



# Solidarity in Academia and its Relationship to Academic Integrity

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## Abstract

This paper provides the theoretical analysis of forms of solidarity in academia and its relationship to academic integrity. This analysis is inspired by the *Guidelines for an Institutional Code of Ethics in Higher Education* drawn up by the International Association of Universities and the Magna Charta Observatory. These Guidelines refer to the principle of solidarity in the context of international cooperation between higher education institutions. However, the author of this paper believes that this principle might also be used in a broader academic context, in particular, in the field of academic ethics and academic integrity. Therefore, this paper aims at revealing the relevance of solidarity in academia and argues that the principle of solidarity can be considered as one of fundamental principles of academic ethics and should be reflected in the structure and provisions of the codes of academic ethics (conduct). For this purpose the author explores the philosophical and sociological approaches towards solidarity and defines the concept of academic solidarity, discusses the conceptual connection between academic solidarity, ethics and integrity and illustrates the impact of solidarity on the development of academic integrity. This analysis allows the author of the paper to recommend embedding the principle of solidarity in the codes of academic ethics of higher education institutions as well as extending the scope of its application by linking the rights and responsibilities of different groups within the academic community in a way that best expresses their unity, shared responsibility, mutual support in meeting the standards of social ethos.

**Keywords** Solidarity · Academic integrity · Code of ethics · Academic misconduct · Academic community

## Introduction

The prevailing consumer lifestyle typical of the postmodern era promotes a perception of individuals as objects of consumption, and thus threatens solidarity as a key principle of human relationships and long-term commitment (Bauman, 2007, 135–136). These tendencies could also be observed in academia. More than twenty years ago Kerr (1994) noted the

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transfer from a traditional paradigm of academic life when “most faculty members were part of a particular academic community as the centre of their lives, and they took their on-campus citizenship responsibilities very seriously”, towards a post-modern academic culture, which “places more emphasis on individual and group advantages and concerns, and less on the overall welfare of the college and university as a self-governing community” (9). Thus, academia becomes a unique type of enterprise, which relies on individual preferences toward conduct and “has generally effective legislative processes, less effective administrative processes, and virtually no effective judicial processes” (Kerr, 1994, 11). The author believes that these issues could still be solved primarily by the internal solidarity of the academic community instead of external authorities (Kerr, 1994, 11). Yet, consumerisation and marketisation continue expanding in contemporary neoliberal academia at the expense of such notions as public service, social purpose and academic solidarity (Gibbs, 2020, 226). On the other hand, as revealed later, the achievement of consumer-oriented goals also requires some type of solidarity and therefore, it cannot be stated that this phenomenon is completely absent in neoliberal academia.

The principle of solidarity and its application is widely analysed in philosophical, sociological, political and other contexts. Meanwhile, even the call for solidarity in academia appears in the scientific discourses on the *status quo* of neoliberal higher education (e.g. McDougall, 2015) or on political regime, migration, refugee etc. issues that require international academic collaboration (e.g. Gaidano et al., 2020; Levich, 1973), the role of the principle of solidarity in academia is still not sufficiently elaborated. One of the most recent attempts to explore the concept of academic solidarity is made by Moroz and Swabowski (2017), who note the ambivalence of this concept and show how solidarity in the university can easily be modified and how it takes on a very dark character at higher education institutions (HEIs).

The topic of solidarity in the context of academic integrity has also received scarce scientific attention. For example, Balik et al. (2010) observe the negative impact of students’ solidarity in the passing around of papers, whether directly or indirectly (via the internet) on academic integrity. Rodriguez (2013) performed a comparative study on ethical issues among college students before and after their application to the programme and provided evaluation of the effectiveness of different active methodologies applied for promotion of the acquisition of solidarity skills, and their impact on performance. Burgess-Proctor et al. (2014) revealed the impact of five faculty members’ solidarity on implementing effective writing improvement strategies for students. Bieliauskaitė and Valavičienė (2019) analysed students’ solidarity and their impact on academic integrity as well as manifestations of solidarity within the academic community and its impact on shaping the culture of academic integrity from the perspective of university lecturers. Maley’s (2020) narrative inquiry revealed students’ solidarity in cases of academic misconduct.

