

COOPERA

Integrating Dual Higher Education In Moldova and Ukraine

PROJECT'S HANDBOOK

Deliverable 1.1

DUAL
HIGHER
EDUCATION



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



COOPERA
DUAL HIGHER EDUCATION IN MOLDOVA AND UKRAINE



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INTEGRATING DUAL HIGHER EDUCATION IN MOLDOVA AND UKRAINE

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DUAL HIGHER EDUCATION IN MOLDOVA AND UKRAINE

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TABLE OF CONTENT

DOCUMENT CONTROL SHEET	4
VERSIONING AND CONTRIBUTION HISTORY	4
TABLE OF CONTENT	5
1. CONSORTIUM MEMBERS	7
2. INTRODUCTION	8
3. PROJECT DETAILS.....	9
3.1 Strategic objective	9
3.2 Specific objectives.....	9
3.3 Total cost of the project.....	9
3.4 Outputs.....	10
3.5 Coordinator contact details.....	10
4. PROJECT`S MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE.....	11
5. PROJECT`S BODIES.....	13
6. MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE	14
7. PROJECT`S WORK PACKAGES` STRUCTURE	15
8. CONTRACTUAL AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT.....	18
8.1. Payment arrangements.....	18
8.2. Remuneration modalities for staff cost	19
8.3. Reimbursement modalities for travel and costs of stay.....	21
8.4. Project documents.....	22
9. TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL REPORTING	22
9.1. Basic principles of reporting	22
9.2. Standards of all reports	23
9.3. Reporting schedule.....	23
9.4. Partner reports	24
9.4.1. Technical report	25
9.4.2. Financial report.....	26
9.4.3. Exchange Rate	26



9.5. Request for payment26

10. PROJECT’S RISK MANAGEMENT27

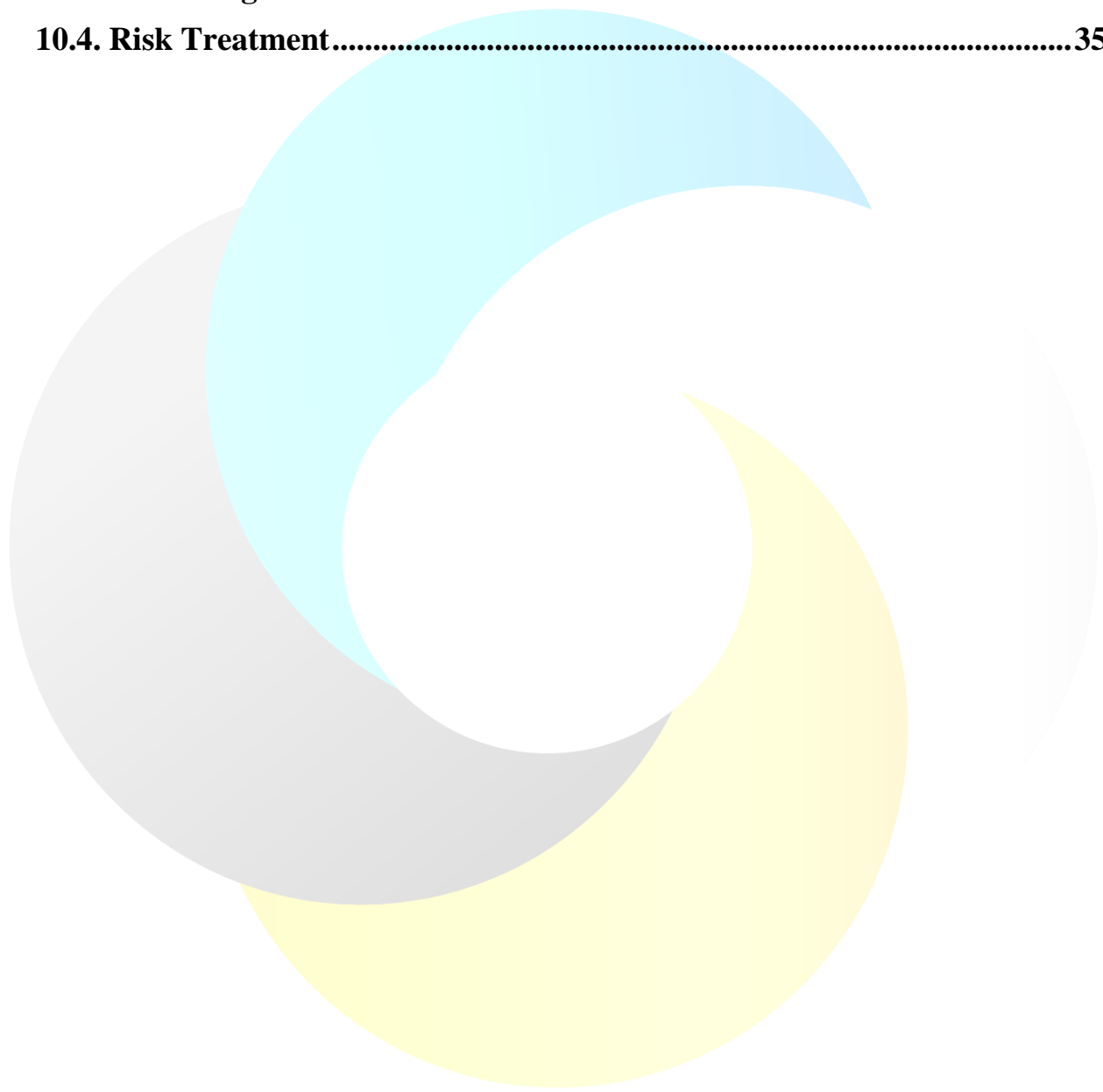
10.1. Context, identification and objectives28

10.2. Risk management responsibilities29

10.2. Risk Assessment30

10.3. Risk Mitigation31

10.4. Risk Treatment.....35





1. CONSORTIUM MEMBERS


Grant Coordinating Institution

 <small>Academia de Studii Economice a Moldovei</small>	Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova (ASEM)
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EU partners

 <small>Duale Hochschule Baden-Württemberg</small>	Duale Hochschule Baden-Württemberg (DHBW)
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 <small>Universitat de Lleida</small>	University of Lleida (UdL)
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 <small>VARNA UNIVERSITY OF MANAGEMENT</small>	Varna University of Management (VUM)
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 <small>Dąbrowa Górnicza, Cieszyn, Olkusz, Żywiec, Kraków</small>	Akademia WSB (AWSB)
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 <small>European Policy Development and Research Institute</small>	European Policy Development and Research Institute (EPDRI)
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MD partners


	Technical University of Moldova (UTM)
--	---

	Free International University of Moldova (ULIM)
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 <small>Ministerul Educatiei al Republicii Moldova</small>	The Ministry of Education, Culture and Research of the Republic of Moldova (MECRRM)
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UA partners

	Uzhhorod National University (UzhNU)
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	KROK University (KROK)
---	--

 <small>V.N. KARAZIN KHARKIV NATIONAL UNIVERSITY</small>	V.N. Karazin Kharkiv National University (KKNU)
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	Odessa National University of Economics (ONEU)
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 <small>MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE OF UKRAINE</small>	Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine (MESU)
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2. INTRODUCTION

The COOPERA project's Handbook has been produced to facilitate the navigation through the events conducted during the project and to offer a guide on what documents are to be submitted, how to be completed, the deadlines and in general to offer assistance with the management of the project.

