



#EthicsGroup_EU



European Group on Ethics in Science and New Technologies

Prof Barbara Prainsack, Chair

What we do

We provide the Commission, EP and Council with independent advice on how EU policies should take account of ethical, societal and fundamental rights issues as science and new technologies advance

The two pillars of the EGE

- **European Group on Ethics**
- **EGE Secretariat**

Interfacing between ethics and policy

**Ethics
community**

**European
Commission**



EGE Members (mandate 2022-2025)



Barbara Prainsack (Chair);
Maria do Céu Patrão Neves (Vice-Chair);
Nils-Eric Sahlin (Vice-Chair)
Nikola Biller-Andorno; Migle Laukyte;
Paweł Łuków; Pierre Mallia;
Fruzsina Molnár-Gábor;
Thérèse Murphy; Herman Nys;
Laura Palazzani; Tamar Sharon;
Jeroen van den Hoven;
Renata Veselská; Takis Vidalis

EGE Members



- (Currently) 15 experts appointed based on their expertise in fields such as law, natural and social sciences, philosophy and ethics
- Issue Opinions and Statements that contain evidence-based recommendations

EGE Secretariat

- Special team within the European Commission – DG RTD
- Acts as a liaison between the EGE and the EU Institutions
- Coordinates the process for drafting/adoption of the Opinions and Statements
- Organises expert hearings and other relevant events
- Prepares special policy briefings/policy landscape reports

How we work



request by EU Institutions



literature review / Hear EC policy-makers and experts



detailed analysis and development of policy recommendations



Delivery and dissemination of our Opinions and Statements

Range of topics of our Opinions & Statements

**Democracy in
the Digital
Age**

**Genome
Editing**

**Pandemic
preparedness
and
management**

**Future of
Work, Future
of Society**

**New Health
Technologies
and Citizen
Participation**

**Security and
Surveillance
Technologies**

**Research,
production
and use of
energy**

**Information
and
communica-
tion
technologies**

**Synthetic
biology**

**Agricultural
technologies**

Range of topics of our Opinions & Statements

Animal cloning for food supply

Review of hESC FP7 research projects

Nanomedicine

ICT Implants in the Human Body

Umbilical cord blood banking

Genetic testing in the workplace

Clinical research in developing countries

Patenting inventions involving human stem cells

Human stem cell research and use

Doping in sport

Latest Opinions

- *Ongoing work on Solar Radiation Modification (December 2024), The Green Transition as a Just Transition (2025), etc.*
- Defending Democracy in Europe (2024)
- Democracy in the Digital Age (2023)
- Values in times of crisis: Strategic crisis management in the EU (2022)
- Values for the future: the role of ethics in European and global governance (2021)
- Ethics of Genome Editing (2021)
- Improving pandemic preparedness and management – jointly with the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors (GCSA) (2020)
- Future of Work, Future of Society (2018)

Values in times of crisis: Strategic crisis management in the EU



Values in times of crisis (2022)

Values play an important role in how we understand, make sense of, and tackle crises. In its Statement, the EGE points to the importance of solidarity being at the core of crisis management; it shows how individual and collective rights and interests are intertwined; it outlines how values should direct the prioritisation of scarce resources; and it highlights the importance of good data as well as good communication.

Values influence how we frame the problems that strategic crisis management is supposed to address, and how we choose the instruments for that.

What is important and why?
Who needs (special) protection and help?
Who is included? Who is left out? Etc.

AMONG OTHER VALUES, **SOLIDARITY** IS AT THE CORE OF GOOD CRISIS MANAGEMENT.

emphasises human interdependences across borders, social groups, and other boundaries

bridges individual and collective needs



can strengthen resilience

means that those in advantaged positions accept costs to alleviate the suffering of others

helps us critically reflect on whom our policies and practices prioritise and whom they exclude

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Solidarity should be a guiding principle for strategic crisis management and solidaristic institutions should be strengthened at all levels.
- Human dignity and solidarity should guide the allocation of scarce resources, also to avoid undue discrimination and to ensure special consideration of disadvantaged people.
- Governments have a duty to combat poverty and inequities, multipliers of the impact of crises.
- Policy makers and the media should apply resilience thinking at the systemic (and not at the individual) level, as problems need structural solutions.
- Policy makers and funders should strengthen the infrastructure for data sharing for crisis management and containment, with adequate protections in place.
- The effectiveness of measures depends significantly on good communication, which is also critical to building trust.
- The values upon which the decisions and recommendations of government agencies are based must be made clear and be open to public scrutiny and appeal.

Read the EGE Statement [here](#).

