BLUE ACTION

Risk register system and procedures

About this document

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Summary for publication

This deliverable aims at ensuring a smooth coordination of the project for a high quality of results and implementation. This deliverable describes the participatory process conducted within the consortium to identify the risks that might occur during the project implementation. Such risks are related to three main activities: i) research and innovation, ii) management, and iii) dissemination and exploitation of results. The coordination and the project office have set up a risk management system with procedures for tracking foreseen and unforeseen risks, and implementing adequate corrective and mitigation measures. A risk register is thoroughly applied throughout the project life cycle to keep track of materialized and potential risks and applied corrective and preventive measures.

Work carried out

A 'risk' is a probable situation that has the potential to cause an unwanted change in the project objectives and planned activities.

The ultimate goal of risk management is to increase the probability of the project success by identifying potential problematic and challenging tasks early and envisaging mitigation and contingency measures to avoid or reduce the probability of negative occurrence

1. Responsibilities in risk monitoring and management

The following are in charge of the risk management and monitoring:

- **Coordinator**: will be responsible for management of the risks within the project.
- **Steering Committee (SC):** The SC is the core executive body that deals with the supervision and execution. It is responsible for tracking the progress of individual deliverables, milestones, and regular reporting. The SC retains an overview of the project activities, identifies issues and suggests decisions to the General Assembly (GA). It coordinates communication and execution of GA decisions to the consortium and reports to the GA regarding the status of deliverables, milestones, reporting, risk management and general progress. The SC is composed by the Coordinator (chair) and the WP leaders and co-leaders. Its mandate and field of operations is defined in the Blue-Action consortium agreement.
- **General Assembly (GA):** ultimate decision-making body in the consortium, it is responsible for dealing with risks, issues affecting the realization of the project. Its mandate and field of operations is defined in the Blue-Action consortium agreement.
- **Project office**: day-to-day maintenance of the risk register, update of the information uploaded in the Participant Portal of the European Commission related to the risks to project implementation, and follow up on the implementation of prevention/mitigation measures decided by the Steering Committee and /or the General Assembly.

2. Monitoring of risks foreseen in the DoA

During the application stage and the grant agreement preparation phase, the coordination and work package leaders conducted a thorough analysis of the risks connected with the execution of the project activities that might affect the achievement of the project objectives through a participatory process involving partner. "Critical risks" to project implementation are those that have the potential to impact the project objectives being achieved.

The potential risks perceived by the consortium related to research activities, project management, and dissemination and exploitation of results are shortly listed in the table WT5 of the Description of the Action, together with the proposed mitigation measures to be adopted in the case the risk should manifest. These are actively managed and continuously monitored throughout the project. Their corresponding mitigation actions and contingency plans in case of their occurrence are listed and explained in the "**risk register**".

No risk identified in the WT5 table has a high probability of occurrence and the likelihood of most risks is low, which facilitates their management. The corresponding mitigation actions as mechanisms to partially or completely prevent these risks, as well as contingency plans to solve them in case of their occurrence have been carefully elaborated and are detailed in the document.

3. Identification and management of new risks

It is possible that new risks pop up by the time the activities are implemented and the project and consortium evolve.

For these cases, the following procedure has been adopted:

1. Inputs on potential emerging risks are to be by WP leaders, partners, Coordination, to the Project Office.
2. Project office reports to the coordinator and seek for mitigation measures.
3. If no solution is available at the Coordination/Project Office, the issue will be brought up to the Steering Committee. Monthly telcos of the SC include the item "Emerging risks" in the agenda.
4. Steering Committee to come up with indication of possible mitigation measures to be applied.
5. In the cases of competence of the General Assembly defined in the consortium agreement, a proposal to the GA will be prepared and submitted for GA decision by the project office.
6. Coordination is in charge of applying the measures decided by the competent governance bodies and ensure follow up.
7. The project Office documents all steps and measures to be implemented in the risk register and supports the Coordination in the implementation of the chosen measures.

