to have certain representativeness in the collection we extended our search to include a wide range of case types.

#### ***3.2 Sources***

Case studies are written by University Professors, students, companies, NGO's etc. Making sure that our collection includes a diversity of sources was another important objective in this project. Furthermore, we aimed at including cases in different languages (at least in English, German, French) but were only partly successful in reaching this objective. This is partly due to the choice of sources which were often found in the Globethics.net online library on ethics or the Globethics.net network which is still by the majority English speaking. Also, the British and American academia is more used to the method of case studies in teaching.

As an international network Globethics.net already has a wide variety of sources at its disposal and strives continuously to keep the network alive through cooperation and exchange in research. Many of our partner organizations such as the International La-

bour Organisation ILO or the Observatoire de la Finance in Geneva have been involved in writing case studies which are of great interest to this project. Furthermore, Globethics.net has a global digital library on ethics which already contains case studies mostly from academic journals.

Further sources were identified through personal contacts to researchers/ethicists such as the ones of the Markkula Center of Ethics in the USA, the Global Compact or resources in Africa, others were found at random, through the internet, books and conferences, always keeping in mind our objective of diversity.

### ***3.3 Categorization and copyright***

After having clear idea of the sources available we prepared an excel list with a categorization of case studies among others into professions, professional environments, type of case studies, geographical region, language etc. (see Annex 3). These categories were further defined while the cases were being added. All cases were collected as pdf documents in a separate file.

An important challenge for the collection is the copyright which needed to be obtained from each source in order to integrate the cases into the digital Globethics.net library and the Coredem collection. A number of copyright protected cases from books or academic journals are not included because the copyright was not available for an online collection.

### ***3.4 Conclusion and further steps***

As a conclusion we can say that in our choice of sources we followed our objective of diversity, remained true to the networking philosophy of Globethics.net and were open to a search at random. As mentioned above the objective of having diversity of language was not easily obtained.

The collection covers a wide range of cases but can not satisfy the claim for representativeness. It is not possible for 200 cases to be representative and this was never envisaged. Nevertheless some trends can be seen; these will be explored in point 6 of this report.

In a further development of the case study collection we would aim at integrating more content in French, German and Spanish and non-European languages such as Indonesian, Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Russian and Arabic. It would be interesting to include more cases written by and analyzing situations in other regions of the world such as Islamic countries (Islamic financing), the developing world and China.

## **4. Theories of Case Methodology – an Ethical Reflection**

At a workshop in October 2008 at fph in Paris Sylvain Lavelle presented a helpful paper about the philosophical foundations of cases (see sources at the end of this report). We therefore do not have to repeat it here. It serves as a background for our own ethical reflection on the case methodology.

### ***4.1 Definitions***

**A Case** on an ethical topic is a description of a concrete situation where actors need to take a decision or various decisions which can be simple and one-time or complex and long term actions.

**A Case Study** on an ethical topic offers an analysis of a case with a special focus on an ethical dilemma. It might end with questions and options or answers and solutions to the problem.

**Casothèque** is a case collection, like a library, focused on case studies.

**Casuistry** in ethics, derived from case (lat. casus), is a methodology used to link and apply general values and principles to concrete situations and circumstances such as “cases”.

**Narrative ethics** provides ethical orientation in form of stories on ethical or unethical behaviour, or shares wisdom in form of proverbs or parables.

**Principles ethics** looks for and determines general and universal values and ethical rules.

**Situation ethics** emphasizes the necessity to determine ethical behaviour in each situation anew. It rejects the application of general universal principles to all situations.

Principles ethics and situation ethics can be combined in manifold ways.

## ***4.2 Types of Cases***

There are different typologies of cases. Michael Davis (1999) distinguishes sixteen pairs of formal and content related characteristics such as “living versus frozen”, “stories versus problems”; William Frey (2008) distinguishes five pairs (e.g. good versus bad news cases). There is no “objective” typology. It depends on the topic of the research, the cases available and the cultural context. We propose the following typology:

**Actors** (individuals, groups, institutions): in cases of individual ethics an actor has to take an intra-personal decision. In cases of interpersonal ethics, decisions influence the direct interaction between persons. In cases of structural ethics, decisions indirectly influence human behaviour through structures such as laws, regulations or organizational structures. In the categorisation of the case studies under 5.3 we differentiate between behaviour of an individual / of a group / of a profession / of a system.

