

Bioethical Implications of Globalisation (BIG) Report 2

Preliminary Results from the 1st Round of the BIG Delphi Questionnaire¹

(This Section presents the all 167 responses from the international community)

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¹ The results are based on a preliminary data set. Slight changes in further analyses are possible.

INTRODUCTION.....	3
PANEL BUILDING AND COMPOSITION.....	5
FIRST ROUND RESULTS.....	9
<i>SPECIFIC AREAS.....</i>	<i>11</i>
STATEMENTS.....	14
Development of the statement 1.....	14
Development of the statement 2.....	17
Development of the statement 3.....	20
Development of the statement 4.....	23
Development of the statement 5.....	26
Development of the statement 6.....	29
Development of the statement 7.....	30
Development of the statement 8.....	31
Development of the statement 9.....	33
Development of the statement 10.....	35
Development of the statement 11.....	37
Development of the statement 12.....	40
Development of the statement 13.....	43
Development of the statement 14.....	49
Development of the statement 15.....	52
Development of the statement 16.....	55
Development of the statement 17.....	57
Development of the statement 18.....	60
Development of the statement 19.....	63
Development of the statement 20.....	66

INTRODUCTION

In the context of its 42 month research programme. Bioethical Implications of Globalization Processes, the BIG Consortium has launched a Delphi exercise. This report presents a summary of the main results of the first round BIG Delphi survey.

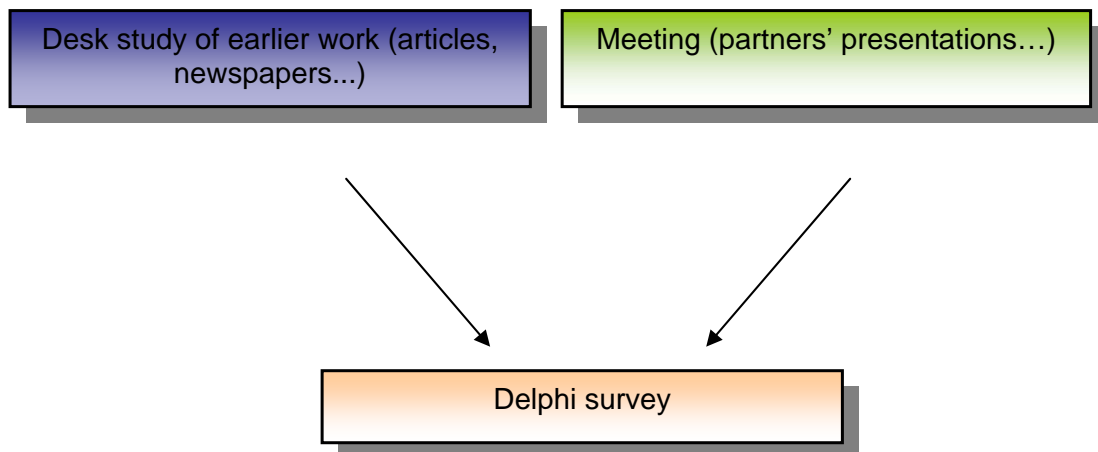
The Delphi method is a method for structuring a group communication process so that the process is effective in allowing a group of individuals – as a whole – to deal with complex problems. To reach this objective the communication is based on feedback of individual contributions, assessment of the group judgement or point of view, opportunity for individuals to revise their views and some degree of anonymity. The Delphi method is a research particularly suitable to allow experts, working independently, to act as a whole while dealing with complex problems. The method has various applications and its major use so far has been in the forecasting area.

Globalization – the growing integration of economies and societies around the world – has been one of the most hotly-debated topics over the past few years. Rapid growth and poverty reduction in China, India, and other countries that were poor 20 years ago, has been a positive aspect of globalization. But globalization has also generated significant international opposition over concerns that it has increased inequality and environmental degradation. The BIG DELPHI focuses on wider ethical implications of globalization in the biomedical field.

Policy-makers and decision-makers are often asking questions about the future: what will our future look like? Can we design policies with respect ethical aspects? Will current ethical implications through the definition of socio-political scenarios. Globalization carries enormous potential to stimulate wealth, and by extension health, through trade and dissemination of information. However, with these opportunities come challenges to ethical principles. These challenges may not be immediately visible or of concern to health policy makers. But if we design policies based on *global* problems, the effect is that we may bring ethical implications in whole the world. In other words, social systems are increasingly complex; the speed of their development limits on the one hand the possibility of influencing them through adequate policy actions and on the other hand the overall capacity of forecasting the consequences of current policy actions. The fundamental hypothesis on which our study is based is that the expert opinion on the bioethical implications of globalization may be helpful to decision makers at local, national, and international levels.

Four main areas have been investigated by our Delphi exercise: a) Global human mobility; b) Global technology and technological revolution; c) Liberalization of health market and trade; and d) New global conflicts. Indeed the BIG Delphi questionnaire has been built on the results of the 4 meetings of the BIG project:

1. Ethical implications of Global Mobility
2. Ethical implications of Global Technology
3. Ethical implications of Liberalisation of Trade and Health Market
4. Ethical implications of Scientific Research on Bio weapons and Prevention of Bio terrorism



We have identified 4 sets of statements (1 set per area investigated), each one including 5 statements. A total of 20 statements have thus been included in the questionnaire. These statements have been confronted with two groups of questions: some questions characteristic of Delphi technique (period in which statement shall occur, barriers and drivers); other focusing on bioethical implications (bioethical relevance, ethical values).

We have asked panellist to confront with:

- *Future trends*: panellists were asked to define period in which the scenario will occur.
- *Ethical impacts*: panellists were asked whether each statement is relevant to bioethics, and to select a variable number of ethical areas impacted by the realisation of the scenario,
- *Barriers and drivers*: panellists were asked to discuss barriers and drivers related to the realisation of each statement.

The questionnaire has been reviewed by all partners and tested for proper wording and developed in an electronic format, which went online in July on a restricted web site (www.esacommunication.it). A pre-test on 76 respondents (on 233 contacts) has been then piloted in September – October. The questionnaire has been then finalised in November, December and January and it has been administered in February, March and April (www.bigproject.org/delphi).

PANEL BUILDING AND COMPOSITION

The key to a successful Delphi study lies in the selection of the participants. Since the results of a Delphi depend on the knowledge and cooperation of the panellists, persons who are likely to contribute valuable ideas are essential to include. In a statistically based study, such as a public opinion poll, participants are assumed to be representative of a larger population; in Delphi, non representative, knowledgeable persons through:

1. literature searches for who has published on the subjects under study;
2. mailing list from institutions (project partners, EC groups of experts, international committees, other EC funded research projects);
3. Recommendation of other experts.

This process is known as “daisy chaining”.

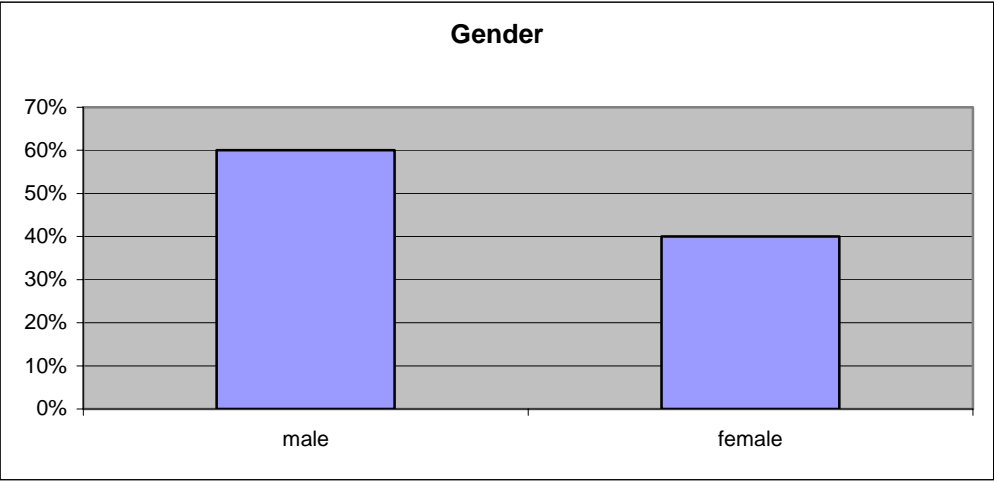
“Daisy chaining” has the potential disadvantage of identifying cliques. Indeed literature searches necessarily result in lists of people who have published on the topic of interests; this approach misses people who may have something to contribute but have not published. Recommendations from institutions and experts suffer from the same shortcoming: the recommendations are limited to only those who are known. To catch “unknown” people, who are outside of the normal lines of communication but who may be able to contribute new and innovative ideas, information on the BIG DELPHI exercise have been widely disseminated online through:

- Cordis and other EU web sites;
- Web site on the main scientific associations concerned with the study (EACME; IAB; Bioethics Today; etc.)

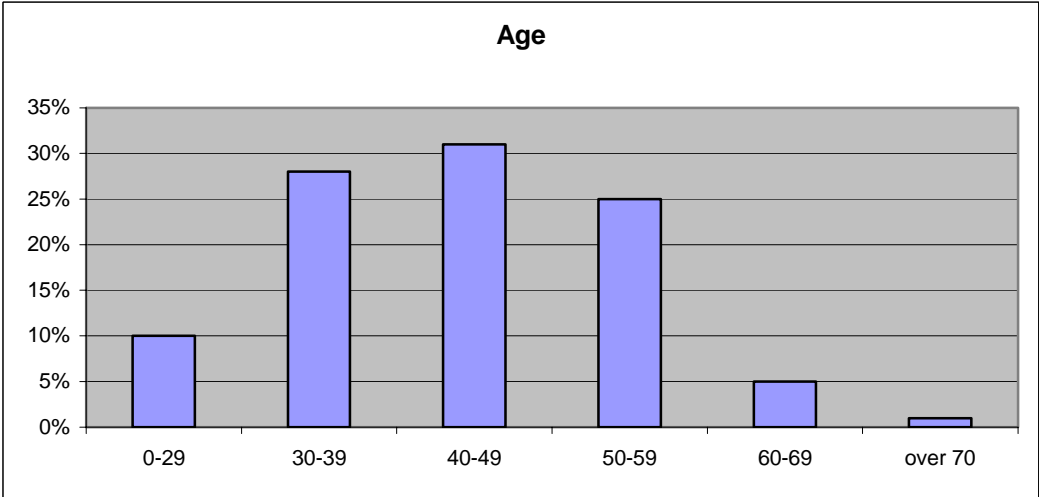
We have sent about 500 emails to selected experts. On five hundred potential (500) respondents, one hundred sixty-seven (167, 31%) accepted to participate in the DELPHI exercise. Response to the exercise was voluntary and no compensation was provided. Ten people (10, 2%) registered themselves autonomously - without any previous invitation - only by visiting the BIG website.

On 167 registered people, 96 completely filled out completely into the questionnaire and 71 did it only in part.

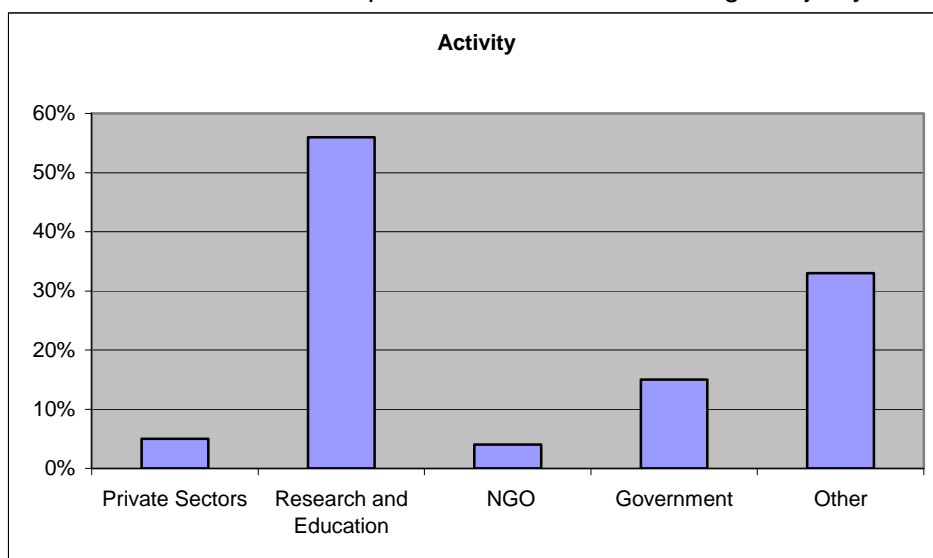
Gender composition was quite balanced. The level of female representation is a 40% versus a 60% of male presence:



For the age of the panel's expert, the age represents a majority (56%) of the normal working age (30-59):



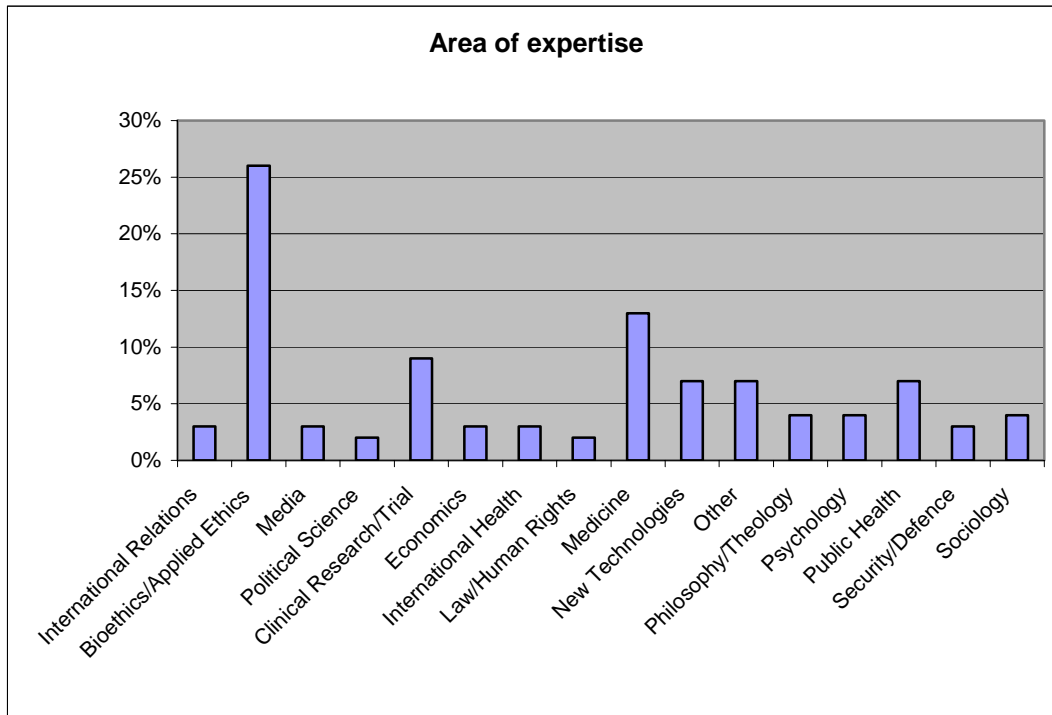
Research and Education respondents have been the large majority of respondents.



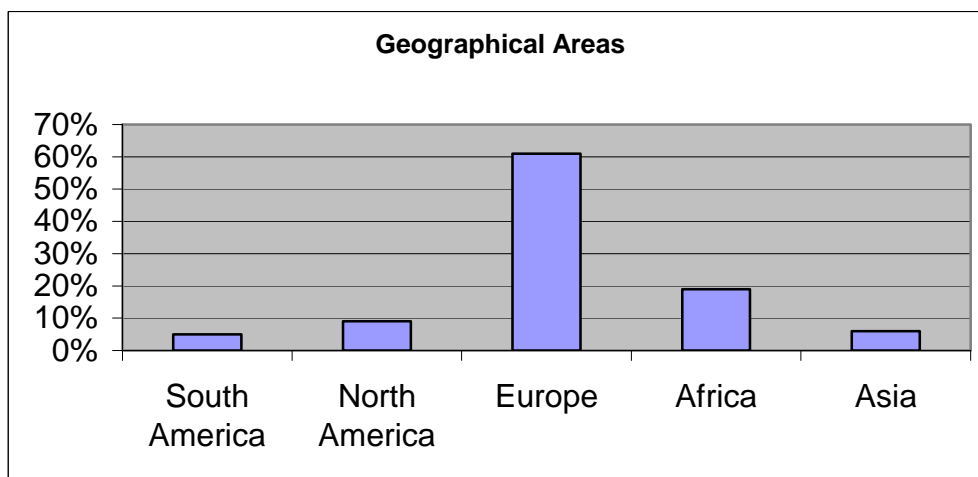
The panels comprised a highly diverse set of experts who come from different area, namely:

- International Relations
- Bioethics/Applied Ethics
- Media
- Political Science
- Clinical Research/Trial
- Economics
- International Health
- Law/Human Rights
- Medicine
- New Technologies
- Other
- Philosophy/Theology
- Psychology
- Public Health
- Security/Defence
- Sociology

Areas of expertise most represented have been ethics, clinical research and medicine. As BIG focuses on bioethical implications of globalisation, it is obvious to have a majority of people with an ethical and medical background. However it is to note that many other disciplines and areas of expertise are represented in the panel.



Forty-five countries (from Europe, Africa, Asia, and America) participated in the study. Europe is the most represented however a good percentage of African experts are also represented. Their opinion within Delphi questionnaire is especially interesting as they come from a part of the world that lives globalisation in different manner.



FIRST ROUND RESULTS

The first-round questionnaire has been disseminated in February/March. It consisted of two primary sections:

1) General scenario

The respondents were asked to give their general understanding of globalisation and its trends. Three scenarios, built on the basis of the US National Intelligence Council's document: [Global Trends 2015: A Dialogue About the Future With Nongovernmental Experts](#), were submitted and respondents have to choose the scenario closest to their views, or, in alternative, sketch their own scenario by making use also of elements of the other three scenarios.

Experts were asked to choose one scenario or to sketch their own scenarios. Scenarios were denominated: 1) inclusive globalisation; 2) conflict globalisation; and 3) regional competition. Conflict globalisation and regional competition have been the most chosen scenarios and those who selected their own scenario actually made some variations on these two scenarios. Only few respondents thought that globalisation can progress towards a more inclusive scenario.

2) Analytic Scenarios

The second section included description of four specific areas related to globalization: a) Global human mobility; b) Global technology and technological revolution; c) Liberalization of health market and trade; and d) New global conflicts. Respondents were given five statements for each issue describing some major challenges posed by globalisation and they had to give their opinion. Five structured questions were associated with the statement:

- 1) period in this statement will occur
- 2) if the realisation of this statement is relevant to bioethics
- 3) a list of ethical areas was given and respondent could choose which of them are impacted (for better and worse) by the realisation of the statement
- 4) a list of key drivers for the realisation of the statement was submitted
- 5) a list of barriers for realising this statement was given

Ninety-six of the study's one hundred sixty-seven respondents (60%) actually filled completely the Round One questionnaire, while 40% respondents filled only some questions/sections.

Top 11 Themes Identified in Round One of the Delphi Process

1. Increasing human mobility is not expected to overturn local identities. Local, regional and national identities are still expected to dominate the international scenario in the mid term
2. The emergence of a global civil society is still more a sociological construction than a reality
3. The main opposition in a globalised world is still the opposition between “poor” and “rich” communities and nations.
4. Although technological divide remains an important element of tension, technology is expected to play a favourable role in emerging and developing economies
5. The two key elements to be taken into account in the introduction of technological innovation are public acceptance and respect for body integrity and human dignity
6. The opposition between public and private sectors as well as the opposition between individual/civil rights and social/economic rights is destined to shape future international scenarios
7. International market deregulation needs to be moderated by supranational governing bodies at least in the health sector
8. The opposition between local communities and multinational corporations is destined to grow deeper
9. The opposition between economic liberalisation and welfare state is destined to remain crucial in many western countries.
10. The “clash of civilisation” hypothesis to explain new global conflicts is unrealistic, while economic drivers are likely to be the main factors in determining international conflicts
11. Security factors are destined to be an important driver of technological innovation.

SPECIFIC AREAS

GLOBAL HUMAN MOBILITY

Human mobility is a special feature of contemporary globalisation. Two major trends in the movement of people characterizes our era —urbanization and cross-border migration—each of which poses both opportunities and challenges. The expansion of mobility alters our concepts of space and time. Rapid transportation across space and through time brings out the fluidity of conventional boundaries and borders. New communications technologies – internet, mobile phones, television – create imagined, virtual, and actual mobility by providing nearly instant access to information, storage, and retrieval. Immigration, migration, tourism, asylum seekers, guest workers, and illegal aliens have challenged conventional notions of residence and citizenship. The volume of modern migration across borders, both legal and illegal, has generated major cultural, political, and health problems.

The Panel is however quite sceptical about the effect on current and future identity issues raised by the increasing human mobility. The panel does not seem to think that mobility per se can create new global, transnational identities. The very model of global civil society is thought to be more a scholarly construction than a concrete possibility. According to the panel cultural factors (ethical views, religious beliefs, world visions, etc.) are still the crucial elements in building a global civil society. Global mobility is seen as chiefly related to economic factors and consequently it is not seen as an important driver that can lead towards the construction of new global identities. For the panel the main barriers that oppose the construction of a global civil society are cultural and religious conflicts, fundamentalism, racism, xenophobia. Conversely a global civil society must rely on some shared values. According to the first round questionnaire, human rights (social, economic and civil rights) and international justice could be such shared values. However the way in which these values could be promoted and whether they can really become universal values remains unclear. Finally it is not clear also whether the panel thinks that global mobility is destined to impact the biomedical field in the future and whether this process is going to have some important ethical implications.

GLOBAL TECHNOLOGY AND TECHNOLOGICAL REVOLUTION

Technology drives globalisation and is driven by globalisation. The technology that has driven the rapid globalisation of trade - information technology - may also be used to improve global health. The products and services of the health care information technology industry can make a significant contribution to global health. The recent millennium assembly of the United Nations emphasised this in its statement on the right of access to information and communication. The convergences of bio-technology and information technology can, however, also results in a dramatic divide between rich and poor countries.

General speaking the panel does not seem to attribute a pivotal role to technology in globalisation processes. Technology is considered more an effect of globalisation rather than a driver. In addition the panel does not think that technology is a unique field, experts seem rather to think that a main distinction should be drawn between technologies that affect the human body and technologies that don't. According to the panel, human dignity is the key value to be taken into account when evaluating new

technologies. However it seems evident that experts think that dignity is at stake chiefly when technological innovations directly affect the body (e.g., biotechnology, medical use of nanotechnology, bio prosthetic, etc.) while information technologies – the internet included – promise to have only minor ethical impact. Surprisingly the internet is not considered a main driver for globalisation. Experts also suggest that technological revolution will be global but it will not be universal, which means that it will affect all countries but it will not affect all citizens. In other words the technological divide between the better off and the worst off is destined to increase. Counter intuitively experts don't think that the technological revolution is mainly a matter of rich western countries, but they think that the main actors of future global technology will be emerging economies and, to some extent, also developing countries. Finally the panel has emphasised the importance of public acceptance in technological innovation. However it is unclear what key factors should be taken into account into public acceptance and – above all – the ethical relevance of public acceptance processes.

LIBERALISATION OF HEALTH MARKET AND TRADE

In economic terms, globalization is understood as an increase in liberalization of trade, such as removal of import restrictions and tariffs, removal of restrictions on trade in services and linking trade sanctions to protection of intellectual property rights. The question then is what impact these measures have on population health. One of the main challenges is how one should balance legitimate concerns about removing trade restrictions that would impede economic growth, and thereby health status and legitimate concerns about how liberalization of trade will affect health status adversely, in particular among disadvantaged groups.

The panel has identified six poles that characterize the international scenario of liberalisation of trade and its effects on health.

- Public/Private Interests
- Local communities/Multinational Corporations
- Welfare State/Market Economy

According to the panel, the tension between these different poles provokes various economic and social conflicts. The panel thinks that market mechanisms per se cannot mediate these conflicts. According to the panel there is consequently a need for a supranational governance of global economy, at least as far as health issues are concerned.

Values are not perceived as key elements in global liberalisation of health markets. Consequently conflicts carried out by economic globalisation are mostly described in terms of conflicts related to social rights. Yet it is unclear whether the panel thinks that some social conflicts may have an ethical relevance. In particular it is unclear which actors (e.g., private insurances, NGOs, nation states, WHO, patient associations, public health experts, etc.) are expected to play a pivotal role in future global health scenarios and which values will be carried out by each one of these categories.

