DG TRADE’S NEW CODE ON ETHICS AND INTEGRITY
Jens Schaps, Director A, DG TRADE

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

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

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:
  - DG Trade Steering Committee on Ethics and Information Security
  - Ethics Correspondent (in A/1)
  - Ethical Compliance Officer (in A/1)
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

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

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

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!
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!

Chapter 3 – Reporting Improprieties

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)

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
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?”

Conclusion 2: Management

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

Conclusion 1:
Management and staff are aware of and share:
➢ Appropriate ethical and organisational values
➢ Uphold these through their own behaviour and decision-making

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!