



**Developing services for Individuals with Disabilities. [DECIDE]**

Project number: 598661-EPP-1-2018-1-RO-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP

Agreement number: 2018-3492 / 001 – 001

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



# PROJECT MANAGEMENT HANDBOOK

VERSION 1.0 / 2019

## **Executive Summary**

This Project Management Handbook is intended to support partners in the effective and efficient administration, procedural and financial management of the project. It focuses on project implementation procedures, structures and coordination and sets out key responsibilities for EU engagement and interaction. It is intended to support the achievement of project objectives, the effective management of partner progress and the timely delivery of project results.

This Project Management Handbook sets out:

- The procedures and standards to be used in the DECIDE project;
- The key roles and responsibilities;
- How the project will be carried out, measured, monitored, accounted for and safeguarded during the project;

### **1. Introduction**

#### **1.1. DECIDE**

DECIDE focuses upon the Three Strand Implementation of a comprehensive sustainable curriculum for Teacher Trainer Educators and Lecturers (Universities), secondly for Government & State Employee & Policymakers, and thirdly, for NGO in the PC'S. This will foster the right of individuals with special needs to access education, enjoy the right of participation in everyday society and to combat discrimination by instilling awareness and acceptance in society as in line with Bologna Process and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. This in turn facilitates the creation of the Access Liaison Officer role at each institution to promote disability access, and the National Special Needs Awareness Day focus via the nationally strategic Action Groups comprised of universities, public administration institutes, Ministries and NGOs.

The project will promote and develop access to inclusive education, to social integration and to non-discrimination treatment of those with special needs in

education in accordance with Bologna Process and UN criteria. This will initiate the right of individuals with special needs to access education, to enjoy the right of participation in everyday society and to combat discrimination against them in society by instilling awareness and acceptance in society.

Principal outcomes and outputs incorporate English for Specific Purposes (Special Needs and Disability) training for all target groups, DECIDE ECTS training, a complete DECIDE Curriculum for all PC institutions (developed with EU-TUNING), a piloting of 8 DECIDE Introductory and Advanced Modules (see Project Content) through Piloting during 2 semesters.

The Quality Plan aspects focus on monitoring and evaluation of the 8 module Curricula, and of both the dissemination/sustainability friendly "Action Group" (who will create the 10 year National Awareness Day in both countries) and the "Access Liaison Officer" (helping students with special needs issues in each tertiary organisation) Strategic Review and the Integration Process of National Students Union Participation.

This is all overseen by a total quality management via project structures and meetings and daily project management.

## **1.2. Work Package**

The objectives of Work Package are:

- To organise and implement DECIDE from inception to satisfactory conclusion.
- Implement an appropriate management structure within the project and co-ordinate partners in the achievement and delivery of the project objectives
- Monitor progress

It is concerned with undertaking the technical and scientific coordination of the DECIDE project as well as the administrative and financial management. This work package will ensure that appropriate quality control and reporting mechanism are applied across the project to.

## **1.3 Deliverable**

### **1.3.1 Purpose**

The DECIDE Project Handbook has been prepared with two purposes:

- 1) To provide the framework within which the project will be managed by the coordinator;
- 2) To guide project participants through all aspects of the project's management and coordination activities and provide a clear set of rules and expectations to be followed in conducting the project.

### **1.3.2 Objectives**

- ✓ To define the procedures and standards to be used in the DECIDE project;
- ✓ To define key roles and responsibilities;
- ✓ To demonstrate how the project will be carried out, measured, monitored, accounted for and safeguarded during the project;

## **2. Management of the DECIDE Project**

### **2.1. Management structure and procedures**

DECIDE will adopt a management structure based on concepts developed and adopted during previous Commission supported projects. The project has been structured so as to have both executive and distributed management systems in place. Overall the DECIDE project will be managed by the Coordinator who be assisted in their management tasks by work packages (WP) leaders, and the Project management Committee (PMC).

The structure of the project and its management has been designed to ensure that its outputs deliver its objectives and series of key milestones have been identified through the management of which enable the project to progress to time and on budget.

### **2.2. Coordinator**

The Coordinator has overall responsibility for ensuring the success of the DECIDE project, from inception to completion. The coordinator is the leader of the Project Management Committee.

The coordinator's responsibilities will include:

- ✓ Monitoring project progress, with three reporting periods (and associated meetings) occurring during the course of the project, at Year 1 – Month 9, Year 2 – Month 9, year 3 – Month 11;
- ✓ Overall quality control of all deliverables including their timely delivery to the EU Project Officer;
- ✓ Ensuring full ethical compliance;
- ✓ Cooperation with the EU project officer and negotiating any changes to the project structure, where necessary;
- ✓ Directing communications between consortium members (including consent to the grant agreement and consortium agreement by the project partners) and between the consortium and the Commission;

- ✓ Maintaining the accounts of the project and coordinating the timely return of financial returns by partners.
- ✓ Providing a dedicated, interactive online platform utilising online tools for knowledge dissemination, providing various levels of controlled access to focused discussion fora and access to a central online document library, as well as an online eLearning platform.

The coordinator of the project is the Transilvania University of Braşov, Romania, represented by Professor PhD. Eng. Ioan Vasile Abrudan, as Rector.

The day-to-day management of the project will be led by Professor PhD. Eng. Angela Repanovici.

