



STANDING COMMITTEE OF ETHICS

CONVENOR : PIERRE NEDERLANDT

REPORT TO THE

EFPA
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EFPA

Standing Committee on Ethics

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1. Executive summary

The Standing Committee on Ethics (SCE) met four times (October 2009 in Brussels / March 2010 in Zurich/ October 2010 in Prague and April 2011 in Salzburg) and undertook a range of work as planned following approval of the 2009 General Assembly Oslo. This has included review of association's ethical codes, contribution to symposia and congresses and development of guidelines for practice.

Three members leaved the SCE : Jurg Forster (Switzerland), Haldor Ovreeide (Norway) and Wolf-Dietrich Zuzan(Austria) and five new members joined the SCE : Anthony Wainwright (United Kingdom), Daniel Stern (Switzerland), Karin Kalteis (Austria), Catherine Wieder (France) and Vicent Bermejo Frigola (Spain).

2. Introduction.

The EFPPA was founded in 1981. In september 1988, the General Assembly decided to appoint a Task Force to « ..explore the possibility of, and work towards the realization of common European ethical codes for professional psychologists. The Ethical Principles for Scandinavian Psychologists will, as an example of codes that are well-developed and international, serve as an important point of reference for the Task Force. A report and possible proposals shall be presented at the next General Assembly ». The first meeting of the « Task Force on professional ethics » took place in Amsterdam, January 1990. Seven countries were represented i.e. France, The Netherlands, Hungary, Norway, Spain, Switzerland and The United Kingdom. From the beginning it seemed difficult to write a European common code, so the purpose of the Task Force became to propose a meta-code on ethics, a common framework for the ethical codes in the member-countries. The Meta-code was adopted at the general Assembly, Athens, July 1995 and the Task Force became a Standing Committee. Since then a lot of recommendations has been produced. The task of the SC is mostly to give

information to the national members associations writing or rewriting their ethical code, to re-read, revise and support the ethical codes, to develop guidelines, to answer to questions of the General Assembly and since 2003 to organize regularly symposia on professional ethics.

In 2008, Geoff Lindsay, Casper Koene, Haldor Ovreide and Fredi Lang, all members of the SCE has published « Ethics for European Psychologists ». This book has benefited greatly from the work of the SCE.

In 2011, 18 countries are represented in the SC Ethics.

Convenors of the Standing Committee on Ethics :

Geir Nielsen (Norway) , 1990 -1993 / Casper Koene (The Netherlands), 1993 – 1999 / Geoff Lindsay (United Kingdom), 1999 – 2009 / Pierre Nederlandt (Belgium), 2009 –

3. Programme of work and achievements

3.1 Review of Associations'Ethical Codes Ethical Codes : The SCE undertook to review and comment the codes from : Russia , Croatia, Ireland.

3.2 Development of guidelines

3.2.1 Guidelines for psychologists who contribute to the media : presented to the GA Istanbul (see annex 2)

3.2.2 Research Ethics : in Brussels, we discussed with Edward Van Rossen (Standing Committee on Scientific Affairs) to comment their preparation of the text on Ethics in research

3.3 Symposium

The SCE prepared and organized in Prague 2010 a symposium on « Teaching ethics ».

3.4 Membership

A number of associations nominated members of the SCE who have never been able to attend meetings. As written by Geoff Lindsay (report to GA Oslo 2009), this raises the question of membership. The work of the SCE depends on the presence at a twice-yearly meeting where issues can be discussed. So, the presence on the list of members who are members in name only is for us

question. After our last meeting (Salzburg), we decided to contact them personally.

4. **Recommendations**

- 4.1 That The General Assembly approves the report of the Standing committee on Ethics
- 4.2 That the General Assembly extends the responsibility of the SCE for a further two years and that its remit should include :
 - 4.2.1 Examining the propositions of ethical codes made by member associations
 - 4.2.2 The presentation of articles in the European Psychologists on the Metacode
 - 4.2.3 The preparation of new guidelines on new technologies
 - 4.2.4 The collaboration on the presentation of nethics on the nwebsite of EFPA
 - 4.2.5 The proposition of a rubrique FAQ on ethics on the website of EFPA
 - 4.2.6 The response to the questions put by GA, EC or member associations.

