Testing PETUS: Expectations and Outcomes of the 'THEORY-PRACTICE' Dialogue on Urban Sustainability

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INTRODUCTION

- **Changing paradigms of the 'theory-practice' interaction - 'research in action' and 'learning by doing';**

- **The 'practical' dimension of PETUS - practice –oriented research (problems derived from practice and methodological support addressed to practice)**

- **PETUS concept development – emerging questions and answers;**

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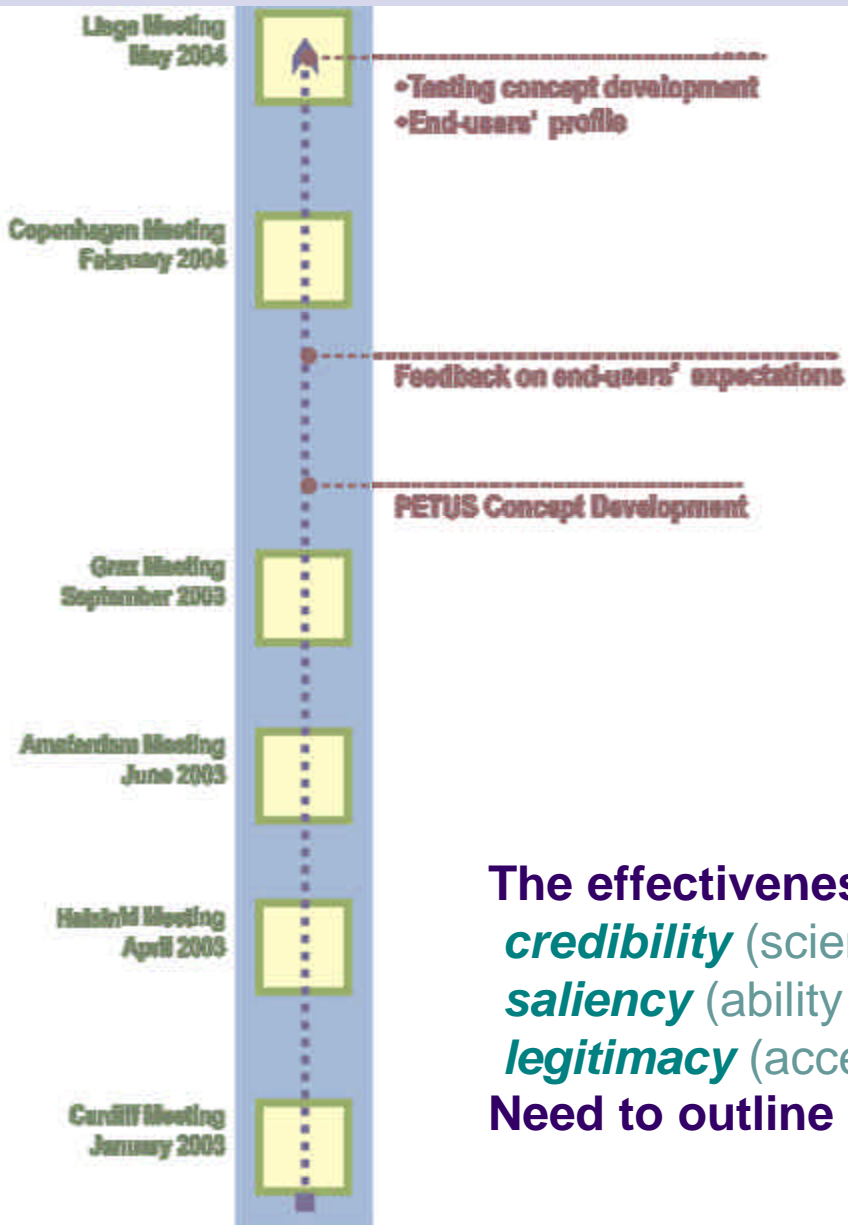
TESTING IN PETUS PROGRESS

- **Three stages**

  Preliminary – development of the testing concept
  Preparatory – development of the testing tools, pilot testing
  Core – testing procedures

PRELIMINARY STAGE

development of the testing concept

The key characteristics of PETUS to be tested concern its ability:
(1) to contribute to a reliable evaluation process;
(2) to address sustainability aspects of urban infrastructure projects;
(3) to be easily implemented in everyday practice of urban management.

