Consolidating European ethics assessment for research and innovation: the SATORI project

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The European Commission's Science in Society (SiS) programme aims to enable society to better meet future societal challenges through citizen engagement and especially through the mechanism of Mobilisation and Mutual Learning Actions. These actions are designed to bring together research bodies and actors from wider society to jointly implement an action plan in order to address a chosen 'Societal Challenge' through the involvement of wider society in research agenda setting and through the use of research results. It is within this context that the European Commission issued a call for a Mobilisation and Mutual Learning Action Plan (MMLAP) on "*Ethics assessment*". Specifically, the EC wants to pursue new ways of involving society at large in the definition, implementation and evaluation of research agendas and of promoting responsible scientific and technological progress "within a framework of common basic ethical principles and on the basis of agreed practices that can inspire the rest of the world".

The SATORI (Stakeholders Acting Together on the ethical impact assessment of Research and Innovation) project is a response to this call. The title of the project reflects the collective effort integral to this challenge: the aim of the SATORI project is to develop an ethical assessment framework for scientific research and related innovation activities through the active involvement of all of the main actors (including scientists, regulators, civil society, international bodies) involved in the design and application of ethics, principles and laws in research and innovation. SATORI aims to contribute to the improvement and recognition of ethical assessment of research and innovation in Europe and beyond.

This paper offers an overview of the SATORI approach. First, we underline the rationale for the project, by describing *de facto* ethics assessment of research and innovation and zooming in on current challenges, including lack of uniformity of ethics assessment frameworks, dissimilar legislation and practices and the implications of globalisation for "ethics dumping". In the second section, we offer an overview of the different activities that fall under ethics assessment (e.g., research ethics, technology ethics, etc.) and on which we seek to build our ethics assessment framework. We focus in on two new approaches, namely anticipatory ethics in the study of emerging technologies and ethical impact assessment. In the third section, we identify and describe the basic tools and concepts that will be used to carry out an analysis of current practices related to ethics assessment in research and innovation. In the fourth section, we describe our efforts to develop a systematised inventory of current practices and principles in ethics assessment and share some early empirical findings.