NEW GLOBAL CONFLICTS

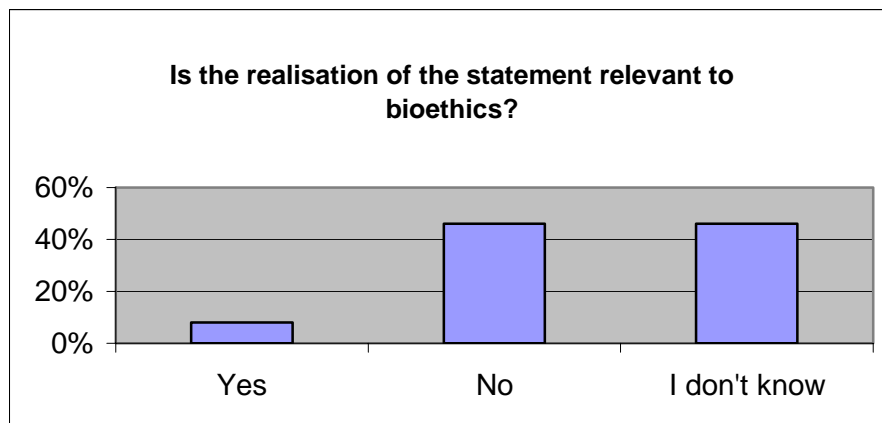
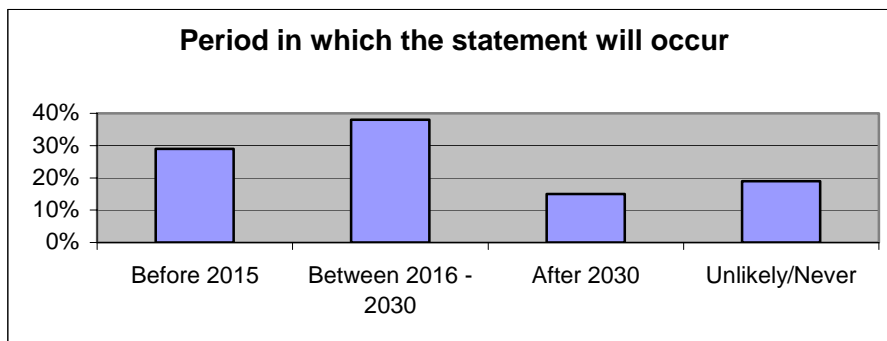
After 9/11 globalisation has been challenged by new conflicts stemming from religious and ethnic disputes. Terrorism, and more particularly transnational terrorist networks, is frequently categorized as one element of "uncivil society" or a key feature of the "dark side of globalization". In the words of UN General Secretary Kofi Annan, networks of terrorism, drug trafficking and organized crime are all forces of "uncivil society" engendered by globalization. The forces that made possible the emergence of a global civil society also, unfortunately, facilitate the transnationalization of "uncivil" elements. Terrorists, traffickers in drugs, women and children, and organized crime utilize global networks and flows for their own ends. Technology is still the key feature of this side of globalisation.

Samuel Huntington is one of the West's most eminent political scientists. Over the next 50 years, says Huntington, we are going to see the patterns of cohesion, disintegration and conflict on the world scene shaped not by old political and economic forces but by civilisation identities. Our panel does not agree with the "cultural conflict" hypothesis. The panel thinks that economic and technological factors will be the main drivers of new global conflicts. Ethical and cultural conflicts are not expected to play any major role in determining future international and global conflicts. Yet security is believed to be one of the most important drivers for future international processes. In particular security and military sectors promise to be one of the chief drivers of technological revolution. However the panel does not express its opinion about scientists' ethical responsibility for military research. In particular it is not clear what the panel think of any kind of "security regulation" of research (i.e., restriction of free movement of scientists, restriction of free circulation of information, restriction of free publication.

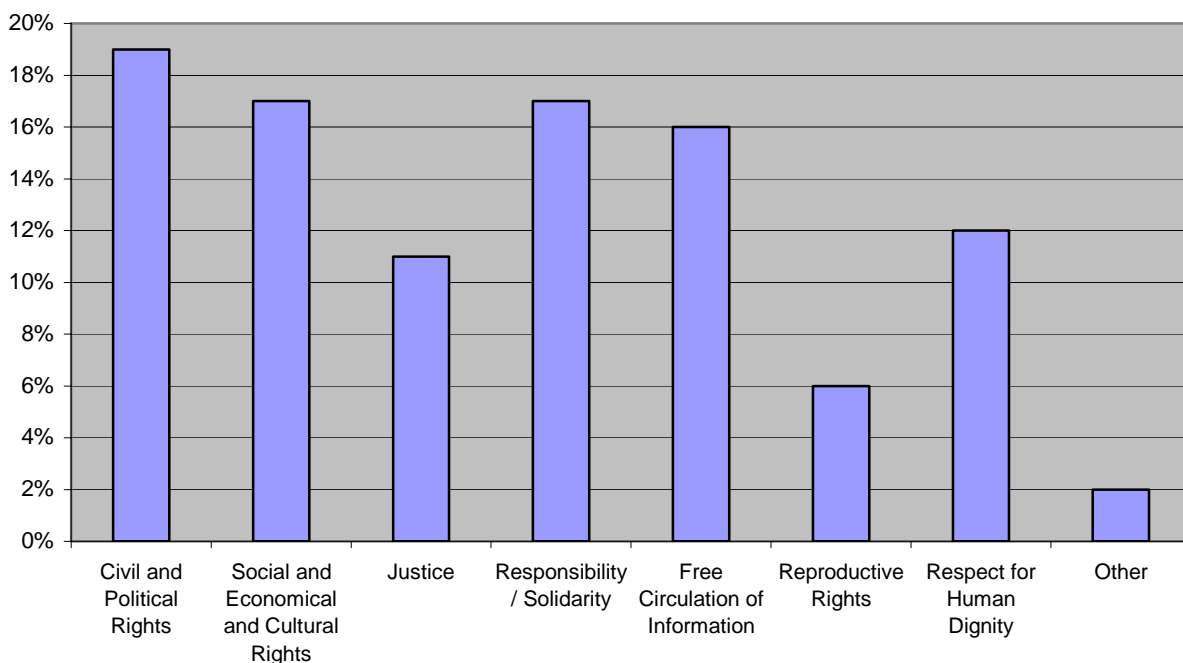
STATEMENTS

Development of the statement 1

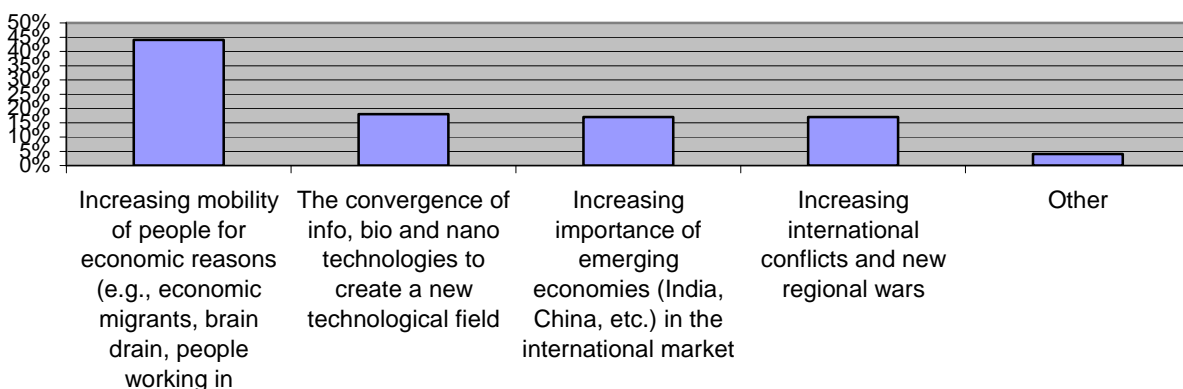
The concept of "belonging" to a particular state will erode among a growing number of people with continuing transnational ties. A global civil society (e.g., athletes, campaigners, musicians, religious believers, managers, aid-workers, teleworkers, medical doctors, scientists, journalists, academics, members of NGOs) play a more and more dominant role in the world scenario.

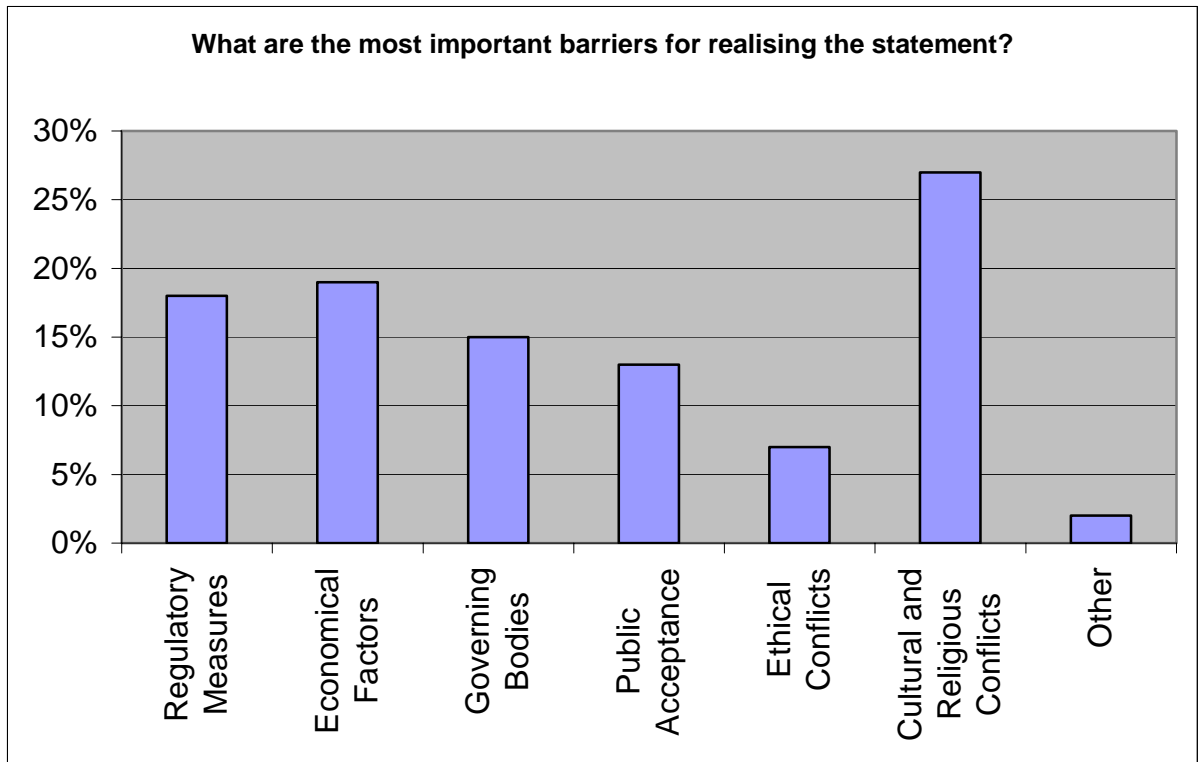


Which of these ethical areas are impacted by the realisation of this statement?



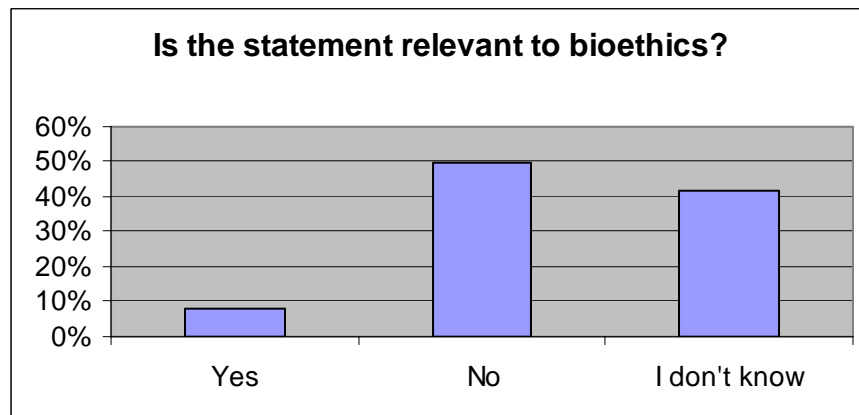
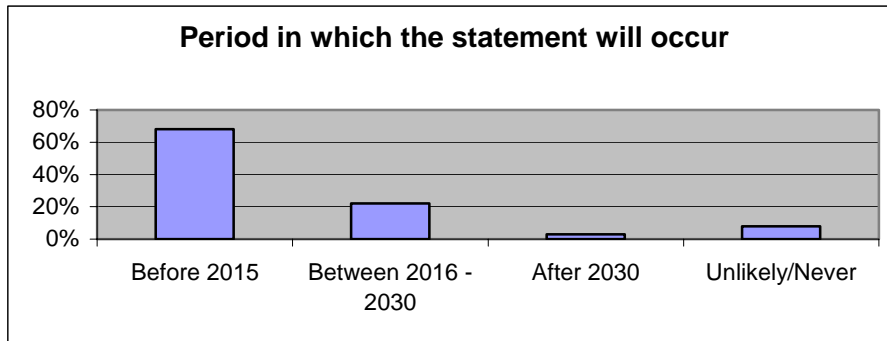
What are the key drivers for the realisation of this statement?

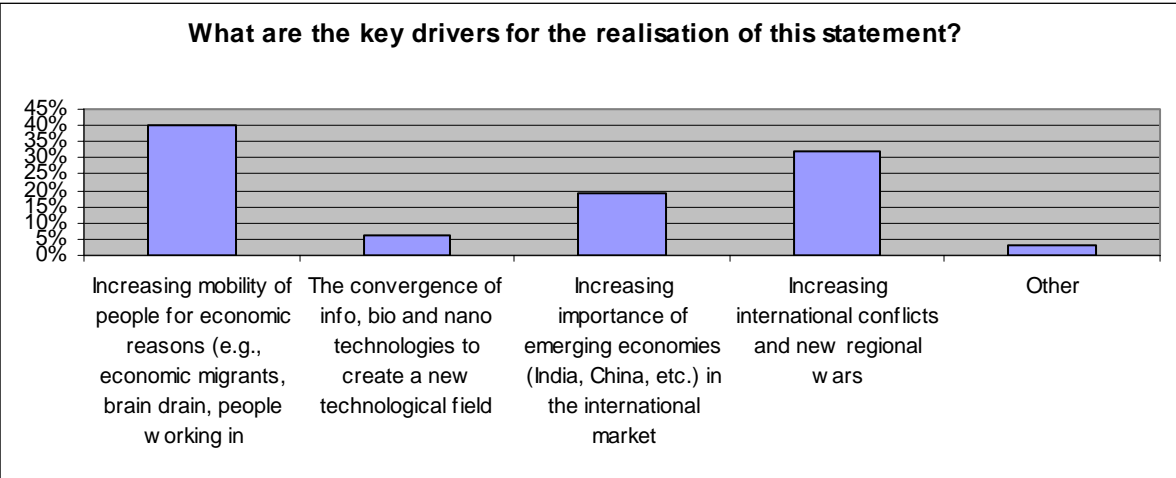
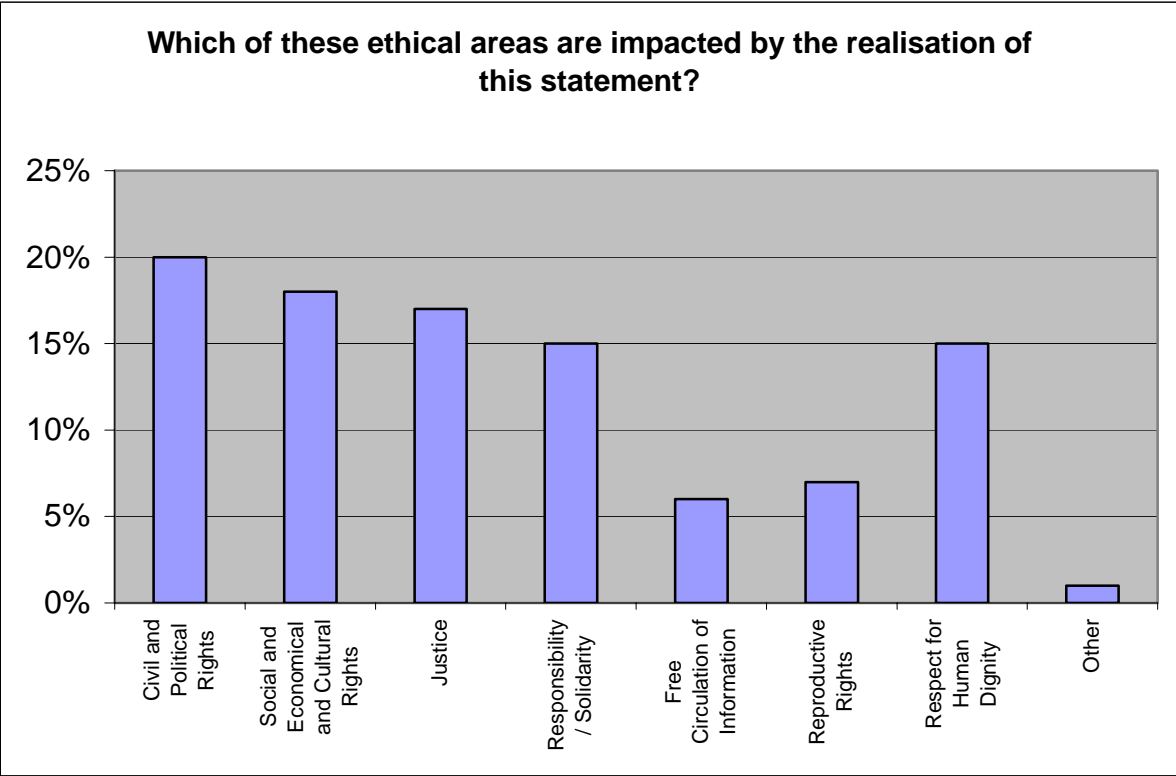


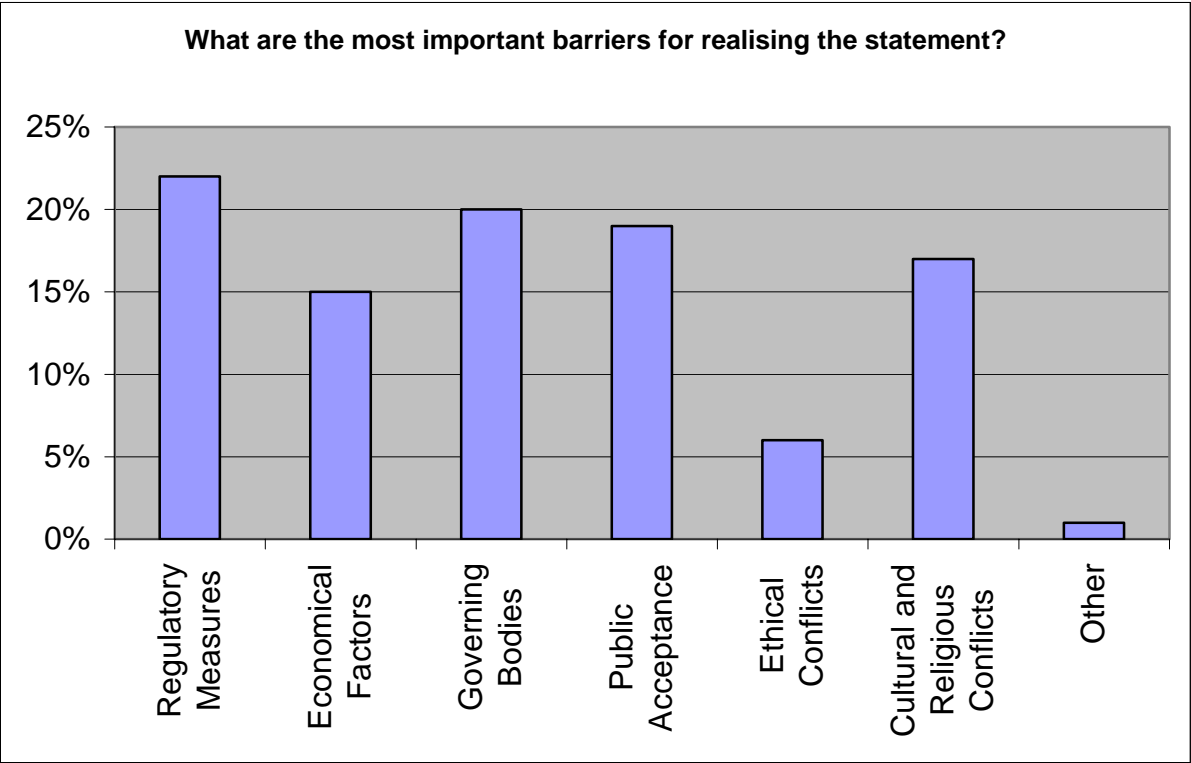


Development of the statement 2

Legal and illegal migrants now account for more than 15 percent of the population in more than 50 countries. These numbers will grow substantially and will increase social and political tension and alter national identities.

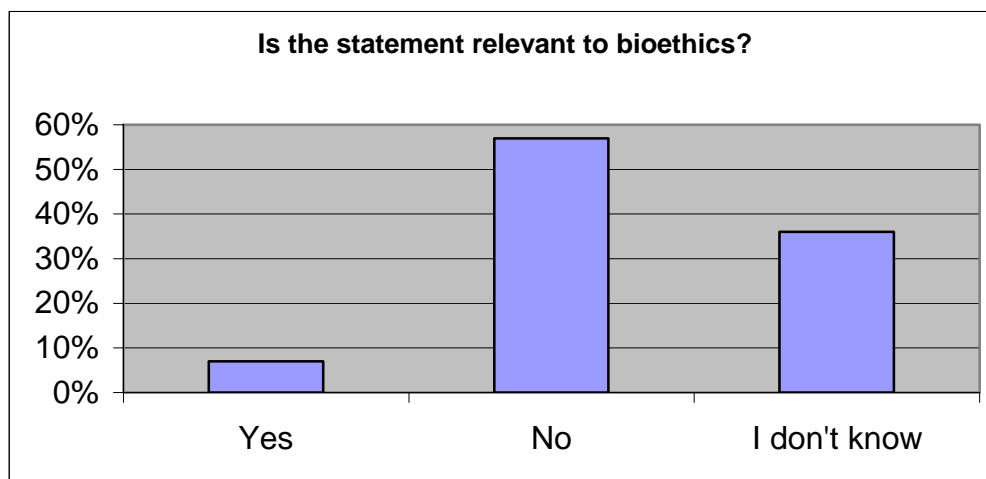
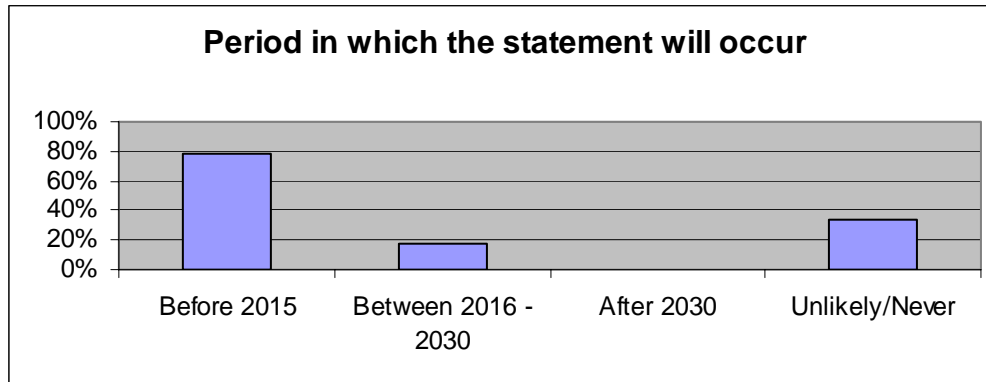




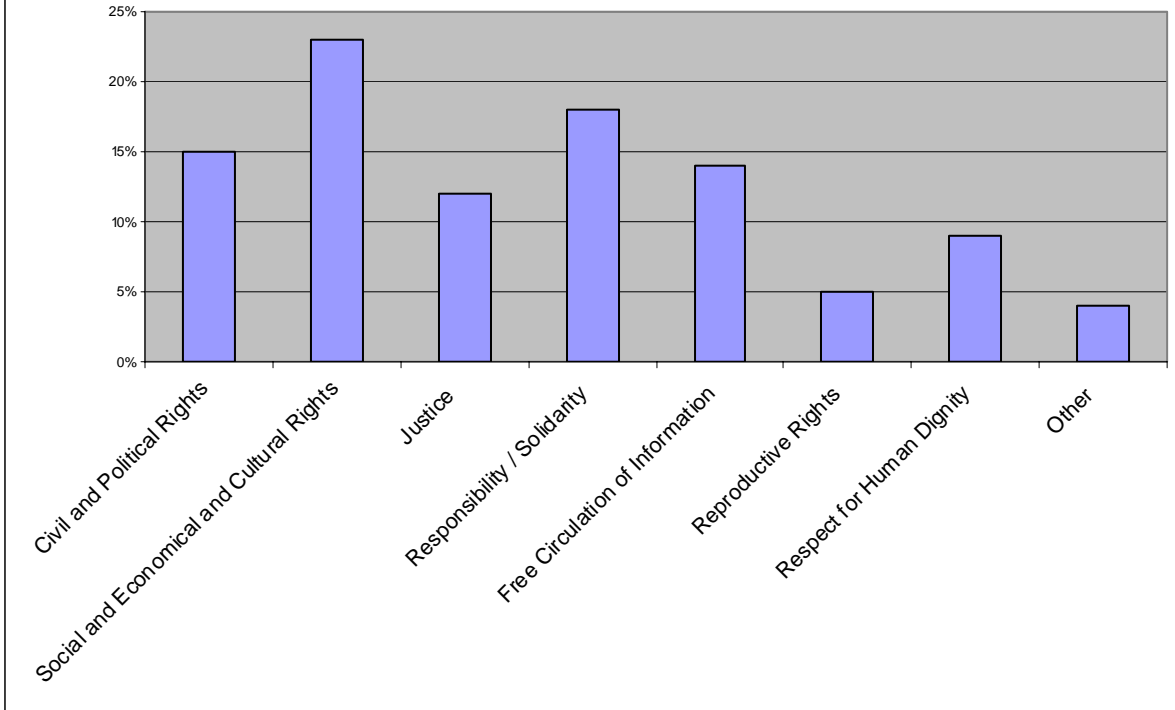


Development of the statement 3

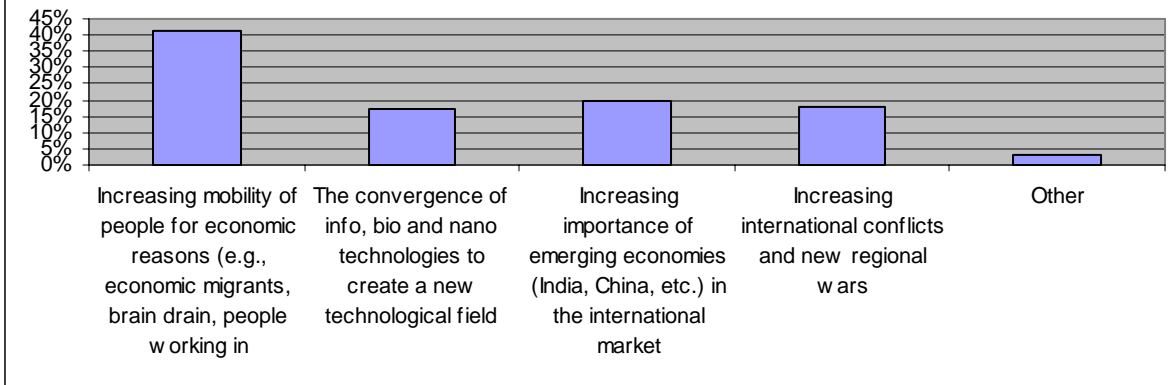
Emigration increasingly will deprive low-income sending countries of their educated elites. An estimated 1.5 million skilled expatriates from developing countries already are employed in high-income countries. This brain drain from low-income to high-income countries intensifies.