The handbook must be read in conjunction with the official approved documents that have been made available to all partners:

- EACEA – COOPERA project Grant Agreement
- COOPERA project's Partnership Agreements
- EACEA - Guidelines for the Use of Grants
- EACEA - Frequently Asked Questions

We strongly encourage all partners to read carefully all of the above documents and to familiarise themselves with the aims, objectives and activities of the project.



3. PROJECT DETAILS

3.1 Strategic objective

COOPERA is following the overarching aim to integrate DHE in the Partner countries in general, and to improve individual employability and development, increase suitability and continuity between the demands of the professional world and the initial training of university students, and achieve of greater economic efficiency and social integration, in particular.

3.2 Specific objectives

OB1: To identify needs and specific requirements of companies in different industrial sectors and businesses for DHE and to find companies willing to participate in pilot implementations of DHE during the project;

OB2: To develop a flexible and generic DHEM to support different needs and interests of employers, HEIs and students in different industrial and business sectors and to provide recommendations to HEIs for implementation of DHE;

OB3: To test the specific DHE models generated from the developed generic DHEM, by realizing their pilot implementations during the project and to analyse achieved results;

OB4: To propose changes to legislation/regulations to adapt DHE in the Partner countries.

3.3 Total cost of the project

EC Grant: 967.200,00 EUR



3.4 Outputs

1. Report on companies needs for DHE;
2. Flexible and generic Dual Higher Education Models for Moldova and Ukraine developed;
3. White Paper on DHE elaborated;
4. Recommendations for amendments to the Law on Higher Education secured;
5. Guidelines on DHE implementation elaborated;
6. Dual Study Programs identified;
7. Training materials for specific Dual Study Programs developed;
8. Analysis of the results of pilot testing of each of specific DHEM realised, report published;

3.5 Coordinator contact details

Any important project related communication to the project coordinator should be done in writing and addressed to the appointed persons of the coordinator in the table below:

<i>Name and surname</i>	Dr. Olesea SIRBU
<i>Institution</i>	Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova
<i>Address</i>	61 G.Banulescu Bodoni str., Chisinau, Moldova
<i>E-mail</i>	oleseasarbu@gmail.com



4. PROJECT'S MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

The management structure of the COOPERA project is based on vast managerial experience of all partners gained through the implementation of various projects funded by the EU and adjusted to fit the needs and recommendations of the Erasmus+ programme. The role of all management bodies is to provide efficient and successful realization of planned activities.

The project management structure is established to ensure effectiveness, decisiveness, flexibility and quality of work. It involves the Contractor, the Coordinator, Co-coordinator, Steering Committee, a Project Coordination Board and Quality Assurance, as shown in point 5, below.

The Contractor – The contractor (Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova in this case) is legally and financially responsible for administering the project grant, drawing the attention of all partners to contractual rules and to releasing money only for the purposes allowed by contract.

Grant Coordinator - As the coordinator also represents the contractor, his/her responsibility is to manage, coordinate and monitor the project activities and with regard to timetable, assess achievement of the planned endpoints and coordinate appropriate records of activities.

Academic Coordinator – the grant coordinator will be supported by the Academic Coordinator (AC), in order to secure the high quality of the specific thematic issues of the project.

Project Consortium Board – the Committee contains the Executive Board which including all leaders of the work packages (6 members) and Consortium Board which is formally appointed at the kick-off meeting (along with persons replacing them in case of their absence) and usually they are contact persons from each partner institution. The Project Consortium Board will meet four times and jointly review and decide on any necessary contingency measures in reorganization tasks and resources.

Project Coordination Team – Project Coordination Board consists of the members of the Contractor and it provides financial and technical assistance for day-to-day management to the Project Coordinator.