**Timeframe** (short, long): the majority of cases need immediate or short term decisions. But a case can also deal with midterm or long term processes and developments.

**Complexity** (simple, complex): cases vary in their complexity from very simple decision to take to very complex international conflicts and structures.

**Size** (small, big): cases can include very broad and detailed description and analysis of a situation or can describe a dilemma in just a few sentences.

**Reality** (historical, hypothetical): normally, cases describe a specific situation. Thus each case is singular and a prototype. But cases can also describe a modified reality (e.g. made anonymous, “le fait stylisé”) or a fiction or a parable. Proverbs are the shortest form of cases. In one sentence they summarize the moral conclusion of a case, based on collective experience over a long period of time of a society.

**Sectors** (societal and professional): cases can concentrate on one specific sector of society and lifespan or can include cross-sectoral, multi-stakeholder situations. The

cases in this collection correspond to various professional categories or sectors (see 5.3 and 5.4).

**Ethics** (descriptive ethics, normative ethics): cases can be purely descriptive or they can include a normative evaluation, offering various options for ethical solutions or promoting and justifying a specific ethical answer.

**Involvement** (observer, partisan): the case can be described from an observer perspective, looking at the case from the outside, or from a partisan perspective of a person involved in the case, or from a scientific, self-reflective perspective.

#### ***4.4 Cultural and thematic differences***

Cases as instruments for ethical orientation exist in all cultures, but they play different roles and have a different importance.

In indigenous cultures, where oral traditions play a more important role than written documents, narrative approaches are often predominant. A narrative is not irrational or un-scientific as many people may think. It has an integrative, often case-based rationality and reasoning and often a very convincing methodology. The parables of Jesus and the stories about his life as well as the narratives of other founders of religions and of Saints are often based on cases. Creation stories and proverbs serve as ethical guidelines.

In the Latin (Roman, French) and German world, the deductive approach from principles to cases is predominant, most famously expressed in the Kantian philosophy and absolute imperative.

In the Anglo-Saxon world, the inductive method is more prominent. Here the whole legal system is based on a case approach, where the law is to a great extent developed by court decisions which are by definition case by case decisions.

In Asian cultures such as China, the relationship is in forefront of decisions which often leads to pragmatism or what is seen in the Western world as pragmatism. The “case” then is the concrete encounter and relationship.

Cases as a method for normative orientation are often used in medical ethics, care ethics, management and business ethics. Cases in social and normative sciences have some similarities to experimental approaches in natural sciences in the sense that a case is a test “trial and error” which leads to the next improved test.

#### ***4.3 Philosophical and theological approaches to cases***

There are three main approaches to link the contextual to the universal/general (Lavelle, 2008):

Deduction from the principle to the case

Induction from the case to the principle

Abduction from the result to the principle to the case

In philosophical ethics, cases for ethical orientation are as old as philosophy itself. From the ancient Greek philosophers, especially Aristotle, to Confucius, up to today’s philosophical systems such as discourse ethics, the case approach is used. In philoso-

pical ethics, casuistry is an issue of methods of applied ethics. While it was controversial in the past, it is today not much contested.

In religious ethics, cases for ethical orientation have existed in the history of religions since animism and shamanism e.g. in form of oracles or healing practices. They existed in religious books containing legal advice such as the Persian book of Hammurabi or in Egypt's cases on how to deal with death and funeral.

Cases for ethical orientation are especially known in the three monotheistic religions Judaism, Christianity and Islam. In the Old Testament, casuistic legal norms "have been one of the most important normative categories" (Wick, 2009, 39). They led to sophisticated systems of casuistry especially in Judaism (halakha, the authoritative interpretation of the moral precepts of Torah and Talmud) In the New Testament cases, narrative ethics as in healing stories or in parables play a pedagogical and normative role. In Islam they play a similar role as in Judaism: Cases of orientation are included in the Qur'an. Shari'a, the law of Islam as it is mentioned in the Qur'an as well as fatwas, seen as legal guidance for believers, include cases and casuistry.