In addition, the principle of solidarity appears in codes of ethics (conduct) and related documents. For example, the *Guidelines for an Institutional Code of Ethics in Higher Education* (hereinafter – *Guidelines*) drawn up by the International Association of Universities and the Magna Charta Observatory, state that a code of ethics for a HEI should, inter alia, uphold the principle of solidarity which is mentioned in the context of international cooperation (IAU-MCO, 2012, Para. 2.2.vii, 3.2.k). It is also the case that in some codes of ethics of HEIs this principle is applied to specific groups of members of the academic community.<sup>1</sup> Even worse, there are codes of ethics that are applied not for the whole academic

<sup>1</sup> For example, in the *Recommendations for Codes of Academic Ethics*, that were approved by the order No. ISAK-2485 of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania on December 5, 2005 (not valid since June 10, 2009) stated that namely the relations between *lecturers* are based on the

community, but for separate parts or just one part of it, usually students (Géring et al., 2019, 61). This approach disintegrates the academic community. These examples reveal the lack of the conceptual scientific discourse on the impact of the principle of solidarity on academic ethics in general and academic integrity in particular that could reveal the potential of this principle and provide the guidelines of its establishment in codes of ethics (conduct) as well as its application in the academic environment.

This conceptual paper aims at revealing the relevance of solidarity in academia and argues that the principle of solidarity can be considered as one of fundamental principles of academic ethics that could make a positive impact on the maintenance of academic integrity in HEIs and, therefore, this principle should be reflected in the structure and provisions of the codes of academic ethics (conduct).

In order to achieve this goal the author starts with the research of philosophical and sociological approaches towards solidarity. The analysis of philosophical literature helps to reveal the inner dynamic of solidarity, while a sociological approach is employed to determine the main solidarity motives as well as the fundamental characteristic of solidarity. Accordingly, the analogy method (Bermejo-Luque, 2014) is used to define the concept of academic solidarity and to model its structure. The second part of the paper employs the analysis of literature that tackles key variables associated with the target phenomenon and defines the conceptual connection between solidarity, ethics and integrity. Finally, based on conceptual analysis provided in previous parts as well as on the analysis of online resources of international networks and generalisation of data of empirical papers, various forms of solidarity in the context of academic integrity are illustrated, and the initial implications for the development of positive impact of solidarity towards academic integrity are provided.

## The Concept and Structure of Academic Solidarity

According to Pensky (2008), solidarity is the status of intersubjectivity, in which a number of persons are bound together into definite relations (9). With reference to Feinberg, Dworkin, Durkheim and Halls, Cureton (2012) describes solidarity as:

a matter of a group of people being united or at one with regard to something (sympathies, interests, values, etc.), having genuine concern for each other's welfare, respecting others as group members, trusting one another not to intentionally undermine or free ride on the group, taking pride in the group as a whole, being ashamed of its failures and suffering loss or betrayal if members of the group do not live up to the requirements that the group places on itself, and perhaps having certain other affections for one's compatriot. (696)

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### Footnote 1 (continued)

principles of collegiality and academic solidarity (Dėl rekomendacijų akademinės etikos kodeksams patvirtinimo, 2005, para. 7). In the following *Recommendations on the Approval, Embedding and Monitoring Academic Ethics Codes by Research and Higher Education Institutions* approved by the order No. V-16 of the Ombudsperson for Academic Ethics and Procedures of the Republic of Lithuania on March 31, 2015 (not valid since August 25, 2020), it was stated that the relations between the *members of the academic community* (students, lecturers, scientists, other researchers and professors emeritus) are based on the principles of collegiality and academic solidarity (Recommendations on the Approval, Embedding and Monitoring Academic Ethics Codes by Research and Higher Education Institutions, 2015, para. 3.1, 12). While in the revised *Recommendations for Codes of Academic Ethics in Research and Higher Education Institutions* approved by the order No. V-38 of the Ombudsperson for Academic Ethics and Procedures of the Republic of Lithuania on August 25, 2020 the principle of solidarity is not listed at all.

