TACTIC

TOOLS, METHODS AND TRAINING FOR COMMUNITIES AND SOCIETY TO BETTER PREPARE FOR A CRISIS

D9.3 Results of the evaluation of the online platform:

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Abbreviations

Acronym	Description
TOSAP	TACTIC Online Self-Assessment Platform

Preamble

The overall aim of the **TACTIC** project is to increase preparedness to large-scale and cross-border disasters amongst communities and societies in Europe. Therefore **TACTIC** based its work on the state-of-the-art literature related to risk perception and preparedness, developed a self-assessment both for organisations responsible for managing such different risks as flooding, earthquakes, terrorism and epidemics as well as the general public exposed to these hazards. It also created a catalogue of good practices in education and communication. Rather than taking a top-down approach to preparedness, **TACTIC** pursues a collaborative project strategy by including different user and stakeholder groups in the development, testing and validation of tools and materials throughout the project by conducting four case studies focusing on terrorism, floods, pandemics and earthquakes. This ensures that the outcomes of the project reflects the needs of end users and ensures that the project's outcomes have a life span after the project has officially ended.

All these findings and outputs are presented in an online learning platform which aims to ensure the sustainability of the use of the projects outcomes after the project has come to an end.

The online platform can be accessed by following this link: https://www.tacticproject.eu/tosap/

This document presents the evaluation report of the **TACTIC** online self-assessment (TOSAP).

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1 Introduction

This report provides an overview on the central results of the evaluation of the online platform. It includes the following key components that were evaluated during different stages of the project. It is based on the feedback we received during the second round of four workshops conducted in the case studies and on the general feedback provided by participants during the final conference. For more information on the case study workshops, please refer to Deliverables 4.1, 4.2, 5.1, 5.2, 6.1, 6.2, 7.1, 7.2 as well as 11.7, on information regarding the evaluation procedure, please go to Deliverable 8.2 and for having a look at the final version of the self-assessment and the feedback report go to Deliverable 2.2 and 3.2. Deliverable 8.2 contains the key outputs as well as findings of **TACTIC**.

Part of these workshop activities was to present the **TACTIC** online self-assessment platform (TOSAP) for learning about preparedness for large-scale and cross-border disasters and to receive feedback for improvements from the workshop participants, regarding the functionality and the user interface of the platform.

The result is that the developed self-assessment platform addresses the functionality and the user interface requirements in a way to create an interactive tool for risk preparedness, allowing communities, organisations responsible for disaster risk management as well local actors (community members, NGOs etc.) exposed to various hazards, to assess how prepared they are to a range of hazards.

1.1 Scope

The general scope of this deliverable is to present the workshop participants and final conference feedback on the TOSAP and identify and integrate suitable solutions that fully address their feedback and improvement suggestions.

1.2 Deliverable Structure

The deliverable is structured in three chapters:

- **Chapter 1** is the introduction of the document.
- **Chapter 2** summarises the platform evaluation and the participants' expectations including the suggested/implemented platform changes.
- **Chapter 3** draws conclusions.

2 Results of the evaluation of the online platform

The evaluation was structured along the following points:

- Knowledge transfer from science to practice and from practice to science
- Expectations reflected and met in the outputs of **TACTIC**
- Implementation and Usability
- Overall evaluation of the outcomes of the project

2.1 Knowledge transform from science to practice and from practice to science

TACTIC itself was organised as a transdisciplinary research process that aimed at developing its central outcome in close collaboration with stakeholders working and being involved in the field of disaster risk management both on the operational as well as on the policy-level. Therefore **TACTIC** has selected four case studies from across Europe, representing different types of crisis and disasters and allowing the consortium to take into account different kinds of preparedness activities and strategies. All of the case studies have experienced actual or potential large-scale and/or cross-border disasters and crises. In the case studies **TACTIC** relied on the one hand on established relationship with various stakeholders that were further enhanced throughout the project by creating and facilitating new relationships with stakeholders working in the different contexts. The collaboration with stakeholder was based on interviews as well as on intensive interaction during 8 workshops that were organised in **TACTIC**'s four case studies. 160 persons participated in 8 eight workshops in the case studies. The majority of participants were governmental representatives as well as non-governmental representatives (see Table 2-1), followed by academics and first-responders.

