

Horizon 2020 Policy Support Facility



MLE Research Integrity

Challenge Paper 1. Structures and processes

1st country visit

Oslo, 30 Jan 2019

Challenge Paper 1

Structures and Processes

Based on

- Review of existing literature and documentation
- Discussions at the MLE Kick-off Meeting in Brussels on the 15th November 2018
- Feedback from 14 countries participating in MLE
 - RI Country report cards



RI country report cards

The idea

- 4th World Conference on Research Integrity (WCRI) in Rio de Janeiro in 2015
- Focus Tracks, on Improving Research Systems: the Role of Countries
- Discussion of participants from 17 countries
- How information about an RI framework in a country could be organized



RI country report cards

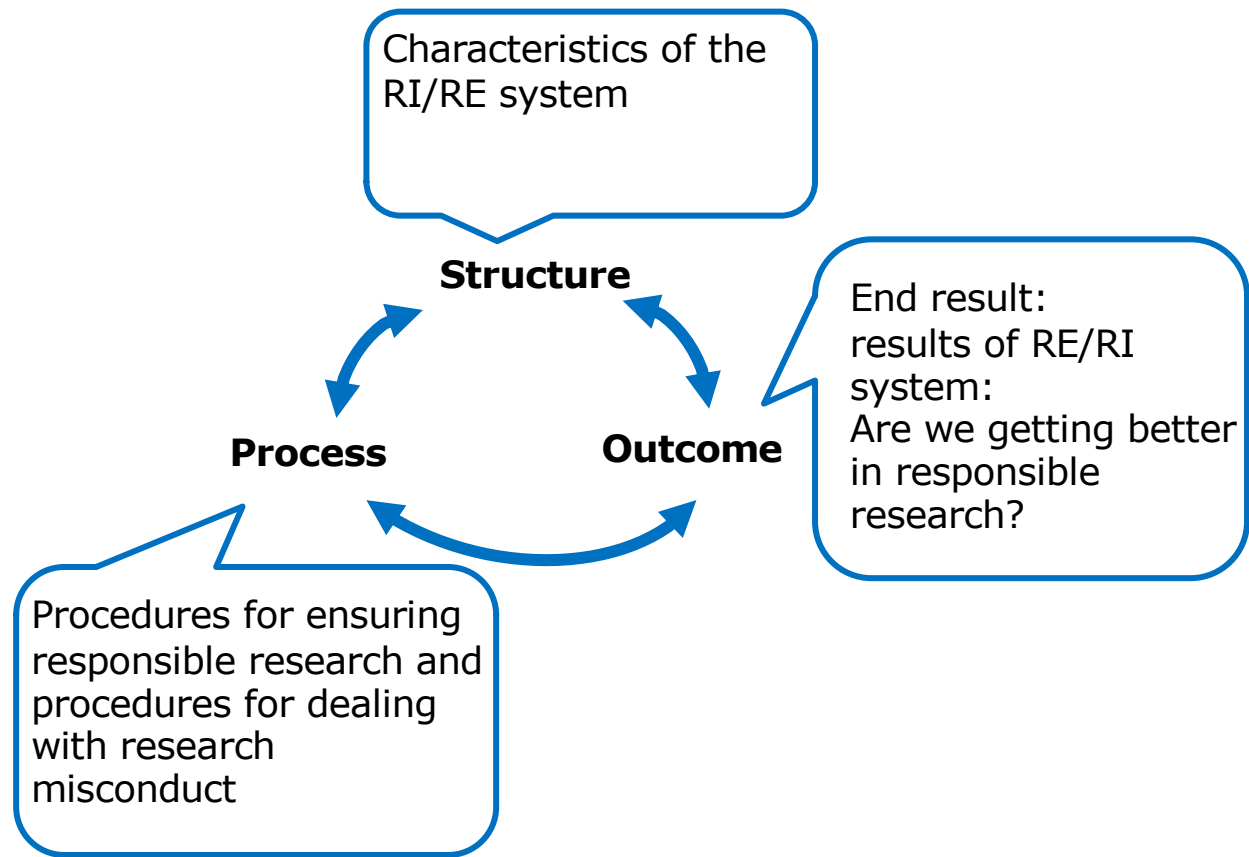
The idea

- 4th World Conference on Research Integrity (WCRI) in Rio de Janeiro in 2015
- Focus Tracks, on Improving Research Systems: the Role of Countries
- Discussion of participants from 17 countries
- How information about an RI framework in a country could be organized
- Tool for:
 - comparing good practices
 - empowering to develop and strengthen RI
 - increasing awareness of RI
 - encouraging research into effective ways to strengthen the integrity of the research systems



