



UNESCO (1945)

- only UN agency responsibility for S&T research
- since 1970's, ethical dimension of Life Sciences

Activities- ethics of science and technology

- global standard setting eg. UDBHR
- capacity building
- awareness raising

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The World Commission on the Ethics of Scientific Knowledge and Technology COMEST

Created in 1998

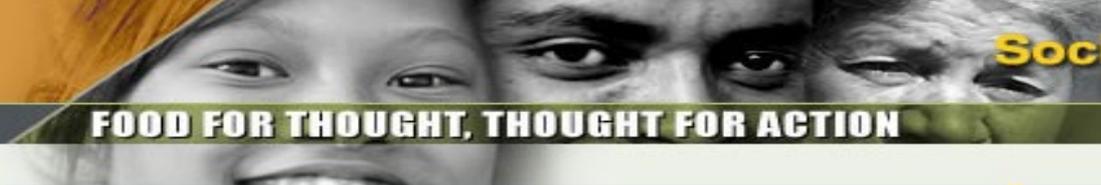
What is the mandate of COMEST?

- ✓ Advisory body of UNESCO
- ✓ Intellectual forum for the exchange of ideas and experience
- ✓ Detect early signs of risk situations associated with science and technology
- ✓ Promote dialogue between scientific communities, decision-makers and the public at large



Membership of COMEST

- ✓ 18 members appointed by the Director-General
- ✓ Independent experts serving in a personal capacity
- ✓ Four-year term, renewable once
- ✓ “...*eminent personalities in the fields of science, professional engineering, law, philosophy, culture, religion or politics...*”



Statutory activities: receptive to distinctive regional concerns

COMEST has held five Ordinary Sessions:

✓ **Oslo** (Norway), April 1999

✓ **Berlin** (Germany), December 2001

Youth Forum

✓ **Rio de Janeiro** (Brazil), December 2003

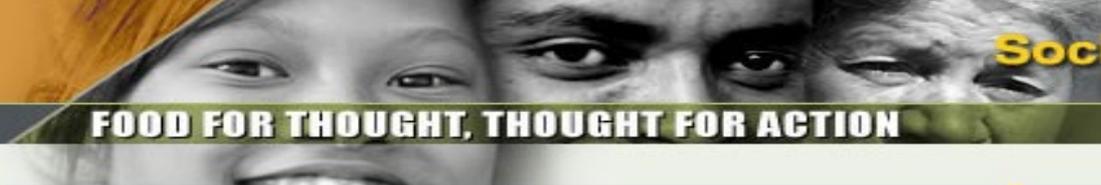
Ministerial Meeting

✓ **Bangkok** (Thailand), March 2005

✓ **Dakar** (Senegal), December 2006

Youth Forum

Ministerial Meeting



Role of COMEST in fostering research integrity

What is research integrity? Adherence to moral and ethical principles, honesty?

Pressures on research integrity: political, financial, institutional, personal

What are the outcomes of non integrity?

How does COMEST foster research integrity within its mandate as an advisory body to UNESCO and its 192 Member States?



Areas of work

- *Statutory activities*
- *Capacity building/*
- *Research integrity*
- *Ethics of technology*
- *Science ethics*
- *Code of conduct for scientists*
- *Environmental ethics*

Global Ethics Observatory
Ethics Education Programme
Ethics Around the World
rotating conferences
Ethics Documentation Centers
Studies - Precautionary
Principle

- Database 1: Experts (*Who is who in ethics?*)
- Database 2: Institutions, organizations, commissions
- Database 3: Ethics teaching programs
- Database 4: Ethics related legislation and guidelines
- Database 5: Codes of conduct

- Worldwide coverage
- Freely accessible
- 6 languages: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, Spanish

EEP

Ethics Education Program

Geobs 3

- mapping of experts in ethics teaching
- sampling of teaching programs (150 programs)
- pilot teacher training course (Nov.2006: Bucharest)
- educational resources (manuals)
- advisory ethics committee