	Terrorism	Floods	Epidemics	Earthquake	Total
Governmental representatives	6	37	5	27	75
First-responders	3	1	5	3	12
Non-governmental organizations	10	4	22	4	40
Small and Medium sized enterprises	1	0	0	2	3
Academics (without consortium members)	5	2	3	4	14
Religious representatives	0	0		4	4
Journalists	1	0	4		5
Students	0	0		7	7
Total	26	44	39	51	160

Table 2-1: Participants of TACTIC's eight workshops organised in four case studies

In addition, to the workshops in the case studies an initial thematically focused workshop was organised in WP 3 aiming at identify criteria for good practices in disaster risk preparedness programmes and communication as well as education activities. 12 external stakeholders were invited to participate. While this workshop was rather directed towards an academic audience (8 stakeholders), also policy-makers, and representatives of governmental bodies as well as non-governmental organisations participated (4 stakeholders).

In addition, **TACTIC** presented its final outputs as well as central empirical findings at its final conference in Brussels, which was jointly organised with the POP-Alert project (See Deliverable 10.4 for a more detailed overview). In total, there were more than 80 persons from 19 countries who participated in the **TACTIC** and **POP-ALERT** conference. As the figure shows, countries from across Europe were represented, in addition to two participants attending from the United States of America (USA).

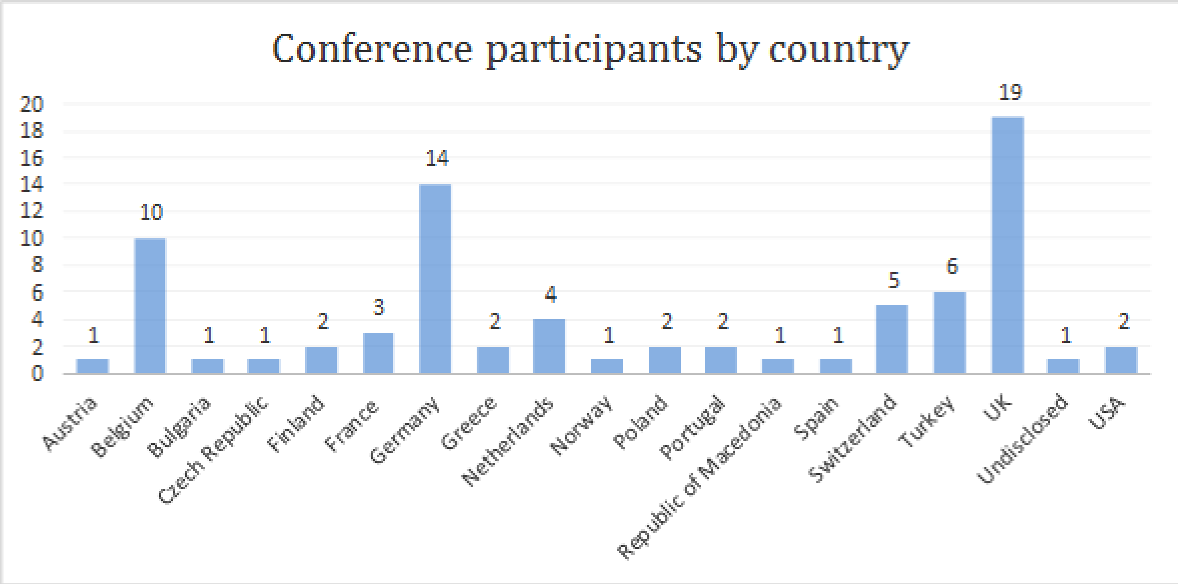

Figure 2-1: Conference participants by country

The conference participants also represented different types of stakeholder category as illustrated in Figure 2-2. All except one (the general public) of the stakeholder categories targeted by **TACTIC** were represented.