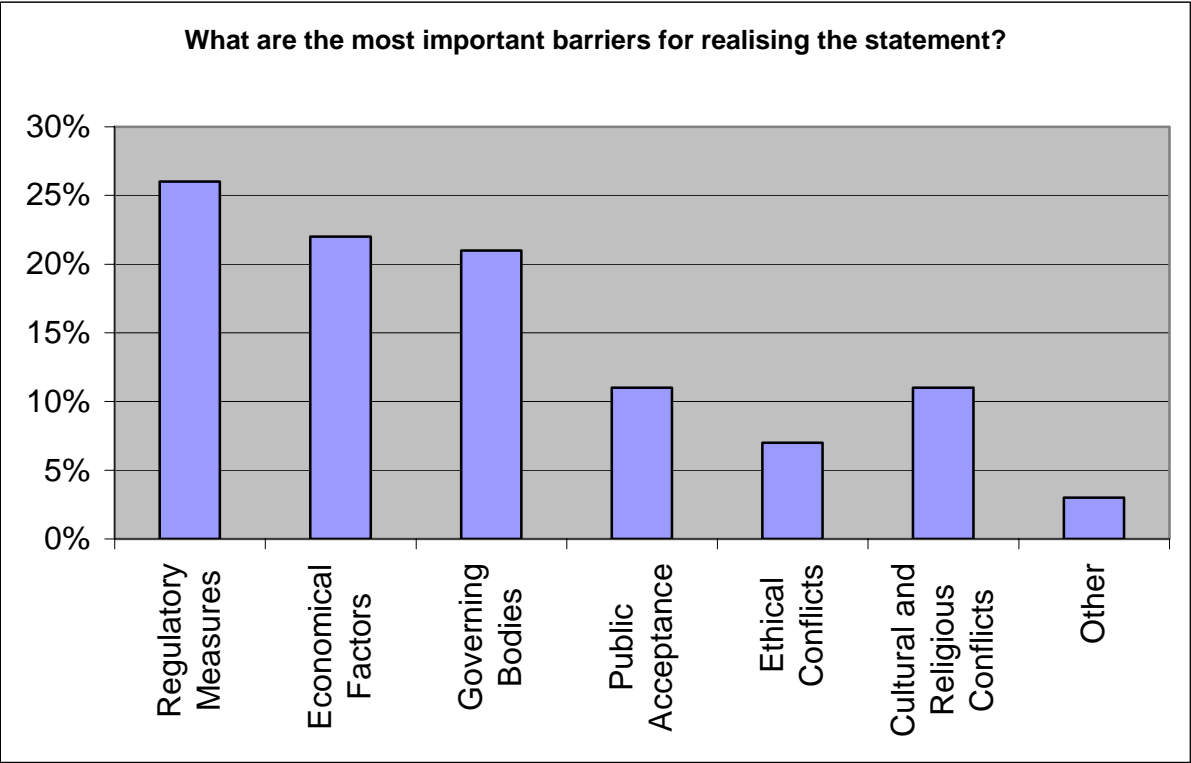


Which of these ethical areas are impacted by the realisation of this statement?



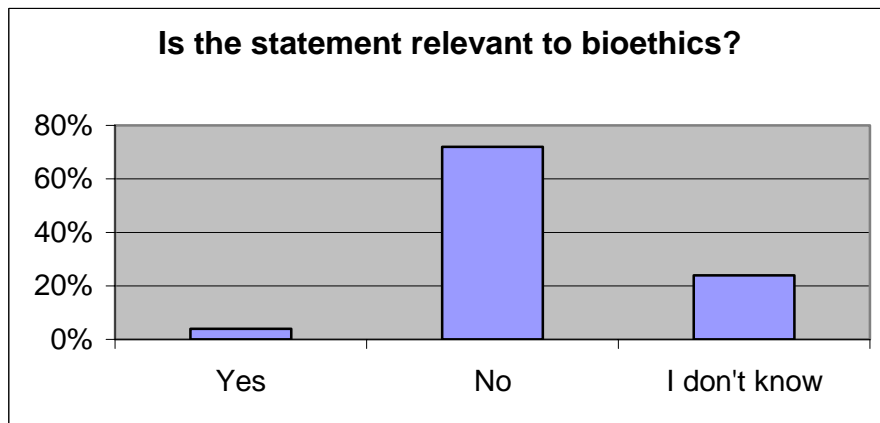
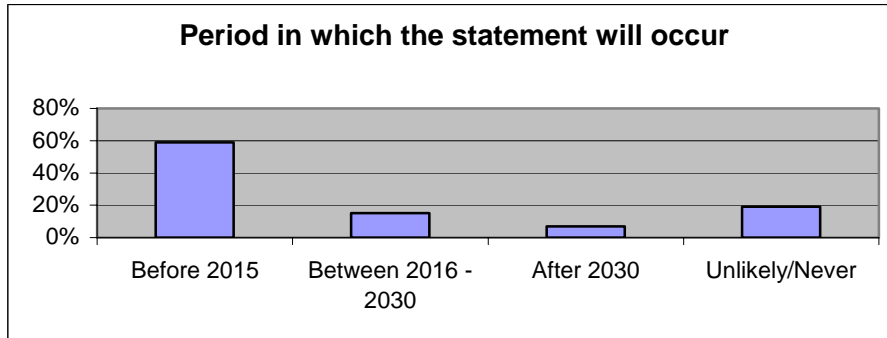
What are the key drivers for the realisation of this statement?



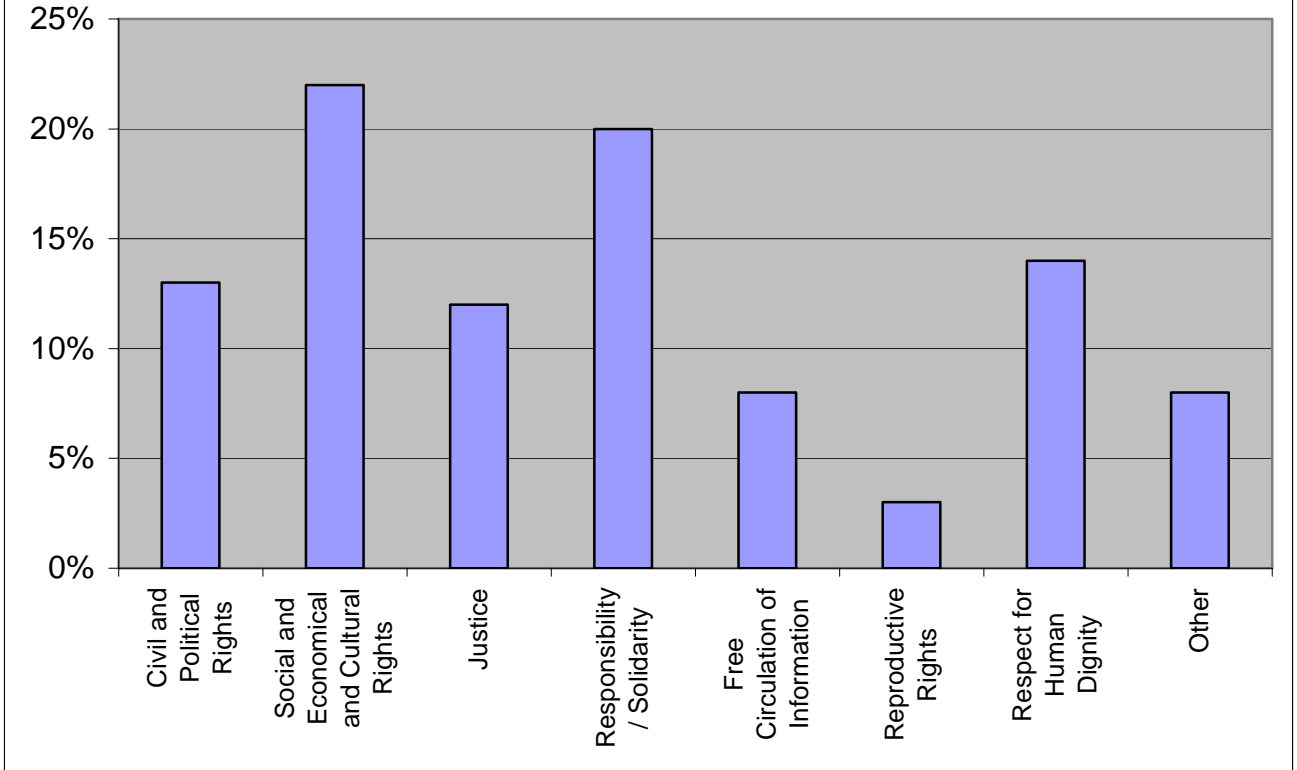


Development of the statement 4

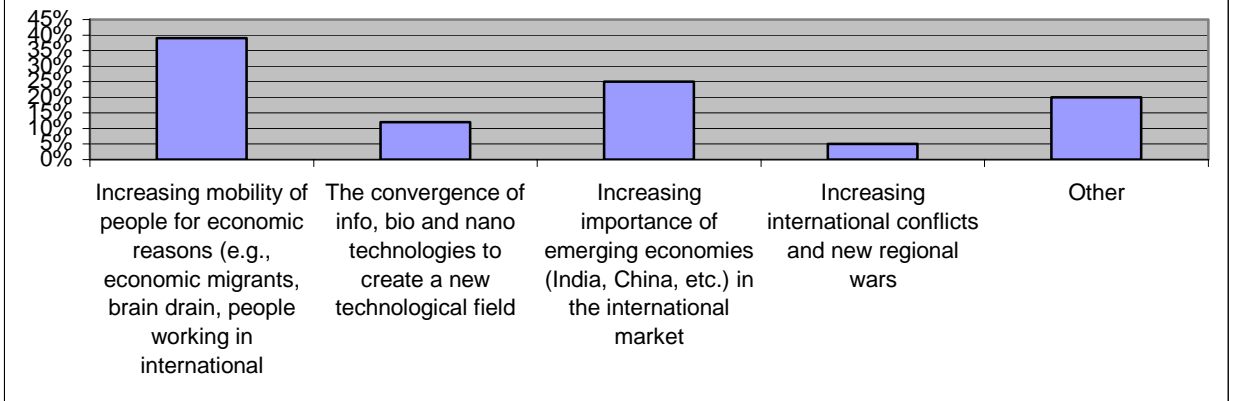
International tourism will increase and it will exacerbate social divisions and will increase environmental degradation by disrupting traditional land management.

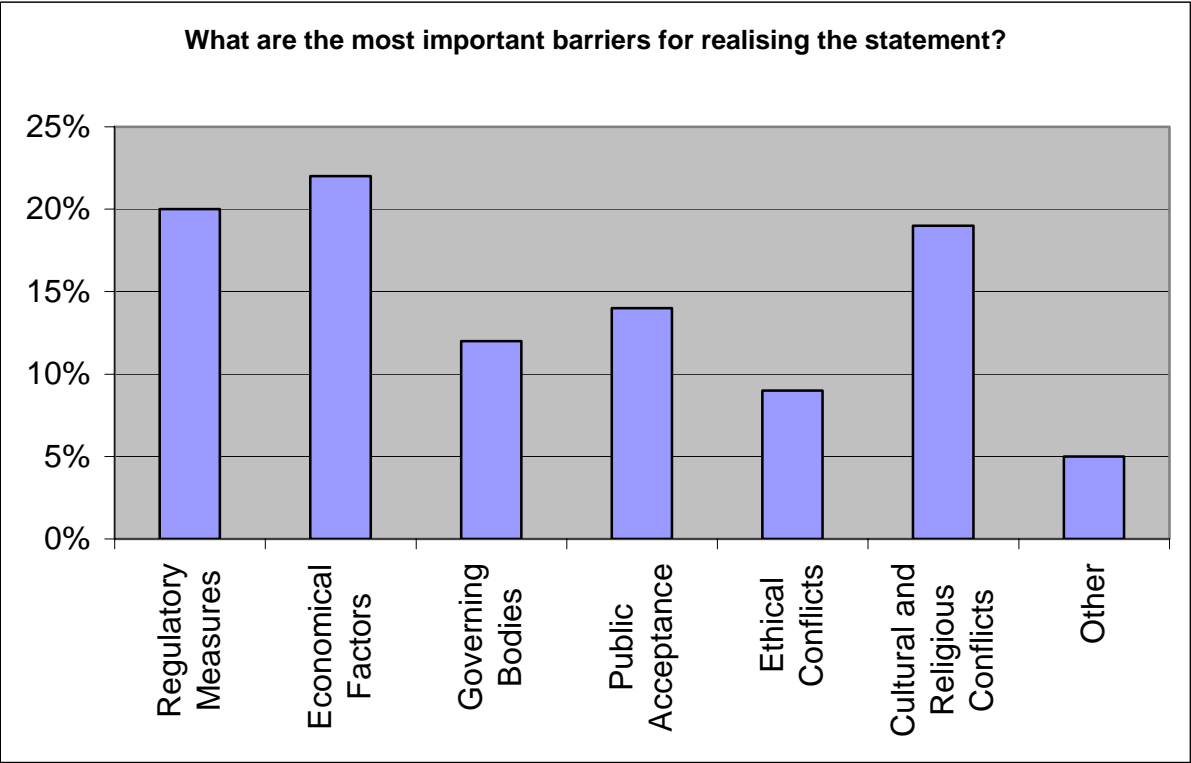


Which of these ethical areas are impacted by the realisation of this statement?



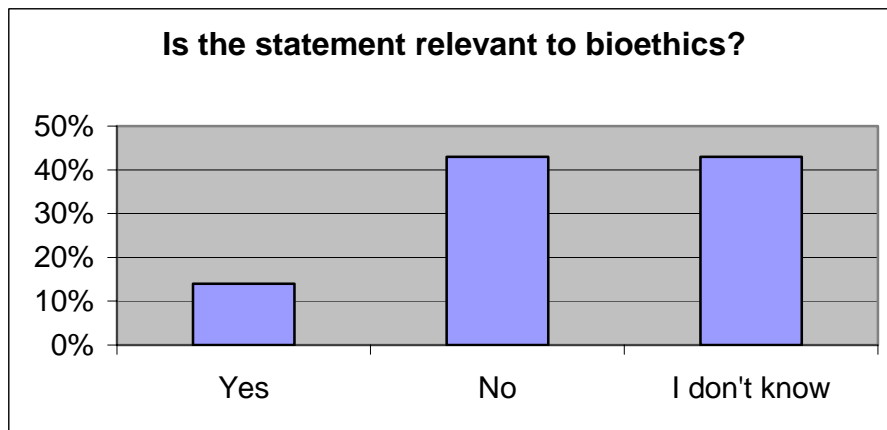
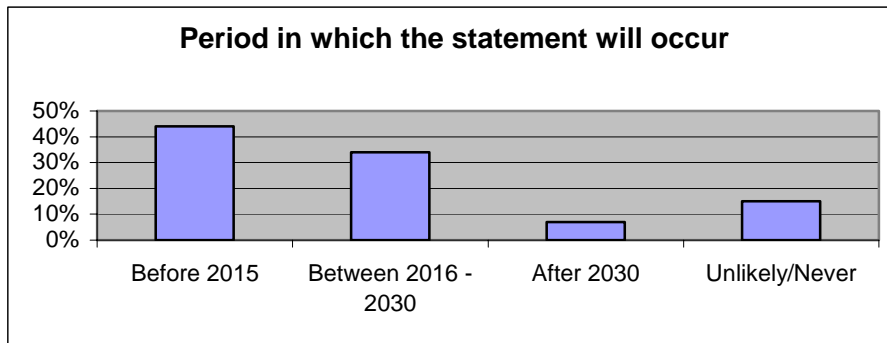
What are the key drivers for the realisation of this statement?

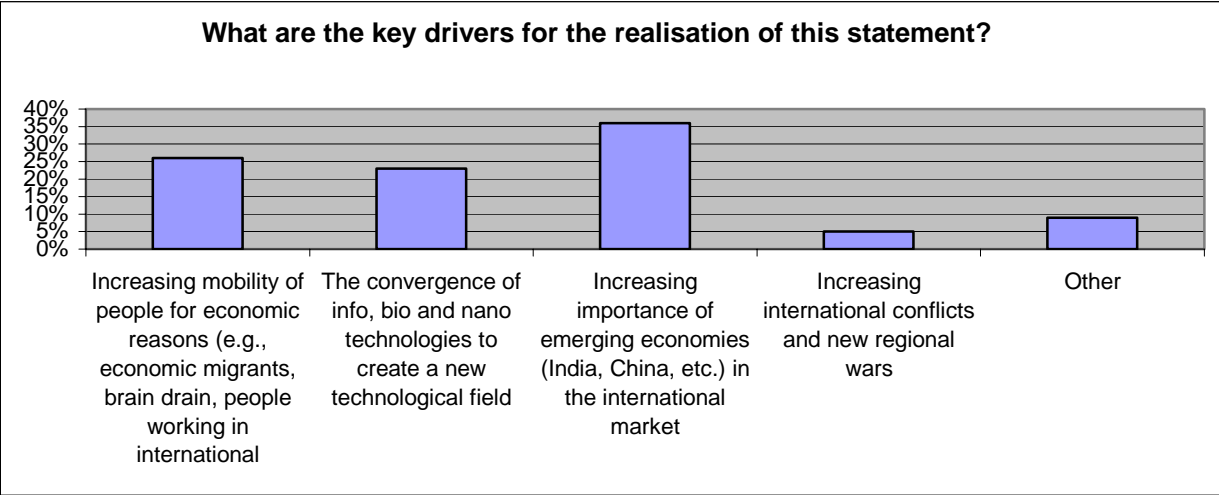
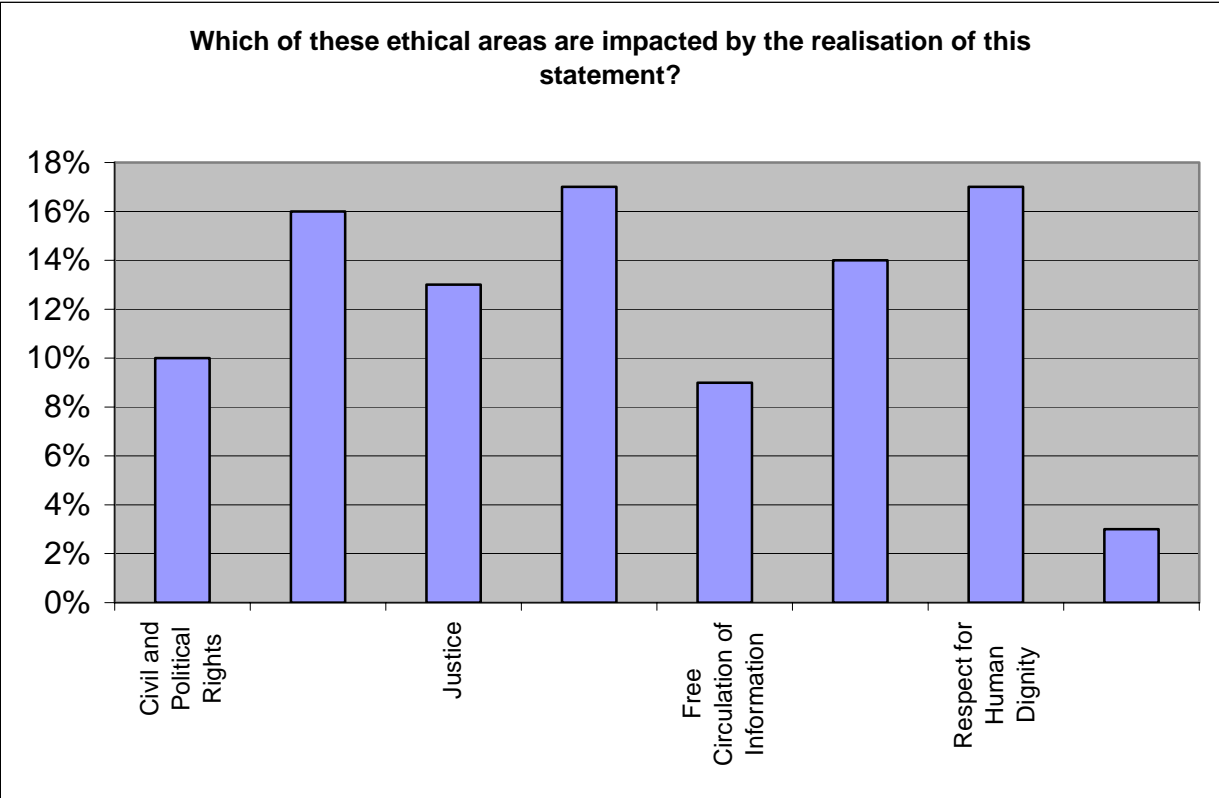




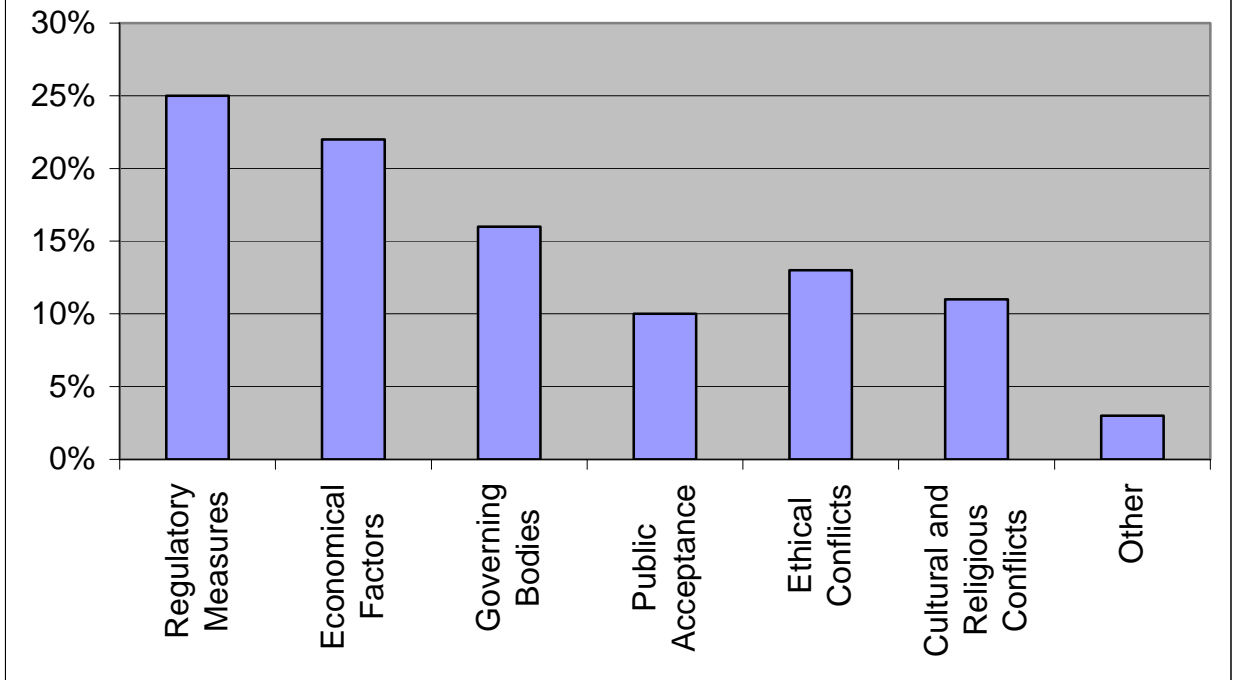
Development of the statement 5

Today the healthcare industry estimates that several thousand foreign patients are treated in private hospitals each year in India and Thailand. Medical Tourism (people seeking care out of their national border) will become one of the most important economic drivers in emerging economies (India, China, Thailand, etc).



