

Summarizing Report of the Evaluation and Advisory Board

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Contributor(s):	Contribution
Stefanie Becker	Summarizing of the contibution of the Evaluation & Advisory Board
All subproject leaders	Summarizing Feedback

Quality Assurance	
Reviewer	Thomas Gehrig
Commented Summary of the Review (incl. corrective action / date of the review)	
Concise summary of the evaluations.	
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1. Summarizing the contribution of the TAO Evaluation and Advisory Board

The purpose of Evaluation and Advisory Board was

- a) to provide the TAO research team with insights from stakeholders that represent a broader array of communities and organisations relevant for the TAO project beyond and additional to those already present in the TAO project consortium.
- b) in order to guarantee a high level of quality of the scientific approach of the TAO Project also scientific experts from the main research disciplines of the TAO Project assessed project results and gave recommendations if considered necessary

One of the first decisions of the project management board was to focus on only *one* evaluation and advisory board with a multistakeholder perspective, in order to guarantee the most effective and efficient path for experts' feedback. The board was made up of 15 representatives of stakeholder organisations and research experts from Switzerland, Germany, the Netherlands and the UK. This composition of the Advisory & Evaluation Board widened the research perspectives and complemented the evaluation directions that were determined by the TAO research consortium partners, thus helped to validate the research results especially with regard to their transferability and internationalization.

So the mandate of the Evaluation and Advisory Board (s. Deliverable 6.1) was defined as to provide the TAO project with feedback and suggestions from an overall and an external experts' perspective concerning:

- 1) the already existing results in the different subprojects and more important
- 2) future research and developmental efforts during the ongoing project as well as beyond the project's funding period.

Along the project's progress the Evaluation and Advisory Board accompanied the project activities with the focus on implementation and internationalisation as well as on scientific advice. The experts also provided guidance for further activities and future policies (policies of community projects, public policies, and official positions of seniors associations) for both national as well as international perspectives.

These aims were achieved by three opportunities using at different times during the project and with different methodological ways of integrating the important and fruitful feedback for the 15 experts of the Evaluation & Advisory Board:

- Face to face meetings:
 - o At the end of the first project year the board members met in Switzerland for the first time. A workshop in Bern was organized and comprehensive feedback based on the "World Café" method referring to the first working phase of TAO as well as recommendations for the second year were given. The experts agreed on the suggestion to (re-)focus and prioritize the project's aims. As a result a list of important criteria evaluated as necessary for the achieving the aims of the TAO project were compiled and evaluated by research team as well as community partner representatives. In consequent the following project work was tailored along and research



activities were focused toward the criteria evaluated most important for a successful project (s. Deliverable 2a).

- A second meeting in Bonn, Germany took place at the end of the second project year. Additional to the evaluation of the achievements of the second year in the light of the criteria formulated, the focus was on the TAO Handbook as the most important product of the project. In order to comply with the conditions and suggestions of the AAL midterm review the respective progress was monitored. The discussion of the experts during this second meeting resulted in a detailed action plan for the necessary efforts to be made to meet the overall aims of the project and to achieve sustainable results (s. Deliverable 2.b).

- Online survey:

Based on a decision of the Project Management Board in May 2013 the focus of the last and final feedback of the Evaluation and Advisory Board should be on the TAO-Handbook as the most important project outcome. In order to integrate the feedback of the E&A Board during the work in progress on the TAO-Handbook it was decided to involve the experts personally via a short questionnaire. Prior to sending the questions via email to all members of the E&A Board, all subproject leaders were asked to compile the most important questions of each subproject (s. Deliverable 2c). The feedback of the board members was directly integrated on Wikiversity. So all adaptations and remarks could be traced by the respective and responsible sub-project leaders for further optimization of their work.

- Individualized Feedback:

The members of the E&A Board were kept informed about the work in progress of each subproject by continued short reports of all subprojects. They were asked individually to give their feedback specific to each short report and directly to each subproject leader concerned.

2. Overall evaluation of the Evaluation and Advisory Board

The overall contribution of the TAO Evaluation & Advisory Board was evaluated as very important und helpful for the success of the project by all subproject leaders. Especially the definition of important criteria for the project's focus after year 1 supported a stringent outline of the research compassing the objectives. In consequence the developmental work on the TAO Handbook was forced which enabled the project team to interlink their activities more tightly and target related.

The action plan defined after year 2 of the project work was can be evaluated as an useful and rewarding result of the involvement of the experts. The action plan was formulated very concretely so the focus of the further and finalizing work of each subproject for the last project year could be deduced on a clear scope.

Overall the feedback and the recommendations of the experts of the Evaluation and Advisory Board contributed essentially to the framing and focusing of the research and development efforts in the TAO project and – eventually – supported its successful termination with the achievement of goals set and their sustainability beyond the TAO project.



3. Critical review

There were two critical aspects with integrating the experts of the Evaluation and Advisory Board discussed in the TAO project team:

1. One can be seen in the difficulties to keep them informed about the ongoing research in between the meeting. The compilation of the short reports of all subprojects led to considerably comprehensive overall project information. On the other hand the information of each subprojects had to be quite consolidated (3-5 pages) which naturally led to a loss of details.

In retrospective more face-to-face meetings with the board members possibly would have been a better way to receive feedback. But since resource and possibilities for the re-embursement of travel expenses as well as the respective time for the organisation and realization of more meetings (in the project team as well as among the board members) were restricted the short report can still be evaluated as an adequate solution.

2. The second aspect refers to the number of experts involved. Since 15 members enabled the intergration of a wide variety of experts from different stakeholder perspectives (i.e. research, senior groups, community experts, etc.), the flip side of the medal must be seen in the difficulties to bring them all together in one meeting and to really ensure the feedback of all of them to be included. As an possible answer to this difficulty, the method of individualized feedback was implemented which, on the other hand, ended in elaborate communication and a number of reminder mails of which many still stayed unanswered.

Nevertheless, all members of the Evaluation and Advisory Board indicated very high interest in the TAO project and its results. Those feedback received were of respective sophistication and comprehensiveness.

Overall the integration of an Evaluation and Advisory Board as a consulting committee must be evaluated as an important success factor for the TAO project. The perspective of an external board of experts was an effective way to support the project's work on a high level of target relatedness and to ensure high quality and sustainable results.



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