The effectiveness criteria concern three dimensions
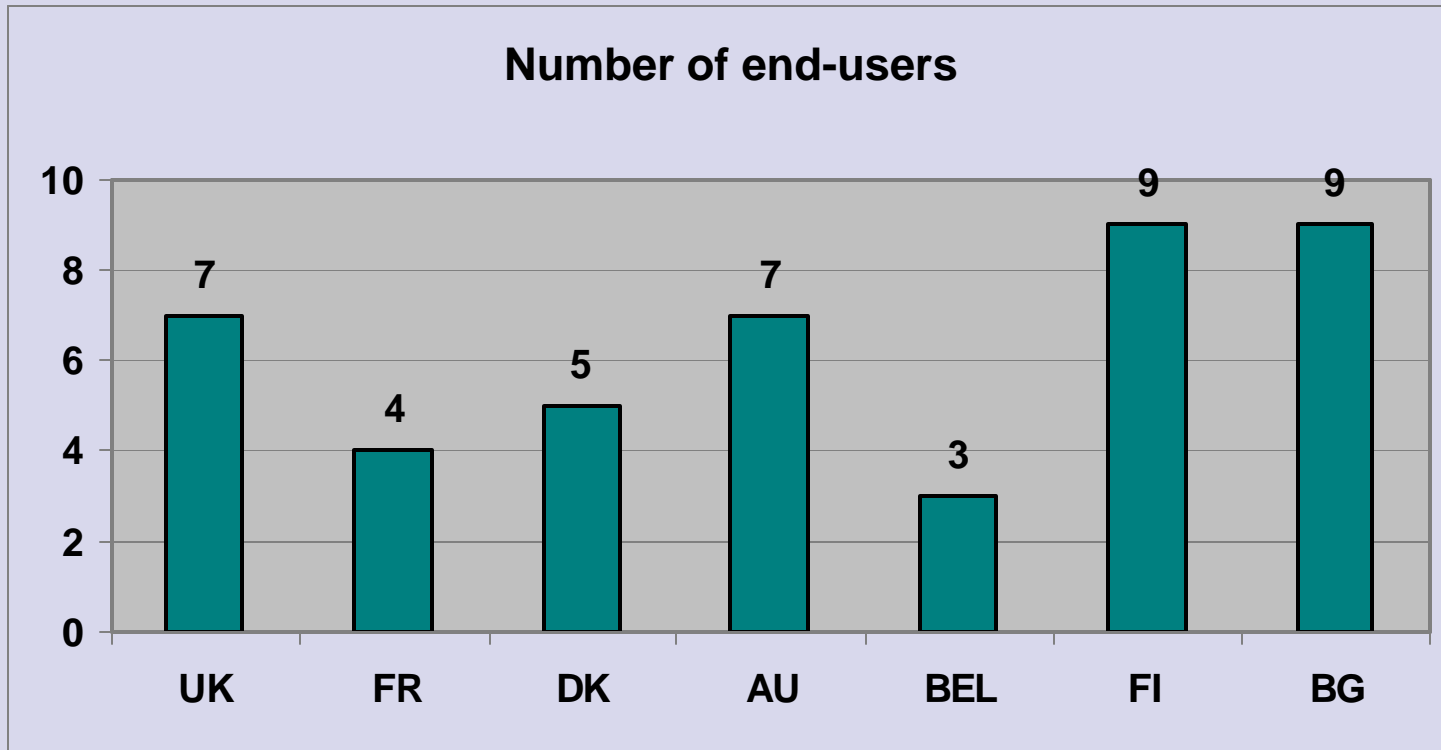*credibility* (scientific/technical soundness),
saliency (ability to address particular practical problems)
