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PAGOSTE

PROJECT MANAGEMENT HANDBOOK OF ERASMUS+ PROJECT PAGOSTE

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Summary:	It comprises main guidelines concerning implementation of the Erasmus+ project PAGOSTE defined in Partnership Agreement, Grant Agreement, Erasmus+ Programme Guide (2018) and presentations of the EACEA. It also presents project objectives and the way it is planned to achieve them. The project management handbook is intended to support partners in administrative, financial and procedural management of the project, in case of doubts the partnership Agreements, Grant Agreement, Erasmus+ Programme Guide (2018) shall prevail.

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CONTENTS

ABBREVIATIONS

C – conference

EACEA – Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency

HEI – higher education institution

ITR – individual travel report

JT – joint declaration

LFM – Logical Framework Matrix

NEO – National Erasmus Office

PBG – partnership-based governance

PWS / WS – project workshops

QA – quality assurance

QAS – quality assurance strategy

QP – quality plan

RT – round table

RTT – staff category "Researcher/Teacher/Trainer"

ST – staff training

TS – timesheet

VET – vocational education and training

VTE – vocational teacher education

WP – work package

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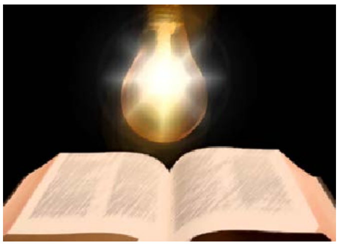
PROJECT PARTNERS

No.	Acronym	Name
P1	UKON	University of Konstanz (Konstanz, Germany)
P2	WU	Vienna University of Economics and Business (Vienna, Austria)
P3	UNITRE	Roma Tre University (Rome, Italy)
P4	KNEU	Kyiv National Economic University named after Vadym Hetman (Kyiv, Ukraine)
P5	SUNPU	South Ukrainian National Pedagogical University named after K. D. Ushynsky (Odesa, Ukraine)
P6	NTU	National Transport University (Kyiv, Ukraine)
P7	UEPA	Ukrainian Engineering-Pedagogics Academy (Kharkiv, Ukraine)
P8	MESU	Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine (Kyiv, Ukraine)
P9	IVET	Institute of Vocational Education and Training of the National Academy of Pedagogical Sciences of Ukraine (Kyiv, Ukraine)

1. PROJECT MANAGEMENT HANDBOOK

1.1. INTRODUCTION

The project management handbook belongs to work package 7. The work package leader is the University of Konstanz. All other partners are involved and equally responsible of the implementation of this WP. The leader of the WP has prepared this handbook. It is a supplementary help tool for the project partners in the administrative, procedural and financial management of the project. The binding character have:



- the Grant Agreement,
- the multilateral and bilateral partnership agreements and
- Erasmus+ Programme Guide (2018) which are sometimes used as reference sources.

In case of doubts, the originals must be always referred to.

The project management handbook also specifies tasks, roles and responsibilities of the project partners. Therefore, it is an integral part of the quality assurance strategy and shall help to foster the delivery of high-quality project outputs.

The project management handbook consists of project overview, project management section and financial administration and reporting section. The presentations from the kick-off meeting “Objectives” and “Administrative issues” are supplementary to this handbook.

1.2. AIM

The main aim of the project management handbook is:

- to clarify the management structures;
- to explain roles and responsibilities of project partners;
- to specify the project administrative and financial procedures.

It sets the project management framework for the Erasmus+ project PAGOSTE.

All partners will adhere to the principles and procedures specified here, however, the Grant Agreement, the multilateral and bilateral partnership agreements and Erasmus+ Programme Guide shall prevail in case of doubts.

1.3. TERMS AND EXPLANATIONS

Project partner is a partner-organisation, which is in the project consortium.

Project member is a person who is employed by the project partner and belongs to the project team of the project partner, and performs project tasks.

WP Leader is a partner-organisation assigned to lead and coordinate a specific WP. The WP leader presents the consortium the outputs produced within the WP and submits a report on the WP implementation (see QAS).

Task Leader is a project partner or maybe also a project member who implements a specific task within the WP to the best of its knowledge and competence. The task leaders are defined internally or by a WP leader.

2. PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Project PAGOSTE is realised within the Erasmus+ Program, Key Action 2 "Capacity Building in the Field of Higher Education". The partner country is Ukraine. This project is structural and belong to the type "*Developing the higher education sector within society*", and namely to the category "*Development of school and vocational education at post-secondary non-tertiary education level, such as reforming in-service training for teachers and reforms to the teaching profession*". This category was defined by the Ministry of Education and Sciences as one of the priority categories for the Call 2019. The peculiarities of the structural projects is that structural projects are "aimed at producing an impact on higher education systems and promoting reforms at national and/or regional level in the eligible Partner Countries" (European Commission, 2018, p.163).

"Structural Projects may typically carry out a wide range of activities, such as:

- strengthening of internationalisation of higher education systems;
- introduction of Bologna-type reforms (three-level cycle system, quality assurance, evaluation, etc.);
- implementation of transparency tools such as credit systems, accreditation procedures, guidelines for the recognition of prior and non-formal learning etc.;
- establishment of National Qualification Frameworks;
- development and implementation of internal and external quality assurance systems/guidelines;
- development and implementation of new approaches and tools for policy making and monitoring, including the establishment of representative bodies, organisations or associations;
- strengthening the integration of education, research and innovation.

In more concrete terms, these activities can include:

- surveys and studies on specific reform issues;
- policy and expert advice;
- organisation of conferences, seminars, workshops, round tables (which should result in operational conclusions and recommendations);
- organisation of staff trainings on policy issues;
- organisation of staff trainings (which may include the production of training manuals and guidelines) involving teaching and support staff, technicians as well as university administrators and managers;
- organisation of awareness-raising campaigns" (ibid., p.163).

The project PAGOSTE aims at improving the governance mechanisms between different stakeholders in vocational teacher education based on partnership and cooperation. Thus, it is expected that new mechanisms enhance the quality of pre-service teacher training and provide the possibility for lifelong learning for the in-service teachers of vocational schools in Ukraine. It goes in line with the current reform in education in Ukraine.

In order to achieve this ambitious goal, three main objectives are set (see Figure 1):

Figure 1. *Objectives of the Erasmus+ Project PAGOSTE*

These objectives require from all participating organisations from both Programme and Partner countries to contribute actively to the project implementation. It means that all beneficiaries are jointly responsible for carrying out the activities attributed to them, and shall conduct these activities in accordance with the work programme and schedule set forth in the Grant Agreement and approved application, working to the best of their abilities to achieve the defined results and taking full responsibility for their work in accordance with accepted professional principles. To this end, each project beneficiary shall provide staff, facilities, equipment, and material to the extent needed for executing the activities as specified in the work programme, and shall be responsible for the sound financial management and cost efficiency of the funds allocated to the project.

2.1. WORK PACKAGES, ACTIVITIES AND DELIVERABLES

The project consists of seven work packages (WPs) (see Figure 2).

