

## DG TRADE's NEW CODE ON ETHICS AND INTEGRITY

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## The Objectives are twofold:

- Take a renewed look at the Ethics framework in place to fit with the specific needs in DG TRADE
- Respond to requests from staff to clarify the rules as they stand for the moment and to ensure professionalism and excellence in DG TRADE

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## Awareness-raising

The Code improves the:

- Understanding of Staff Regulations and other rules relating to Staff conduct
- Prevention of wrongdoings
- Protection of staff in working relations and delivery of work
- Recognition and Minimising potential risk situations

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## Ethics is not optional !

- The Code applies to all DG TRADE personnel and the Cabinets staff
- It incorporates the Statement of principles adopted by the Commission
- Introduction course + compulsory training
- Creation of a:
  - DG Trade Steering Committee on Ethics and Information Security
  - Ethics Correspondent (in A/1)
  - Ethical Compliance Officer (in A/1)

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## 3 sources of ethics

( 5 "R's" of Ethics)

- Rules
- Responsibility/Results (individual level)
- Respect/Relationships (collective level)
- > *The Code should lead to a self regulating system*

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## Chapter 1 - General obligations

Key principles: (as stipulated in articles 11-22a of SR)

- *Independence and Loyalty*
- *Duty to represent the Commission's views*
- *Respect of colleagues*
- *Efficient use of Commission resources*
- *Private life in all dignity*

☞ *Quality of Service/Professionalism*

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## Chapter 2 – Conflict of interest

*Be aware of situations that possibly compromise on your independence or impartiality*

- *Family ties, personal friendships*
- *Gifts, favours and donations*
- *External activities and remuneration*
- *Political affinities and national influences*
- *Holding financial interests*

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## Chapter 2 – Conflict of interest

*Gifts, favours and donations - the most discussed issues:*

*It is recommended to decline all such offers that have more than merely symbolic value - all others bear the risk of potential Conflict of Interest (Art 11,12)*

*Possible exceptions:*

- *Gifts/favours ≤ € 50 per year from one single source may be accepted;*
- *Gifts/favours > € 50 per year from one single source require prior authorisation*

*Covers business meals until further clarification/guidance is provided by DG ADMIN based on College decision*

⇒ *Be Transparent and consider consequences !*

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## Chapter 2 – Conflict of interest

*Outside activities - another important case:*

- *Paid or unpaid, all outside activities require in advance permission (Art 12b SR)*
- *Permission might be refused if the activity impairs the independence and/or is detrimental to the work of the Commission*
- *The net amount should not exceed a ceiling of € 4,500 per years*
- *This also applies to staff having left the active service!*

⇒ *Be Transparent and consider consequences !*

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## Chapter 2 – the Ethical dilemma

- *Your specific Situation might not always be covered by the textbook*
- *At a first glance, it is not always obvious what is right or wrong*
  - *Which choice to make?*
  - *How to act?*
- *In doubt, reporting is the professional way out!*

⇒ *Be Transparent and consider consequences !*

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## Chapter 3 – Reporting Improproprieties

Duty to report suspected serious wrongdoing to:

- *Immediate Superior/Director General and/ or SEC GEN*
- *OLAF*
- *Address President of Commission, Court of Auditors, Council or EP or Ombudsman only if own Institution/ OLAF have not taken action within 60 days*

(Art 22a Staff Regulations)

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## Chapter 4 – Outside Contacts

- *Circumspection and Discretion, also after leaving service (Art. 12, 17 & 18 SR)*
- *Publications and speeches on professional and EU matters ☞ Inform! + declare remuneration - if any - in your mission order! (Art. 17a SR)*
- *Remuneration for publications and speeches on other matters: no limit of € 4,500, no prior authorisation*

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## Chapter 4 – Third parties

- *Be Transparent: inform about external contacts and ask for instructions for media contacts - avoid moment of glory !*
- *Be aware of possible Risks which create Conflicts of Interest and damage our Public Image*
- *Register for Interest Groups*
- Ethical Reflex:  
*"Is my behaviour risking the Commission's position?"*

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## Conclusion 1:

*Management and staff are aware of and share:*

- *Appropriate ethical and organisational values*
- *Uphold these through their own behaviour and decision-making*

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## Conclusion 2 : Management

- *Sets the good example*
- *Creates an environment of responsibility and respect*
- *Rewards good behaviour*
- *Ensures compliance with the rules*

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## Conclusion 3:

*Your individual responsibility:*

- *Analyse the situation*
- *Consider the consequences*
- *Check (Rules, Hierarchy, A/1, DG ADMIN)*
- *Take action*
- *Evaluate*

⇒ *Be Transparent and consider consequences !*

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