Rorty (1989) believes that solidarity is not what every person has in advance, it is “not discovered, but created via reflection” (xvi). Creation of solidarity is the community’s task accomplishing which starts at the community itself, the place we are (Rorty, 1989, xvi). Meanwhile Gadamer (2009) argues that solidarity could be discovered, not created. Nevertheless, he thinks that a “real solidarity must be conscious” (39), it includes the elements of unity, respect for differences and mutual understanding (Warnke, 2012, 13). Despite these different approaches, the insights of philosophers reveal the dynamism of solidarity, the ability to consciously create or discover it, and at the same time to encourage and nurture it.

In their analysis of solidarity motives, some sociologists highlight instrumentalism and utilitarianism, while others emphasise values and socially-based obligations. For example, solidarity could be encouraged by the rational egoism, avoidance of punishment and the pursuit of personal gain or reward (Komter, 2005, 113–115). These approaches express the *instrumental* solidarity of members of a liberal individualistic society, where cooperation in order to meet personal needs becomes a paramount in a market economy (Bieliauskaitė, 2009, 83). Proponents of another view equate solidarity not with rational calculation but with a sense of unity and the values of the community in which the person lives. For example, communitarians believe that people have a sense of identity and moral values and feel committed to the community. In other words, people “(...) not only seek pleasure or benefit, but also act on the basis of internalised values and common norms” (Komter, 2005, 116). This solidarity theory emphasises the person’s belonging to a particular group. In this case, we can speak about ethnic, cultural, intergenerational solidarity, or *we* solidarity, that does not anonymously unite any member of any society, but exists in particular communities with their own traditions and specificities.

The development of various aspects of togetherness requires social interaction and, accordingly, coordination as a “key feature of solidarity” (Koudenburg et al., 2013, 1). This coordination is based on rules that are a constitutive part of solidarity relationships with one another (Cureton, 2012, 692). Here, Cureton (2012) means social moral rules, while Durkheim saw legal regulation as a key to the maintenance of social solidarity (Johnson et al., 2017, 649).

Although different authors indicate different motives for solidarity, it is generally acknowledged that one of the most important features of solidarity is the pursuit of a common goal (Butler, 2010; Cureton, 2012; Dawson & Verweij, 2012; Gadamer, 2009 etc.). Goals can be different and therefore, as Moroz and Swabovski (2017) observe, solidarity is not an autonomous term. Rather, it depends on social functions: what community is produced by this term and for what purpose (149). In their considerations about academic solidarity, authors assume that it:

has, in fact, two functions. Firstly, it mystifies real conflicts in the university. Secondly, it is a way to keep privileges over other workers (inside and outside academia). In general, academic solidarity, both in the feudal academy and in the neo-liberal education factory, blocks emancipatory practice and the possibility of solidarity that is wider and based on values other than being obedient and deferring to power. This solidarity is very dark. (Moroz & Swabovski, 2017, 153)

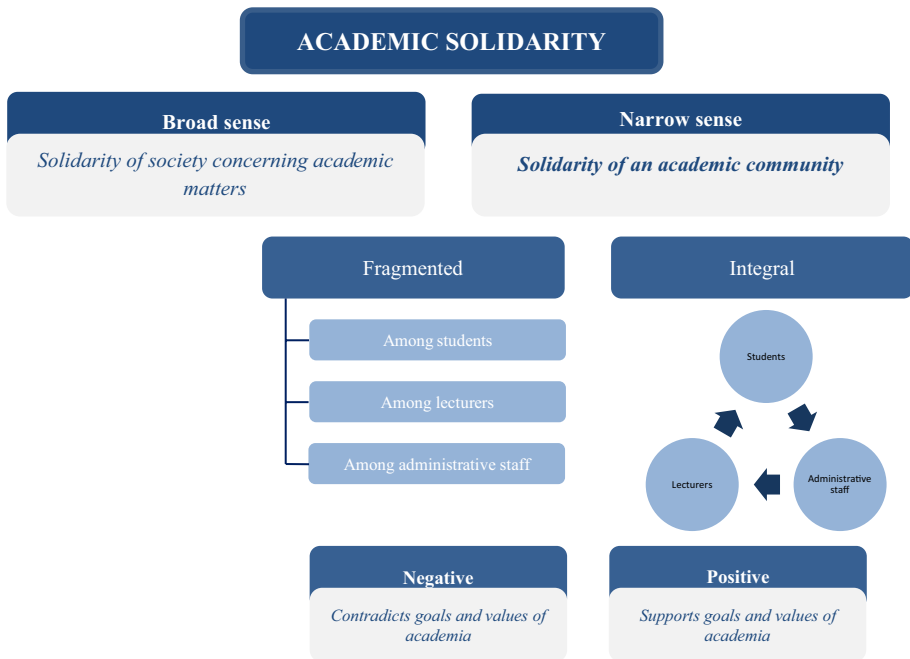
These insights illustrate *instrumental* solidarity and are definitely worthy attention. However, the author of this paper believes that solidarity has a bright side as well and follows the communitarian line of *we* solidarity by assuming that the goal of solidarity is oriented towards the welfare of society or community which, accordingly, could be a basis