RI country report cards

Donabedian model of quality assurance in health care



RI country report cards

Structures

- number of researchers and research institutions per population (to capture the demographics of the research community); the amount of spending on research and the distribution of private, public and charity funding; scientific strategy;
- national bodies and laws relevant for RI/RE; the organizational structure and level of research integrity
- number of researchers and others involved in RI/RE
- percentage of postdoctoral students who get paid positions and percentage of grant success for applications to national funders



RI country report cards

Processes

- procedures to disseminate and enforce RE/RI policies, existence and nature of training for RE/RI
- evaluation and monitoring of the RE/RI policies and activities
- transparency of outcomes of research misconduct allegations
- presence and activity of designated RI offices in institutions
- procedures for whistle-blowers protection
- funding for RE/RI work and research
- registration of clinical trials (for biomedical research)
- actions to ensure transparency of research (open access)



RI country report cards

Outcomes

- results of research integrity evaluation as a part of institutional quality assessment
- research impact assessment and translation of research findings to the community
- public's perception of research integrity in their country
- rewards for collaborative science and incentives for networks



RI country report cards

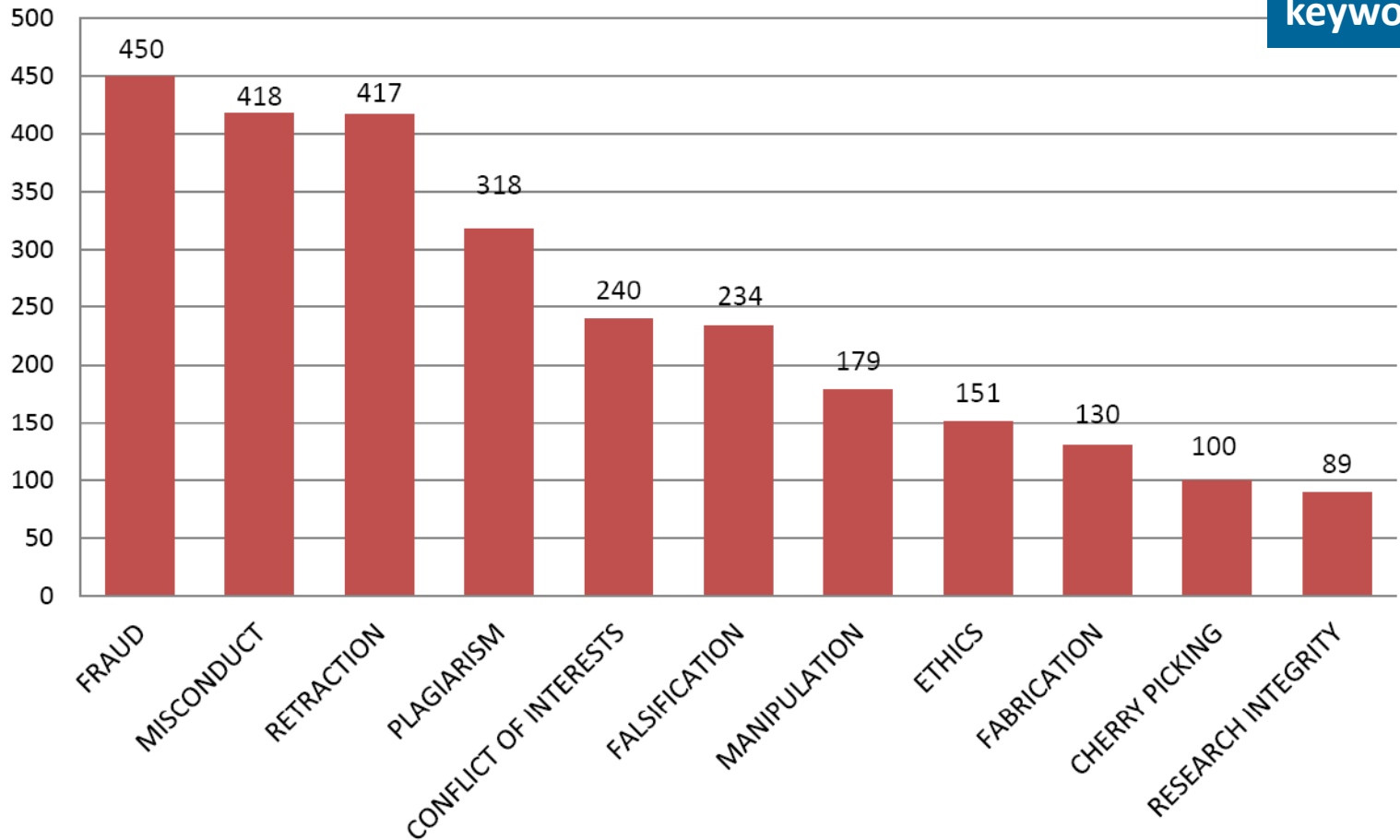
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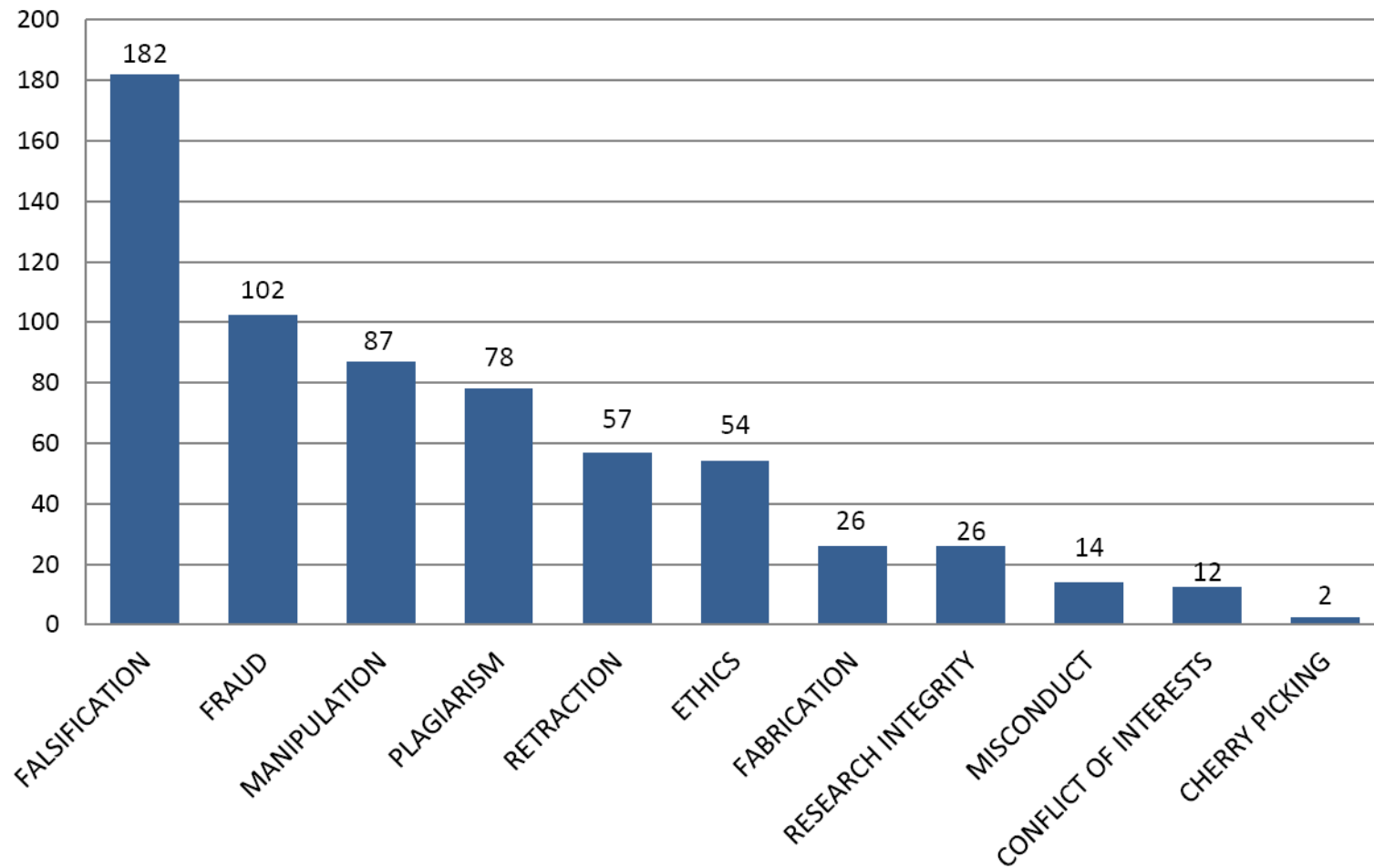
PRINTEGER project – analysis of daily press in UK and Italy

