

YouTest - Young people performing technological impact assessments

Direct-to-consumer genetic testing as an example

New technologies and their application - this is also true for genetic research - often trigger uncertainties within societies and need broad public reflection and a discourse taking place. Using the example of direct-to-consumer (dct) genetic testing, the project YouTest examined in which way a knowledge based and systematic dialogue about science, new technologies and their applications can be promoted between different actors in society. Dct genetic tests are genetic analysis directly marketed to consumers without a physicians referral. During this project, students carried out a systematic technology assessment study by applying proper research methods, and were accompanied by natural and social scientists. Following the idea of active citizenship, they were discussing and developing an informed position regarding the impact of dct genetic testing on society, and thinking about regulations which might be necessary. In this joint research project, young people and an interdisciplinary project team carried out a web based media search, applying qualitative empirical research methods. By that, they carried out a participative technology assessment on dct genetic testing and analyzed the different roles of actors in science, politics, public administration, economy and civil society during dct development, regulation and application.

Partner Institutions:

Demokratiezentrum Wien

Institute for Advanced Studies

Partner Schools:

BRG6 Marchettigasse

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