Work packages

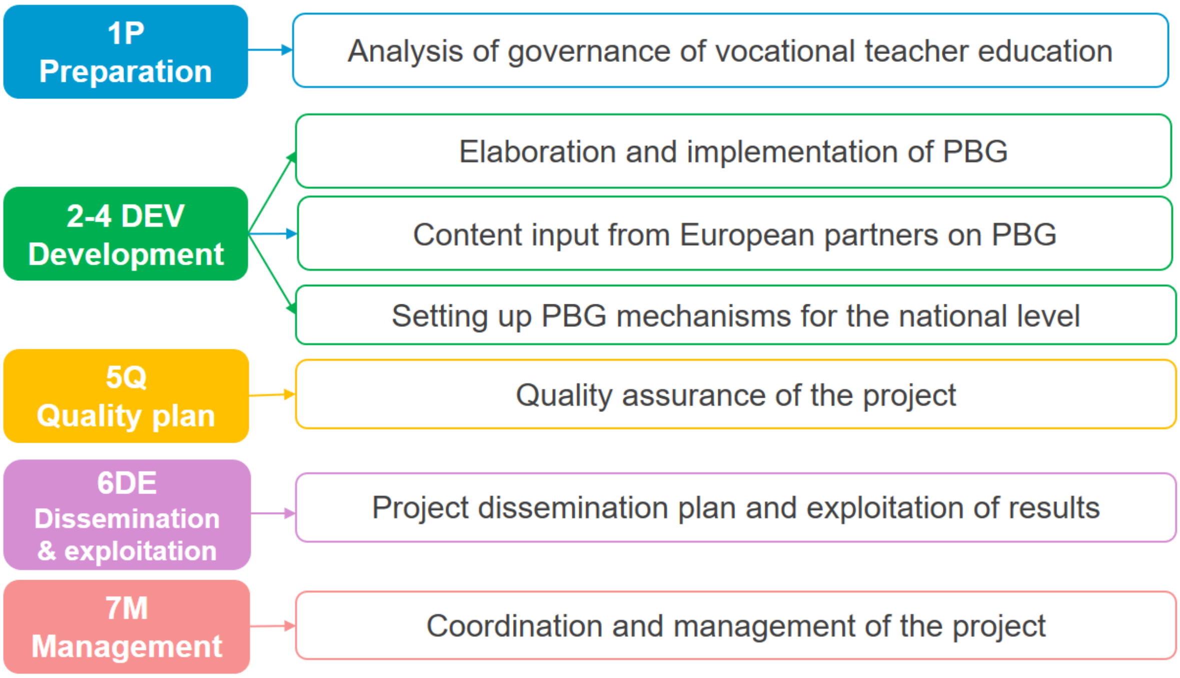


Figure 2. *Work packages of the project PAGOSTE*

Each work package encompasses a number of activities, which implementation is expected to produce deliverables. Table 1 schematically presents the activities and the expected deliverables according to the project application and additions, which were introduced after beginning of the project implementation. The new activities and deliverables are written in green.

Table 1. *Activities and deliverables of the project PAGOSTE*

WP1: Analysis of governance of vocational teacher education	
Activity	**Deliverable**
1.1. Organisation of the workshop for the need analysis and presenting governance of vocational teacher education in EU countries	1.1. Presentations of the best practices of EU in governing vocational teacher education
1.2. Developing instruments for need analysis of target groups	1.2. Instruments for the need analysis for target groups (HEI students, HEI academic staff, VET teachers, VET management)
1.3. Conduct the need analysis and produce reports on the findings	1.3. Findings of the need analysis in each partner-HEI in the form of institutional reports and on national level in form of the consolidated (structured) report

1.4. Organisation of a round table on a national roadmap for changes of VTE in Ukraine	1.4. Round table on a national roadmap for changes of VTE in Ukraine
WP2: Elaboration and implementation of PBG	
2.1. Organisation of study visits of staff involved into VTE and PBG	2.1. Elaborated and documented concepts of PBG mechanisms
2.2. Elaborating PBG mechanisms at partner-HEIs	2.2. Establishment of new structures at partner-HEIs for realisation of PBG concepts
2.3. Piloting new structures of PBG and installing the necessary equipment	2.3. Sustainability strategies how to maintain and further develop the partnership
2.4. Organisation of round tables for public discussions of PBG mechanisms and their implementation at partner-HEIs	2.4. Round tables
WP 3: Content input from European partners on PBG	
3.1. Developing training materials for staff trainings and translating them	3.1. Conducted staff training for HEI staff, MESU staff, VET management and teaching staff
3.2. Organising at partner-HEIs staff trainings	3.2. Training materials (modules)
WP4: Setting up PBG mechanisms for the national level	
4.1. Organising a staff training on VTE governance (external trainers from Kultusministerium Baden-Wurttemberg or State Seminar for Didactics and Further Teacher Training)	4.1. Conducted staff training for the MESU on governance in VTE
4.2. Writing a policy paper on PBG in VTE	4.2. Policy paper on mechanisms of PBG in VTE
4.3. Designing and launching the online platform for PBG facilitation	4.3. New online platform "Partner Space" for fostering PBG
4.4. Initiating a network of HEIs involved into VTE	4.4. Memorandum of Understanding between HEIs which have VTE study programs
4.5. Developing the amendments for standards of VTE in accordance with PBG and submitting them to the MESU for approval	4.5. Amendments to educational standards for VTE
WP5: Quality assurance of the project	
5.1. Preparing regular reports on project results and WPs	5.1. Regular reports on WPs

5.2. Preparing evaluation sheets and conducting evaluations	5.2. Evaluations by the participants of staff trainings and other activities
5.3. Organisation of visits of external experts and critical friend	5.3. Evaluations by experts and a critical friend
5.4. External auditing	5.4. Statement of an external financial auditor
5.5. Participation in seminars (meetings) at EACEA, National Agency in Germany and National Erasmus+ Office in Ukraine; visiting onsite during activities in Ukraine	5.5. On-sites visits during activities
WP6: Project dissemination plan	
6.1. Developing corporate project branding	6.1. Corporate project branding and website
6.2. Posting news in social networks	6.2. News in social networks
6.3. Sending newsletter	6.3. Newsletters
6.4. Organising a conference on VTE in Ukraine	6.4. Conference on VTE
6.5. Publishing an anthology	6.5. Raised awareness on VTE through dissemination of the anthology
6.6. Promotion of the project by means of publications	6.6. Published articles, news, updates, proceedings etc.
WP7: Coordination and management of the project	
7.1. Conducting project meetings (workshops and online video meeting)	7.1. Minutes of project meetings (project workshops and online jour fixes)
7.2. Organisation of informational sessions on software usage	7.2. Introduction of project management software
7.3. Financial managements	7.3. Financial evidences and reports
7.4. Monitoring of tasks performance	7.4. Objectives reached and tasks performed on time
7.5. Administrative management	

The list of activities is not exhaustive and may be extended according to the circumstances. The project officer at the EACEA must be informed of all new activities and deviations from the original list.

The list of deliverables is also non-exhaustive and may be extended according to circumstances, however cannot be reduced.

All the deliverables must comply with the requirements of the EACEA, project objectives and project standards specified in the QAS. The minimum checklist for the deliverables is below (see Table 2). The checklist can serve as a help tool for the task leader or WP leader.

Table 2. *Checklist for the project deliverables*

Criteria	Yes/No	Comments
1. The deliverable is available in English		
2. The language meets the grammar rules		
3. The deliverable is available in Ukrainian		
4. The language meets the grammar rules		
5. The deliverable is produced on time		
6. The deliverable has a clear structure agreed with the partners/WP leader		
7. The deliverable fulfils formal academic requirements (e.g. indication of references, list of figures etc.).		
8. The analysis in the deliverable is based on reliable and current data		
9. The argumentation within the deliverable is comprehensible		
10. The deliverable has been submitted for peer-review		

The deliverables where appropriate (e.g. reports, articles, etc.) must be internally peer-reviewed. Figure 3 outlines internal peer reviewing of deliverables from WP1-4, 6.