Annex 1

Standing Committee Ethics 2011 :

Adonis Marios (CY)

Barkauskiene Rasa (LT)

Bermejo Vicent (SP)

Geertsema Henk (NL)

Gerganov Encho (BG)

Koblicova Alena (CZ)

Korkut Yesim (TR)

Lang Fredi (DE)

Nederlandt Pierre (BE)

Niemczynski Adam (PL)

Reggini Nubbia (SM)

Simonenkova Irina (LV)

Stern Daniel (CH)

Timulak Ladislav (IE)

Wainwright Tony (UK)

Wieder Catherine (F)

Wisniewska Dorothea (EFPSA)

Zganek Andrea (HR)

Annex 2

Guidelines for psychologists who contribute to the mediaon working with the media

1. Preamble

1.1 This Guideline is based upon the EFPA Meta-code of Ethics approved by the EFPA General Assembly, Granada, July 2005 (www.efpa.eu).

1.2 Psychologists have a responsibility to share their knowledge, insights and expertise with the public. Media (television, radio, internet, print-media) have become important sources of knowledge, opinions and power. By using the media, psychologists can disseminate their knowledge and aspire to contribute to the welfare of people.

1.3 Psychologists may have many objectives when dealing with the media, e.g.:

- a. to share information regarding various areas of psychology, research and services;
- b. to inform people about psychological services as well as the ways to obtain them;
- c. to play a part in the presentation of psychological challenges and problems by using media;

- d. to act as educators and informants to consumers;
- e. to support empowerment activities;
- f. to reduce uncertainty and stress in times of crisis in an informative way.

1.4 These underlying guidelines have been developed to support member Associations in developing national guidelines in order to:

- a. support psychologists who are appearing in public media to behave in an ethically sound way.
- b. respect and protect the rights of all people involved.

2. Basic elements of a media guideline

The following are basic elements of *the media guidelines*. Each item has a reference to the relevant article(s) of the Meta-code (MC).

A psychologist appearing in public media should:

2.1 show respect for all persons involved.

Though respect is expected in *all* professional activities, it is of utmost importance when the psychologist appears on television, writes in a newspaper or when the psychologist presents to the public. Appearing in the media involves many people watching or hearing the psychologist.

One should be careful not to show unintended disrespect to any person involved or to refer negatively to any individual or organisation without sufficient evidence. Public statements are always read in a local context and one should therefore be careful not to accidentally or erroneously identify third parties.

(MC: 3.1.1.ii)

2.2 avoid giving professional opinions about any person in public.

It is generally accepted among psychologists that an assessment of a person's psychological condition should be based on a proper investigation which can only be done with the consent of the person involved, if not otherwise required by legal regulations. A proper investigation includes observations, interviews and/or tests.

But even if it could be considered possible to make a professional judgement about a person based solely on information provided by public

media, the psychologist should refrain from such statements as he or she has no consent from the person involved.

In general this rule does not apply in the study of deceased persons of historical interest. But even in this situation one should be careful not to harm the interests of others for example, descendants.(MC: 3.1.2, 3.1.3 and 3.2.3.ii)

2.3 be very careful not to bring into the public domain any personal data about persons with whom the psychologist has or has had a professional relationship.

Confidentiality is a key value in the work of psychologists. Even with consent or on request from the client the psychologist should refrain from bringing information about the client into the public domain.

The psychologist should be aware of potential conflicts of interest when taking on different roles which involve providing a service to a particular group of clients and at the same time publishing information about them. (MC: 3.1.2.ii and 3.4.4.i)

2.4 be careful not to go beyond his/her range and level of competence.

Successful involvement with the media by the psychologist may result in the psychologist being asked at a later date about similar or other questions. The psychologist should take care not to go beyond his/her experience and field of competence.(MC: 3.2.2)

2.5 aim at empowering his audience.

Psychologists aim at sharing psychological knowledge and insights that may be relevant to the lives of their audience. In doing so it is advised to use language that will be understood by the general public and as far as possible avoids misunderstanding. (MC: 3.1.1.i and 3.4.4)

2.6 be aware that he/ she is also representing a community of psychologists.

Being aware of this responsibility, the psychologist should be respectful to different psychological models and work styles and abstain from statements that could discredit or hinder the presentation of the work of colleagues. However, fair critique with valid arguments should not be hindered; this might even strengthen the profession. (MC: 3.3.1.ii)

2.7 be sensitive to the potential effects on third parties, like relatives and other acquaintances.

