

ANNUAL REPORT

2008



TUTKIMUSEETTINEN NEUVOTTELUKUNTA
FORSKNINGSETISKA DELEGATIONEN
NATIONAL ADVISORY BOARD ON RESEARCH ETHICS



National Advisory Board on Research Ethics

TENK

Annual report 2008

COMPOSITION OF THE BOARD AND MEETINGS

The Ministry of Education has appointed the National Advisory Board on Research Ethics for a three-year period 1 February 2007 - 31 January 2010. The Chair of the Board in 2008 was Chancellor **Eero Vuorio**, University of Turku, and the Vice Chair was Vice-Rector **Riitta Keiski**, University of Oulu. The Advisory Board has eight members:

Professor **Katie Eriksson** (Åbo Akademi University),
Counsellor of Legislation **Markku Helin** (Ministry of Justice),
Archivist (From 1.6.2008 Development Manager) **Arja Kuula** (Social Sciences Archive, University of Tampere),
Director **Paavo Löppönen** (Academy of Finland),
Vice-President (From 1.8.2008 Director) **Sinimaaria Ranki** (EVTEK University of Applied Sciences, from 1.8.2008 Helsinki Metropolia University of Applied Sciences),
Technology Expert **Hanna Rantala** (National Technology Agency TEKES), (1.1. - 30.4.2008 Senior Technology Director **Merja Hiltunen**),
Professor **Ari Salminen** (University of Vaasa),
Senior Director **Jussi Simpura** (National Research and Development Centre for Welfare and Health), from 3.9.2008, (1.1. - 20.7.2008 Senior Director, from 1.5.2008 Director General **Matti Heikkilä**).

Technology Advisor Merja Hiltunen tendered her resignation as member of the board to the Ministry of Education in April 2008 and she was replaced by Technology Expert Hanna Rantala from 1.6.2008. Senior Director Jussi Simpura was appointed to replace the late Director General Matti Heikkilä from 3.9.2008.

Dr. **Salla Lötjönen** acted as Secretary General until 14.6.2008 and from 1.8.2008 Dr. **Liisa Nieminen**, M.Sc. **Terhi Tarkiainen** acted as assistant to both the National Advisory Board on Research Ethics and to the Committee for Public Information from 7.1.2008. The office of the National Advisory Board on Research Ethics was attached to the Federation of Finnish Learned Societies at the House of Nobility (Hallituskatu 2 B, 00170 HELSINKI).

The Advisory Board convened seven times during 2008. With the exception of the December meeting, the meetings were held at the House of Sciences and Letters (Kirkkokatu 6, 00170 Helsinki), which is managed by the Federation of Finnish Learned Societies. Meetings of the various working groups were held in the Secretary General's office.

1. Preventive action and education

The National Advisory Board on Research Ethics worked actively to make its guidelines *Good scientific practice and procedures for handling misconduct and fraud in science* (3.4.2002) known. The information was especially targeted in 2008 to graduate schools, the polytechnics not yet committed to the guidelines, and learned societies. The guidelines have also been distributed at the House of Sciences and Letters, at the Tiedekirja bookshop, at seminars organized by the Advisory Board and at various other events.

New organisations which committed to following the guidelines *Good scientific practice and procedures for handling misconduct and fraud in science* in their activities through the signature of their directors in 2008 are: Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences, Humak University of Applied Sciences, Åland University of Applied Sciences, Kajaani University of Applied Sciences, Satakunta University of Applied Sciences, Metropolia University of Applied Sciences, and Novia University of Applied Sciences.

By the end of 2008 altogether 96 universities, polytechnics, research institutes, and other research organisations had signed the 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>.

As before, the Advisory Board received a large number of requests for education on topics relating to research ethics from universities, graduate schools, polytechnics and other research organisations. The Chair, some members and the Secretary General held educational sessions on research ethics in various locations in Finland (Appendix 1). Considering education a primary and vital priority, but lacking the resources to respond to all requests, the Board convened a meeting on 10.6.2008 for groups of active educators to discuss the organization of education relating to research ethics.

