

THE INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT OF THE AUSTRIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES (ITA)

Our scientific work deals with the relationship between technology and society. The ITA investigates the impact of technical change and its implications for society, politics and the environment.

The aim of technology assessment (TA) is to identify intended and unintended consequences of technical development. We want to create knowledge for politics, administration and the public to enable informed decision in the areas of research and innovation. TA uses a wide range of methods from different disciplines. An essential component is the inclusion of different bodies of knowledge, values and interests through participation procedures.

TOPICS

Technology assessment can take on many forms. It is as varied as the multitude of technical applications that surround us. Therefore, the ITA team deals with a number of topics which are defined in our research program. Some topics – ie. Artificial Intelligence, Privacy or Security – overlap. The key questions of TA always focus on implications for society, politics and the environment. Current topics include: The Power of Algorithms, Digitization, Artificial Intelligence, Energy Transition, Foresight, Inclusion and Innovation, Sustainability and Technology, Nanotechnologies, and the thematic area of Security, Surveillance & Privacy.

WORK METHOD

Our scientific research happens through various projects. There are often collaborations between different work areas as well as thematic working groups containing experts from different fields. Depending on the requirements, the research teams from within ITA are supplemented by external experts for a limited period of time. Each project has an internal project advisory board and sometimes also an external advisory board. For quality control purposes, regular project seminars are held with the entire scientific staff.

FINANCING

As an interdisciplinary institute, the ITA is part of the Austrian Academy of Sciences. It finances about two thirds of its work with funds from the Federal Ministry of Science and Research (BMWF) through the budget of the Austrian Academy of Sciences, the rest with third-party funds (EU, funds, other ministries, etc.). The ITA is supported by an international Scientific Advisory Board.

TEAM

We employ about 20 scientific staff members with a broad range of educational backgrounds. Half of our team comes from the natural and technical sciences, the other half from the social sciences. The subjects range from philosophy, sociology, political science and law to economics, computer science, process engineering, biology and human ecology.

Updated: May 2022

FACTS AND FIGURES

- **founded** in 1987
- **Director:** Univ.-Doz. Dr. Michael Nentwich
- **26 employees**, thereof 20 scientists
- **Budget:** about 1,5 M€, thereof 30-40% third-party funds
- **Member of:**
NTA - Network Technology Assessment
EPTA - European Parliamentary Technology Assessment
ETAG - European Technology Assessment Group
globalTA - Global Technology Assessment
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