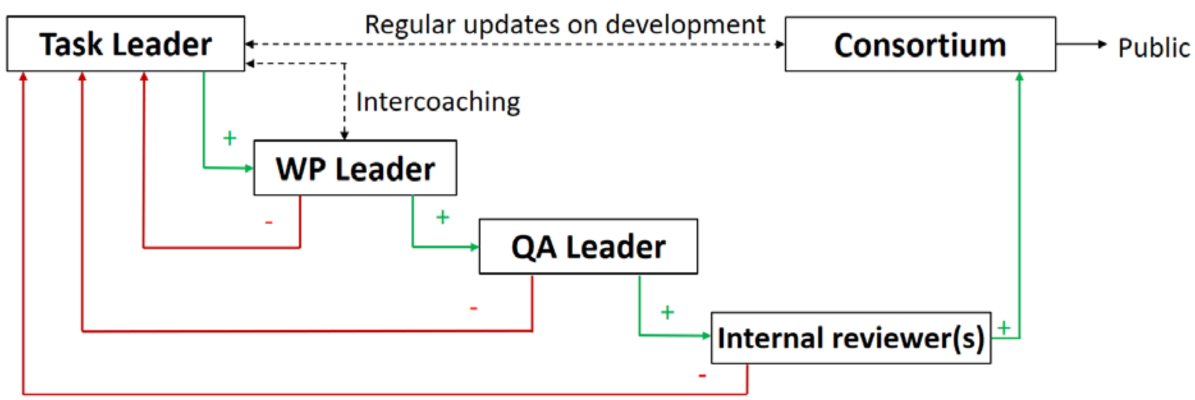


Figure 3. *Internal peer-review process*

2.2. PROJECT WORKPLAN

The work packages must implement according to the workplan in the project application, which is visualized in Figure 4. However, the changes maybe introduced upon the necessity and approval of the EACEA.

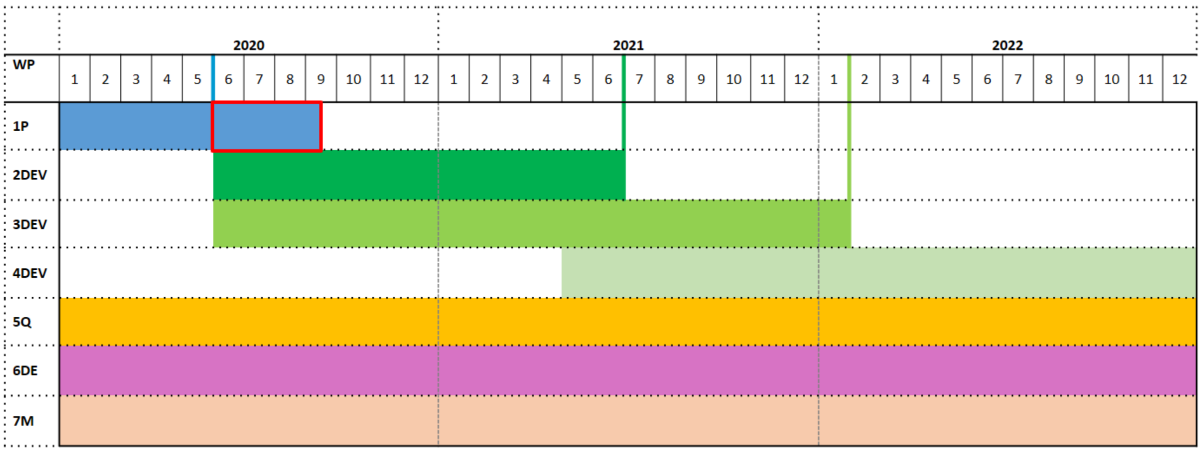


Figure 4. *Workplan of the project PAGOSTE*

2.3. PROJECT ACTIVITIES (EVENTS)

Within the project different activities (events) are planned.

6 project workshops

Objectives:

- Coordination meetings of the project consortium
- Working on WPs
- Meeting with stakeholders
- Visits to organizations involved into VTE
- Field monitoring of the project implementation

Duration: 2 days (½ arrival and ½ departure day)

8 staff trainings

Objectives:

- Content input from the EU partners on governance, VTE in the respective countries, quality assurance, reforms in educational systems, quality assurance in VTE, digitalization, theory and practice in VTE, teaching in vocational contexts, soft skills development, teacher professionalization and other topics defined after the need analysis

Duration: 2 days (½ arrival and ½ departure day)

Participants: 1-3 project members per responsible partner from EU, 7 participants per partner from Ukraine, VET teachers and management from the respective region

Requirements: involvement into VTE

3 round tables

Objectives:

– Public discussion with the involved actors on problems and possible solutions in VTE, public discussion of the project results

Duration: 1 day (½ arrival and ½ departure day)

Participants: 1-3 participants per partner from EU, 7 participants per partner from Ukraine, VET teachers and management from the respective region, employers, policy makers, trade unions, other actors involved in VTE

Requirements: involvement into VTE

1 conference

Objectives:

– Dissemination of the project results, raising awareness on VET, VTE and teaching profession

Duration: 1 (2) day (½ arrival and ½ departure day)

Participants: 1-3 participants per partner from EU, 7 participants per partner from Ukraine, VET teachers and management from the respective region, employers, policy makers, trade unions, other actors involved in VTE.

2 study visits of staff

Objectives:

– On-site introduction of the VTE to HEI and MESU staff involved into establishing of new mechanisms of PBG, job shadowing, meeting with relevant stakeholders

Duration: 5 day (½ arrival and ½ departure day)

Participants: 1-2 per partner from Ukraine

Requirements: involvement into VTE, good command of English

2 study visits of students

Objectives:

– On-site introduction of quality assurance mechanisms, students networking and practice to the Ukrainian students who study at VTE programs

Duration: 5 day (½ arrival and ½ departure day)

Participants: 1-2 per HEI from Ukraine

Requirements: VTE study programs, good command of English, proactivity (multiplier effect)

Each event has a *hosting* and *responsible* partner. In some cases, it may be the same partner. The task of the *hosting* partner is to provide all necessary administrative arrangement for conducting an event, namely rooms, equipment, accommodation, logistics, catering, printing materials etc.

The tentative to-do checklist below (Table 3) can be helpful in the event organization.

Table 3. *Check list for events*

To do	Yes/no, comment	Who
Invite guests		
Make an agenda		
Print out the agenda		
Book a classroom (hall) for the event		
Book hotel rooms		
Book flight tickets		
Send flight tickets to participants		
Book transfer tickets		
Send transfer tickets to participants		
Book Lunch		
Make invitations for participants		
Send invitations to participants		
Prepare presentations		
Prepare documents for accounting department		
Prepare Wifi for participants		
Prepare a travel guide for participants		
Prepare name cards on the table		
Prepare badges with names		
Prepare attendance lists		
Book coffee breaks for participants		
Organize translation/interpreting		
Organize protocolling		
Print out evaluation sheets for the participants		
Collect and send the filled in evaluation sheet to P1		

The task of *responsible* partner is to deliver the event itself, i.e. to develop an agenda, send it at least **3 weeks in advance** to participants, to deliver the event, to prepare and send follow-up materials where appropriate.

After the event, the hosting and the responsible partner in cooperation shall submit a self-evaluation report of event organization (Annex 9, Collection of annexes), so they can reflect how successful the event has been conducted from their perspective. The WP Leader "Quality assurance", P1 must process the data from the evaluation sheets submitted by the participants and present the results from the perspective of the participants.

Hosting and responsible partners have the ready project templates for agendas, evaluation sheets, self-evaluation of event organization and attendance lists in the "Collection of annexes and templates".

3. PROJECT MANAGEMENT

3.1. MANAGEMENT APPROACH

In the project, the Agile methodology is predominantly employed, though it does not exclude the elements of the traditional project methodology.

The Agile project methodology is considered to be effective for the management of complex adaptive system, which can function in the environment with high uncertainty (Srivasan & Mukherjee, 2018). The implementation of the Erasmus+ Capacity building project can be considered as an environment with high uncertainty because many external factors are beyond the influence of project teams, especially it concerns structural projects. Project teams can be considered to have features of complex adaptive systems because they are normally composed of people with different cultural (and sometimes professional) background.