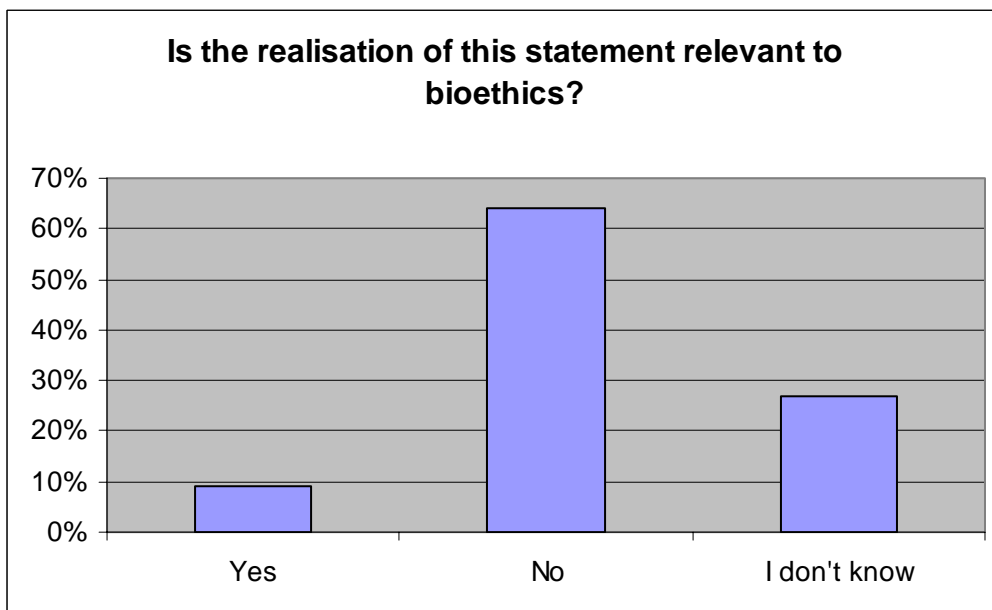
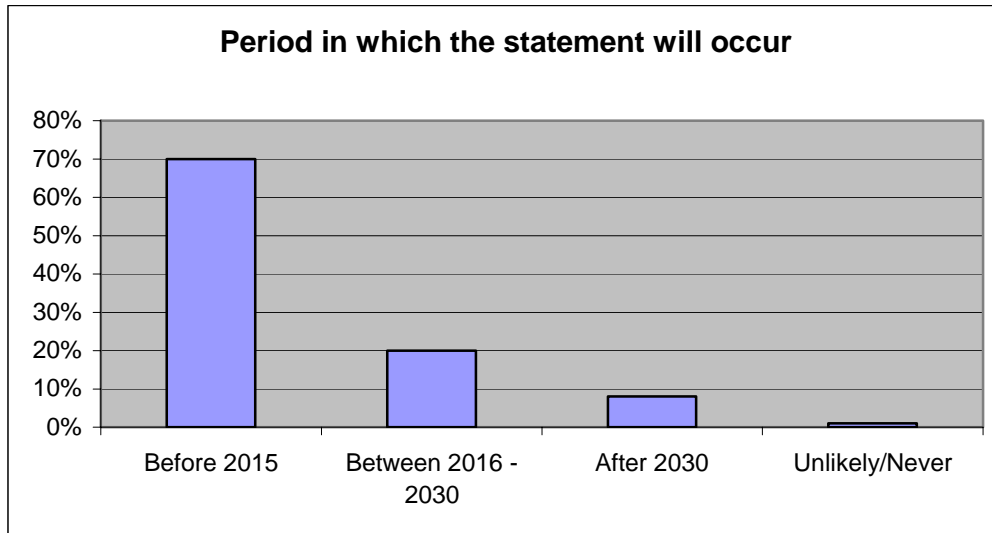


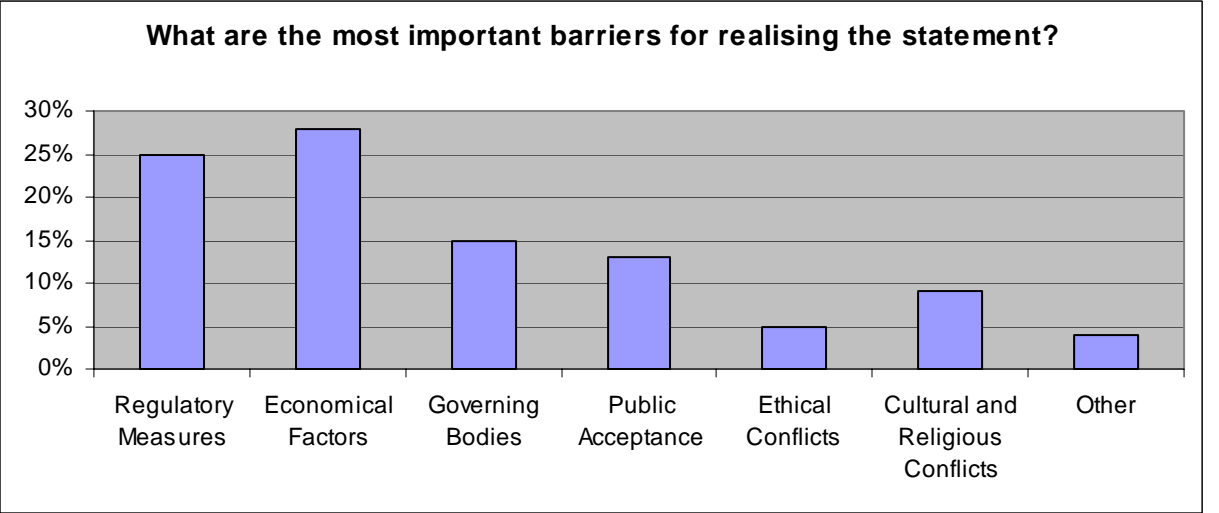
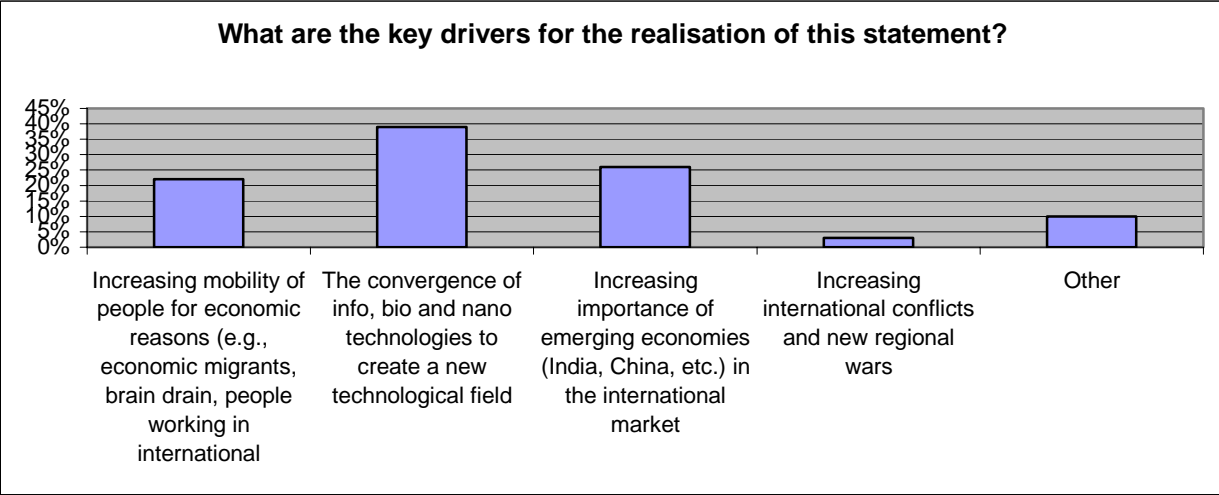
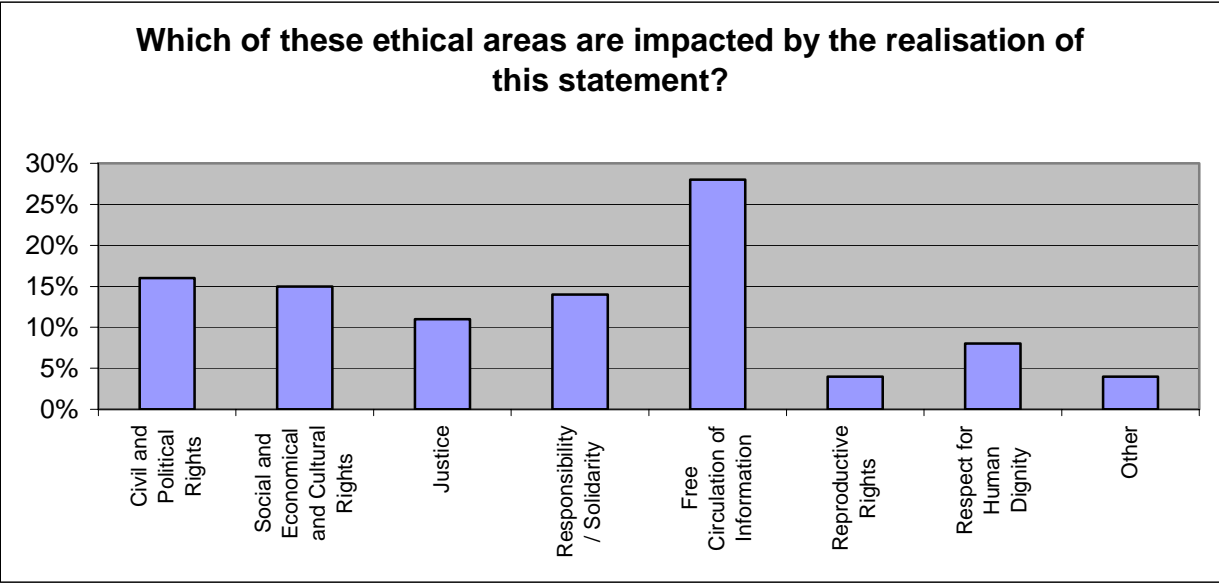
What are the most important barriers for realising the statement?



Development of the statement 6

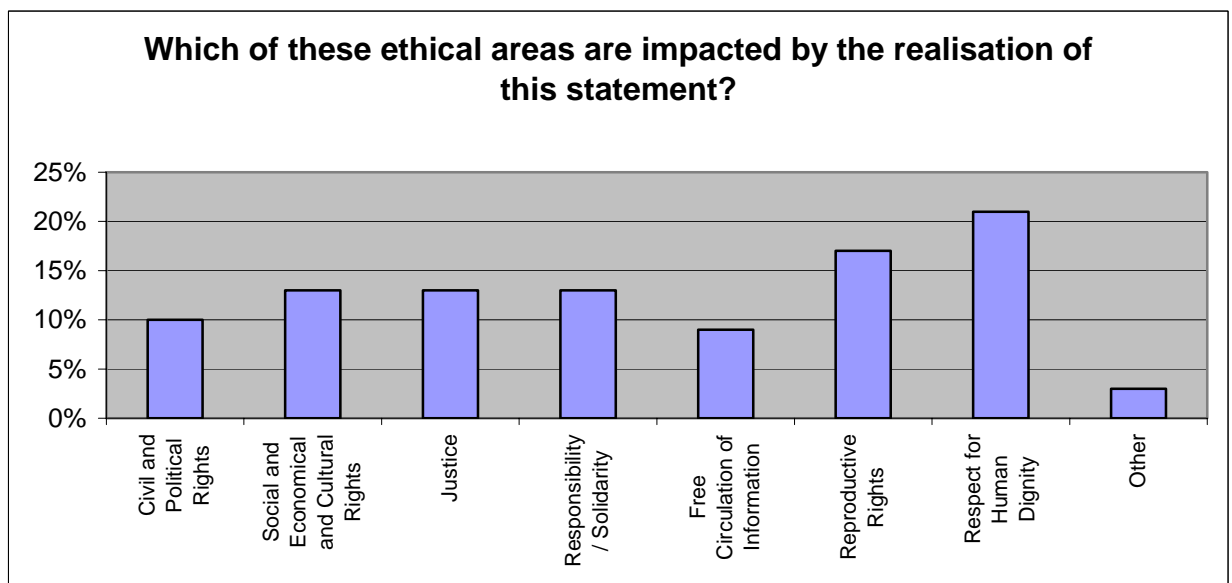
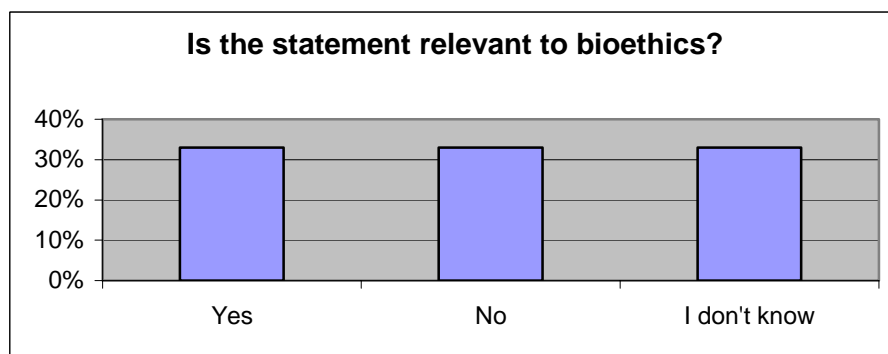
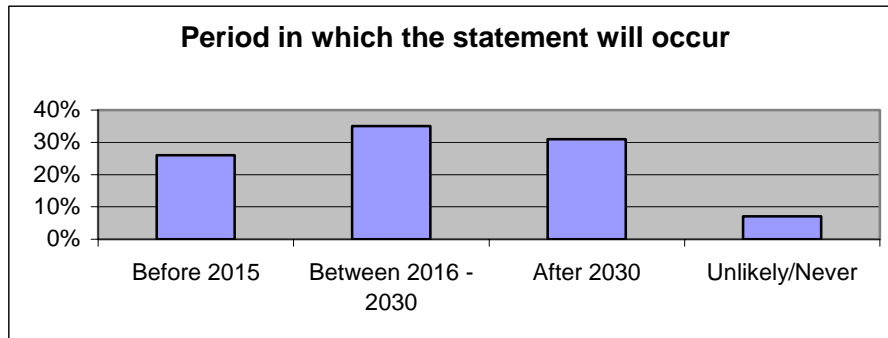
Local-to-global Internet access and universal wireless connectivity will become a reality.



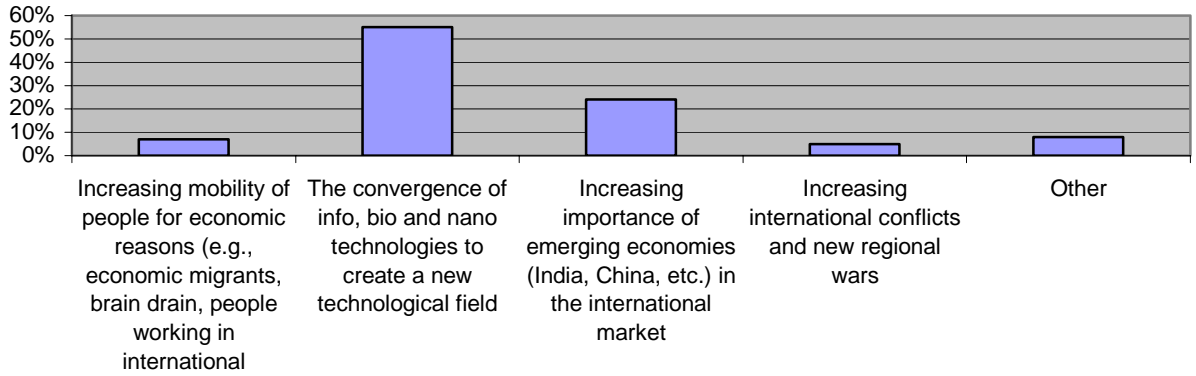


Development of the statement 7

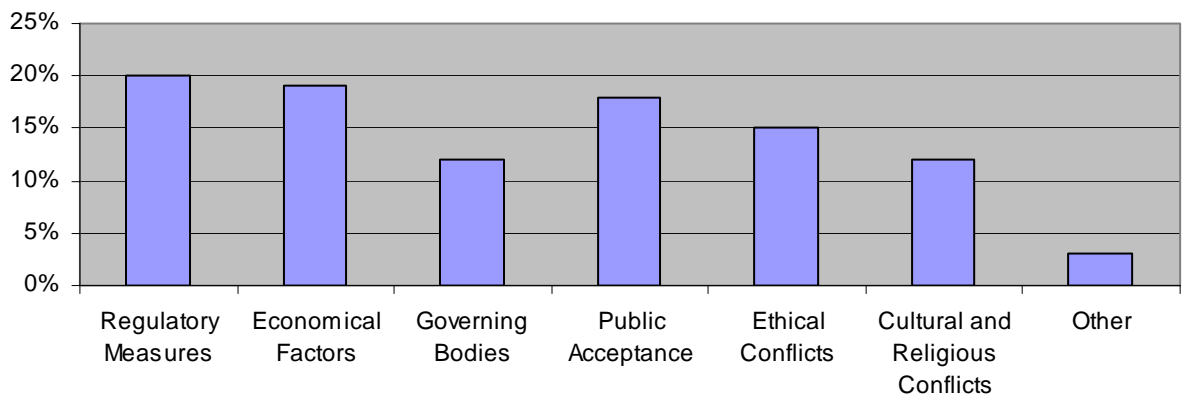
Discoveries in nanotechnology will lead to unprecedented understanding and control over the fundamental building blocks of all physical things. Self-assembled nanomaterials will enable rapid processing for drug discovery, blood content analysis, genetic analysis, and other biological applications.



What are the key drivers for the realisation of this statement?

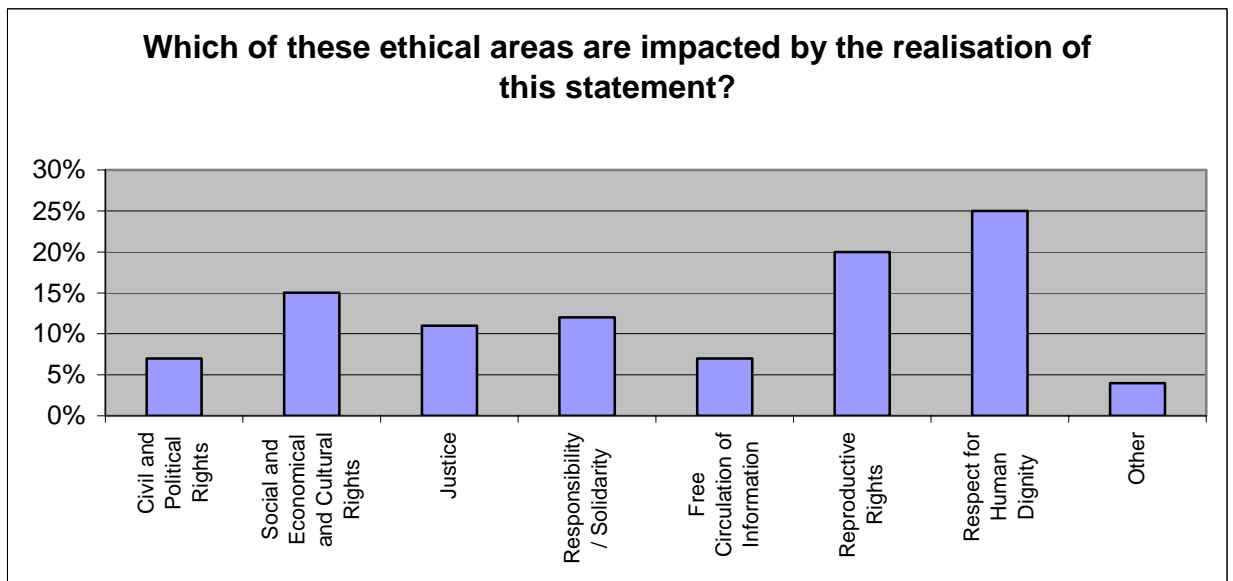
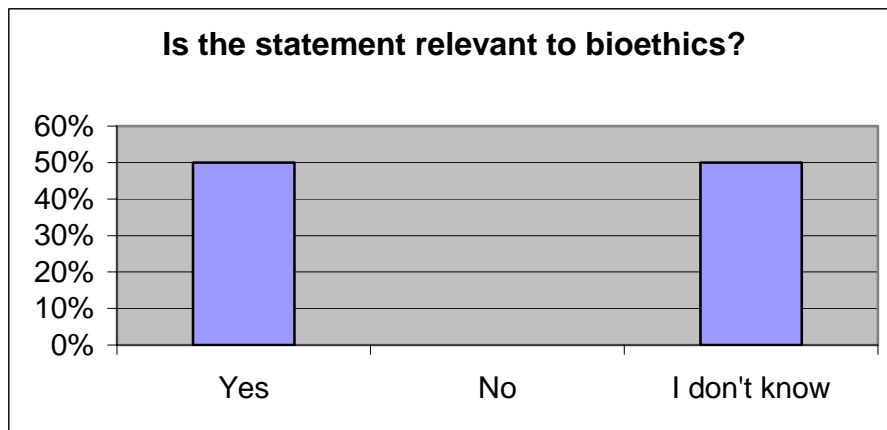
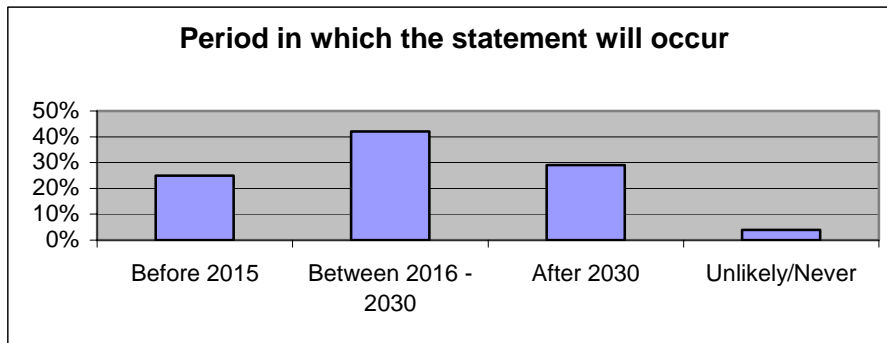


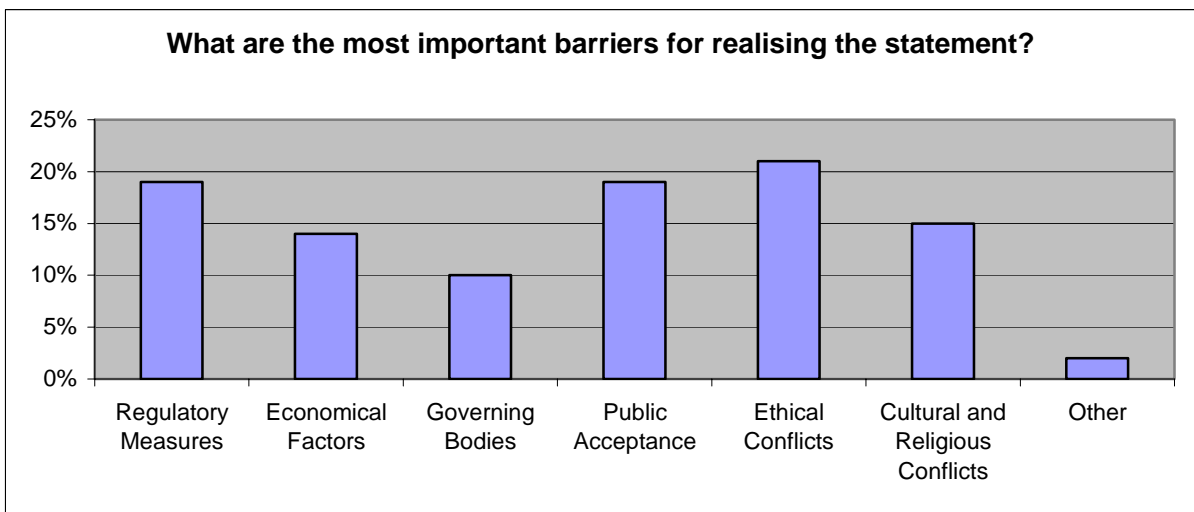
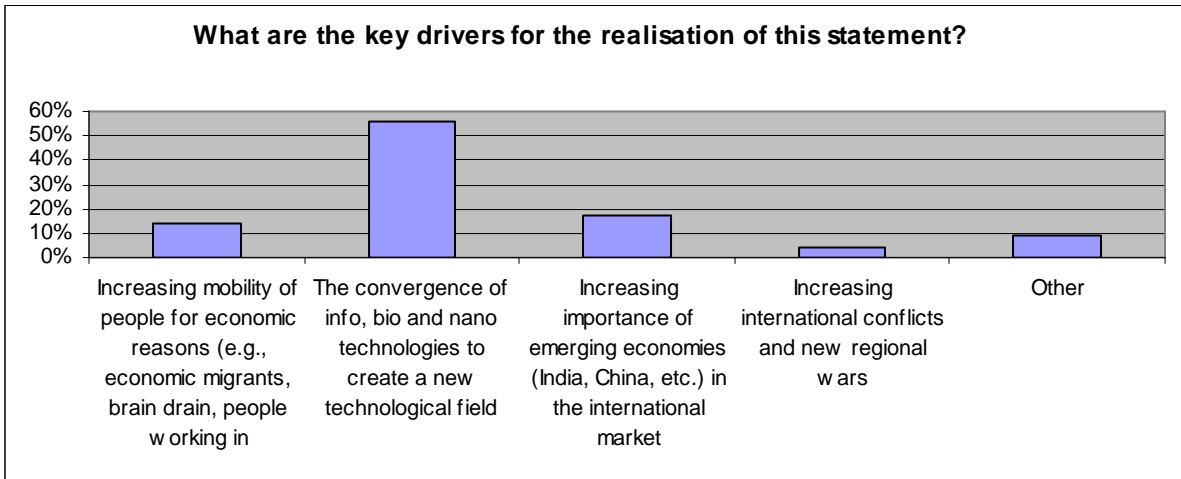
What are the most important barriers for realising the statement?