Catholic Christianity used casuistry with the rediscovery of Aristotelian philosophy, especially in the Middle Ages and again after the 16<sup>th</sup> century (Society of Jesus with the Counter-Reformation).

In Protestant Christianity, casuistry was sharply criticized by the Reformation, but later also used in ethics in a different way. Middle Age catholic casuistry led to abuse and as a result was criticised by the reformation and later by Protestants. Casuistry was used for two motives: a) either to control and also oppress believers with absolute, detailed rules and sophisticated case based regulations as an expression of the power of the religious or non religious authorities, b) to promise and give a (false) certitude on how to behave correctly in front of God. This was often linked to religious systems of guilt and the attempt of getting salvation through correct moral behaviour.

The protestant answer, especially during and after reformation, was to disapprove of casuistry seen as legalistic by emphasizing that salvation cannot be reached by following the correct path of the cases, but that one gets salvation by God's grace. Liberated from guilt, the believer is set free to listen to God's commandments and then take a decision on the basis not of casuistry but of his own conscience. In current protestant ethics, casuistry is a controversial topic, not as a pedagogical teaching methodology, but in its ethical, normative value (Wick, 2009; Fischer, 2009).

Modern catholic ethics, especially business and professional ethics, prominently represented e.g. Jesuit Business Schools, substantially contributes to a new and fruitful use of casuistry and case studies.

The various sciences developed their own methodology of cases: in law it is different from ethics, in sociology different from economics.

#### ***4.5 Value and limitation of the case approach in professional ethics***

Today, casuistry and case methodology can be useful for ethical orientation and ethical empowerment

- if it is not bound to the oppressing attitude of authoritative interpretation of the cases by religious, political or economic powers
- if it leads to an informed, responsible decision
- if it sharpens the conscience of individuals and communities
- if it recognizes that each ethical decision remains a risk and a venture and that no case and casuistry can give absolute certitude that the decision is the right one
- if it is used as a pedagogical and didactical methodology and not an ideology
- if the naturalistic fallacy (conclusion naturaliste erronée, naturalistischer Fehlschluss) is avoided which would deduct a norm from the description of a fact/a case. (The case can include norms, but a fact does not yet include a normative justification of it.)
- because it challenges the ethical principles from the feasibility and contextual perspective
- because it motivates people to decide and act according to or against the case.

The description of a case is never free from value judgment. Already the definition of the problem and the selection of the case are based on convictions and values: Why deal with child labour and not with the production of luxury goods? How does one limit the case, what is excluded in the description and what is included? Such questions lead to normative decisions.

Cases need general values or principles to interpret the specific case. At the same time the case, the specific situation, may influence to rethink and modify the principle. Casuistry is often the attempt to solve the conflict between a principle and its application in a concrete situation.

Especially difficult to solve are ethical conflicts in form of a *dilemma*.

A dilemma is a difficult decision process in which one has to decide between two or more bad options or two or more values (“goods”). A dilemma is a conflict of values or interests. In ethics one tries to solve dilemmas by using two different methods:

Preferential Rules try to solve the conflict of values by building an order of priorities based on basic values and practical values. These rules have the structure of “if – then”: If situation x, then value A has the priority in front of value B and values C. If situation Y, then the bad option A is less bad than the bad option B. E.g. in the situation of a dictatorship, the value of freedom is more important than that of justice. In the situation of exaggerated free capitalism, the value justice may become more important than additional freedom.

Rules of compromise try to solve the dilemma with an ethical compromise. A compromise is a process through which one finds, under pressure or out of free will, a balance of interests by partly realizing opposing interest. This can only happen if both parties partly renounce the full realization of their goals. Different types and justifications of compromises exist. From an ethical point of view there are conflicts on which no compromise can be found because the basic values (e.g. Human dignity) is not negotiable.

## 5. Typology and Analysis of the Cases

### 5.1 Introduction

The following section provides a quantitative analysis of the collection of case studies which has been prepared by Globethics.net. Following the categorization of the cases we have focused on a quantitative analysis of the languages, types of case studies, professions, sectors and geographical regions represented. In order to proceed in the qualitative analysis of the cases the cases and the professions that are mentioned have been divided into types.

