

***EPTA Directors meeting  
Brugge, 21st and 22nd March 2005***

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING**

Participants: Joao Ary (Council of Europe), Sergio Belluci (TA-Swiss), Robby Berloznik (viWTA), David Cope (POST), Philippe Dally (OPECST), Robby Deboelpaep (viWTA), Roger-Marie Dubois (STOA), Ulrica Gabrielsson (Committee for the Future), Armin Grunwald (TAB), Leonhard Hennen (TAB), Lars Klüver (Teknologiradet – DK), Jordi Mas (CFRI), Elvind Osnes (Teknologiradet – NO), Costas Papadimitriou (GPTCA), Jean-François Peyrot (OPECST), Jan Staman (Rathenau), Tore Tennøe (Teknologiradet – NO), Kate Trumper (POST).

Excused: Walter Peissl (ITA), Antonio Mené (VAST)

**1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION**

After a brief welcome of the hosting institution by mr. Luk Van Langenhove, director of the United Nations University – Comparative Regional Integration Studies, mr. Robby Berloznik, director of viWTA and president 2005 of EPTA, put the boundaries of the discussions. As the parliamentary TA-institutions are confronted with many questions and great expectations, what are our experiences in our institutions, how can we learn of the experiences in each institution and what is the added value of our EPTA-network? The outcome of the discussions may be useful for stimulating and developing TA in the new EU countries, but also for enhancing own work.

**2. STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT IN TA-INSTITUTES. THE ADDED VALUE OF AN EPTA NETWORK.**

Mr. Ludo Keunen, external facilitator, set out the methodology for the group discussion and gave the objectives:

- foster the mutual learning regarding the strategic thinking within the EPTA network:
  - o what is wanted (the objectives)?
  - o What is necessary (should be done)?

- What is feasible (could be done)?
- Strengthen the EPTA network by focussing on network themes and challenges.
- Enjoy the EPTA network.

The methods to streamline the discussions of the day, briefly stated:

- an appreciative interview (2 by 2) on how EPTA is being experienced by the participants, under what circumstances the "best experience" is possible and what might be the contribution of the EPTA network (provocative);
- identify the key themes for discussion (postcard session - individual exercise);
- group discussions (3 groups) on the key themes;
- resume of the discussions;
- feedback and evaluation on the meeting.

## **2.1. *Résumé of the discussions***

Following questions and problems were raised:

1. Branding the EPTA network (as the reference for policy advise on science and technology assessment in Europe). This means:
  - a. Increase visibility;
  - b. Working on the website;
  - c. Working on a common database.
2. Scaling up the EPTA network. Without changing the light structure of the network, this means:
  - a. Defining common projects;
  - b. Shared tools;
  - c. Agree on guiding principles;
  - d. In-flow of information.
3. Build awareness:
  - a. Defining the right client level.
  - b. Of the added-value of EPTA within the own organisation.
4. On the long term: is there an update of the actual EPTA objectives (see annex 1) required?

## **2.2. *Conclusions of the participants***

Members stress the importance of taking the clients, this is the members of parliament, into account. This is a main focal point: how do we activate and motivate the MP's in attending EPTA activities, in the TA-activities of the own organisations and in stimulating science and technology assessment?

Although some members regret that no final conclusions could be made immediately, one agrees that the momentum of the discussions should be held. One expects some initiatives of the presidency. In particular the use of e-mail discussions (eptadir) should be stimulated. The participants consider that as discussions are not finished and there is no consensus yet, they should continue within the director's group prior to possible

discussions in the Council. As we have already an agreed framework for common projects (decided on precedent meetings), we can continue to tighten bonds and stimulate the strategic discussion.

