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1. Introduction

1.1. Executive summary

This deliverable, entitled Ethics Compliance Report (ECR) is developed in the context of Work Package 8 (WP8): Coordination, Project Management, Quality and Ethics. The main aim of this ECR is to acknowledge the ethical considerations that pertain to the project and outline how ENVRINNOV ensures compliance during its lifecycle.

Within Horizon Europe, proper research data management and active preservation of ethical principles throughout the project cycle is viewed as a key conduit towards achieving the right balance between discovery and innovation, without compromising human integrity, or health and safety or fundamental rights. A robust ECR is the backbone of this, as one of its essential aspects is the introduction of appropriate controls related to ethics issues. Furthermore, as per the ENVRINNOV Grant Agreement sub-section 1.2.5. On Open Science, a key guiding principle of Horizon Europe projects is making research data generated from said projects findable, accessible, interoperable, and reusable (FAIR). As such, the ECR is considered a strategic document outlining the fundamental ethical issues pertaining to the ENVRINNOV project and how these are considered and addressed by the project Consortium.

1.2. Relation to Other Project Documents

The following documents overruled the present document:

- Grant Agreement (GA) and their Annexes: (Annex 5, Article 14)
- Consortium Agreement (CA)

1.3. Abbreviation List

Below is the list of the acronyms that are used in the present document:

- CA: Consortium Agreement
- DMP: Data Management Plan
- ECR: Ethics Compliance Report
- FAIR: Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, and Reusable
- GA: Grant Agreement
- RP: Reporting Period
- WP: Work Package
- ENVRI: European network of Environmental Research Infrastructures
- ESFRI: European Strategy Forum for Research Infrastructures

1.4. Other Reference Documents

- European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity of ALLEA - revised edition, 2023 <https://allea.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/European-Code-of-Conduct-Revised-Edition-2023.pdf>
- European Commission (2016). Open innovation, open science, open to the world: a vision for Europe. <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/news/open-innovation-open-science-open-world-vision-europe>
- European Commission, Directorate-General for Communication, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, Responsible research and innovation (RRI), science and

technology: report, Publications Office, 2013,
<https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2777/45726>

- European Commission, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, Europe 2020 flagship initiative Innovation Union : SEC(2010) 1161, communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, Publications Office, 2011, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2777/47750>
- European Declaration on Digital Rights and Principles for the Digital Decade, <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/library/european-declaration-digital-rights-and-principles>
- OpenAIRE, “How do I know if my research data is protected? (Online). Available: <https://www.openaire.eu/how-do-i-know-if-my-research-data-is-protected>
- OpenAIRE, “How to comply with Horizon Europe mandate for Research Data Management” (Online). Available: <https://www.openaire.eu/how-to-comply-with-horizon-europe-mandate-for-rdm>
- OpenAIRE, “How to make your data FAIR”. (Online). Available: <https://www.openaire.eu/how-to-make-your-data-fair>
- OpenAIRE: “How to deal with sensitive data”. (Online). Available: <https://www.openaire.eu/sensitive-data-guide>
- OpenAIRE: “How to license my research data”. (Online). Available: <https://www.openaire.eu/how-do-i-license-my-research-data>
- Regulation (EU) 2021/695, <https://eurlex.europa.eu/legalcontent/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX:32021R0695>
- Responsible Research and Innovation Toolkit, <https://rri-tools.eu/>

2. Ethics considerations and controls

According to Article 19 of Regulation 2021/695 on establishing Horizon Europe, Guiding Principles on Ethics shall be clearly outlined and carried out before and during the life of the project. The Programme shall comply with ethical principles and relevant EU, national and international law, including the Charter and the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and its Supplementary Protocols.

The ENVRINNOV project Ethics considerations within this framework are outlined below. In line with the above framework, and as already outlined in the ENVRINNOV Ethics Self-Assessment carried out and submitted by the project at proposal stage, the areas that this report focuses on are examined. These considerations and related project controls, relating to ethics compliance are outlined below.

2.1. Rights of individuals to privacy, personal data protection, data management, collection and governance.

As already outlined in the Ethics Self-Assessment for ENVRINNOV at proposal stage, personal data collection and processing during the project is anticipated relating to data collected and/or processed in WP1, WP3, WP5, and WP6, to support co-creation with, and feedback received from, key stakeholders that need to input and endorse project results (from ENVRI, ESFRI, Wider Scientific Community, Policy and Industry).

The project is doing this through facilitation on a voluntary basis of surveys and interviews (data from which are extracted in CSV or DOC), and meetings / meeting recordings (video/audio in mp4) (for WP1, 5, 6) as well as training/pilot workshops (physical and hybrid) and their recording (video in mp4) (for WP3).

In addition, personal data are to be collected and/or processed through processes that are fully compliant with GDPR for the purposes of facilitating the ENVRINNOV webpages (on the ENVRI community website) and promotional material, the ENVRI Innovation mailing list (via the ENVRI community used platform), and the ENVRINNOV web platform (for WP7, and WP4).

The consent of all involved will be requested to record, and/or release material (e.g. images or videos) captured of them for dissemination and/or communication purposes relating to the ENVRINNOV project.

In addition, relating to existing data being re-used within the framework of ENVRINNOV. In cases results of previous or parallel research projects will be used for reference, and to ensure synergies and complementarities. All relevant results from these projects being also via volunteers.