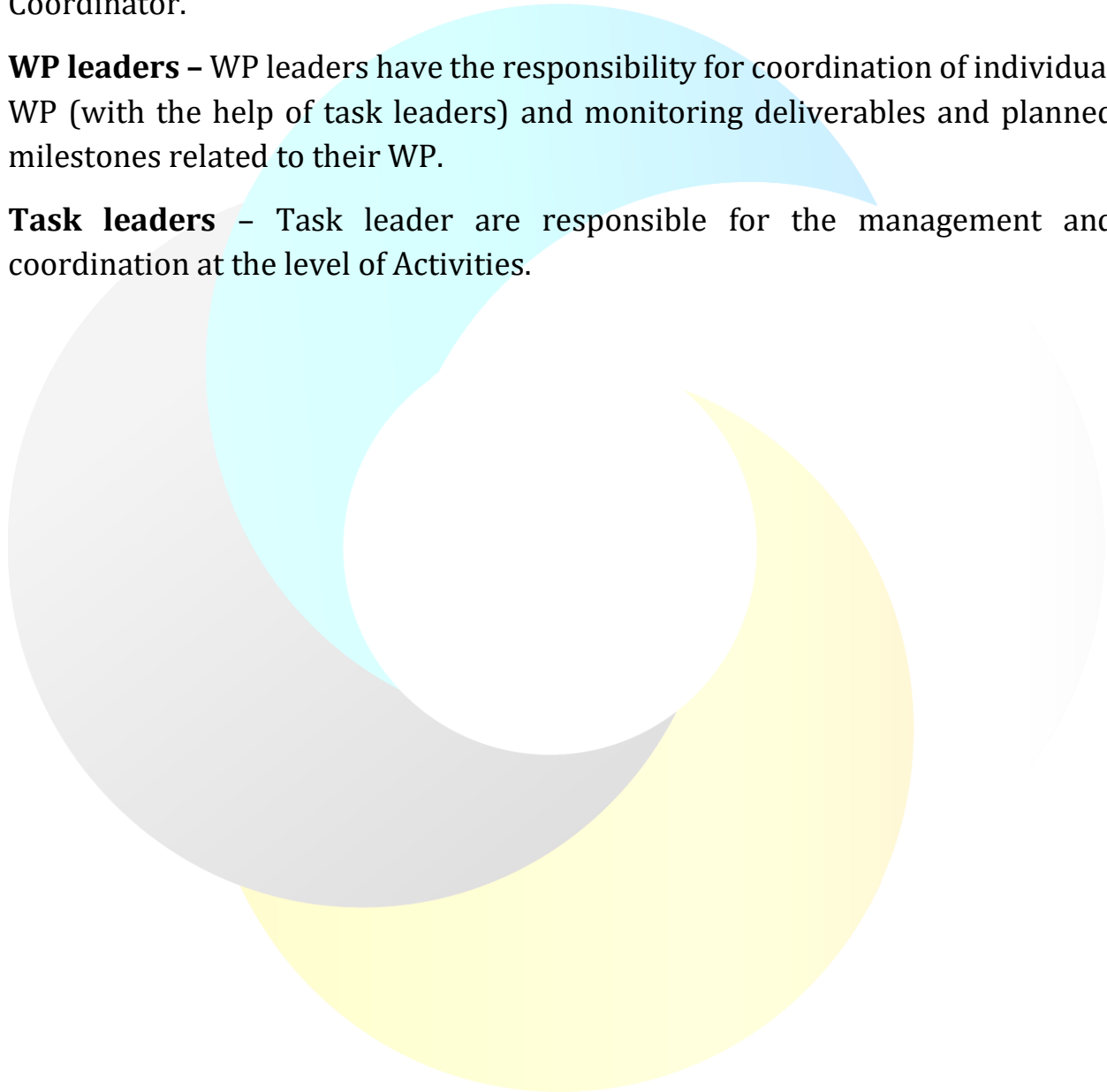


Quality Assurance Tam – The team acts as a support to the project coordinator in the process of overall internal monitoring. In order to contribute to the efficient project management, the team will develop the Quality control and monitoring strategy.

Site Managers – Site Managers (contact persons) are in charge of local project management supported with their local teams, in consultation with the Coordinator.

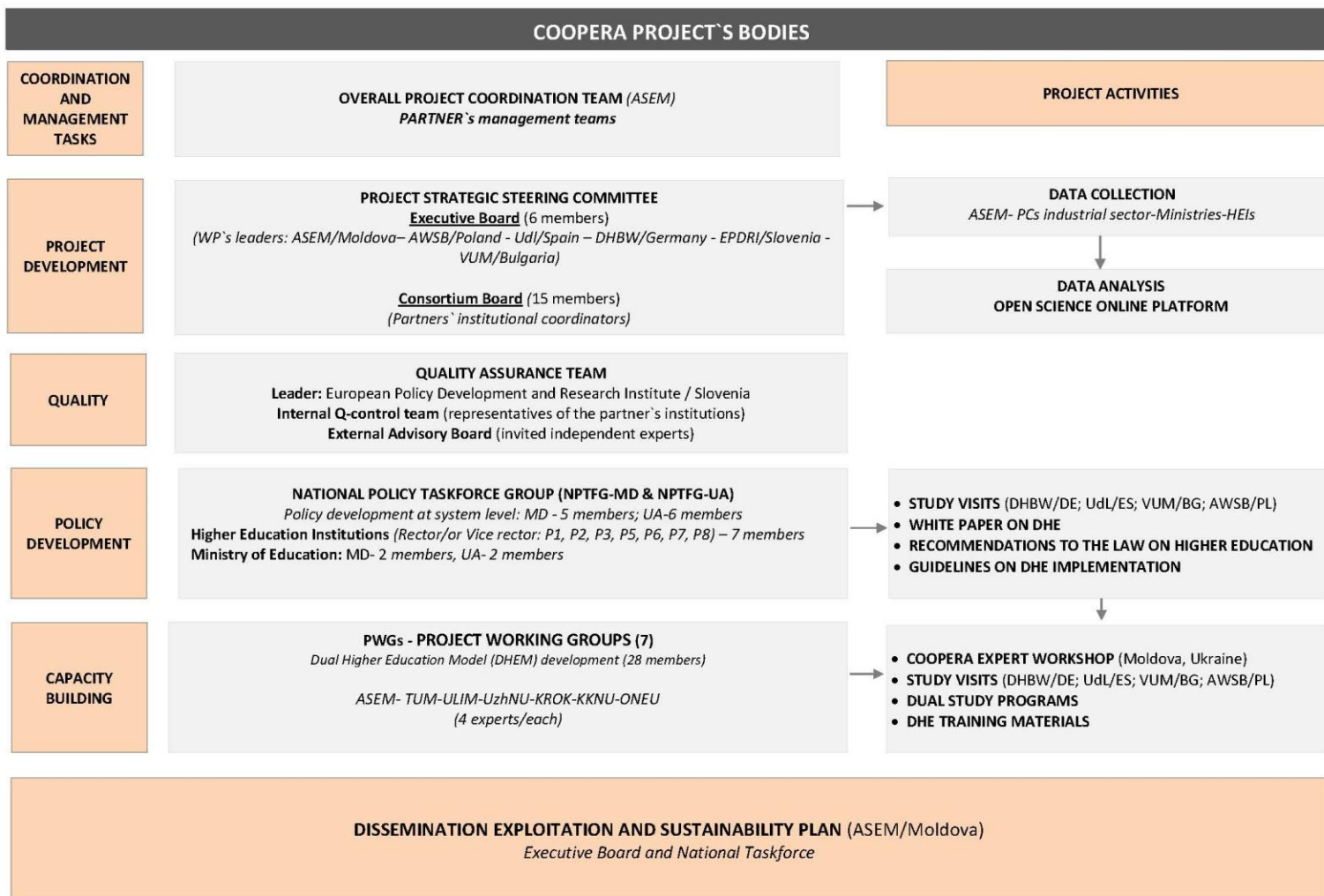
WP leaders – WP leaders have the responsibility for coordination of individual WP (with the help of task leaders) and monitoring deliverables and planned milestones related to their WP.

Task leaders – Task leader are responsible for the management and coordination at the level of Activities.



