

VALUE ISOBARS

Meeting at Sem Gjestegård, Asker, Norway
June 16 – 17, 2009

Minutes

Participants:

From the coordinator SVT, UiB: Matthias Kaiser, Signe Solberg, Roger Strand, Sigrid Skavlid;
From LSE: Nicole Kronberger
From dialog & genteknik: Brigitte Gschmeidler
From DINAMIA: Maria Eduarda Goncalves, Ines Gameiro
From EKUT-IZEW: Thomas Potthast
From UNIMAAS: David Townend, Laurens Landeweerd

Excused:

from SVT UiB: Torunn Ellefsen
from LSE: George Gaskell
From EKUT-IZEW: Simon Meisch

Tuesday, 16 June 2009, 09-18:30 h:

1. Welcome and Agenda setting:

Kaiser welcomed all participants to the meeting, expressing delight that the project finally has started and great hopes for the future collaboration of the partners.
A round of short introductions of the participants followed.
A draft of the agenda for the meeting was distributed earlier.

- The agenda was adopted.

2. The Board Meeting:

- The sub-agenda of the Board Meeting:
 - *Update on the Contract (DEF) and the revised Description of work (DOW)*
The partners were informed of the current status of the Contract, i.e. that UiB is still waiting for a corrected version of the GPA because of misspelling and wrong names used for two partners in the previous version. UiB is contacting Brussels again for an update.
 - *The consortium agreement; remarks on the draft sent by UiB*
A draft of the Consortium Agreement (CA) was sent to all partners. Comments were received from all partners except from LSE. On the basis of the comments UiB had produced a second draft. This second draft was presented with the marked changes on a screen. A detailed discussion followed in which some corrections were added by the present participants. Kaiser noted the corrections.

- Action: Kaiser shall convey the corrections to the legal administrator at UiB asap.
 - Action: Townsend shall send a proposal for the definition of the terms “foreground” and “background” to the coordinator asap.
 - Action: Kronberger shall contact the legal department at LSE and ask them to speed up their comments and reply to UiB asap.
 - *administrative procedures of the project, further board meetings*
Kaiser announced the intention to include a Board Meeting in all further consortium meetings. Additional meetings can be held either by telephone or electronically on demand.
 - *finances of the project, looking ahead*
Kaiser informed the participants about the payment procedures of the project. Brussels shall send a pre-payment 45 days after the start of the project. A certain percentage of this is paid directly to the Guarantee Fund (EUR 40.999,-). The UiB shall then divide the pre-payment according to the partners’ share of the total budget. Solberg informed the partners that some delay in the payment from UiB can occur due to the summer break, but that efforts shall be made to avoid all unnecessary delay. The partners were satisfied with this.
 - *reporting procedures during the project*
The most important dates to remember in this regard are month 18 and month 30: project reports and financial costs statements are to be sent to Brussels. For deliverables see Kaiser’s Power point and the DOW.
 - *general meeting plan of the project*
There are altogether five consortium meetings (including the kick-off) planned, plus the Final Conference, all in intervals of approximately 6 months. In addition there are the meetings within WP6 in Hamburg. For further details, see minutes below.
 - *any other business.*
No further points.
3. **Introduction to the background of the project – the project idea**
Kaiser gave a brief Power Point presentation on this topic, presenting among others the origin of the term “value isobars” and the project’s relation to the 2005 Eurobarometer on Social values, science and technology. It was noted that the project is mentioned among the EU Science in Society Highlights 2008. (Power Point presentation to be placed on the internal section of the website.)
4. **Introduction to WP1 Value Concepts – Ideas and Challenges**
Potthast presented information on EKUT-IZEW and mentioned among others the ongoing project THEBEN about Terahertz Detection Systems. He included observations / a hypothesis according to which the present discussions e.g. in the EC context views ethics as problematic whereas values are seen as “good”. A number of open questions concluded the presentation. It was among others asked to what extent one may be able to assign value isobars to spatial / geographical parameters (nations), rather than paying attention to more internal group specific parameters. (Power Point presentation to be placed on the internal section of the website.)
5. **Introduction to WP2 Value Methods – Ideas and Challenges**
Kronberger presented information on LSE, in particular about the Methodology Institute and background on George Gaskell and herself. She mentioned among others the project on Sensitive Technologies and European Public Ethics (STEPEN). An

important point to consider is among others the issue of expressed values versus revealed values, as well as aggregate indicators for value climates. The question of values as “truism” was raised. The preparations for the EB 2010 and the preparation for the European Social Survey end of 2010 were mentioned as an upcoming opportunity to contribute something from Value Isobars. (Power Point presentation to be placed on the internal section of the website.)

6. Introduction to WP8 Management – tasks and ideas

Kaiser presented the basics concerning management and finances in a Power Point presentation. The coordinator is responsible for all Board meetings, Consortium meetings, and writes the minutes. In particular he explained what is included in eligible costs (direct costs as personnel, travel and consumables, plus indirect costs = overheads – for most partners 60% of the direct costs). The maximum EU contribution is 75% of all eligible costs. The pre-payment is set to 60% of the total EU contribution. (Power Point presentation to be placed on the internal section of the website.)