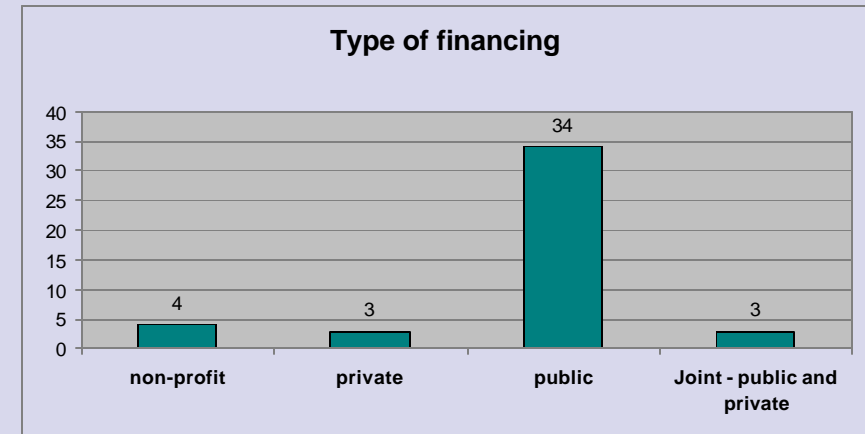*legitimacy* (acceptability by end-users).
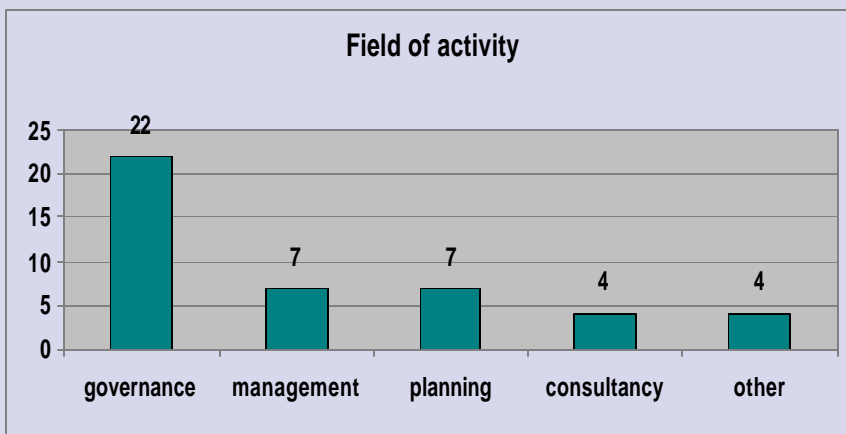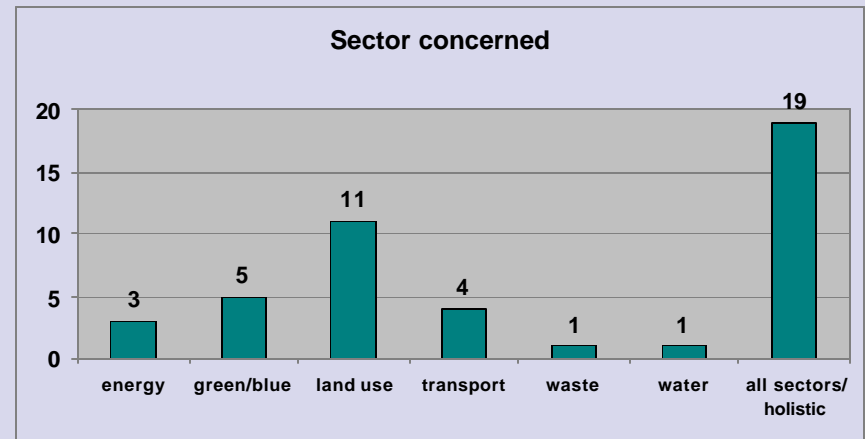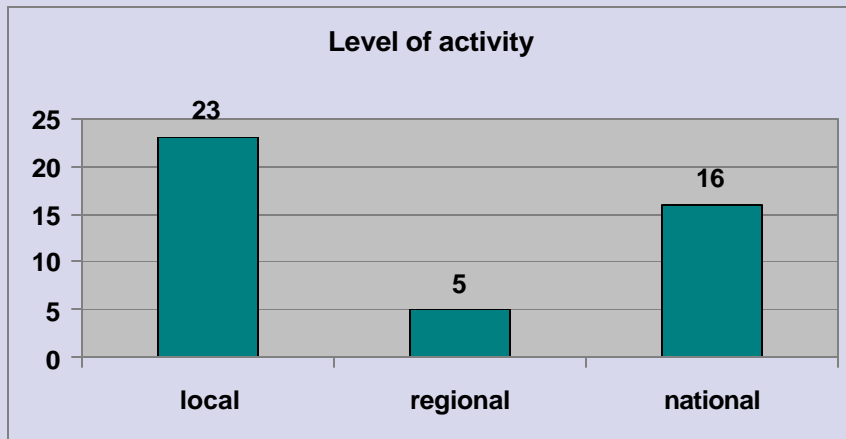**Need to outline PETUS end-users' profile**