Development of the statement 8

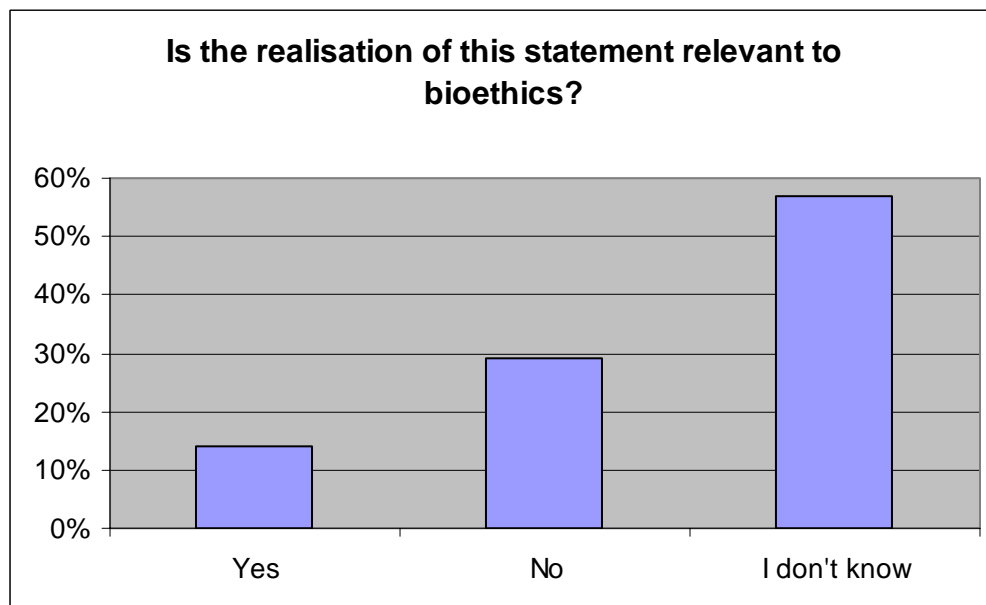
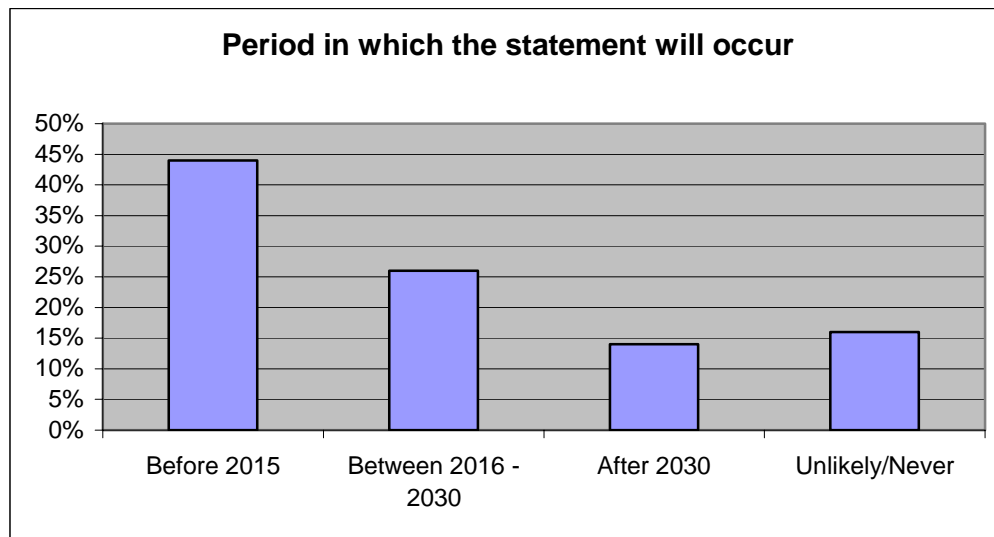
Biomedical engineering, exploiting advances in biotechnology and "smart" materials, will produce new surgical procedures and systems, including better organic and artificial replacement parts for human beings, and the use of unspecialized human cells (stem cells) to augment or replace brain or body functions and structures.



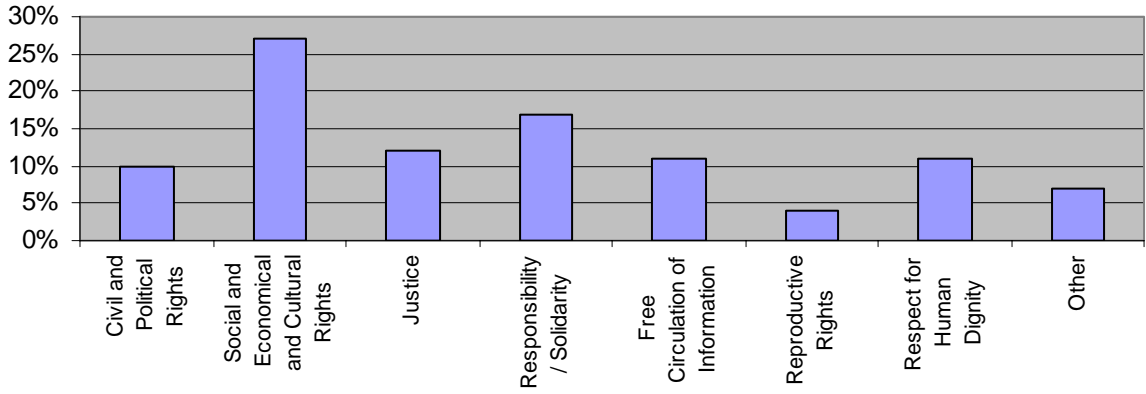


Development of the statement 9

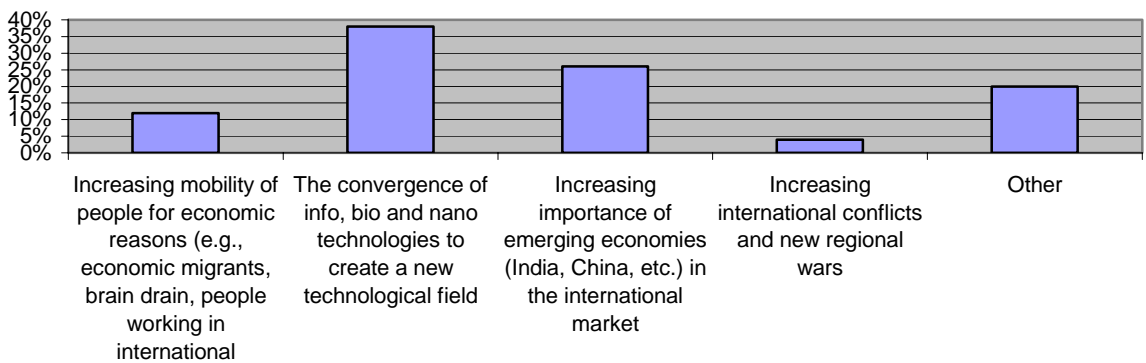
Genetic modification-despite continuing technological and cultural barriers-will improve the engineering of organisms to increase food production and quality. Despite cultural and political concerns, the use of genetically modified crops will be widely accepted.



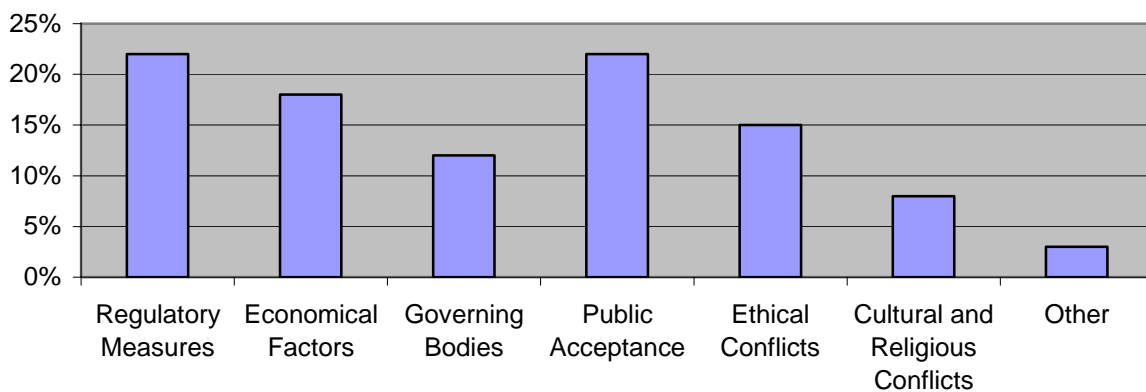
Which of these ethical areas are impacted by the realisation of this statement?



What are the key drivers for the realisation of this statement?

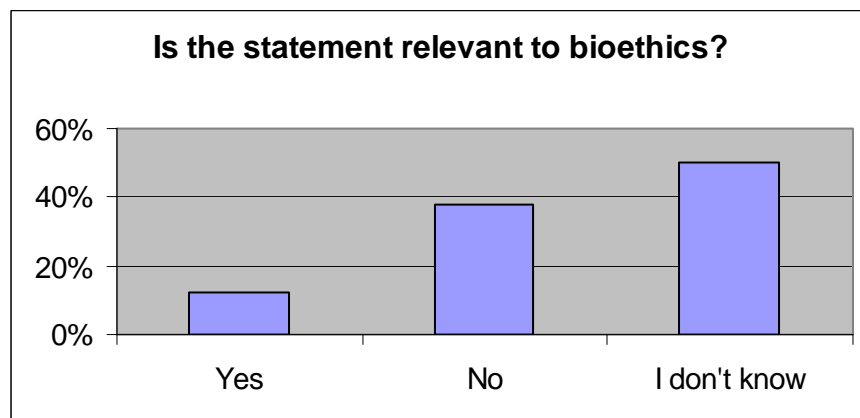
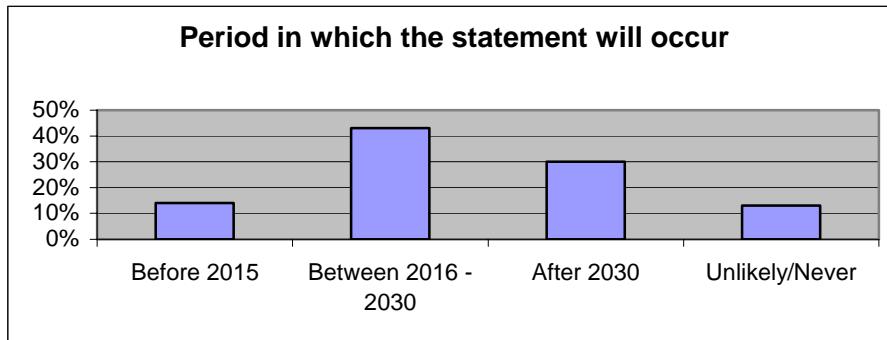


What are the most important barriers for realising the statement?

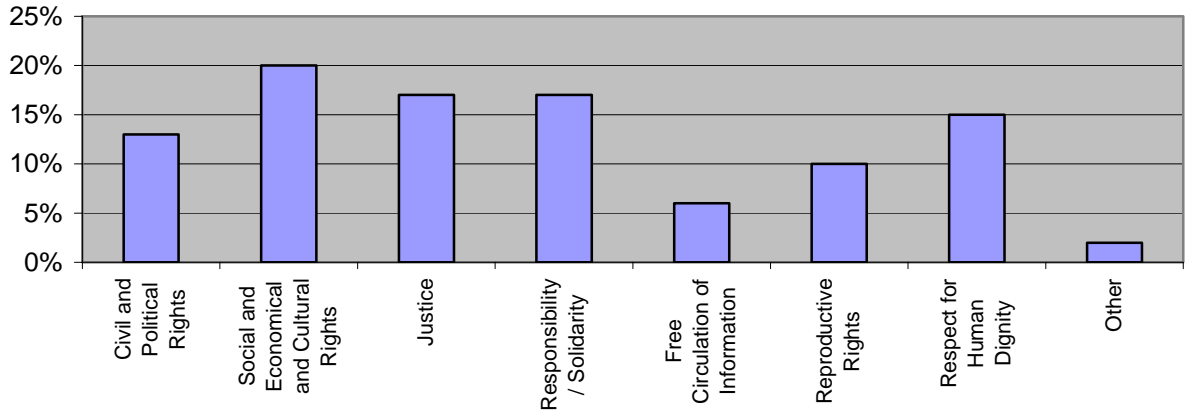


Development of the statement 10

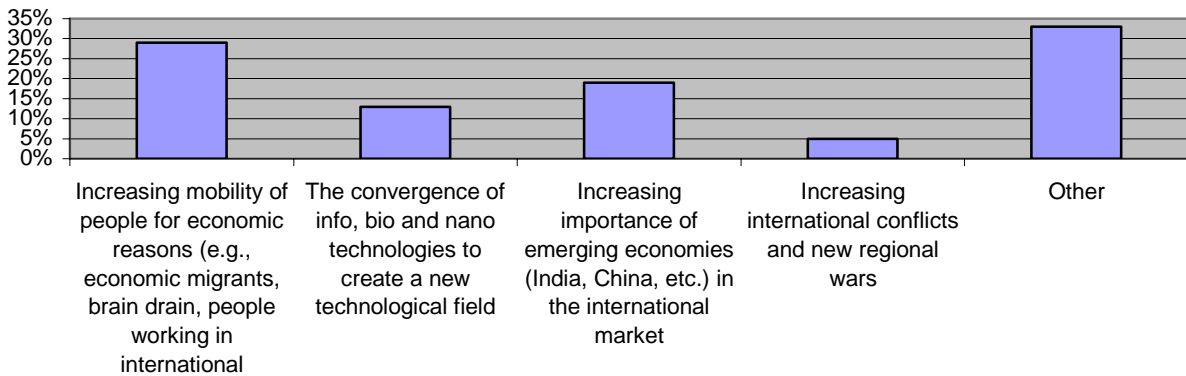
The integration/convergence of information technology, biotechnology, materials sciences, and nanotechnology will generate a dramatic increase in innovation, till the birth of a totally new disciplinary and technological field. The effects will be profound on research, business, commerce, public health, and security.

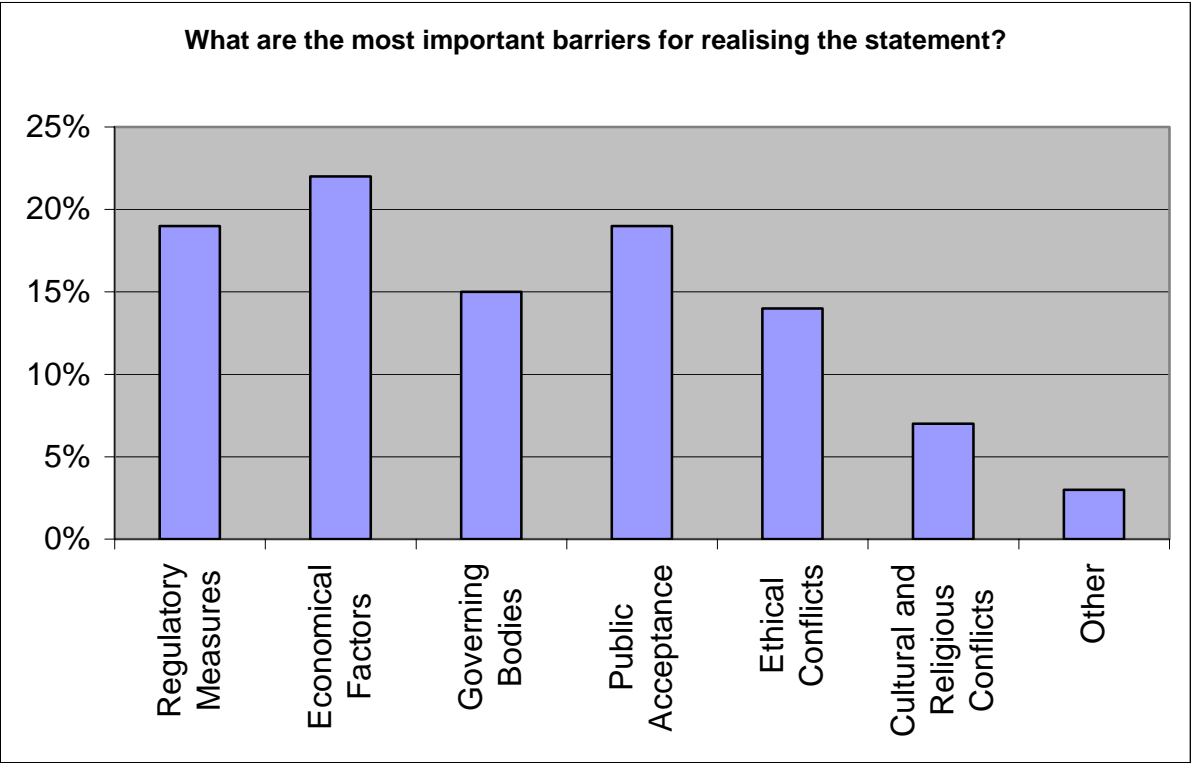


Which of these ethical areas are impacted by the realisation of this statement?



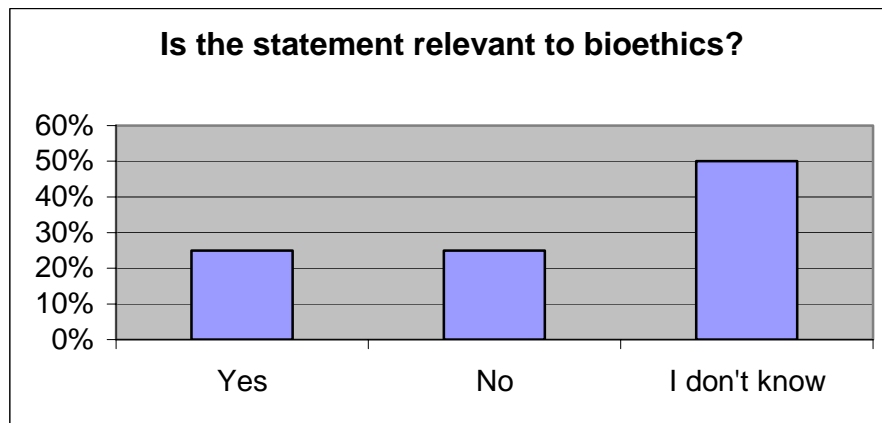
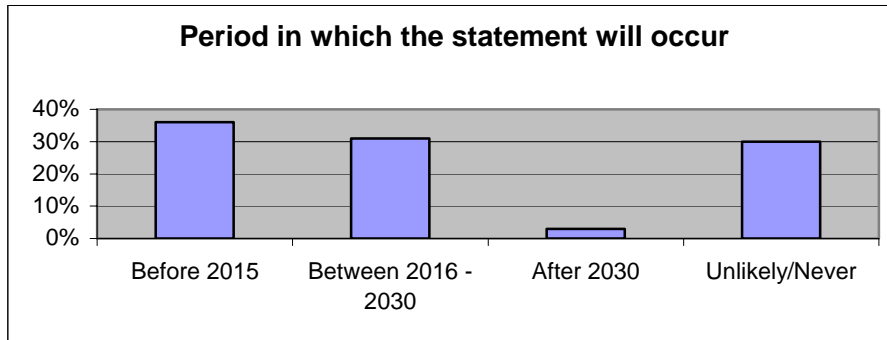
What are the key drivers for the realisation of this statement?

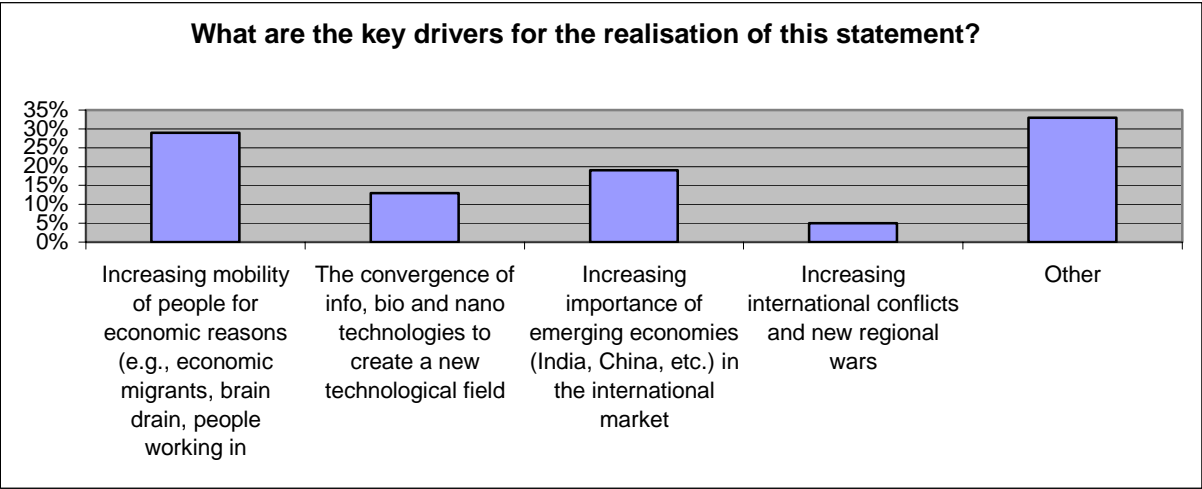
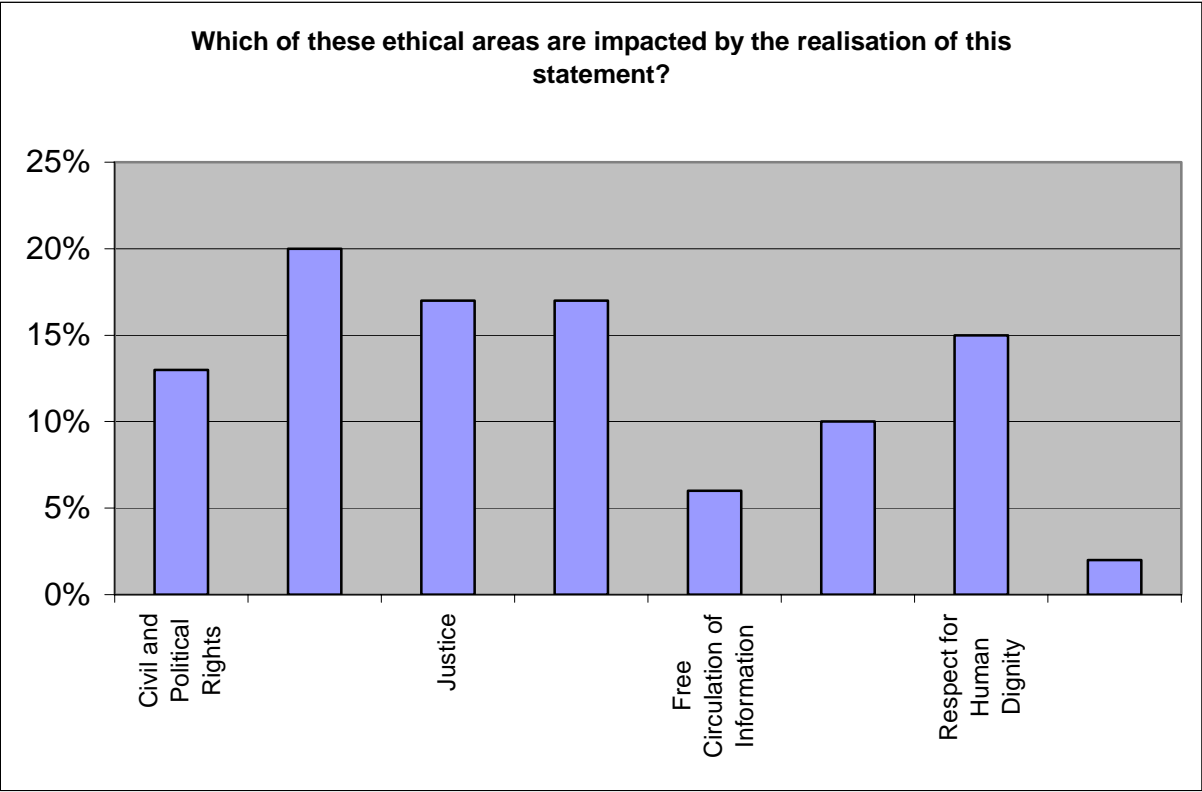


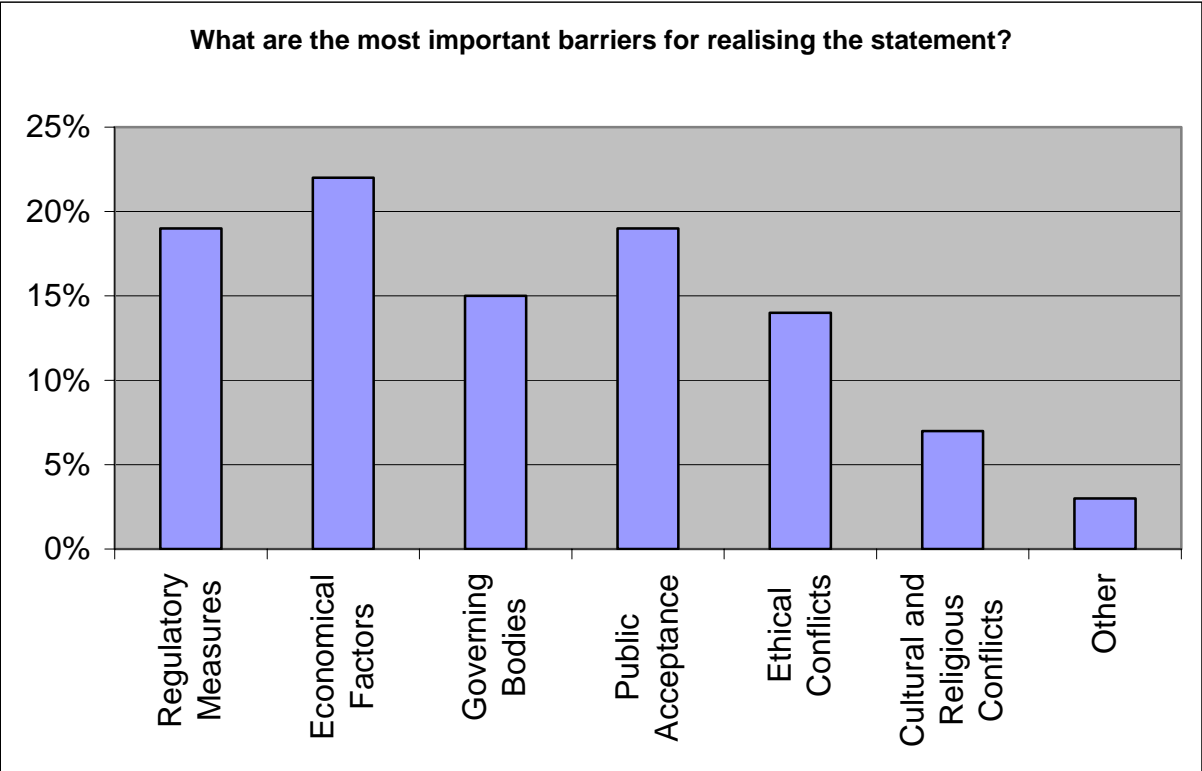


Development of the statement 11

Private multinational health insurances become the most important insurance system in most developed countries (US, Europe, Japan).