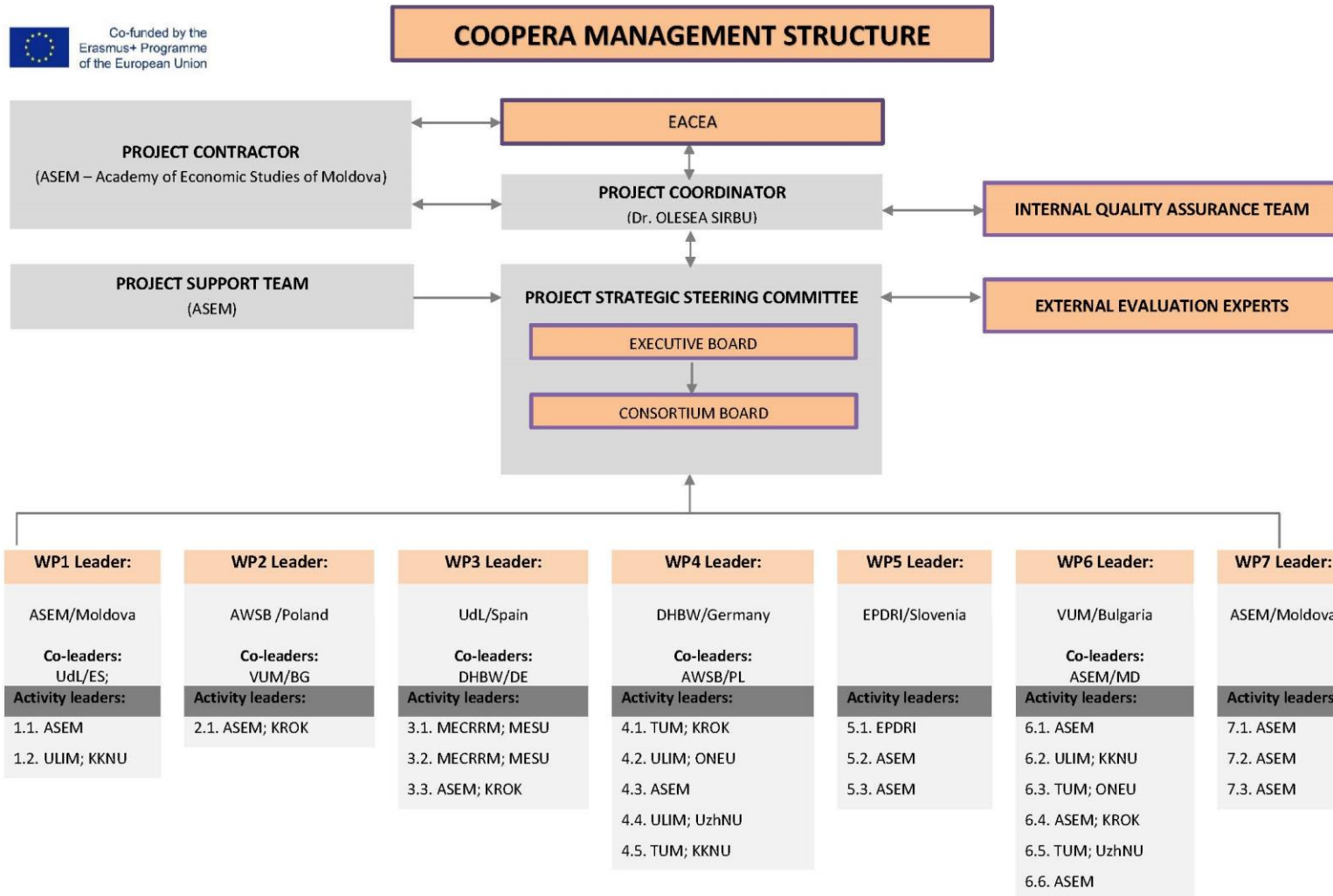


5. PROJECT'S BODIES





6. MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE





7. PROJECT'S WORK PACKAGES' STRUCTURE

WPs Nr.	TITLE	DELIVERABLES	ACTIVITIES	Activity Leader
WP1 (PREP)	Preparation <u>Leader: ASEM/Moldova</u> <u>Co-leader: UdL/Spain</u>	1.1. Preparation of overall project's implementation secured 1.2. Companies needs for DHE identified	1.1.1. Participation at the Grand Holder coordinators meeting 1.1.2. Elaboration of the Project's Handbook 1.1.3. Elaboration and signature of Partnership Agreements 1.2. Completion of surveys of companies needs for DHE	1.1. ASEM 1.2. CEENQA
WP2 (DEV1)	Flexible and generic dual higher education model (DHEM) <u>Leader: AWSB/Poland</u> <u>Co-leader: VUM/Bulgaria</u>	2.1. Flexible and generic Dual Higher Education Model (DHEM) developed	2.1.1. Formation of Project Working Groups 2.1.2. Conducting study visits to EU partners 2.1.3. Organisation of COOPERA Expert Workshop	2.1. ASEM; KROK'
WP3 (DEV2)	Creation of legal and other conditions for implementation of DHE <u>Leader: UdL/Spain.</u> <u>Co-leader: DHBW/Germany</u>	3.1. White Paper on DHE elaborated 3.2. Recommendations for amendments to the Law on Higher Education secured 3.3. Guidelines on DHE implementation elaborated	3.1.1. Formation of the National Policy Task Force Group (NPTFG) 3.1.2. Elaboration of White Paper on DHE 3.2. Creating amendments to the Law on Dual Education and Law on Higher Education 3.3. Elaboration of guidelines on DHE implementation	3.1. MECRRM; MESU 3.2. MECRRM; MESU 3.3. ASEM; KROK
WP4 (DEV3)	Pilot testing of the flexible and generic DHEM	4.1. Dual Study Programs elaborated 4.2. Materials for specific DHEMs elaborated 4.3. Equipment procured	4.1.1. Identification and conceptual definition of Dual Study Programs 4.1.2. Elaboration and signature of agreements	4.1. UTM; KROK 4.2. ULIM; ONEU 4.3. ASEM 4.4. ULIM; UzhNU



