Parliamentary TA in Europe

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Technology Assessment

Assessment of possible (future) effects of new scientific and technological developments on human health, society, economy and the environment.

Facts

Values

**TA:
Intermediate between Science
and Politics**

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Why TA? – problems of policy making in the field of Science and Technology

- **Legitimisation**: lacking consensus on what is a socially acceptable application of technologies

- **Democratic inclusion**: growing demands of social groups (those afflicted) to be involved in decision making

- **Democratic Control of R&D**: parliaments are lacking access to relevant knowledge

Two models of Technology Assessment

The "Pre-TA", positivistic (or technocratic) model of decision making:
> Policy making is informed (guided) by Science to a one best solution of the problem at stake

Reflexive Modernization:
> Cognitive uncertainties and normative ambiguities are unavoidable

TA as an answer to the crisis of the technocratic Model

Policy Analysis Model

Expand the scientific knowledge base of decision making by employing different scientific perspectives and disciplines

Take account of different values and interests

Deliberative Model

Expand the normative basis of decision making by involving different social perspectives, interests and values

Deliberate on best ways of problem solving

Main features of TA as Policy Advise

- **Comprehensiveness:** with regard to scientific perspectives and possible effects

- **Transparency:** with regard to values and assumptions, quality of data and knowledge

- **Inclusiveness:** with regard to social interests and perspectives
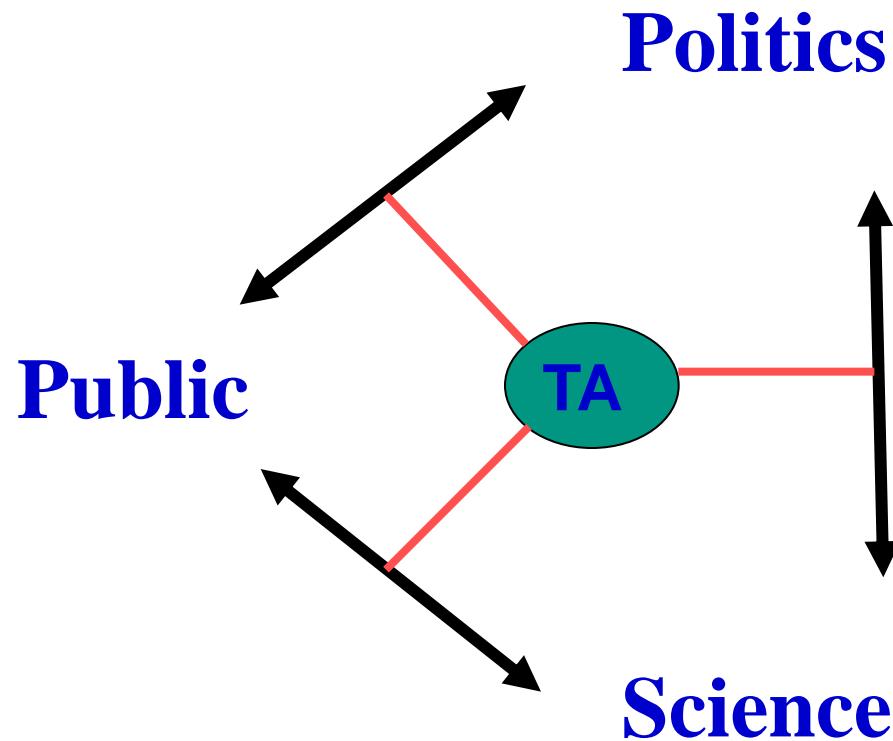
European Parliamentary Technology Assessment

www.eptanetwork.org

- Founded in 1991

- Full-members: 14 Parliamentary TA institutes in Europe (3 associate members)

- Cooperative network, no formal legal entity (consortium)

- Continuous exchange on projects and methods

Activities:

