

National Advisory Board on Research Ethics

TENK

Annual report 2010 (1.2.2010–31.12.2010)

1. Composition of the board and meetings

The Ministry of Education and Culture appointed the National Advisory Board on Research Ethics for a three-year period 1 February 2010 - 31 January 2013. Chancellor, Professor **Krista Varantola**, University of Turku started as the new Chair of the Board, and the new Vice Chair was **Veikko Launis** from the University of Turku. The Advisory Board also has eight other members:

Counsellor of Legislation **Markku Helin** (Ministry of Justice),
Director **Arja Kallio** (Academy of Finland),
Professor **Riitta Keiski** (University of Oulu),
Senior teacher **Irma Mikkonen** (Savonia University of Applied Sciences)
Consultative civil servant **Tuula Pehu** (Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry)
Research Professor **Jussi Simpura** (National Institute for Health and Welfare THL)
Chief legal counsel **Ari Suomela** (National Technology Agency TEKES), and
Professor **Pirkko Walden** (Åbo Akademi University).

Docent **Liisa Nieminen** acted as Secretary General of the Board until 16.6.2010, and **Docent Sanna Kaisa Spoof** from 1.9.2010. **Terhi Tarkiainen M.A.** acted as assistant to the Board apart from the period 16.9.2010 – 31.12.2010 when **Heidi Laine B.Soc. Sc.** acted as assistant.

The office of the National Advisory Board on Research Ethics was attached to the Federation of Finnish Learned Societies in Helsinki. The office was located at the House of Nobility (Hallituskatu 2 B) until 25.10.2010 after which it moved to new premises at Mariankatu 7 C 1.

The Advisory Board convened six times during the period under review. The meetings were mainly held at the House of Sciences and Letters (Kirkkokatu 6, Helsinki).

2. Preventive action and education

The new advisory board commenced its work with Sakari Karjalainen, Director General of the Ministry of Education and Culture telling a joint meeting of the Ministry of Education and Culture and the National Advisory Board on Research Ethics held on 15.3.2010 about the history and duties of the Advisory Board. He also told the meeting that the ministry was satisfied with the work of the Advisory Board. He also deliberated whether the aim should be adopted of also getting financing organisations such as funds and learned societies to commit to the *Good scientific practice and procedures for handling misconduct and fraud in science* guidelines published in 2002 by the Advisory Board in conjunction with the Finnish scientific community. Chair Krista Varantola defined the Advisory Board's future challenges for the three-year period now commencing. In her

opinion the most important was preventive work, such as highlighting education in research ethics in both basic and further studies, and active international work. The guidelines for good scientific practice should also be updated.

By the end of 2010 a total of 89 universities, universities of applied sciences, research institutes, and other research organisations had signed the above mentioned guidelines. A list of the organisations that have signed the guidelines can be found on the Advisory Board's website at: <http://www.tenk.fi/HTK/allekirjoittajat.pdf>.

In April 2009 the Advisory Board approved the publication *Ethical principles of research in the humanities and social and behavioural sciences and proposals for ethical review*. These guidelines were given to the scientific community at the beginning of 2010. By the end of 2010 the majority of Finnish universities and universities of applied sciences, as well as research organisations in the field (including the Academy of Finland) had committed to upholding these common ethical ground rules.

On 2.11.2010 the Advisory Board arranged an *Ethical review in the Humanities* seminar at the House of Sciences and Letters (Programme in APPENDIX 1). Around one hundred people from over fifty different organisations attended the seminar. The great interest shown towards the seminar indicated the high degree of motivation of universities and research institutes in implementing ethical review. The Helsingin Sanomat newspaper reported the seminar on 3.11. The presentations given at the seminar are published on the Advisory Board's website at www.tenk.fi/ennakkoarviointi/.

As in previous years, the Advisory Board received requests for education on topics relating to research ethics from universities and other research organisations. The Chair of the Advisory Board, some members and the Secretary General held educational sessions on research ethics at various locations in Finland (APPENDIX 2). Members of the Advisory Board and the Secretary General also gave advice to different bodies on the contents of good scientific practice and on the clarification mechanisms for violation of good scientific practice.

