



The Four EURCAWs Conflict of Interest procedure

Introduction

The independence of the EU Reference Centres for Animal Welfare (EURCAWs) is a legal requirement set in Article 95(3) of the Official Controls Regulation (EU) 2017/625, which establishes they shall act impartially when exercising their tasks as European Union Reference Centres. In particular, given that EURCAWs support and assist the European Commission and the EU Member States in the conduct of official control activities, operators who may be the subject of official controls in the area covered by the EURCAWs should not be in a position to directly or indirectly influence the technical and scientific advice and recommendations from the EURCAWs.

Given this requirement, it is essential for the EURCAWs to have robust mechanisms in place to identify and manage potential conflicts of interest with private or public companies or organisations.

To fulfil these criteria, the four EURCAWs have created a Conflict of Interest procedure (CoI procedure) and a systematic and fair process should a conflict of interest or perception of such conflict occur.

The Conflict of Interest (CoI) procedure is described in this document.

In addition, the Four EURCAWs have developed a Declaration of Interest (DOI) form (Annex 1), in which individuals declare all relevant interests and project involvements. The DOI is based on the 'Standard Declaration of Interest form' for the members of the EU Platform Animal Welfare, organised by DG SANTE.

Conflict of Interest Procedure

1. The DOI is to be filled in and signed by each member of the EURCAW Management Teams or Coordination Teams or similar body (as defined by the EURCAW), and the (co-)authors of output specified in the respective Work Programmes of the EURCAWs. Outputs may include reviews, reports or other types of documents, and may also include digital materials such as videos.
2. The DOI is updated and reconfirmed at the beginning of each calendar year by the members of the EURCAWs.
3. New members of the EURCAWs as specified in 1.) should sign the DOI upon starting their work within a EURCAW regardless of the time of the year.
4. It is the obligation of the Coordination Team of the EURCAWs to make sure their personnel signs the DOI and renews it annually.
5. The DOI can be signed digitally or by hand.
6. The evaluation of the DOI is done by the Coordination Team (or similar, as defined by each EURCAW). If in place, the Ethics Committee provides a detailed opinion on the DOIs to the Coordination Team.



7. The Coordination Team may call the signatory to provide further explanations on the information provided in the DOI.
8. The signed DOI is kept by the EURCAW on their own intranet site, with access level defined by the respective EURCAW. On the public website of each Centre a statement is made to reflect the content of this Col procedure. It indicates that the members of the EURCAW team are required to submit a Dol form, which has to be approved by the Coordination Team of the Centre.
9. The signed DOIs will be available to the European Commission upon request.

Procedure in case of a (perceived) Conflict of Interest

1. Each member of the EURCAWs responsible for the EURCAW-tasks has a continuing obligation to fully disclose to the Director of the Centre (or designate*) any situation involving actual or potential Conflicts of Interest, as soon as such situations arise. The DOI form should also be updated at the next annual renewal moment.
2. The Coordination Team will assess whether a Conflict of Interest or the appearance thereof, exists. If necessary, the Ethics Committee will be consulted to provide a detailed opinion.
3. If the Coordination Team determines that a Conflict of Interest or appearance of such conflict exists, the team member may be required to immediately address or resolve the issue.
4. Depending on the circumstances, the team member may -in the worst case- be excluded from further involvement in EURCAW activities.
5. The DG SANTE may be consulted, if deemed necessary.
6. Team members who disagree with the decision may submit an appeal to the Management Team within 10 working days, starting from the day after the notification of the Coordination Team's decision. Appeals will be reviewed promptly, and adjustments will be made if considered appropriate.
7. If the incident under review concerns a member of the Coordination Team or the Management Team or – where applicable - the Ethics Committee, the relevant member shall be excluded from the respective procedure.
8. Following an (optional) appeal, the decision of the Management Team is final.

* Appointed by the Coordination Team



Annex 1. Declaration of Interest form

This Declaration of Interest (DOI) form should be completed and signed by each member of the EURCAW Coordination and/or Management Teams, as well as (co-)authors of outputs related to the tasks described in Article 96 of the Official Controls Regulation (EU) 2017/625 and specified in the respective Work Programmes of the EURCAWs. The background and purpose of this form are explained in the Conflict of Interest procedure, which has been agreed by all EURCAWs.

Definitions

"Conflict of interest" means any situation in which an individual has an interest that may compromise, or be reasonably perceived to compromise, their ability to act independently and in the public interest when carrying out his/her tasks in relation to the subject of work performed by EURCAWs.