The Board arranged 4 seminars during 2008. The programmes and papers read at the seminars can be accessed at the Board's website (www.tenk.fi/ajankohtaista). The seminars not only served to disseminate knowledge from the Advisory Board and from its invited speakers to the scientific community, but also, through the discussions that took place at these events, brought initiatives, ideas and feedback from the scientific community to the Advisory Board. In 2008 the Advisory Board activated the humanities and social scientific community in particular through the series of seminars arranged by the so-called HYMY II working group.

Hyvä paha etiikka – tarvitaanko humanistis-yhteiskuntatieteellisen tutkimuksen ennakkoarviointia (Good and bad ethics – is there a need for ethics review in humanities and social sciences research?) 10.3.2008

This was the first seminar organised by the Advisory Board and its working group to consider the ethics of humanities and social sciences research. The seminar considered the need for regulation, preassessment and guidelines for humanities and social sciences research, and also provided a background of international models relating to the subject. In addition to papers from invited speakers, papers were also presented by Arja Kuula, Chair of the working group, Klaus Mäkelä, member of the working group, and the Secretary General. There were 104 registered participants.

Tutkimus, aineistot ja avoimuuden rajat (Research, data and the limits of openness), 21.4.2008
The seminar was arranged jointly by the Committee for Public Information and the ethics committee of the National Research and Development Centre for Welfare and Health. The seminar discussed questions relating to open publication of information, the use of data, and science ethics from a multidisciplinary angle. Papers were read by the Chair of the Advisory Board and Matti Heikkilä, member of the Advisory Board, as well as by invited speakers. There were 176 registered participants.

Ennakkoarvioinnin raamit (The framework for ethics review), 9.6.2008

This was the second seminar organised by the Advisory Board and its working group to consider the ethics of humanities and social science research. The seminar continued its discussion on ethics review in the fields of humanities and social science, and objectified the discussion on the need for preassessment in those scientific fields and research areas where ethics review could be viewed as justified in terms of the protection of those under research. Also discussed were various

organizational models, for which implementing ethics review would be possible, and the costs that this would incur. In addition to papers from invited speakers, papers were also presented by the Chair of Advisory Board, and the Chair of the working group. There were 76 registered participants.

Eettinen kipu ja riski – Humanistis-yhteiskuntatieteellisen tutkimuksen riskit, ennakkoarvioinnin tarpeellisuus sekä ohjeistaminen. (Ethical pain and risk – The risks of humanities-social science research, the necessity for ethics review, and the guidance), 6.10.2008

This was the third seminar organised by the Advisory Board and its working group to consider the ethics of humanities and social science research. The topic of the seminar was the need for ethics review of research projects in the humanities fields. In their papers, the speakers were asked to bring up such situations where, in their own fields, they believe there to be a need for ethical preassessment. They were also asked to consider already completed research projects from their own fields, for which ethical problems have subsequently arisen. Would it have been possible to avoid these through ethics review? In addition to papers from invited speakers, papers were also presented by the Chair of the working group and Klaus Mäkelä, member of the working group. There were 53 registered participants.

2. Development of mechanisms for handling conflicts in research ethics

In 2008 the National Advisory Board on Research Ethics was notified of nine cases of alleged violation of good scientific practice, which had been handled locally. Two of these alleged violations concerned plagiarism (one of these also included alleged falsification), two concerned alleged falsification, one concerned misconduct in science, one concerned fraudulence in scientific activity, and one concerned the rejection of a thesis on other than scientific grounds. In one of the cases the person concerned was asked to generally explain a commissioned research from the perspective of research ethics, and in one case the allegation focused on, among other things, that the researchers were alleged to have repeatedly attempted to justify their research plan by presenting fabricated data to the scientific readership and misleading the scientific community and decision-makers regarding the significance of their work, as well as being guilty of dishonesty in their writings and in their letters.

One case concluded in an amicable settlement (alleged plagiarism), in one case the university did not regard the case as being such that should generally have been dealt with under the Advisory Board's rules of conduct for violation of good scientific practice (alleged falsification), in one case the view was that the notification was not sufficiently detailed as to what the violation of good scientific practice in question was. In one instance it was found that the alleged case contained no new occurrence of an alleged falsification that had been dealt with previously, and in one case no evidence was found of anything other than scientific evaluation. One case was regarded as being misconduct in science rather than plagiarism. In one case the carelessness and violation of good scientific practice occurring in places in a research study were not regarded as misconduct or scientific fraud. The conclusion in one case was that although the incorrectness in one method of reference did in itself deviate from good scientific practice, the complaint did not warrant any action as this was not an issue of fraud or misconduct. In one case a graduate student guilty of fraud was excluded from the university for a period of one year by order of the university board.