3. Handling of suspected violation of good scientific practice

Violations of good scientific practice reported to the Advisory Board

From 1.2. – 31.12.2010 universities, universities of applied sciences and other organizations committed to the guidelines for good scientific practice notified the National Advisory Board on Research Ethics of a total of seven cases of alleged violation of good scientific practice. The alleged violations were handled within the organisation where the suspect research was being done or had been carried out. In five of these cases no violation of good scientific practice was found. In one case fraud was found i.e. unauthorised borrowing and plagiarism. One reported case of plagiarism was still being processed in December 2010.

One of the abovementioned cases concerned the examination process of a thesis manuscript. The university in question found that it was, however, a case of a quality problem relating to the administrative processes rather than violation of good scientific practice.

Another case concerned the rights of a dismissed member of a research group to the results of the group. The authorship of the research for the thesis associated with this notification of violation of good scientific practice was found to be groundless. Furthermore, on the basis of the actual investigation, the claim that the researcher in question, as a member of the research group, should have been named as an inventor of the invention patented by the research group was also found to be groundless. In the same context, the investigative group appointed for the case emphasised that a researcher on having made an invention should immediately inform the employer of this and that more is required from a researcher to be included as an inventor of a patent than as an author of a scientific article.

One notification concerned an allegation of disregard for good scientific practice and different forms of fraud occurring in a certain thesis manuscript. Based on the preliminary investigation, it was deemed by the university that although there were shortcomings in the referencing practices, violation of good scientific practice as

defined by the Advisory Board had not occurred. A statement from the Advisory Board on the matter was also later requested. The statement was prepared in 2011.

In a fourth case, the university investigated a notification which stated that a thesis it had approved connected with a research study had plagiarised parts of a thesis from a university of applied sciences. Unauthorised borrowing, i.e. plagiarism was found to have occurred. Consequently the university initiated action to reject the suspected person's work.

Statements of the Advisory Board

During the period 1.2. – 31.12.2010 The National Advisory Board on Research Ethics looked at two cases of suspected violations of good scientific practice that had been examined at local level, which the investigators had also wanted the Advisory Board to deal with. For one of these the Advisory Board issued a statement in 2010, and for the other the statement is being prepared.

Statement 1: fabrication and disregard for good scientific practice, and shortcomings in the investigative process for good scientific practice

A case of suspected fraud was investigated in a certain Finnish research organisation, in which the focus was on the work of a research post holder who was a foreign national. The researcher had also belonged to an international research group. In its statement concerning the matter, the Advisory Board gave an opinion as to whether the procedures used by the research organisation in question in its investigation into the violation of good scientific practice were faultless, and whether the researcher was guilty of violation of good scientific practice.

In its statement, with regard to the procedures used by the research institute, the Advisory Board pointed out: The Finnish language was mainly used in the investigation, although this was not the mother tongue of the researcher in question. Furthermore, the incapacity of the chair of the investigating group had to be evaluated. Although the investigation had been undertaken incautiously, the Advisory Board did not however recommend that the investigation should be reopened.

In the research organisation's own preliminary study and investigation the researcher under suspicion had been found guilty of four different instances violation of good scientific practice: two cases of disregard for good scientific practice, as well as falsification and fabrication. One of the instances of disregard for good scientific practice related to the accuracy of information submitted to a digital publication database. In this case the Advisory Board did not find carelessness to such an extent in the researcher's work that the case could be classified as disregard for good scientific practice. In the other case classified as disregard for good scientific practice the Advisory Board found that it related to the scientific quality of the research work; the Advisory Board does not examine such cases. However, the Advisory Board did find violation of good scientific practice proven in the two other cases. One of these concerned **fabrication**: an abstract that the researcher had submitted to a congress referred to research results that were not even in existence at the time the reference was made. In the case of the research organisation's work classified as falsification, which was connected with negligence in the research methods, the Advisory Board found that **disregard for good scientific practice** had occurred when the research was undertaken.