for the welfare of its individual members. What could be the motives of solidarity and common goals in academia?

Individuals become members of the academic community following a variety of reasons. In the ideal case, one or another study programme is chosen in order to become an expert and to provide professional services to society. On the other hand, these motives could also be egoistic: we study because we are convinced that the knowledge, skills, or at least the fact of studies proved by a higher education diploma, will help us getting a (better) job, earning a (higher) salary, etc. or just because we enjoy studying (on the variety of students' motivation and goals see more: Lieberman & Remedios, 2007; Serdiuk, 2012). Similarly, professors may deliver their lectures not only because they need to sustain themselves and their families, but because they understand the impact of their professional activity on future society (on the variety of university instructors' motivation and goals see more: Daumiller et al., 2019). Thus, the definition of a common goal of the academic community becomes complicated, since it is affected not only by motives of a particular person but also by their status in academia.

Nonetheless, the author of this paper believes that it is possible to find a common goal that unites the members of the academic community as well as the whole of society. It is (could be) a sustainable development of society which is inconceivable without respect for each of its members and, accordingly, for human rights and freedoms. This goal is directly linked to the academic community, which not only prepares professionals of various fields to help achieve these goals, but also develops respect for individuals, their rights and freedoms. As it is enshrined in the preamble of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (hereinafter – *Declaration*), this *Declaration* is “a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations, to the end that every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by *teaching and education* (emphasised by the author) to promote respect for these rights and freedoms (...)” (The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948). These provisions are reflected in national legislation and thus shape national (higher) education policies, which accordingly affect both institutional and individual goals and motivation.

In their analysis of the issue of solidarity, sociologists distinguish two – micro and macro – hypothetical contracts (Komter, 2005, 145–146). The author of this paper presumes that similar contracts could also be detected in an academic environment. For example, a *microsocial* contract brings together members or their groups of a particular academic community. The existence of this contract could not only be deduced from traditions and values of a particular group or community, but also could have tangible expression in study or job contracts that establish commitment of students, lecturers, and administrative staff to the provisions of regulations of higher education, which in turn can also be considered as agreement to act one or another way and thus to maintain values of a particular academic community. Meanwhile, the *macrosocial* contract is a hypothetical agreement between members of society on social goals and their establishment in certain legal documents, e.g. a constitution. Thus, solidarity based on *macrosocial* contract extends beyond a single academic community and brings together not only the academic communities of a given country, but also the relevant governmental and non-governmental institutions, organisations and society in general. In addition, according to the *Guidelines*, it is desirable that solidarity ties in the academic field should also include the academic communities of different countries as well as international governmental and non-governmental institutions, organisations and the international community in general. In this case, we can talk about a *mezasocial* contract.



**Fig. 1** Structure of academic solidarity

On this basis it is possible to define several meanings and forms of academic solidarity (Fig. 1). In the *narrow sense*, academic solidarity is a sense of community, unity, shared interests, shared responsibility, and mutual support in a particular academic community. Here, relatively small groups – students, lecturers and administration – could be distinguished. The united interaction within these groups in pursuit of their goals can be called *fragmented academic solidarity*. Such solidarity can be both *positive* when the individual group focuses on achieving the common goal of the academic community (by sharing material that is difficult to access (students), developing new study programmes (lecturers) etc.) and *negative* when solid activities of members of these groups contradict or deny goals and values of academia (e.g. tolerance of a fellow’s misconduct). In addition, these groups could also demonstrate their mutual solidarity in both positive and negative ways (see more examples in Bieliauskaitė & Valavičienė, 2019; Valavičienė & Bieliauskaitė, 2019). Fragmented solidarity could also appear as collegiality, which is explained using such concepts as “community, respect, value of colleagues and their work, concern for one another, and a feeling of inclusion” (Schmidt et al., 2017, p. 29).