	<p>Leader: <u>DHBW/Germany</u></p> <p>Co-leader: <u>AWSB/Poland</u></p>	<p>4.4. Piloting of Dual Study Programs realised</p> <p>4.5. Stakeholders feedback secured</p>	<p>4.2. Development of training materials</p> <p>4.3. Purchase of equipment</p> <p>4.4. Piloting of Dual Study Programs</p> <p>4.5. Securing stakeholders feedback on Dual Study Programs</p>	<p>4.5. UTM; KKNU</p>
<p>WP5 (QPN)</p>	<p>Quality assurance and monitoring</p> <p>Leader: EPDRI/Slovenia</p>	<p>5.1. Internal evaluation reports prepared</p> <p>5.2. External evaluation reports prepared</p> <p>5.3. Fine-tuning of procedures and regulations realised</p> <p>5.4. Audit report</p>	<p>5.1.1 Elaboration of monitoring & evaluation manual</p> <p>5.1.2 Conduction of monitoring visits</p> <p>5.1.3 Elaboration of Internal evaluation reports</p> <p>5.2.1. Elaboration of external reports</p> <p>5.2.2. Audit report</p> <p>5.3. Organisation, realisation fine-tuning of regulation and procedures</p>	<p>5.1. EPDRI</p> <p>5.2. ASEM</p> <p>5.3. ASEM</p>
<p>WP6 (DISS)</p>	<p>Dissemination, exploitation & sustainability</p> <p>Leader: VUM/Bulgaria.</p> <p>Co-leader: <u>ASEM/ Moldova</u></p>	<p>6.1. International campaign released</p> <p>6.2. National campaign realised</p> <p>6.3. University campaign realised</p> <p>6.4. Dissemination and Sustainability reports secured</p> <p>6.5. Exploitation reports secured</p> <p>6.6. Final Conference organized</p>	<p>6.1.1 Defining dissemination, exploitation and sustainability plan</p> <p>6.1.2 Design of project's identity materials and web page</p> <p>6.2. National mass-media dissemination</p> <p>6.3.1 University's level dissemination events</p> <p>6.3.2 Institutional mass-media dissemination</p> <p>6.4 Preparation of dissemination and sustainability reports</p> <p>6.5 Preparation of exploitation reports</p> <p>6.6 Organisation of Final Conference</p>	<p>6.1. ASEM</p> <p>6.2. ULIM; KKNU</p> <p>6.3. UTM; ONEU</p> <p>6.4. ASEM; KROK</p> <p>6.5. UTM; UzhNU</p> <p>6.6. ASEM</p>
<p>WP7 (MNGT)</p>	<p>Project Management</p> <p>Leader: ASEM/Moldova</p>	<p>7.1. Efficient overall management secured</p> <p>7.2. Steering Committee meetings organised</p> <p>7.3. Interim and Final report submitted</p>	<p>7.1. Conducting day-by-day project management</p> <p>7.2. Consortium meetings</p>	<p>7.1. ASEM</p> <p>7.2. ASEM</p> <p>7.3. ASEM</p>



			7.3.1. Elaboration of trimestral reports (R1-R6) 7.3.2. Elaboration of Interim report 7.3.3. Elaboration of Final report	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova/MOLDOVA - ASEM 2. Technical University of Moldova / MOLDOVA - UTM 3. Free International University of Moldova / MOLDOVA - ULIM 4. Ministry of Education, Culture and Research of the Republic of Moldova/ MOLDOVA - MECRRM 5. Uzhhorod National University/UKRAINE - UzhNU 6. KROK University/UKRAINE - KROK 7. V.N. Karazin Kharkiv National University/UKRAINE - KKNU 8. Odessa National University of Economics/UKRAINE - ONEU 9. Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine/UKRAINE - MESU 			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. Duale Hochschule Baden-Wurttemberg/GERMANY - DHBW 11. University of Lleida/ SPAIN - UdL 12. Varna University of Management /BULGARIA - VUM 13. Akademia WSB/POLAND - AWSB 14. European Policy Development and Research Institute/ SLOVENIA - EPDRI 	



8. CONTRACTUAL AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

8.1. Payment arrangements

Beneficiaries are obliged to use the Erasmus+ grant contribution exclusively for the purposes defined by the project, and in accordance with the terms and provisions of the Grant and Partner Agreement and its annexes.

The Erasmus+ grant amounts received in advance and not used by the beneficiaries must be reimbursed to the coordinator at the latest 30 days after the end of the project's contractual period.

If there is a difference between the amount of the Erasmus+ grant contribution actually used by the partnership and the amount of expenditure declared eligible by the Executive Agency at the end of the project, the following procedure will apply:

- **The beneficiary responsible for the expenditure declared ineligible will reimburse the corresponding amount to the coordinator.**

The costs of financial transfers shall be borne as following:

- **The costs of dispatch charged by the bank of the coordinator and costs of repeated transfers caused by one of the parties will be charged to the beneficiary.**

The coordinator will transfer the part of the Erasmus+ grant contribution corresponding to each individual beneficiary in the Partner Countries (Moldova and Ukraine) using the new account for the project in EUR. The transfer of money will be executed in EUR.

The coordinator will transfer the part of the Erasmus+ grant contribution corresponding to each individual beneficiary in the Programme Country (Germany, Spain, Bulgaria, Poland, Slovenia) using new account for the project in EUR.



The transfer of the Erasmus+ grant contribution to individual beneficiaries will be implemented in accordance with the following timetable and procedure:

Report No.	Eligible cost by	Report due date	Payment of EACEA to coordinator (as a percentage of "Total EU Budget per Party" indicated in Anex III)	Payment to beneficiaries No.	Payment due date	Payment amount (as a percentage of "Total EU Budget per Party" indicated in Anex III)
			50% January 2021	1st payment	July 2021 (after signature of PA)	25%
1 st intermediate report	14.11. 2021	30. 11. 2021				
2 nd intermediate report	14.10. 2022	31. 10. 2022				
EACEA progress report		14.12. 2022				
4 th intermediate report	14.05. 2023	31.05. 2023	40% OCT/NOV 2022	2nd payment	February 2023 (After intermediate report)	24.19 %
5 th intermediate report	14.01. 2024	31. 01. 2024				
EACEA final report		15.03. 2024				
			APR 2024 payment of the balance (max. 10%)	Final payment: balance		Payment of the balance (max. 10%)

8.2. Remuneration modalities for staff cost

The COOPERA project remuneration of staff involved in the project is based on the rules set out by the Education, Audiovisual & Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) of the European Commission in the Grant Agreement and accompanying Guidelines for the Use of the Grant of the Erasmus+ CBHE call 2019 (art.3.3.1.1., pag.29).

The amount of staff costs that can be reimbursed to a partner institution for staff involved in the project is limited to the maximum indicated in the budget per



partner (Annex I of the Partnership Agreement) and the ceilings per staff category set out in the Guidelines for the Use of the Grant.

The staff category to be applied depends on the type of work performed in the project and not on the status or the title of the individual. The grant for staff cost is calculated by multiplying the unit cost by the total number of days spent on the implementation of the project. One working day is defined according to the applicable national legislation. Normally 7.5 Hours in the EU. Declared working days per individual will not exceed 20 days per month or 240 days per year.

The coordinator will reimburse to the beneficiary's account the costs actually incurred in accordance with the estimated budget breakdown identified under Annex I of the Partner Agreement for staff costs. The exception is the last reporting period when the reimbursement will be made after the final 10% balance transfer of funding from the EACEA.

Payment for work conducted for the implementation of the project will be paid in arrears after the submission of the evidence to support the request for payment within 15 days after the end of the Period for which the report is being sent (see Chapter "Technical and Financial reporting"). The beneficiary will provide the receipt for the amount requested.

For the calculation of the amount to be reimbursed the following must be produced:

- 1) Scanned copy of the Contract of Employment covering the period in which claim is being made. The contract of employment should be sent for the First Period only if it is a permanent contract. This could be either an existing contract or a document signed by the Legal Representative stating that the person is employed in the organization from the date to – permanent -. If it is a temporary contract, then the period of employment must be clearly stated (From-date to date). Originals must be kept in the partner organisation for 5 years.
- 2) Scanned copy of the Time-Sheet where the activities conducted are described. (The template is available on the EACEA webpage). Originals must be kept in the partner organisation for 5 years.



