

The project TAMI

The aim of TAMI is to create a structured dialogue between Technology Assessment (TA) experts and decision-makers in the Science and Technology (S&T) policy area on the methods used in and the impact of current European TA activities. Two teams, drawn from major TA institutes throughout Europe, are working together with decision-makers on a reference system of European S&T foresight and evaluation processes to identify best practices relative to policy needs.

This involves a thorough comparison of current TA methods and identification of criteria to evaluate their impacts.

The main aims are to increase the value of TA to policy advice and its input in European Science and Technology policy.

Objectives

TAMI intends to create and promote a pan-European dialogue on Technology Assessment and its effect on Science and Technology policy. Special emphasis will be given to improving collaboration between experts (providers of TA) and policy-makers (its users).

Given the diversity of European TA methods and the rationales behind their use, a comparative analysis will be adopted to derive a common reference system. This will have to take into consideration the dimension of political impact. Such a reference system will aid the identification of "best practice" in the socio-political context in which the advice is requested.

In detail, the objectives of the project are to:

- Review and evaluate the state-of-the-art of methods and practices used in current European TA
- Review and evaluate studies of effectiveness already undertaken by European TA institutes
- Compare major European S&T policy structures and parameters affecting them
- Identify "best practices" in TA that maximise impact relative to policy needs
- Create a common reference system for the Method, Impact and Policy components of TA

Structure

The project work process is constructed on two main pillars:

- Impact assessment of TA results:
Identifying criteria to measure policy impact; classifying different levels of impact; classifying different political contexts
- Comparison of TA methods:
Identifying criteria to enable comparison; classification and evaluation of TA methods; identifying criteria for the legitimisation and policy relevance of TA results

Each of these topics will be examined by a group of TA experts in two teams working parallel to each other, with regular plenary meetings to exchange and evaluate results.

Representatives of industries and policy-makers with a strong interest in TA will also offer their input to this process at regular intervals, culminating in the final conference.

Milestones

- Project commencement: January 2002
- Kick-off meeting: June 2002
Discussion with policy-makers, industrial TA and external experts
- Mid-term meeting: March 2003
Second round of discussion with policy-makers, industrial TA and external experts
- Dissemination conference: November 2003
International conference presenting and discussing the results of the project
- End of project: December 2003
- Book publication: March 2004
Main results of the two groups and the conclusion of the wider discussions will be published in a book