Originally, the Agile project methodology comes from the IT sector, however, it has been adopted in other industries and spheres (Conforto et al, 2014; Lopez et al, 2019). The difference between traditional and agile project management is demonstrated in Table 4.

Table 4. *Comparative chart – Traditional vs Agile (adapted from Hoda, Noble & Marshall, 2005, p.219)*

Categories	Traditional	Agile
Development model	Traditional	Iterative
Focus	Process	People
Management	Controlling	Facilitating
Customer involvement	Requirements gathering and delivery phases	On-site and constantly involved
Developers	Work individually within teams	Collaborative or in pairs
Technology	Any	Mostly object oriented
Product features	All included	Most important first
Testing (QA)	End of the development cycle	Iterative
Documentation	Thorough	Only when needed

The Agile Manifesto (Individuals and interactions over processes and tools; working software over comprehensive documentation; customer collaboration over contract negotiation; responding to change over following a plan) has been adapted to the project PAGOSTE:

- ***Individuals and interactions over processes and tools.***
- ***Quality deliverables over quantity of deliverables.***
- ***Stakeholder collaboration over end-result presentation to stakeholders.***
- ***Responding to change over following a plan***.

The practices of the Agile project management, which are used in the project PAGOSTE, are:

- Assume simplicity
- Embrace change
- Enable and focus on the next effort
- Incrementally change
- Manage with purpose, question actions
- Rapid feedback to all stakeholders
- Quality deliverables
- Create documentation based on value
- Free informational flow

The Agile project methodology suits better than other methodologies the horizontal governance, which the project consortium strives to build.

3.2. TOOLS AND SOFTWARE

The tools from the Agile project methodology employed in the project is Kanban and Scrum (recommended).

Kanban is used to visualize the project progress (see the Figure 5) and list of tasks (see Figure 6). For this purpose, the software Trello is used.

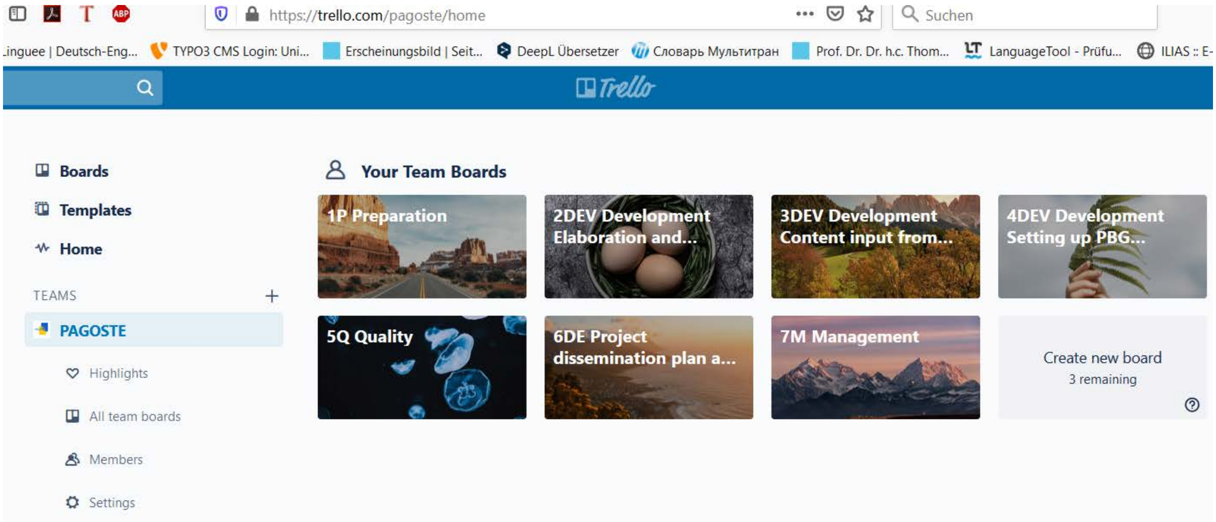


Figure 5. *Boards of the project PAGOSTE in Trello*

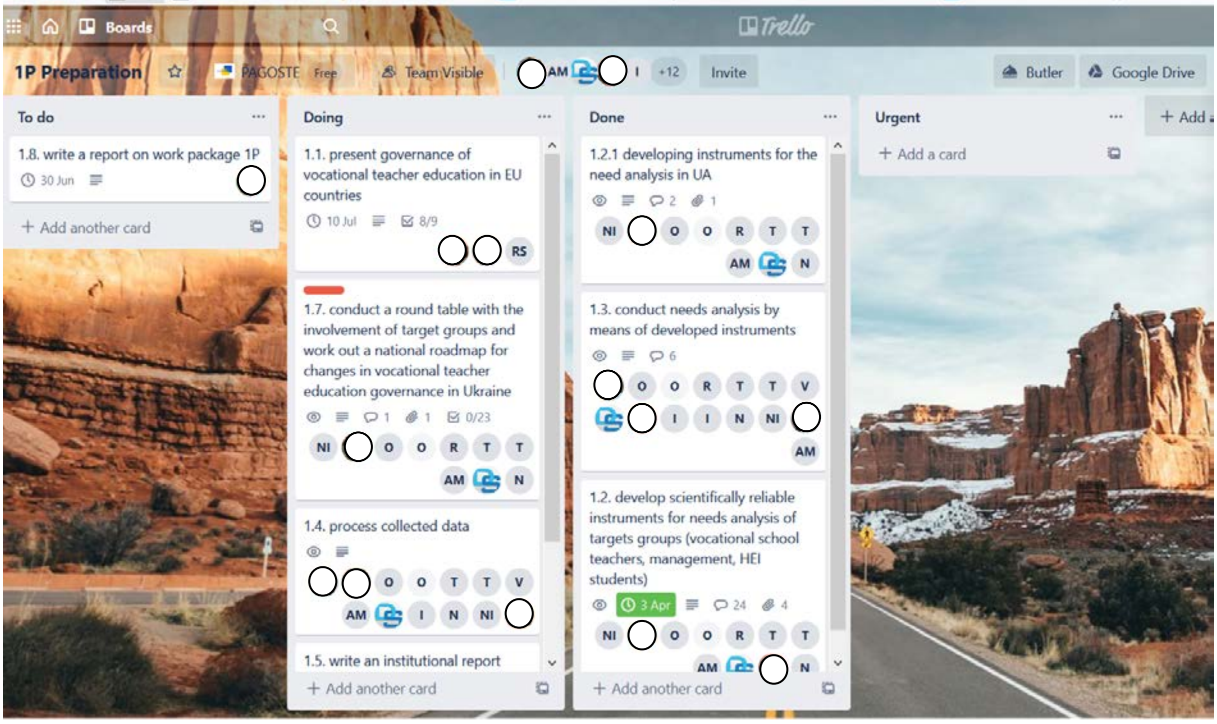


__Figure 6.__ Tasks in the board „Preparation" in Trello

Every project partner has at least one registered representative, who can inform the organisation's project team on the developments. The boards are administered by P1, the leader of the WP7 "Management", but every invited project member can create additional cards, ask questions, comment, assign people to the tasks, link the documents etc., so the boards can stay updated. Such an approach ensures transparency of the project processes.

Scrum is another tool from the Agile methodology, which is recommended to use in the project teams of the partners. The main idea and goal of it is iterative inspection and adaptation (see Figure 7).

