

**Memorandum of Understanding IHS WIFO –
Principles of research integrity for commissioned studies**

13 August 2020

The IHS and WIFO agree on the following principles of research integrity when accepting and preparing commissioned studies and when using them for policy advice and public debate:

Principles for the acceptance of orders/contracting

1. Within the scope of contract research, only those contracts are accepted in which the institutes assume sole responsibility for the results of the scientific work and in which no ethical principles are violated to which the institutes have committed themselves.
2. Commissioned works are always published. Exceptions must be justified by the client at the time of the award of the contract and will be documented by the institutes.

Principles for the preparation of studies

WIFO and IHS observe the standards of good scientific practice when preparing studies, specifically by

3. Safeguarding the traceability of the research results by means of the long-term(10 years) storage of all documents relevant to the study, e.g.
 - a. Description of the research methodology
 - b. Data records and data cleansing; exceptions, such as when the deletion of data is necessary according to data protection laws (DSGVO), are documented accordingly
 - c. calculation methods, e.g. through programme codes, model descriptions
 - d. In the case of interviews: questionnaires, survey results and sample information
4. Clear identification and citation of all ideas, texts, data and other sources originating from others
5. Mention of all persons who have made their own scientific or other significant contribution as co-authors of the publication
6. Disclosure of potential conflicts of interest
7. Names of all the clients financing the study
8. The responsibility for adhering to the standards of good scientific practice is a fundamental duty of every researcher, and is also clearly anchored and institutionalised in the institutes. The persons responsible for questions relating to good scientific practice are known internally to all employees and are also advertised on the websites of the institutes.
9. The institutes are members of the Austrian Agency for Scientific Integrity (ÖAWI), an independent institution which consolidates the standards of good scientific practice in Austria and ensures compliance with them. The ÖAWI also serves the institutes as an independent authority in cases of suspected scientific misconduct.

Enquiries from the media, the general public or specialist audiences regarding the methodology and results of our work can be answered accordingly. The traceability of our research results is possible on the basis of the available documentation of the research procedure. *The exact modalities of implementation are left up to the institutes.*

Principles for using the results of commissioned studies for policy advice and public debate

Responsibility of the institutes in the scientific preparation and answering of a socio-politically relevant question

10. Results and recommendations relevant to economic and social policy are based on a critical review of broad empirical evidence, which in particular takes account of the robustness of the underlying methodological approach.
11. Limits to the validity of the statement and any assumptions behind the available evidence are made transparent without being asked
12. The researchers of the institutes and the clients are aware that the results of a commissioned work are only one component in the development of policies, as the latter require a broad evidence base and deliberative processes involving also stakeholders.

Principles of transparency

13. The institutes publish all research work for clients. Exceptions must be justified by the client at the time of the award of the contract and must be documented by the institutes. Even in such cases, the work will be prepared according to the standards of Good Scientific Practice, for example with regard to the documentation of the scientific methodology. However, the results and data of commissioned research must be able to be used for academic publications, provided that there are no legal or company regulations to the contrary.
14. If completed research results are actively communicated to the public (in the form of press releases, press conferences, ...), the underlying publications must also be submitted to the public in full.
15. If an unfinished study is subject to premature public debate, the study cannot be published until it has been completed and its scientific quality has been assured.