The lengths of the cases vary a lot and can count from half a page up to whole books (in this collection up to about eight pages). The cases describing individual dilemma situations are very often quite short whereas the cases on corporate social responsibility programmes of companies are often very detailed and long.

<b>5.2 Languages</b>	<b>No.</b>
English	155
French	31
German	2

### Analysis / Comments

As already mentioned under point 3 we aimed at including cases in different languages (at least in English, German, and French) but were only partly successful in reaching this objective. The overview above shows that the majority of cases found are in English. This is partly due to the choice of sources which were often found in our library or network which is still by the majority English speaking. Also, the British and American academia seems to be more used to the method of case studies in teaching.

### 5.3 Types of case studies

	No.
1 Behaviour of an <b>individual</b> , problem focused case, descriptive	50
2 Behaviour of a <b>group</b> , discussion, descriptive	2
2.1 Behaviour of a <b>group</b> , empirical description, descriptive	49
2.2 Behaviour of a <b>group</b> , comparative description, descriptive	2
2.3 Behaviour of a <b>group</b> , good practice, normative	54
2.4 Behaviour of a <b>group</b> , comparison of good and bad behaviour, normative	1
2.5 Behaviour of a <b>group</b> , bad practice, normative	1
2.6 Behaviour of a <b>group</b> , problem focused case, descriptive	13
3.1 Behaviour of a <b>profession</b> , empirical description, descriptive	3
3.2 Behaviour of a <b>profession</b> , problem focused case, descriptive	8
4. Behaviour of a <b>system</b> , empirical description, descriptive	3
Total	<b>187</b>

#### Analysis / Comments

The collected case studies can be divided into ones describing the behaviour of an individual or that of a group or a system. Within these categories the cases can be further distinguished between cases focussed on a dilemma, on a neutral description of a behaviour or action or a normative validation (good or bad). The dilemma cases usually don't provide ready answers but invite the reader to answer questions on the ethical dilemma the person or group is facing. These cases are very often short and have a certain pedagogical value because they invite for reflexion, discussion and introspection on ones own values.

Factual descriptions of the behaviour of a group (very often the behaviour of a company) are usually longer cases and include an extensive analysis of the situation, the background and various aspects which need to be taken into consideration in order to have a clear idea of all the ethical implications.

The table above shows that three types of case studies are clearly over represented in our collection. These are: a) empirical description of the behaviour of a group, normative description of good practice of a group, c) Individual behaviour, focused on a problem.

With Corporate Social Responsibility becoming more and more important many institutions involved or companies themselves are interested in studying the case of a company, its involvement in CSR and its good or bad practices. On the basis of these studies research can be made on the advancement of CSR or companies can learn from other experiences.

The cases which describe the good behaviour of a group usually focus on one aspect of a company's behaviour in which the group is exemplary. This does not mean that the company might not be less of a model in other areas. Nevertheless, these cases can

be an encouragement for other companies or be used by the company itself for pure communication and PR means, which is of course not in accordance with the ideals of CSR.

Other widely represented cases in this collection describe an individual behaviour in a dilemma situation. These are mostly written in Universities for the use of students.

#### 5.4 *Types of professional categories*

	No.
<b>Public Sector</b>	
Administrative Officer at regional administration	1
Administrator for football association	1
County employee	1
Employee at local district	2
Employee at ministry for works and housing	1
Mayor	1
Presidential advisor	1
Tax officer	1
Senior Officer of finance and administration department	1
Sub-metropolitan District Director	1
	<b>(11)</b>
<b>Private Sector</b>	
<i>Board</i>	
Board	2
<i>Executive/Management</i>	
CEO	6
Entrepreneur	1
Head of personnel	1
Manager / Auditor	2
Manager	33
<i>Administration</i>	
HR Officer	1
HR Officer / Auditor	1
HRD Assistant	1
<i>Technical</i>	
IT engineer	1
<i>Communication</i>	
Advertiser	1
Communications Officer	2
Public Relations Manager	1
<i>Finance</i>	
Accountant	2
Auditor	1
Banker	3
Broker	1