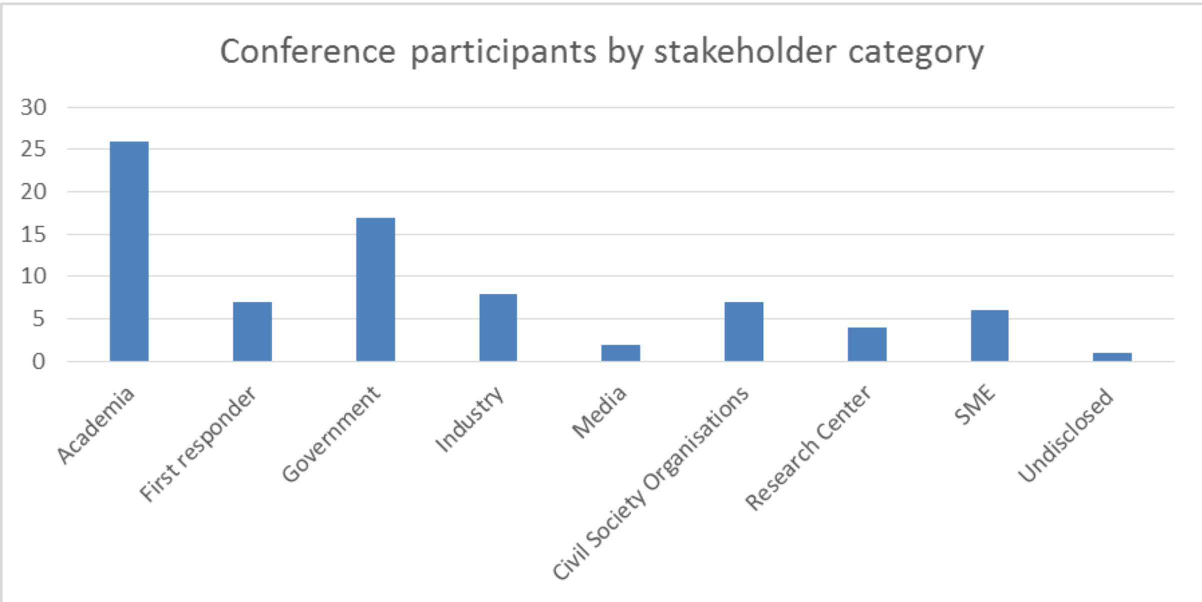

Figure 2-2: Conference participants by stakeholder category

Intensive stakeholder interaction was hence a central characteristic of **TACTIC**. For a more detailed account on information and knowledge flow and production throughout the **TACTIC** project, please see Deliverable 8.2.

2.2 Evaluation procedure

The platform was evaluated at two stages. First, it was presented as a comprehensive draft version during the second rounds of workshops in the case studies. Therefore, before the second round of workshops qualitative Indicators were developed for evaluating the online platform during the case study workshops. It comprises the following questions that were asked by project members to the participants of the workshops testing the online platform during the workshops:

I) Expectations:

- What do you expect from the tool?
- Do you have any experiences with similar tools?
- How important is receiving feedback on your risk communication/ suggestions how you can improve your risk communication for you?

II) Using the self-assessment:

During the test:

- Is the question understandable, reasonable, and/or relevant?
- Are the answers/respond categories understandable, reasonable, and/or relevant?
- Is something missing?

After a topic/a thematic block of the self-assessment:

- Does the thematic block include all relevant issues?
- Is the structure comprehensible?
- Which questions are the most relevant for you?
- Which questions are less important?

III) Overall impression:

Please evaluate the:

- Comprehensibleness
- Applicability
- Expenditure of time
- Design
- Functionality
- Suggestions for reflection
- Importance of single topics/themes
- Rigor
- Suggestion for improvement

Feedback was collected during all case study workshops and was used to improve the platform. In addition, we presented the general ideas and feature of the online-platform to participants of the final conference of the **TACTIC** project (jointly organised with the **POP-ALERT** project) and asked a general question about how useful participants considered the online platform and whether they would be willing to test the platform

In the next section we provide an overview about stakeholders' expectations and how they were met as well as the overall impression. Thereafter we turn to more technical questions before summarising the general impression of the usefulness of the **TACTIC** platform.

