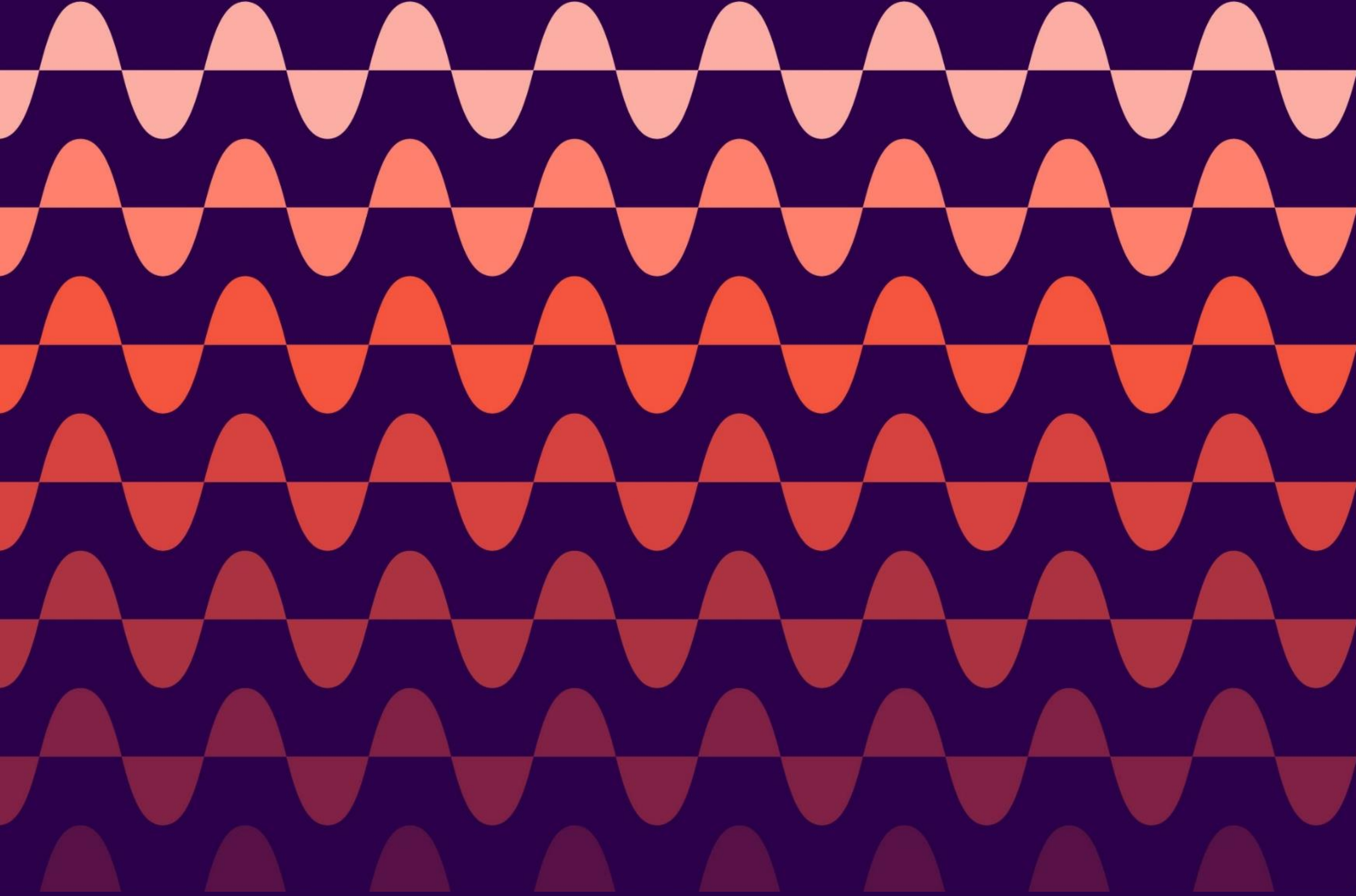

MIGNEX Handbook Chapter 4

Research ethics and research integrity

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MIGNEX

MIGNEX (Aligning Migration Management and the Migration-Development Nexus) is a five-year research project (2018–2023) with the core ambition of creating new knowledge on migration, development and policy. It is carried out by a consortium of nine partners in Europe, Africa and Asia: the Peace Research Institute Oslo (coordinator), Danube University Krems, University of Ghana, Koç University, Lahore University of Management Sciences, Maastricht University, the Overseas Development Institute, the University of Oxford and Samuel Hall.