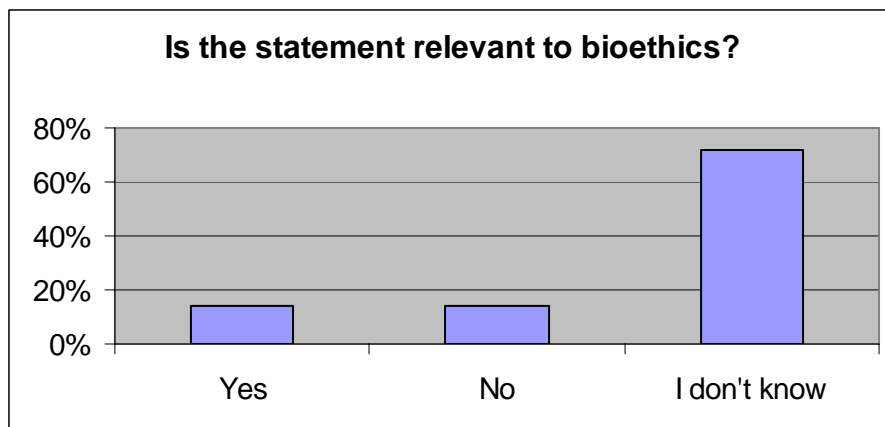
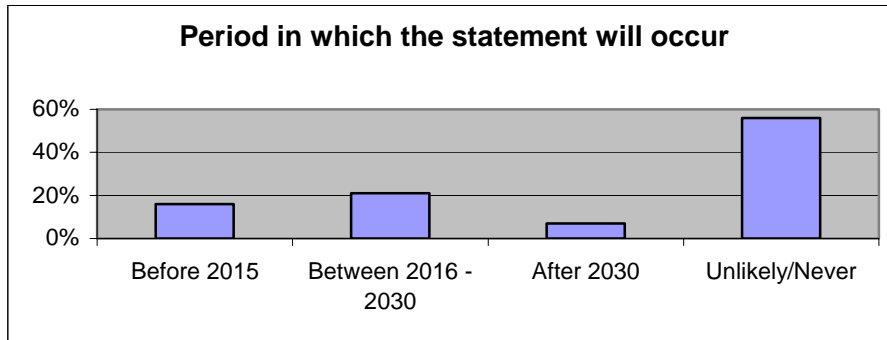




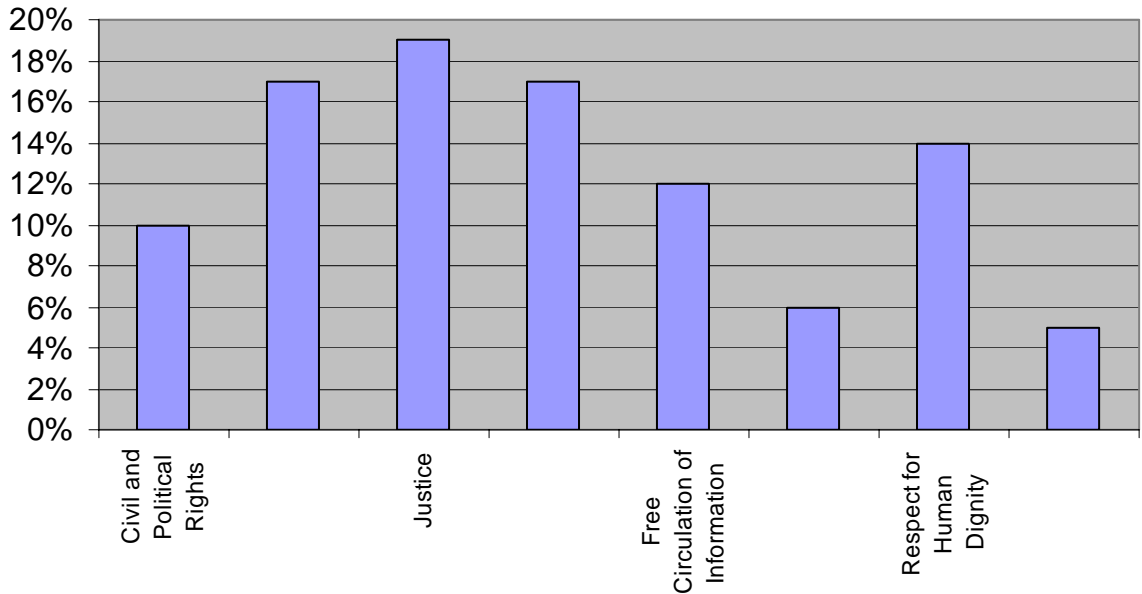


Development of the statement 12

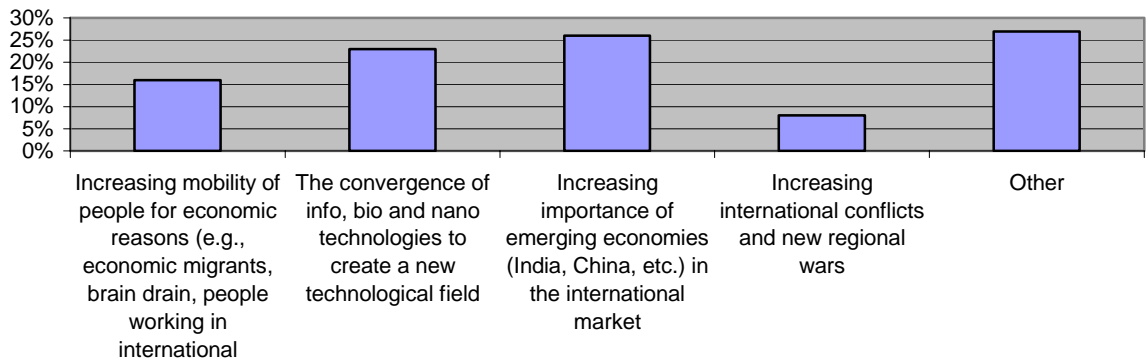
Most controversy about Drug pricing policies and Intellectual Property Rights in the pharmaceutical market are solved.

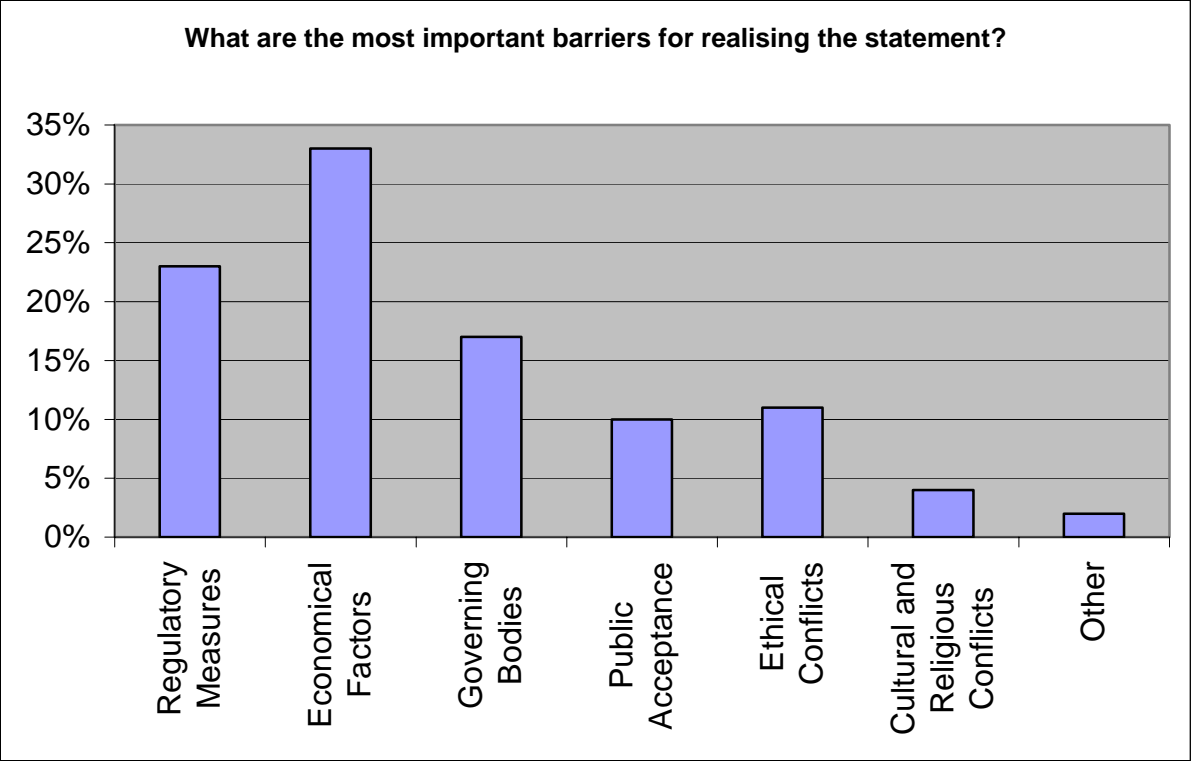


Which of these ethical areas are impacted by the realisation of this statement?



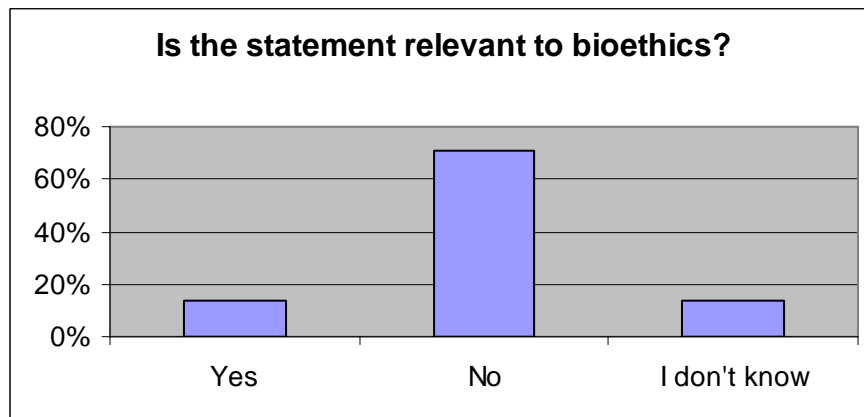
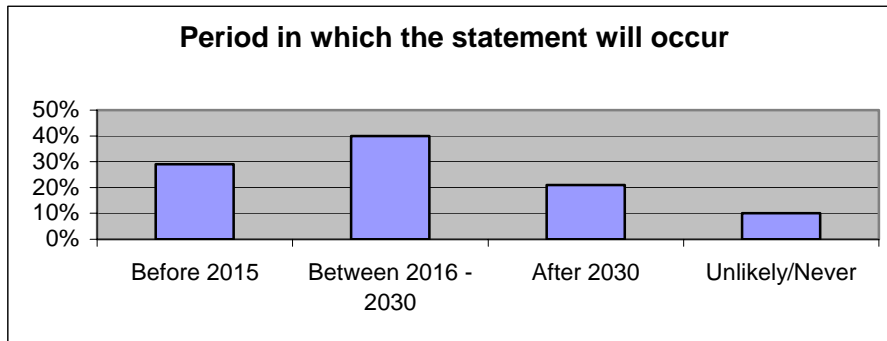
What are the key drivers for the realisation of this statement?



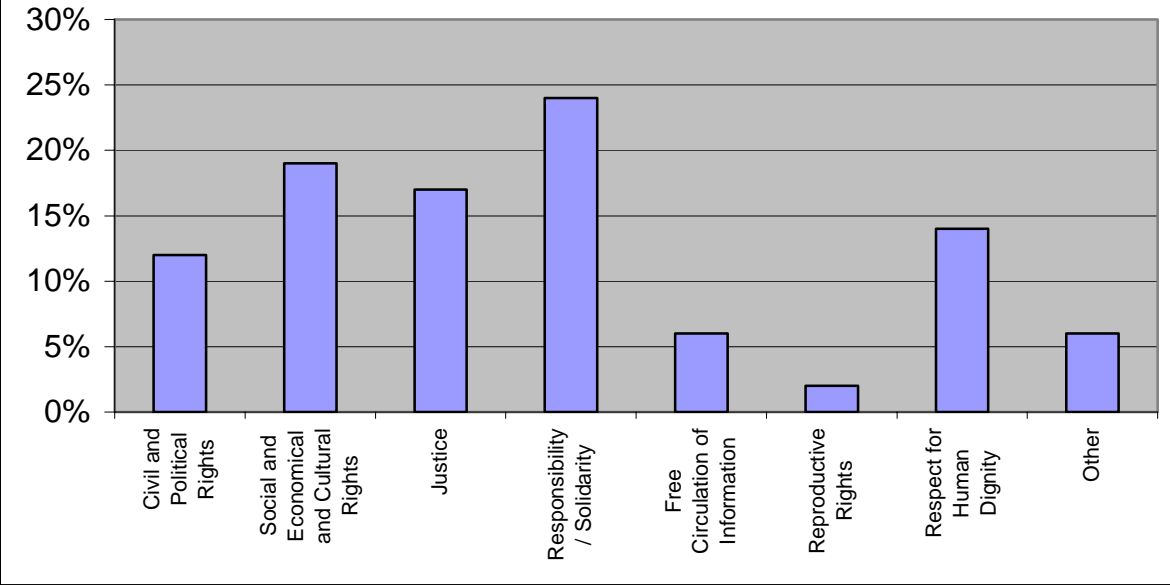


Development of the statement 13

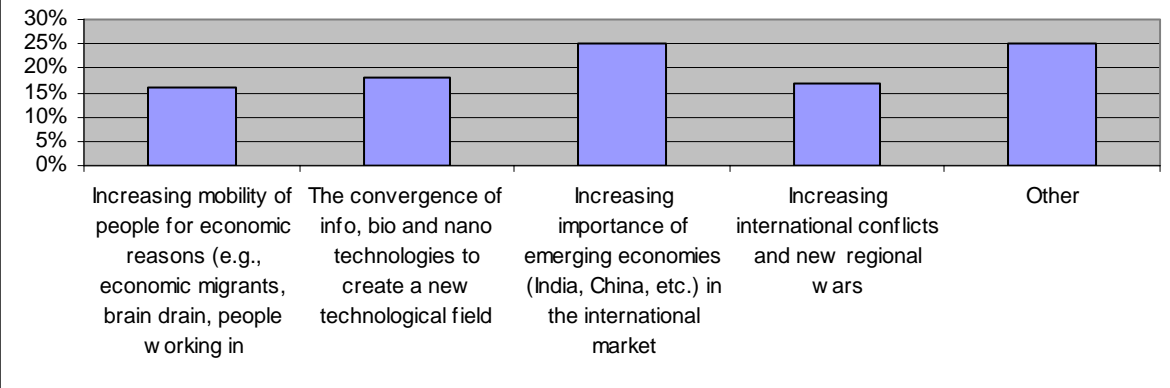
Rapidly changing weather patterns attributable to global warming - with grave damage and enormous costs for several developed countries—sparks an enduring global consensus on the need for concerted action on the environment.



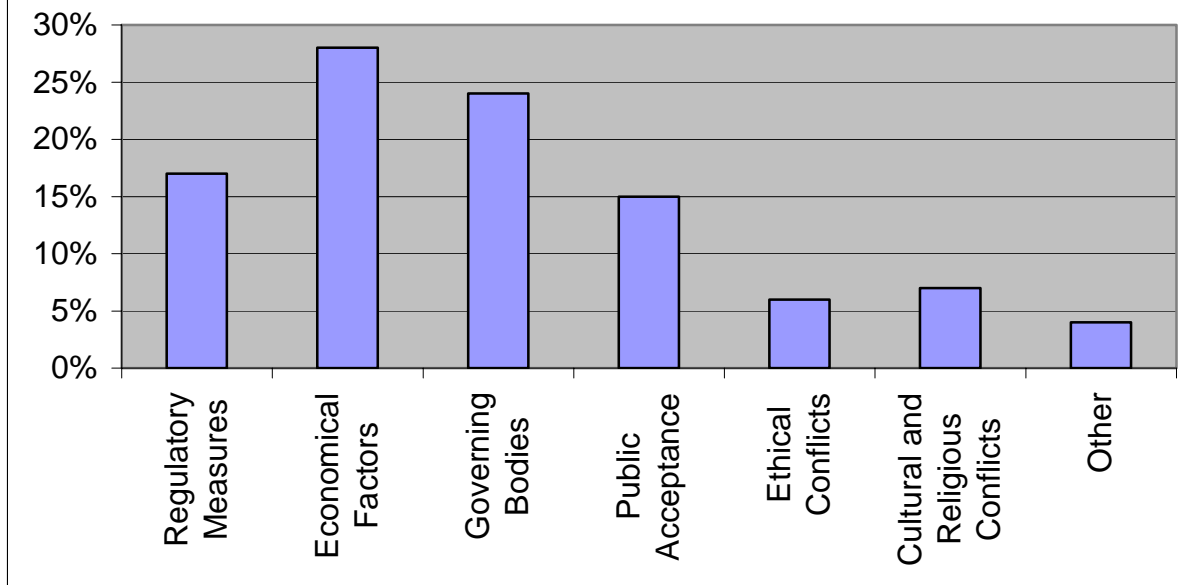
Which of these ethical areas are impacted by the realisation of this statement?



What are the key drivers for the realisation of this statement?

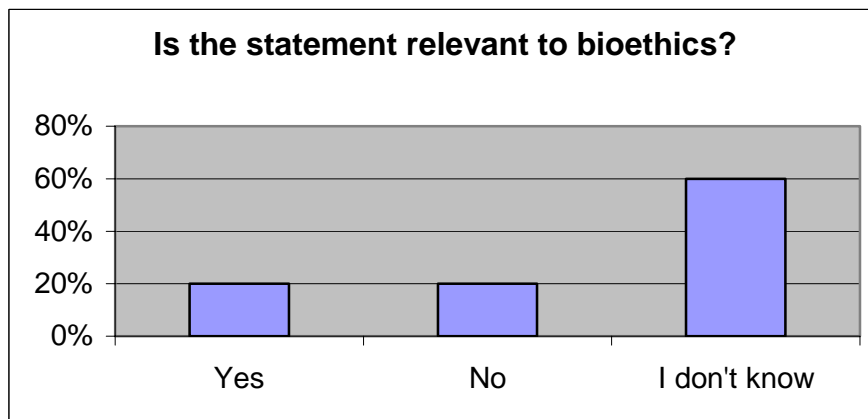
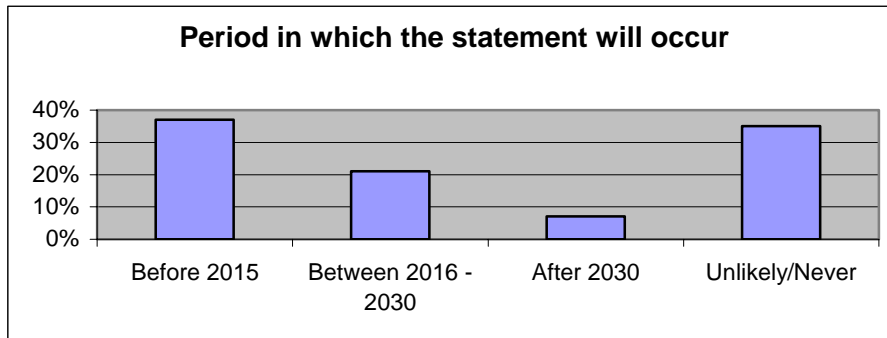


What are the most important barriers for realising the statement?

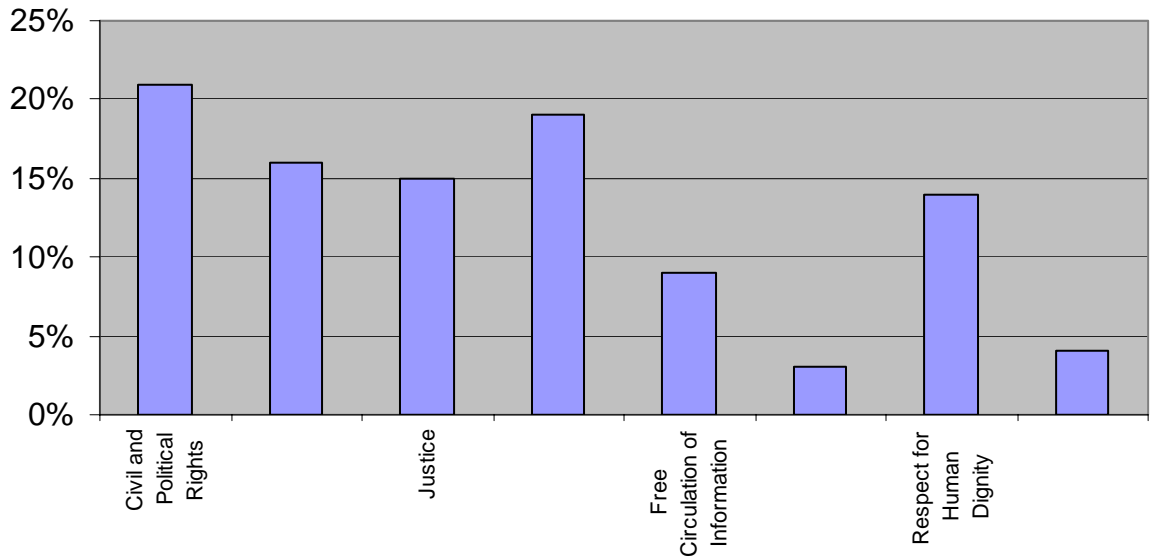


Development of the statement 14

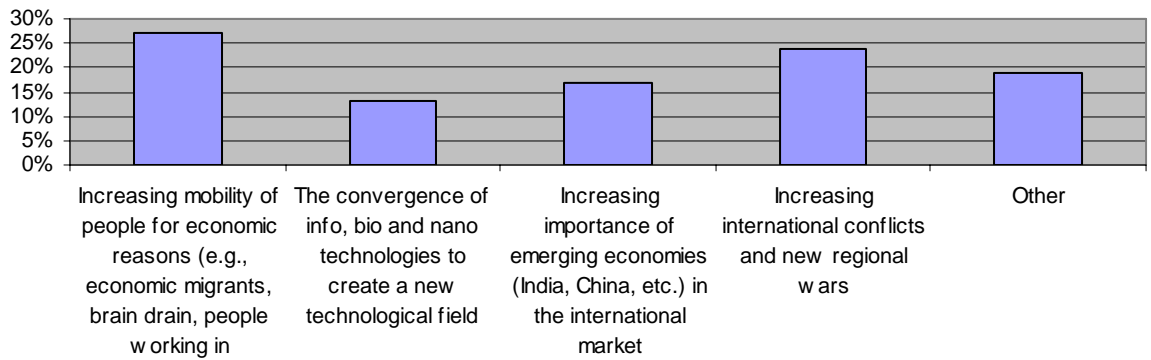
After another global epidemic, economic international governing bodies are bestowed with the power to sanction countries that do not adhere to International Health Regulations regarding epidemics.