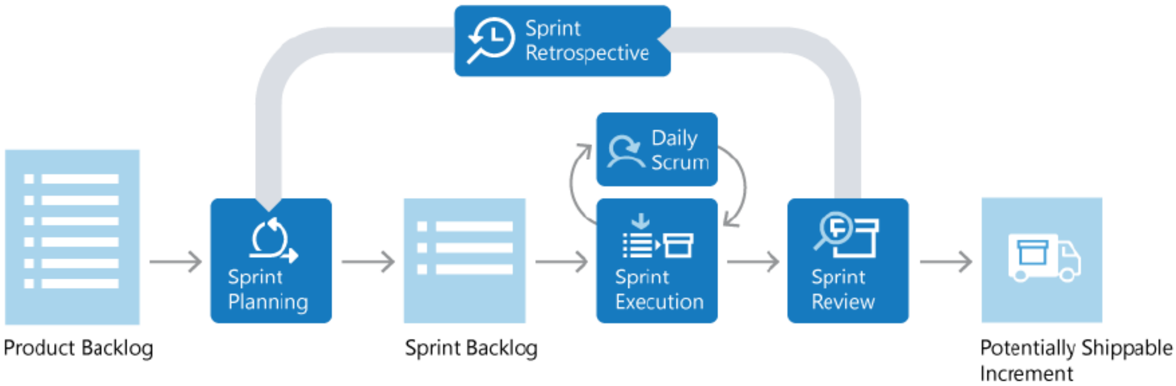


__Figure 7.__ Scrum Cycle (Boer, n/a)

Within the project, the consortium conducts every two or three weeks an online meeting (jour fixe), where updates on the project developments are summarised and retrospected and iterative planning takes place, the state of deliverables is inspected and if necessary changes are adapted.

3.3. ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE AND ROLES

The roles in Erasmus+ projects are presented in Figure 8.

Grant Holders Meeting, Part A, 2020, p.10

Figure 8. *The roles in Erasmus+ projects*

The project consortium adheres to this division and additionally distributes tasks and roles in the way described below.

P1, which is a project coordinator, leads the majority of work packages (WP2, WP3, WP5, WP7). P1

P2, P3 shall make the main input in WP3 by developing and conducting staff trainings and preparing relevant teaching materials. They are also expected to provide expert support to the Ukrainian partners during the implementation of WP2, WP4 and make active contribution in the implementation of the QAS.

P4, P5, P6, P7 are responsible for the development of the PBG concepts, implementing them at their HEIs and based on their experience working out the policy paper how to use PBG mechanisms on the national level. They are also actively involved in the dissemination activities and exploitation of results.

P8 being the state authority in Ukraine in the sphere of education has the biggest potential and competence to exploit the project results on the national level. During the kick-off project workshop in Konstanz on 17.-18.02.2020, the project consortium agreed that P8 shall become the leader of WP4. P8 has also profound expertise in education governance, therefore the project team of P8 will provide the guidance and counselling to the Ukrainian partners, which develop and implement PBG mechanisms.

With regard to expertise and competence, WP1 is lead by P9, the other responsibilities of P9 is to provide continuous scientific support to the development and implementation of PBG, assure scientific quality of the produced results. Since P9 is the only state research institution in the sphere of vocational education, this partner has the task of launching the online platform, which is expected to unite virtually diverse stakeholders in vocational teacher education.

P4 is also a leader of WP6 with active involvement and contribution of all other partners.

The function of strategic decision-making is set to the Steering committee (for more details see chapter 3.4.).

Following the Agile methodology, the consortium avoids strict hierarchy. In the project the WP leaders perform rather a function of the "Scrum master", i.e. supporting the project development teams, clearing organisational flows, keeping process agile and robust, presenting the results to the consortium, inspecting and adapting the work plans.

Figure 9 depicts the organisational structure of the project consortium.

3.4. DECISION-MAKING

The decision-making in the project adheres to the principle of democracy and horizontal governance. Every project partner and project member can initiate a decision, which can be discussed during the project workshops, online video meetings or per email.

For the crucial decisions, a Steering Committee has been appointed within the PAGOSTE consortium, which consists of one representative per partner organisation, who will be responsible for representing the views of their organisation and making decisions on its behalf. The Steering Committee is designed to support the coordinator in the strategic management of the project by making decisions regarding planned activities and strategies, and mediating and deescalating tension in case of conflicts. The decision is made by a mere majority of votes. In stalemate situation, the coordinator has the final decision.

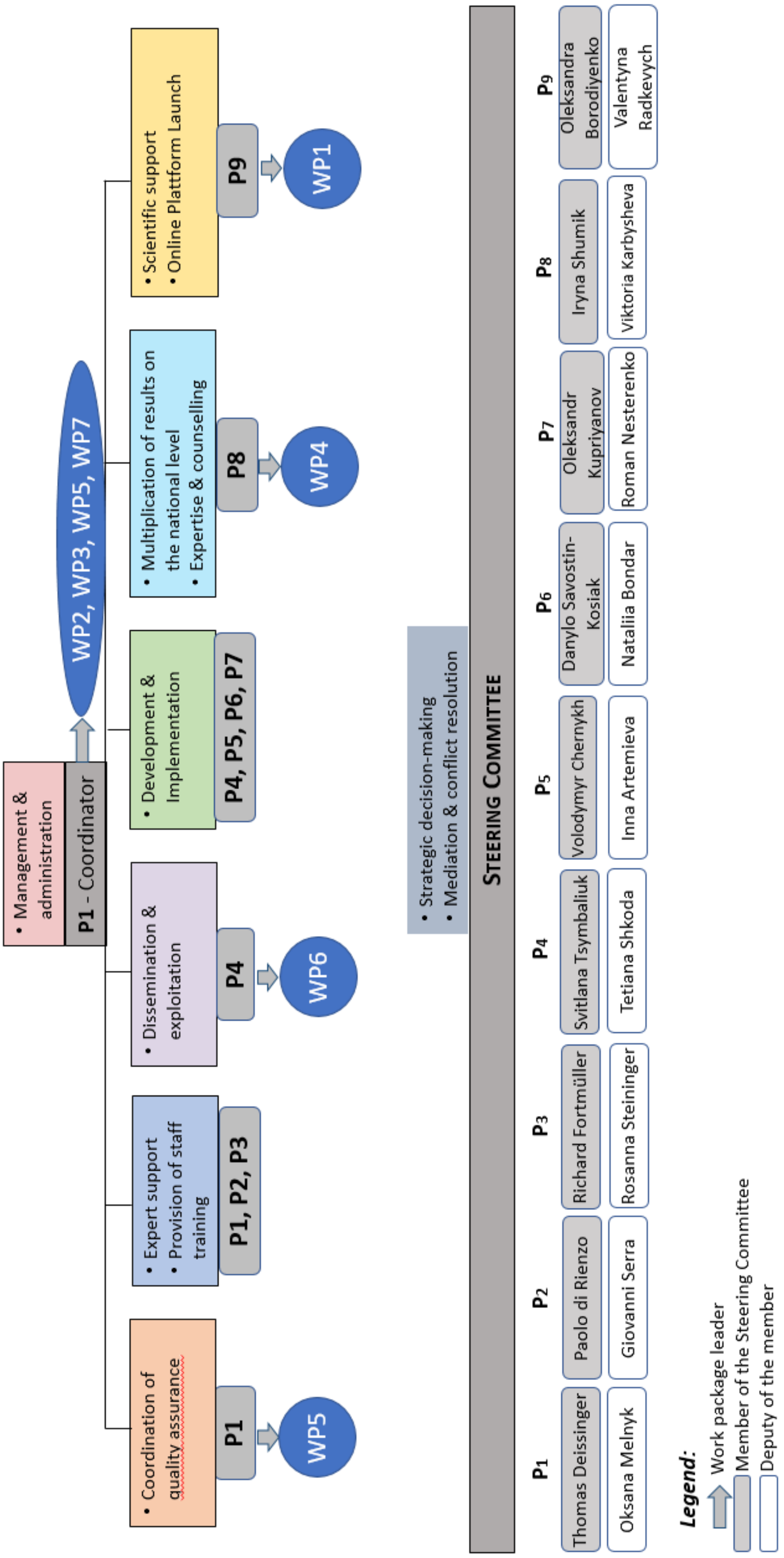


Figure 9. *Organisational structure of the project consortium PAGOSTE*

3.5. COMMUNICATION

The coordinator is solely responsible for communication with the EACEA. As such, this communication will be bilateral in nature; however, the coordinator is equally responsible for keeping the project partners informed of any matters discussed with the EACEA as and where appropriate.