UK – keywords

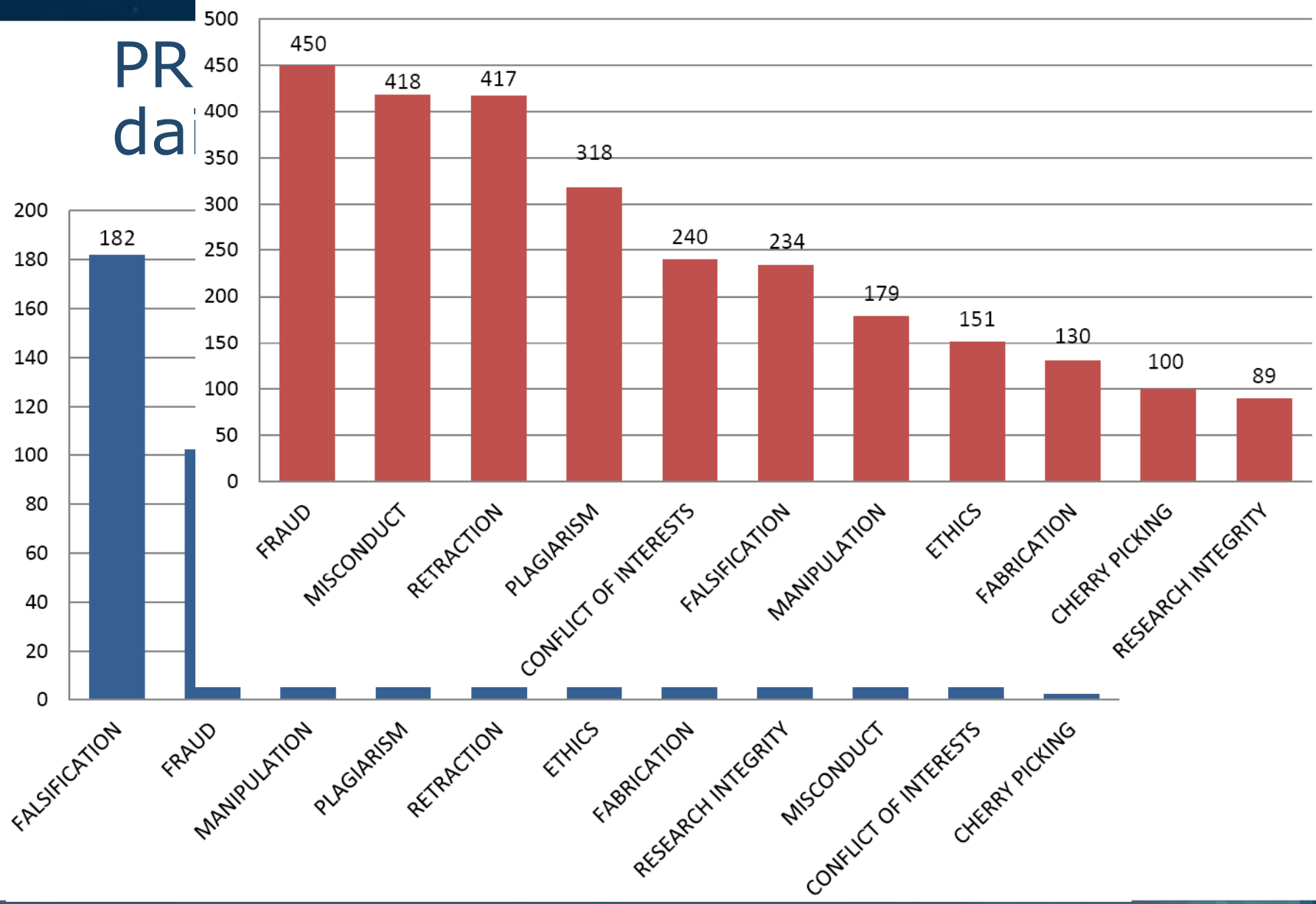


PRINTEGER project – analysis of daily press in UK and Italy