"Declaration of Interest" refers to a document used to disclose all interests that could influence a decision-making process or the outcome of a specific project within the framework of the EURCAWs. It is a transparency measure designed to ensure objectivity and prevent undue influence.

"Immediate family member" means the individual's spouse, civil partner, children and parents. "Children" includes the child(ren) the individual and the spouse have in common, the own child(ren) of the individual and the own child(ren) of the spouse.

"Legal entity" refers to any commercial business, industry association, consultancy, research institution or other enterprise whose funding is significantly derived from commercial sources. It also includes independent own commercial businesses, law offices, consultancies or similar entities.

"Body" refers to a governmental, international or non-profit organisation.

"Meeting" includes a series or cycle of meetings.

Declaration of Interest Form

Please answer each of the questions below. If the answer to any of the questions is "yes", please provide details of the relevant interests and circumstances, as appropriate.

Failure to do so will result in your DOI form being considered incomplete. Consequently, your membership or application to become a member of an EURCAW in a personal capacity will be rejected.



1 Identity

<p>First name:</p> <p>Family name:</p> <p>Related to which EURCAW:</p>
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2 Employment consultancy and legal representation

	<i>Within the past 3 years, were you employed or have you had any other professional relationship with a legal entity, or held any non-remunerated post in a legal entity or other body with an interest in the field of activity of your EURCAW team?</i>	yes	no
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2a	Employment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2b	Consultancy, including services as an advisor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2c	Non-remunerated post	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2d	Legal representation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Activity	Time period (from ... to ... month/year)	Name of entity or body	Description

3 Membership of managing body, scientific advisory body or equivalent structure

	<i>Within the past 3 years, have you participated in the internal decision-making of a legal entity or other body with an interest in the field of activity of your EURCAW or have you participated in the works of a Scientific Advisory Body with voting rights on the outputs of that entity?</i>	yes	no
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3a	Participation in a decision-making process	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3b	Participation in the work of a Scientific Advisory Body	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Activity	Time period (from... until month/year)	Name of legal entity or body	Description



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4 Research support

		yes	no
4a	<i>Within the past 3 years, have you received any research funding as a main applicant for activities with an interest in the field of activity of your EURCAW, such as research support, including grants, or rents, sponsorships, fellowships, non-monetary support</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Activity	Time period (from... until month/year)	Name of legal entity or body	Description

5 Financial interests

	<i>Do you have current investments in a legal entity with an interest in the field of activity of the EURCAW, including holding of stocks and shares, and which amounts to more than 10,000 EUR per legal entity or entitling you to a voting right of 5% or more in such legal entity?</i>	yes	no

5a	Shares	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5b	Other stock	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Investment	Name of legal entity	Description

6 Intellectual property

	<i>Do you have any intellectual property rights that might be affected by the outcome of the work carried out by the EURCAW?</i>	yes	no

6a	Patent, trademarks, or copyrights	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6b	Others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Intellectual property	Description



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7 Public statements and positions

	<i>Within the past 3 years, have you provided any expert opinion or testimony in the field of activity of the EURCAW, for a legal entity or other body as part of a regulatory, legislative or judicial process? Have you held an office or other position, paid or unpaid, where you represented interests or defended an opinion in the field of activity of the EURCAW?</i>	Yes	no
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7a	For a legal entity or other body as part of a regulatory, legislative or judicial process	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7b	Represented interests or defended an opinion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Activity	Time period (from... until month/year)	Name of legal entity or body	Description

8 Interest of immediate family members

8a	To your knowledge, are there any interests of your immediate family members which could be seen as undermining your independence in the field of activity of the EURCAW?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
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Interests	Time period (from... until month/year)	Name of legal entity or body	Description

8b	If interests of your immediate family members are declared, it is your responsibility to inform them about the collection and publication of information on their interests included in the DOI and to provide them with the privacy statement attached to the guidance for filling in this DOI, and this at the latest when you file the DOI form with the EURCAW.
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9 Other relevant information

9a	Are there any other elements that could be seen as undermining your independence in the field of activity of the EURCAW?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
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Description:

I hereby declare on my honour that I have read the guidance for completing this form.

I also declare on my honour that the information disclosed in this form is true and complete to the best of my knowledge.

Should there be any change to the above information, including as regards upcoming activities, I will promptly notify the Director of the EURCAW, and include the new information as part of the annual revision of the DoI form.

I am informed that my personal data are stored and processed in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2016/679.

Date: _____

Signature: _____