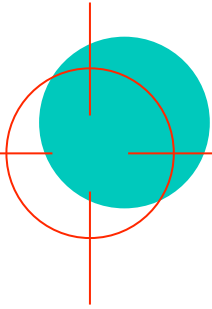# Participatory technology assessment at ITA

Introduction to TA'11, Vienna, 20 June 2011

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OAW AUSTRIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT **ITA**

Participatory technology assessment (pTA)

Describes a *"… class of methods of assessing socio-technological issues that actively involve various kinds of social actors as assessors and discussants."*

(Joss and Bellucci, 2002: 7)

- Citizens (lay persons)
- Civil society organisations
- Stakeholders
- Representatives of the state system
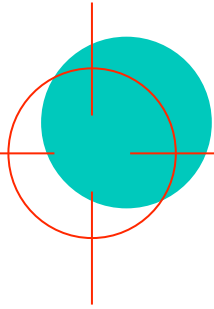
Expectations:
pTA promises to …

… improve legitimacy of socio-technical decisions

… acknowledge that knowledge is distributed

… include diverse values, preferences, interests and worldviews

… raise acceptability of technology

… foster public understanding and engagement

➤ provide potential answers to:
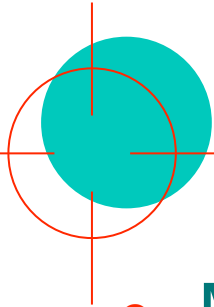"crisis of democracy" and "crisis of expertise"
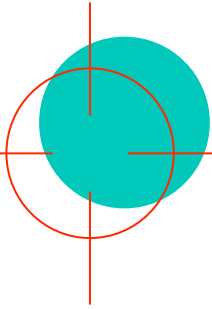
Critique of ideals and practice of pTA

- Vague aims (in practice)
- Instrumentalisation by policy-makers
- Unclear link to political decisions
- Deliberative bias
- Ignorance of expertise
- High costs/low effect

➢ Challenges for pTA:
quality control;   conscious design;
strong link to politics

pTA at ITA

- Many years of experience with stakeholder participation, e.g. 'Delphi Austria' project (1998)

- pTA from a theoretical perspective
  - Research on pTA (EUROpTA, 2002)
  - Assessment of pTA (Bogner, 2004)
  - pTA and technology policy (Techpol 2.0 2006, pTA Ageing 2008)

- Research on e-participation, e.g. DEMO-net, e2dem (2006ff)

- Doing pTA projects involving also lay people (2006ff)
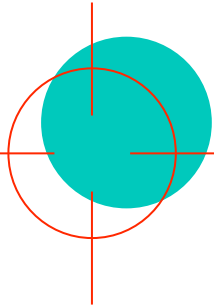
ITA's pTA projects from 2007

Themes: **Years:**

privacy and security   2007, 2013

energy and households   2007
                                               2011

ageing society   2013

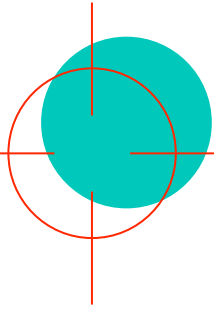climate policy   2009

future research topics   2009/2010

nano politics   2011

sustainable consumption   2013

ITA's pTA projects from 2007

Themes:	Projects:
privacy and security	PRISE, (SURPRISE)
energy and households	FSA Energy
	Smart New World?
ageing society	PACITA
climate policy	WWViews
future research topics	CIVISTI
nano politics	NanoSafety
sustainable consumption	PACITA
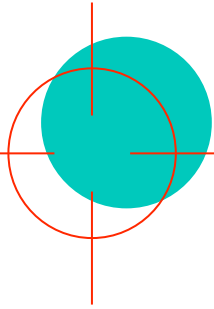
ITA's pTA projects from 2007

Themes:

privacy and security

energy and households

ageing society

climate policy

future research topics
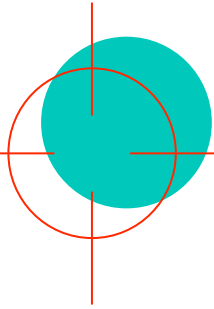
nano politics

sustainable consumption

Addressees:

European Commission

Austrian Government
Austrian Research Agency

European Commission

Austrian Government &
world politics

European Commission

European Parliament

European Commission

ITA's pTA projects from 2007

Themes:

privacy and security

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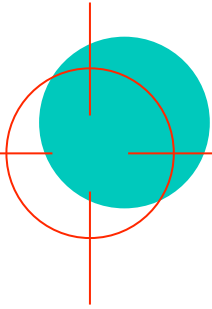
ageing society

climate policy

future research topics

nano politics

sustainable consumption

Methods:

focus groups

future search,
focus groups

scenario workshop

citizens consultation

citizens consultation

focus groups

citizens consultation

Strategic Development Plan of the Austrian Academy of Sciences

- Main focus: Basic research, but "open for application"
- New parallel aim:
  Societal relevance of research

  - answering "complex questions of scientific and societal relevance"

  - giving science-based advice for politics and society

→ pTA toolbox and experience as a valuable contribution to this overall aim of the Academy

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