Italy – keywords

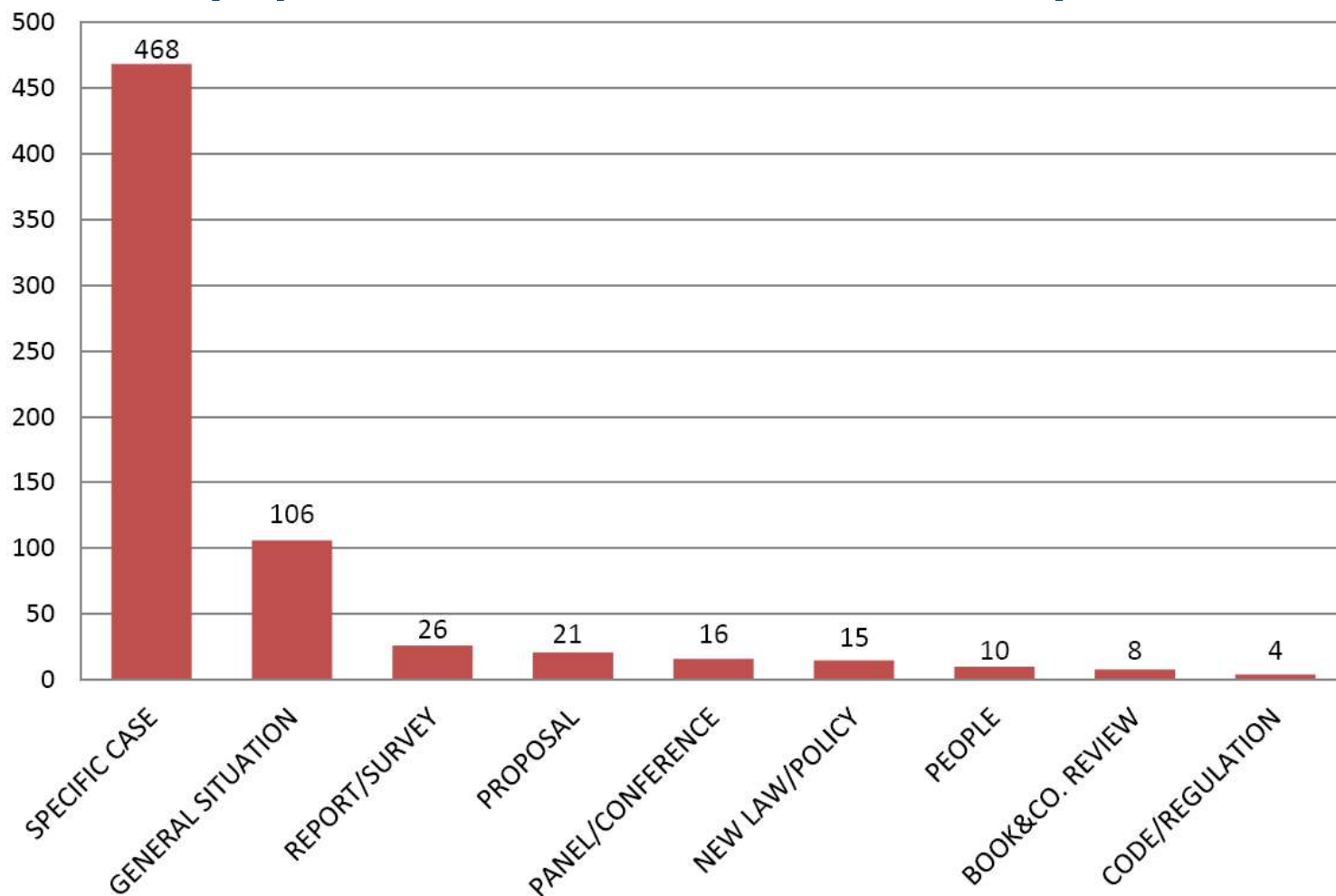


PR
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