The project consortium will internally adhere to the ***KISS principle***: *Keep It Simple and Straightforward*. The project partners will make communication within the project a key priority. They will ensure regular, transparent, respectful and timely communication.

Communication between the project members takes place face-to-face during the project workshops and other events, during regular online video meetings (jour fixes), by e-mails (the list of contact emails is available on Google Drive) or in extremely urgent cases by messengers (Viber, WhatsApp and Messenger).

All communication that concerns the production of project results, e. g., establishing work groups, distribution of tasks, conceptualizing & drafting reports / analyses / strategies / action plans, organization of dissemination events, submission of reports, relaying information regarding delays / problems / constraint, etc., will be documented via the project's functional e-mail address (Erasmus.pagoste@uni-konstanz.de) by setting it in copy (cc).

For the post correspondence with the coordinator the following address must be used:

Oksana Melnyk (or Thomas Deissinger)
University of Konstanz
Department of Economics
Chair of Business and Economics Education I
Fach 127
Universitätsstraße 10
D-78457 Konstanz
Germany

It is recommended that each project member creates a 'PAGOSTE' folder within his/her email inbox, in order to facilitate ease of filing and referencing. It is important to ensure that the relevant project members are included in the email communication. For example, where the subject matter may have an impact on the activities within another action or even another WP, other partners should be 'carbon copied' on the correspondence. The project members are encouraged to retain all project emails including copies of sent emails. Contact persons should inform the co-ordinator when they will be out of reach, the dates of this and an alternative contact person. In the absence of this information, it will be assumed that the contact person deals with correspondence. Important information from the coordinator is sent to contact persons of the project partners as indicated in the project application and their deputies if available. All other project materials are sent to e-mails of the project partners who are on the contact list of the active project members on Google Drive.

As a file sharing platform ***Google Drive*** is used. Every project partner has an access to the project folders. The project environment in Google Drive is created and administered by P1, the leader of the WP 7 "Management" (see Figure 9). Google Drive contains all project related documents and templates. Project results and interim results will be also uploaded to the file sharing platform. An electronic directory has been created and it is important to keep the order in it.

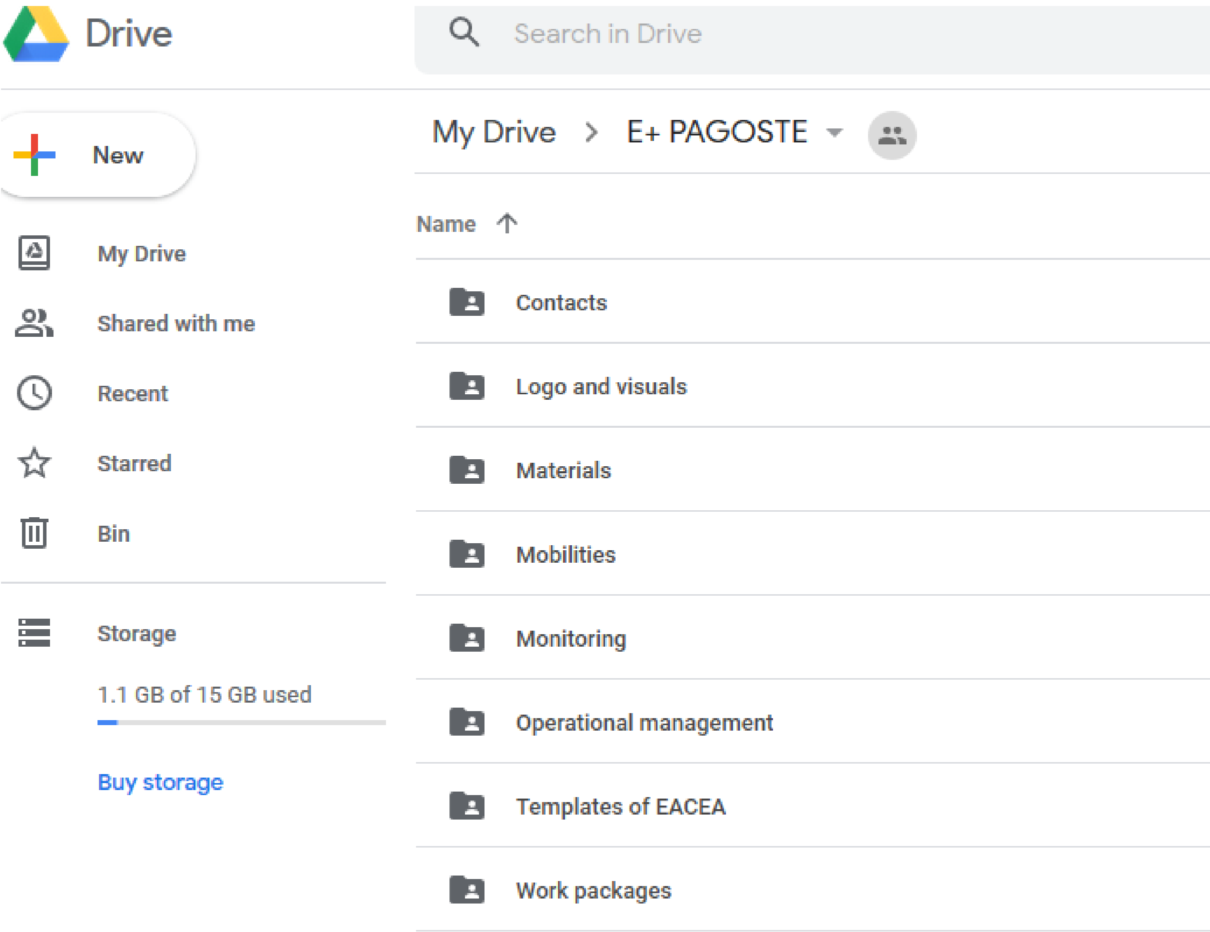


Figure 10. *Project environment in Google Drive.*

Therefore, the file names of deliverables must have the following format:

WPX_Short name of deliverable_v.X_PAGOSTE, where

X – number of the WP,
v.X – version of the deliverable (where applicable).

The results of mobilities (presentations, attendance lists etc.) must have the following name:

WSX_ACRONYM_Short name_Author's Surname_language (e. g. WS1_UKON_Overview of VTE in Germany_Deissinger_en), where

WS – workshop (can be also ST – staff training, RT – round tables, C – conferences, SVH – study visits of HEI staff, STS – study visits of students)
X – number of the event in the category (see chapter 2.1.),

ACRONYM – acronym of the project partner (applicable only to presentation),
Short name – short name of the file,
Author's Surname - applicable only to presentation,
Language – applicable only to presentation.

4. FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION AND REPORTING

The coordinator administers and collects the necessary for the reporting documentation. For this purpose Google Drive may be used, in case of personal sensible data – emailing to the functional e-mail address.

The detailed modalities of financial administration of the project grant with regard to the specific category (staff costs, travel costs and costs of stay, equipment costs and subcontracting costs) are specified in the multilateral and bilateral (between the coordinator and P9) partnership agreements.

