

## **To what extent is mobile telephony and its risks acceptable?**

### **Abstract**

1991 the Center for Technology Assessment commissioned a project to research into perception, assessment and acceptability of risks. Object of research were seven sources of risks, among them mobile telephony.

In spite of the wide distribution of mobiles a social controversy about possible risk potentials sparked off. However, the data show that in Germany the perception of mobile telephony is not based primarily on personal threat or the perception of social risks, but essentially on uncertainty about possible risks. Additionally, the personal benefit of mobile telephony is assessed rather small. In fact, moderate benefit and low perceived risks make a positive balance of benefit and threat, but limited benefit, the expectation of increasing risks and a low trust in industry and operating authorities could create a risk not for the public, but for operating authorities, industry, and their profit interests.