### **3. INTERNAL AFFAIRS**

#### **3.1. EPTA website**

Lars Klüver gave the state of the redesign of the EPTA website:

- the CMS has been redeveloped;
- the website will be basically a database;
- within some weeks an account and password will be send to all members;
- Teknologiradet and viWTA will first work on defining the keywords;
- An online help is available in the program itself (f.i. bold-HTML tags);
- It takes max. 10 minutes to fill in a project in the database;
- Beside the brief description of projects per country, there will be an URL to the full description of the projects in the database;
- There is a free text search on all the projects or on specific projects;
- The aim is to have a database of 5 years back in time;
- The update is first done on a test website and when all of the current projects are filled in, the test website will be switched into online production (filling in to be stimulated and coordinated by viWTA);
- Members are supposed to fill in their projects by themselves. They can also fill in institution information by themselves or send these data to Teknologiradet for input in the website.

Robby Berloznik will take an initiative for the redesign of the home pages of the website: discussion between our communication managers by e-mail.

Roger-Marie Dubois makes following suggestion for content: at least the website should contain the agenda, the minutes and links to other new activities.

#### **3.2. Projects and activities**

##### **3.2.1. Rathenau (Jan Staman)**

There is a 3 year program still going on. There is a lot on ICT, life sciences, military technology, converging technology, security technology, ... Rathenau received a new task: to develop science system assessment (first method will be looking on the science innovation system in the Netherlands, including benchmarking). In total Rathenau will hire a total of 10 to 15 people (about 3 of them specifically TA). Rathenau will move to another building in The Hague.

3.2.2. *CFRI (Jordi Mas)*

A new director is appointed. A strategic plan for 2005-2009 is developed, partly focussed on parliamentary TA and advice to the Catalan parliament. The methods will be adapted for the support of an expert committee work. Specific TA-projects planned on RFID, on science and technology policy and on science communication (including international activities).

3.2.3. *POST (David Cope)*

There is a pre-election period going on in the UK. For the future work program (timeline 5 years) POST just received the required human resources and informed the parliament on consultation techniques. On the international scale: a UNESCO workshop on parliamentary science assessment (we should consider UNESCO as a potential candidate for EPTA-membership), the World Science Forum in November in Budapest. The next meeting of EPTA staff (non-directors) will be hosted by POST (May 2006, near Ashford in Kent).

3.2.4. *Committee for the Future (Ulrica Gabrielsson)*

Projects: future of public health care (2-year project), food safety for people of all ages (end date: May '05), regional innovation systems (final report during Summer '05), social capital and children (end date May '05), human security (safety).

3.2.5. *TAB (Armin Grunwald)*

Parliament had some 25 requests. TAB, as to resources, could only perform 8 to 9 projects. Until next elections the focus will be on health issues (brain sciences, individual pharmacy, ...), converging technology and bionics (focus on nano & neuro). TAB is finishing projects of last year, including future of work, innovation policy, web-based communication on political culture.

3.2.6. *GPTCA (Costas Papadimitriou)*

There has been a government change in Greece. In that period there was only one project: clinical testing of medicaments. Due to the government change (new reorientation?) there is no future work plan yet.

3.2.7. *Teknologiradet Denmark (Lars Klüver)*

There will be appointed a new Board of Governors, and a new chairman of the Board – presumably in June '05. The intentions of a more open strategy as an independent “third party”, now also working on external financing basis for municipalities, the Greenland Parliament, government agencies etc, has been implemented and is working well (3 persons employed by these activities). Projects: future of patenting systems, digital rights and free information, environment and children (will end up in stating a

need for specific regulation), balance between working and other life, chemical producing GMO plants, Globalisation of knowledge work, pervasive health care, future of the energy systems, free public transportation, RFID, bio-fuels, brain science project of the King Baudouin foundation.

3.2.8. *Council of Europe(Joao Ary)*

The main activity is the organisation of a PTA Conference aimed at the Central and East-European countries in Budapest (18-19 September). Other projects: academic freedom and university autonomy; student disaffection for scientific studies; scientific publications and access of the public to scientific reports.

3.2.9. *TA-Swiss (Sergio Belluci)*

There has been a government election 2 years ago leading to a shift in TA-approach. TA-Swiss is very worried of the fusion of research institutes. Projects: imaging in brain science (end of October '05), autonomous computer systems (auto determination of computers), nanotechnology (finished medicine aspects, to start on nanoparticles), grid technology, anti-aging systems (in particular to so called food supplements).