This is a summary of a **Statement** by the **European Group on Ethics in Science and New Technologies (EGE)**. It was co-issued with a **Scientific Opinion** by the **Group of Chief Scientific Advisors (GCSA)** and an **Evidence Review Report** by the **Consortium of European Science Academies (SAPEA)**.

The **European Group on Ethics in Science and New Technologies (EGE)** is the independent body appointed by the President of the European Commission that



But when leaders appeal to solidarity during a crisis, too often they do so in a tokenistic way, for instance, to demand from people that they comply with measures or accept hardship. This can do more harm

Opinion on

DEMOCRACY in the digital age

European Group
on Ethics in Science and
New Technologies



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Democracy in the Digital Age (2023)

PROTECTING **DEMOCRACY**
IN THE DIGITAL AGE REQUIRES MORE
THAN FIGHTING ELECTION MEDDLING,
AND MORE THAN A NARROW FOCUS
ON TECHNOLOGIES.

A WIDE AND DEEP UNDERSTANDING OF DEMOCRACY



Democracy is the form of government that is best suited to realise **fundamental rights and values**. It is itself a **set of values that enables people to live and thrive together** in solidarity.

CHALLENGES



Algorithms and social media provide powerful means for **manipulating opinion and public debate in the digital space**.

The **increasing reliance on tech corporations** for the provision of public services limits spaces of democratic control.



Socio-technical developments are too often driven by the interest in profit of a few, and not by the interest of society in the common good.



RECOMMENDATIONS



Stronger support for public participation, civic education, critical digital literacy and inclusive digital citizenship.



Coherent, impactful regulation for digital practices that serve all. Technology design for values and democracy.



Better support for civil society organisations & media professionals.



Publicly funded innovation to benefit the public – and basic needs safeguarded from market rationales.



EU diplomacy for protecting democracy and voicing civil society's calls for people and planet.



An understanding of privacy that does not treat it merely as a negative right but also as an individual and collective right to develop and express ourselves without being continuously watched and judged.

Read the EGE Opinion on [here](#).

This is a summary of an Opinion by the [European Group on Ethics in Science and New Technologies](#) (EGE). The EGE is the independent multidisciplinary body appointed by the



European
Commission

Defending DEMOCRACY in Europe

Addressing the threat of authoritarian populism and reinforcing democratic practice

European Group on Ethics in Science and New Technologies



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Defending Democracy in Europe (2024)



This EGE Statement analyses factors that put democracy at risk and develops recommendations for the strengthening of a pluralistic European civic space.

Democracy is **not merely a formal regime** consisting of periodic free elections. It is committed to **protecting and promoting fundamental rights and values**, as well as **practices of lived democracy**. Our democratic ethos, situated in relations of reciprocity and solidarity among citizens, needs to be **nurtured**, through **dialogue** between politicians and citizens, and by **strong and meaningful participation of citizens** in civic and political life.

Authoritarian populism is incompatible with this conception of democracy. It is characterised by antagonism against civil society organisations, media, and other entities that stand up for the rule of law and the interests of the people and minorities.

— SO WHAT IS NEEDED NOW? —

- ▶ We need an **understanding of identity which is not defined by exclusionary categories** such as territory, nation, ethnicity or religion – but which transcends these, appreciates plurality, and creates a sense of (transnational, European) belonging by building on values and their translation into civic practices. This could help to **strengthen people's participation in society** and their **appreciation of the European endeavour**.
- ▶ We need a reorientation of Europe to its **social roots** – understood as a commitment to providing a dignified life for everyone, avoiding grave levels of social and economic inequality. This would also help to provide **protection against the rise of far-right authoritarianism**.

— RECOMMENDATIONS —



Renewing our understanding of democracy and making **substantive participatory democracy** real, which involves ongoing public consultation and deliberation.



Strong and sufficiently funded **public infrastructures** (for housing, health, education etc.) as a precondition for civic and political engagement.



Support for **European public spaces**, such as (non-commercial) deliberative platforms, including digital social spaces, that encourage citizen involvement in European decision-making.



Active encouragement of **intermediary structures**, including associative democracy – the self-organisation of citizens in grass-roots associations that identify and solve problems at local and regional levels.



Encouragement of a **strong administrative and civic ethos** in public administration that works with civic associations; indeed a transformed interplay between citizens and the existing institutions of decision-making – on the basis of a pluralistic Europe as a community of values.



Analysing how **law**, including legal processes, are at risk of being hollowed out and repurposed by authoritarian populist leaders – and resisting this.



Reinforcing mechanisms that secure and support fact and value-based **collective memory** of our European history; recognising the contribution of the **research community** to strengthen democracy; measuring the **wellbeing of societies** in a more comprehensive sense.



European Commission



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Thank you



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