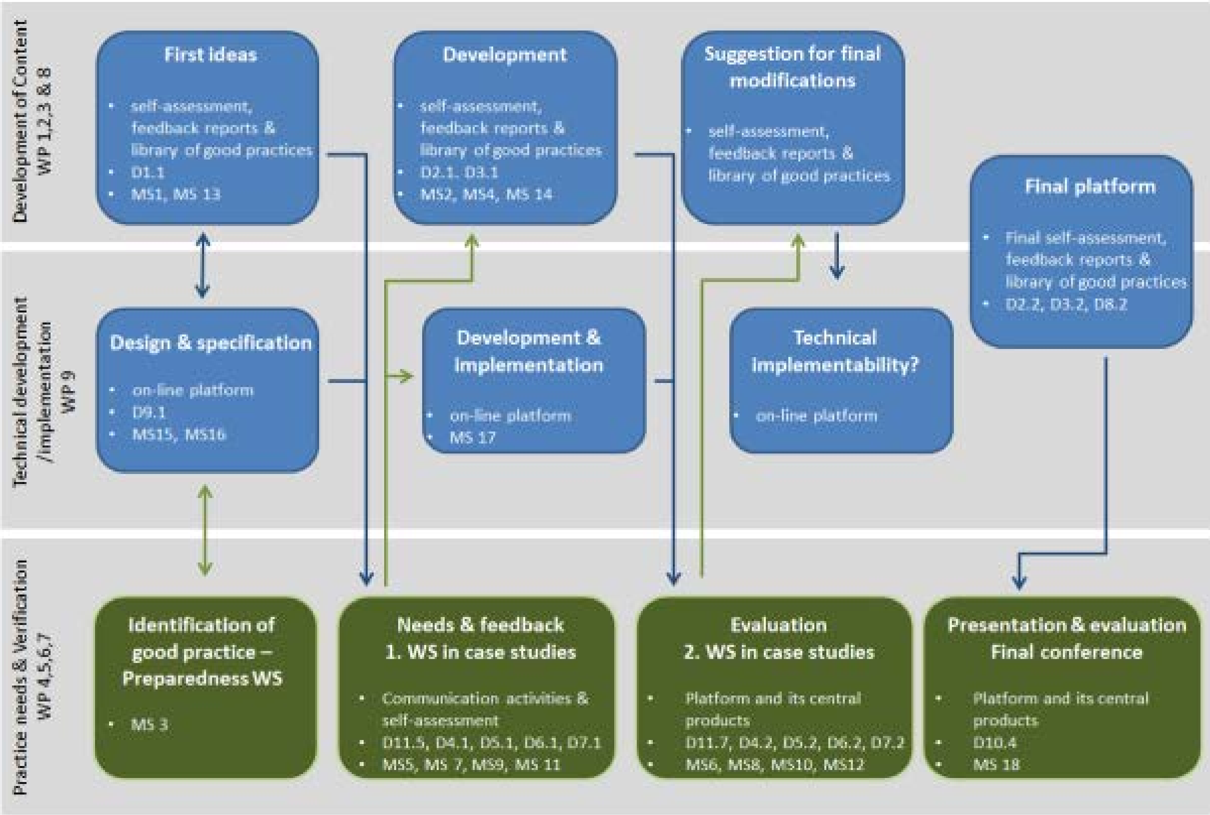

Figure 2-3: Knowledge and information flow as well as stakeholder collaboration in TACTIC

2.3 The needs and expectations from participants of the workshops

Stakeholders' needs and expectations with regard to development of the self-assessment as well as the provision of communication and education practices were taken into account in two different ways. During the first round of workshops conducted in the four case studies stakeholder were asked about their needs and requirements with regard to risk communication. These needs and requirements were collected and formed the basis for the overall structure of the TACTIC online-platform (i.e. development of a self-assessment, feedback reports and the library of good practices). During the second round of workshops organised in the case studies stakeholder were asked what they expect from the online-platform and its products. These expectations are presented below. Thereafter the central products of the online platform were presented and discussed with stakeholders (i.e. the two self-assessment, the feedback reports as well as examples from the library of good practices) in order to unravel to what extent the products met the expectations of stakeholders and to identify aspects that require further improvements in order to make them usable in stakeholders everyday working environment.