See www.mignex.org.

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The MIGNEX Handbook

The MIGNEX Handbook grows chapter by chapter over the lifetime of the project. It is primarily as a tool for internal information-sharing and quality assurance. The text refers to ‘we’ as the team members and ‘you’ as an individual team member reader. The handbook is public in order to ensure transparency and facilitate knowledge exchange also on issues such as project management, methodology and communication.

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4. Research ethics and research integrity

Research ethics and research integrity are not only a matter of compliance. They are also ideals that inspire reflection on how we carry out research and communicate insights to audiences with diverging views on migration and its links with development.

It can be hard to tell which research participants are most vulnerable and which information is most sensitive. Sound general safeguards are therefore needed.

There is not always a ‘correct’ response to challenges related to ethics and integrity. It is nevertheless important to recognize them and be deliberate in our approach.

Tensions with implications for research ethics and research integrity emerge in the intersection of migration research, migration policy and migration politics.

4.1 Introduction

Research ethics and research integrity are overlapping themes that are increasingly addressed together. The two key concepts can be broadly defined as follows:

Research ethics: doing research with *responsibility*, particularly towards participants, colleagues, employers, funders and society.

Research integrity: doing research in ways that underpin *confidence* in the results, the researchers, and the research community.

The two concepts are distinct, but virtually every aspect of research that affects its ethics also have consequences for integrity, and vice versa. For instance, errors that result from poor data management not only undermine confidence in the research (a breach of integrity) but also reflect a lack of responsibility towards participants and funders (a breach of ethics).

Consequently, this chapter is not structured along the distinction between integrity and ethics. Following this introduction there are three main sections. The first clarifies responsibilities for ethics and integrity within the project. The second addresses issues that were identified in the *ethics self-assessment* of the proposal, based on the European Commission's checklist of potential ethics issues. The third section takes a broader view on research ethics and integrity, addressing issues of relevance to MIGNEX.

MIGNEX activity covers data collection and/or analysis in more than a dozen countries within and outside Europe. The primary institutional anchoring of research ethics and research integrity is with the Research Executive Agency of the European Commission. Since the project coordinator is located in Norway, additional guidance and procedures for project-wide ethics and integrity issues are anchored with Norwegian institutions, notably the Norwegian Center for Research Data (NSD) and the Norwegian National Research Ethics Committees. Text box 1 lists the three main reference documents for research ethics and research integrity. Additonal documents are cited in the text.

The information in this chapter reflect our plans at the time of publication. However, new issues may emerge in later stages of the project and necessitate revision of the chapter.

Text box 1. Key reference documents

- *Ethics in social science and humanities* (European Commission DG RTD 2018)
- *The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity*(ALLEA 2017)
- *Guidelines for research ethics in the social sciences, humanities, law and theology* (Norwegian National Research Ethics Committees 2016)

4.2 Responsibility for ethics and integrity in MIGNEX

Research ethics and integrity are always the joint responsibility of institutions and individual researchers. In the case of MIGNEX the following institutions, groups and individuals have responsibilities concerning research ethics and integrity:

- Coordinating institution (PRIO)
- Consortium institutions (All beneficiaries)
- Steering Committee
- Project leadership (project leader and project manager)
- Work package leaders
- Task leaders
- Deliverable leaders
- Country coordinators
- Team members

4.2.1 General principles

Responsibility generally follows the governance structure of the project. In other words, standards of ethics and integrity for each activity must be ensured by the person, group or institution responsible for that activity. Even if general responsibility for research ethics and integrity is shared, the specific responsibilities rest with particular individuals or groups, reflecting the responsibilities for the work itself.

For instance, the leaders of WP3–5 are responsible for developing data collection protocols that safeguard research ethics and integrity, and the task leaders for data collection in each country are responsible for following the protocols and managing issues that emerge in the field.

