
Curriculum Vitae Professor Dr Ernst Fehr

Name: Ernst Fehr
Born: 21 June 1956



Image: University of Zurich

Research Priorities: Behavioural Economics, Experimental Economics, Neuroeconomics, Fairness and Reciprocity

Ernst Fehr is an Austrian-Swiss economist and specialist in behavioural economics. He was able to show through extensive empirical studies that people are not as rational and self-serving as the standard model of the homo economicus assumes. His work contributed significantly to this fundamental change in economics.

Academic and Professional Career

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| since 2012 | Director, UBS International Center of Economics in Society, University of Zurich, Switzerland |
| 2011 - 2020 | Global Distinguished Professor for Economics, New York University, New York City, USA |
| 2010 - 2015 | Director, Department of Economics, University of Zurich, Zurich, Switzerland |
| 2010 | Co-Founder, FehrAdvice & Partners AG, Zurich, Switzerland |
| 2005 - 2012 | Head, University Research Programme “Foundations of Human Social Behavior”, University Zurich, Zurich, Switzerland |
| 2004 - 2009 | Fellow, Collegium Helveticum, Zurich, Switzerland |
| 2003 - 2011 | Faculty Member, Department of Economics, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Cambridge, USA |
| 2002 - 2006 | External Faculty Member, Santa Fe Institute, Santa Fe, USA |
| 1999 - 2010 | Director, Institute for Empirical Research in Economics at the University of Zurich, Switzerland |

since 1994	Full professor of Microeconomics and Experimental Economics, University of Zurich, Switzerland
1993 - 2006	Director, Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for Research in Economic Growth, Vienna, Austria
1991 - 1994	Professor, Institute of Economics and Economic Policy, Technische Universität (TU) Wien, Vienna, Austria
1991	Habilitation, TU Wien, Vienna, Austria
1988 - 1989	Research Fellow, London School of Economics and Political Science, London, UK
1986	Doctoral Degree, TU Wien, Vienna, Austria
1982 - 1991	Research Assistant, Institute of Economics and Economic Policy, TU Wien, Vienna, Austria
1980 - 1982	Research Assistant, University of Vienna, Vienna, Austria
1975 - 1980	Studies in Economics, University of Vienna, Vienna, Austria
1970 - 1975	Bundeshandelsakademie und Bundeshandelsschule Bregenz (BHAK Bregenz), Bregenz, Austria

Functions in Scientific Societies and Research Projects (selection)

since 2017	Member, Advisory Board, Experimental Economics
since 2011	President, Board, Excellence Foundation Zurich for Economic and Social Research
2010 - 2019	Member, Senior Editorial Board, Science
2008	President, European Economic Association (EEA)
2006 - 2018	Member, Board of Reviewing Editors, Science
2006 - 2014	Member, Editorial Board, Quarterly Journal of Economics
2006 - 2011	Member, Editorial Board, Games and Economic Behavior
2003 - 2005	President, Economic Science Association (ESA)

Project Coordination, Membership in Collaborative Research Projects (selection)

2020 - 2025	Head, Project "Behavioral Economics of Preventive health Care Campaigns", SNF Switzerland
2013 - 2016	Project "The Abandonment of Harmful Social Norms: Improving Children's Rights with Evidence-Based Research", UNICEF Switzerland

2013 - 2016	Project "Neuroeconomics of value-based decision making", Swiss National Science Foundation (SNF)
2012 - 2018	Principal Investigator, Project "Foundations of Economic Preferences", European Research Council (ERC)
since 2012	Head, Project "The Distribution and Determinants of Social Preferences", SNF, Switzerland
2010 - 2014	Head, Project "The Social Dynamics of Normative Behaviour: Population Fragmentation and Divergent Cultural Evolution", SNF, Switzerland
2009 - 2013	Head, Project "Individual heterogeneity and social interaction", SNF, Switzerland
2009 - 2012	Head, Project "Understanding Trust. Foundations, Forms and Limits of Trust", SNF, Switzerland
2008 - 2013	Head, Project "SystemsX, Neural Correlates of collective decision making: from molecules to minds", SNF, Switzerland
2007 - 2010	Project Partner, Project "Moral Thinking and Religion, Research Grant "Explaining Religion (EXREL)", European Commission
2006 - 2011	Head, Project "The Foundations of Human Prosociality – Social Preferences in Marmosets, Chimpanzees and Children", SNF, Switzerland
2005 - 2013	Participant, Project "NCCR Affective Sciences", SNF, Switzerland
2004 - 2006	Head, Project "The Effects of Loss Aversion and Social Preferences on Economic Incentives", SNF, Switzerland
2004 - 2006	Head, Project "European Wages and Employment under Low Inflation", SNF, Switzerland
2004 - 2007	RTN-Network "ENABLE: European Network for the Advancement of Behavioural Economics", European Commission
2003 - 2004	Principal Investigator, Project "The Economics and Psychology of Incentives"
1998 - 2001	TMR Research Network "ENDEAR - European Network for the Development of Experimental Economics and its Application to Research on Institutions and Individual Decision Making", European Union
1998 - 2001	Head, Project "Nominal Rigidity and Neutrality of Money", SNF, Switzerland
1995 - 2005	Participant, Network on Economic Environments, MacArthur Foundation, Chicago, USA
1995 - 1998	Head, Project "The Effect of Social Norms on Wages and Employment. A Theoretical and Experimental Analysis", SNF, Switzerland