This section presents a summarising overview on stakeholders' expectations and whether these expectations were met by the products developed in TACTIC. The results are based on more detailed information provided in the Deliverable 4.2, 5.2, 6.2 and 7.2 as well as 11.7 on the central evaluation processes that were conducted during the second round of workshops in the case studies. Table ## outlines the expectations as expressed by stakeholder during the workshop before the online platform was presented and a qualitative interpretation whether the expectations were fulfilled by the platform based on the feedback we obtained during the workshops after we presented the different self-assessments, an outline of the feedback report and some examples of the library of good practices. In addition, we also reason on why the platform could not meet all expectations expressed by stakeholders.

Identifying communication gaps between organisations and the public. Does an organisation reach its audience? It the "message" coming across? Where are weaknesses and shortcomings in current risk communication practices?
Offering something more than the emergency manual that some organisations already use by providing specific feedback on how to improve the risk communication
To be directed to helpful resources (e.g., where to go to learn about first aid) and good practices that other organisations use already
Being provided with recommendation on what to do to increase preparedness
To learn about communicating with social media as many participants were looking for guidance on how to best use it.
Some participants were also interested in learning about how they best deal with the language in cross-border cooperation
Identifying risks and vulnerability
Identifying organisational and communities' responsibilities

Table 2-2: Expectations as expressed by stakeholder with regard to the organisational self-assessment and the feedback report

Participants expected to learn more about risk communication. In fact, they stated that the self-assessment was a good starting point. Especially, participants thought that it would be a good opportunity for the organizations to develop their risk communication strategy based on the results of the OSA. Participants found it very important to receive feedback on their institutions' risk communication and also suggestions on how they can improve their institutional risk communication for the public. In addition, they considered the tool as very cost-effective since it was online available and required, at least in its initial usage, not external support or consultation.

In most workshops the overall intention, set-up and content of the self-assessment and the feedback reports were perceived as very helpful and most expectations were fulfilled by the self-assessment. There was general agreement that the thematic blocks the organisational self-assessment are comprehensive as well as very detailed in some regards. In some groups, particularly the potential for inner-organisational exchange and learning was highlighted. Some groups concluded that the self-assessment has potential to be conduct by different persons or units within an organisation and that the results could be discussed among members of an organisation and hence initiate debates and discussions among the participating persons.

It also became apparent during the workshop that the usefulness of the organisational self-assessment was rated quite differently depending on the degree of experience with regard to risk communication. It was pointed out that some people or organisations already have a lot of experience in dealing with flood risks or other emergency situations. For them it was considered as being more useful to have a checklist of what they can do as result (short list, maximum one page, only focus on methods and things that need to be done in the case of an emergency, others do not have that much experience and are possibly more interested in obtaining more background information). Other organisations or members of organisations might not have disaster risk experience (e.g. recently elected mayors). For them, a longer assessment and feedback report would be valuable.

By some participants of workshops, the general feedback on the organisational self-assessment was rather ambivalent: on the one hand participants had the impression that questions were too general and not helpful in their context; they expected a decision-support-tool that would help them to communicate better in a case of emergency (e.g. when a flash flood is occurring), on the other hand they also underlined that the self-assessment might be more helpful for an organisation that is less experienced and less advanced with regard to risk communication as the one that tested the self-assessment.

Some expectations go clearly beyond the scope of **TACTIC**. It is neither intended to be a decision-support tool nor will it allow evaluating risks and vulnerability, at least not directly. However, the GPSA allows assessing the preparedness of the general public in a specific community if it the assessment is conducted thoroughly and receives high return rates.

Assessing the preparedness of the general public with regard different hazards
What does the general public expect from authorities with regard to risk communication
Give recommendation on what to do to increase preparedness by identify the actions and things that they can do (e.g., creating a grab bag).
To identify the information that the general public can expect from authorities.
Identify and understand cultural and socio-demographic differences in communication habits and needs as well as preparedness
To identify the threats and risks that would affect them as a community

Table 2-3: Expectations as expressed by stakeholder with regard to the preparedness check of the general public and the feedback report

Also the **general feedback to the general public's self-assessment**, including the feedback report, was quite positive. Participants mentioned that especially questions about concrete measures that people can take before and after flood events and things they are asked to do during the flood are always relevant and frequently asked by members of the general public in their community. Having answers to these questions is not only seen as useful for the general public but also for the organisations as it supports their work. In the case-study on flooding many stakeholders were interested in testing the self-assessment for the general public in their communities because they though a) their feedback is a very valuable source of information for them and b) because it provides answers to the questions that the general public asks, (e.g. links to where to find information about certain measures).

