



Factsheet on the new European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity

What is meant by Research Integrity?

According to the European Code of Conduct, good research practices are based on fundamental principles of research integrity. They guide researchers in their work as well as in their engagement with the practical, ethical and intellectual challenges inherent in research. The Code of Conduct defines these principles as reliability, honesty, respect and accountability. The Code provides more expansive definitions of these principles.

Why is research integrity important?

Integrity is essential to ensure excellence in research and high quality research outputs that enable innovation and policy making. Excellent research has a major impact on society for example in areas such as public health or environmental protection, to name just two. Furthermore, ensuring research integrity is crucial to ensuring and promoting public trust in science.

In December 2015, the Member States of the EU adopted Council conclusions on research integrity for the first time, in which they identified integrity as a prerequisite for research excellence. The new European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity is a key step in implementing these conclusions.

What impact does the Commission hope the Code of Conduct will have?

The Code will catalyse discussions in the Member States and among researchers and thereby promote awareness of the importance of research integrity and progressively develop a genuine EU culture of research integrity.

Who is concerned? Is the Code of Conduct only aimed at beneficiaries of Horizon 2020 or members of the ALLEA network of academies?

The new code was drafted in a manner so that it is relevant to and can be used by all researchers from both the public and the private sector.

The new Code replaces an existing one and is referred to in Article 34 of the Model Grant Agreement of Horizon 2020, which stipulates that "*beneficiaries must respect the highest standards of research integrity — as set out, for instance, in the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity.*"

Horizon 2020 will facilitate the effective take-up and implementation of the Code via several Horizon 2020 funded research projects aiming notably at creating an EU research integrity community. Ongoing and planned activities aim at estimating the cost of misconduct, mapping the normative EU landscape,

developing training/education material (train the trainers, training modules for researchers etc.) and promoting integrity in the use of research results in evidence based policy.

How is this Code of Conduct different from its predecessor?

The new code is truly European. It was drafted following wide consultation with key EU stakeholders from the academic and private research performers, NGOs and Young researchers associations. The new code is shorter and more focused than the previous code, clearly underlining the main areas of concern and responsibilities for researchers and funders. In line with the 2015 Council Conclusions on research integrity, it emphasises, in particular, the responsibilities of research organisations to put in place the necessary procedures to prevent, detect and handle research misconduct.

In addition, the Code is a living document that will be revisited, if necessary, to take account of changes in the research environment and the European legal framework (for example the implementation of the new EU regulation on the processing of personal data which will apply from May 2018 ¹).

¹ Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Directive 95/46/EC (General Data Protection Regulation) (Text with EEA relevance) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.L_.2016.119.01.0001.01.ENG&toc=OJ:L:2016:119:TOC