PETUS ENDUSERS
by country

Number of end-users

Country	Value
UK	7
FR	4
DK	5
AU	7
BEL	3
FI	9
BG	9

PETUS ENDUSERS' PROFILE
traced by types of organizations (level and field of activity)

Level of activity

- local: 23
- regional: 5
- national: 16

Sector concerned

- energy: 3
- green/blue: 5
- land use: 11
- transport: 4
- waste: 1
- water: 1
- all sectors/holistic: 19

Field of activity

- governance: 22
- management: 7
- planning: 7
- consultancy: 4
- other: 4

Type of financing

- non-profit: 4
- private: 3
- public: 34
- Joint - public and private: 3

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PETUS ENDUSERS' PROFILE
traced by professional background of contact persons

Role

Category	Value
public	2
political	4
technical	33
technical political	3

Professional background

Category	Value
planning	4
architecture	7
engineering	10
environmental sciences	9
management	5
other (lawyer, IT)	7

Position

Category	Value
manager	11
head of department/direcrors	18
officer	7
other	6
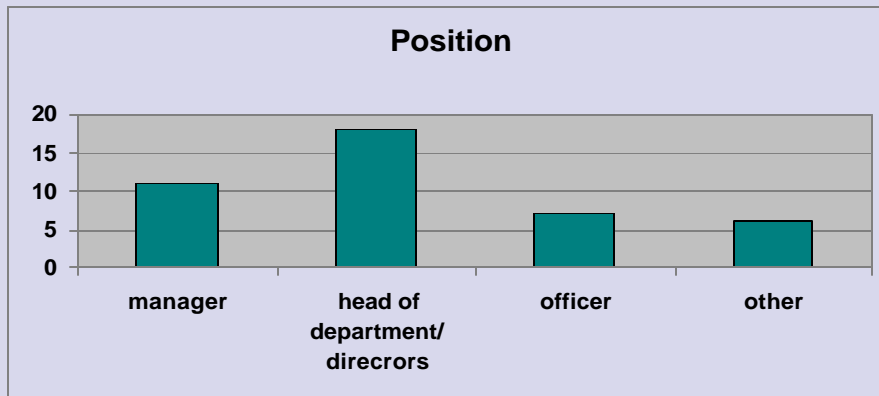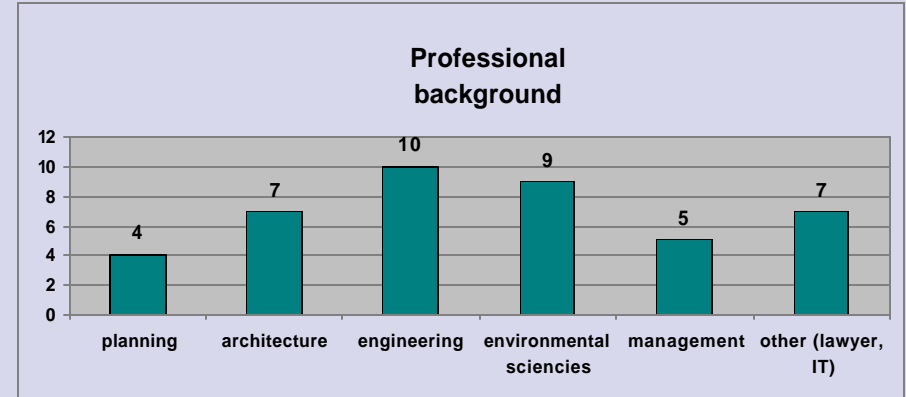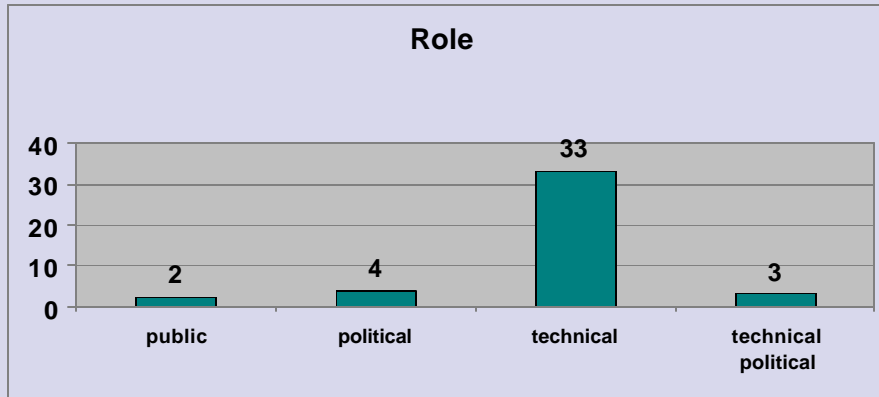
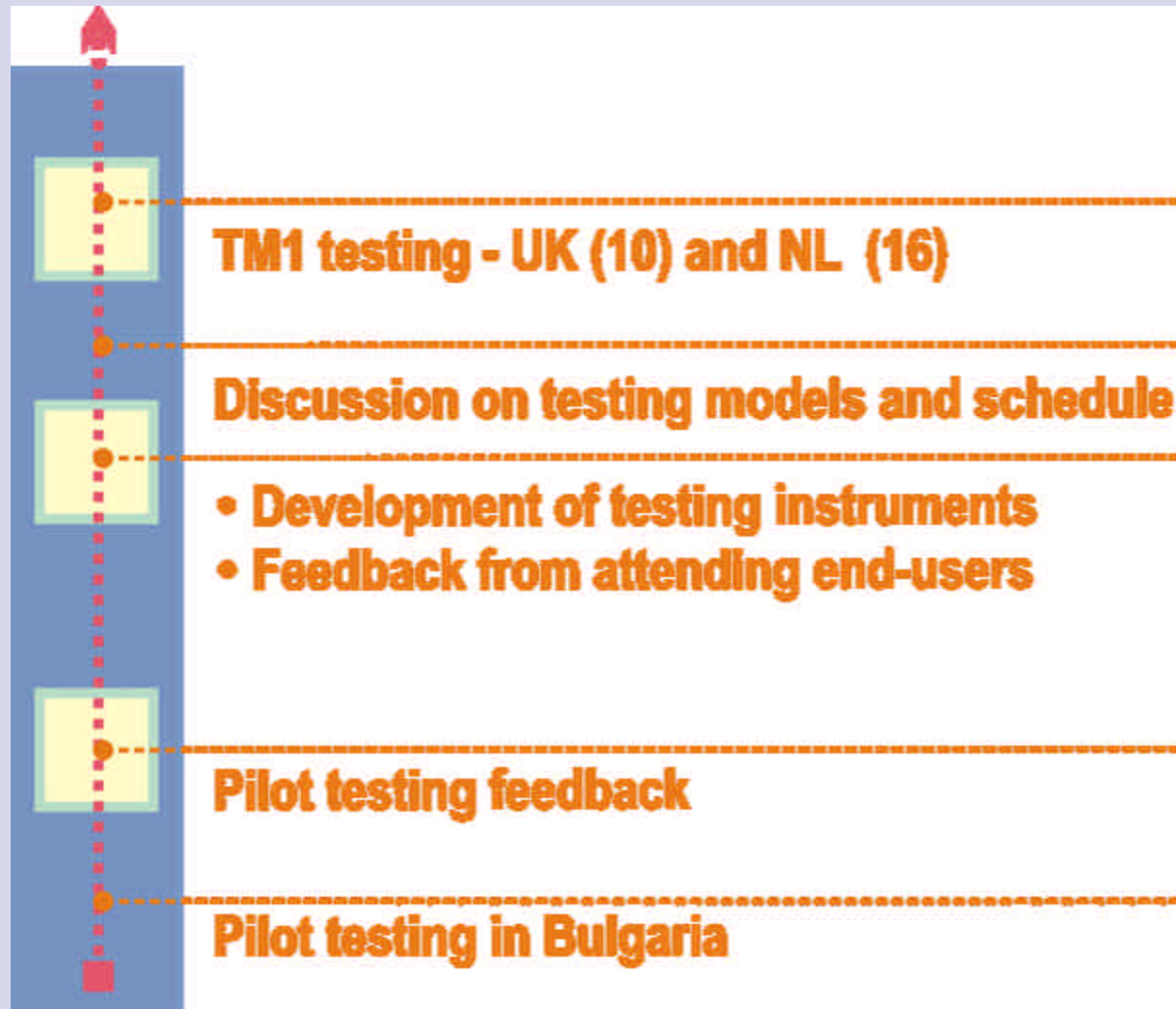# FIRST FEEDBACK ON ENDUSERS' EXPECTATIONS