1993 - 1996 Project, “Involuntary Unemployment as an Equilibrium Phenomenon”, Austrian Science Foundation FWF, Austria

Honors and Awarded Memberships

2020 Honorary Doctorate, Vrije Universiteit (VU) Amsterdam, Amsterdam, Netherlands

2017 Oskar Morgenstern Medal, University of Vienna, Vienna, Austria

2017 Honorary Doctorate, University of Antwerp, Antwerp, Belgium

since 2016 Corresponding Member, Austrian Academy of Sciences, Austria

2016 Honorary Doctorate, Karl Franzens Universität Graz, Graz, Austria

2014 Gutenberg Research Award, Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz, Mainz, Germany

2013 Gottlieb Duttweiler Prize, Gottlieb Duttweiler Institute (GDI), Zurich, Switzerland

2012 Austrian Cross of Honor for Science and Arts, Austria

since 2011 OLB Foundation Fellowship, Hanse-Wissenschaftskolleg – Institute for Advanced Study, Delmenhorst, Germany

2011 Science Prize, State of Vorarlberg, Austria

2010 German Fairness Prize, Fairness Foundation, Frankfurt, Germany

2010 Austrian Cross of Honor for Science and Art (I. Class), Austria

2010 Gustav Stolper Prize, Verein für Socialpolitik, Berlin, Germany

since 2009 Fellow, Association for Psychological Science, Washington D.C., USA

since 2009 Member, Academia Europaea

2009 Honorary Doctorate, Università della Svizzera italiana, Lugano, Switzerland

2009 Honorary Doctorate, University of Lausanne, Lausanne, Switzerland

2008 John Kenneth Galbraith Fellow, American Academy of Political and Social Sciences, USA

since 2008 Member, Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences, Germany

since 2008 Fellow, Econometric Society, New Haven, USA

2008 Swiss National Science Award Marcel Benoist, Marcel Benoist Foundation, Bern, Switzerland

2008 Honorary Doctorate, University of Munich, Munich, Germany

since 2007 Honorary Member, American Academy of Arts and Sciences, USA

2004 Cogito Prize, Cogito Foundation, Wollerau, Switzerland

2004	Honorary Doctorate, University of St. Gallen, St. Gallen, Switzerland
since 2002	Member, German National Academy of Sciences Leopoldina, Germany
2000	Hicks-Tinbergen Medal, European Economic Association
1999	Gossen Prize, Verein für Socialpolitik, Berlin Germany

Research Priorities

Ernst Fehr is an Austrian-Swiss economist and specialist in behavioural economics. He was able to show through extensive empirical studies that people are not as rational and self-serving as the standard model of the homo economicus assumes. His work contributed significantly to this fundamental change in economics.

Fairness, altruism, or the desire for compensatory justice: Phenomena like these that serve to humanize social interactions have until recently been almost completely ignored by economic theories. Ernst Fehr critiques the neoclassical dogma of the consistently rational behaviour of "homo economicus" who is exclusively driven by the principle of personal gain and utility maximization. Thereby, he affected a fundamental transformation that is today referred to as the "psychological shift in economics".

Fehr was able to demonstrate in numerous behavioural studies that humans are in no way only governed by the pursuit of material gains when acting as economic subjects but rather often try to attain a fair balance of interests even if it is to their disadvantage. He is intensely interested in the role that the principle of solidarity plays in economic decisions and in the cooperation of small groups. In addition to laboratory experiments, Fehr conducts controlled field studies. During tests with indigenous peoples from the Amazon basin and Papua New Guinea he explored the extent to which "fair" conduct or sanctions against anti-social contemporaries are culturally determined. To track down the evolutionary roots of cooperation and "pro-social behaviour", he organized experiments with children and chimpanzees. His institute has its own brain scanner to investigate the neurobiological bases of human behaviour.

Ernst Fehr bridged the gap between such diverse disciplines as economics, sociology, psychology, biology, ethnology, and neuroscience. His insights into the basics of human social behaviour help explain why the real economy often acts different from the ways found in many economic textbooks. From his work, Ernst Fehr also derives practical recommendations for influencing human behaviour by both utilizing prohibitions or monetary incentives and more subtle psychological mechanisms.

In 2008, Ernst Fahr was the first economist to receive the Marcel Benoist Price that is often considered the "Swiss Nobel price". Because of his continued presence in Zurich, the city became a centre of modern experimental economic research.