4.2.2 Project leadership and Steering Committee

Overall responsibility for research ethics and integrity lie with the project leadership (project leader and project manager) and the Steering Committee. The project leadership and Steering Committee have four main responsibilities regarding research ethics and integrity:

- Receiving queries from team members and offering guidance
- Making decisions where there is disagreement about the course of action
- Identifying challenges that appear to be insufficiently addressed
- Handling breaches to research ethics or integrity

4.2.3 Country coordinators

Some aspects of research ethics and integrity are cross-cutting within each of the countries where we collect data. These are the responsibility of country coordinators:

Afghanistan:	Samuel Hall
Cabo Verde:	Overseas Development Institute
Ethiopia:	Samuel Hall
Ghana:	University of Ghana
Guinea:	Overseas Development Institute
Nigeria:	Overseas Development Institute
Pakistan:	Lahore University of Management Sciences
Somalia:	Samuel Hall
Tunisia:	Overseas Development Institute
Turkey:	Koç University

With respect to research ethics and integrity, the country coordinators have two main responsibilities:

- Ensuring compliance with national regulations and requirements for approval
- Identifying contextual factors with implications for research ethics, especially those which create risks of harm or stigmatization for participants (see 4.3.1).

4.2.4 Ethics check

An ethics check will be carried out before the empirical data collection begins, as recommended in the Ethics Summary Report. This will take place in M14 or M15 (October or November 2019), which is after the preparation and documentation of ethics procedures and data collection protocols, and before the start of the data collection.

4.3 Pre-identified ethics issues

Research ethics in Horizon 2020 is managed with reference to a checklist of potential ethics issues. The following questions were ticked as ‘yes’ in the ‘Ethics issues table’ in the MIGNEX proposal and addressed in detail in the ethics self-assessment:

- *Humans:* Does your research involve human participants?
- *Personal data:* Does you research involved personal data collection and/or processing?
- *Third countries:* In case non-EU countries are involved, do the research related activities undertaken in these countries raise potential ethics issues? In case your research involved low and/or lower-middle income countries, are any benefit-sharing actions planned?

These issues concern four components of the project:

- Survey data collection (T3.4–T3.13)
- Key informant interviews (T4.3–T4.12)
- Focus group interviews (T4.3–T4.12)
- Policy expert interviews (T5.4–T5.14)

In the ethics self-assessment, which was the foundation of ethics clearance, it was asserted that the issues 'humans' and 'third countries' concern all these components, whereas 'personal data' concern only key informant interviews and focus group interviews (T4.3–T4.12).

The following sections summarize our commitments under each point and account for our interpretation of what constitutes 'personal data'.

4.3.1 Human participants

Research with human participants raises a series of broad ethical commitments. These include respecting human dignity, privacy, and autonomy, and minimizing harms and risks and maximizing benefits when conducting research with human participants. In addition, the MIGNEX Grant Agreement contains specific commitments relating to informed consent and vulnerable individuals.

Informed consent

We will obtain and document informed consent from all individuals participating in the research. Requirements for informed consent are covered in relevant legislation (European Parliament 2016), data protection principles (Norwegian Centre for Research Data 2018) and ethics guidelines (Norwegian National Research Ethics Committees 2016) and also need to reflect the specific context at hand. Within MIGNEX, a separate consent form and an accompanying information sheet will be prepared for the following categories of participants:

- Survey respondents (WP3)
- Key informants (WP4)
- Focus group participants (WP4)
- Policy experts (WP5)

The consent forms and information sheets will be translated into the language that is used in the interviews. The information sheet will cover the following in simple language:

- The purpose of data collection
- The nature and format of the data that is collected
- The consequences of participation
- The voluntary nature of participation
- The possibility for asking questions about participation before consenting
- The possibility of withdrawing from participation at any time
- The subsequent processing and use of the data
- Contact details for the responsible individual(s) and institution(s)

It is recognized that 'there are situations where standard procedures for obtaining written informed consent are harmful or offensive to the participants' (European Commission DG RTD 2016:8). To ensure anonymity and avoid any potential harm, the consent form will not include the name or signature of the participants, which could trace back to the participants indirectly.

Consent will be given orally.[1] The interviewer will, for every interviewee, sign the statement 'I certify that the interviewee freely gave explicit and informed consent to participate in the research'. The formulation reflects the requirements for consent described by the Norwegian National Research Ethics Committees (2016:§8).

Vulnerable individuals and groups

MIGNEX research may involve vulnerable individuals or groups, which need specific safeguards in terms of research ethics. The ethics self-assessment asserts this possibility.

The project's objective 5 'Identify opportunities for sound management of transit migration' may require interviews with migrants presumed to be in transit.[2] This is the only specific vulnerable group of participants that we have identified in advance. The research will, by design, not involve minors or individuals unable to give informed consent.

