



co-funded by the EU



share and move to face nasty bugs

Milan, 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2016

## PRESS RELEASE

### **Ethical issues in national pandemic influenza plans**

What is the relevance of ethical principles in national preparedness and response plans? This is the question that drove ASSET experts to perform [an analysis of national pandemic plans](#) developed by ten countries of the European Union/European Economic Area (EU/EEA) and by Switzerland, to evaluate the relevance of ethical issues and the application of ethical principles in their development.

The analysis showed little concern for ethical aspects and a lack of discussion on ethical issues in most pandemic plans developed from European countries, except for Switzerland, United Kingdom, Czech Republic and France. This is even more relevant since the analysis revealed multiple areas of possible ethical interest within the different plans, like [ASSET data visualisation clearly shown](#).

Influenza pandemics are unpredictable but recurring events that can have severe consequences on human health and socio-economic life to global level. For this reason, the WHO has recommended all countries to prepare a pandemic influenza plan following its own guidelines. The WHO guidance, revised in 2009, stresses the importance of ethical principles such as equity, liberty, solidarity and states that any measure limiting the individual rights and the civil liberties (such as isolation and quarantine) must be necessary, reasonable, proportional, equitable, not discriminatory, and not in violation of the national and international laws. For such purposes, WHO has developed a framework of detailed ethical considerations in order to ensure that overall concerns (such as protecting human rights and the special needs of vulnerable and minority groups) are addressed in pandemic influenza planning and response.

ASSET study may represent a useful tool to guide future drafters of pandemic plans, since it encourage debate on the necessity to update all national pandemic plans with topics of great relevance in case of epidemics and pandemics.

For any further information please visit our website (<http://www.asset-scienceinsociety.eu/>)

or contact ASSET Press Office

Roberta Villa

[villa@zadig.it](mailto:villa@zadig.it)

+39 3398182219

Video (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yvfcMcIDb10>)

Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/ASSET-1541257256158409/>)

Twitter ([@asset\\_project](#))

[www.asset-scienceinsociety.eu](http://www.asset-scienceinsociety.eu)