Generally, all topics and themes that are included in the GPSA were rated as important. The thematic blocks include all relevant issues. The overall impression of the group is that the tool is functional and allows reflection on individual flood risk preparedness.

However, it was mentioned again that the applicability is limited to persons with computer skills. In terms of user friendliness it was mentioned that the design of the dialogue window should be more intuitive. Sometimes it would be important to define the terms used in questions below the questions. It would be interesting for them to go through the self-assessment again after having worked through the feedback report and after having received the link to the best practices (to test the added value and learning factor). It was considered important to promote this tool on a wider scale.

2.4 Feedback on technical details and usability

TACTIC has received very detailed in informative feedback from stakeholder who participated in the workshops. In this section we provide a summary. For more detail, please go to Deliverable 11.7. Table 3 to 6 provide a detailed overview to every single feedback we received and how we responded to it and tried to take it into account for improving the outputs of **TACTIC**.

Feedback to the products as presented during the second round of workshops	How it was taken into account by TACTIC
Overall length of the assessment and the feedback reports was consider as problematic.	The overall length of the assessment was considerably shorten in the final version compared to the version presented at the second round of workshops. The assessment now focuses on goals, methods, good aspects and the audience. It also includes some questions regarding the context of the organisation. Additionally, **TACTIC** developed a short version of the feedback report which is linked to the single section of the assessment. It provides positive feedback based on the answers provided. Additionally, we decided to develop a longer report that contains all the relevant information the assessment is based on; it will be static and generated independent of the results of the assessment. This longer report will be organised like a handbook. It is based on Deliverable 8.2.
Purpose of tool, structure of the assessment as well as what kind of feedback to expect needs to become clearer in the intro section.	Great efforts were undertaken to frame expectations' of users better when they want to use the self-assessment. Therefore it is now explained how the self-assessment is structured, how it works, what kind of feedback they can expect and what they can learn from the assessment and what not. This includes a intro before the assessment as well as a intro to the feedback report as and the library of good practices.
Simplify questions and language.	There was an overall impression that many questions were too technical, too long, not to the point etc. Single questions and answers were therefore redrafted and shorted. Therefore also the detailed suggestions for improvements were considered. In addition, the final non-English versions was produced by a professional translator
Different communications goals.	It was hard for respondents to understand that they are answering questions related to different communication goals. Therefore an introduction to the single goals is now provided and the goals are also reflected in single questions.
Not only text, but also icons for a better guidance should be included.	Moodle, the open source software the platform is based on, allows usage of icons in specific places. Hence, where it was possible, icons were included in the assessment and feedback reports.
Timeline/bar showing the progress that has been made.	The Moodle software does not provide a progress bar. We have investigated how to avoid giving the impression of a slow progress that can result in user frustration.
Anonymous login/registration	Workshop participants were concerned that a formal login would very likely decrease the general public's motivation to conduct the self-assessment. However, some form of registration is necessary. Anonymous login is allowed only for viewing "good" practices. As responses are grouped based on the geographical location of the participant/user anonymous login will negatively affect this key functionality. However, we could allow anonymous login for the general public, but their answers will not be linked to any organisation and geographic region.