Ethics Around the World Conferences

Rotating Conferences

- disseminating information
- networking with national experts

Netherlands, 18 March 2004
Iran, 2 May 2004
Lithuania, 13 September 2004
Turkey, 15 September 2004
Argentina, 4-5 November 2004
South Korea, 16 November 2004
Mexico, 24 November 2004
Indonesia, 2 December 2005
Portugal, 6 January 2005
Russia, 21 January 2005
China, 31 Oct – 2 November 2005
Estonia, 25 November 2005
Philippines, 9-10 December 2005
New Zealand, 13-14 February 2006
Peru, 19-20 April 2006
Denmark, 7 November 2006
Slovak Republic, 15 December 2006
Togo, 9-10 March 2007

Ethics Documentation Centers

- Facilitate exchanges among policy makers & scientists
- Share information on international instruments
- Following documentation centers established:
Vilnius, Lithuania, Kenya

SCIENCE ETHICS

Precautionary Principle

Born out of environmental concerns,
PP matured into ethical principle with broader scope

COMEST / UNESCO publication

- Clarification of concept (decision makers, scientists)
- Application of principle

Ethical Code of Conduct for scientists

UNESCO General Conference 2005, Resolution 39

« ethics and responsibility of science should form an integral part of the education and training of all scientists »

Need to « instill in students and scientists a positive attitude towards reflection, vigilance and awareness of the ethical dilemmas that they may encounter in their professional lives »

Ethical Code of Conduct for scientists

“normative pause”: in new biennium no further normative instrument

19 October 2005: 33rd General Conference:

“...to continue...the reflection on the subject...”



- International consultations (NatComs; scientific organizations)
- **Collection and analysis of existing Codes of Conduct**



1974: UNESCO Recommendation on the Status of Scientific Researchers



pursue reflection on principles of science ethics

Activities undertaken to pursue reflection on science ethics

- *Consultation meetings*
- *Review of previous work: 1974 Recommendation*
- *Analysis of existing codes of conduct (Geobs 5)*



Reflections on science ethics

Consultation meetings (March-Dec 2006)

- All European Academies
- Europe
- 3 meetings in Asia
- Latin America
- Africa

Detailed reports:

- <http://www.unesco.org/shs/ethics>

Reflections on science ethics

Consultation meetings (March-Dec 2006)

Results

- Strong arguments for codes of conduct
- National / intl regulations help prevent misconduct – adoption/ratification??
- Reference texts useful: drawn up at national / intl level & appropriated
- Drafting of codes + establishment of bodies ensuring compliance go hand in hand (ethics committees, implementation / monitoring mechanisms)

Reflections on science ethics

Review of previous work of UNESCO:

1974 Recommendation on Status of Scientific Researchers

- Focused on status of researchers, freedom of science and rights of scientists
- Reflections on update: risks, uncertainties, responsibility, integrity, fraud, misconduct, emerging technologies, scientific discoveries / applications
- *Recommendation + Declaration on Science and Use of Scientific Knowledge* (1999): fundamental texts in ethics « unknown »

Reflections on science ethics

Analysis of existing codes of conduct (Geobs 5)

Collection of codes, analysis criteria and methodology:

- <http://www.unesco.org/shs/ethics>

Inclusion criteria for the collection of codes

- **Provider**

- The code must be issued by an entity which deals with science and technology issues, with the intention to regulate/inspire/educate the behaviour of its own members (individuals and/or institutions) or addressing scientists in general.

- **Addressee**

- The code must concern professionals within scientific professions or disciplines, within any area of science

- **Content**

- A code must have a normative content: ethical principles, values, norms, rules of conduct.

GEObs 5: Public search engine

Code of conduct

Ethics in Science

Activities

Ethics of Outer Space

Ethics of the Environment

Science Ethics

Research

Ethics > More

Bioethics

Ethics Education Programme (EEP)

Global Ethics Observatory

Ethics around the World

Other SHS Themes

Human Rights

Philosophy

Physical Education and Sport

Social Transformations

Information Services

...

UNESCO Action Areas

...