The peculiarities of the financial administration are explained in the video presentations from *the Grant Holders Meeting in Brussel on 27.-28.01.2020*, which are available on Google Drive, project website (pagoste.eu) and the website of the EACEA.

The generalising overview of the budget administration in Erasmus+ Projects is presented in Figure 9.

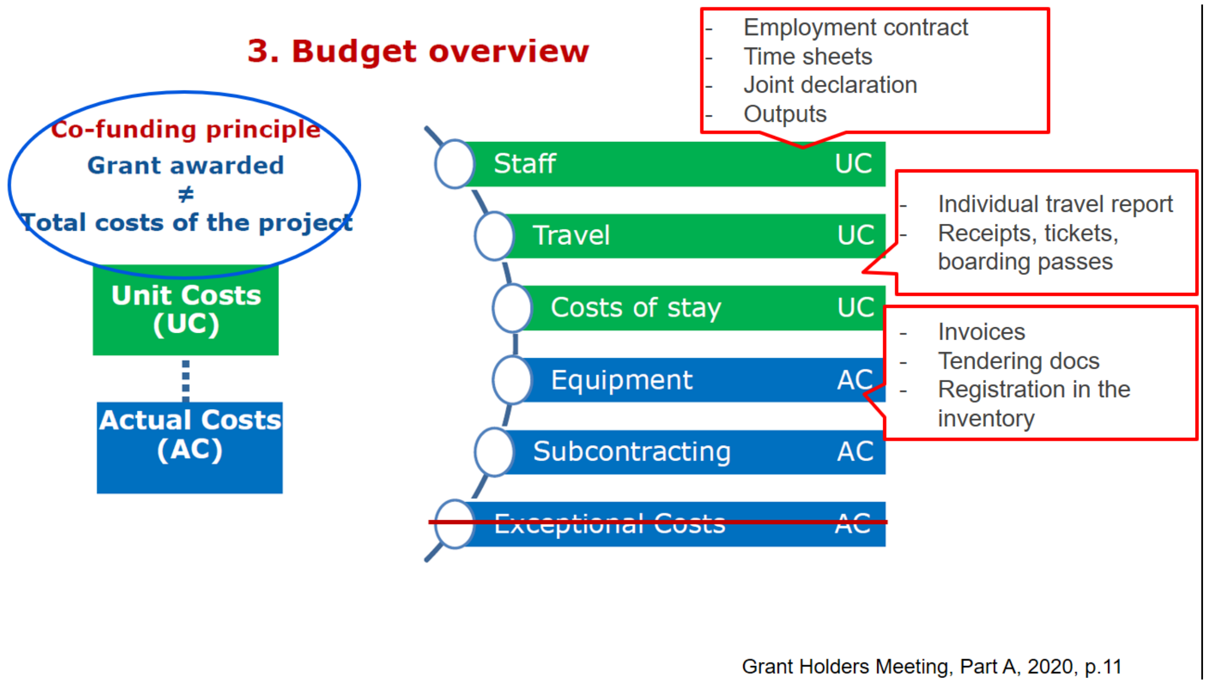


Figure 11. *Overview of the budget administration*

As a general rule, the partners must:

1) keep all possible results to be able to show-case the activities;
2) keep all the original documents with the project records for 5 years, in case of audit.

4.1. ELIGIBLE AND INELIGIBLE COSTS

“An EU grant must not exceed an overall amount which is established by the EACEA at the time of the project selection in the basis of the estimated eligible costs indicated in the application form.

Eligible costs are costs actually incurred by the beneficiary of a grant which meet all of the following criteria:

– they are incurred during the lifetime of the project, with the exception of costs relating to final reports and audit certificates;
– they are indicated in the estimated overall budget of the project;
– they are necessary for the implementation of the project which is the subject of the grant;
– they are identifiable and verifiable, in particular being recorded in the accounting records of the beneficiary and determined according to the applicable accounting standards of the country where the beneficiary is established and according to the usual cost accounting practices of the beneficiary;
– they comply with the requirements of applicable tax and social legislation;
– they are reasonable, justified, and comply with the principle of sound financial management, in particular regarding economy and efficiency.
– They are not covered through EU grants in the form of contribution to unit costs, lump sums or flat-rate financing.

The following costs shall not be considered eligible:

– return on capital;
– debt and debt service charges;
– provisions for losses or debts;
– interest owed;
– doubtful debts;
– exchange losses;
– VAT, when it is considered as recoverable under the applicable national VAT legislation (see above paragraph on Value Added Tax);
– costs declared by the beneficiary and covered by another project or work programme receiving an EU grant (see also above paragraph on eligible indirect costs);
– excessive or reckless expenditure;
– contributions in kind;
– in the case of renting or leasing of equipment, the cost of any buy-out option at the end of the lease or rental period;

– costs of opening and operating bank accounts (including costs of transfers from/to the National or Executive Agency charged by the bank of the beneficiary)" (European Commission, 2018, pp. 258-259)

4.2. STAFF COSTS

Eligible staff costs are costs of the staff when they are performing any of the four different PROJECT-RELATED types of tasks (manager, Researcher/Teacher/Trainer, Technical staff, Administrative staff), which are directly necessary for the achievement of the objective of the project. These costs are supported on the basis of unit costs. Staff costs should be calculated on the basis of the task performed and not on the status of the person.

For the reporting on staff costs project members must provide the documentation that proves that they have worked on the project for some days and they are employed by the partner organisation (beneficiary) and enrolled into the paying system of the partner organisation.

"Working days might include week-end, obligation and bank holidays. For the sake of estimating the budget, working days per individual ***will not exceed 20 days per month or 240 days per year.*** The estimation of the budget results from applying Erasmus+ contribution to unit costs for staff. It is independent from the actual remuneration modalities that will be defined in the partnership agreement and implemented by the beneficiaries.

The profile of staff involved in capacity-building projects is regrouped in four categories:

- **Managers (staff category 1)** (including legislators, senior officials and managers) carry out top managerial activities related to the administration and coordination of project activities.
- **Researchers, teachers and trainers (RTT)** (staff category 2) typically carry out academic activities related to curriculum/training programme development, development and adaptation of teaching/training materials, preparation and teaching of courses or trainings.
- **Technical staff (staff category 3)** (including technicians and associate professionals) carries out technical tasks such as book-keeping, accountancy and translation activities. External translation services and external language courses provided by sub-contracted non-consortium members should be classified as "Sub-contracting costs".
- **Administrative staff (staff category 4)** (including office and customer service clerks) carries out administrative tasks such as secretarial duties. (European Commission, 2018, p. 307)

For the purposes of any financial evaluation and/or audit, beneficiaries will have to be able to justify / prove the following :

- the existence of a formal contractual relationship between the employee and the employer.

- the declared workloads are identifiable and verifiable. Evidence is required of work completed and time spent on the project (e.g. attendance lists, tangible outputs / products, compulsory time sheets);

[…], a duly filled-in staff convention (joint declaration) for each person engaged by the project must be attached to the project accounts and retained by the co-ordinator as supporting documents. The declarations must be signed by the person concerned, then signed and stamped by the person responsible (e.g. the dean) in the institution where this person is normally engaged. For staff performing different categories of tasks a separate convention must be signed for each type of activity. Staff function is unrelated to their official position at the institution. It is based on the activity being performed.

In addition, time-sheets have to be attached to each staff convention. They must indicate:

- the date of the service provided;
- the number of days worked on these dates;
- the tasks performed (short description) in relation to the activity plan" (European Commission, 2018, p. 309-310).

For the description of tasks performed and outputs produced it is advised to follow the structure:

Task: Main verb/Gerund + task description

Output: measurable result of the work outcome

For example: preparing documents for the meeting, such as the agenda, attendance list (…), designing the instruments for the target groups in Ukrainian, such as a questionnaire for HEI students and a questionnaire for HEI staff (…).