However, solidarity of the entire academic community is also important here. In this case, solidarity ties become more complex, i.e. they not only bring together students, lecturers and academic staff individually, but all of these groups into one academic community, united by *integral* (solid) academic solidarity in pursuit of common goals and values established in academia’s mission, strategy and other documents and maintained by the code of ethics (conduct).

Meanwhile, in a *broad sense*, academic solidarity is the unity, shared responsibility and mutual support of society that unites individuals as well as various institutions,

international or national, state or non-governmental organisations in the academic field. It appears in the context of macro- and megasocial contracts.

## Academic Integrity and its Relationship to Academic Solidarity

Professional services provided by members of society are undoubtedly important for its sustainable development. As surveys show, people with higher integrity are more innovative and productive than those with lower integrity (Becker, 1998, 160). This is presumably because, in performing their duties in good faith, individuals fulfil the expectations of other members of society and this is seen as professionalism. Consequently, the training of professionals in an academic institution is inseparable from the development of honest behaviour.

Academic integrity is a significant value of academia and could be perceived as “one of the most important imperatives of academic ethics and even as its synonym” (Gaižauskaitė et al., 2017, 0936). It maintains the fluency and transparency of educational processes including provision of knowledge, development of skills and shaping “the moral behaviour of future generations” (Nijhof et al., 2012, 93). Academic integrity can be understood as: (a) a commitment to such fundamental values as honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility, and courage; (b) honest behaviour, e.g. compliance with rules of the code of ethics (conduct); and (c) opposite to dishonesty, misconduct, cheating and plagiarism (Gaižauskaitė et al., 2017, 0932). Even if academic integrity is often understood as a personal, not institutional, quality (Vasiljevičienė, 2014), it can also be characteristic to the institution or academia in particular. As Calabrese and Calabrese Barton (2000) note, “integrity always speaks to wholeness; it does not embrace fragmentation (...). Integrity is the relationship between the people and their chosen leaders. This integrity-driven relationship is built on mutual trust and commitment in solidarity” (281).

In order to reveal the relationship between academic solidarity, ethics and integrity it is necessary to refer to the initial meaning of these concepts. According to Maak (2008) “someone has integrity if he acts in accordance with important moral principles, does so in a coherent and consistent way, over time (...)” (358). Thus, integrity requires unity of words and actions which enables one to evaluate the person as trustworthy. It also “requires acting in accordance with one’s conscience” (Audi & Murphy, 2006, 4). One of the philosophers who explored the notion of conscience most precisely is Thomas Aquinas. He understood human conscience as an inner quality which enables us to discern what is right and wrong and to apply this knowledge to particular decisions about some of our actions. According to the philosopher, human conscience consists of: (1) a specific habit of practical reason (*ratio practica*) – the inherent knowledge of common moral-practical principles (*synderesis*); (2) an acquired world-view concerning practically important basic beliefs and basic values (*sapientia*); (3) an acquired empirical knowledge (*scientia*) which helps an individual to recognise and judge the actual practice (Anzenbacher, 1998, 80–81). *Synderesis* of every person is equal as far as everyone bears a conscience, but *sapientia* and *scientia* vary as far as every person may acquire different knowledge. The conviction of personal conscience is always subjective therefore it can be wrong. According to Aquinas, conscience is wrong when individual world-view or empirical approaches do not conform to the widely recognised public standards (Anzenbacher, 1998, 99). Understanding of right conscience as corresponding to public standards indicates the cohesion of individual conscience and *social ethos*.