Home GEObs1 GEObs2 GEObs3 Geographical Search

Database 5: Codes of Conduct

Find a code of conduct **141**

There are currently 96 codes of conduct registered in the database.

Search

Region

Country

Geographical coverage of the code

Any

Global

Regional

National

Profession and/or discipline

Nature of the code

Any

Aspirational

Educational

Regulatory

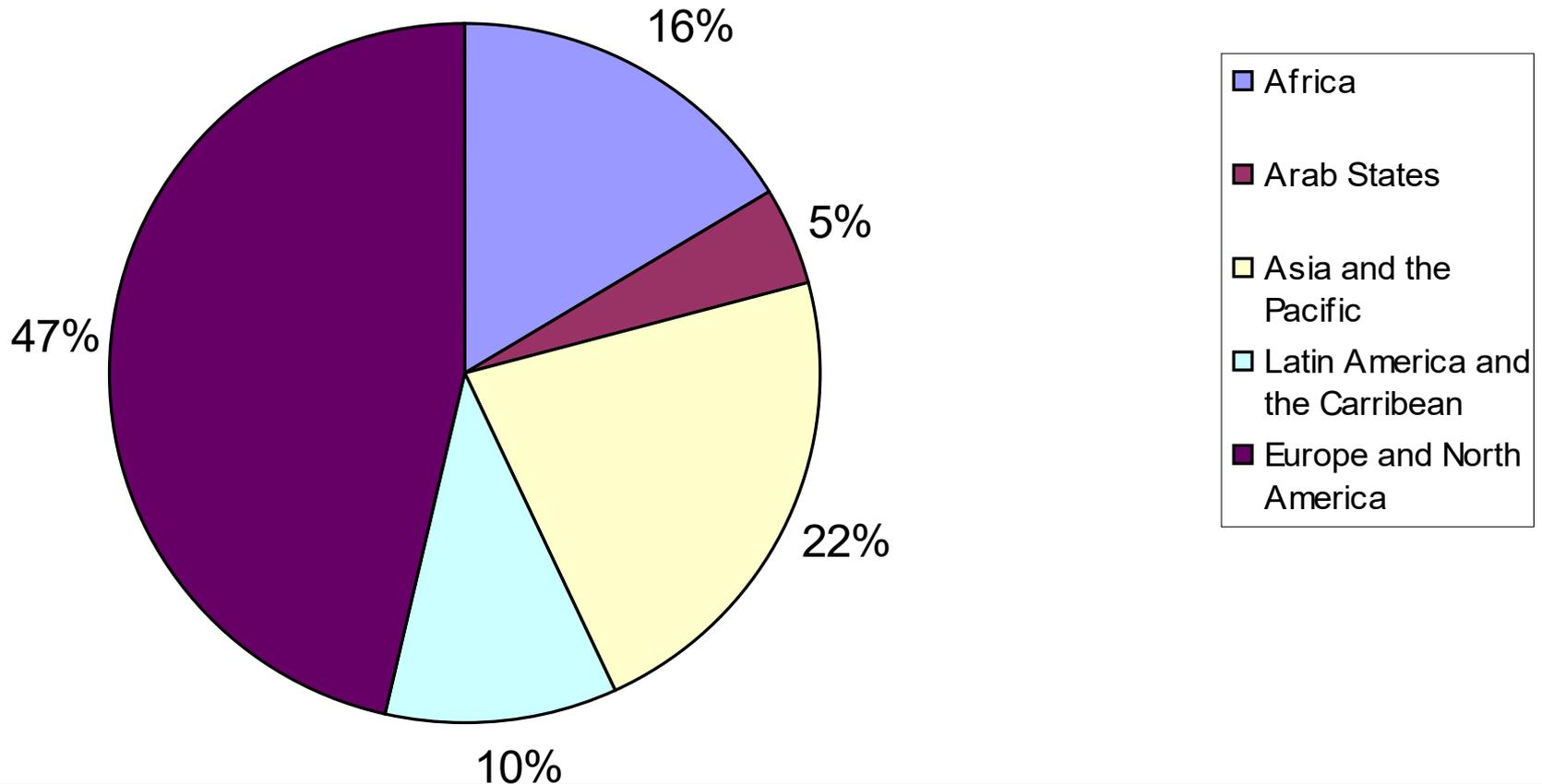
Field of activity

External principles

Internal principles

UNESCO's regions represented

Regions represented



Number of codes in Latin America

World



GEObs1	Entries Latin America & the Caribbean 9
GEObs2	
GEObs3	
GEObs4	
GEObs5 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