	Additionally, all user responses are anonymized, thus giving the opportunity to users to be honest
Making the platform available as a mobile app.	This goes beyond the scope of **TACTIC**, but is possible using the official mobile app for Moodle from: https://download.moodle.org/mobile/ However, in order to provide a common feeling, between the mobile and the web-application, a custom CSS has to be developed for the mobile version. Additionally we have to enable web services for mobile devices, in the TOSAP administrator settings.
It should be possible to link results of the general public self-assessment with organisation responsible for risk communication through the ZIP code.	Community member responses are grouped according to their geographical location. Part of the registration process, both for community members and organizations, is to provide details regarding the country and city/town of origin. However, linking results through the ZIP code is technically not feasible, due to the extensive changes required at the source code level. However, if an organisation decides to do the preparedness check in a specific community a clone can be produced and an access code can be provided to the member of the community, so that it is possible to link results of both organisations and community members.
The term "audit" was suggested to be off-putting and the language considered to technical.	Platform now uses the term self-assessment.
Offline access.	Workshop participants stated that limitations in the access to the internet in some segments of the public (e.g., elderly and citizens with low levels of education may have limited access) could be a hindering factor for the use of the platform. Hence, all assessments were made available as a pdf-printer friendly versions that can be distributed in a community, ensuring that community members without internet access have access to the tool and its responses.
Faster progress.	Group more self-assessment questions per page.
QR Codes for an easier access.	Workshop participants suggested simplifying the access to the self-assessment using e.g. QR codes for publications in official gazettes. Use of an external QR code generator, such as http://www.qr-code-generator.com/ and include the QR codes in the project main-page or to any other interested party, for a quick and direct access to TOSAP.
Possibility to comment the library of good practises.	Workshop participants discussed how the practices should be evaluated. They have suggested that providing feedback and comments about the practices using a rating system and comments that are pre-moderated (e.g., similar to Amazon) would work for them. Added Amazon like star rating and comment sections.
Grouping of radio button or checkbox questions to allow for better visualisation.	Update Moodle core modules to support this extra functionality.
Support feedback for checkbox type questions.	Update Moodle core functionality to offer feedback also for checkbox type questions.

Clarify how user registration information is utilised and securely stored.	A privacy statement will be included in the TOSAP main page.
Option for a group user account, to be used by groups of people.	Workshop participants, suggested this option as it will allow a community organizer or volunteer to provide instructions. As a result we support creation of group user accounts on request.
Too many filter options in the library of "good" practices makes it unattractive and difficult to use.	Create two separate search/filter options: simple and advanced.
User manual regarding platform operation.	An online user manual will be available at the TOSAP home page. We will also investigate creating a video file.
TOSAP includes only written material (i.e., text) and this might be boring for the user.	Support any type of video material. For example Linking to a YouTube video is possible by typing in a word, selecting the word and hyperlinking to the YouTube video.
Concerns about platform privacy.	Workshop participants stated that they fear that their institutional and/or individual identity could be revealed. However, as already stated platform is not logging any user actions, while at the same time is anonymizing all user responses.
Support of anchors for Likert-type response options.	To support anchors for Likert-type response options, the following format should be used: On each line of "possible answers" enter the degree number, immediately followed by two colons (::), immediately followed by the name we want to give to that degree.

Table 2-4: Participant Feedback on Technical Details and Usability and Respective Platform Changes

2.5 Overall evaluation of the outcomes

The final evaluation of the outcomes of the **TACTIC** project was done during the final conference (for more details see Deliverable 10.4). After the overall idea and approach of the **TACTIC** project as well as central outputs, such as the assessment, feedback reports and the library of good practices was presented to the audience, attendants of the conference were asked to anonymously evaluate "How useful they consider the **TACTIC** self-assessment for your work". Figure 2-4 shows that 80 % of respondents (n=30) rate the self-assessment as "useful" or "very useful" indicating that the **TACTIC** platform is organised in a way that meets and current requirements of many different stakeholders in Europe.

