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Proposals for the creation of an expert working group on human enhancement

Summary of proposal: To set up an appropriate European body to: oversee and analyse trends towards human enhancement; assess moral and social consequences; provide information and advice.

Motivation for this proposal: In conjunction with stakeholders, the SIENNA[1] project make this proposal based on the observation that human enhancement is expected to be an area of research and development in the near future, and because it presents society with significant social, ethical and regulatory challenges. However, currently, there is no policy-oriented body at the European level that tracks these developments and makes policy recommendations for the ethical and regulatory guidance of human enhancement research, development and deployment.

Identity of the working group: The group should maintain sufficient breadth of expertise so as to ensure accuracy and efficiency in the tasks they fulfil, as well as to ensure the ongoing efficacy of proposed methods for promoting ethics for human enhancement.

Primary activities of the working group:

- **Propose methods for ethical approaches to human enhancement.** This includes in policy proposals, and in relation to the guidelines. These should be both at European and National levels, as appropriate. New methods should also be added, in response to new developments, and existing proposals should be kept up to date.

- **Provide support and guidance** to individuals, to national bodies, as well as to EU-level institutions, bodies and agencies. This list includes researchers, developers, and (para)medical practitioners in human enhancement fields, as well as policy makers, research funders, regulators, and other interested stakeholders, both public and private.

- **Evaluate developments in human enhancement technologies, especially in relation to core values as developed in the SIENNA guidelines.** These include, but are not limited to well-being, autonomy, informed consent, equality, justice, and (moral and social) responsibility.

- **Survey key and related human enhancement fields**, including literature reviews, data collection, and keeping abreast of new as well as existing policy documents. This material should be used alongside SIENNA guidelines and proposals so as to maintain records of relevant research, development and application of human enhancement technologies in national as well as cross-European contexts *[or globally?]*.

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[1] The SIENNA project, 'Stakeholder-Informed Ethics for New technologies with high socio-ecoNomic and human rights impAct', seeks to develop ethical protocols and codes for human genomics, human enhancement, and artificial intelligence & robotics. SIENNA is funded under the European Union's H2020 research and innovation programme (grant agreement No 741716). These guidelines have been informed by engagement with key experts and other stakeholders including participants from ethics committees, policy makers, academia, and industry.

- **Engage with national and EU authorities** in matters concerning the regulation of human enhancement technologies, including on topics related to health, safety, and risk. Risk needs to be considered and assessed not only for individuals and recipients of enhancement, but also for for families, groups and communities, for workers, employees and students, and for society more generally.

- **Develop methods to sustain ongoing stakeholder participation.** This will help to ensure knowledge sharing, cross-disciplinary and industry dialogue, and public engagement, as well as to help facilitate best practice participation among new and established human enhancement communities, both public and private.

SIENNA ethics guidelines for human enhancement: The guidelines cover research in, as well as development and application of human enhancement technologies and procedures. The aim of the guidelines is to ensure that there is a systematic inclusion of ethical values and principles in the design and development processes of human enhancement, as per the *Ethics by Design* approach promoted by SIENNA. We recommend that the working group ensure that the SIENNA ethics guidelines for human enhancement are:

- kept up to date and new guidelines added as appropriate;

- revised periodically so as to remain relevant, including for additional ethical issues that arise from new and emerging developments in human enhancement technologies;

- incorporated in national as well as cross-European ethics guidelines and research ethics protocols for relevant fields, as identified in the preamble of that document;

- incorporated in ethics guidelines and research ethics protocols for the field of biomedicine;

- instrumental in new or updated regulations, policies, protocols and procedures for human enhancement research, development, applications, and funding. Where possible the aim should be to ensure consistency and harmony between those documents and the guidelines.

STOA study on human enhancement technologies: The proposals we offer here complement and build on proposals as recommended in the STOA study, which proposed the creation of 'A European Body on Human Enhancement Technologies'. In that study they describe the aims of that body to 'develop a normative framework for human enhancement that can guide the formulation of EU policies in this field,' including for regulation. They recommend representation that ensured 'European cultural diversity', a range of expertise, and scope for public consultation.[2] They list the purpose of the 'normative framework' to evaluate human enhancement technologies in terms of (1) effectiveness and risks, (2) impacts related to 'political, ethical, legal, societal, cultural, political, safety, security, and health aspects', (3) scope for EU funding, especially where technologies disrupt social norms, or European 'values', (4) research gaps, and (5) parameters for national regulation. The aims were noted as being to (6) avoid 'undesirable (side) effects as well as inequalities, e.g. in healthcare, (7) prepare groundwork for policy human research funding, and (8) to 'stimulate a social dialogue' on these topics. On the identity of an expert group, the STOA study notes a need for broad expertise, including on 'Social, ethical, technological, natural-scientific, medical, and policy expertise'.

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[2] Coenen, C. *et al*, 2009, Human Enhancement. See especially pp. 148-150. Available here: https://www.europarl.europa.eu/stoa/en/document/IPOL-JOIN_ET(2009)417483 [accessed 10 October 2020].