7. Introduction to WP3 Value Dialogue – Ideas and Challenges

Gschmeidler presented her unit and some first thoughts on the work in WP3. She mentioned among others an ongoing collaboration with Kronberger in a project on synthetic biology. There are a number of crucial questions that need to be addressed quickly, e.g. to what extent one wants to include stakeholders or prefers “lay people”. Furthermore, is it wise to work with special social segments, e.g. younger people in a particular community, or should one rather aim at broad representation. What is the best recruitment process for the exercise? (Power Point presentation to be placed on the internal section of the website.)

8. Coordination with the project Technolife

Strand presented briefly the SVT of the UiB and some of its ongoing projects. Technolife is funded as the result of a proposal to the same call as Value Isobars and deals with three technological fields. The carrying idea of Technolife is to work with social imaginaries and to explore the largely unexplored field of social communities less structured than typical organisations. An example would be internet communities like e.g. Facebook or similar. As possible synergies between Technolife and Value Isobars he stressed the opportunity of intellectual exchange since both projects face a truly innovative task. Other possible forms of synergies were also mentioned (and discussed within Value Isobars towards the end of the meeting). (Power Point presentation to be placed on the internal section of the website.)

9. Introduction to WP4 Values and Regulation – Ideas and Challenges

Goncalves presented the DINAMIA centre stressing among others its diverse sources of funding and the resulting variety of activities. In regard to law and values, reference was made to justice and security in legal theory, to Human Rights, and to instrumentality / morality of European law. There is a relevant current debate about models of regulation (public, private, self- and co-regulation). GMO regulation is mostly risk regulation and includes important concepts like uncertainty and precaution, both with clear value implications. But from here the tendency is towards governance of S&T with a view to foster innovation and European competitiveness. A starting point in the project will be a survey of existing legal and regulatory instruments in policy documents and agencies’ institutional doctrines. (Power Point presentation to be placed on the internal section of the website.)

10. Introduction to WP7 Dissemination – first ideas

Kaiser presented the different dissemination tasks of the project. The project website (www.valueisobars.eu) will be instrumental from an early stage onwards. Another

important task at the beginning of the project is the identification of the targeted end-users. Three communications will be sent to these end-users during the course of the project, and they will then be invited to the final project conference. Other dissemination tasks include the production of a manual and scientific publications in peer-reviewed journals. The possibility of aiming at a book production towards the end was also mentioned. (Power Point presentation to be placed on the internal section of the website.)

(During the evening the participants enjoyed a common dinner, hosted by UiB, at Sem Gjestegård.)

Wednesday, 17 June 2009, 09-13:00 h

11. Introduction to WP5 Two Technologies – Ideas and Challenges

Townend and Landeweerd presented UNIMAAS and their first reflections on the tasks ahead. The team operates within the Health, Ethics and Society section of UNIMAAS. Possible links to other projects were mentioned, e.g. SYNTHETHICS and SYBHEL. One of the main tasks of WP5 is to glue together the contributions of WP1-4 in the concrete light of the two selected technologies. In regard to the choice of the technologies some questions were raised about their adequacy and special problematic since both seem somehow tied to issues of national security. One may miss an economy-based value case technology. This also raises the question of the quality control of the information gathered about them. More detailed reflections followed on the issue of identifying main players and their implicit values. Particular challenges may arise in respect of identifying relevant voices of the public. (Power Point presentation to be placed on the internal section of the website.)

12. Introduction to WP6 Synthesis – Ideas and challenges

Kaiser introduced the basic function of WP6, namely to extract the information from WP1-5 and convert it to written input for the targeted end-users, and eventually to a sketch for improved governance and future research needs. Thus, the WP6 starts according to the workplan with a 6 months delay in relation to the other WPs. Meetings shall be held in Hamburg at the Altonaer Stiftung für philosophische Grundlagenforschung. The first meeting is envisaged for the time around January / February 2010. The meetings shall have a length of two full days, i.e. arrive the evening before and leave the morning after the workshop.

13. Summary discussion and the road ahead with action points

(The originally proposed last points on the agenda were merged into one.) The participants gave their summary impressions of some relevant points from earlier discussion, and included specific action points.

Summary points:

- The transfer of the pre-payment shall be speedy, but some delay can be expected due to the summer break.
- All partners need to remember that costs of the project need to subtract all visible VAT taxes.
- Active communication between all partners on research questions is encouraged, and emails to specific partners should be cc'ed to all partners.
- The internal section of the website shall include the project archive.

- Participants felt that a common final conference with Technolife may not be advisable, since one wants to focus on one set of results during the conference.
- Intellectual exchange with Technolife, common meetings (after an initial start-up period), and perhaps even a common list of targeted end-users may, however, be useful.

Action points summary:

- David provides definition of foreground and background for inclusion in CA.
- Nicole contacts the legal section at LSE for feedback on CA.
- Matthias sends comments on CA to UiB.
- Ines sends a first book / literature list around.
- Nicole and Ines create a Google or other email group.
- Matthias makes sure another website is reserved for the name www.value-isobars.eu and that both sites are connected by the resend function.
- Matthias and Sigrid explore the possibilities of using Project Wiki for our purposes and report back at next meeting.
- Matthias shall draft a first intended profile of the targeted end-users and sends it to partners after the summer.
- Matthias shall provide an invitation letter to targeted end-users after some possible candidates are identified by all partners.
- Nicole and George send an update on the upcoming Eurobarometer survey during this fall.
- Thomas and Nicole seek to clarify the issue around the term “social values”.

- The next consortium meeting shall take place in Vienna; the preferred date is 3 – 4 December 2009, alternatively 14 – 15 December 2009 (the definite final date shall be determined by electronic communication by September).

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