

# **Acceptance of Risk and Technology**

## **Study for the Enquete-Commission »Protection of Humankind and Environment« of the German Bundestag**

### **Abstract**

The Germans are not hostile towards technology, but they have surely problems in accepting certain technologies, especially major and risk technologies. The experience of ambivalence and the fear of hardly calculable unsurenesses leave their mark on the attitude of the vast majority of the German population towards technological risks and chances. This is, reduced to a short denominator, the balancing statement of an evaluation of more than 300 publications about the topic ›Perception and assessment of technology and risks‹. The ambivalent attitude towards technology, particularly when it gets as an alien element into the own lifeworld, emerges from an area of conflict between the demand for benefit on the one hand and an aversion to risks on the other hand, but this conflict of aims seems to be rather insoluble and remains a permanent challenge for the future, for risk communication, and the public's involvement in decision-making. On the basis of their great wealth of experience in dealing with conflicts of aims, the authors give scientifically sound, practical recommendations to decision-makers who have a professional look at this topic.

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Ortwin Renn and Michael M. Zwick 1997: Acceptance of Risk and Technology. Published by the Enquete-Commission ›Protection of Humankind and Environment« of the 13<sup>th</sup> German Bundestag, Springer, Berlin.