Budget Coordinator	1
	(61)
<b>Medical</b>	
Hospital staff	3
Nurse	1
Physician	3
Physiotherapist	1
Psychiatrist	1
	(9)
<b>Arts</b>	
Film producer	1
	(1)
<b>Tertiary sector</b>	
Farmer	5
	(5)
<b>Service sector</b>	
Hotel staff	2
	(2)
<b>Media</b>	
Journalist	12
	(12)
<b>Industry</b>	
Miner	1
Worker	41
Worker and society	2
	(44)
<b>Academia</b>	
Researcher	2
Student	3
	(5)
<b>Sport</b>	
Professional athlete	1
	(1)
<b>Security</b>	
Security agent	1
	(1)
<b>General</b>	
Employee	17
Society	11
Government, business, civil society	1
	(29)
<b>Committees</b>	
Ethics committee	1
	(1)
<b>Minorities</b>	
Disabled	2
Homosexual	1
Women employees	1

Prostitute	1
	(5)
<b>Total</b>	<b>187</b>

### Analysis / Comments

This collection of cases studies touches a large variety of professions as can be seen from the table above. In order to have a clearer overview the professions have been divided into various categories. It can easily be seen that the professions which are overrepresented are: managers, workers and employees in general. The cases usually focus on one profession which is at the centre of the analysis, either because it makes the decisions or is at the centre of the dilemma / situation.

The cases revolving around CSR mostly concern managers or CEO's because these are the people who decide on the company's CSR policy or are involved in the implementation of such policies. Consequently, there is a correlation between the increased interest in case studies on CSR and the focus on managers.

Another overrepresented group are the workers mostly in industry. A lot of cases studying the behaviour of a company are interested in the conditions of the workers and how these are treated by their employers. With the progression of globalisation, resulting in many western companies investing in Asia and the growing awareness of CSR, many researchers are studying labour conditions. The cases in this collection often describe a situation which can reveal bad behaviour or point out good behaviour. Many of the cases focusing on workers refer to Asia, either in the main production units or along the supply chain.

Finally, the third group which is studied in a lot of the cases are employees in general or society as a whole. This means that a large number of cases are focusing on the effects a company can have on its employees in general or on the society. Cases which study employees in general focus on the companies' environment, social behaviour and aspects such as staff turnover, quality of the work place, discrimination etc.

The effect which companies can have on society is often studied in relation to corporate social responsibility, corporate citizenship and companies investing in the developing world or unstable countries.

### 5.5 Types of Sectors

	No.
<b>Industry</b>	
Aluminium industry	1
Automobile industry	5
Cement industry	1
Chemical industry	2
Extracting industry	7
Food industry	3
Industry	8
Metal Industry	1
Oil industry	1
Paper industry	1
Textile industry	13
Wood industry	1
Petrochemicals	1

Pharmaceutical industry	6
Consumer goods	1
Construction	1
Electricity company	5
Electronics company	2
Fragrance design	1
Power plant	1
Brewery	1
Jewellery Manufacturing	1
	<b>(64)</b>
<b>Agriculture</b>	
Agriculture	5
Wine production	1
	<b>(6)</b>
<b>Media / Art</b>	
Film industry	1
Publishing	1
Radio	1
Telecommunications	4
Television	3
Newspaper	9
	<b>(19)</b>
<b>Finance / Administration</b>	
Accounting	2
Administration	14
Banking	11
Finance	2
Investment Management	1
Marketing	1
	<b>(31)</b>
<b>Transport</b>	
Aviation	2
Transport company	1
	<b>(3)</b>
<b>Services</b>	
Hotel	2
Hypermarket	2
Real estate	1
Research	1
Retail	4
Security services	1
Tourism	1
PR Profession	1
Prostitution	1
Cosmetics	1
	<b>(15)</b>
<b>IT</b>	
Dotcom start-up	2

High-tech industry	1
Information technology	1
IT industry	3
Software industry	1
	<b>(8)</b>
<b>Medical</b>	
Medical	9
Medical association	1
	<b>(10)</b>
<b>Organisational structure</b>	
Association	1
Conglomerate	1
Cooperative	2
Government	1
Large company	1
Multinational	2
ONG	1
Private entrepreneurship	1
Public service	1
SME	1
Social enterprise	1
Start-up	1
City council	2
Large company	1
Trade unions	1
University	2
	<b>(20)</b>
General	3
Various	7
Sport	1
	<b>(11)</b>
Total	<b>187</b>

#### Analysis / Comments

In the previous point we analyzed the professional categories represented in this collection. Above we see the categorization according to professional sectors of which there is a large variety in these case studies. The sectors represented in the cases are either economic sectors or types of structures. Some cases clearly define the business sectors whereas in others this is not so important and there is only mention of a structure. Many of the individual dilemma cases don't focus so much on whether it is a large or small company, private industry or public administration. In the centre of attention are the individual and his dilemma. However, the analysis according to sectors does show a clear predominance of cases from the industrial sector followed by finance and administration. This confirms the analysis of the professional sectors in which there were a large percentage of workers represented.