In 2008 the Advisory Board was requested to give its opinion on two locally resolved cases by parties unsatisfied with the procedure or the finding:

- one allegation concerned unauthorised borrowing: the Advisory Board found the suspect had been guilty of a misdemeanour comparable to plagiarism, but the publication committee had contributed to the violation of good scientific practice to the extent that the author's misdemeanour was, in accordance with the decision of the research organisation, classified as being misconduct in science.
- one allegation concerned falsification: the Advisory Board found that the evaluation of a communication based on an interview did not come within the scope of the Advisory Board's rules of conduct concerning good scientific practice, and the violation of such, particularly if the person being interviewed had not been given the opportunity to check the content of the communication. During the time of the interview the researcher is obliged to conform with good scientific practice,

however, the Advisory Board did not find any indications of negligence in connection with the interview.

Furthermore, the Chair of the Advisory Board, many members, and the Secretary General, gave advice to various groups on the content of good scientific practice and of the mechanisms for handling violations in respect of good scientific practice.

3. Initiatives, publication and information

The National Advisory Board on Research Ethics has maintained its active dissemination of information by means of its website, the seminar papers published on the site and articles published by the members and the Secretary General.

Based on proposals for membership received from scientific associations, on 1.11.2007 the Advisory Board established a working group (the so-called HYMY II working group) to deliberate the ethics of humanities and social science research, which continued the work carried out by the earlier "HYMY I" working group from 2002 to 2006 regarding the ethics of human sciences and pre-regulation in the humanities and social sciences. The working group completed its work at the end of the year and submitted its findings to the National Advisory Board on Research Ethics

The working group met eight times in 2008 and organised three seminars (see Preventive action and education). The working group were very active in terms of information dissemination through publication on the Advisory Board's website of minutes of meetings, other background material, seminar papers, and articles published by Board members.

Articles written by the members and the Secretary General and other publications:

- K. Eriksson – H. Leino-Kilpi and K. Vehviläinen-Julkunen: "Hoitotiede ja tiede-etiikka" (Treatment science and the ethics of science), *Hoitotiede*, December 2008,
- Arja Kuula: "Tarvitaanko tutkimusetiikan tarkistusta?" (Is there a need for revision of research ethics), *Sosiologia* 2008, pp. 135-143,
- Arja Kuula: Un nouveau regard sur l'éthique, in M. Dargentas – M. Brugidou – D. Le Roux – A.C. Salomon (Eds.), *L'analyse seondaire en recherche qualitative: une nouvelle pratique en sciences humaines et sociales*, Paris: Lavoisier, 2008,
- Sinimaaria Ranki: "Eettisyys tutkimustoiminnan prosessissa" (Ethics in the research process), *KeVer web magazine*, Vol. 7, No. 4 (2008).
- Liisa Nieminen: "Laitoshoidossa oleviin vanhuksiin kohdistuvat perusoikeuksien rajoitukset" (Restricting the fundamental rights of elderly persons in institutional care), *Lakimies* 2008, pp. 871-893.
- Liisa Nieminen: "Lapset tutkimuskohteena: Kuka päättää lapsen osallistumisesta tutkimukseen?" (Children under research: Who decides on a child's participation in research?), will be published in *Lakimies* 2009,
- Liisa Nieminen: Book review: Henrika Clarkeburn and Arto Mustajoki, "Tutkijan arkipäivän etiikka" (A researcher's everyday ethics), will be published in *Lakimies* 2009.

4. Statements issued, international activities and other cooperation

The National Advisory Board on Research Ethics issued two expert statements in 2008:

-Statement to the Finnish Medical Association on updating the draft of the Helsinki Declaration (4.2.2008)

- Statement to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland on the Government's draft proposal on the ratification of the biomedical agreement (7.2.2008).