However, vulnerability takes unforeseen and context-specific forms. It is typically the *combination* of personal and situational factors that creates vulnerability (Vogel and Kraler 2017). In research ethics as in migration management, the category 'vulnerable' easily becomes a bureaucratic label which undermines its utility (Bakewell 2008, Hruschka and Leboeuf 2019). Especially in a project such as MIGNEX, with relatively short-term presence in diverse and often unfamiliar settings, vulnerabilities may be difficult to identify. Averting harm to vulnerable individuals or groups therefore require sound general safeguards that are applied throughout the data collection activities.

These safeguards must have two pillars. First, we must strive to ensure that participation is based on information, comprehension and voluntariness. Second, we must realize the limits to these principles – especially for informants who are not familiar with social-science research – and seek to shield participants from negative consequences that they do not have prerequisites to foresee.

In the context of MIGNEX, a genuine risk is that the research can be interpreted as an instrument of particular actors or interests, and that association with the research could make individuals vulnerable or stigmatized within their communities. This possibility should be mitigated through the following precautions:

- *Assess the risk of participant stigmatization or victimization.* Researchers should consider the national and local context to anticipate how inter-group relations or power structures might affect people's interpretation of our research and its agenda. For instance, researchers may need to balance the need for endorsement by local government officials with the need to not be perceived as acting on the government's behalf.
- *Mitigate the spread of rumours about the research.* If the researchers' presence and activity is poorly understood in the community, alternative explanations can emerge in the form

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[1] This method of obtaining consent was made explicit in the ethics self-assessment and given clearance by the Research Executive Agency.

[2] This will be decided in the context of selecting research areas and developing the protocol for sampling survey respondents (WP3) and recruiting focus group participants and key informants (WP4). See (European Commission DG RTD not dated) regarding research on migrants.

of rumours. Researchers should be attentive to this possibility and the risks it may create for project staff and participants. Effective and appropriate communication about the project is therefore important, not only as it relates to informed consent, but in the community more generally.

- *Consider the public exposure of participation.* Participant stigmatization or victimization is a risk if (1) the project is perceived as suspicious or malevolent and (2) it is known who participates. Since the local perceptions of the project might not be fully known, it can be advisable to shield participants from unnecessary exposure, for instance when interview locations are selected.

The vulnerability of participants is not confined to the data collection setting, even if this is where they actively participate. Participants can potentially also be stigmatized or victimized in connection with dissemination and stakeholder engagement.

Identification with the European Union

MIGNEX is funded by the European Commission but does not represent the commission nor the European Union. The funding is motivated by the demand for policy-relevant knowledge, but our findings and recommendations might not align with the European Union's political agenda. Overall, our ability to influence European policy-making is unknown, but certainly limited. This relationship between MIGNEX and the European Union can easily be misunderstood and raises ethical challenges vis-à-vis the research participants.

On the one hand, the principles of honesty and transparency as core elements of research integrity require openness about how the research is funded. On the other hand, if MIGNEX is incorrectly seen to *represent* the European Union, the consequences are ethically worrying. First, the association could jeopardize participants. Second, their consent to participate could be based on false premises. Third, their answers (in interviews) or statements (in focus groups) could be affected. We will address these risks to participants by mitigating misunderstandings of the project's links to the European Union.

- We will ensure that references to funding by the European Commission are accompanied by explanations of the project's independence.
- We will limit the display and prominence of the EU emblem and name, so that the connection is not taken out of context. If we foresee complications with respect to the Grant agreement's § 38.1.2 (Information on EU funding) we will consult the Project Officer.

4.3.2 Personal data

The data collection plan has been held up against the definition of personal data in EU Directive 95/46/EC[3] and the interpretations contained in the *Handbook on European data protection law* (FRA 2014) to define the extent of personal data collection in the project (Table 1). With reference to the table, data is personal if conditions (A or B) and C are met.

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[3] Personal data was defined in Article 2(a) EU Directive 95/46/EC as 'any information relating to an identified or identifiable natural person ("data subject"); an identifiable person is one who can be identified, directly or indirectly, in particular by reference to an identification number or to one or more factors specific to his physical, physiological, mental, economic, cultural or social identity' (European Parliament 1995). The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) which came into force after the MIGNEX proposal was submitted uses the same definition, reformulated to gender-neutral language.