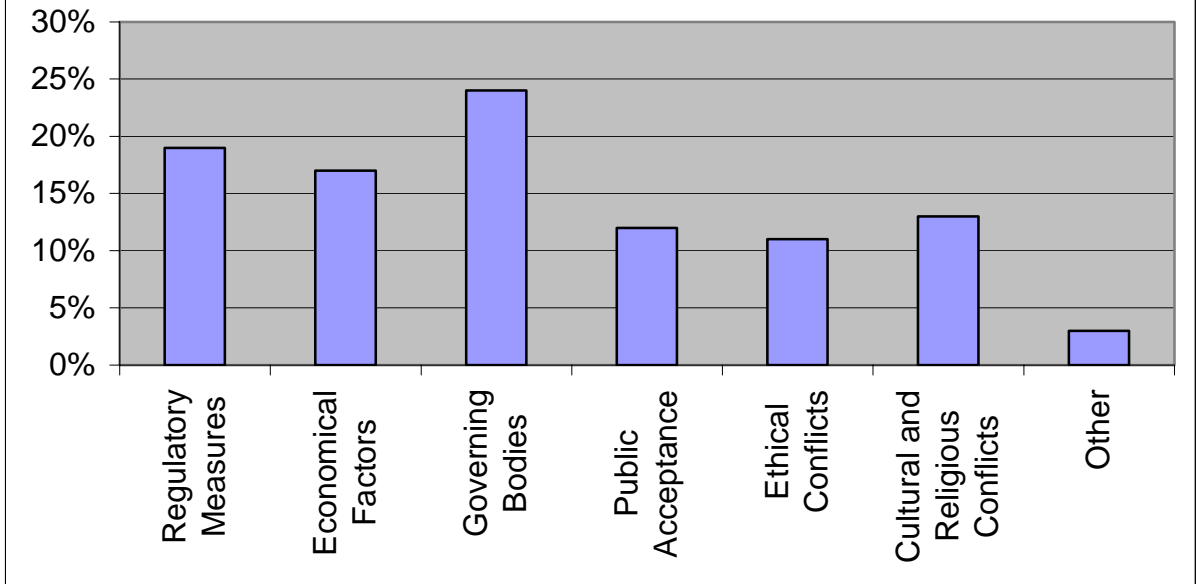
Which of these ethical areas are impacted by the realisation of this statement?



What are the key drivers for the realisation of this statement?

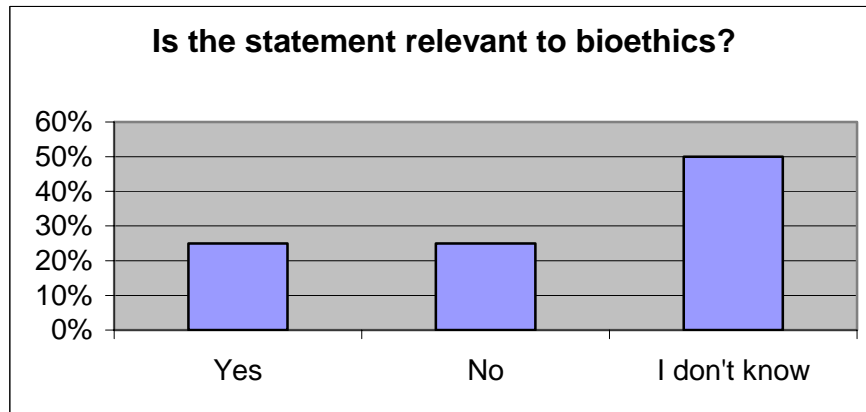
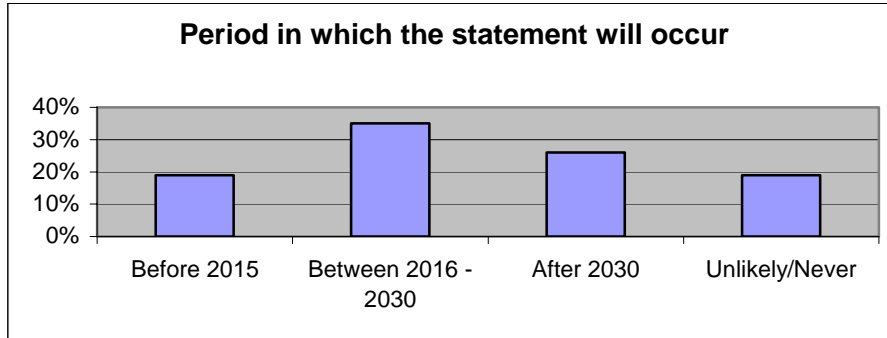


What are the most important barriers for realising the statement?

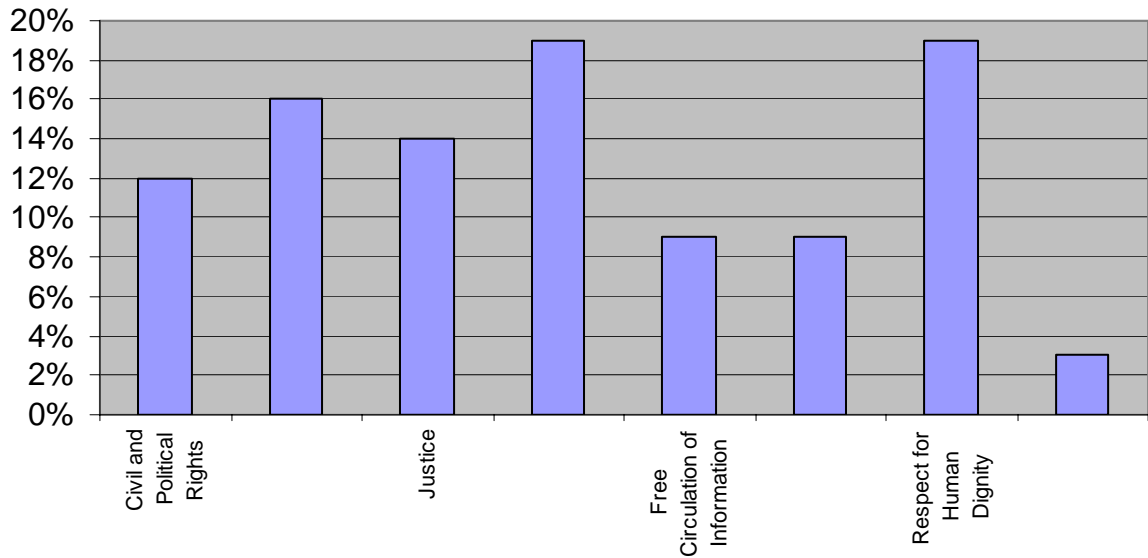


Development of the statement 15

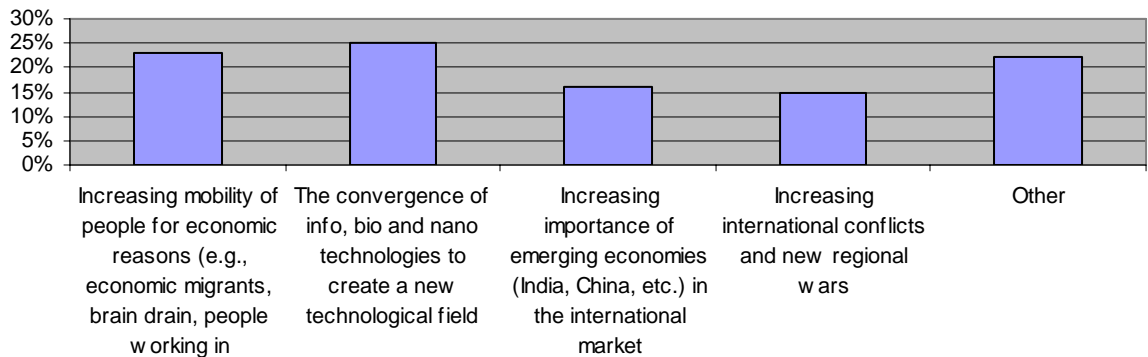
The development of affordable prophylactics and drugs for HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria afford control these diseases in Africa.



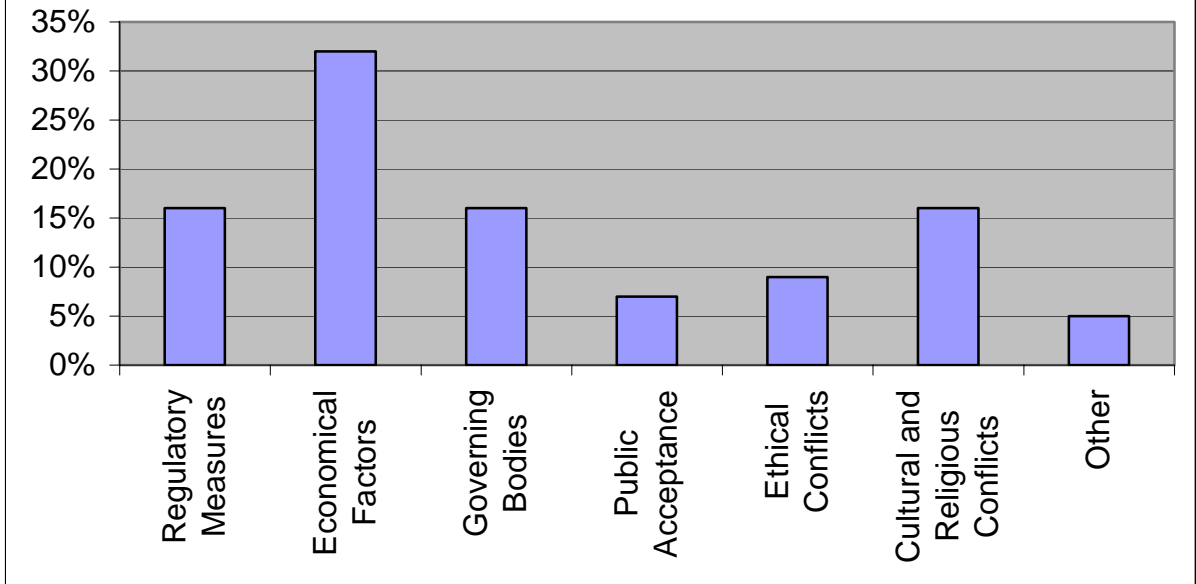
Which of these ethical areas are impacted by the realisation of this statement?



What are the key drivers for the realisation of this statement?

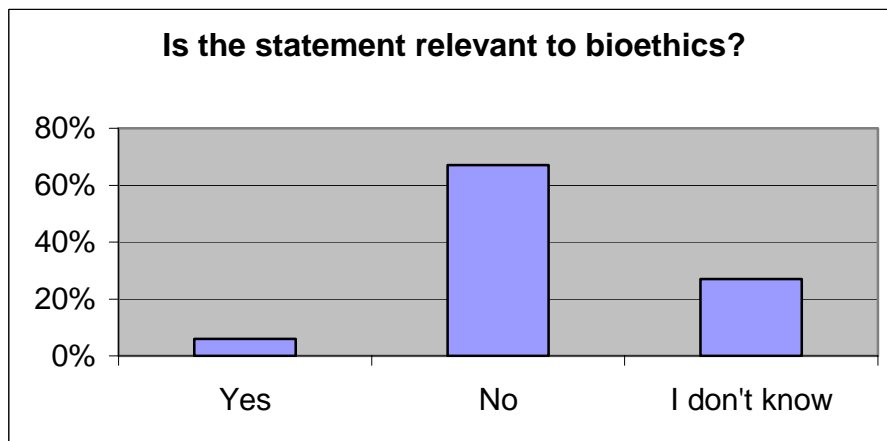
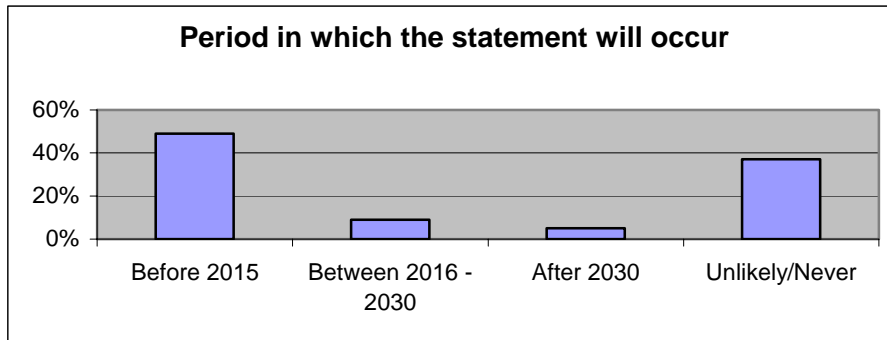


What are the most important barriers for realising the statement?

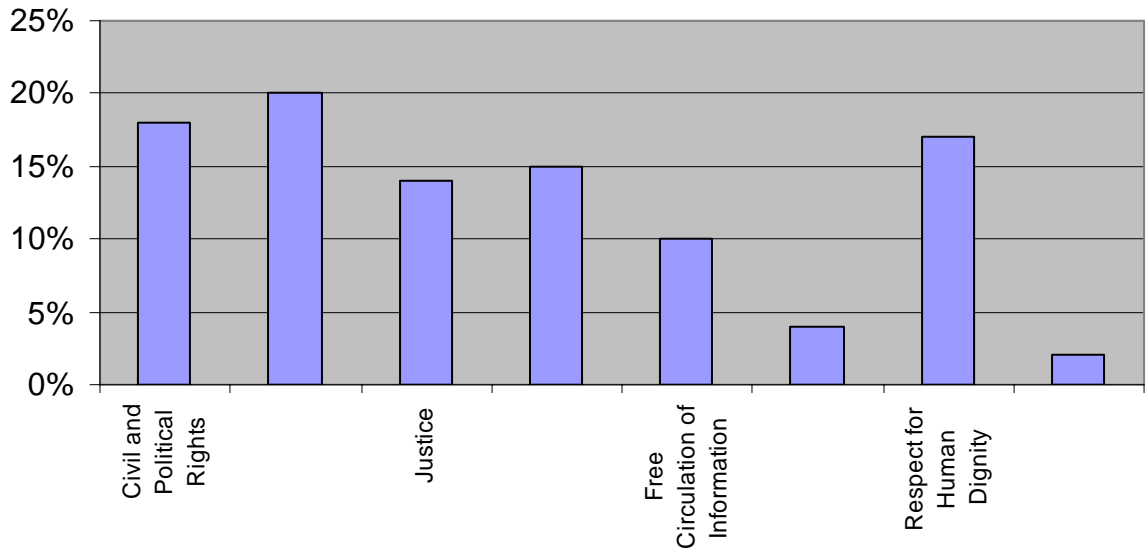


Development of the statement 16

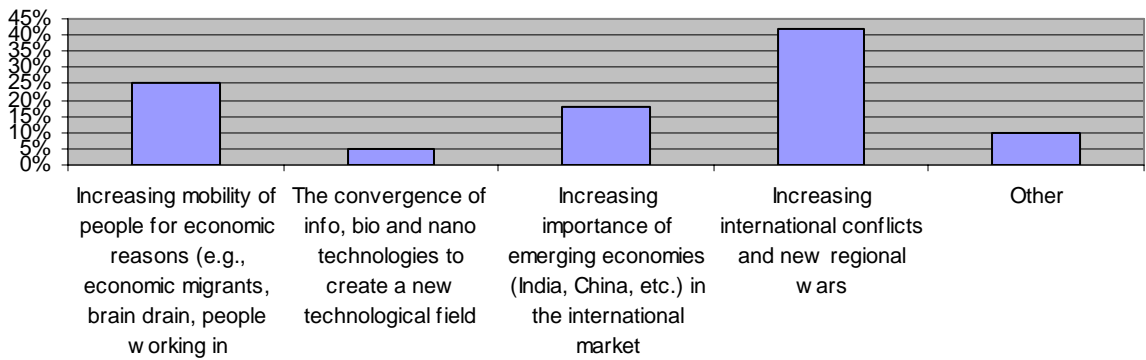
Division and particularism increase. Religious, cultural and ethnic conflicts become endemic. The dominant source of international conflicts becomes cultural.



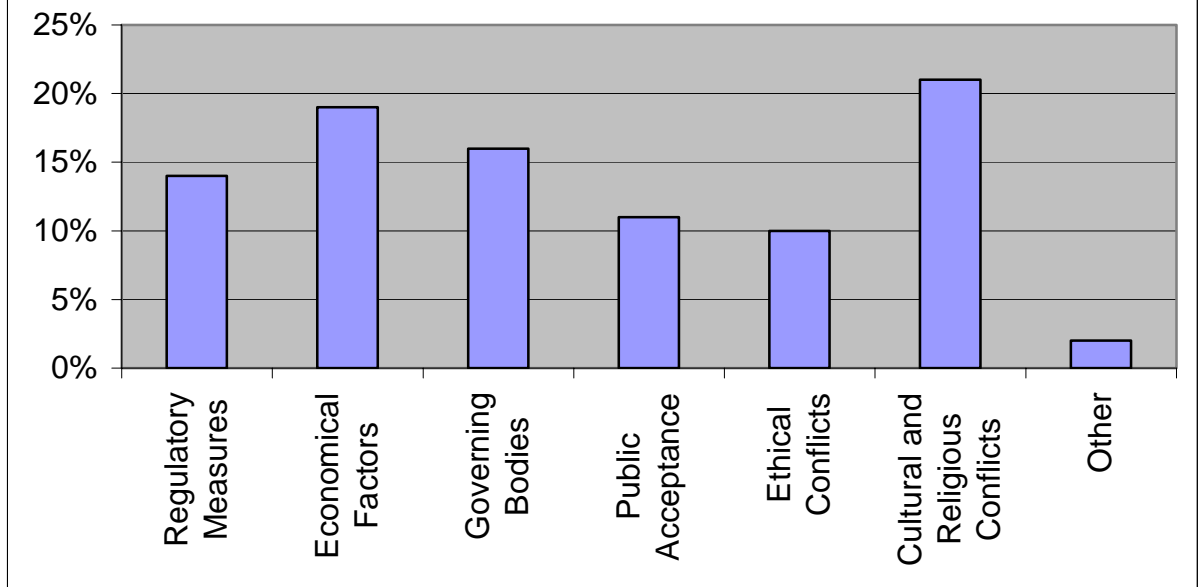
Which of these ethical areas are impacted by the realisation of this statement?



What are the key drivers for the realisation of this statement?

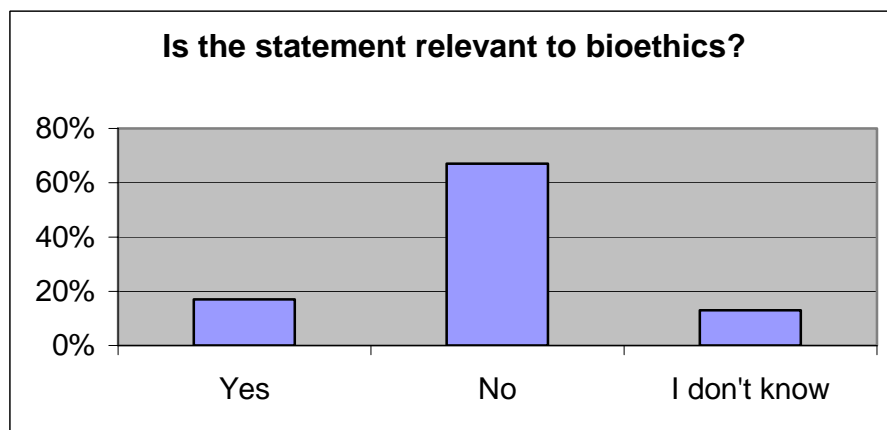
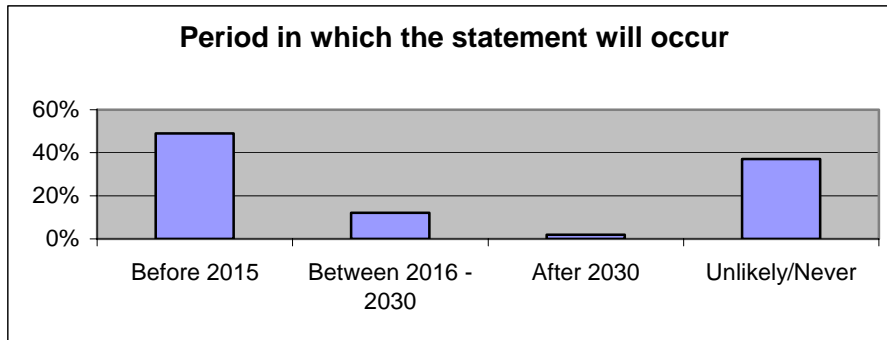


What are the most important barriers for realising the statement?

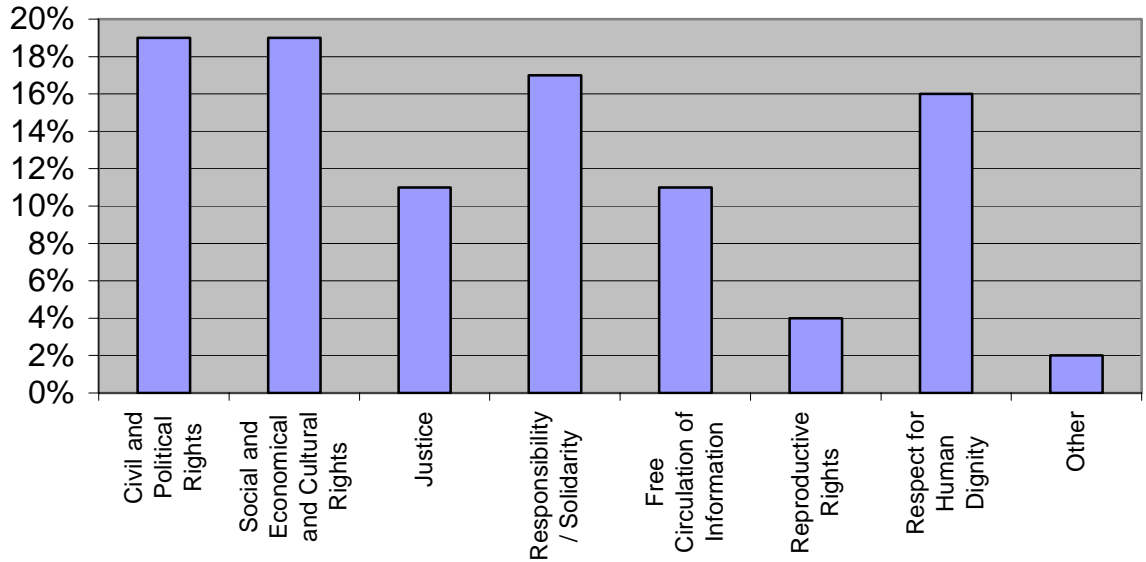


Development of the statement 17

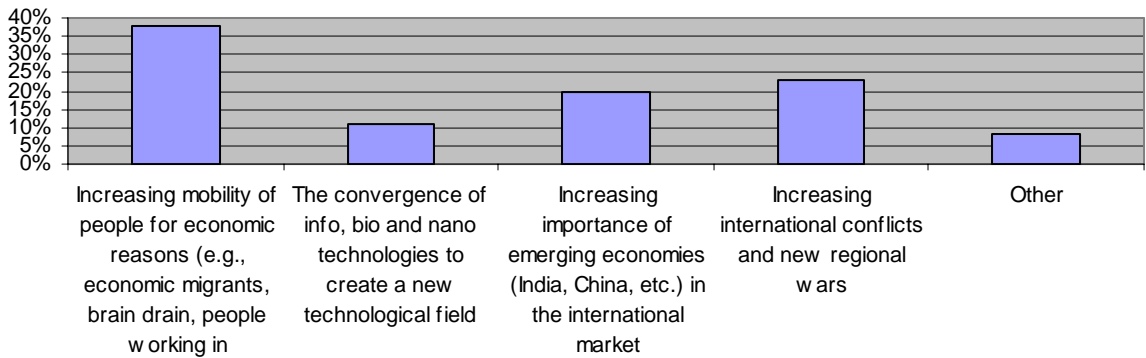
The explosive increase of world travel and migration flows produces thousands of potentially infectious contacts daily. The fear of new epidemics – such as SARS - will increase xenophobia and intolerance in developed countries.