Other recommendations and opinions

Over the year, the Advisory Board responded to many inquiries relating to both research ethics and requests for statements. The Advisory Board's policy is that it does not deal with matters relating to the evaluation of applications for research funding. In relation to one expert statement given in court, a question dealing with the possibility for evaluating good scientific practice was directed to be put before the organisation behind the research expert concerned.

4 Cooperation, initiatives, publication and communication

The National Advisory Board actively followed media discussions and publications in the field relating to research ethics, and also took part in these. In 2010, among the matters under public discussion was the

connection between swine flu inoculation and children and young people suffering from narcolepsy. Most of the Advisory Board's dissemination of information is by means of the seminar papers (APPENDIX 2) and articles published by the members (APPENDIX 3). No expert statements were requested from the Advisory Board in 2010.

The members of the Advisory Board worked actively in both national and local ethics committees and working groups (APPENDIX 4). The Advisory Board has started to coordinate the establishment and operation of ethics committees reviewing research in the humanities.

In autumn a new general brochure about the activity and aims of the Advisory Board was published in Finnish, Swedish and English, in order to increase awareness of the Advisory Board. The Advisory Board actively continued to make the guidelines for good scientific practice more well-known. The guidelines can be found on the Advisory Board's website, and the guidebook can be ordered free of charge from the Advisory Board's office. The guidelines have also been distributed at events arranged by the Advisory Board. An additional print run of the guidelines was made.

5 International activities

The Chair of the Advisory Board, **Krista Varantola**, was appointed as the representative of the Federation of Finnish Learned Societies on the All European Academies (ALLEA) Standing Committee on Science & Ethics (SCSE). She took part at the committee meeting in Paris 2 - 3.11.2010. The previous Chair of the Advisory Board, **Eero Vuorio**, gave a paper *How to Revise National Research Guidelines in the Changing International Landscape?* at the second World Conference on Research Integrity in Singapore on 22.7.2010.

Other international meetings in which the Chair, members or the Secretary General participated were:

Chair **Krista Varantola**:

- European Science Foundation (ESF) Membership Forum: 3rd Workshop (Working Group Meeting). Split, Croatia 22.3.2010.
- 2nd World Conference on Research Integrity. Singapore 21.–24.7.2010.
- ESF Membership Forum: 4th Workshop (Working Group Meeting). Rome, Italy 11.11.2010.

Secretary General **Sanna Kaisa Spoof** and assistant **Heidi Laine** made a study trip to Brussels, Belgium and Paris, France from 6 – 10.12.2010. The programme of the study trip included a visit the European Parliament and to the Permanent Delegation of Finland to the OECD and UNESCO.

6 Personnel and finance

In 2010 the National Advisory Board on Research Ethics had one full time employee, the Secretary General. The Federation of Finnish Learned Societies together with the Chair of the Advisory Board handled the recruitment of the new Secretary General in summer 2010. In addition, a salaried project worker was employed from 4.10. – 31.12.2010. The Advisory Board also had the use of information technology and other services provided by the Federation of Finnish Learned Societies, as well as the premises of the House of Sciences and Letters for meetings and seminars.

In 2010 the Ministry of Education and Culture granted the National Advisory Board on Research Ethics a total of EUR 120,000, of which EUR 10,000 was allocated for running costs and EUR 25,000 for the Advisory Board's expenditure on publications, seminars, and travel. The administration of these funds transferred from the ministry to the Federation of Finnish Learned Societies at the beginning of 2010. The salaries and office costs of the National Advisory Board on Research Ethics had already been previously administered by the Federation of Finnish Learned Societies.

The Annual Report was presented at a meeting of the National Advisory Board on Research Ethics on 3rd May, 2011.

Krista Varantola
Chair

Sanna Kaisa Spoof
Secretary General

APPENDIX 1



TUTKIMUSEETTINEN
NEUVOTTELUKUNTA
FORSKNINGSETISKA
DELEGATIONEN

ETHICAL REVIEW IN THE HUMANITIES

Tutkimuseettinen neuvottelukunta järjestää koulutustilaisuuden yliopistojen, ammattikorkeakoulujen ja tutkimuslaitosten eettisille toimikunnille ja muille kiinnostuneille. Tilaisuuteen on vapaa pääsy.