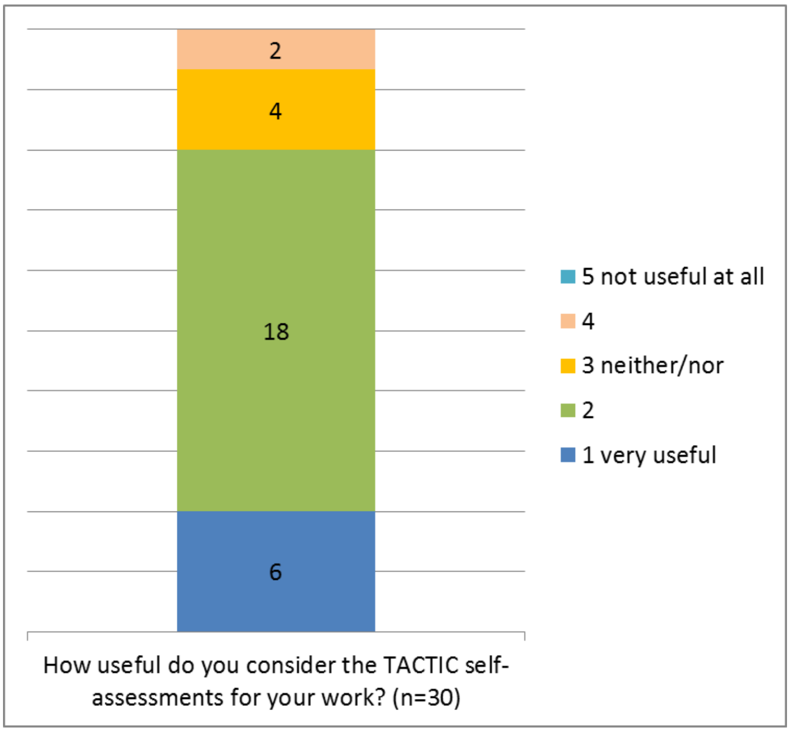

Figure 2-4: Overall evaluation of the usefulness of the self-assessments

This result is also underlined by the rather positive feedback we obtained in the workshop as well as the willingness to test the final version of both the organisational self-assessment as well as the preparedness check for the general public. Also among the participants of the final conference, by far the majority of participants were willing to test the final version of the self-assessments.

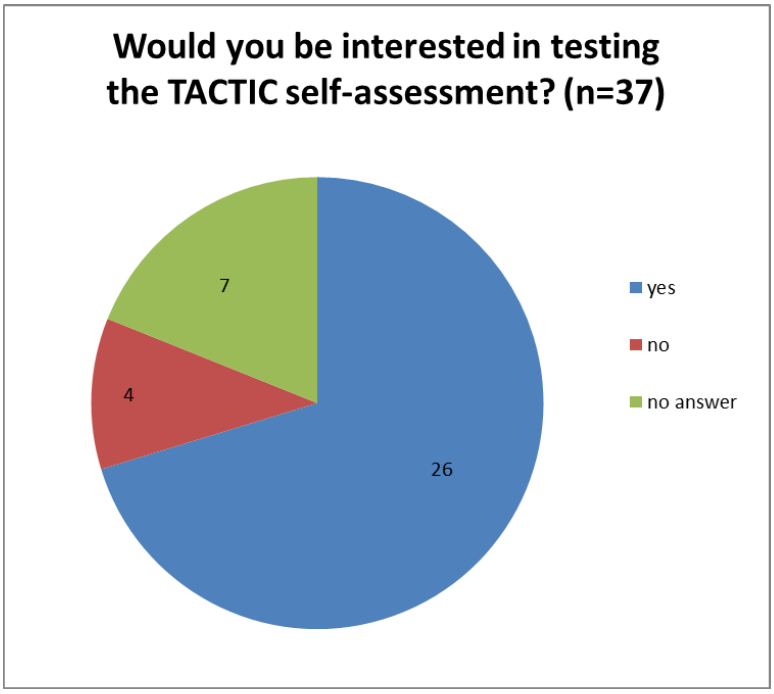

Figure 2-5: Willingness to test the final version of the self-assessments

3 Conclusions

This deliverable has gathered all workshop participants' feedback and expectations including the suggested/implemented platform changes. Any open points will constitute a guide upon which further development of the TOSAP platform will be based.

4 References

[1] **TACTIC Consortium**, "Tools, methods And training for CommuniTIes and Society to better prepare for a Crisis", May 2014

[2] **D4.1** Short report on workshop 1, case study terrorism in Europe (March 2015), https://www.tacticproject.eu/sites/default/files/TACTIC_D4.1_TRI_31.03.15_FINAL.pdf

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[6] **D4.2** Short report on Workshop 2, Case study Terrorism in Europe (December 2015), https://www.tacticproject.eu/sites/default/files/TACTIC_D4.2_FINAL.pdf

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[9] **D7.2** Short Report on Workshop 2: Case Study Earthquakes in Turkey (December 2015), https://www.tacticproject.eu/sites/default/files/D7.2%20final.pdf