- Annual conference and directors meeting

- Project data base

- Joint projects: Privacy, Biotechnology

- Cooperation in EU funded projects on TA concepts and methods (EUROPTA, TAMI)
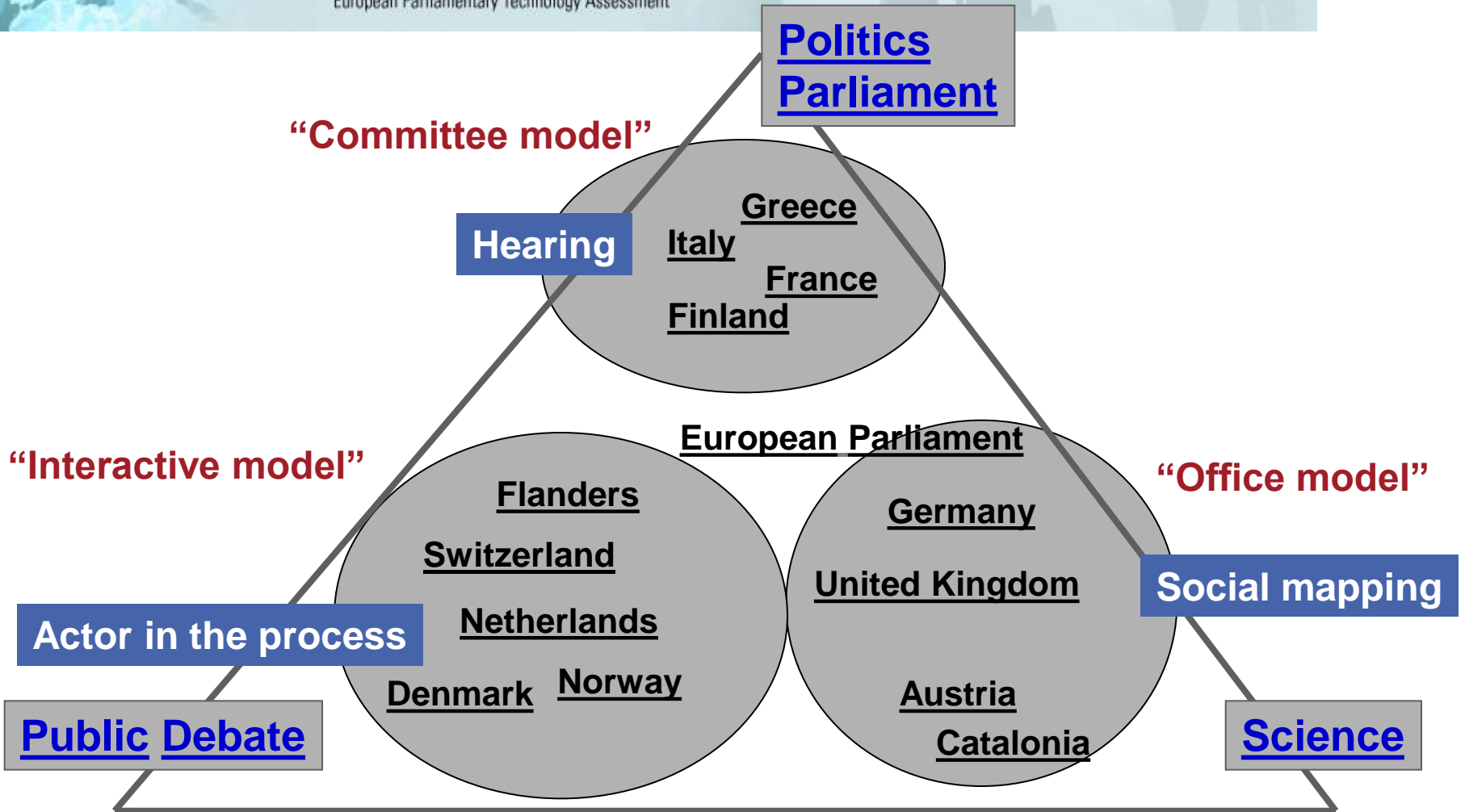
- Bi-annually: Project managers meeting

Intermediate Role of TA

EPTA
European Parliamentary Technology Assessment

Politics Parliament

"Committee model"

Hearing

Greece
Italy
France
Finland

"Interactive model"

European Parliament

"Office model"