The tool should be holistic:

- **It should provide for the implementation of strategic approaches and for choices between alternatives.**
- **It has to give the possibility to act rather than react.**
- **The scale is important for decision making; different scales require different approaches and type of information.**

The tool should help planning bodies in providing for:

- **Comprehensive visualised information and for involving the public into the decision-making process.**
- **Effective communication between departments and services, planning body and actors involved;**
- **Continuity of the policy process within the whole life-cycle of a project and the separate administrative units involved in its implementation.**

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PREPARATORY STAGE
development of the testing tools, pilot testing

TM1 testing - UK (10) and NL (16)

Discussion on testing models and schedule

- Development of testing instruments
- Feedback from attending end-users

Pilot testing feedback

Pilot testing in Bulgaria

THE PILOT TESTING

Concerning the **green/blue sector**;

Focused on a **Bulgarian municipality**

Following the **definition of tools/frameworks proposed by PETUS.**

Based on

- the concept already formulated within PETUS project and on results already developed:
- one of the three main key-problems identified in the green sector
- analysis of existing evaluation tools (URGE, GREEN POSTER) addressed to the green/blue sector;

Focused on

- Public awareness on sustainable development concept;
- Attitude towards urban public green spaces;
- Communication between authorities and citizens;
- Local business involvement in green /blue system   maintenance;
- Biodiversity

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THE PILOT TESTING OUTCOMES

Required **Transferability** of testing results concerns:

- **Testing tools to provide effective communication** with end-users;
- **Identification of test cases** would depend on partners' resources and willingness of end users to get involved;
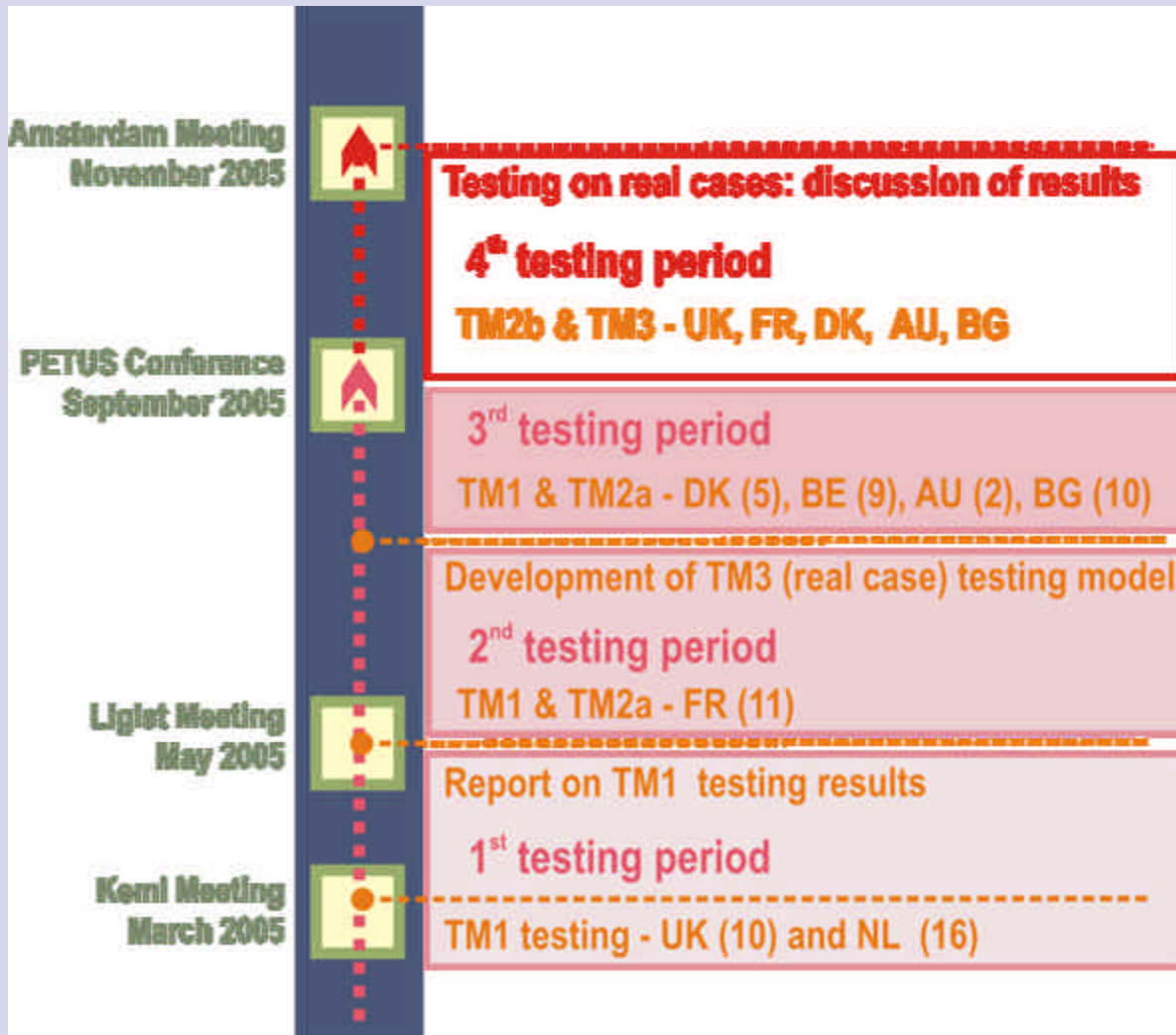- PETUS testing tools should comprise **holistic and a sector sets**

