



Environmental Research
Infrastructures Providing shared
soLutions for science and Society

Envri Plus week,
Grenoble, 15-18 May 2017

Theme 4: Societal relevance and understanding

WP 13: Developing an Ethical Framework for RIs

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Partners: INGV, ETHZ
EMSO, EPOS

1. **increasing the awareness** of both the scientists and the public **on the importance of ethical aspects in Earth sciences**;
2. **establishing a shared ethical reference framework**, to be adopted by RIs governing bodies, including management guidelines for Ethical Boards in RIs;
3. **increasing the awareness** of scientists **of their social role** in conducting research activities;
4. **assessing the ethical and social aspects** related to the results achieved and deliverables released within the project .

Code	Deliverable	Responsible person	Due date
D 13.1	Questionnaire and assessment report	Silvia Peppoloni (INGV)	30 April 2017
D 13.2	Ethical label template	Giuseppe Di Capua (INGV)	30 April 2018
D 13.3	Ethics Consensus Guidelines for RIs	Silvia Peppoloni (INGV)	30 Nov 2018
D 13.4	Contents for Websites, social media appearance, printed matter on ethical & societal issues for general Public	Florian Haslinger (ETHZ)	30 April 2019

“WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT ETHICS IN GEOSCIENCES?”

TO WHOM WAS IT ADDRESSED?

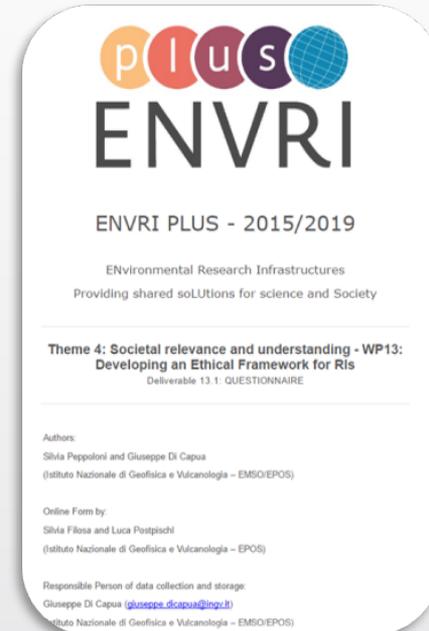
addressed to all the participants in ENVRIplus

WHICH WAS ITS OBJECTIVE?

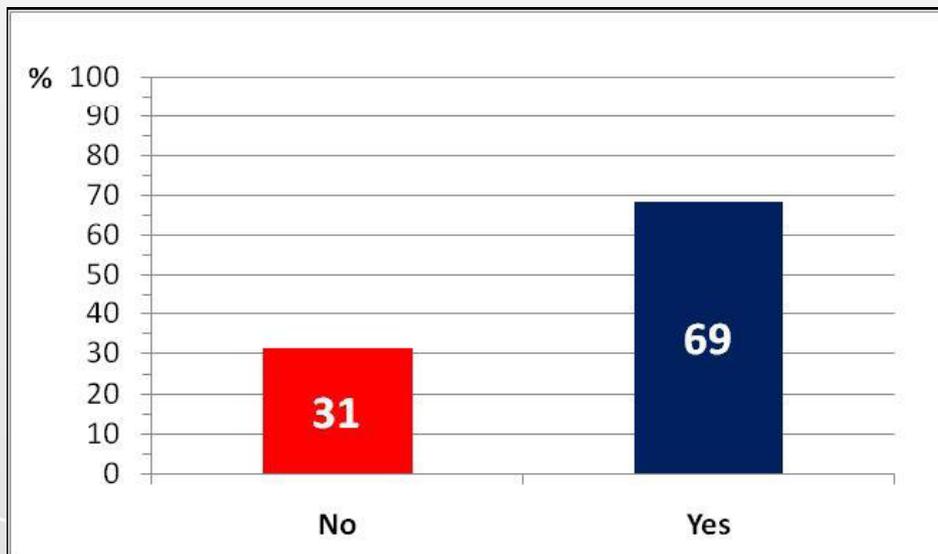
to investigate to what extent each participant involved in the project is aware of and takes into consideration ethical issues in relation to his/her scientific activities and is informed on how his/her organization faces these issues.

CONSIDERED ASPECTS

- Principles of research integrity and professional ethics;
- Aspects related to the impact on the environment that research activity may have;
- Aspects related to the repercussions of the research activities on the different categories of society (such as citizens, decision makers, politicians, local authorities, professionals, etc.)