Table 1. MIGNEX data in relation to the definition of personal data

	Conditions in the definition of personal data			
	(A) Collection of directly identifying information (e.g. names)	**(B) Collection of data with the possibility of indirect identification**	**(C) Collection of information relating to the individual**	**Collection of personal data**
Survey data collection (WP 3)		[1]	●	
Key informant interviews (WP4)		●	●	●
Focus group interviews (WP4)		●	●	●
Policy expert interviews (WP5)	●	●		

Notes: (1) See detailed discussion under 'Collection of data with the possibility of indirect identification' below.

Collection of directly identifying information

Directly identifying information (e.g. names, contact details, or pictures) will not be collected as part of the survey data. Contact details for key informants and focus groups participants will only be collected temporarily for arranging interviews. Only in the case of expert interviews will names be recorded as part of the data.

Collection of data with the possibility of indirect identification

In general, research participants can sometimes be indirectly identified from data that do not contain names or other directly identifying information. In the case of MIGNEX, key informants, focus group participants, and expert interviewees might be indirectly identifiable through information in the interview or through the recording of their voices.

The survey is not expected to entail the collection of information with the possibility of indirect identification. This expectation is based on Recital 26 of the Data Protection Directive, which sets the benchmark for such identifiability. It refers to the likelihood that reasonable means for identification will be available and administered by the foreseeable users of the information, including third-party recipients (Beyleveld and Townend 2004).

However, it cannot be affirmed with certainty that the data does not enable identification. It depends on the specific questions and response categories, the variation in the population, and the randomly sampled respondents. For instance, if specific occupation is recorded, a respondent with occupation 'bus driver' and sex 'female' could render the respondent identifiable if there are few female bus drivers in the research area. The survey data will therefore be stored, processed and prepared for archiving with the assumption that indirect identification of respondents may be possible.

Collection of information relating to the individual

The data collection entails gathering information 'relating to' the individual, except for interviews with policy experts. These interviews will concern the interviewee's expertise on policy issues, not information relating to the interviewees as persons. For this reason, notes or transcripts from the policy expert interviews are not considered personal data.

Special categories of personal data

The MIGNEX survey data is expected to include questions that cover what the GDPR refers to as 'special categories of personal data' and which broadly overlaps with what was previously referred to as 'sensitive personal data'.[4] Relevant examples include information about ethnicity, political opinions, religious or other beliefs, and health. Questions producing special categories of personal data will be kept to a minimum, ensuring that each one has specific added value for the dataset.

While some categories of information are formally regarded as 'special' or 'sensitive', these can differ from the categories of information that are truly sensitive to participants. For instance, information about ethnicity or religious beliefs might be openly shared by participants in their communities while information about employment or household finances might be sensitive. Researchers must therefore be cautious in making assumptions about which categories of information raise particular privacy concerns among participants.

Protection of personal data

General data security provisions are described in MIGNEX Handbook Chapter 3, *Data management plan*. These provisions seek to minimize the risk of unauthorized data access. Here we describe the measures that are taken to ensure that research participants cannot be identified by those who are authorized to access the data, including third-part users of archived data. As a precaution, these provisions are applied not only to the key informant and focus group interviews, but also to the survey data which may or may not qualify as personal data.

Table 2 presents an overview of what the potentially identifying information is, and how it will be handled, for each of the relevant types of data. Anonymization techniques for survey data are described in greater detail by ICO (2012) and PDPC (2018).

4.3.3 Third countries

The European Commission asserts that research involving 'third countries' raise specific ethical issues. For the purposes of data protection, third countries should be regarded as countries outside the EU and EEA, so in the case on MIGNEX, Turkey is a third country while Norway is not, though both are associated to Horizon 2020.

International data transfers

It may be an ethical concern when personal data from the EU or EEA are transferred to third countries with inferior data protection regulations. Such transfers will not take place within MIGNEX. Data collected in third countries will be analysed in EU and EEA countries, but, as we asserted in the ethics self-assessment, they will not be 'exported' and 'imported'. The data will be produced and owned by the consortium from their creation, and there will consequently be no third-country legal entity that would have the competence of exporter.

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[4] Sensitive personal data is defined in both the EU Convention 108 (Article 6) and the Data Protection Directive 95/46 (Article 8) as being data that 1) reveal racial or ethnic origin, 2) reveal political opinions, religious or other beliefs or that 3) concern health or sexual life.