Although it may be difficult to foresee negative effects on third parties and their relationships, the psychologist should do their best to avoid such effects(MC: 3.3.3)

2.8 *be sensitive to negative effects of self-promotion.*

When appearing in public media, psychologists have the opportunity to raise the profile of the organisation they work for, or their own practice. Due account should be taken of guidelines on honesty and integrity when presenting this information and be sensitive to the potentially negative effects of self-promotion(MC: 3.4.2 and 3.4.4)

3. Recommendations for the Member Associations:

3.1 to implement these EFPA guidelines on the ethical aspects of appearing in, and working with the media;

3.2 to check – if possible within the national legal regulations – whether persons who are presented in public media as psychologists, indeed are psychologists according to the regulations of the country;

3.3 to offer their members media training which includes training in awareness of ethical issues as well as the more technical aspects

Annex 3 : report meeting SCE Brussels, 17-18 October 2009 approved in Zurich.

Present : Victor Claudio, Jürg Forster, Henk Geertsema, Alena Koblicova, Yesim Korkut, Fredi Lang, Pierre Nederlandt (Convenor), Haldor Ovreeide, Catherine Wieder, Wolf-Dietrich Zuzan.

Apologies : Vicente Bermejo, Andreja Brajsa-Zganec, Adam Niemczynski, Nubbia Reggini, Dorota Wisniewska.

1) Welcome

The SCE welcomes Catherine Wieder who has replaced Alain Létuvé as the representative of France.

2) Minutes of meeting Lisbon 20-21 March 2009-10-24

Minutes are approved

3) Presentation of the EFPA office in Brussels by Sabine Steyaert, Office Manager.

Sabine explains the role and the organization of the office (she works with Valeri Boni, Management Assistant).

4) Discussion with Ann-Magritt Aanonsen and Katharina Althaus

- AMA explains that there is a new president of EFPA (R.A. Roe) and probably a new way of contact between the EC and the SC. EFPA is a big organization (35 countries !) and there are some problems to clarify (ex : relations with EFPSA, ghost members, funds to find in the countries and the European Commission).
- AMA and KA are working on a book on ethics and ask questions on the ethical committees, and our SC.

Conclusions of the discussion :

To send all the documents we have written to AMA

ACTION : JF

To ask the EC to define a clear procedure for new candidates ; we suggest :

- 1- there must be a code
- 2- a copy is sent to the SC Ethics
- 3- the SC Ethics reviews the code and concludes « compliant or not »
- 4- Information is given to EC that decides

ACTION AMA and PN

We have a long discussion on the codes, all the texts and books existing or in preparation.

5) Discussion with Edward Van Rossen (SC on Scientific Affairs)

EVR explains the aims of the SC on Scientific Affairs. For information, I add to these information the point concerning this SC in the draft of minutes of GA in Oslo (8.2.3) : « Report of the SC Scientific Affairs : The Executive Council recommended : that the report be accepted, applauds the work on developing minimum standards for PhDs and the guide for European Congresses ; the future priorities are working on the PhD standards and the relationship with the European Psychologist and with the Scientific Committee of the next ECP ; the conclusions of the report be taken into consideration in the work of EFPA and its Member Associations ; the Standing Committee continue. »

We have a long discussion with EVR. The conclusions are that, if there is no problem with the role of the SC ScAff in the relation with the European Psychologist, the preparation of « recommendations » or « guidelines » or « a code » on research may be at least in cooperation with our SC. We have to avoid confusion.

Decision :

- To ask EVR to report the SC Scientific Affairs our opinions
- To remember SC Scientific Affairs the Meta-code must be the reference
- The members of our SC to send to PN remarks till december 2009

ACTION : ALL

- If there is a paper « on ethics », to have a common presentation

6) Ethical codes

JF and WDZ give remarks to CW on the french code. In fact there is a new version in preparation and CW will give these information to the committee working on this new text.

Codes to comment :

- Russian code (copy to have via Geoff Lindsay) ACTION JF anf HG
- Croatian Code ACTION HO and WDZ
- Irish Code ACTION AK and VC

7) Working with the media

We read and comment the draft prepared by HG, YK and VC.