Finally, in terms of data collection, protection and security, the consortium will implement all appropriate technical and organization measures required to ensure a level of data security that is appropriate to the data collected, and to ensure the confidentiality and integrity of processing procedures. This applies to the above and all project activities that might involve collecting of personal data (i.e. participants list for consortium meeting, stakeholder or technical meetings etc.). More details on all the above aspects have been detailed in submitted deliverable D7.2 - Refined Data Management Plan (DMP).

2.2. Open Science principles

The project also ensures that transparency, open access and Open Science principles are adequately followed. How ENVRINNOV approaches this has already been outlined in the project's Data Management Plan (DMP) submitted as deliverable D7.2 - Refined Data Management Plan (DMP) which will act as a frame of reference for this topic.

Compliance with ethical principles and relevant regulations

As project coordinator, Cyl shall ensure the consortium guarantees the treatment of personal data generated during the project based on ethical standards and requirements deriving from European Legislation (i.e. right of privacy), the Horizon Europe programme (i.e. do-no-significant harm principle etc.), the GDPR, the ALLEA European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity, and EARMA-ERION.

Cyl will engage its appointed Data Protection Officer (DPO) as well as involve its externally assigned collaborator for Data Protection matters. These will allow full compliance with data privacy rules, ensuring appropriate stewardship and curation of all data and research materials, while appropriately acquiring informed consent.

The ENVRINNOV project will comply with all requirements of The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018, and Beneficiaries are also bound by their institutional ethics structures. The coordinator (Cyl) will assume responsibility to ensure that project data are stored securely, and provisions are made to ensure that data security extends beyond the lifespan of the project (including limited writing access, account control system, transmission via dedicated VPN infrastructure and stored in high availability databases, multiple compute and storage nodes). Open access outputs will be stored in trusted repositories for long-term preservation and curation.

2.3. Ongoing monitoring and regular review of ethics considerations and controls

Finally, to ensure the ongoing relevance of the considerations and controls outlined above, the Project has planned for the monitoring of ethics throughout project duration. This will be done periodically, with any updates or revisions being reported as part of the project's Periodic Technical Reporting.

3. Further Frameworks to be considered

As already outlined in section 2 of this deliverable, the ENVRINNOV Ethics compliance planning and reporting, is grounded in and builds on the work already carried out and reported in:

- The project ethics self-assessment submitted at proposal stage (Part A)
- ENVRINNOV's Refined Data Management Plan (DMP), submitted as Deliverable D7.2, which outlines the project's approach to ensuring alignment with open access and wider Open Science principles

Complimentary to this, this section demonstrates how the project considers the relevance of additional ethics dimensions relating to the EU frameworks for Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI).

3.1. Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI)

The European Commission policy approach for Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) is gaining momentum in European research planning and development as a strategy to align scientific and technological progress with socially desirable and acceptable ends. RRI is integrated as a cross-cutting objective in the Horizon Europe funding programme and the European Commission (EC) highlights its potential for tackling grand societal challenges related to health, food security, clean energy, transport, climate, social inclusion and privacy rights.

Considering the ethical parameters with which RRI discusses the considerations of research around the following principles can be summarized as:

- a. Research always facilitating 'doing good' and contributing to social justice.
- b. Research is always being undertaken by people who have necessary skills and knowledge.
- c. Research outcomes are always being honestly reported.
- d. Research always takes account of ethnic and cultural diversity for individuals and interest groups.
- e. Research is always seeking to minimize any adverse impact on the wellbeing and privacy of individuals.
- f. Research is always taking account of the potential environmental impact of the products and services with which it is concerned.

More specifically, RRI is considered through the lens of the ingredients promoted by the European Commission as the six keys and the three Os, as follows:

SIX KEYS:

- **Public engagement**, for engaging a broad range of societal actors in the research and innovation process, including researchers, industry, policy-makers and civil society actors.
- **Open access** to make research and innovation activities more transparent and easily accessible to the public, e.g. through open data and free access to publications.
- **Science education** for increasing society's general science literacy, e.g. through equipping civil society actors with the necessary skills to more actively take part in the research and innovation process.
- **Gender** for promoting women's participation as researchers and integrating a gender dimension into research and innovation content (when applicable).
- **Ethics** for fostering research and innovation activities of high societal relevance, that comply with the highest ethical standards.
- **Governance** in ensuring that legal and policy frameworks are in place to support responsible research and innovation.

THREE Os:

- **Open innovation** for making the innovation processes more open and attentive to the needs and expectations of different societal actors.
- **Open science** for ensuring openness, cooperation and transparency in scientific knowledge making and encouraging citizen science.
- **Open to the world** for allowing research and innovation to circulate more quickly and free across national boundaries and ensuring that European research contributes to global agendas.

ENVRINNOV fully embraces the RRI framework. Indicatively, in addition to the considerations and controls already mentioned in section 2 of this deliverable and the ENVRINNOV work programme that are aligned with the RRI's six keys, ENVRINNOV in its core (through the ENVRI Innovation Roadmap) also works towards the establishment of strategies, assets and structures to further enhance and facilitate greater ease for the adoption of Open Innovation within the ENVRI community, while also aligned and actively promoting Open Science (as per D7.2), and Openness to the world (through the promotion of greater collaboration across the pan-European R&I ecosystem in the environment domain, and focus on knowledge and technology transfer).

4. Conclusion

This Ethics Compliance Report (ECR) aims to describe all the fundamental ethical issues relevant to the project. The Consortium carries out the project actions in compliance with ethical principles and applicable international, EU and national laws, and has also developed its own guidelines, procedures and measures aiming to support the protection of ethical aspects of research. The present report is complementary to the existing deliverables of the project, especially the DMP (D7.2), and shall be used as guidance when it comes to completing project activities.