Table 2. Measures for preventing identification of research participants

	Potentially identifying information	Handling of potentially identifying information when data collection is completed	Precautions against disclosing potentially identifying information in publications	Precautions against disclosing potentially identifying information after the end of the project
Survey data (WP 3)	Unique or unusual combinations of variable values	Shared within the MIGNEX team in the MIGNEX data folder	Not publishing data at the individual level; suppressing or perturbing small numbers in tables where relevant[1]	Blurring of openly archived data by recoding selected variables to broader categories
	Address or other identifier used for data collection	Destroyed or deleted	N/A	N/A
Key informant interviews (WP4)	Content of the interview notes or transcripts	Retained by the researcher on a protected storage device; not shared	Critically reviewing identification risks and revising the text when necessary	N/A
	Voice recordings (when relevant)	Retained on a protected storage device for quality assurance and verification of verbatim quotes	N/A	Deleted at the end of the project
	Contact details of the interviewee	Destroyed, deleted or retained separately by the researcher to facilitate potential follow-up (without connection to the data)	N/A	N/A
Focus group interviews (WP4)	Content of the interview notes or transcripts	Shared within the MIGNEX team in the MIGNEX data folder	Critically reviewing identification risks and revising the text when necessary	To be determined depending on the decision about archiving or not
	Voice recordings (when relevant)	Retained on a protected storage device for quality assurance and verification of verbatim quotes	N/A	Deleted at the end of the project
	Contact details of the interviewee	Destroyed, deleted or retained separately by the researcher (without any connection to the data)	N/A	N/A

Notes: N/A signifies ‘not applicable’. (1) The threshold for when a small number represents an identification risk is context-specific.

Approvals of data collection

The formal requirements for authorisation of data collection will vary between the case study countries and depending on the data-collecting institution. Copies of relevant approvals, authorisations or notifications, when and if required, will be kept on file.

Benefit-sharing actions in low-income and lower-middle-income countries

All the MIGNEX case study countries except Turkey are low or lower-middle-income countries. Research involving such countries creates ethical obligations for benefit-sharing. The project will build on the active participation of local researchers and professionals, either as consortium participants (GHANA, LUMS and SAMH) or as subcontractors. The participation of local personnel has a capacity-building function. Benefit-sharing will be enhanced through the organization of dissemination events also in countries of origin and transit.

The low and lower-middle income countries covered by the project are directly affected by the policy regime that the project is examining. The greatest benefits to these countries may come from recommendations for European policies that are more attuned to the needs and interests of inhabitants of these countries.

Researcher security

Some of our research locations will be areas with significant security challenges. Institutional capacity to responsibly address these challenges was important when the consortium was established. The need for appropriate precautions is recognized as an ethical issue for the project and the consortium members.

Responsibility for measures to ensure the security of researchers in the field (e.g. insurance and training) lie with each consortium institution, in their capacity as employers. Work package leaders should ensure that data collection protocols reflect security concerns. Country coordinators should include security concerns in the identification of research areas. All MIGNEX team members should contribute to a work environment with a low threshold for raising concerns about security in a broad sense, including harassment or other threats to individual well-being that do not result directly from the overall security situation.

If the security situation deteriorates and impedes research, a change of research areas (or even countries) may be necessary. Such a decision will have to be made by the Steering Committee, based on consultations with affected team members and the project Officer. MIGNEX does not automatically follow particular security advice or indicators. However, team members may be mandated by their employers to do so, with consequences for the project.

4.4 Broader perspectives on ethics and integrity

This section widens the perspective on research ethics and integrity beyond the specific issues that were pre-identified and formally considered in the ethics review.

4.4.1 Principles of research integrity

The Grant Agreement refers to the *European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity* which in its most recent version builds on the following four principles of research integrity (ALLEA 2017):

- *Reliability* in ensuring the quality of research, reflected in the design, the methodology, the analysis and the use of resources.
- *Honesty* in developing, undertaking, reviewing, reporting and communicating research in a transparent, fair, full and unbiased way.

- *Respect* for colleagues, research participants, society, ecosystems, cultural heritage and the environment.

- *Accountability* for the research from idea to publication, for its management and organisation, for training, supervision and mentoring, and for its wider impacts.

