

EDITORIAL

ESHG recommendations on key issues related to the advances in human genetics

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For several years now, the European Society of Human Genetics has a 'Public and Professional Policy Committee'. Among the key obligations of professionals in the field of human genetics are to anticipate the potential applications of their discoveries, to transfer their knowledge as fast as possible when a benefit may be expected for the community, to provide guidelines and recommendations, and to help less experienced professionals in minimizing misuses and misinterpretations of conceptual and practical advances in the field. In a programme subsidized by the European Union, the PPPC has so far held four series of deliberations about important topics of concern in the field of Human Genetics, and produced four sets of recommendations.

These documents were produced through a formal process including the production of a working document, sent to experts from all connected disciplines and from almost all European countries. The documents were then amended according to their comments. A workshop was then organized to discuss in depth the most difficult points raised. A group of about 50 experts selected from the

original reviewers was invited for a 2-days meeting, one meeting per topic. Following the workshops, the documents were amended once again, then proposed for discussion on the internet to the almost 1000 members of the European Society of Human Genetics. In the meantime, the PPPC members drafted recommendations, which were also made available on the Society's website, then amended before final adoption by the membership.

The four recommendations are presented in this issue. The background documents are going to be published as a separate special issue of this journal.

These recommendations are aimed to contribute to the debate among the community and to serve as references for policy makers in European countries and at the European Union level.

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