International meetings in which the Chair, members and the Secretary General participated:

- Secretary General Salla Lötjönen: Meeting of the new and old composition of the Nordic Bioethics Committee, Stockholm, 30.1.2008,
- Secretary General Salla Lötjönen: International Stem Cell Forum, Ethics Working Party, San Francisco, USA, 25 - 27.2.2008,
- Secretary General Salla Lötjönen: First Network of European Research Integrity Structures meeting, London, 11.3.2008,
- Secretary General Salla Lötjönen: Office of Research Integrity: First Biennial ORI Conference on Responsible Conduct of Research (CRC) Education, Instruction and Training, 17 -19.4.2008, St. Louis, USA Washington University,
- Director Paavo Löppönen: OECD Global Science Forum: Co-ordinating Committee for Facilitating International Research Misconduct Investigations, 2nd meeting, OECD Headquarters, Paris, 21 - 22.4.2008.
- Secretary General Salla Lötjönen: EU funded ADIT projects, ethics committee meeting, Bath, Great Britain, 18 -21.5.2008,
- Chair Eero Vuorio: From Principles to Practice: How European Research organizations implement research integrity guidelines, Madrid 17.-18.11.2008.
- The details of the application for EU funding regarding a Great Britain proposal were agreed at a meeting of representatives of the European Research Ethics Offices held in London 11.3.2008. However, no money was received for the project.

The Advisory Board, together with Academy of Finland, reported to the European Science Foundation for an international study, the purpose of which was to compile and compare information on actors and procedures relating to research ethics in order to facilitate international cooperation. The study was published in May 2008.

In autumn 2008, several visitors from different universities, including South Korea, Japan and China, made visits to familiarise themselves with the work of the Advisory Board.

The Advisory Board has entered into discussions with the Academy of Finland specifically regarding the Advisory Board's active role in creating a uniform model for résumés and lists of publications.

The National Advisory Board on Research Ethics continued its close cooperation with the other national ethical bodies (ETENE, TUKIJA, BTNK, GTLK and KYTÖ) in 2008. The ethical bodies participated in a joint programme at the Turku Science Fair on 3rd November, 2008, the theme of which was "Tissue samples and privacy". The Advisory Board also had a joint stand together with the Committee for Public Information. The Advisory Board also prepared a programme for the Science Forum to be held in January, 2009.

The negotiations that started in 2007 with UNESCO and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to organise a visit by an African trainee for 2008 (Malawi was agreed as Finland's partner) had to be put on hold, however, until such time as the official cooperation agreement between Malawi and UNESCO has been made.

5. Personnel and finance

In 2008 the National Advisory Board on Research Ethics had only one full time employee, the Secretary General. Salla Lötjönen acted as Secretary General from 1.1.2008 to 14.6.2008, and Liisa Nieminen from 1.8.2008 onwards. They were assisted from 7.1.2008 by Terhi Tarkiainen, whom the Advisory Board shared with the Committee for Public Information. In addition, the Board had the use of the telephone exchange, computer and caretaker services of the Federation of Finnish Learned Societies.

In 2008 the Ministry of Education granted the National Advisory Board on Research Ethics a total of EUR 33,400, of which EUR 18,400 was allocated for running costs and EUR 15,000 for the Advisory Board's expenditure on publications and seminars, these funds were administered by the Ministry of Education. The salaries of the Secretary General and secretary of the National Advisory Board on Research Ethics and the clerical funds, EUR 75,182.00, were 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 9th December, 2008.

Eero Vuorio
Chair

Liisa Nieminen
Secretary General

Appendix 1

List of seminars and educational events other than those organised by the National Advisory Board on Research Ethics, which the Chair, members or Secretary General attended in 2008