- 3) Scanned copy of the Joint Declaration form dully completed. (The template is available on the EACEA webpage). Originals must be kept in the partner organisation for 5 years.

8.3. Reimbursement modalities for travel and costs of stay

This budget heading contributes to the costs of travel and stay for staff* and students participating in activities directly related to the achievement of the project. These costs are covered on the basis of unit costs (see section 3.3 of the Guidelines for the Use of the Grant).

** The existence of a formal employment relationship between the employee and the beneficiary institutions is required in order to participate to any travel.*

The unit costs to be applied are those defined in Annex I of the Partnership Agreement. Prior written authorisation from the Agency is required for activities and their corresponding travel costs and costs of stay which are not taking place in or between countries represented in the partnership.

Any category of staff (e.g. managers, RTT, technical and administrative staff) under official contract with the beneficiary institutions and involved in the project may benefit from financial support for travel and subsistence provided it is directly necessary to the achievement of the objectives of the project.

Except in the case of existence of a national law which states the contrary, beneficiary institutions should not suspend payment of normal salaries to their staff during time spent travelling within the framework of the project.

Each Partner university will cover the travel cost and cost of stay in the limits indicated in the Partner Agreements.

The following supporting documents must be retained with the project accounts:

- A duly filled-in Individual Travel Report. Originals or scanned copies of the Individual travelling reports completed using the template available on the webpage of the project. Originals must be kept in the partner organisation for 5 years.



- Supporting documentation will have to be attached to each Individual Travel report:
 - Scanned copies of the boarding passes for flights or train tickets glued on a A4 white paper. This could be scanned and sent by email as digital copies. Originals must be kept in the partner organisation for 5 years.
 - If dates of travelling are not shown on the travelling documents then scanned copies of invoices must be sent to the coordinator. Originals must be kept in the partner organisation for 5 years. EACEA is not interested in the cost but in the dates of the travelling to show that the participant has actually travelled during the period claimed.
 - Scanned copies of invoices for accommodation. Originals must be kept in the partner organisation for 5 years.

It is a responsibility of the beneficiary to keep the supporting documents or submit the mobility reports and the supporting documents to the coordinator upon the requirement, otherwise the amount spent will be regarded as co-financing.

8.4. Project documents

In order to save time and labour and to facilitate the transmission of documents, partners must produce scanned copies of the documents to be submitted to the coordinator. Scanned copies, of good quality, are acceptable as official documents.

However, partners are responsible for keeping the originals and are obliged to send them by post to the coordinator or EACEA if requested.

9. TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL REPORTING

9.1. Basic principles of reporting

There are two main purposes of the reporting. The formal reporting, by ASEM, provides the necessary information to the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) to assure them that our project is being implemented according to the Grant Agreement and that payments should therefore be



released. The annual reports provide information to the PCT (Project Coordination Team) to allow them to support project partners with implementation.

Reporting also helps us to view our progress objectively.

The annual (technical and financial) reports are linked to transfer of grant to partners from ASEM. The Final Report though must be approved by EACEA before the final payment to the coordinator is released. No report is required to secure the advance payment.

The reports should accurately reflect Project Partner (PP) progress during the reporting period, highlighting any key issues and providing justification for any deviations from the Description of the project as set out in Annex I of Grant Agreement.

It is significantly faster to prepare the technical reports if information is added to them at the time when the activity takes place. This can always be amended later but it makes sure that the recommendations for corrective action and for improving the programme are not lost. Equally, the Work plan should be updated whenever necessary changes are identified and submitted along with the annual report if there are any changes. All changes must be justified in writing.

9.2. Standards of all reports

All reports should be typed and should be in English. Copy of each report and supporting documents should be provided to the PCT, as well as an electronic version. The report forms will be sent to each partner.

9.3. Reporting schedule

Project partners are required to produce technical and financial reports:

REPORT NO.	ELIGIBLE COSTS BY	REPORT DUE DATE
1st intermediate report	14 July 2021	31 July 2021
2nd intermediate report	14 January 2022	31 January 2022
3rd intermediate report	14 July 2022	31 July 2022
4th intermediate report	14 January 2023	31 January 2023



5th intermediate report	14 July 2023	31 July 2023
Final report	14 January 2024	31 January 2024

Reports (two in total) prepared by the Coordinator to be delivered to EACEA:

- EACEA Progress Report – 15.09.2022
- EACEA Final report – 15.01.2024

The partner has to respect the reporting deadlines (also stated in the Partnership Agreement), and submit their Report with supporting documents on validation of expenditure to the project coordinator in due time as requested, in 10 (ten) working days. If those are not submitted to the coordinator within the set deadline, they will not be included in the progress report of the project that coordinator is responsible to deliver to the Executive Agency.

9.4. Partner reports

The partners' reports are linked to a payment. Information contained in the reports will be reviewed as part of the monitoring process. It is not intended that these reports will provide all the details of what is happening on the project. The reports focus on activities and results. If further details are required for clarification, then PP will be contacted separately.

The Coordinator can only submit Intermediate and Final reports, as well as financial statements to the EACEA based on inputs from project partners. Therefore, in order to provide adequate information on the progress of the project, each Project partner has to submit the partner report to the Coordinator consisting of:

- **Technical report**, describing the activities carried out and their results during the reporting period, and
- **Financial report**, presenting the costs incurred during the reporting period.

The intermediate reports of the partners will be reviewed by PCT team and approved by the Coordinator, taking into consideration following assessment criteria:

- Conformity of the expenditures with the budget of the project;



- Eligibility of the expenditures;
- Correct use of the procurement procedures, whenever required;
- Correctness and completeness of all supporting documents;
- Correctness of the calculations and applied exchange rates;
- That any changes which occurred between budget categories are eligible and justified;
- All copies of the annual reports must be signed in original by the appointed contact person of partner institution;
- Expenditures must be in conformity, including full eligibility, with the allocated Budget in the Partnership Agreement.

In case that information in Annual Report are not complete or justified, the PCT team will help and make recommendations on how this situation can be rectified prior to the final approval of the Annual report by the Coordinator. The Report approved in this way is the basis for the transfer of next instalment to the partner institution.

9.4.1. Technical report

The Technical reports should provide the clear picture on the progress of project activities, time and quality of deliverables and results, to what extent the progress indicators are achieved, as well as introduction of changes into the Work plan (if any). For this purpose, the Technical report is structured as follows:

- Statistics and indicators
- Table of achieved/planned results,
- Statement of costs incurred.

