

# Ethics, Ethics, everywhere – but which code should we use?



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IP3, the International Professional Practice Partnership, was formed by IFIP in 2007 as the body to deliver on the Strategic Goal to “Advance Professionalism in ICT”, by:

- ☐ Promoting appropriate bodies of knowledge for ICT
- ☐ Promoting common skills and competencies framework
- ☐ Promoting accreditation and certification
  - ☐ Ethics core to this
- ☐ Promoting high quality ICT education
- ☐ Promoting life long learning.



# Ethics defined

- Ethics is “the discipline dealing with what is good and bad and with moral duty and obligation”

Merriam-Webster

- “Any behavior with a Positive or Negative impact on society, its citizens, or the environment (cultural and natural)”
- Any behavior of computing professionals during the design, development, construction, and maintenance of computing artifacts that affects other people

“Trust is to make yourself vulnerable to another party for attaining your goals” - Professor Deon Rossouw, CEO of The Ethics Institute.

- Trust isn't built – it's granted
  - Four elements (Diego Gambetta)
    - Competence
    - Reliability
    - Integrity – how much does the trusted party care?
    - Benevolence – are the intentions aligned with those who trust them (often ignored)

- **Founding principles of any Profession**
  - Ethics and Trust
  - Competence
  - Accountability
- **ICT is no different**
- **Information and Knowledge Societies use Digital products**
  - They must Trust in the product.
  - Organizations suffer reputational damage
  - Would you trust someone who it unethical?

- Applying values to make proactive ethical decisions .... *should be easy*
- Fatal Premise
  - I am a good person, so I can focus on other things
  - “Evil is done by evil people.”
- Professionals need to be in a permanent state of ethical introspection
- “Every line of code has a moral and ethical implication.” Grady Booch

# Danger of too many Codes

- 170+ at last count
- Which one do you choose?
- Too many choices creates confusion
- Human nature – pick the one you like best
- Organisations will develop software using AI, Robotics, etc., and utilise Data Analytics
  - Ethics Code should be nonspecific
- **Any behavior of computing professionals during the design, development, construction, and maintenance of computing artifacts that affects other people**





# Misuse of Ethics

- Ethics-washing AKA ethics theater
- Organisations appear to be very concerned about ethics
  - To avoid the application of EXTERNAL regulations
  - Do nothing to mitigate or respond positively when issues arise
- Example: promoting “AI for Good” while developing and selling questionable surveillance software is ethics-washing.





“The Information Society should respect peace and uphold the fundamental values of freedom, equality, solidarity, tolerance, shared responsibility, and respect for nature.

We acknowledge **the importance of ethics for the Information Society**, which should foster justice, and the dignity and worth of the human person. The widest possible protection should be accorded to the family and to enable it to play its crucial role in society.