3.2.10. *Teknologiradet Norway (Tore Tennøe)*

An attempt to diminish the budget for TA by the Minister has been stopped by Parliament. There are general elections coming up. Projects: nanotech; clustered ICT-projects (digitalisation of everyday life, electronic traces & privacy, biometric passports, RFID, digital rights management, digitalisation of public services, foresight on the information society 2020); hydrogen society; sustainable technology policy; marine growth; foresight project on nature and the use of technology (including tourism); and teaching material on stem cells and cloning (in collaboration).

3.2.11. *OPECST (Philippe Dally and Jean-François Peyrot)*

Now publishing the big report on ICT and privacy (can serve as input for the common EPTA project). Also published the reports on nuclear waste management, on broadband communication and health systems, on health security (food, pharmacy). On nanotech still have to decide what model for research to take (Dutch or Danish). New studies planned: diseases from solvents, what can bring science and technology for the sustainable economy.

3.2.12. *STOA (Roger-Marie Dubois)*

STOA keeps a low profile for the moment. No projects are planned.

### 3.2.13. *ViWTA (Robby Berloznik)*

The project list was in the briefcase of the participants. viWTA had some success (very timely with the political agenda) on the energy debate (reports in Dutch language are available). Current and planned projects: energy foresight, book on ethical aspects of Kyoto treaty, brain sciences (part of group led by King Baudouin foundation), future of country sites, stakeholder analysis on e-democracy, cyber bullying in the young generation, technological roadmaps (short studies on particular subjects, first was on nanotech), part of project groups on ethics and science, part of project Eurogenetics, collaborating with a special parliamentary committee on digital Flanders. viWTA carried out a survey of member of parliament especially on their attitude to science and technology.

### 3.3. **Requests for membership**

The request for full membership of CFRI (TA institute, advice for the Catalan Parliament) is still pending and will be put on the agenda of the next Council meeting for approval. The letter of support by the Catalan Parliament dates from 2003 and had been positively advised by the Swiss and French EPTA presidency. The Flemish EPTA presidency finds it not appropriate to neglect earlier recommendations and sees no objections. It therefore will support the candidacy. This was supported by all participants.

### 3.4. **EPTA Conference – theme**

After extensive discussion the proposition of the Flemish presidency for “converging technologies” (NBIC) as theme of the EPTA conference is accepted. The presidency will work on an introductory part, inspired by the works of the European High Level Expert Group and for the TA practice part will send an invitation to contributions to the members.

The meeting also agrees on the German proposal of organizing a roundtable specifically to participating members of parliament on the day of the Council and somehow related to the subject of the Conference.

The meeting agrees on a working session with STOA – members of European Parliament on the day of the Council (subject should be significant for EPTA).

### 3.5. **EPTA presidency 2006**

Tore Tennøe of the Norwegian Technoligradet states that his institution is candidate for the presidency 2006 of EPTA and gives a well received presentation on the provisional agenda and location for the directors meeting 2006. This was supported by all participants.

### **3.6. Miscellaneous**

Joao Ary asks the members to get as many members of parliament as possible to the Conference on TA for the Central- and East-European countries of the Council of Europe in Budapest in September 2005. Aim should be to convince these countries of the importance to set up TA processes and institutes.

Lars Klüver announces that in June the Danish Board will commemorate its 10 and 20 year existence. On 13<sup>th</sup> of June there will be an international seminar at the Danish parliament.

During the discussions Lars Klüver gave an overview of the status of the common privacy project:

- the project is now in the stage of management résumé of the projects (20-30) sorted in issues;
- the raw material was discussed in a workgroup meeting in Vienna;
- in Autumn ongoing projects will be incorporated;
- in Spring 2006 the policy recommendations and options will be ready for discussion in the directors meeting;
- there is a very good atmosphere in the working group and there are no "sleeping partners" (everybody is working);
- the participating projects managers are enthusiastic:
  - o from learning from each other;
  - o from learning from different methods.

Robby Berloznik hopes that the members will also look forward for a candidate for the 2007 presidency and ends the meeting. Several members express their feelings that the meeting was successful and that we should continue the discussions as set in the meeting.