TranSTEP – Trans-domain Technology Evaluation Process

Get an integrated perspective on complex technology issues by teaming up across established assessment communities

TranSTEP is a conceptual assessment approach targeted towards policy makers commissioning assessments and professionals conducting assessments.

TranSTEP is an approach to the assessment of technologies or technological applications that present challenges related to **complexity, uncertainty and controversy** over facts and values. In such situations the legitimacy of any assessment may be challenged with respect to who participates, how the assessment is conducted and the quality and meaning of the results.

TranSTEP offers an approach where the range of participants is widened, the assessment process itself is made transparent and the output has been subject to broad review. In this respect TranSTEP aims to confront the difficult discussions as an integrated part of the assessment, conducive to better robustness and legitimacy of its output.



Find TranSTEP here: http://transtepapproach.wordpress.com/

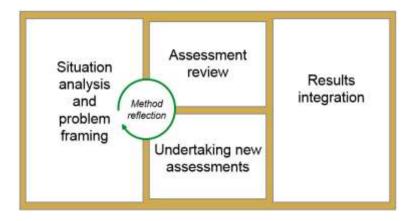
TranSTEP is a **conceptual** guide for practical work. It gives commissioners and facilitators the necessary leeway to blend tools and methods from different assessment traditions in a flexible manner without sacrificing transparency and accountability in the process.

TranSTEP focuses on the enhancement of communication and **interdisciplinary learning** between different domains of expertise, because fragmentation of expertise is one of the main barriers to integrate factual evidence, values and normative perspectives across these domains.

Using the TranSTEP approach involves initiating and facilitating assessment groups composed of people from different assessment backgrounds to integrate assessment perspectives on complex technology issues. Participants in such processes can be assessment practitioners from domains such as economics, risk assessment, ethics, foresight, impact assessment or technology assessment, or from outside these domains. This is why TranSTEP is called a **trans-domain approach**. The various perspectives to be integrated are found in the participants' professional background. In order to ensure that all relevant perspectives are brought in, other actors should also be involved, such as representatives from industry and public research, private sector stakeholders, public sector decision-makers or administrators, NGOs or the public.

The breadth of possible participation, and the focus on learning, requires a high degree of process design reflexivity amongst the assessment initiators and participants. TranSTEP involves collaborative situation analysis, transparent method reflection, and a continual use of facilitated dialogue.

An important part of the process is to assess existing knowledge and identify gaps where the knowledge base may be improved. The work may also involve initiating and carrying out new activities in order to strengthen this base. The purpose is to integrate existing knowledge that is compatible with the group's problem formulation into an evidence base (where evidence must be understood in a wide sense, also potentially including input from the public) for responding to this problem. The approach ultimately aims at the production of an **integrated assessment** by the assessment group with a firm rooting in science, society and policy.



The origins of TranSTEP

TranSTEP was developed by the European research project <u>EST-Frame</u>. It is based on analysis of current practices of assessment of emerging science and technologies (EST) and on dialogues with more than 70 assessment professionals, policy makers, researchers and stakeholders. We are grateful for all the contributions and all the help we have received in developing <u>TranSTEP</u>. EST-Frame is funded from 2012 to 2014 by the European Commission, 7th Framework, Science-in-Society, programme.

Get in touch!

The partners in EST-Frame are happy to assist if you plan to conduct a TranSTEP process. We can assist with process advice or training, and can also contribute to running processes.

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