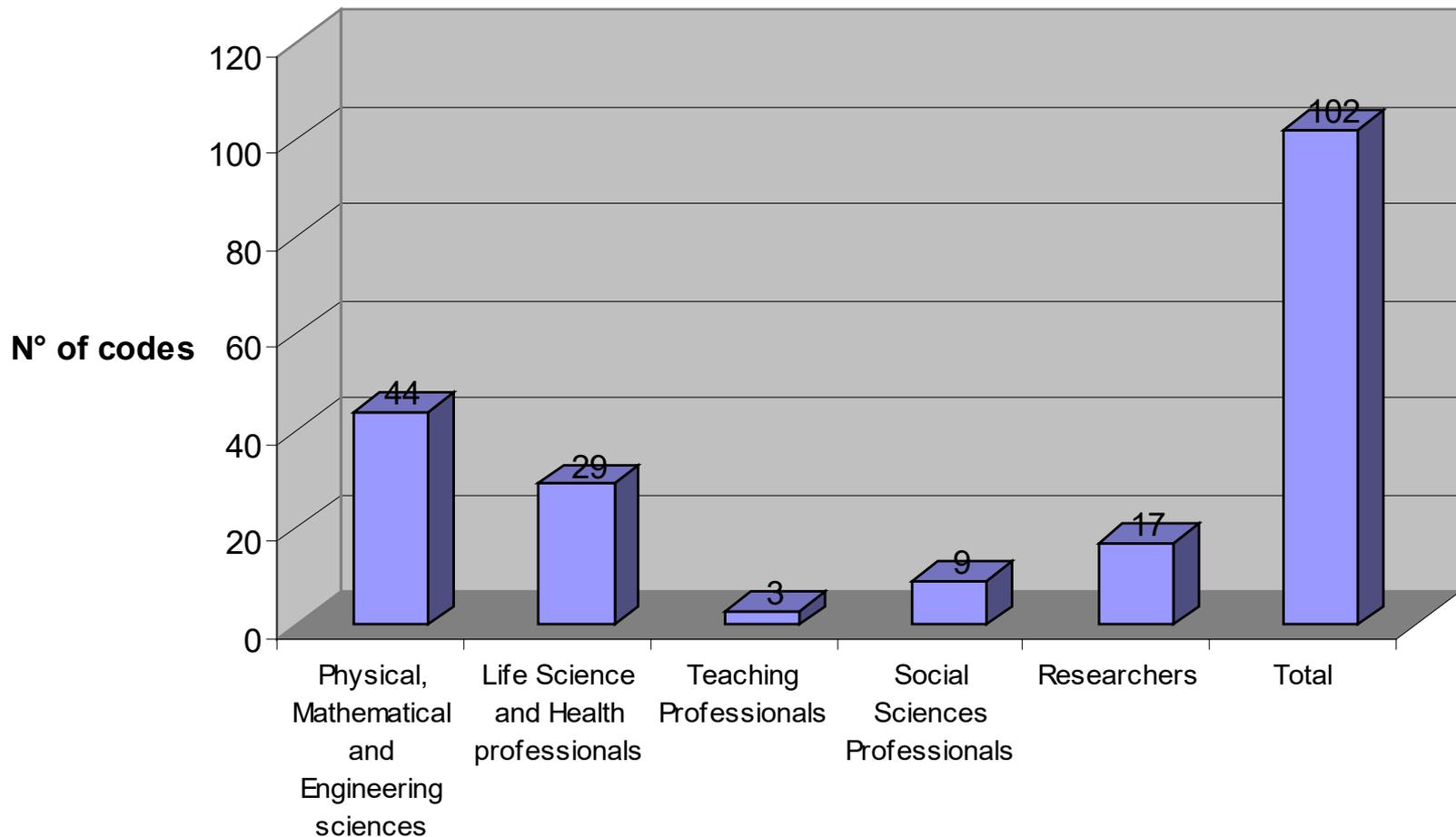
0 < 251 < 501 < 1001 < 2501 < 5001 > 5000