Contemporary researchers on integrity and conscientiousness indicate the relevance of Aquinas' ideas and provide the basis for the comparison of these notions which finally lead to the conclusion that integrity is a "morally laden element of conscientiousness" (Becker, 1998, 158; also see: Audi & Murphy, 2006, 4), i.e. integrity is adherence to the instructions of the right conscience. However, conscientiousness is the internal quality (virtue) of a person. It can be governed by right or wrong conscience which affects his way of thinking, talking and acting. Whereas, integrity is an external quality which can be considered as personal as well as an institutional quality (value) (Bieliauskaitė, 2014, 4231). It imperatively requires us to address statements and actions to widely recognised moral principles and values, i.e. to meet the requirements of generally accepted standards and comply with consequent responsibilities. This institutionalised duty to meet public expectations (Komter, 2005, 106) links integrity and solidarity when members of society *in corpore* engage in activities based on universally recognised (institutionalised) standards and aimed at upholding values of public interest. Accordingly, academic integrity means congruence with the standards of academic community (*academic ethos*) or, as the European Network for Academic Integrity defines it, "compliance with ethical and professional principles, standards, practices and consistent system of values, that serves as guidance for making decisions and taking actions in education, research and scholarship" (Tauginienė et al., 2018, 7–8).

What can be considered as public standards (*social ethos*) in modern society? As Anzenbacher (1998) noted, in homogeneous societies conscience and ethos overlap, since here standards are accepted strongly and unanimously, and consciences tend to be oriented uncritically towards social ethos and its norms (110). Meanwhile, in today's heterogeneous, pluralistic societies, the identification of a common ethos and its impact on human conscience becomes problematic. However, that does not mean that it is impossible to identify it at all. According to Anzenbacher (1998), an excellent example of universally recognised standards is the ethos of human rights (99). Not only do human rights help for reassurance of values that are important to each individual and society, they are themselves considered as such values. As mentioned above, the *Declaration* obliges every individual and every organ of society to make every effort to promote respect for these rights and freedoms by training and education (The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948, preamble). In addition, it is recognised that science and research are important values of modern society (e.g. International Covenant of Economic, Social & Cultural Rights, 1966, Art. 13, Art. 15 Para. 3; Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, 2012, Art. 13, 14). Consequently, science and education are not only means of protecting human rights, but also values to be protected. In doing so, the international community and each signatory state is obliged to ensure the recognition and enforcement of these values.

Thus, it can be argued that academic solidarity and academic integrity are linked through a *social ethos* that maintains socially significant values. These values are both standards and goals that require members of society as well as of particular academic communities to behave in a spirit of solidarity and integrity. The later principle requires "acting according to a code (integrated system) of morally justifiable principles" (Becker, 1998, 158). Then codes of ethics (conduct) as far as they reflect the most important values and moral principles of a particular institution or profession, can be considered as recognised standards. In the context of academia these codes together with other strategic documents of HEIs embed the *academic ethos*.



## Impact of Academic Solidarity on Academic Integrity: Observations and Directions of Development

A growing number of higher education and other governmental and nongovernmental institutions are engaged in combating academic dishonesty, sharing their experiences in promoting academic and research integrity at both national and international levels through mutual collaboration, establishment of centres, associations, and networks. Examples of these are the International Center for Academic Integrity (ICAI), the European Network for Academic Integrity (ENAI), the European Network of Research Integrity Offices (ENRIO), and the European Network of Research Ethics and Research Integrity (ENERI), together demonstrating their solidarity at the *megasocial* level. National governments express their concern about academic integrity issues by means of institutionalisation and legislation, i.e. establishing institutions to promote academic and research ethics and deal with academic misconduct (offices of ombudspersons, ethics committees etc.), as well as by issuing or making amendments to legislation that foster academic and research integrity and apply penalties for academic misconduct. HEIs also establish local offices of academic integrity and commissions of academic ethics, sharing best practice and issues with other institutions, and publicly demonstrating the principled position of institutions towards academic dishonesty. Depending on the scope and the characteristics of these actions, they could be conceived as expressions of either broad or narrow sense academic solidarity.