These principles serve as a foundation for identifying issues, dilemmas or challenges at different stages of the research. All the principles are, in various ways, *relational* in that they concern relationships between the researcher or research team and others. In the context of MIGNEX, the relevant others include the following:

- Individual research participants
- Other individuals implicated by the research
- The societies within which we do research
- Groups that our research portrays
- The European Commission (as funder and policy actor)
- European society (which Horizon 2020 is intended to serve)
- Potential end users of the research
- The broader research community
- The MIGNEX consortium as a whole
- Colleagues within the MIGNEX team

The interests of these others are not necessarily aligned with each other. For instance, our research will partly represent the group 'prospective migrants' whose interests could be at odds with those of the European Commission.

4.4.2 Sensitivity and reflection

Research ethics and integrity are governed by the European Commission largely as an issue of compliance. However, carrying out research with integrity and in an ethically justifiable way also requires a broader continuous sensitivity to relevant aspects of our activities. There is not always a 'correct' response to challenges related to ethics and integrity, but it is nevertheless important to recognize these challenges and be deliberate in our approach to them.

- Work package leaders and task leaders will seek to identify issues related to ethics and integrity when research activities are planned, and protocols are developed.

- Team members, while carrying out their activities, will seek to identify issues related to ethics and integrity as they emerge.

- Team members who encounter issues, dilemmas, or challenges related to ethics and integrity will raise them with colleagues or leaders to allow for joint reflection or advice.

- Reviewers of deliverables will be asked to look for and raise issues related to research ethics and integrity.

There is not a clear threshold for what constitutes an ethical issue that merits discussion with colleagues or leaders. Team members need to make this judgement during their work, erring on the side of caution. Leaders at different levels of the project should create an atmosphere that lowers the threshold for raising such issues.

4.4.3 Impartiality and accountability in migration research

Challenging dilemmas related to research ethics and integrity might lie in the relationship between our research and the contested politics of migration. Even before the research has begun, several forms of conflicting influences are evident.

The Societal Challenges section of Horizon 2020 is intended to 'addresses major concerns shared by citizens in Europe and elsewhere'[5]. We do so simply by conducting research on migration, but with awareness that citizens are concerned about migration from disparate perspectives. Many research fields are defined by a shared and uncontroversial aim, such as developing better treatment for a disease. That is not the case with research on migration.

Our emphasis on impact has an ethical dimension, since societal impact represents the returns of society's investment in this type of research. However, the degree of impact on policy depends on how well our research is aligned with the European Commission's policy positions. And since these positions are contested, targeting our research to support them could conflict with the principle of impartiality as an element of research integrity.[6]

The Description of Action partly pre-empts these concerns by laying out 15 specific objectives that, for the most part, can be pursued independently of contested policy objectives. However, challenges may emerge when our insights are extended to policy agendas. For instance, we aim to *document how configurations of policies and non-policy factors shape migration processes* (objective 2) and will have achieved our objective when these causal relationships are described. But in our engagement with end users, we could be implicated in attempts to use these insights to stem migration. Indeed, the call that funded MIGNEX presents engagement with 'root causes' as a means to 'successfully manage immigration flows at home'.[7]

Our research agenda includes analyses of the tensions between disparate policy objectives and diverging normative positions related to migration and development, especially under objective 8, 'disentangle the foundations of policy incoherence in European migration and development policy'. We will use this opportunity to strengthen our awareness of how research and policy interact, and how we can best ensure our research integrity as we present new knowledge in this field.

The MIGNEX team will jointly ensure that we discuss the challenges to research ethics and research integrity that emerge in the intersection between migration research, policy, and politics. Three principles for how to navigate this terrain can already be established:

- Avoid supporting or rejecting contested policy positions, such as seeking to use development aid to stem migration, without discussing their potential merits as well as weaknesses.
- Refrain from suppressing findings that have problematic political implications, but rather discuss those implications explicitly and make clear why they are deemed problematic.

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[5] See https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/en/h2020-section/societal-challenges.

[6] The 2011 edition of the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity, which the Grant Agreement refers to, includes 'impartiality' as an essential principle. The Grant Agreement furthermore specifies that beneficiaries have a duty to 'ensure objectivity, accuracy and impartiality when disseminating the results'. As social scientists we also recognize that the notion of 'impartial' or 'objective' research is problematic in its own right.

[7] Horizon 2020 work programme, ENG-GLOBALLY-03-2017 - The European Union and the global challenge of migration.

- When it is relevant, identify and describe policy dilemmas that emerge from the research and acknowledge that tackling them requires political choices.

The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity emphasizes *accountability* for research as a core principle. It is a reminder of the need to be able to justify our choices vis-à-vis audiences and stakeholders with diverging views on migration and its links with development.

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