## 5.6 Types of issues

	No.
<b>Corporate Social Responsibility CSR</b>	
Corporate community involvement	4
Corporate governance	1
Corporate social responsibility, general	13
Corporate social responsibility and supply chain management	1
Corporate social responsibility programmes	4
Corporate social responsibility, education project	1
Corporate social responsibility, environmental project	3
Corporate social responsibility, health and social problems/projects	4
Code of conduct and supply chain	1
Joining corporate social responsibility initiatives	1
Stakeholder engagement	3
Sustainability management	1
Fair trade	3
Sponsoring	1
	<b>(41)</b>
<b>Corporate environment</b>	
Environment	2
Impact of corporate scandal on key players	1
Impact on society	5
	<b>(8)</b>
<b>Workers rights</b>	
Child labour/forced labour	1
Collective bargaining, social dialogue	5
Employees health and safety	2
Freedom of association and collective bargaining	1
Labour relations	1
Labour standards	1
Workers education	1
Workers representation	1
Workers rights	6
Working conditions	2
	<b>(21)</b>
<b>Discrimination</b>	
Discrimination	1
Equal opportunity	1
Gender discrimination	1
HIV discrimination	1
Health programmes	1
Women's empowerment	2
Disabled	3
	<b>(10)</b>
<b>Corruption/ abuse of power</b>	
Abuse of privileges	2
Blackmail	1

Bribe	3
Corruption	5
Favouritism	1
Kick back	1
Manipulation of subordinates	1
Sexual harassment	1
Tax evasion	1
Unfair advantage	2
Theft	1
Pressure for preferential treatment	1
Whistle blowing	2
	<b>(22)</b>
<b>Working conditions</b>	
Choice and coercion	1
Diversity in workforce	3
Employee relations	6
Employee satisfaction	1
Entry into working environment	1
Fairness, employees right to know	1
Four-day workweek and lay-offs	1
Lay-offs	4
Loyalty	1
Motivation	3
Organisational structure	1
Overtime	1
Staff turnover	1
Training and motivation	7
Work-life balance	1
	<b>(33)</b>
<b>Code of conduct/professions</b>	
Confidentiality	1
Copyright	1
Exploitation of tragedies	1
Governance	1
Independence of journalists	4
Intellectual property	1
Marketing news	1
Misuse of research	1
Negligence / responsibility	1
Privacy	1
Public/private life	4
Transparency	6
Trust	1
Security standards	1
Responsibility of journalist towards informant	2
Protection of identity	1
Research ethics	1
Human dignity	1

Intercultural communication	3
	<b>(33)</b>
<b>Legal</b>	
Human Rights	2
Patient rights/ and obligations	2
Research ownership	1
Tax break	1
	<b>(6)</b>
<b>Situations</b>	
Crisis management	1
PR in Sexual abuse cases	1
Housing shortage	1
Health risks	2
Promise	1
Relocation	1
Romance at work place	1
Life saving measures	1
Debt	1
Friendship and lobbying	1
	<b>(11)</b>
Various topics	2
Total	<b><u>187</u></b>

### Analysis / Comments

The table above points out the issues which are stressed in the cases collected. In order to analyse the cases we have created nine subgroups of issues. Cases revolving around CSR are a clear majority. This would confirm a tendency towards an increase in studies on the responsibility of companies which can mean accountability towards its employees, society or the environment.

Another important issue is the worker's rights and the working environment. This is related to the behaviour of a company towards its employees.

The examples of malpractice or professional codes are very often dilemma cases describing the behaviour of an individual or a group.

