



Code of Conduct

2026

ADOPTED BY: 82ND ECCE GENERAL MEETING
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PLACE: BRAGA, PORTUGAL

ECCE Code of Professional Conduct

A framework defining the ethical principles and professional standards expected of all those representing ECCE.

The purpose of Civil Engineering is to plan, design, construct, assess, and maintain the infrastructure and the built environment that support modern society, improve living conditions for humankind, while safeguarding safety, sustainability, functionality, health, property, and the environment.

A Civil Engineer is a servant of society and a promoter of culture, safety, resilience, sustainability, and quality of life, and must possess practical knowledge to enhance the technical, social, economic, and environmental performance of structures and the built environment.

Members of ECCE must set and maintain the high reputation that the profession holds in society by providing their services with professional excellence, integrity, fairness, care and courtesy, by communicating effectively to various audiences, and by exercising appropriate judgement when performing their role. Members of ECCE are committed to ensuring that the reputation of their own profession continues to be held high in society.

This Code of Professional Conduct sets out the ethical principles and professional obligations expected of Civil Engineers represented by the European Council of Civil Engineers (ECCE). It shall be applied dynamically, as a living framework of professional responsibility. By participating in an ECCE meeting, event, or in communications between members on ECCE matters – whether in person, in writing, or via email – all members and participants agree to adhere to this code.

1. Duty to Society and the Public Interest

A Civil Engineer shall:

- 1.1 Act with integrity and fairness and have full regard to the public interest, placing public safety, health, and welfare above all other considerations.
- 1.2 Have due regard for the health and safety of the public, colleagues, employees, and all persons affected by their professional activities.
- 1.3 Express professional opinions only when founded upon adequate knowledge, sound judgment, and honest conviction.
- 1.4 Reject bribery, corruption, and unethical inducements in all forms.
- 1.5 Recognise that obligations to society and the public interest override obligations to clients or employers where these are in conflict.

2. Duty to the Environment and Sustainable Development

A Civil Engineer shall:

- 2.1 Understand and evaluate the effects of their work on society, the environment, and climate systems.
- 2.2 Promote the principles of safety, sustainable development, climate resilience, and responsible adaptation to climate change.
- 2.3 Commit to improving environmental performance and enhancing environmental quality wherever practicable.
- 2.4 Recognise the interdependence of ecosystems, the finite nature of natural resources, and the responsibility to future generations.
- 2.5 Minimise adverse environmental impacts and promote the use of renewable, recyclable, and low-impact materials.
- 2.6 Strive to accomplish professional work using the most efficient and responsible use of natural resources.

3. Duty to the Profession

A Civil Engineer shall:

- 3.1 Uphold and enhance the dignity, reputation, and standing of the civil engineering profession.
- 3.2 Perform professional duties with honesty, independence, fairness, and objectivity.
- 3.3 Avoid conduct likely to discredit or harm the profession or undermine public trust.
- 3.4 Protect the profession from misrepresentation, misuse of title, or false claims of competence.

3.5 Accept responsibility for professional judgments and for work carried out under their direction or supervision.

4. Professional Competence and Development

A Civil Engineer shall:

- 4.1 Undertake only those professional tasks for which they are competent by education, training, and experience.
- 4.2 Maintain, develop, and update professional knowledge and skills through continuous professional development (CPD).
- 4.3 Apply appropriate skill, care, and diligence in all professional activities.
- 4.4 Ensure that they possess the skills, knowledge and competence, relevant to the services and advice that they provide. Where they have a role to develop and oversee the services provided by others, they do so by recognising and communicating unambiguously the extent and limitations of any relevant knowledge or skills. All under the assurance of a quality management system and within the legislation of the country in which they are working.
- 4.5 Seek specialist advice or collaboration where a task extends beyond personal competence.

5. Duty to Clients and Employers

A Civil Engineer shall:

- 5.1 Act as a faithful, fair, and competent agent for their client or employer, consistent with the public interest.
- 5.2 Clearly disclose, upon appointment and thereafter, any actual or potential conflict of interest.
- 5.3 Ensure that professional advice is objective, independent, and not influenced by personal gain or interest.
- 5.4 Present clearly the consequences of decisions, particularly where professional judgment is overridden.
- 5.5 Maintain confidentiality of information unless disclosure is required by law, ethical duty, or public safety.
- 5.6 Not accept commissions, gifts, or benefits from third parties in connection with work.
- 5.7 Inform the client or employer if, in professional judgment, a project is likely to be unsafe, unlawful, or unsuccessful.
- 5.8 Not undertake professional work outside regular employment without the knowledge and consent of the employer, where applicable.

6. Conflicts of Interest and Independence

A Civil Engineer shall:

- 6.1 Avoid situations where professional judgment may be compromised by personal, financial, or other interests.
- 6.2 Fully disclose conflicts of interest as soon as they arise.
- 6.3 Decline or withdraw from assignments where independence cannot be maintained.

7. Duty to Other Civil Engineers

A Civil Engineer shall:

- 7.1 Treat other engineers with respect, fairness, and professional courtesy.
- 7.2 Give proper recognition to the work, ideas, and contributions of others.
- 7.3 Assist in the education, training, and professional development of colleagues and future engineers.
- 7.4 Not maliciously or unfairly damage the reputation, prospects, or practice of another engineer.
- 7.5 Report to the appropriate authority any serious unethical, illegal, or dangerous professional conduct, acting in good faith.

8. Equality, Diversity, and Professional Respect

A Civil Engineer shall:

- 8.1 Promote equality, diversity, and inclusion in professional practice.
- 8.2 Reject discrimination, harassment, or unfair treatment on any grounds.
- 8.3 Foster professional environments based on dignity, cooperation, and mutual respect.

9. Ethical Conduct and Personal Behaviour

A Civil Engineer shall:

- 9.1 Behave honourably and ethically in both professional and personal conduct where it may affect the profession.
- 9.2 Act truthfully in all professional communications and representations.
- 9.3 Promptly inform the relevant professional body of serious criminal convictions or disciplinary matters, in accordance with national rules.

10. Compliance, Interpretation, and Enforcement

- 10.1 This Code shall be observed by all civil engineers represented within ECCE member organisations.
- 10.2 Members shall also comply with the ethical rules of their national professional institutions, applicable laws, and regulations.
- 10.3 Breaches of this Code may result in disciplinary action in accordance with national procedures.

11. Communication

- 11.1 Clear and accurate communication is of critical importance in all business matters. Members must use appropriate language in all professional communications at all times. Whether written or verbal, communication shall be polite and courteous.
- 11.2 Members shall not use designatory letters, or adopt descriptions of themselves in professional communications, which may mislead others as to their position within the Council or their membership grade they hold within the Council.

This Code reaffirms the commitment of the European Council of Civil Engineers to ethical excellence, professional competence, public trust, and safe and sustainable development, ensuring that civil engineering continues to serve society responsibly across Europe.

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