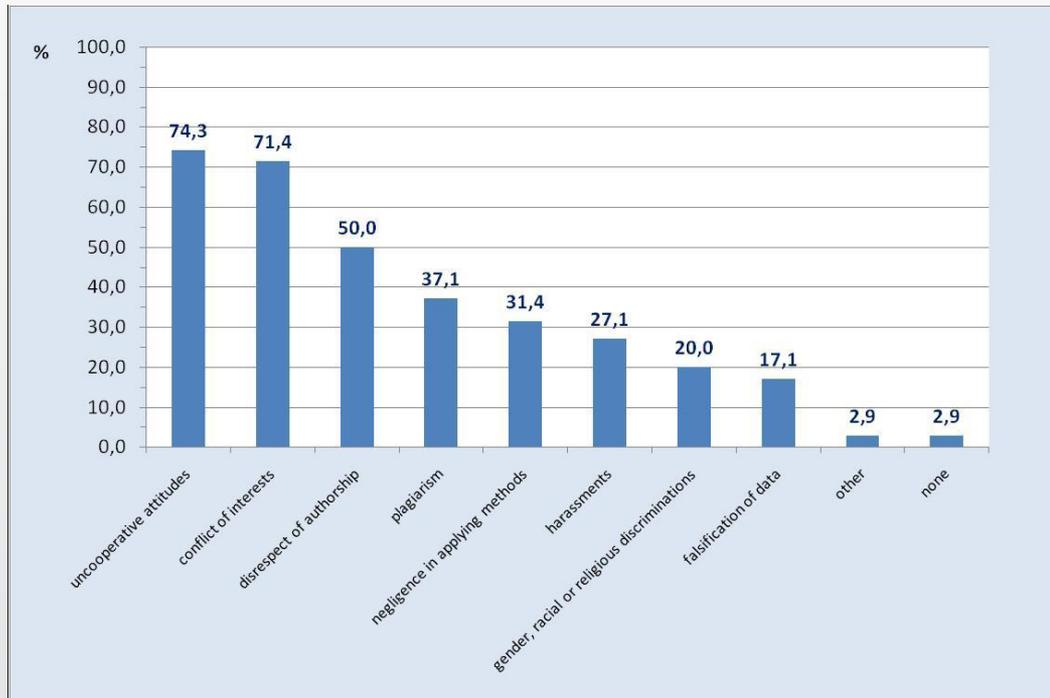
- ❑ A low number of participants in the survey (**26%**), despite ethical and societal aspects in science represent important issues of the ENVRIplus project.
- ❑ A significant percentage that has never heard about ethics applied to geosciences (**31%** of 70 interviewees).



Have you ever heard about ethics applied to geosciences?

- ❑ Ethics is important for a large majority (honesty, accountability, reliability and credibility are considered the main values of reference in research activities).

- Unethical behaviors in the working environment (such as conflicts of interest, harassment and discrimination) seem quite common.



Have you ever heard about some of the following behaviors within your working environment?

- The interviewees give greater importance to the responsibility towards colleagues, rather than towards society and the environment, highlighting a relatively low perception of societal and environmental implications of their work.

- Percentages relative to the presence of different kinds of offices, respectively within Universities/Institutes and RIs. Red background indicates higher values, blue background lower values.

	Universities/Institutes	Research Infrastructures
Ethical Board	40.0%	28.6%
Communication Office	91.4%	48.6%
Geo-Education Office	48.6%	10.0%
Anti-Corruption Office	21.4%	4.3%
Guarantee Committee for equal opportunities	54.3%	10.0%

- Percentages relative to the existence of different kinds of policies, respectively within Universities/Institutes and RIs. Colors as above.

	Universities/Institutes	Research Infrastructures
Code of conduct/ethics	51.4%	22.9%
Data policy	37.1%	64.3%
Access policy to laboratories	40.0%	34.3%
Publication policy	40.0%	22.9%
Policy about inclusivity and access for personnel with disabilities	61.4%	10.0%
Gender balance policy	54.3%	32.9%
Policy to limit the environmental impact of activities	32.9%	21.4%

SIGNIFICANT POINTS		
Large number of answers “I don’t know”		Scarce knowledge and low involvement in the life of the organization
Importance of ethical and social aspects of scientific activity recognized by most of the interviewees		Real perception of these issues not adequate, especially with regard to society.
Priority: to increase the ethical awareness and the social responsibility of the RIs’ community.		Development of an ethical framework supporting scientists in their work
To strengthen the cooperation among colleagues, to improve the institutional communication within each RI, to face and reduce some unethical practices.		Improvement of the quality of the working environment, which is the fundamental prerequisite for doing excellent science.



High importance to define Ethical Guidelines for Ris

IMPACT ON THE PROJECT

- The survey results have been useful to identify key points to be included in the ethical guidelines.
- The participation in the survey has already had in itself an impact on the project, since many scientists probably for the first time had to deal with issues that usually are not subjects of the scientific/technical discussion or part of their usual research activity.

IMPACT ON STAKEHOLDERS

Usability of the Deliverable for the RIs:

- Necessity to call upon RIs to improve their internal institutional communication, in order to increase the awareness and knowledge of staff and affiliated members about activities and organizational structure.
- Useful input to RI managers, to improve their institutional activity through the implementation of structures and offices dedicated to ethical and social issues and the improvement of the work environment.