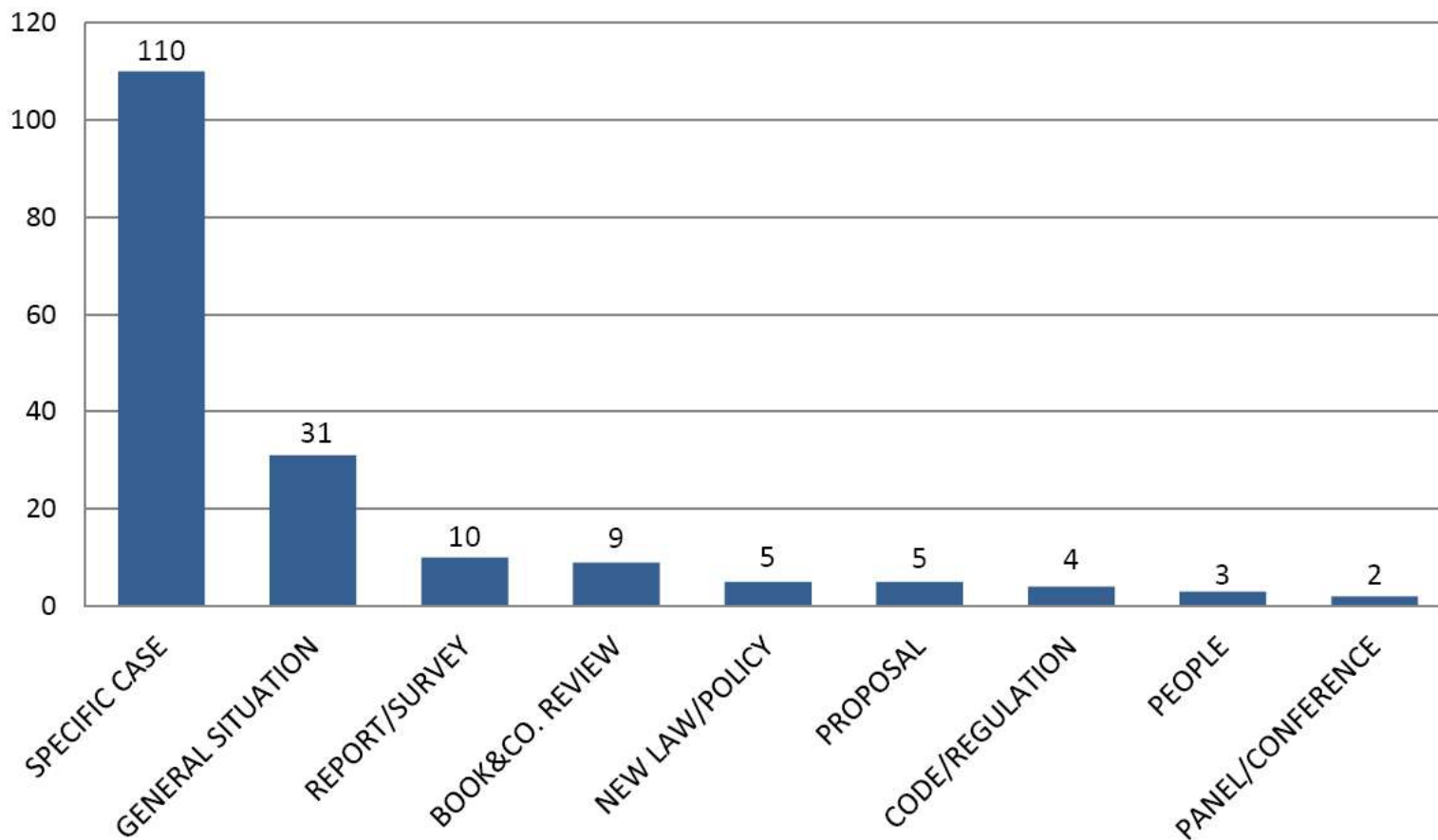
PRINTEGER project – analysis of daily press in UK and Italy