PETUS TESTING MODEL

● **TM1** - an individual filling-in of a questionnaire

● **TM2a** - individual interview (open but structured discussion)

● **TM2b** - focus group discussion

● **TM3** – testing on real cases

TM3 Testing steps - Description of testing case, Testing procedure (filling in the matrix), Structured interviews with end-users, Report on testing results
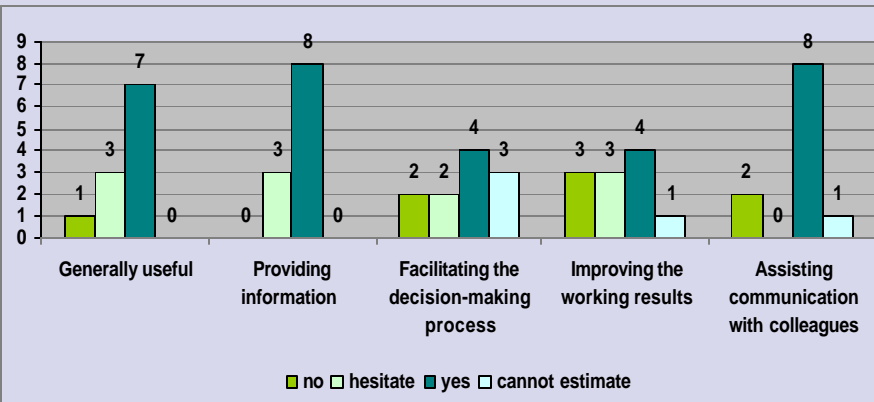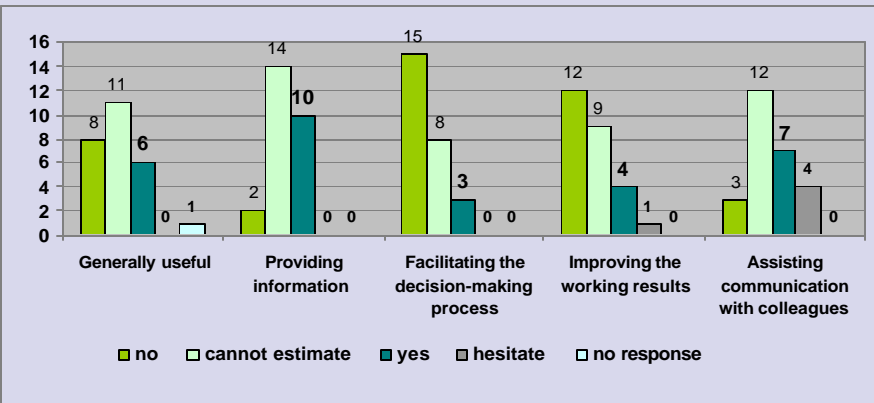
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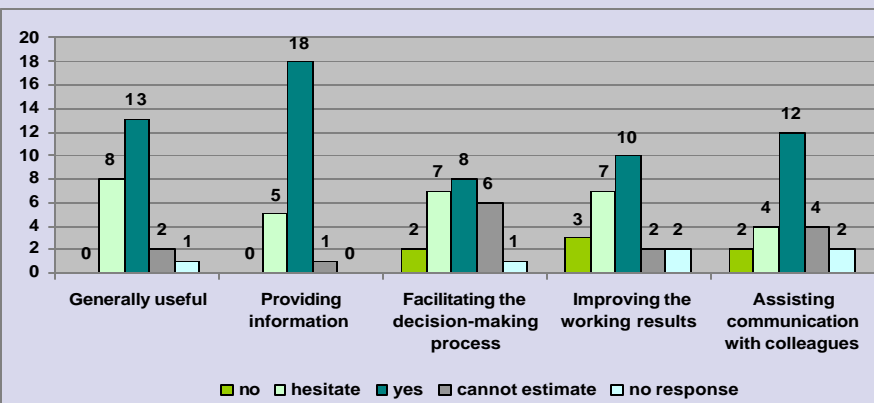Community Research
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CORE STAGE
testing procedures

Question 2. Could PETUS be relevant in your everyday work?