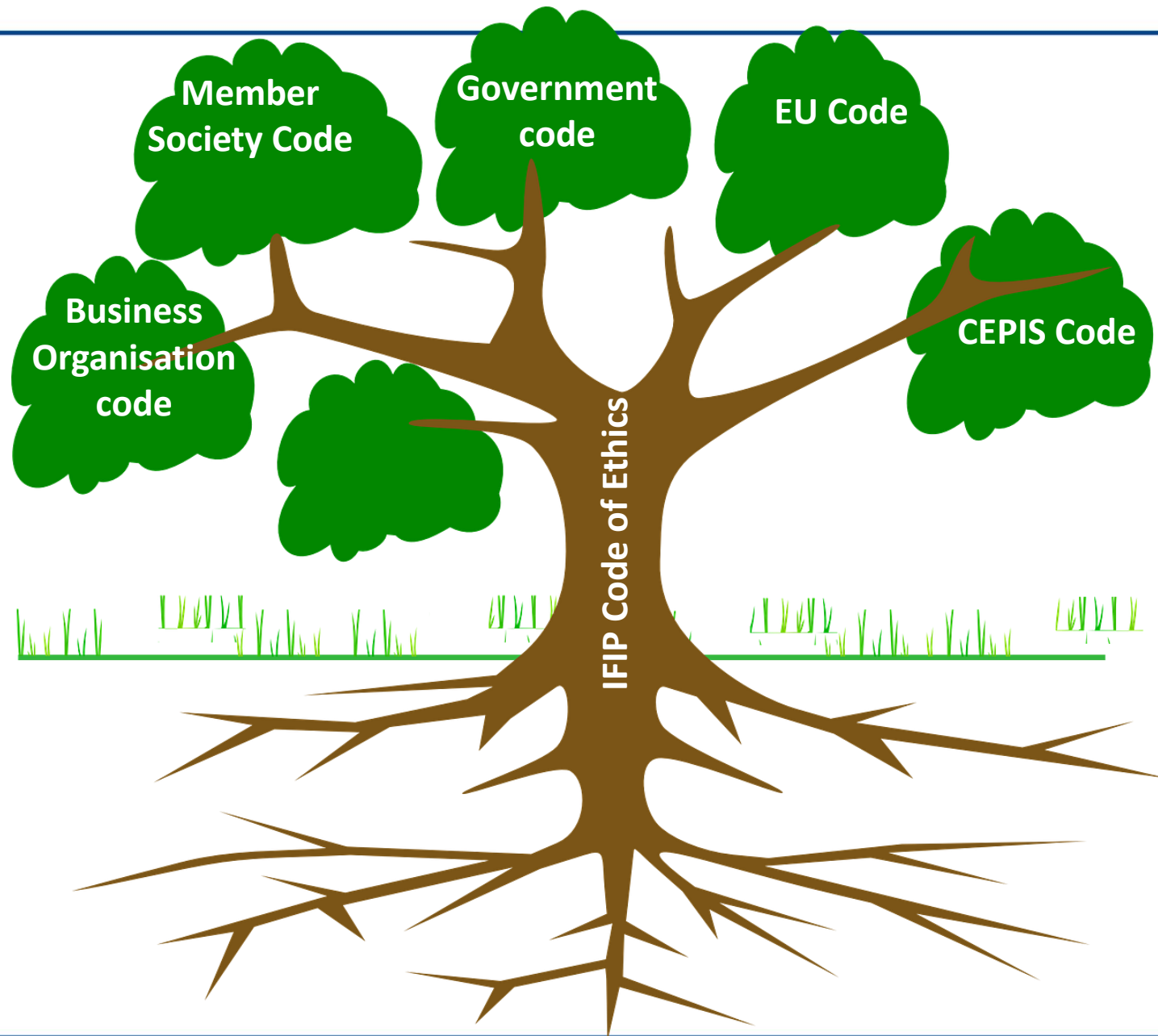
The **use of ICTs and content creation should respect human rights and fundamental freedoms of others, including personal privacy**, and the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion in conformity with relevant international instruments.

All actors in the Information Society should take appropriate actions and preventive measures, as determined by law, against abusive uses of ICTs, such as illegal and other acts motivated by racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerance, hatred, violence, all forms of child abuse, including paedophilia and child pornography, and trafficking in, and exploitation of, human beings.”

Geneva Declaration of Principles, WSIS 2003

# IFIP Code of Ethics

- Reason
  - An over-abundance of Codes of Ethics
  - Create an exemplar Code of Ethics
- Objective
  - A comprehensive code that engages the IT Professional
    - Not a tick-box exercise
    - Puts IT Professional in the real world



# IFIP Code – The Process

- General Assembly 2019
  - Agreement to develop code
  - Led by TC9: ICT & Society
- Based on ACM Code of Ethics
  - Wide consultation process
  - Robust code
- Task & Finish Group formed
  - Draft code – consulted with members
  - Approved GA 2020
- Code ready for publication
- IP3
  - Market the code
  - Create section on IP3 website
    - The Code
    - Case Studies
    - Training Materials
  - Consult with organisations
    - Business
    - Government

# Code of Ethics

- Should give voice to values.
- One or two exemplars set the standard – formed through a consultative process
- Substantial Codes of Ethics that go beyond simply saying “Be Good”
- When much ethical decision-making is unconscious, it is important to raise consciousness when it comes to new situations
- Examples of ethical decision making essential
- Enforcement of codes of ethics is the wrong focus, we need to work toward ethics as part of everyone’s “DNA” (*living the values*)

# IFIP Code of Ethics – in brief

## General Ethical Principles

*A computing professional should ...*

- Contribute to society and to human well-being
- Avoid harm
- Be honest and trustworthy
- Be fair and take action not to discriminate
- Respect the work required to produce new ideas, inventions, creative works, and computing artifacts
- Respect privacy
- Honor confidentiality



# IFIP Code of Ethics – in brief

## Additional sections

- Professional Responsibilities
- Professional Leadership Principles
- Compliance with the Code



- Real-life examples to demonstrate Ethical Decision Making
  - Guide for IT Professionals
- Actual facts
- Fictional scenarios
- Ethical Decision Making using the Proactive CARE process
  - Consider
  - Analyse
  - Review
  - Evaluate

# Recommendations

- Use IFIP Code as foundation
- Amend / Customise
  - Don't lose core principles
  - Add local / regional imperatives



***Thank You!***

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