They'll prepare a new version for our next meeting taking in consideration our remarks and comments.

ACTION : HG, YK, VC

8) Carta Ethica

Postponed to the next meeting, VC will prepare a paper.

9) 4th SCE Symposium

As Vito Tummino resigned, the project of Symposium is postponed to october 2010.

- Place : a) Prague b) Vienna c) Brussels
- Date : 1-2-3 October 2010.
- Theme : teaching ethics to psychologists

To do :

- Confirmation of possibility in Prague ACTION AK
- Think to possible presentation by members of SC ACTION ALL

10) Website

Jürg presents a proposal and receives a lot of propositions he will adapt. He will send us the new proposition and after reactions send it to the webmaster.

Proposition to add to the ethics website :

- References of books on ethics
- Advertisement for events
- History of SC on Ethics

ACTION : ALL

ACTION : CW and WDZ

ACTION : PN

11) Information on situation in our different countries

12) Next meeting : Zurich 20-21 March 2010.

Annex 4 : report meeting SCE Zurich, 20-21 March 2010 approved in Prague

Present : Victor Claudio, Jürg Forster, Henk Geertsema, Alena Koblicova, Yesim Korkut, Fredi Lang, Pierre Nederlandt (convenor), Haldor Ovreeide, Catherine Wieder, Wolf Dietrich Zuzan.

Apologies : Vicente Bermejo, Nubia Regini, Dorota Wisniewska.

Many thanks to Jürg for the organization of his last meeting with the SCE.

1) Minutes of meeting Brussels 17-18 October 2009.

Minutes are approved

2) Report discussion with Robert Roe, new president of EFPA

This was an informal discussion. PN gave to Robert Roe information on the work of the SCE. RR said he would give more reaction on the meeting of SC convenors in June .

3) Ethical codes :

The question is : what after our advice on the presented versions ? It is not clear and the question is in discussion.

- Russian code : two remarks : probably translation difficulties and cultural differences. Apparently a new revision is done by the Russians.
- Croatian code : apparently also difficulties with the translation « may », « must not » « should », « must ». To clarify with the Croatian Colleagues.
- Irish code : has adopted the structure and main principles of the meta-code ; contains information on working with animals, this question should

be discussed in the revision of the meta-code or transmitted to SC on scientific affairs.

4) Code of ethics of ISPA

After explanations from JF, this question is not relevant for our SC.

5) Working with the media

New comments and the working group prepares the last version.

6) Recommendations on research

SC on Scientific Affairs prepares a text, we'll receive copy when ready.

7) Carta Ethica

VC presents the idea : some countries will try to introduce the concept.

8) Website

JF has done the work for the new presentation of the SCE on the website of EFPA. It seems to be good, some technical aspects must be solved.

PN prepares a new version of the history of SC. (see annex 2)

9) Symposium Prague

Long discussion to see how we organize the symposium : the result is the invitation with list of presentations.

10) Next meetings :

- We'll meet before the Symposium on Friday 1 October 2010
- Next meeting : Bergen 9-10 April 2011

Pierre Nederlandt

Annex 5 : report Meeting SCE Prag, October 1st 2011 approved in Salzburg

Present : Henk Geertsema, Alena Koblicova, Yesim Korkut, Pierre Nederlandt(convenor), Catherine Wieder, Wolf-Dietrich Zuzan.

Also present: Karin Kalteis

a.m.

After being welcomed by Wolf-Dietrich (who announces his retirement and introduces the new Austrian member, Karin Kalteis), taking Pierre's chair (since he was compelled to stay in Brussels and arrives only in the afternoon), the agenda is confirmed:

- vote on Zurich's decisions,

- how to organize this week-end's Prag symposium,
- preparation of EFPA's Conference in Istanbul,
- a review of the several national Codes,
- news from our several countries,
- planning a second book with clinical cases,
- recommendations on ethics and research,
- preparation of the next meeting to be held in either Bergen or Salzburg.

- 1) Zurich's Minutes are approved
- 2) We should re-read further the Irish and Russian codes with Pierre at the next meeting
- 3) Questions about the *Carta Etica*: a short version of the Metacode? The Metacode is an instrument for the associations whereas the *Carta* would be for everybody.
- 4) What news about the website? On the website a short history of the SC should appear.
- 5) Organisation of the symposium: It should lead to a questionnaire submitted to all countries, enabling us to have a clearer vision of what's going on in Europe. The programme of the Symposium is handed to the organizers.