1st testing period

2nd testing period

3rd testing period

Question 6. Does the content of PETUS meet your expectations?

1st testing period
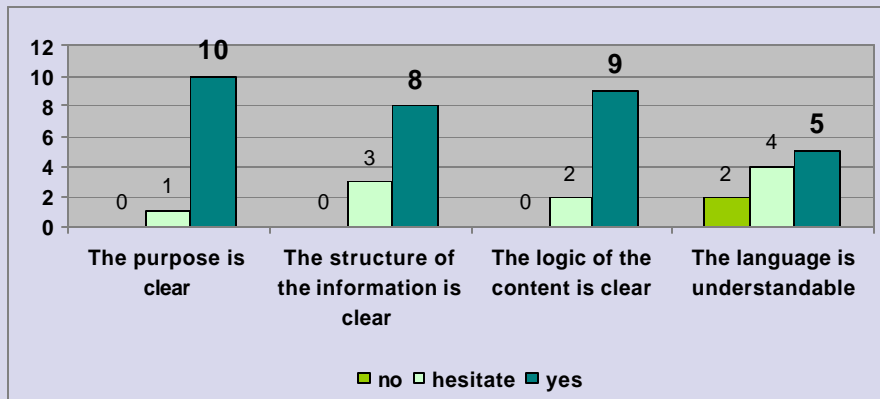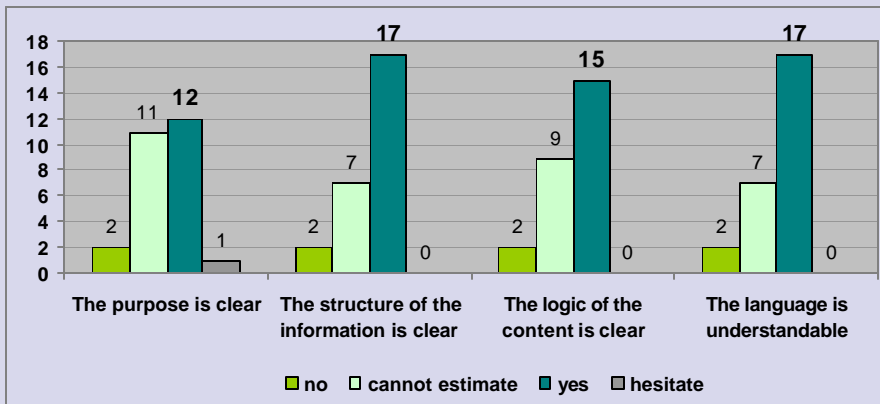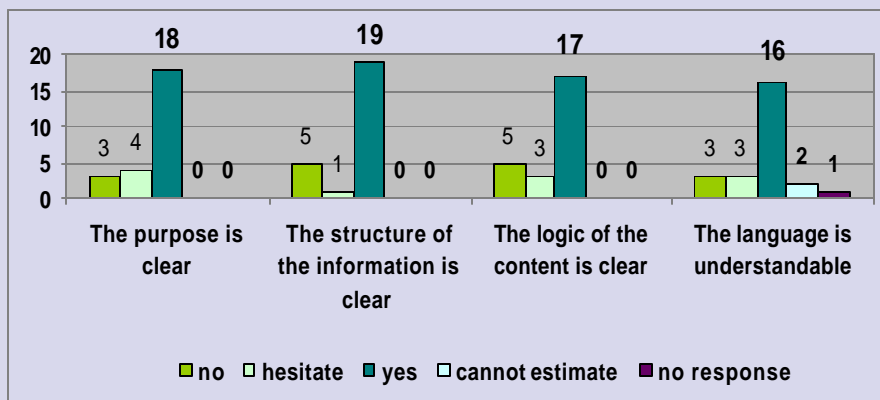
2nd testing period

3rd testing period

CURRENT TESTING RESULTS
OPEN QUESTIONS

● **Q1. What is your overall impression of PETUS website as a tool?**

● **Q4. Please provide comment on how PETUS can be improved.**

● **Q5. What else would you expect to find in PETUS?**

● **Q11. Please submit any ideas, questions, or comments you may have.**

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ESTIMATED PETUS EFFECTIVENESS

Petus could be used for various purposes – information, communication, political debate, providing a collaborative platform (through the matrix), etc.

1013 "If always updated it could become a very valid source - also for political debates."

1015 I would see it as a useful 'record-keeping' tool.

3001 "It is important to demonstrate that sustainability is not necessarily about making something very complicated and spectacular, but more about giving time for finding the best and most efficient solutions."

