

Towards a Just Europe?

EU Justice beyond (Low Threshold) Sufficiency

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Abstract: What are the requirements of distributive justice in the EU? In his book Joao Labareda defends a sufficientarian view of EU justice grounded in the values of economic reciprocity and democracy. On Labareda's account, among the requirements of EU justice there is the protection of a threshold of welfare goods (education, healthcare, etc.) adequate to participate in a democracy. In this essay I discuss the role that sufficientarian thresholds can have in a theory of EU justice, arguing that EU justice is more redistributively demanding than Labareda may think. The alternative view I propose is premised on Schemmel's claim that the Member States have a duty of justice to support each other in promoting egalitarian welfare states. I also challenge Labareda's appeal to welfare conditionality, since it seems incompatible with Labareda's way of interpreting democratic values. And I criticize how Labareda conceives the predistributive/re-distributive distinction as a reason to contain re-distribution in the EU.

Keywords: EU justice, Reciprocity, Sufficientarianism, Pre-distribution.

notizie di POLITEIA, XLII, 161, 2026. ISSN 1128-2401 pp. 89-105