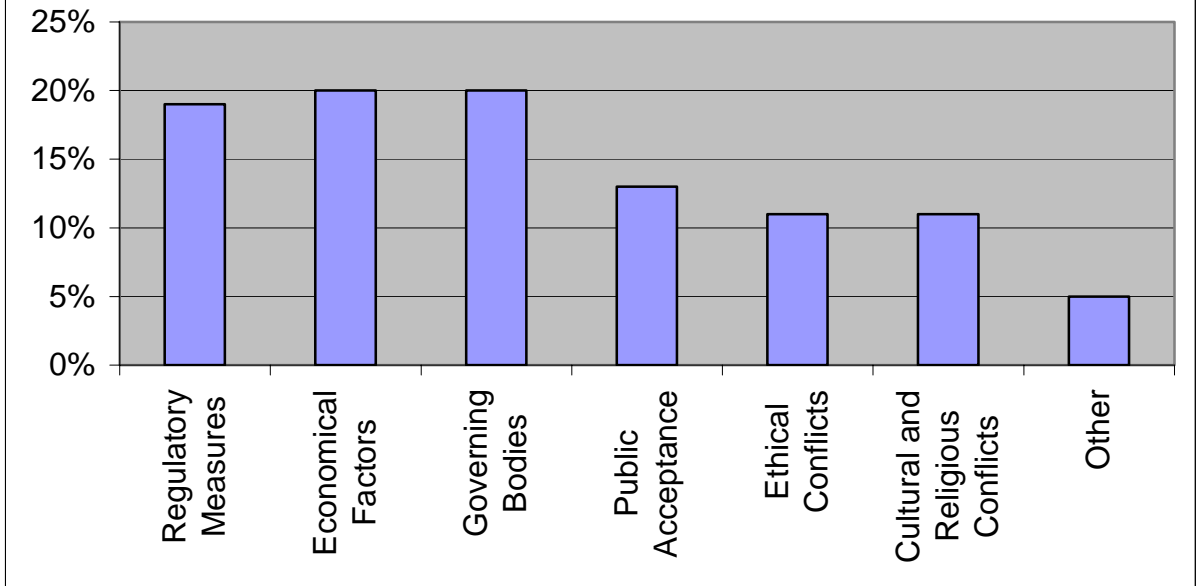
Which of these ethical areas are impacted by the realisation of this statement?



What are the key drivers for the realisation of this statement?

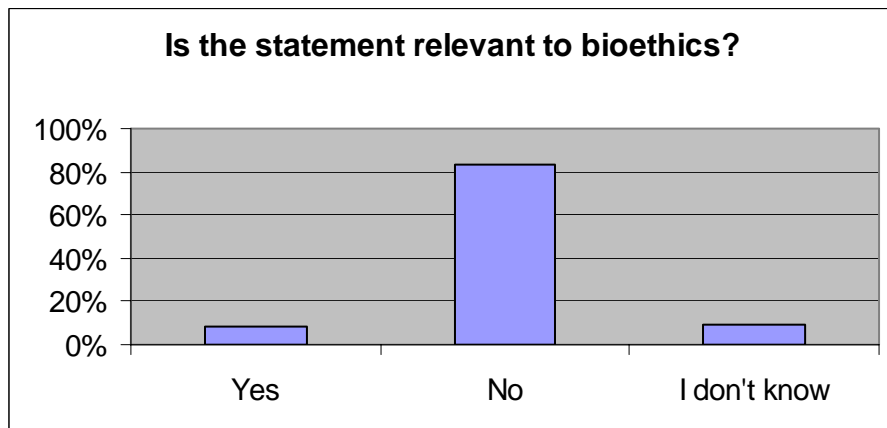
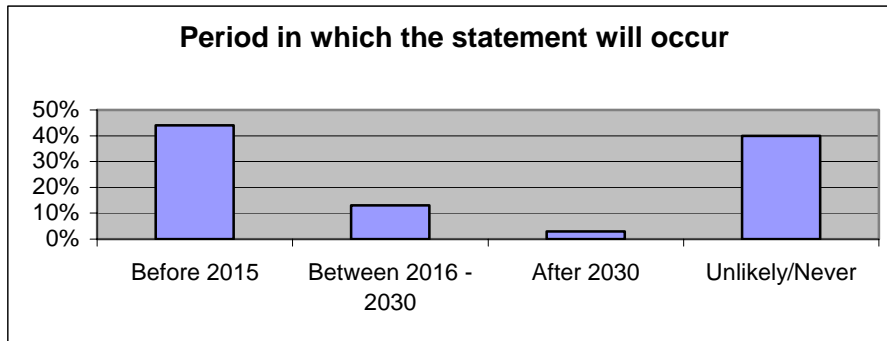


What are the most important barriers for realising the statement?

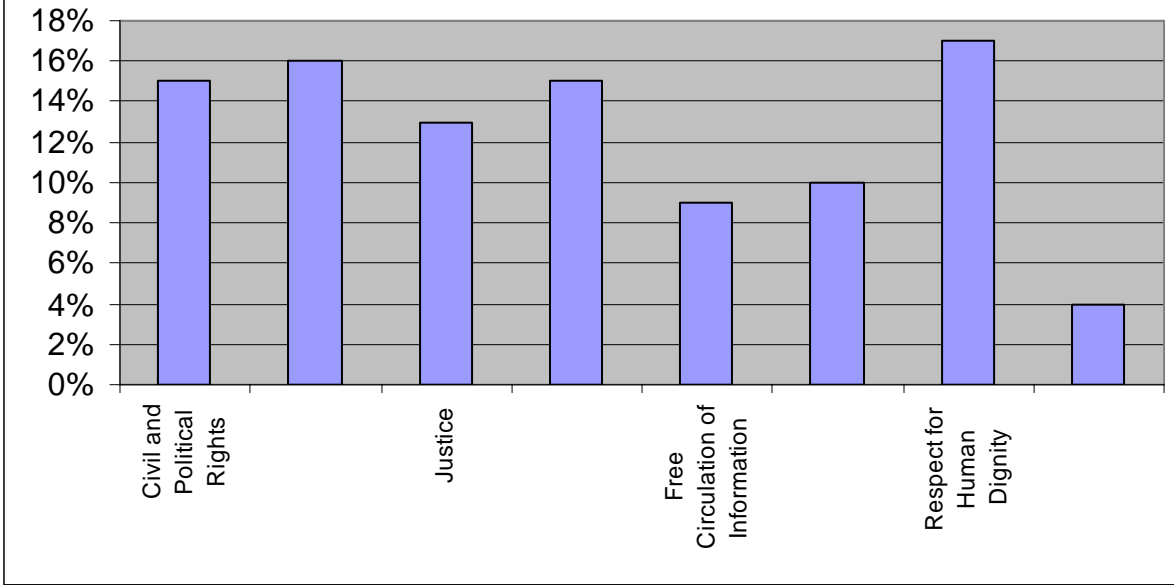


Development of the statement 18

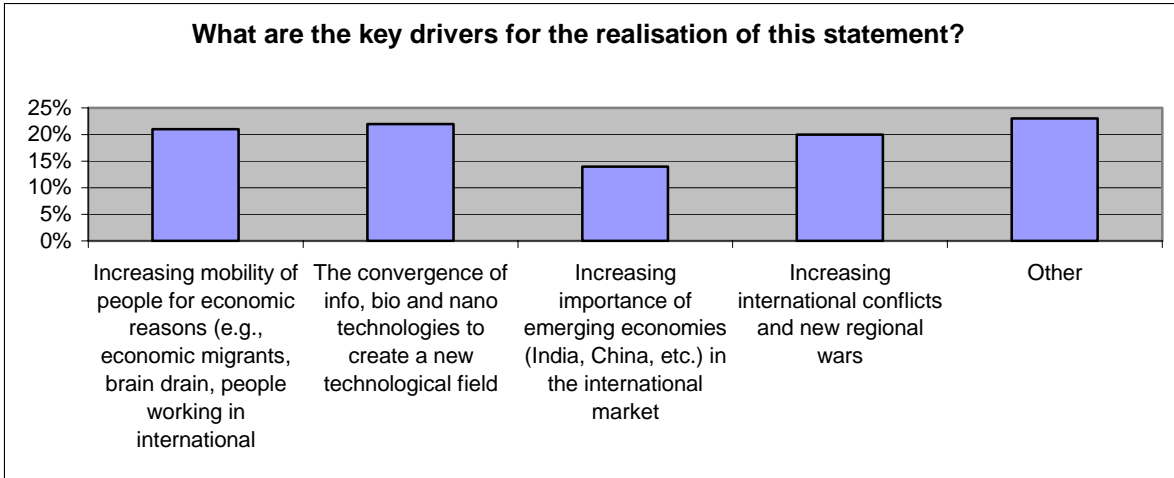
A new religious or spiritual movement emerges, possibly linked to environmental values, to contest such issues as genetic manipulation, nanotechnology, and the income gap between rich and poor.



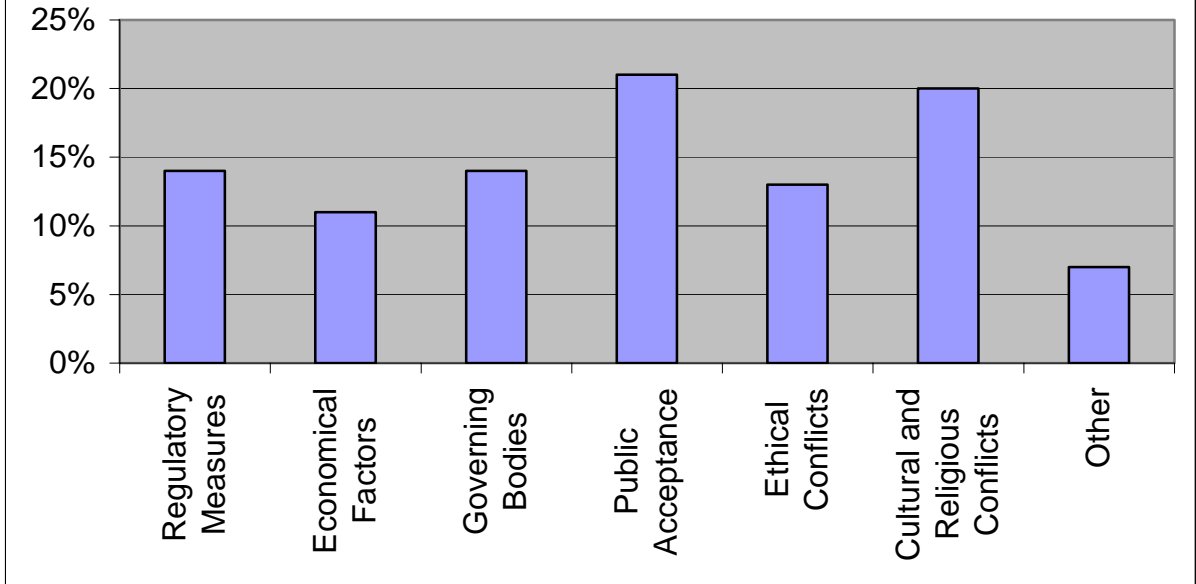
Which of these ethical areas are impacted by the realisation of this statement?



What are the key drivers for the realisation of this statement?

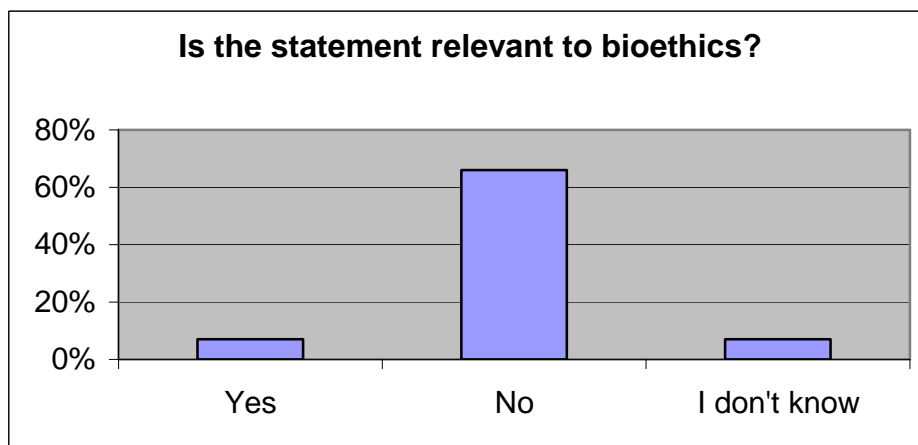
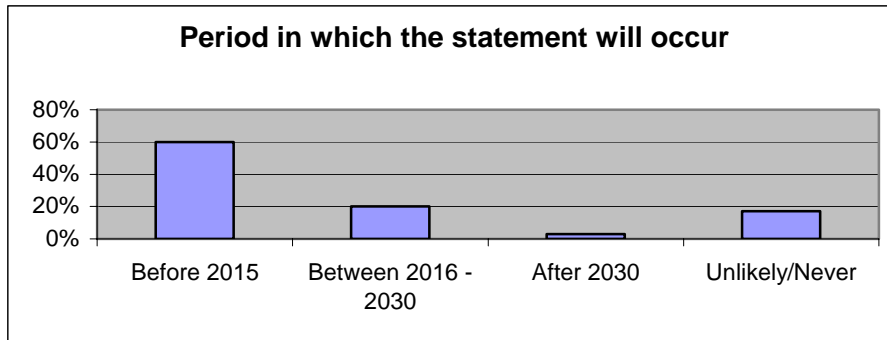


What are the most important barriers for realising the statement?

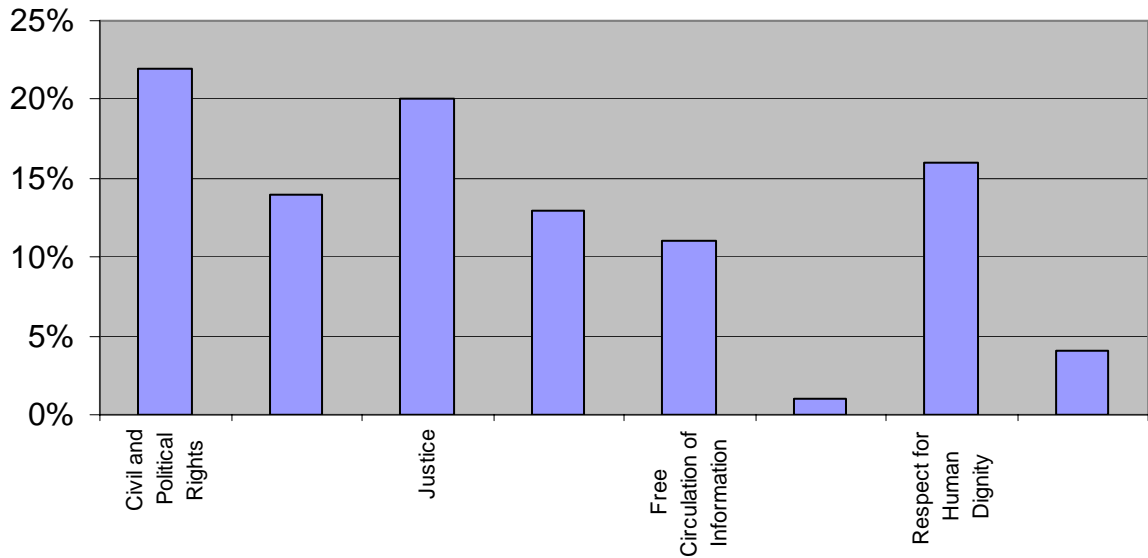


Development of the statement 19

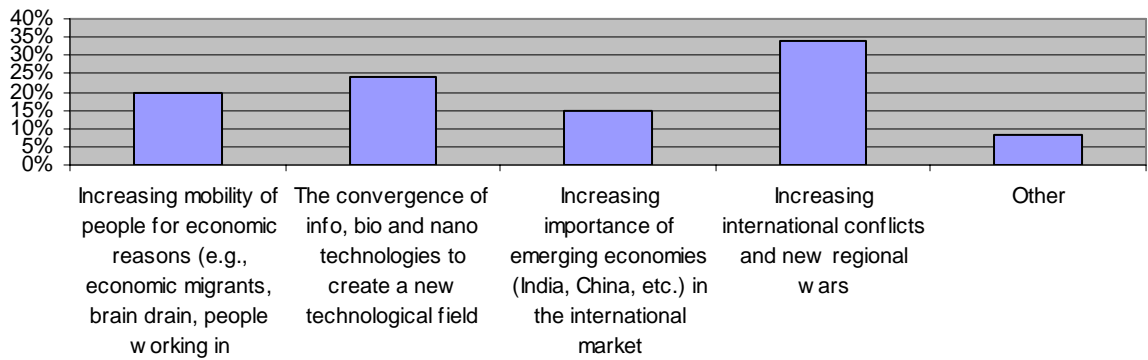
Weapon export control regimes and sanctions will be less effective because of the diffusion of technology, porous borders, defence industry consolidations, and reliance upon foreign markets to maintain profitability. More sophisticated weaponry, including weapons of mass destruction will get into the hands of non state belligerents.



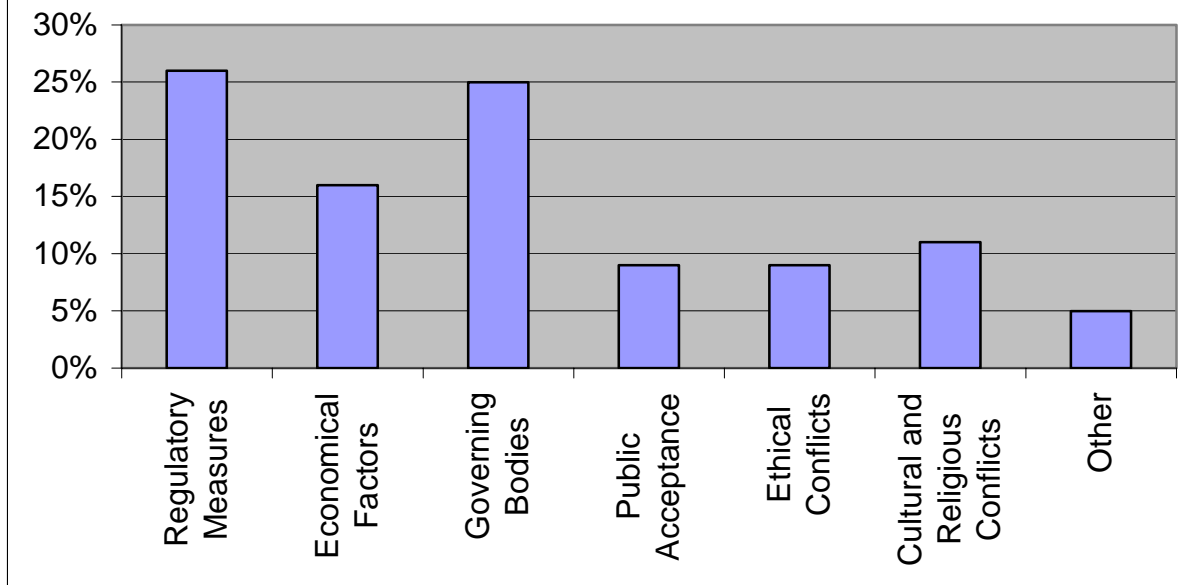
Which of these ethical areas are impacted by the realisation of this statement?



What are the key drivers for the realisation of this statement?

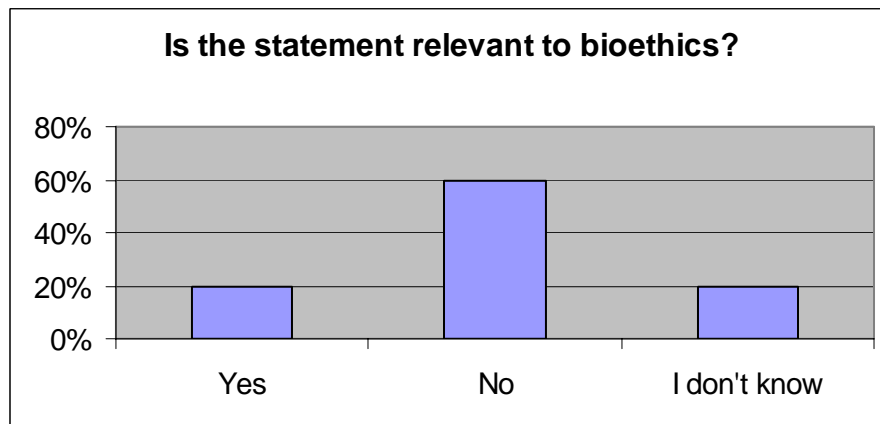
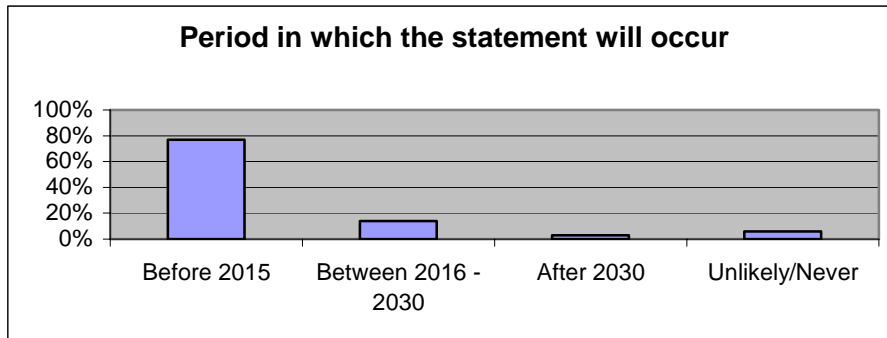


What are the most important barriers for realising the statement?

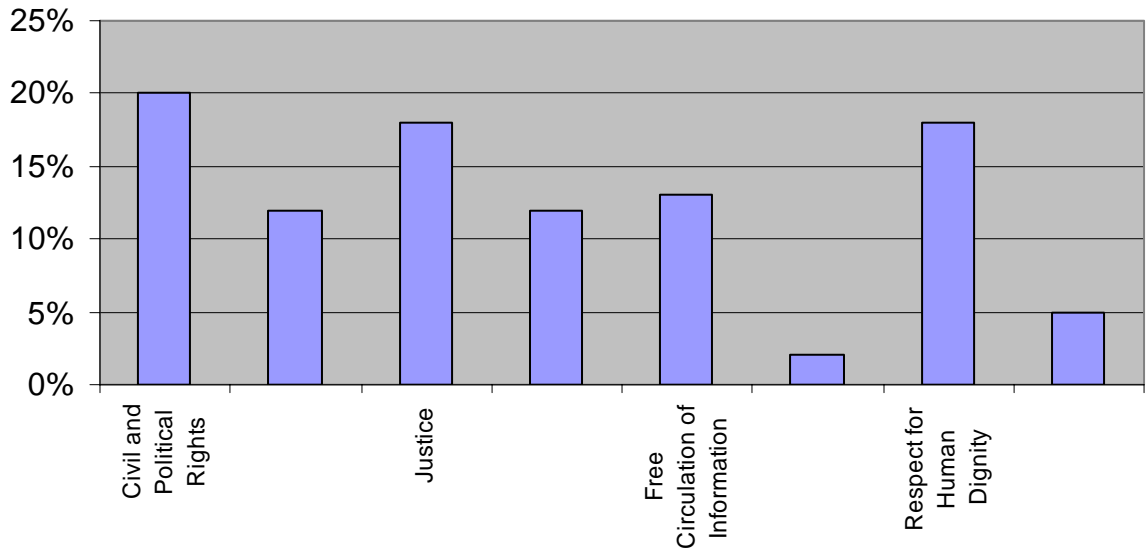


Development of the statement 20

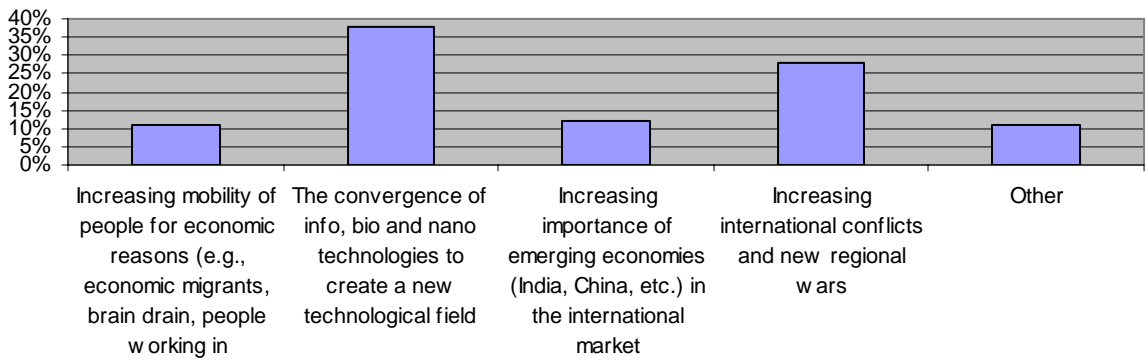
Defence-related technologies will advance rapidly—particularly nanotechnology, information systems and biotechnology. The development and integrated application of these technologies will occur mostly in the United States.



Which of these ethical areas are impacted by the realisation of this statement?



What are the key drivers for the realisation of this statement?



What are the most important barriers for realising the statement?