Tapahtumapaikka ja aika: Tieteiden talo, sali 104, Kirkkokatu 6, Helsinki, tiistai 2.11.2010, klo 12-16.

OHJELMA

klo 12.15-12.30 Tilaisuuden avaus

-Tutkimuseettisen neuvottelukunnan varapuheenjohtaja, professori **Veikko Launis** (TY)

klo 12.30-13.15 Ihmistieteiden eettisten periaatteiden esittely

-Eettiset periaatteet valmistelleen työryhmän pj, kehittämisspällikkö **Arja Kuula** (Yhteiskuntatieteellinen tietoarkisto, TaY)

klo 13.15-14.00 Mitä eettinen ennakoarviointi on?

-Tutkimuseettisen neuvottelukunnan varapuheenjohtaja, professori **Veikko Launis** (TY)

klo 14.00-14.30 Kahvitarjoilu

klo 14.30-15.00 Sosiaalityön tutkimuksen eettinen ennakoarviointi

-Yliopistonlehtori **Elina Virokannas** (HY)

klo 15.00-15.45 Eettisen toimikunnan työskentely

-Eettisen toimikunnan puheenjohtaja, professori **Aila Virtanen** (JY)

-Kommenttipuheenvuorot: eettisen toimikunnan puheenjohtaja, dosentti **Laura Hokkanen** (HY) ja eettisen toimikunnan puheenjohtaja, professori emeritus **Markku Ojanen** (TaY)

klo 15.45-16.00 Keskustelua

klo 16.00 Tilaisuuden päättäminen

Lisätietoja antaa tutkimuseettisen neuvottelukunnan pääsihteeri **Sanna Kaisa Spoof**, puh. 09-228 69 234 / 050-594 19 09.

Tarkempia tietoja ihmistieteiden eettisistä periaatteista ja eettisestä ennakoarvioinnista saa neuvottelukunnan kotisivulta, osoitteesta www.tenk.fi.

TERVETULOA!

APPENDIX 2

List of seminars and educational events where the Chair of the Advisory Board, members or the Secretary General have given papers in 2010, other than the Advisory Board's own seminars and educational events concerning research ethics.

Puheenjohtaja Krista Varantola:

- Puheenvuoro tutkimuseetiikasta ja suomalaisista käytännöistä. Tieteiden yö, Porin yliopistokeskus 24.9.2010.
- Konsultointi Suomen tavasta käsitellä tutkimuseettisiä rikkeitä. RANNIS ja Islannin tiede- ja teknologianeuvosto, Reykjavik, Islanti 9.12.2010.

Varapuheenjohtaja Veikko Launis:

- Ovatko rasva- ja rokotekeskustelut vain nykypäivän ilmiö? Onko lääketieteen arvovalta rapautumassa? Tiedettä ja taikauskoa – selättääkö tutkimus uskomuksen? Lääketieteen toimittajien ja THL:n seminaari, Helsinki 21.10.2010.

Jäsen Riitta Keiski:

- Research ethics –luento How to get a PhD? Methods and practical Hints –jatko-opintokurssilla, Infotech Oulu Graduate School. Oulun yliopisto 5.10.2010
- Research Ethics –kurssi maisterivaiheen opiskelijoille, Prosessi- ja ympäristötekniikan osasto, Oulun yliopisto.

Jäsen Pirkko Walden:

- Research ethics –luento tietojärjestelmätieteen maisteri- ja tohtoriopiskelijoille, Åbo Akademi 22. ja 25.11.2010.