The different issues are often interlinked. They show the manifold conflicts between individual conscience, legal requirements, economic pressure and public expectations.

### 5.7 Geographical Regions covered

	No.
Africa	35
Asia	29
Asia/Latin America	1
Australia	1

Caribbean	3
Europe	17
Global	8
Latin America	10
Middle East	1
n/a	11
North-Africa	1
North-America	64
North-America / Asia	1
North-America / Australia	1
North-America / Europe	1
North-America / Latin America	1
Various	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>187</b>

### **Analysis / Comments**

As can be seen in the table above our cases mainly focus on North-America, Asia or Africa. A good part of the dilemma cases were received from the Markkula Center in the US so this partly explains why this number is so high. Then again North-America and especially the USA are known for their use of case studies in education. The use of case studies in Business was in recent times systematically developed by the Harvard Business School even if cases for education in professional life are used since more than 2000 years, as was mentioned above.

Then, there are quite some cases from Asia and Africa. On the one hand this can be explained again by the sources we had access to especially regarding Africa where many cases were taken from a book on professional ethics in administration.

The high number of cases on Asia would confirm the rise in interest in emerging economies and the behaviour of Western companies in this region.

## **6. Conclusions from the Analysis**

### **6.1 Enlarge Ethics Domains**

In order to support a further analysis of the cases we have allocated the subjects to the main ethics domains which are used by Globethics.net and which structure the subjects in our library and network. Obviously these cases are all part of professional / labour ethics. However, they can be further divided into various sub-categories or ethics domains as can be seen below (cases can often be counted under more than one domain).

#### **Political ethics**

Ethics of political systems

Legal/rights ethics

6

Peace ethics	
Governance and ethics	5
Development ethics	(many from business ethics)
<b>Economic ethics</b>	
Business ethics	49
Ethics of economic systems	
Labour/professional ethics	96
Technologies and ethics	
Trade ethics	3
Consumer ethics	
<b>Cultural ethics</b>	
Media/communication ethics	1
Cultural/inter-cultural ethics	6
Sports ethics	
Secularisation and ethics	
<b>Religious ethics</b>	
Comparative religions ethics	
Inter-religious dialogue and ethics	
Spirituality and ethics	
<b>Methods of ethics</b>	
General and historical	
Theological ethics	
Philosophical ethics	
Ethics of science/research ethics	1
<b>Bio ethics</b>	
Bioethics	
Sexual ethics	2
Medical ethics	
Health ethics	6
<b>Community ethics</b>	
Lifestyle ethics	1
Family ethics	
Gender ethics	5
Education and ethics	
Ethnicity and ethics	
Minority ethics	2
<b>Environmental ethics</b>	
Resources ethics	4
Biodiversity ethics	
Animal ethics	
Ethics of global commons	

The selected cases show the broad variety of issues, professions, continents and contexts for which case studies are useful. The figures should at the same time not be over-interpreted because the selection does not claim representativeness which is not possible on a global level. It is much more an encouragement to broaden the collection and deepen the aspects in order to become more diversified, more inclusive and in that sense more global in languages, professions, issues, geography, methodologies and political, economic, religious and cultural backgrounds. For further enlargement of the collection, a special attention and emphasis could be given a) to domains which are not yet well represented in the existing collection, because for all fields of ethics cases exist, and/or b) to deepen selected domains by collecting more cases and more different contexts.

## **6.2 Broaden Cultural and Historical Diversity**

The analysis of the cases in chapter 5 shows that the cases often highlight a current issue such as CSR, the finance sector and the issues around globalisation. The perspective is often western by pointing out the questions with which a foreign company investing in Asia is faced, or by showing the dilemmas of the financing world. The issues are often those of a globalised world and eventually bring in the recurring theme of intercultural management. From this perspective it would be of interest to this case study to include cases written in other cultures and bringing in another perspective to the collection.

In domains such as gender ethics or medical ethics it would be interesting to see which perspectives are brought in, which values are defended and whether the cases employ a normative description or not.

Collecting historical cases from earlier centuries could sharpen the perception and answers of ethical challenges.

## **6.3 Broaden the Diversity of Ethical Values**

Furthermore, in view of the origin of values and convictions it would be interesting to see whether these are rooted in religion and whether the religious reasoning is implicit or explicit.