Apart from the statistical and financial information related to the reporting period, the major part of the Technical report is consisted of the Table of achieved/planned results (one table per work package), with following describing elements:

1. Activities carried out and indicators of achievement,
2. Planned activities and indicators for progress,
3. Any proposed changes (people involved, budget, remaining activities...).



EACEA has provided a template for the technical reporting:

https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/beneficiaries-space/capacity-building-in-field-higher-education-2020_en

9.4.2. Financial report

When preparing the Financial report, the project partners are strongly advised to use the Excel file provided by the EACEA Final Financial Statement, which can be found here:

https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/beneficiaries-space/capacity-building-in-field-higher-education-2020_en

9.4.3. Exchange Rate

The Partner financial reports should be drawn up in Euro. In case that Project Partner is from State which has not adopted the Euro as their currency, the Project Partner shall convert into Euro the amounts of expenditure presented in the cash-flow tables that correspond to the invoices in national currency. Those amounts have to be included in all other tables of the Financial report.

Any conversion into euro of actual costs incurred in other currencies shall be made by the partners at the monthly accounting rate established by the Commission and published on the webpage https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/how-eu-funding-works/information-contractors-and-beneficiaries/exchange-rate-infoeuro_en.

9.5. Request for payment

The Coordinator has provided all partners with the appropriate form for issuing the transfer of funds to the partner institution – Request for Payment (the template is sent to all project's partners). Along with the Request for Payment, the partner has to submit the report whose approval will be the basis for issuing the next instalment. Deadlines for submitting the Partner Reports are given in section 9.3 of this Manual.



10. PROJECT'S RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk is the “effect of uncertainty on objective” (ISO 31000 2018), that may have one or more causes and, if it occurs, one or more impacts/effects may be negative or positive. This document focuses on events that could have a negative impact on achieving the objectives of the project.

Risk management is an ongoing process that continues through the life of a project. It includes processes for risk management planning, identification, analysis, monitoring and control. Many of these processes are updated throughout the project lifecycle as new risks can be identified at any time. On the other hand, any event that could have a positive impact should be exploited.

The identification of risk normally starts before the project is initiated, and the number of risks increase as the project matures through the lifecycle. When a risk is identified, it's first assessed to ascertain the probability of occurring, the degree of impact to the schedule, scope, cost, and quality, and then prioritized. Some risk events may impact only once while others may impact the project in multiple impact categories. The probability of occurrence, number of categories impacted and the degree (high, medium, low) to which they impact the project will be the basis for assigning the risk priority. All identifiable risks should be entered into a risk register, and documented as a risk statement.

The purpose of the Risk Management Plan, is to provide a management framework to ensure that levels of risk and uncertainty impacting the coopera Project are properly identified, reviewed and managed throughout the project lifecycle. The expectation is to create an environment and a context for proactively identifying and dealing with risks and issues. This includes prioritising and assessing risk so that the right resources can be applied in a timely manner for implementing mitigation plans to minimise risks or increase opportunities. This will include recording and communicating these risks, as well as the eventual close-out of specific risks and the project itself.

This document describes the methods for identifying, analysing, prioritising, and tracking risk drivers, developing Risk Mitigation Plans and planning for adequate resources to handle risk. Also, it assigns specific responsibilities for the management of risk and prescribes the documentation, monitoring, and report processes to be followed.



10.1. Context, identification and objectives

External Context: number of events and requirements that exist outside COOPERA which impact on the performance of the consortium. These could be at international, national or institutional level where COOPERA operates.

Internal Context: related to the culture, management processes and how different stakeholders participate in the implementation of COOPERA activities.

Risk management Context: strives to minimise the impact from negative events and maximise the benefits from positive events. The risk management context will be examined taking into consideration all COOPERA project's objectives. The COOPERA project Grant Coordinator with the support of the Consortium Board has overall responsibility for managing project risk.

The benefits of having a Project Risk Management plan are:

1. Assignment of clear roles and responsibilities within the project team for risk management;
2. Enhanced team communication and commonality of approach;
3. Assisting project managers to understand the potential risk exposure, to develop a focused treatment plan;
4. to reduce the likelihood of risks occurring or to mitigate the impacts and to understand confidence in achieving project objectives;
5. Understanding the resource constraints and time dependencies;
6. Support the allocation of project contingency funds and sufficiency of management reserve;
7. Increasing the value of the project 's deliverables through exploitation and sustainability;

The fundamental approach adopted in applying risk management is that it should not be viewed as an add-on to the project management process but rather, must be embedded into the project management process.

The current standard for the definition of risk according to ISO 31000:2018, is "effect of uncertainty on objectives" and the Institute of Risk Management (IRM) Definition is that "risk is a combination of an event and its consequence. Consequence can range from positive to negative". Risks include both threats and



opportunities, with negative and positive impacts on objectives as suggested by the IRM definition.

Throughout all phases of the COOPERA project, consortium will continuously reflect and brainstorm on potential risks in the different areas related to the project. Project Quality Assurance Committee will be responsible for identifying risks to the project and will continuously report to the Grant Coordinator and Consortium Board.

10.2. Risk management responsibilities

The responsibility for managing risk is shared amongst all the stakeholders of the project. However, decision authority for selecting whether to proceed with mitigation strategies and implement contingency actions.

The responsible for handling the different aspects of risk management process are outlined below:

- i. **Risk Identification:** All project stakeholders
- ii. **Risk Registry:** Grant Coordinator
- iii. **Risk Assessment:** Institutional Coordinators
- iv. **Risk Response Options Identification:** Consortium Board
- v. **Risk Response Approval:** Steering committee
- vi. **Risk Contingency Planning:** Steering committee
- vii. **Risk Response Management:** Grant coordinator, Project Manager
- viii. **Risk Reporting:** Grant coordinator, Project Manager, Steering committee.

10.2. Risk Assessment

Risk assessment is the act of determining the probability that a risk will occur and the impact that event would have, should it occur. This is a “cause and effect” analysis. The “cause” is the event that might occur, while the “effect” is the potential impact to a project, should the event occur.

Risk assessment will be conducted along two criteria:

- (a) The likelihood of occurrence and
- (b) The potential impact.

The likelihood of occurrence of a risk will be assessed according to the criteria summarised in Table 1.

Table 1: Criteria to assess likelihood of occurrence of the risk.

Likelihood	Description	%	Score (out of 5)
Almost Certain/Common	The risk is almost certain to occur in the current circumstances. The risk is already occurring, or is likely to occur more than once within the next 12 months.	90%	5
Likely	More than an even chance of occurring. The risk could easily occur, and is likely to occur at least once within the next 12 months.	70%	4
Possible	Could occur quite often. There is an above average chance that the risk will occur at least once in the next 3 years.	55%	3
Unlikely	Small likelihood but could happen. The risk occurs infrequently and is unlikely to occur within the next 3 years.	20%	2
Rare	Not expected to happen - Event would be a surprise. The risk is conceivable but is only likely to occur in extreme circumstances.	10%	1



The potential impact of a risk will be assessed according to the criteria summarised in Table 2.