- Vice Chair Riitta Keiski, Lecture at the University of Oulu Faculty of Technology for the graduate course "How to Get a PhD? - Methods and Practical Hints" on the subjects "Research Ethics" and "Good Practices in Researcher Education", 8.1.2008,
- Secretary General Salla Lötjönen: "The HYMY work group of the National Advisory Board on Research Ethics and international models of preassessment" and discussion on questions relating to the work of those doing dissertations. Culture and interaction graduate school ethics day, University of Oulu Faculty of Humanities, 25.1.2008,
- Secretary General Salla Lötjönen: "Tutkimuseetiikka, hyvä tieteellinen käytäntö ja vilppi" (Research ethics, good scientific practice and fraud), weekly meeting of the Maternity and Foetal Research unit at Oulu University Hospital, 13.2.2008,
- Member Ari Salminen, lecture on research ethics to medical students, University of Vaasa Doctor Forum, 19.2.2008,
- Member Paavo Löppönen, presentation to the international Marie Curie sleep research students, University of Helsinki, 12 –14.3.2008,
- Secretary General Salla Lötjönen: Ethics and integrity in scientific research, Pharmacological Wednesday Lecture series, Biomedicum, Helsinki, 19.3.2008,
- Member Arja Kuula: "Laadullisen aineiston arkistoinnin etiikka" (The ethics of archiving high quality data), Faculty of Behavioural Sciences, seminar for researchers, University of Helsinki, 10.4.2008,
- Chair Eero Vuorio: Fostering good scientific practice, Research ethics seminar at Åbo Akademi University, 17.4.2008,
- Member Sinimaaria Ranki: Good scientific practice and misconduct of research, Seminar for HEBIOT, MBIOT and MScPPs Master students, Viikki, Helsinki, 17.4.2008,
- HYMY II – working group Chair Arja Kuula: Presentation at a seminar of hospital district ethical committees 13 –14.5.2008, Biomedicum, Helsinki,
- Chair Eero Vuorio: presentation at the TGSBB retreat organised by the Tampere Graduate School in Biomedicine and Biotechnology, Seili, 14 -16.5.2008,
- Member Arja Kuula: presentations at the research seminar of the Finnish Association of Local Government Studies, University of Tampere, 23.5.2008,
- Secretary General Salla Lötjönen: "TENK, tutkimuseetiikka ja oikeustiede ja keskustelu väitöskirjatekijöiden kanssa, Oikeus muuttuvassa maailmassa" (National Advisory Board on Research Ethics, research ethics and jurisprudence, and discussion with dissertation writers on "Rights in a changing world"), research ethics day for graduate students, University of Helsinki Faculty of Law, 27.5.2008,
- Chair Eero Vuorio: Ethical framework for biomedical research, National Graduate School of Musculoskeletal Disorders and Biomaterials (TBGS) – graduate school annual meeting, 5.6.2008,
- Member Arja Kuula: "Tutkimuseetiikan peruskysymyksiä" (Basic issues of research ethics). Lecture at the graduate school's summer school on ageing, well-being and technology, University of Jyväskylä, 27.8.2008,
- Member Ari Salminen, lecture on the ethics of teaching and research as part of the university's ethical guidelines, Advanced special studies on Public Management, University of Vaasa, 22.9.2008,
- Member Ari Salminen, introduction to the ethics of teaching and research, to first-year students at the University of Vaasa, 24.9.2008.
- Member Arja Kuula: presentation to the National Archive's afternoon session on the ethics of archiving, 13.10.2008,
- Chair Eero Vuorio: "Tutkimuseetiikka – tutkijoiden omat pelisäännöt" (Research ethics – researchers' own ground rules), Baltic Graduate School, ethics afternoon, University of Turku, 22.10.2008,
- Member Arja Kuula: "Lapsi tutkimuskohteena – eettinen ennakoarviointi ja aineistojen arkistoinnin etiikka", (The child as a research object – ethical preassessment and the ethics of data archiving), University of Tampere, 31.10.2008,
- Member Arja Kuula: "Eettiset kysymykset opinnäytteessä" (Ethical questions in theses). Lecture to Masters students at the Tampere School of Public Health, University of Tampere, 5.11.2008.

- Secretary General Liisa Nieminen: introduction to research ethics to those involved with Universities of Applied Sciences, Mikkeli, 7.11.2008,
- Member Arja Kuula: "Tutkimusaineistojen etiikka" (The ethics of research data). Presentation at seminar on research data projects, University of Helsinki, 27.11.2008,
- Member Arja Kuula: Qualitative research and the ethics of data archiving. Presentation at the Oral History and Ethics symposium, Helsinki, 4.12.2008.

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