1) Discussion on Code with the media

Enclosed : a copy of the proposals (*e.g. But even if it could be considered possible to make a professional judgement about a person based solely on information provided by public media, the psychologist should remain silent because he has no consent from the person* Comment: In the Netherlands, it will be very difficult to accept this point)

We all agree with the content then it will have to be re-read again. Henk suggests more time is needed to discuss (either in Bergen or Salzburg, then will be sent to Istanbul afterwards by Pierre. Check with every country BEFORE Istanbul). All participants insist on the confidentiality principle. Besides, there are quite a few differences between the civil and penal courts in the different countries. Basically the whole guideline is not dealing with the courts though most of the media deal with court procedures.

The final decision whether it should be online will be taken in Istanbul.

2) Istanbul

The aim of this "ethics track" is during ECP Istanbul 2011, to provide the participants a chance to follow various presentations on ethics with the help of a frame which will take place each day regularly, in the same place and time. This frame will enable the audience to follow certain specific discussions in a well organized and coherent fashion systematically. The main goals are, to focus on development on codes in various cultures; to compare the ethical activities in USA, Canada, EFPA countries & Balkan countries and to discuss on some region-specific issues. It is expected via this track, to learn from different experiences and to bring ethical issues into more awareness of psychologists and to discuss on future possibilities of collaboration.

Submission criteria: Basically this track is not planned to be open to general submission. However, those presentations on psychology ethics can be brought together under panels that can be added to this track- if the presenters agree.

The details of the program will be presented in the following months, when the themes of the presenters are clear.

KEYWORDS

- Ethical Code Development
- Cross-cultural practice and ethical issues
- Teaching ethics and ethical decision-making
- Indigenous approaches to ethics
- Universalising ethical codes of practice

There will be different presentations, no need to repeat the “human rights issues” as described in Oslo. Deadline late October abstracts should be sent to Yesim. One person will be the facilitator of the group.

Topics to be discussed:

e.g.:

- 1) A comparison between the Codes: too theoretical. Does it have to be something new?
- 2) A problem encountered by the EFPA: Why some countries do not join us? Does EFPA represent ALL countries in Europe? Has it anything to do with the language? Could it be a matter of “ethics being so dry”? Are people afraid of ethics?
- 3) Should a Metacode be (or not) independent from religion.
- 4) A panel or a workshop on media? How to teach how to behave on the media?
- 5) How to overcome prejudices against ethics? Would it be possible to enlarge the topics?
- 6) Applications with the police and military?
- 7) Ethics and torture?
- 8) Ethical problems encountered with coaching in top sports.

(Arrival of Pierre, 3. p.m)

Pierre introduces the news from Brussels:

- 1) Absence of the Portuguese. Difficult situation there.
- 2) A new English colleague + a new Swiss.
- 3) The new President Dr Roe wishes to change things:
 - suggests that EFPA should have experts, when there are discussions on ... e.g.: Child abuse, traffic etc ... No one is or is not a specialist.
 - we are a good task force in EFPA, we meet twice a year, publish etc. He wants to have a formal structure to be organized on a more rigorous way.
 - there should be a chair + a secretary
 - each year the SC should give information of what has been done.
- 4) About the situation in Europe: *Europsy*? No precise news. Situation in France: CW explains. France being accepted to deliver the *Europsy* accreditation from this year on. 3 candidates will be official in April 2011. Three psychotherapists accredited in Turkey.

After short discussion, Catherine Wieder elected as a Secretary

3) Book of Cases,

We should discuss a second book with chapters on different domains according to different countries: A great interest for the students. Yet there's a risk of being taken as tenants of "*good practices*". It would be very interesting to see what they do in other countries! We can have ideas on what we can do or suggest.

We should also inform EFPA of the several panels of ethics to be held in Istanbul.

4) What shall we do in Bergen? Or Salzburg

- Conclusions from Prag
- Preparation of Istanbul
- Book of cases: how to promote
- Support from their own countries about the "media"

Proposal for next meetings

SALZBURG, April 16-17, 2011

ISTANBUL : during the ECP (to be discussed in Salzburg)

**pp. the Convenor,
Catherine WIEDER, Secretary.**