Table 2: Criteria to assess potential impact of the risk.

Potential Impact	Description	%	Score (out of 5)
Critical	Negative outcomes or missed opportunities-critical impact on achievement of objectives.	100%	5
Major	Negative outcomes or missed opportunities substantial impact on achievement of objectives.	70%	4
Moderate	Negative outcomes or missed opportunities-medium impact on achievement of objectives.	50%	3
Minor	Negative outcomes or missed opportunities - low/ small impact on achievement of objectives.	30%	2
Insignificant	Negative outcomes or missed opportunities – irrelevant impact on achievement of objectives.	10%	1

The impact assessment should put into consideration the achievement of the deliverables/milestones of the project within all Work Packages.

Table 3: Summary of the overall risk exposure assessment:

Overall Risk Categorisation	Score	Description
High	18-25	Unacceptable level of risk - High level of control intervention required /Urgent attention needed/stop
Medium	9-17	Unacceptable level of risk, except under unique circumstances or conditions - Moderate level of control intervention required to achieve an acceptable level of residual risk/ Intervention in short term/cautious driving
Low	0-8	Mostly acceptable- low level of control intervention required. Manage risk within business unit.

10.3. Risk Mitigation

Risk mitigation is the process by which an organization introduces specific measures to minimize or eliminate unacceptable risks associated with its operations.

Risk mitigation involves two steps:



- (a) Identifying the various activities, or steps, to reduce the probability and/or impact of an adverse risk.
- (b) Creation of a Contingency Plan to deal with the risk should it occur.

All risks and their corresponding mitigation activities will be documented in the Risk Register, and reviewed on a regular basis. A sample of this is provided as annex 1.

The review could involve and incorporate:

- i) Identification of potential failure points for each risk mitigation solution.
- ii) For each failure point, documenting the event that would raise a “flag” indicating that
- iii) the event or factor has occurred or reached a critical condition.
- iv) For each failure point, providing options for correcting the failure.

In order to ensure the achievement of all COOPERA project objectives, the following risks were exposed at the initial project stage:

Table 4: COOPERA project risks mitigation plan:

Risk No	Description	WP No	Proposed risk-mitigation measures
1	Unfavorable political climate and reluctance to changes/ impact - high; likelihood - medium	WP2 WP3 WP4	(a) Regular exchange of information to keep local key stakeholders informed with progress and achievements (e.g. representatives of Ministries of Education & Research, National Academy/Foundation, and/or other Ministries or local bodies for HE); (b) Proactive communication measures to build accountability of local key stakeholders
2	Unfavorable sanitary conditions at local, regional and transnational levels due to pandemic context/ impact - high; likelihood - medium	WP2 WP3 WP4	(a) Digital communication and coordination with full online bilateral meetings for local coordination and some of the general coordination meetings; (b) Digital quality reporting, monitoring, and controlling activities with partial online meetings;



			(c) Meeting events and mobility also designed in hybrid format, if necessary; (d) Mobility flows are planned well in advance and considering travelling restrictions
3	English level of academic and administrative staff in Moldova/ impact - medium; likelihood - medium	WP2 WP3 WP4	The essential documents will be translated in Romanian and Ukrainian languages. Live interpretation, if necessary, will be provided at the various meetings and visits, independently if organised offline or online.
4	Failure in fulfilling the quantitative and qualitative indicators for training and mobility events/ impact - medium; likelihood - medium	WP2 WP3 WP4	(a) Practical arrangements start well in advance and once the target group composition is established, the back-up list with reserves teachers is foreseen, as part of logistics sequence; (b) Regular monitoring of participants; confirmations of the flows of events.
5	Resistance to positive changes induced by project solution, impact - high; likelihood - medium	WP2 WP3 WP4	(a) Proactive communication measures to inform and actively engage strategic decisional factors from PCs side in project solution for overcoming communication barriers; (b) Active support from EU teams and collaboration with decisional factors for effective information and accountability purpose; (c) Regular exchange of qualitative information and ongoing communication flows key stakeholders; (d) Involvement of direct local beneficiaries, students, businesses, and local private sector in project from idea inception to completion.
6	Delays in equipment acquisition/ impact - high; likelihood - medium	WP4	(a) Tender procedures and documentation start at the beginning of the project.
7	The risk of change in the government could modify the Ministry of Education determination to implementing the project/	WP2 WP3 WP4	(a) Enhancing communication about the numerous benefits of the project and creating motivation and a sense of ownership for each stakeholder will guarantee the implementation of the



	impact – high; likelihood – medium		project regardless of government changes
8	Communication bottlenecks and misunderstandings with local direct beneficiaries, impact – high; likelihood – high	WP2 WP3 WP4 WP7	(a) Most of the activities, deliverables are performed/developed in local mother language and the translations are ensured, whenever necessary.
9	Miscommunication and conflicts between partners and project teams, impact – medium; likelihood – medium	WP2 WP3 WP4 WP5 WP6 WP7	(a) Proactive style of communication and democratic decision-making process to solve technical and administrative issues and avoid escalation process; (b) Balanced involvement of partners in implementation with cohesion in line with complementary expertise and experience
10	Reticence and lack of interest from local community, impact – medium; likelihood – high	WP2 WP7	(a) Deploying good measures for informing and disseminating with qualitative informative materials; (b) Expanding the database with local contacts, practitioners, and experts from various fields; (c) Effective communication measures with local potential beneficiaries through a good flow of informing, engaging and multiplying results and benefits.



10.4. Risk Treatment

The possible response options to risk could include any of the following actions:

Risk Avoidance: The most ideal way to mitigate a risk is to avoid it altogether. Risk avoidance involves eliminating or significantly reducing the probability of a risk by circumventing the risk altogether.

Risk Transfer: The responsibility for each risk that cannot be avoided must reside with the party who is best placed to manage it. Risks may be transferred externally or internally within the project team and this may result in additional costs as parties insure against the probability of the risk occurring.

Risk Reduction: When risk avoidance or transfer is not possible, risks may be effectively mitigated by implementing strategies and tactics that lower either the probability of occurrence, or the consequence or sometimes both simultaneously. Strategies to reduce the consequence of threats are preferred over reducing its probability of occurrence. Therefore, consequence of threats may be reduced by implementing stringent controls.

Risk Acceptance: Risk acceptance is the acknowledgment of the existence of a particular risk and a conscious decision to accept it without engaging further special efforts to mitigate it. This may occur immediately after the risk has been identified or after all reasonable efforts have been made, successfully or unsuccessfully.