Unlike compliance-based programmes which embody a coercive orientation with measures designed to prevent, detect and punish violations of present standards of behaviour, integrity-based or values-based ethics programmes incorporate an enabling orientation. These programmes encourage ethical aspirations of autonomous individuals based on their understanding of what is the right way to act in a specific situation, and requires participants “to balance and apply different values in concrete settings” (Nijhof et al. 2012, 100). The best results can be achieved by the joint effort and commitment of everyone. ICAI, for example, provides ten ways to improve academic integrity, including forming a Campus Academic Integrity Committee consisting of students, faculty and staff representatives, involving students in educating their peers on integrity policy (ICAI, 2020). The importance of students’ commitment is also stressed in ENAI materials: “students must be main characters and active change agents” (Guerrero-Dib, 2019). This mutual collaboration of each and every member of the academic community in order to promote academic integrity could be considered as an *integral positive solidarity*. One of many examples of the expression of this type of academic solidarity is a code of academic ethics if it is created by the academic community, i.e. all internal stakeholder groups (see more: Géring et al., 2019; Popa & Ristea, 2020).

On the other hand, solidarity in the context of academic integrity could bear not only a positive character. For example, students can express their solidarity via mutual consultations during assessments, tolerance (not reporting) of other students’ misconduct, official permission for their fellows to use (plagiarise) one’s own paper (more examples see: Pupovac et al., 2019; Valavičienė & Bieliauskaitė, 2019). Lecturers also observe some unethical behaviour amongst their colleagues: deliberately ignoring students’ cheating and plagiarism, blaming those lecturers who care about academic integrity for their assumed incompetence and their negative attitude towards students. This experience can make lecturers to look for compromise and to address integrity issues more flexibly, because they want to keep good relationships with their colleagues (Bieliauskaitė & Valavičienė, 2019, 6767). This manifestation of solidarity within particular groups of the academic community, directed towards pursuit of their personal goals

that contradict academic values, could be defined as *fragmented negative solidarity*. Accordingly, it is also possible to observe *integral negative solidarity*, when, for example, lecturers allow their students to cheat during an exam, or do not assess a plagiarised paper objectively (Bieliauskaitė & Valavičienė, 2019, 6768). At some point, questionable collaboration practices (Gladwin, 2018) could also be considered as examples of negative solidarity. These and similar attitudes and actions of faculty members, as well as peers' misconduct, stimulate academic dishonesty (Maloshonok & Shmeleva, 2019, 315). Meanwhile *fragmented positive solidarity* is when, for example, lecturers consult each other on issues of academic integrity and provide support for their colleagues while participating together in examinations and thus helping to ensure fair assessment (see more: Bieliauskaitė & Valavičienė, 2019). Thus, the manifestations of forms of solidarity depend on what is considered as the main goal: academic integrity as the value and common interest of academia, or individual egoistic preferences (better grade, good personal relationships, saving time and efforts).

These examples suggest that the effective maintenance of a culture of academic integrity requires the creation of such conditions that stimulate positive solidarity and prevent the appearance of any forms of negative solidarity. This could be done by taking, at first glance, simple and obvious measures that many HEIs have already taken: not only inclusion of all internal stakeholders in drafting a code of academic ethics and other internal policies and regulations, but also leading by example. This could also include: increasing awareness of ethical dilemmas and motivation of students, especially freshmen, supporting and encouraging intolerance of academic misconduct as well as other collaborative activities leading to the creation and strengthening of the culture of academic integrity (see more; IAU-MCO, 2012; Minarcik & Bridges, 2015; Chankova, 2020; MacLeod & Eaton, 2020; ICAI, 2021). The principle of academic solidarity could be enshrined in institutional codes of academic ethics (conduct): (i) literally; (ii) in combination with other principles, for example, the principle of collegiality (Tauginienė, 2016, 335), fairness (IAU-MCO, 2012), or it could be revealed (iii) indirectly. For example, IAU-MCO *Guidelines* aim at the consolidation of HEIs' efforts to ensure academic ethics (*mega-* and *macrosocial* level) as well as emphasise the role of each and every member of the academic community (*microsocial* level) in the establishment and maintenance of the culture of academic integrity (para. 3.1–3.3). In other words, even if not expressed directly, a call for solidarity is present in this document in a context wider than international partnership.

