

## BfS - Mobile Telephone Systems

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Project commissioned by the Federal Office for Radiation Protection (Bundesamt für Strahlenschutz, BfS) on the topic "Survey of the knowledge and effect of information activities in the field of mobile telephone systems and design of further approaches to improve information of different sections of the population"

### **Brief description:**

#### ***Background of the problem and the project's objectives:***

Mobile telephone systems have spread more and more in the last few years in the whole Federal Republic of Germany as well as in nearly all classes of society. Closely connected to that is the public debate over possible risks of low electromagnetic radiation from mobile phones or from transmitting facilities. Several institutions and organisations in the fields of economy, science, civil society and politics try directly or indirectly (media) to inform about the risks by information and communication activities. To which extent they reach the addressees (citizens) with the chosen means is a question that has to be settled empirically. In order to improve its information and communication activities, the Federal Office for Radiation Protection (Bundesamt für Strahlenschutz, BfS) commissioned the project "Survey of the knowledge and effect of information activities in the field of mobile telephone systems and design of further approaches to **improve information** of different sections of the population" (in short: BfS – Mobile Telephone Systems)

#### ***Tasks:***

In the one-year-project DIALOGIK will first summarize the state of the art of research regarding the effects of information and communication activities in the field of mobile telephone systems (study of literature, meta-analysis, secondary analysis). On this basis, specific information and communication activities will be selected and examined regarding their effects by two empirical surveys. In the quantitative-representative postal survey of German citizens (mobile telephone systems survey 2005) attitudes and behaviour, knowledge about the topic, risk perception and extent of benefits as well as perception and assessment of the different measures will be investigated. The qualitative study includes five focus groups with producers (e.g. scientists), distributors (e.g. journalists) and consumers (e.g. citizens) of information. It serves to identify chains of argumentation and social and communicative mechanisms of information processing and of the evaluation of risks of mobile telephone systems. The insights gained by the quantitative survey will thereby be deepened and enriched. Finally, the project team will compile a manual of risk communication in the field of mobile telephone systems which will refer to the insights of the previous project phases.

**Duration:**

01.10.2004 - 30.09.2005

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