



The Vienna Institute for International Economic Studies

Memorandum of Understanding- Principles of Research Integrity for Commissioned Studies

27.01.2022

The undersigned research institutions agree on the following principles of research integrity when accepting and producing publicly financed studies and when using them for policy advice and public debates:

Principles for order acceptance/commissioning

1. In the context of commissioned research, only commissions are accepted where the institutes assume ultimate responsibility for the content of the results of the scientific work and where the nature of the commission (research question, process, utilisation and communication of the results) does not violate any ethical principles to which the institutes have committed themselves. All commissioned studies are transparently documented on the website.
2. Studies that are produced with public funds should in principle be published.
3. The undersigned institutes represent these principles vis-à-vis the clients and in the respective awarding of contracts. Exceptions are to be justified by the client at the point of awarding the contract and are documented by the institutes.

Principles for the preparation of studies

The undersigned institutes observe the rules of Good Scientific Practice (GWP) in the preparation of studies, specifically they do the following:

4. Ensure the traceability of the research results through the long-term storage of all documents relevant to the study in accordance with the guidelines of the Austrian Agency for Scientific Integrity (ÖAWI), in particular
 - a. Description of the scientific methodology

- b. Data records and data cleansing; exceptions, such as when the deletion of data is necessary under data protection law according to the GDPR, are - documented accordingly.
 - c. Calculation methods
 - d. In the case of surveys: Questionnaires, survey results and sample information
- 5. Clear labelling and citation of all ideas, texts, data and other sources originating from others
- 6. Naming of all persons who have made their own scientific or other significant contribution as co-authors of the publication.
- 7. Disclosure of possible conflicts of interest
- 8. Naming of all funding sources
- 9. Responsibility for compliance with the rules of good scientific practice is basically the duty of every scientist, and at the institutes it is also clearly anchored in the organisation and institutionalised; the persons responsible for the content are known internally to everyone and are also named on the institutes' website.
- 10. The institutes are members of the Austrian Agency for Scientific Integrity (ÖAWI), an independent body that consolidates the standards of good scientific practice in Austria and ensures compliance with them. The ÖAWI also serves as an independent authority for the institutes in cases where there is a suspicion of scientific misconduct.

Enquiries by the media, the public or the professional public about the methodology and the results of our work are answered accordingly. The traceability of our scientific work is possible due to the available documentation of the scientific procedure. *The exact modalities of the implementation of this voluntary commitment are left to the institutes.*

Principles for using the results of commissioned studies for policy advice and public debates

Responsibility of the institutes in the scientific preparation and answering of a socio-politically relevant question

- 11. Economic and socio-political relevant results and recommendations are based on the critical review of the available evidence, which in particular examines the robustness of the underlying methodological approach.
- 12. Limits of validity and any assumptions behind the available evidence are made transparent without being asked.
- 13. The researchers of the institutes are aware, as are the clients, that the statements of a commissioned study are only one building block in the development of policy measures, as the latter require a broad evidence base and broad discussions.

Principles of transparency

- 14. As a matter of principle, the institutes shall publish all commissioned studies financed by public funds. Exceptions are possible, but must be comprehensibly justified by the client at the time the contract is awarded and documented by the Institute. In such cases, the work is also prepared in accordance with the standards of good scientific practice, for example with regard to the documentation of the scientific methodology. However, the results and data from studies of public contract research must be able

to be included in academic publications if there are no legal or company regulations to the contrary.

15. If completed research and analysis results are actively communicated to the public (in the form of press releases, press conferences, ...), the underlying publications must also be presented to the public in full.
16. Even if a public debate arises prematurely about a study that has not yet been completed, the study can still only be published after it has been fully completed and its scientific quality has been checked.

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