Click to zoom in on the countries within the region

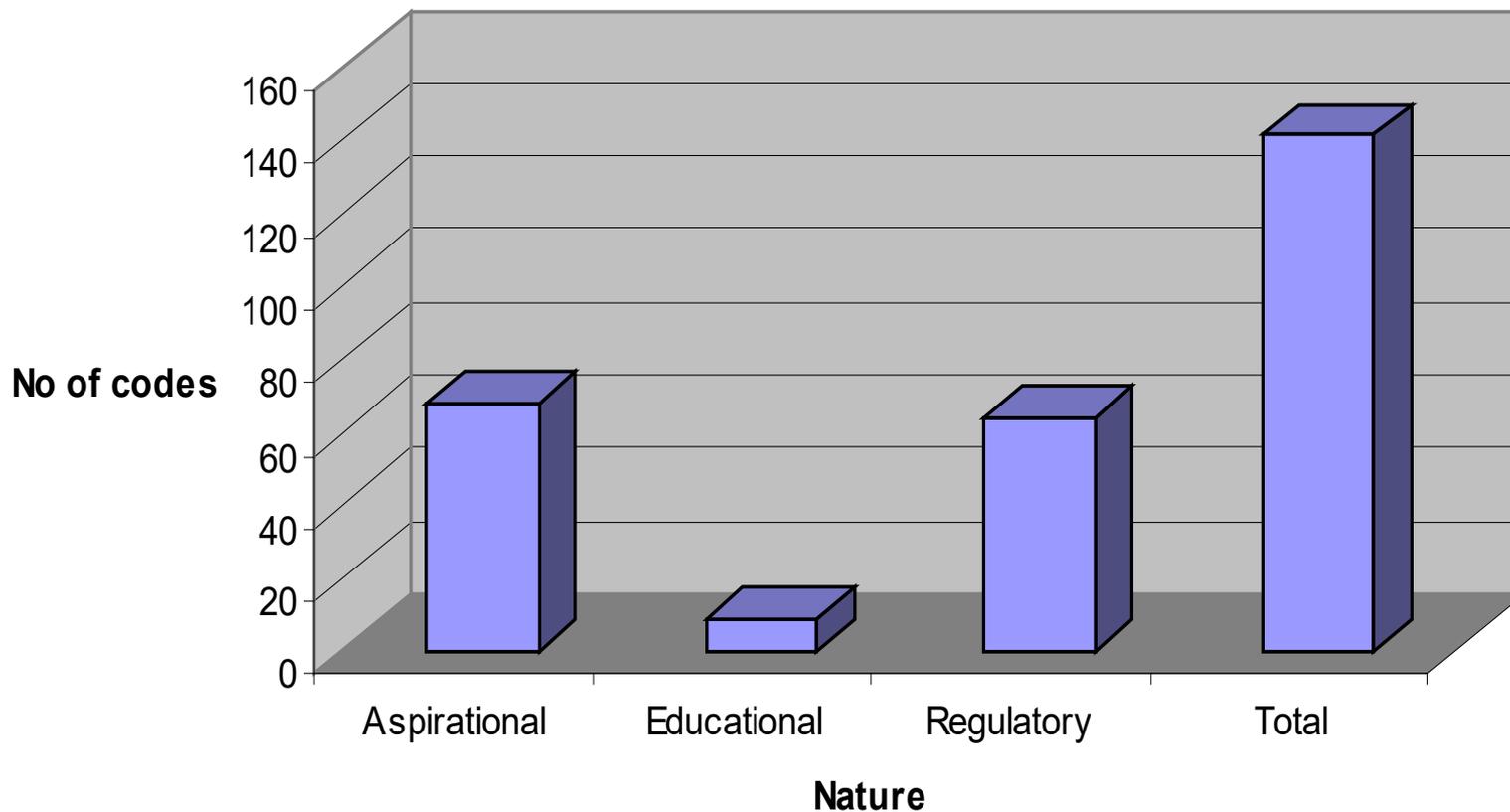
Please select a region on the map to zoom in on the countries within the region.

