

Expanding the TA Landscape in Europe

Comparative findings from the PACITA explorative country studies

2nd Parliamentary TA Debate, Lisbon, 7-8 April 2014

Leonhard Hennen (Karlsruhe Institute of Technology)



PACITA

Expanding the TA landscape

Tasks and Objectives

- Seven country studies in “Non-(P)TA” countries to explore barriers, opportunities, challenges for establishing TA
- Identifying existing TA or TA-like activities
(Parliament, Government, Public Authorities, Academia, Civil Society)
- Identifying relevant actors and inducing networking activities,



PACITA

Countries explored and Pairing Scheme

Fieldwork organised in	By	Supported by
Belgium/Wallonia	Univ. Liege	TA-Swiss (Switzerland)
Bulgaria	ARC-Fund	RI (The Netherlands)/ ITA (Austria)
Czech Rep.	Acad. of Sciences	IST (Flanders)
Hungary	Acad. Of Sciences	DBT (Denmark)
Ireland	Univ. Cork	NBT (Norway)
Lithuania	KE-Forum	ITAS (Germany)
Portugal	Univ. Lisbon	ITAS (Germany)



PACITA

Expanding the TA landscape - Activities

02 – 08
2012

Field studies in 7 countries

- Exploring existing TA initiatives,
- Contacting possible TA advocates
- Interviews for identifying barriers and opportunity structures

03/04
2012

1st national workshops

- Bringing actors in contact with each other
- Briefing on TA as a concept of supporting policy making

06 2012

Discussion of first result of country studies

09 2012

Final country reports

09 2012

2nd national workshops

- Discuss results of country studies
- Next steps to be taken

10 -12
2012

Comparative Workshop / Final Report



PACITA

Achievements

- Make relevant actors aware of the TA concept
- Identify „needs“ for „knowledge based“, transparent S&T policy making
- Provide a platform for discussion on country specific problems in S&T
- Support existing national activities to implement TA infrastructures
- Open up the option for establishing national networking activities for TA



PACITA

Lessons Learned: Historical context matters

Back in the 70ies and 80ies in todays Parliamentary TA countries:

- Highly developed R&D system with strong governmental committment:
Funding and regulation
- Movement to „problem oriented research“ in academia
- Fading tacit consensus on S&T, vivid Public Debate on S&T
- Expressed need in S&T policy making (Parliament, Government) for support in coping with the dynamics of S&T and related challenges



PACITA

Lessons Learned

Context in „Non-PTA“ countries (I)

a) Building up or restructuring the R&D System

- Heritage of bureaucratic, hierarchical R&D system in Eastern European countries
- R&D landscape in transition
- Steering R&D system towards innovation
- Economical impact matters

b) „Change management“ is highly centralised, intransparent and inconsistent

- Lack of participatory structures in S&T policy making (centralised, intransparent formulation of policies)
- Lack of involvement of stakeholders
- Weak role of parliaments



PACITA

Lessons Learned

Context in „Non-PTA“ countries (II)

Academic TA entrepreneurs missing (exception Wa, Pt)

- Problem oriented research poorly developed
- Academia detached from (or sobered with regard to) S&T policy making
- Complaints about lack of consistency and „rationality“ in S&T policies

S&T is generally not an (contested) issue of public debate

- Complaints about low public interest in S&T
- No platforms for exchange of relevant actors (NGOs)
- Low media coverage of S&T
- Disenchantment with politics ? (lack of culture of debate)



PACITA

Modes of Institutionalisation of TA

Preferences revealed in discussions and Interviews

Parliamentary TA Unit (IE, PT, BE)

- **Explicit interest in TA by Parliaments**
- **Existing TA activities in Academia**
- **Motiv.: Open up S&T policy making, more transparent (and thus effective) structures of S&T policy**

National TA Network moderated by NGO (LT, BG)

- **Perceived need for more effective S&T policy making**
- **Little or no TA like activities in academia**
- **Motiv.: Open up S&T policy for civil society**

TA as part of existing structures for monitoring/evaluation of S&T (HU, CZ)

- **Strong role of national Academies of Sciences in policy advice**
- **Experience with TA-like activities at Academies**
- **Weak role of parliament in S&T policy**
- **Motiv.: Support effective dev. of agendas and strategies for R&D**



PACITA

A role for TA?

a) **Restructuring of the R&D System**

TA to contribute to strategic planning of R&D structures, evaluation of R&D capacities and change management

b) **“Economy first”**

TA as pathfinder for socially robust and country specific innovation strategies. Expanded concept of “Foresight” (technological options & societal needs)?

c) **Transparent democratic decision making structures in S&T missing**

Opportunity for TA as an unbiased player for public knowledge production (but difficult to find active supporters in the system)

d) **Lack of public involvement**

TA has to fine tune its mission of “Stimulating public debate” with regard to diverging expectations (“Educating the public” vs. “Democratising S&T policy making”)

e) **Expressed need for “knowledge based” S&T policy making (with sometimes technocratic connotations)**

TA has to be independent and at the same time connected to the existing S&T landscape (new models of institutionalising TA?)



PACITA

Thank you very much!



PACITA