No less than the academic community, society in general has a significant impact on the promotion and maintenance of academic integrity. Results of numerous research studies indicate correlation between students' cheating and society's values (Maloshonok & Shmeleva, 2019, 315). The interesting fact observed by researchers is that students in so-called collectivistic countries like Russia, Ukraine, and Lebanon, tend to consider peers' behaviour in performing dishonestly more than in individualistic countries like the US and Switzerland (Maloshonok & Shmeleva, 2019, 324). These findings might be one of reasons that lead to a moderate approach towards solidarity as a principle of academic ethics, not to mention ambiguity of the content of this principle. For example, after 15 years, solidarity was deleted from the list of principles provided in the *Recommendations for Codes of Academic Ethics in Research and Higher Education Institutions* in Lithuania (see footnote 1). On the other hand, these risks expose the demand of both deeper analysis of the dynamics of this principle, and the active role of the state in the promotion of academic integrity – not only in the establishment of scientific and educational institutions, but also in protection of intellectual property and copyright, fair competition of students, researchers and others. These activities should be directed towards the encouragement of positive solidarity and prevention of the negative solidarity of academic communities in general

and their members in particular. For example, state institutions could stimulate unification of HEIs reaction towards academic misconduct by creating a database of students expelled from HEIs for violations of academic ethics. This could prevent such a situation when a HEI expels a student for severe academic misconduct and sets a time restriction for his/her enrolment, the same student is admitted to another HEI without any restrictions, thus allowing a student to escape responsibility. Moreover, not only the state institutions, but also societies should actively protect their values, demonstrating intolerance of academic dishonesty and providing information for institutions dealing with academic misconduct. If the society remains apathetic or tolerates violations of academic integrity, governmental and HEIs alone will be powerless to deal with the problem. Such a public position sooner or later can become harmful for society itself (Bieliauskaitė, 2014, 4231, 4234). Therefore, it is highly important to encourage integral positive solidarity not only in a narrow sense (microsocial level), but also in a broad sense (macro and mega social levels).

Solidarity is especially demanded in times of crisis, like the COVID-19 pandemic that has required rapid, and in some cases, radical changes of the process of education and research. Even if not formalised in the documents, academic solidarity is already present. This crisis calls for as much collaborative work of students, lecturers, administrators as never before. In addition, academic institutions are looking for ways to support their members, while governments seek the same for academic institutions. The international academic community (networks, associations etc.) is sharing its best practices, material and recommendations on how to deal with issues that have occurred (Chatfield & Schroeder, 2020). This situation demonstrates that solidarity in general and academic solidarity in particular is important not only for the maintenance of academic integrity but also for sustainability or even survival of academia itself.

## Conclusions

Solidarity may be encouraged by the pursuit of purely egoistic motives (*instrumental* solidarity) as well as by a sense of unity and belief in community values (*we* solidarity). In any case, solidarity is about acting together in order to achieve a certain goal. One of the main goals of academia is educating future professionals, thus contributing to the sustainable development of society. However, members of academia could have different goals. These different goals and their scope allow different forms of academic solidarity to be revealed – *fragmented* and *integral*, *negative* and *positive* solidarity – which appear in different combinations within the academic community.

Solidarity and integrity are linked via *social ethos* – widely recognised public standards – insofar as they guarantee the maintenance of social values. These values are both standards and goals that require members of society, as well as of particular academic communities, to behave in a spirit of solidarity and integrity. In academia this behaviour is usually regulated by codes of academic ethics (conduct) that embed *academic ethos* – standards and values of the academic institution.

Academic integrity is the part of *academic ethos*, the maintenance of which requires involvement of all members of academia and their efforts, i.e. *positive integral solidarity*. In other words, the culture of academic integrity could be created and promoted via inclusion of all members of academia (at micro level) and society (macro or mega levels) in the process of determination of the main academic values and their communication, thus fostering awareness of academic standards. Here, the motivation, efforts and principled

position of each member of the (academic) community is important in order to follow these standards and to eliminate social pressure to commit academic misconduct.

These conclusions support recommendations to embed the principle of solidarity in the codes of academic ethics of higher education institutions, and to extend the scope of its application by linking the rights and responsibilities of different groups within the academic community in a way that best expresses their unity, shared responsibility, mutual support in meeting the standards of academic and, at the same time, social ethos.

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