Distribution of codes among main disciplines

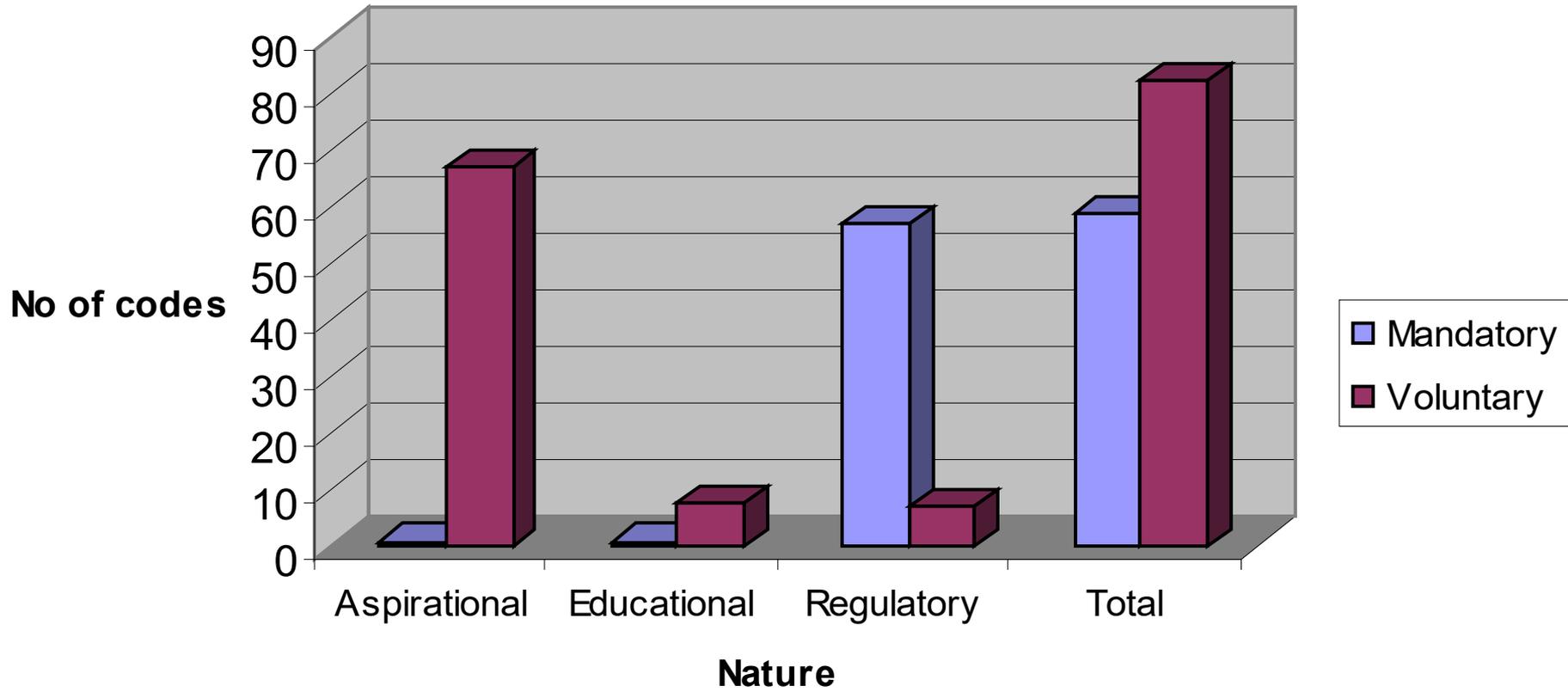
Distribution of codes (Main group level)