The various approaches to ethics was developed in point 4.3 and highlighted the importance of cases in the various religions and also the conflict which occurred between the ideological approach or the more pedagogical and didactical approach. For the continuation of this project one could specifically search for cases in areas which have been neglected.

It would further enrich the collection to include other value systems e.g. by Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Arabic, Russian and indigenous cases. The analysis of cultural differences and communalities would be very fruitful

## **6.4 Adding Teaching Modules of Ethics Cases**

Finally, adding to the collection of cases a collection of Teaching Modules of ethics cases would be a service which Globethics.net has already been asked for. It would contribute to improve teaching and would especially help teachers in developing countries, with less access to such resources, to substantially improve and facilitate their teaching and publication services.

## 7. Products, Availability and Copyright

A number of **products** have been developed from this collection of case studies and are available to our project partner FPH.

- The Project **Report** on paper
- **The collection of case studies** in full text (one pdf per case) on a CD-Rom
- **A Table** (Excel sheet) with the data and categorization of each case study, on the same CD-Rom
- **The online collection of case studies** with their metadata (bibliographical data) on the **Globethics.net library** (<http://www.globethics.net/web/guest/library/search>). The documents have either been uploaded as a pdf document or with the link to the respective website. Where the copyright was received the cases were directly uploaded into our library, however in some cases we have just indicated the link, according to the rights received.
- **The Collection of case studies delivered to the fph Casothèque on the Coreдем Website** A number of cases can only be given once all the copyright issues have been clarified.

The Globethics.net library now includes a large amount of the cases. They are now searchable in the library and can also be found as a collection. In future and step by step, the Globethics.net library will include a number of collections on various ethics issues. The collection of cases is the first and most prominent one.

## 8. Recommendations and Follow up

We conclude this report with six recommendations.

1. This collection of case studies on professional ethics is an encouraging beginning for a collection on ethics cases. The **specific character and advantage of this collection**, compared to others, can be emphasised. It is
  - its focus on professional ethics
  - the significant number of cases
  - the broad range of themes
  - the international, multi-cultural, multi-sector and multi-lingual diversity
  - the online availability
  - the availability for free, especially targeting developing countries
  - the full searchability in the Globethics.net online library
  - the analysis of the collection in the report.
2. **The marketing** of this collection should now be started
  - by Globethics.net in its network of participants (on website, in newsletter, via adverts) and through its partner ethics networks
  - by fph and Coreдем through their marketing tools

3. **The enlargement of the collection** should be envisaged by professions, by languages, by regions, by ethics issues, by types, by cultural and religious backgrounds and by cases methods. This can be done by Globethics.net by
  - inviting Globethics.net experts among the participants to contribute cases and case studies by the online submission process or otherwise, especially from regions, languages and backgrounds under-represented in the existing collection
  - inviting partner networks such as the continental business ethics networks to contribute further cases
  - cooperating with fph and the experts in their partner organisations to contribute further cases
  - online research and direct contacts through the Globethics.net International Secretariat and its affiliates.
  - analysing and selecting from the Globethics.net database “Global Survey of Business Ethics in Research and Teaching” which should be ready by the end of 2010.
4. **A new collection of teaching modules of ethics cases.** This additional collection would be smaller in number, including teaching modules, concepts and material and if possible teaching videos. This could be done together with point 3.
5. **The Globethics.net website and its global online library on ethics** is a pre-condition and therefore integral part of this collection of ethics cases and its use as described above. Globethics.net is in a promising process to implement the goal to become the global leading online library on ethics. In order to reach this ambitious goal and service and becoming sustainable, substantial funds are necessary.
6. **A follow up project with fph** would therefore be promising, including a) the further sustainable development of the online library (point 5) and b) broadening and deepening the collection (point 3) and adding a collection of teaching modules (point 4).

## Sources

### Documents of this project

- 1 Table with description and sources of the 187 cases (excel file) [Annex 1](#)
- 2 Collection of 187 cases (single pdf's) [on a CDROM](#)
- 3 Project description GE 38.003, signed between Fph and Globethics.net 2008
- 4 Report, June 2008

### Literature/sources for chapter 4 of the report (small selection)

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## **Annex: List and metadata of Cases (table)**