4. Risk prevention and risk mitigation measures

In addition to the mitigation measures identified in the table WT5 of the Description of the Action, the consortium had decided to implement additional measures for risk management:

- **Anticipated risk management** include risks connected to financial deviations, collaboration between partners and on-time, quality project execution. In order to mitigate these risks, day-to-day communication among partners is encouraged by the coordination/project office to assure that all activities are implemented on time and with a high quality level;
- Blue-Action uses an **internal peer-reviewing system** to improve the quality of deliverables.
- **Two management bodies**, the Steering Committee and the General Assembly, have been created to enhance a smooth management of the project through providing communication spaces to partners to express and discuss their concerns, exchange information about the project development and become informed about the overall project execution.
- **Two independent advisory bodies**, the Research and Innovation Advisory Group (RIAG) and the Societal Engagement Group (SEG) [1] ensure a regular internal mechanism of review for the implementation of the project, and evaluation of progress and implementation.

5. Risk register

The risk register is a living document, available for the partners in the intranet, and kept up to date by the project office. For each of the risks mapped in the WT5 table of the DoA and potentially new risks, the register tracks down the mitigation measures to be applied and the following information:

Monitoring period	Risks are monitored per reporting period, this is also the method for reporting on risks to the European Commission via the EU portal.
Did the risk materialized?	Yes or No
Was the mitigation measure applied?	Yes or No
WP/Tasks affected	List of the tasks and WP affected by a materialized risk.

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[1] http://www.blue-action.eu/index.php?id=3503

Description of the materialized risk	Extensive description of the materialized risk.
Additional mitigation measures comments	List of the mitigation measures adopted for the risk, these might be additional to those we had identified in the WT5 table in the DoA. Steps are identified for the implementation of the measures.
Decisions by/ date of decision/reference to redmine	Measure implementation is backed up by decisions of the coordination, the work package leaders, by the Steering Committte, or the General Assembly according to the relevant competences listed in the consortium agreement.
Current status of this risk/ mitigation measures	Open/closed.
Further documentation available in the redmine (intranet)	Link to additional documentation available in the intranet to all partners.

Main results achieved

- Distribution of responsibilities in dealing with existing and emerging risks.
- Clarification of who does what with mapping of steps to be followed.
- Set up of internal documentation for tracking down information and decisions.

Progress beyond the state of the art

Not applicable.

Impact

A sound risk management system is the basis for an efficient implementation of the project, and allows the project to contribute to the expected impacts declared in the DoA Section 2.2.

Lessons learned and Links built

- We have compared risk management systems, risk management plans and risk registers set up by other H2020 projects. Most of them focus on the management of existing risks, but very little is said on how to deal with unforeseen risks and on the responsibilities shared in the partnership.
- The WT5 table in the DoA might be subject to changes in the future, during the project life cycle, that is why it is not included in the present document.

Contribution to the top level objectives of Blue-Action

This deliverable indirectly contributes to the achievement of all the objectives and specific goals indicated in the Description of the Action, part B, Section 1.1.

References (Bibliography)

- How to successfully manage a Horizon 2020 funded projects
  http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/other/gm/h2020-guide-to-research-pm_en.pdf
- ISO 31000:2009 – Risk Management Principles and Guidelines
- H2020 online manual
  https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/funding/guide.html

Dissemination and exploitation of Blue-Action results

Uptake by the targeted audiences

As indicated in the Description of the Action, this deliverable is public, as in the DoA, though the targeted audience is rather the consortium of partners.

This is how we are going to ensure the uptake of the deliverables by the consortium:

- Work package leads and co-leads have been informed about the procedures indicated in this document as they are directly involved in monitoring risks;
- All project partners and staff involved have been made aware of these procedures via direct communication;
- Document made available on website;
- Document made available in the intranet https://code.zmaw.de/projects/bg10/wiki/ in the section **Project Management.**