"The time-sheets must be signed by the person concerned and countersigned by the person responsible in the institution where this person is normally engaged.

The actual contribution of the EU will be re-calculated globally for the overall project, using the unit cost approach, on the basis of the actual human resources mobilised. The EU contribution to the staff costs cannot exceed 110% of the absolute amount indicated in the grant agreement or its amendments." (European Commission, 2018, p. 309-310).

The full pack of documents for the staff costs must be sent or uploaded in Google Drive electronically and sent per post to the address mentioned in chapter 3.5. according to the schedule in the multilateral partnership agreement. It is advisable to name the files in the following way:

ACRONYM_reporting period in roman number_Surname_Category (e.g.: UKON_I_Melnyk_Tech)

4.3. TRAVEL COSTS AND COSTS OF STAY

Any category of staff (e.g. managers, RTT, technical and administrative staff) under official contract in 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.

Travels are intended for the following activities:

- Teaching/training assignments;
- Training and retraining purposes (only eligible for staff from Partner Countries);
- Updating programmes and courses;
- Practical placements in companies, industries and institutions (only eligible for staff from Partner Countries);
- Project-management related meetings (e.g. for management, coordination, planning, monitoring and quality control activities purposes);
- Workshops and visits for result dissemination purposes.

[…] For the purposes of any financial evaluation and/or audit, beneficiaries will have to be able to justify / prove the following:

- the journeys are directly connected to specific and clearly identifiable project-related activities.
- the journeys actually took place (boarding pass, hotel invoices, attendance list, etc.). No justification will be requested as regards the actual costs of travels and costs of stay. (European Commission, 2018, p. 307, 310)

Travel costs and costs of stay are foreseen for all partner institutions. Travel costs and costs of stay are administered centralised by the coordinator according to the agreement on funding and managing the costs of travel and stay, i.e. the coordinator with the assistance of the hosting partner organisation in advance books flights, accommodation and catering in accordance with the workplan and lists of participants.

Expenses, which cannot be covered for any reason by centralised management system will be reimbursed to the person travelling by the transfer to the partner organisation's bank account and further outpayment after the event and upon the receipts.

The methods however is not applicable to P8 which is conditioned by its status, therefore P8 receives its grant share in advance and is responsible itself for the sound financial management of travel costs and costs of stay and providing to the coordinator all supporting documentation.

A duly filled-in Individual Travel Report (ITR) has to be signed by each participant at the meeting venue. ITRs will be prepared by coordinator and distributed during the meetings.

Supporting documentation in original must be attached to each travel report in order to demonstrate the fact that the travel and the activity actually took place (e.g. travel tickets, boarding passes with points of departure and destination, dates and name of the person travelling, invoices, receipts, proof of attendance in meetings and/or events, agendas, tangible outputs/products, minutes of meetings).

4.4. EQUIPMENT

This budget heading contributes for the purchase of equipment necessary for the implementation of the project:

- 100% of the actual costs may funded by the grant
- Infers to the total purchase cost of the equipment, not the equipment's depreciation!
- Only for Higher Education beneficiaries from Partner Countries (in PAGOSTE: Ukraine)!
- Must be installed as soon practically possible
- Must be recorded in the inventory of the institution where it is installed
- Must bear the Erasmus+ sticker
- The beneficiaries may not split the purchase of equipment into smaller contracts below the threshold!

"For the purposes of any financial evaluation and/or audit, beneficiaries will have to be able to justify / prove the following elements:

- the declared costs are identifiable and verifiable, in particular have been recorded in the accounting system of the beneficiary;
- the equipment is properly registered in the inventory of the institution concerned.

[…] The following should, however, be retained with the project accounts:

- Invoice(s) for all purchased equipment (please note that order forms, pro-forma invoices, quotations or estimates are not considered as proof of expenditure).
- When the threshold of EUR 25 000 is exceeded, documentation on the tendering procedures" (European Commission, 2018, p. 310).

4.5. SUBCONTRACTING

"Subcontracting is intended for specific, time-bound, project-related tasks, which ***cannot*** be performed by the consortium members themselves. It includes self-employed / free-lance experts. Sub-contracting to external bodies should be very occasional. The specific competences and particular expertise needed to reach the project objectives should be found in the consortium and should determine its composition. Sub-contracting for project-management related tasks is therefore not allowed.

Typical activities which may be sub-contracted are (provided they are not carried out by beneficiaries' staff):

- Evaluation activities and auditing
- IT courses
- Language courses
- Printing, publishing and dissemination activities
- Translation services
- Web design and maintenance

In all cases, tasks to be subcontracted ***have to be identified in the proposal*** (based on relevant supporting information, along with clear reasons as to why the task cannot be carried out by the beneficiaries) and the estimated amount entered in the budget. Sub-contracting initially not foreseen in the budget will need prior written approval from the Agency during project implementation.

[…] Subcontracting must be done on the basis of a contract, which should describe the specific task being carried out and its duration. It must include a date, project number and the signature of both parties.

Staff members of co-beneficiaries are not allowed to operate in a subcontracting capacity for the project.

The actual travel costs and costs of stay related to subcontracted service providers have to be declared under the sub-contracting budget heading and be justified and documented" (European Commission, 2018, p. 308-209).

4.6. REFERENCE SYSTEM

The coordinator uses the following reference system for encoding the supporting documents into the financial statement.

Travel costs and costs of stay documents are presented in Table 5:

Table 5. *Reference system for encoding documents of travel costs and costs of stay into the financial statement*

2	3	2	7	1	05
No. in fin statement * *2 – travel costs	**No. of the WP** 1 – Preparation 2 - DEV: Elaboration and implementation of PBG 3 - 3DEV: Content input from European partners on PBG 4 - DEV: Setting up PBG mechanisms for the national level 5- Quality assurance of the project 6 - Project dissemination plan and exploitation of results 7 - Management	**Type of activity** 1 – Project workshops 2 – Staff trainings 3 – Round Tables 4 – conference 5 – study visits of staff 6 – study visits of students 0 - other	**No. of activity within the type of activity**	**No. of a partner according to project application** 1 – UKON 2 – WU 3 – UNITRE 4 – KNEU 5 – SUNPU 6 – NTU 7 – UIPA 8 – MESU 9 – IVET 0 - other	**No. of a project member in the organisation or according to the list of contacts** (must be defined internally) in binary system 01 02 03 etc.

For example

2-3-2-7-1-05 means that this is a travel document (begins with "2"); the third WP Development "Content input from European partners on PBG"; it is a staff training; it is the seventh staff training; it is a document of the first partner – UKON, and the fifth member in the project team of UKON (it is defined internally), in our case, it is Prof.Thomas Deissinger.

For the staff costs the encoding system is presented in Table 6.

Table 6. *Reference system for encoding documents of staff costs into the financial statement*

1	**7**	**3**	**05**	**1**
No. in fin statement * *1 – staff costs	**No. of partner according to project application** 1 – UKON 2 – WU 3 – UNITRE 4 – KNEU 5 – SUNPU 6 – NTU 7 – UIPA 8 – MESU 9 – IVET 0 - other	**Category** 1 – Manager 2 –Researcher/teacher 3 – Technical staff 4 – administrative staff 0 - other	**No. of a project member in the organisation or according to the list of contacts** (must be defined internally) In binary system 01 02 03	**Reporting periods according to the partnership agreement** 1 2 3 4 5

For example

1-7-3-05-1 means that this document relates to the staff costs, and it belongs to the UIPA, this document is for technical staff category, and this is a document of person who is listed as the fifth on the project team of UIPA, it is the first reporting period.

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