8010 "the most helpful part of the left side are the case studies – could be used as an argument for the development of new approaches; could be a good communication tool when municipalities develop a common project."

"… a way to work together; to keep and trace memory and the history of a project; to help the control of difference between what have been said and what has been done; to keep the sense for all the project duration; The added value of PETUS is the combination of project management matrix with sustainability considerations and SEA implementation *(FR, WP5 working report)*;

ESTIMATED PETUS EFFECTIVENESS

PETUS appears a way to learn about sustainability and not to learn technical competence (FR)

2005 It could be a good idea to integrate a large scale public participation tool, alongside with the stakeholder and technicians project/ knowledge management platform.

2011 "When different experts work together on a holistic project, it is often difficult to understand colleague's priorities and perceptions of sustainability. Petus could, in my opinion, open the mind to other sectors of expertise."

3002 The matrix was really helpful and easy to read – and gave me some good questions on what to think about during a process;

5006 Useful to see how it is possible to deal with sustainability, to pick up some ideas and to discover new tools.

7009 Excellent survey of PROCESS information.

8005 sector information is too general as a manual. It could be useful to have links with other projects websites, conferences, magazines, etc. It helps users to gain more holistic view and to find relevant information.

ESTIMATED PETUS EFFECTIVENESS

Outlining European dimension

2006 a possibility to investigate what is possible to do about sustainable development and which kind of urban infrastructure projects are currently occurring at the European scale; we have little knowledge at the European scale; could help in sharing knowledge and information through Europe.

5003 It makes Europe more concrete; it is a source of inspiration, it opens the mind.

ENDUSERS' EXPECTATIONS CURRENTLY NOT MET

2011 I would expect in the PETUS website a reflection on urban infrastructures evaluation: what is a good evaluation? What is it for? Which outcomes can we obtain from an evaluation procedure?

3004 Indicators are important: indicators in PETUS are absent in many sectors. The indicators should refer to EU-indictors which more experts have approved.

3004 "Sustainability" should be better defined in PETUS. Cases, tools, matrix etc. focus on the environmental part of sustainability – this should be emphasized in the introduction. The official definition of sustainability (Brundtland report) should be written.

4002 about the tool→ these are too general, the question is also whose opinion is mentioned (policy actor, or citizen?);

7009 Due to local political choices the process as mentioned is often not realistic.

1015 The website seems to focus more on the tools and less on their effectiveness and user's experiences with the tools.

IDEAS ABOUT PETUS FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

PETUS needs virtual space for debate

2006 The addition of a forum could be a good idea. Therefore researchers who have made PETUS, users of PETUS and case studies project owner could communicate each other.

2008 in the list of the case studies to present just next to the name of the case 3 lights - for environmental, economic and social issues. A green light means that the case study takes into account this issue, and a red one not.

3004 A methodology for using SEA would be really useful for local authorities

5006 What about the use of GIS as a decision-making tool

7006 Give it greater name publicity. On the moment only a few colleagues are reached.

8007 To develop Section FAQ and a possibility for on-line consultation.

8008 A system for feedback from the end-users would be good; thus to enrich and update the content of PETUS.

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IDEAS ABOUT PETUS FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

PETUS needs clearer focus on particular type of endusers

2003 PETUS website applies to people competent in the subject. It could be possible to make it accessible to a broader public.

3007 It would be nice with examples on smaller projects => more interesting for smaller municipalities

4002 Give more information about which tool is particularly relevant for which end user

5001 too theoretical and general consideration, lack of tools specifically dedicated to local authorities

8010 the holistic view is not clear, it would be useful to have more about relations between levels;

8010 PETUS is to target a particular type of municipalities – probably the medium ones that have the potential to use it and still need help to develop their approaches.

IDEAS ABOUT PETUS FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

English makes a barrier

2007 English still remains a real problem for professionals. For elective representatives it seems impossible to ask them working in English.

2011 English language remains a problem. It is needed to provide at least summary of case studies, tools descriptions and sectors descriptions in French.

3002 to make the first page available in the national language – so it was easier to see whether it would be relevant to proceed or not.

3007 It is difficult to use the matrix when it is in English – stops reading further

5003 A French translation is needed (Wallonian administrations, etc. end-users)

7005 Translating in country/ on language

7009 A Dutch exemplar is appreciated. We are not used to produce the work in English.

NEXT STEPS PLANNED

- **Real cases TM2b and TM3**
- **By whom** – UK, DK, AU, FR, BG
- **WP5 schedule amendments** results to be submitted till the end of October; feedback to be discussed at Amsterdam meeting; WP5 final report by the end of November

THE "THEORY – PRACTICE" DIALOGUE: CHALLENGES STILL TO FACE IN THE PROCESSES TOWARDS URBAN SUSTAINABILITY

- **No universal theoretical and technical solutions** of urban problems are possible; local context and experience provide unique chances for practical action;

- **Technical knowledge** is important but **not enough;** sustainability is not a technical but an ethical and policy notion;

- **Dialogue is vital** to capacity-building for urban sustainability - in order to be convincing, expert knowledge and arguments should be made understandable to the broader audience.

- **To "open up the mind"** is both sides' responsibility

PETUS conference, Cardiff, September 2005

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