UK – context

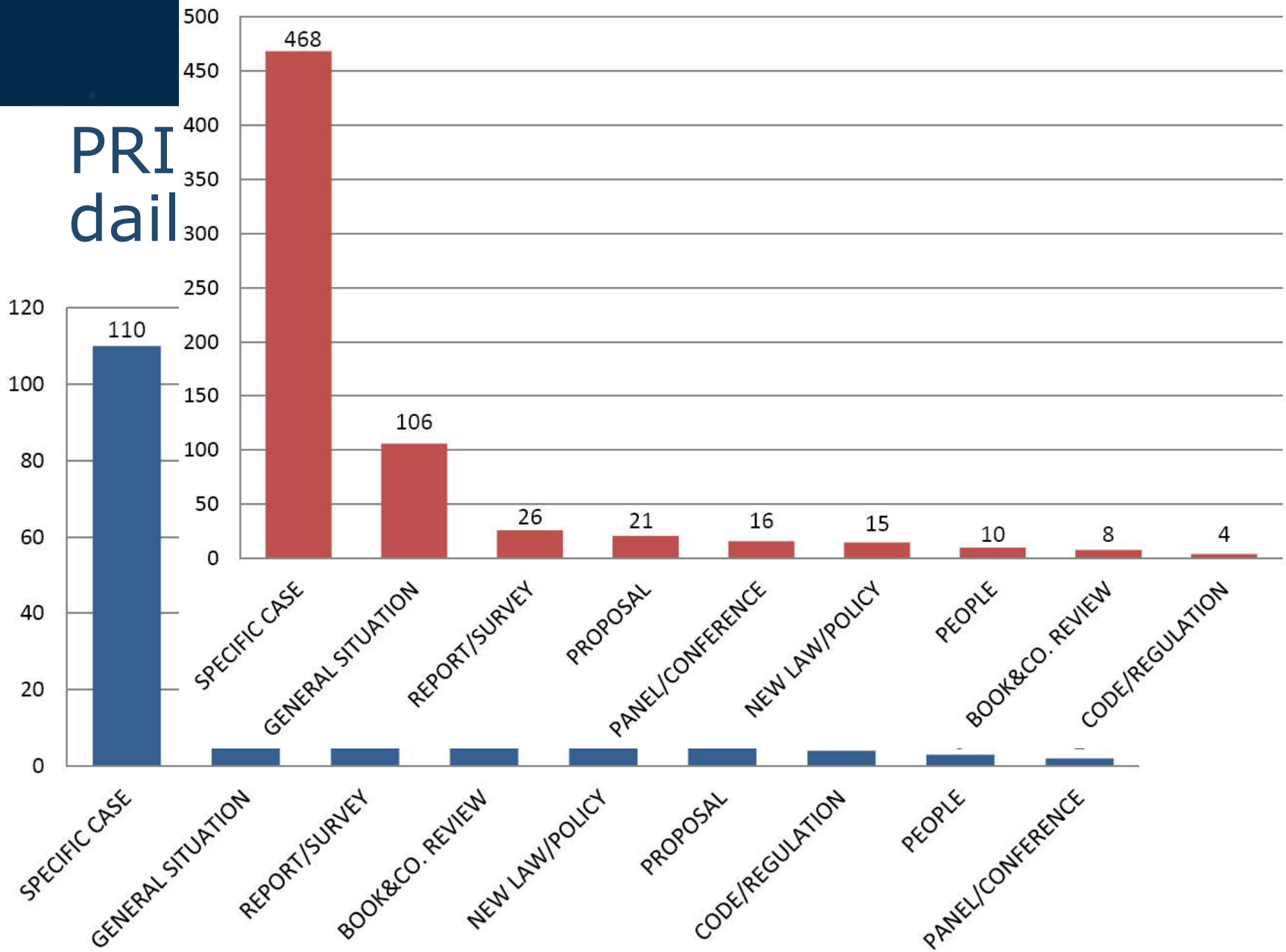


PRINTEGER project – analysis of daily press in UK and Italy

Italy – context



PRI dail



RI country report cards

Practical evaluation

- 5th WCRI in Amsterdam, May 28-31, 2017
- 4 country report cards
 - USA (by ZH Hammat)
 - UK (by E Wager)
 - Norway (by E Engh)
 - Croatia (by A Marušić)



RI country report cards

14 countries in MLE on RI

- 5 countries do not have a national RI policy
- 2 countries do not have a national body or bodies for RI
- 3 countries are not represented in the ENRIO
- 8 countries have publicly available, defined procedure for handling misconduct
- 9 countries do not have specific RI expertise in the form of RI offices or officers although the level of misconduct investigation was institutional or a mixture of institutional and national
- Diversity of bodies and practices in producing RI guidelines and policies



Recent initiatives

- 2017 – European Code of Conduct for Research integrity by *All European Academies (ALLEA)*
- 2017 – The Brussels Declaration on Ethics & Principles for Science & Society Policy-Making by an *international group of diverse stakeholders*
- 2018 – Code of Ethics for Researchers by the *World Economic Forum*



Surveys on RI

2013: Survey of the Danish Agency for Science, Technology and Innovation on national systems for handling research misconduct cases (15 countries)

- Different definitions of research misconduct
- Law vs guidance
- Level for misconduct investigations (mostly institutional)
- Members of RI bodies
- Procedures for a) taking up cases, b) hearing process, c) appeals, d) sanctions
- Confidentiality and transparency of the process
- Protection of whistleblowers



Surveys on RI

2013: Survey of the Danish Agency for Science, Technology and Innovation – issues

- research institutions are best placed to conduct investigation of misconduct allegations
- institutional mechanisms and willingness to handle such cases should be in place
- absence of coordinated national policies may result in different outcomes for similar cases at different institutions;
- existence of a permanent national independent body for handling research misconduct – positive
- lack of authority of such body to make binding decision – negative



Surveys on RI

2014 Survey of RI guidance documents in countries in EEA

49 guidance documents from 19 countries

- importance of RI and definitions of research misconduct
- authors' responsibility mostly addressed, data management and conflict of interest less so
- importance of RI training and RI environment in preventing misconduct



Surveys on RI

2016 Survey of RI practices in Science Europe member organisations

27 responses from 33 different organizations that are members of Science Europe (mostly funding organizations)

- **Definitions:** One third of the respondents did not have a definition of RI; many noted that the borderline with the RI and research ethics remains unclear; having policies and processes for research ethics is not sufficient to cover RI issues.
- **Policies:** Most of the respondents stated that their organization has a specific RI policy.



