

## Code of Conduct and Ethics



## EUNICE CODE OF CONDUCT AND ETHICS

### 1. Purpose and Context

Any planned action, task, meeting, or event (hereinafter referred to as a “EUNICE activity”) plays a central role within EUNICE as part of its mission as a European University Alliance. These activities extend beyond traditional academic settings and take place in a wide range of contexts, including cultural initiatives, international mobility programmes, and collaborative learning and working environments (i.e. all interactions that are taking place in physical and digital environments). Given the diversity of contexts and participants involved, EUNICE activities require a shared ethical framework to define the principles and standards expected of all individuals engaged in these activities. This framework should be grounded in a respectful, inclusive, accessible, and safe environment, in full alignment with the core values of EUNICE and the European Higher Education Area.

This Code of Conduct and Ethics sets out the guiding principles and expected standards of behaviour for all individuals participating in any EUNICE activity.

### 2. Scope

This Code applies to all individuals participating in EUNICE activities, including:

- **Students** and **staff** of EUNICE member institutions.
- **All participants** in institutional, academic, and project-related activities.

For the purpose of this Code, ‘participants’ include students, staff, and organisers. While all participants are expected to comply with the same core principles, staff and organisers bear additional responsibilities due to their role and position.

These guidelines/code are intended to complement, and not duplicate or replace, existing institutional and Erasmus+ mobility frameworks, including the ECHE commitments, the Erasmus Student Charter, grant agreements, and existing pre-departure or monitoring procedures. Where Erasmus+ procedures already apply, relevant EUNICE elements should be integrated into those existing processes.



### **3. Core Ethical Principles**

#### ***3.1 Respect for Diversity and Inclusion***

EUNICE activities involve participants from multiple countries, cultures, and backgrounds. Diversity is recognised as a source of strength, and innovation that enhances learning, collaboration, and societal impact. Respect for diversity is therefore fundamental.

Participants are expected to:

- Treat all individuals with dignity and fairness.
- Avoid discriminatory attitudes or behaviours.
- Be attentive to cultural differences and communication styles.

Inclusion is a fundamental right and a shared responsibility that must be actively upheld by all participants.

#### ***3.2 Intercultural Awareness and Dialogue***

EUNICE promotes intercultural exchange as a key learning dimension and an ethical responsibility. Participants are expected to engage constructively across cultural boundaries.

This includes:

- Demonstrating openness and curiosity.
- Avoiding stereotypes and assumptions.
- Respecting the cultural norms of host environments.
- Behaving in accordance with fundamental human rights.
- Reflecting on their own cultural perspective.

Intercultural competence is both a learning outcome and an ethical responsibility.

#### ***3.3 Responsibility***

Participants are expected to:

- Act responsibly and professionally.
- Respect local communities, environments, and institutional contexts.
- Avoid behaviours that may harm other individuals or undermine the activity.
- Take accountability for their actions.
- Staff and organisers are expected to facilitate inclusive intercultural environments and to address potential misunderstandings or tensions constructively.

Participants represent both EUNICE and their home institutions and should act accordingly.



### **3.4 Safety and Well-being**

The well-being of all participants is a shared responsibility.

Participants are expected to contribute to:

- Physical safety during all activities.
- Psychological safety in group and intercultural environments.
- A respectful setting free from harassment and exclusion.
- Mutual support, particularly for participants facing difficulties.

Creating a safe environment is a shared responsibility between organisers and participants.

Organisers must anticipate potential risks and take preventive measures to ensure the safety and well-being of participants.

Participants, particularly staff, are expected to respond appropriately to incidents and to report concerns without delay.

### **3.5 Sustainability and Social Responsibility**

EUNICE activities must reflect EUNICE's commitment to sustainability and societal engagement.

Participants are expected to:

- Promote environmentally responsible practices (including favouring sustainable transport choices when relevant, minimising waste and environmental impact during activities, etc.).
- Respect local ecosystems and communities.
- Contribute positively to societal challenges.
- Engage in activities aligned with European values<sup>1</sup> and principles<sup>1</sup> and principles.

### **3.6 Integrity and Responsible Conduct**

Integrity is essential in all EUNICE activities.

Participants must:

- Use material, financial and institutional resources responsibly and transparently.
- Acknowledge and respect intellectual contributions.
- Follow agreed procedures and guidelines.

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<sup>1</sup> The European Union values are established in Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union: Human dignity; Freedom; Democracy; Equality; Rule of law; Respect for human rights



#### 4. Expected Behaviour

Participants are expected to:

- Communicate respectfully and professionally.
- Engage constructively in discussions and teamwork.
- Be inclusive and supportive of others.
- Respect diversity of perspectives and experiences.
- Follow safety and organisational instructions.
- Respect confidentiality when required.

#### 5. Unacceptable Behaviour

The following behaviours are strictly prohibited:

- Discrimination based on race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, disability, age, or any other protected characteristic.
- Sexual misconduct, including verbal, visual, digital, and physical harassment.
- Harassment, including online and digital conduct.
- Personal attacks or intimidation.
- Disruptive or obstructive behaviour.
- Abuse of power, leadership or authority.

#### 6. Reporting and Response

Participants are encouraged to report any concerns or incidents promptly through the following channels:

1. First instance, the organisers of the EUNICE activity, a representative from the home institution, and/or the respective project officers involved, if they are not the person reporting.
2. If necessary, the responsible Work Package Leader.
3. Escalation: The EUNICE President or the Secretary General of EUNICE AISBL.

All reports will be:

- Handled **confidentially** and **fairly**, with anonymous reporting available (via QR code at the end of this document).
- Assessed **proportionally**, with appropriate measures taken depending on severity of the case.
- **Protected** from retaliation, which is strictly prohibited.



- Followed by a prompt response that promotes a sense of safety and protection while respecting the individual's agency - avoiding actions against their will, but providing clear information about institutional support services.

## 7. Consequences

Depending on the situation, possible measures include:

- Formal warning.
- Partial or full exclusion from the EUNICE activity.
- Disciplinary action by the participant's home institution.

## 8. Responsibilities of organisers of the EUNICE activity

Organisers must:

- Promote awareness of this Code.
- Ensure inclusive and safe environments that enable participants to report any concerns.
- Establish safeguarding and emergency response procedures adapted to the context of each activity, and communicate these to all participants in advance.
- Monitor activities and address issues in a timely manner.
- Provide support to participants.
- Ensure ethical implementation of activities.
- Promote and/or participate in ongoing awareness campaigns focused on the themes covered by the Core Ethical Principles.

## 9. Commitment

All participants agree to uphold this Code and contribute to a respectful, inclusive, and responsible environment.

This Code complements, and does not replace, the internal regulations and disciplinary procedures of each partner institution.

**If you want to report any incident or concert anonymously, please use the QR code below:**

