



European
Research Area

EUROPEAN POLICY BRIEF



CIVISTI - Citizen Visions on Science, Technology and Innovation

Ongoing project

December, 2009

SUMMARY

Objectives of the research

CIVISTI will produce a list of new and emerging issues for European S&T, produce a set of policy options of relevance to future European framework programmes, and base these products upon a novel process of citizen participation in seven member states, supported by the analytical capacity of experts and stakeholders

Scientific approach / Methodology

The CIVISTI methodology consists of three major steps. First citizens around Europe are asked about their visions for the future. Second experts and stakeholders analyse the visions and transform them into research agendas and policy options for European research. Third the results are given back to the citizens to validate and prioritise them.

New knowledge and/or European value added

CIVISTI will make a long-term view into the needs, concerns and visions of and to the future and an overview of potential new areas for S&T, including a list policy options and a set of S&T issues and recommendations, which the citizens find most important for their future.



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**Key messages for
policy-makers,
businesses,
trade unions and
civil society actors**

The key messages of CIVISTI will be concrete recommendations for future research agendas and policy options, which the citizens find most important for their future. The design of the results ensures that they can be fed directly into the processes of defining FP8.

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Objectives of the research

The CIVISTI project is based upon the idea that the process of defining relevant and proactive research agendas could in many respects gain from consultation of citizens. The citizens are the carriers of the concerns and expectations to the future, and with the right facilitating methods, such concerns and expectations can be collected and transformed into relevant research agendas.

In short, CIVISTI will

- Produce a list of new and emerging issues for European S&T
- Produce a set of policy options of relevance to future European framework programmes
- Base these products upon a novel process of citizen participation in seven member states, supported by the analytical capacity of experts and stakeholders

Scientific approach / Methodology

The CIVISTI methodology consists of three major steps. First citizens around Europe are asked about their visions for the future. 7 Citizen Panels of 25 people are established, one in each of the CIVISTI partner countries. Each Citizen Panel makes a long-term view into the needs, wishes, concerns and challenges to the future through a process of deliberation, informed by introduction material and expert and stakeholder input. This was done in 7 national citizen consultation weekends in May-June 2009. The result of this process is 69 visions for the future.

Second experts and stakeholders analyse the citizens' visions and transform them into research agendas and policy options for European research in a two-day expert- and stakeholder workshop in April 2010. The framework for extracting new S&T policy options from citizen visions practically builds on Kingdon's (Kingdon 1995) *streams model* (of policy agenda setting), which is a widely applied approach in policy analysis. There will be two overall results of the expert- and stakeholder workshop. The first is a list of research agendas derived from the citizens' visions. The second is a set of policy options related to these research agendas or to other aspects from the citizens' visions.

These results are given back to the citizens in the third step of the process. For the citizens to validate and prioritise the new S&T agendas and policy options.

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New knowledge and European value added

For Europe to become the most advanced knowledge society in the world, it is imperative that legitimate societal concerns and needs related to science and technology development are taken on board, entailing an enhanced democratic debate with a more engaged and informed public and better conditions for collective choices on science issues. Knowledge and innovation could very well become the main sources of wealth creation globally, and societal relevance of science and technology will enhance the European economy in the global competition. EU Seventh Framework programme aims at increasing the societal relevance of research, and thus encourages greater public engagement and promotes the participation of society in research and science policy-making. This change in perspective recognises that research activities are a special type of social activity that is embedded in a wider societal context.

The CIVISTI project is based upon the idea that the process of defining relevant and proactive research agendas could in many respects gain from the consultation of citizens (e.g. independence of direct interests, democratic credibility, wider knowledge and value base etc.). Our societies are changing rapidly as a consequence of globalisation, new technologies, multi-cultural societies, media developments, environmental and climate challenges, new energy futures, increasing welfare and consumption, etc. These are developments, which all involve an interface between science, technology and society and raise issues about societal management of the involved needs and uncertainties – for society as well as for the individual.

The purpose of the CIVISTI project is to help European decision-makers in the process of defining relevant and proactive research agendas. This will be based upon a novel process of citizen participation in seven member states, supported by the analytical capacity of experts and stakeholders. CIVISTI will produce a list of new and emerging issues for European S&T. This list will be direct input for the design of the future EU research policy and more specifically CIVISTI will produce a set of policy options of relevance to future European framework programmes (FP8).

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The results of CIVISTI will be directly related to the objectives of the Blue Sky Research call.

First, the project will make a long-term view into the needs, concerns and visions of and to the future. Citizens in seven European member states will be encouraged to present views on the future, which are new or not necessarily recognised as policy issues. The visions will in themselves be a result, since they will represent trends of relevance to S&T in the future.

Secondly, a process involving experts and stakeholders will use an analytical model to extract the new S&T agendas from the visions of the citizens. The R&D issues will relate to scientific disciplines and technological development, and/or complex trans-disciplinary challenges. This will result in an overview of potential new areas for S&T, including an overview of policy options.

Thirdly, the citizens will be consulted again to validate and prioritise the new S&T agendas and policy options. The result will be a set of S&T issues and recommendations, which the citizens find most important for their future, and which can directly be fed into the processes of defining FP8.

Fourth, CIVISTI will contribute to the expansion of the European foresight capacity. The aspect of citizen consultation is expected to attract attention from scientific areas – such as policy sciences, study of democracy, ethics and philosophy – who has not yet been generally aware of the developments in foresight. The results of CIVISTI, including the methodological approach and experience, will be actively disseminated to the scientific community as well as to the relevant policy-making institutions, which will support the attention towards forward looking studies.

Fifth, a new concept for citizen participation on long-term foresight will be established in CIVISTI. This highly innovative methodological approach will be characterised by being very cost-effective – as compared to existing experience of cross-European citizen participation. Potentially, the method will make it possible to execute citizen consultations across all member states at a price, which has not yet been inside reach.

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**Key messages
for
policy-makers,
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The key messages of CIVISTI can be split in three categories.

First there are the 70 visions produced by European citizens with diversity in their cultural backgrounds and analysis. These visions give an insight into the hopes and dreams and the fears and challenges people see for the future European society. They can be considered as direct input from citizens from 7 EU member states to the politics of the future on a number of policy areas. The visions are unique and original input from citizens to policy-makers, industry and stakeholders within the sphere of the visions.

Second there is a list of new and emerging issues for European S&T. This will have the form of recommendations for future research agendas and policy options for European science and technology politics. This list will be direct input for the design of the future EU research policy and more specifically CIVISTI will produce a set of policy options of relevance to future European framework programmes (FP8). In this way CIVISTI will produce concrete and direct recommendations for policy-makers, which is formulated by S&T experts and stakeholders on the basis of future visions of European citizens and validated and prioritised by citizens to know what they find most important for their future. The design of the results ensures that they can be fed directly into the processes of defining FP8.

Third CIVISTI will develop and test an innovative methodology for citizen participation on long-term foresight, which will be characterised by being very cost-effective – as compared to existing experience of cross-European citizen participation.

PROJECT IDENTITY

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European Commission	Marie-Christine Brichard
Duration	September 2008 – February 2011 (30 month)
Funding Scheme	Collaborative project – small or medium-scale focused research project
Budget	714 292 Euro
Website	www.civisti.org
Further reading	Main, publications, books, etc. No more than 5
Related website	<p>www.tekno.dk</p> <p>www.kuluttajatutkimuskeskus.fi</p> <p>www.samenvoeringentechnologie.be</p> <p>www.mcst.gov.mt</p> <p>www.arc.online.bg</p>
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