Surveys on RI

2016 Survey of RI practices in Science Europe member organisations

- Legal instruments: a half of respondents followed one or more legally binding instruments or processes for dealing with misconduct cases and had established processes for dealing with allegation of misconduct
- the information on these processes is not readily available in the public domain
- the bodies for investigating misconduct cases are most often external to the responding organization, and are permanent



Surveys on RI

2016 Survey of RI practices in Science Europe member organisations

- Mobility in misconduct cases: only a few had procedures for dealing with allegations against persons that moved before the allegation was made or during the investigation process or after the completion of investigation.
- Whistle-blowers: only a few had arrangements for whistle-blowers.
- Sanctions: from warnings to blocking of grants to withdrawal of academic degrees; only in a single case there was a sanction for organization that failed to follow RI rules
- Appeal: less than half of the organizations permitted appeals against administrative decisions on RI cases.
- Collaboration: only a few had RI or misconduct cases as a part of collaborative agreement with other organizations



EU RI grants – results

ENERI - European Network of Research Ethics and Research Integrity

- “ **Research ethics** addresses the application of ethical principles or values to the various issues and fields of research. This includes ethical aspects of the design and conduct of research, the way human participants or animals within research projects are treated, whether research results may be misused for criminal purposes and it refers also on aspects of scientific misconduct”
- “**Research integrity** is recognized as the attitude and habit of the researchers to conduct research according to appropriate ethical, legal and professional frameworks, obligations and standards.”

ENERI RI&RE manual



EU RI grants – definitions

PRINTEGER – Promoting Integrity as an Integral Dimension of Excellence in Research

Divergence of researchers and policy makers in how they see RI

- Researchers: wide discourse of RI, seeing it as a virtue that should be promoted
- Policy makers: take a more regulatory tone in their documents, with strict norms and financial concerns



EU RI grants – definitions

PRINTEGER – Promoting Integrity as an Integral Dimension of Excellence in Research

Divergence of researchers and policy makers in how they see RI – complications:

- Researchers see RI policies more as an obstruction than as native part of the research community, and approach the policies as a ritual but not real compliance
- This complicates further attempts at harmonizations of approaches to RI



EU RI grants – definition of RI expert

ENERI

Core competencies for RI/RE expertise

- Ethical competences
- Integrity competences
- Research/science experience
- Legal competences
- Ethics assessment/review experience
- Integrity assessment/review experience



EU RI grants – definition of RI expert

ENERI – Skills for RI/RE expertise

Hard skills	Soft skills	Process skills	Emotional skills
Analytical skills	Communicational	Administrative/ management	Open-mindedness
Scientific skills	Interpersonal	Turning ideas into recommendations/ practice	Independence
Ethical commitment/ thinking/abilities	Eye for details	Decision-making	Societal/cultural/health care awareness/impact
Critical thinking	Ability towards deliberation		Personal commitment
Assessment/ review	Peace-making, conflict- resolution		
	Collaboration		



EU RI grants – definition of RI expert

ENERI

Wide consultations with different stakeholders

- “experience in ethics assessment processes is valued over qualification, and training is advised for all members”
- “specific knowledge/qualification is required for ethics specialists and legal experts”
- “procedure and training certification are favoured over personal certification”



Challenges

- Related to implementation of principles and requirements in practice and transparency of the process

Q1: How to translate national policies to the institutional level?

Q2: How to monitor RI procedures at different institutions and ensure that they are harmonized and consistent within a single country?

Q3: What is the acceptable level of transparency before, during and after misconduct procedure?

Q4: Should the findings of research misconduct investigation be made public and with what level of anonymization?

Q5: How to communicate the finding of misconduct investigation to relevant bodies, such as funding organizations and journals?



Challenges

- Related to mobility of researchers and collaboration of institutions/structures on research misconduct investigation

Q1: How to deal with allegations of misconduct for persons that have already moved from the institution when the allegation is made?

Q2: What to do when the person being investigated moves to another institution?

Q3: What to do with misconduct investigation that are concluded but the person being investigated moves?

Q4: Should institutions check for the history of misconduct allegations with previous employers for newly recruited personnel?

Q5: Should applicants for new positions or grants or the institutions they come from be required to provide a declaration on research integrity?



Challenges

- **Related to whistleblowers**

Q1: What are good practices in protecting a whistleblower?

Q2: How to provide support to whistle-blowers before or at the early stages of misconduct investigation?

Q3: How to protect persons who are either whistleblowers or innocent associates, such as PhD students?



Challenges

- **Sanctions and appeals**

Q1: What are possible sanctions?

Q2: Which sanctions work, do they make a difference?

Q3: Can and should institutions be sanctioned, not only individuals?

Q4: How should an appeal process be organized? Should it be possible?