Nature of codes



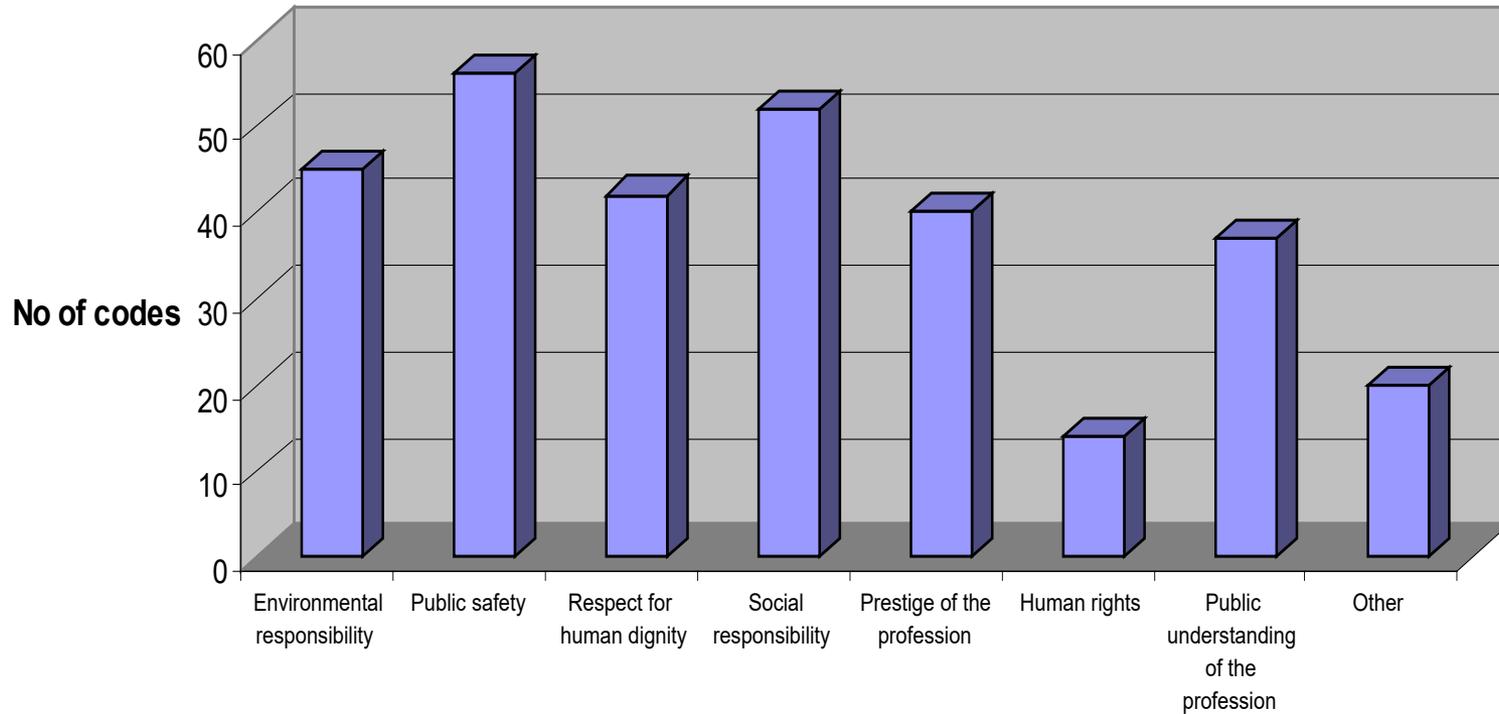
Commitment to the code



Most recurrent external principles

Most recurrent external principles

No of codes



CONCLUSIONS

UNESCO & Scientific Integrity

Science = effective means to ensure peace and common welfare of mankind

Need for holistic approach to

individual and institutional capacity development

in scientific research integrity



United Nations Educational,
Scientific and Cultural Organization

**Social and Human
Sciences**

FOOD FOR THOUGHT, THOUGHT FOR ACTION



COMEST Secretariat

UNESCO Social and Human Sciences Sector

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