

**Informal WP meeting at the ECC7, Liverpool, August 27th 2018, 2-4PM -
Protocol**

Participants: Hartmut Frank, Hans Steisslinger, Jan Mehlich, Brigitte Van Tiggelen, Valentina Domenici, Anca Silvestru, Christophe Coperet, Maria José Calhorda, Francesco de Angelis.

1. Welcome and introduction

Chair Hartmut Frank opens the meeting by welcoming the members, among which some attend a WP meeting for the first time. Therefore, everybody introduces him/herself briefly.

2. Past and state-of-the-art

JM summarises the past activities of the WP, pointing out as central aspects the collection and systematisation of ethical and social dimensions of ethical activity (as illustrated in an essay by WP members in *Chem.Eur.J.* 2017), and the refinement of these topics for educational purposes. The WP has been centrally involved in an endeavour pushed forward by the EuChemS executive board to conceptualise, compile, and launch an online course "Good Chemistry - Methodological, Ethical and Social Dimensions". With JM as lecturer in a series of video classes, and HF and Luigi Campanella as advisors and commentators, the WPs past work found its way into this course. Besides general appreciation and support of the course, a few critical remarks are noted for the future:

- The course should adopt an approach that starts each topic from reported cases, framing the central problem and its roots, concluding in possible solutions and orientations for decision-making (FdA calls this "*inductive approach*"). This would serve the purpose better than teaching concepts of science ethics and then see how it applies to various aspects of chemical activity (FdA: "*deductive approach*").
- We must not forget that - even though we address students with the course - it is not the students whose ethical behaviour we are worried about. Teaching them *good scientific practice* does not imply that we accuse them of being generally susceptible for misconduct. This impression must be avoided, otherwise it generates an unjustified additional pressure on students.

3. Future activities

Education in Ethics in Chemistry has been a focus in the past 2 years. Now that this topic has been addressed and actively brought on the way, new topics that need urgent attention should be identified. Two issues are pointed out:

- Publishing: On the one hand, recent reports on significant numbers of academic and other researchers publishing in non-peer-reviewed for-profit journals of "predatory publishers" is reason for worries. On the other hand, the ethical and also scientific problems arising from the growing field of open access publishing deserve our attention.

- Chemistry in the network of industry and politics: The noble goals of scientific and technological progress enabled (at least partly) by chemical sciences and R&D are undermined by profit-oriented power pathways in which global finance elites and big corporate businesses are connected, rendering the common man (and chemist) powerless and his efforts towards a more ethical world insignificant. Members of the WP (HF, HS) consider writing an essay on this topic, whereas others (e.g. JM) remark that for the sake of credibility and scientific integrity, it should be proceeded with caution and care. Any claims and statements should be circumstantiated by proper references and proves, rather than with emotion and hearsay.

In order to increase the visibility of the WP, and to reach more members and members-to-be, JM suggests to start a WP Newsletter. This could start humbly with 1-2 short issues per year, including one key article, a list of contemporary "hot topics", the introduction of a "WP member of the year", a list of recent publications in the field, etc. If this finds general acceptance, he will come up with a more detailed concept in October.

The WP should plan activities for the ECC8 in Lisbon at early stage! The deadline for time slot applications is already past but has been extended. It should be the goal of the WP to be present with a "special symposium" on Ethics in Chemistry, as at ECC3 Nürnberg 2010 and ECC4 Prague 2012. It could be an option to ask the European Young Chemists Network (EYCN) to collaborate on this. JM will approach them later during the ECC7 *[Remark by JM: I asked members of their board, and they like the idea! More details will follow after further discussion.]*

Options for next year's WP meeting have been fathomed. Anca Silvestru invited the WP to meet in Romania (either Cluj-Napoca or Bucharest). The organisation (exact dates and place) depends on how many WP members indicate their participation. It may be scheduled together with the EuChemS General Assembly in Bucharest in October 2019 in order to keep travels at a minimum. Meeting in Cluj is more flexible in time; envisioned is July/August 2019.