Flanders
Switzerland
Netherlands
Denmark Norway

Germany
United Kingdom
Austria
Catalonia

Social mapping

Actor in the process

Public Debate

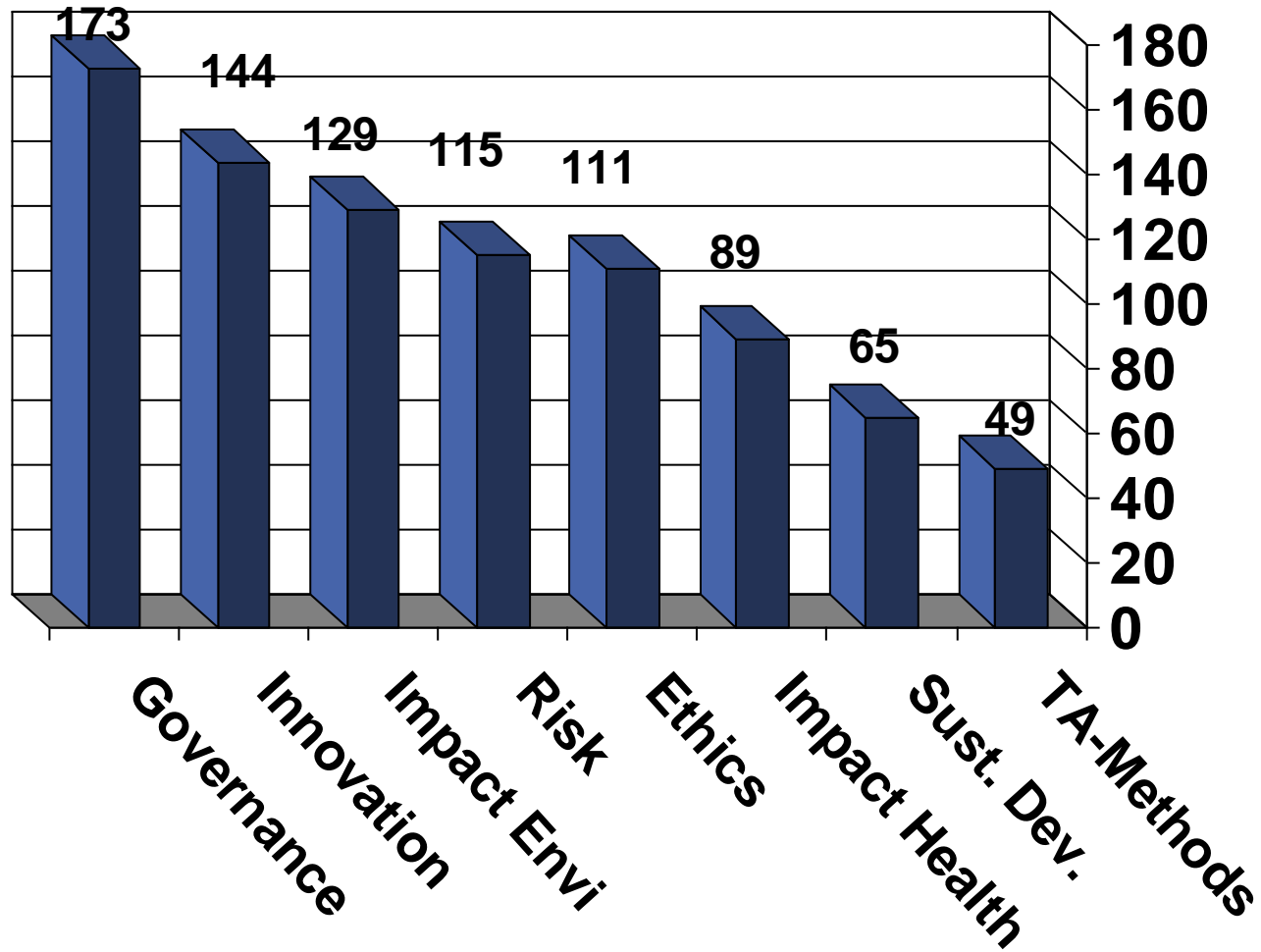**Science**

Technology fields covered by EPTA projects 1990-2009

Total of 587 projects covered by EPTA database:
www.eptanetwork.org
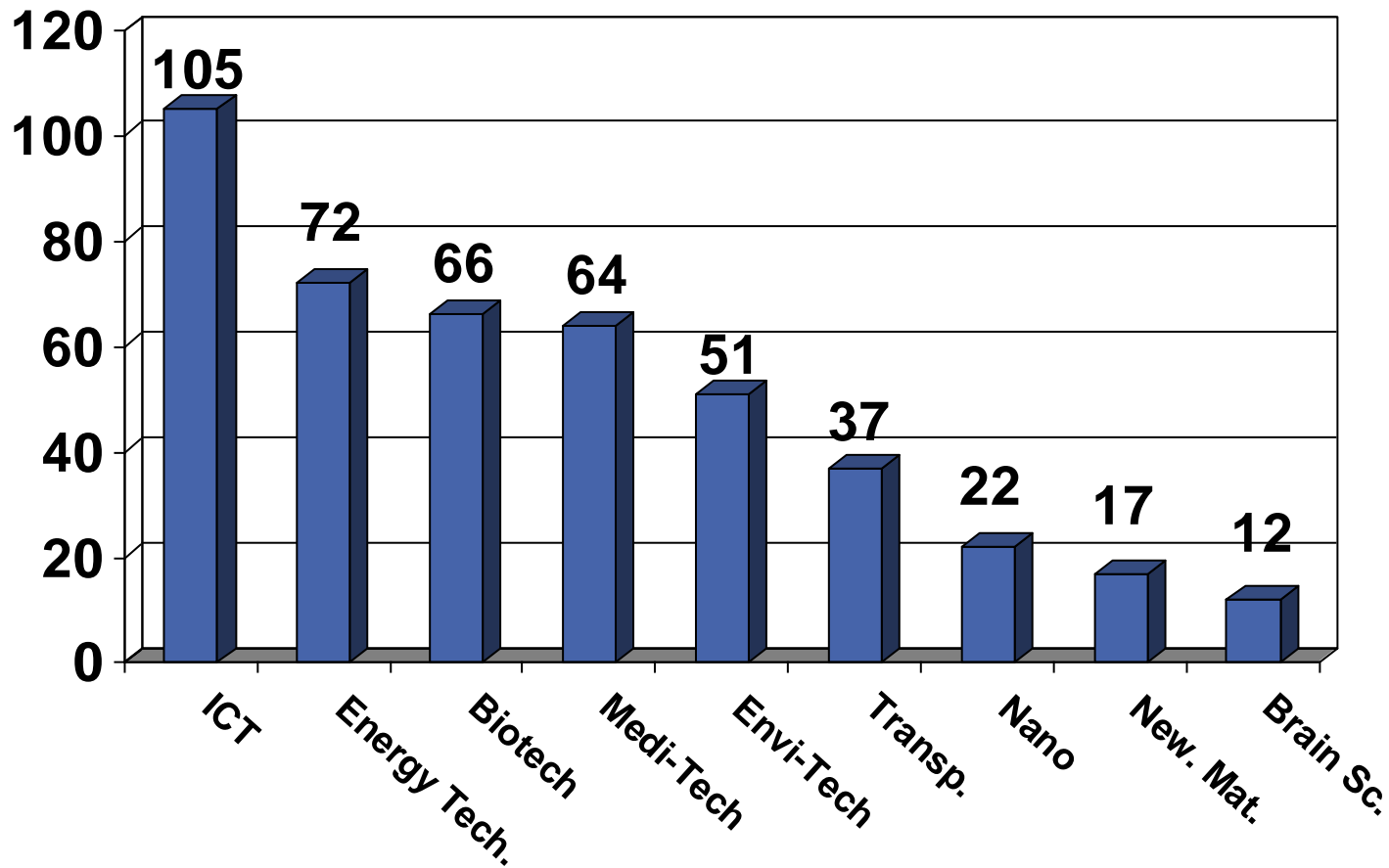
Issue Dimensions covered by EPTA projects

Common features of institutional setting

- Clear <u>public</u> mandate and mission (no closed shop)

- Problem- and policy oriented (not academic) selection of subjects

- Close co-operation of science and politics – but clear separation of competences

- Involvement of scientific community and societal interests - but institutional independence

Selection of TA methods

- Citizen Consultation
    - Consensus Conference
    - Citizen Summit / WWViews
    - Citizen hearing
    - Interview Meeting
    - Voting conference
    - Citizen visioning processes
    - Focus groups
- Stakeholder involvement
    - Future Search
    - Scenario Workshop
    - Perspective Workshop
    - Ad hoc workshop design
    - World café / Café seminar

- Expert Analysis
    - Scientific research
    - Work Groups
    - Structured Brainstorms
    - Modelling/scenarios
    - Conferences & Workshops
- Advisory function
    - Parliamentary Hearings
    - Future Panel
    - Early Warning; Briefings
- Public Debate
    - Debate meetings
    - Debate Products/ www
    - Web 2.0

Contribution of TA to the Policy Process

Impact Dimension Issue Dimension	Raising Knowledge	Forming Attitudes/ Opinions	Initialising Actions
Techn. – Scientific Aspects	**Scientific Assessment** (1) Tech. Options assessed and made visible (2) Overview on consequences	**Agenda Setting** (6) Agenda setting in political debate (7) Stimulating Public debate (8) Visions introduced	**Reframing of Debate** (15) Action to further scrutinise issue (16) New orientation in policies established
Societal Aspects	**Social Mapping** (3) Structure of conflicts made transparent	**Mediation** (9) Self-reflection among actors (10) Blockade running (11) Bridge Building	**New Decision Making Processes** (17) New ways of governance introduced (18) Init. To intensify public debate
Policy Aspects	**Policy Analysis** (4) Policy objectives explored (5) Existing policies assessed	**Re-Structuring Policy Debate** (12) Compreh. in debates increased (13) Policies evaluated (14) Democratic Legitimisation	**Decision Taken** (19) Policy alternatives filtered (20) Innovations implemented (21) New legislation

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Thank you very much!

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