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A concerted approach to definitions of research integrity and related concepts: ENRIO's contribution

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Research integrity and related concepts have different perceived and legal meanings in different institutions, cultures, and countries. Such variations can be well-founded but may pose challenges in international research and collaborative efforts to promote research integrity. Considering this, some reports have recommended that professional standards for research integrity should be harmonised across Europe (European Science Foundation, 2010; Resnik, 2009). The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity (ALLEA, 2023) formulates four principles of research integrity that are relevant across the research system and in all disciplines: reliability, honesty, respect, and accountability. However, the Code does not provide a clear-cut definition of research integrity or related concepts.

The European Network of Research Integrity Offices (ENRIO) aims to promote responsible conduct of research, to assist in addressing potential breaches of good research practice, and to strengthen research integrity. To support ENRIO members and foster a concerted approach in advancing research integrity in Europe, ENRIO has established a working group for research integrity-related definitions. It aims to: (i) map key concepts in the countries represented in ENRIO, and to (ii) provide recommendations and interpretations of these concepts and definitions.

At the ENRIO-Congress, we will launch the ENRIO report *Key Research Integrity Concepts: Interpretations and Recommendations*. In this presentation, we put forward the main results from the survey questionnaire sent to all ENRIO members (e.g. research integrity offices, research ethics committees, contributors) (N=25). The response rate was 84 percent (n=21). ENRIO members were asked to provide an overview of 11 concepts and how these are defined in key national documents, such as legal regulations, and guidelines in member organisations and/or countries that they represent. We found that almost every ENRIO member has a document defining research integrity and associated concepts, yet the definitions vary considerably, as do their legal status. Overall, there is considerable variation in relation to the scope of norms included in the definitions.

The findings of this report constitute the first step in finding a common normative framework for research integrity, and a joint approach to research integrity in Europe.

References

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