Edellisen neuvottelukunnan jäsen Arja Kuula:

- Miten tietovarannot liittyvät etiikkaan ja viestintään? Tutkimusaineistojen elinkaari. Tutkijakoulujen hakuinfo ja tutkijan työelämätaidot. Suomen Akatemia 10.3.2010.
- Tieteen avoimuuden eettiset huolenaiheet lasten ja nuorten tutkimuksessa. Lasten ja nuorten tutkimuksen etiikka –seminaari. Helsinki 12.4.2010.
- Panel: Confidentiality and Access Concerns of the Social Sciences and Human Subjects Ethics Review Boards. IASSIST Conference, Cornell University, Cornell, Yhdysvallat 3.6.2010.
- Open Access ja tutkimusaineistot. Mitä saan käyttää? Tekijänoikeus ja tutkimus- ja julkisaineistot. IPR-Center, Helsinki 14.9.2010.
- Tutkimuksen eettisen ennakoarvioinnin periaatteet. Ihmistieteellisen tutkimuksen eettinen ennakoarviointi Tampereella –seminaari. Tampereen yliopisto 17.11.2010.
- Ethics review system and researching minors. National University of Ireland, Maynooth, Irlanti 24.11.2010.
- Should we reconsider our ethics? National University of Ireland, Maynooth, Irlanti 25.11.2010.

Pääsihteeri Liisa Nieminen:

- Alustus Helsingin yliopiston keskustakampuksen etiikkailtapäivässä. Helsingin yliopisto 14.4.2010.

Pääsihteeri Sanna Kaisa Spoof:

- Tutkimuseettisen neuvottelukunnan puheenvuoro. Ihmistieteellisen tutkimuksen eettinen ennakoarviointi Tampereella –seminaari. Tampereen yliopisto 17.11.2010.

APPENDIX 3

Articles, other publications and interviews by members of the Advisory Board in 2010.

Puheenjohtaja **Krista Varantola**:

- Tutkimusetiikka ja mittaamisen autuus. Acatiimi 8/2010.

Varapuheenjohtaja **Veikko Launis**:

- Terveystieteiden teknologia – mahdollisuudet ja uhat. Teoksessa Kehityksen eturintamassa. Invalidisäätiön juhla- ja tutkimusraportti 2010. Invalidisäätiö, Helsinki 2010, 28–32.
- Rokottamisen etiikasta keskusteltava avoimesti. Turun Sanomat 16.9.2010.
- Pandemiaetiikka. Suomen Lääkärilehti 2010:65 (49): 4114–4116.
- Haastattelu aiheesta rokotteisiin liittyvät eettiset näkökohdat YLEn MOT-ohjelmassa 20.9.2010.

Edellisen neuvottelukunnan jäsen **Arja Kuula**:

- Alaikäisiltä kerätyn aineiston arkistoinnin ja jatkokäytön etiikka. Teoksessa Lasten ja nuorten tutkimuksen etiikka, toim. Hanna Lagström, Tarja Pösö, Niina Rutanen & Kaisa Vehkalahti. Nuorisotutkimusverkosto, Helsinki 2010, 213–235.
- Kuula, Arja & Tiitinen, Sanni: Eettiset kysymykset ja haastattelujen jatkokäyttö. Teoksessa Haastattelun analyysi, toim. Johanna Ruusuvaara, Pirjo Nikander, Matti Hyvärinen. Vastapaino, Tampere 2010, 446–459.
- Aineiston arkistoinnin etiikka. Kolumnit http://www.kommentti.fi/sivu.php?artikkeli_id=812 Nuorisotutkimuksen verkkokanava 2010.

APPENDIX 4

Advisory Board members' membership of national and local research ethics bodies in 2010

Varapuheenjohtaja Veikko Launis:

- Geenitekniikan lautakunnan (GTLK) jäsen –30.6.2010
- Valtioneuvoston asettaman eläinkoelautakunnan jäsen
- Lääketieteellisen tutkimuseettisen jaoston (TUKIJA) varajäsen –30.9.2010
- Varsinais-Suomen sairaanhoitopiirin eettisen toimikunnan jäsen
- Turun yliopiston eettisen toimikunnan puheenjohtaja 1.1.2010–30.6.2010 ja varsinainen jäsen 1.8.2010–

Jäsen Riitta Keiski:

- Oulun yliopiston etiikka-työryhmän puheenjohtaja

Jäsen Irma Mikkonen:

- Savonia-ammattikorkeakoulun tutkimuseettisen toimikunnan jäsen

Jäsen Jussi Simpura:

- Terveyden ja hyvinvoinnin laitoksen tutkimuseettisen työryhmän puheenjohtaja