**Contact Details:**

Professor PhD. Eng. Angela Repanovici: [arepanovici@unitbv.ro](mailto:arepanovici@unitbv.ro)

### **2.3. Project Management Committee (PMC)**

The Project Management Committee (PMC) is comprised of a representative of each consortium partner participating in the DECIDE project. The Project Management Committee (PMC) is responsible for the overall success of DECIDE. The PMC has two primary project management functions: executive and administrative.

The executive project management consists of:

- ✓ Project progress review;
- ✓ Ensuring the project remains focused on achieving and delivering its objectives and maintains relevance within the theme of the framework matrix;
- ✓ Co-ordination and application of measures/procedures for quality control;
- ✓ Resolving any technical, administrative or contractual issues;
- ✓ Ethical consideration of the project work and deliverables;
- ✓ Preparation and distribution of non-technical reports, including exploitation plans;
- ✓ Approval and acceptance of final versions of technical reports prepared by the Partners;



- ✓ Ensuring the preparation of implementation strategies and agreements for the project results.

The administrative management consists of:

- ✓ Maintaining accurate consolidated records of costs, resources, and time;
- ✓ Preparing and submitting the cost statements of all partners;
- ✓ Remaining in close contact with the Education, Audio-visual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) and the Project Officer
- ✓ Communicating with other projects and co-ordinating dissemination and presentations.

The PMC will meet 6 times during the course of the project. Four of the steering group meetings will take place online. If there is a need expressed by the majority of the representatives, additional sessions will be arranged.

### **3. Project Workplan & Implementation**

#### **3.1. Overview of Project Components**

DECIDE is broken into 5 WPs where each WP contains a set of associated and related tasks. The overall WP plan has been agreed by all parties and implements a commonly agreed work plan, deliverables and milestones. The interlinkages and relationships between WP's are illustrated below:

DECIDE is a 36-month project that has been designed to maximize coordinated and supportive activities that will advance the understanding of the opportunities and challenges of inclusion of people with disabilities from the involved partner Countries. DECIDE will proceed in 5 fully integrated work packages. The accompanying Gantt chart shows the timings of activities across the WPs.

The WPs have the following responsibilities and interfaces:

#### **WP1: Preparation prior to development**

Project commencement will see the undertaking of various Needs Detection activities to gather information and interpret data to identify the performance areas for improvement within PC institutions.

A Strategic review of education needs services in PC institutions will be undertaken to determine existing (implicit or explicit) vision, mission, objectives and strategies. In order to develop a future Consortium Strategy for PC universities we must know current strategies and measure their success to date and opportunities for harmonisation.

The first step of Curriculum Development Policy process will be taken with agreement of the Mission Statement for Consortium universities - which will outline for each in agreement the purpose of this policy and the audience to whom it is addressed.

#### **WP2: Development of the project**

This Work package contains all the main elements for the substantial development of the project including English for Specific Purposes Training, Action Group and



Access Liaison Officer Strategic Review, the development of the DECIDE Curriculum (8 modules), Development of ONLINE Platform and QA Guidelines for population of the site

It focuses on the Training Programme Modules 1-8 with EU-TUNING and the Pilot 1 of DECIDE Modules 1-8

Extremely important is Pilot 2 DECIDE Modules 2-8 with its Strategic Train the Trainer “Home Multiplier” programme by PC Universities for NGO’s and Government which is conducted in local language as NGO and Government participants, due to lower English levels did not attend main Special Needs training in EU.

This activity taught in their native languages corrects this issue. It is perfectly located as all materials from Pilot 1 have been QA evaluated and are now optimal for this activity.

Population of website with Project Module materials for Piloting 1 and dissemination reports and dissemination materials for mass media campaign.

### **WP3: Quality in the DECIDE project**

DECIDE Action Group formed presented in each PC institution.

Relations between PC institutions and other relevant stakeholders evaluated-DECIDE Network plan identified. National Student Unions are invited and integrated into the group so as to ensure involvement of students in the strategic development of libraries in the target PCs.

-Creation of Library Access Liaison Librarian role in each PC institution in the project to help ensure libraries are accessible and relevant for people with Special Needs and Disabilities

-Creation of Specialised “Subject Liaison Librarians” to ensure quality library support to Academic Departments and specific academic subject areas

Involvement of academic staff and students and people with special needs in the development of curriculum for special needs persons.

Quality indicators will be evaluated by EU partners and the lead university of each Partner Country. The lead institution in each Partner Country will monitor project effectiveness across the partners in their country. This will be achieved via termly video conference and one monitoring visit per year. The monitoring visit will

comprise observations and inter-partner observations and interviews. Lead partners will create evaluation reports to be forwarded to the Grant Holder after each termly monitoring video conference and after each monitoring visit.

EU partners will conduct termly video conference and one monitoring visit per year for each lead partner. Each EU partner will create evaluation reports to be forwarded to the Grant Holder after each termly monitoring video conference and after each monitoring visit.

Nevertheless, QA Guidelines will be introduced from the Kick Off Meeting and in reviewing the Workplan one can see a co-ordinated approach to QA based on previous experience and best practice.

#### **WP4: Dissemination and Exploitation in the project**

The dissemination strategy will specify preferred channels used by all EU and PC stakeholders and we are aware of the fact that the channels of communication have to be right in order to make the maximum impact. A detailed plan of the dissemination will be drafted outlining dissemination activities. The dissemination strategy will comprise of dissemination of the project process, the project results and promotion of DECIDE programs which will be promoted before, during and post project (DECIDE Action Group, Library Access Liaison Librarians). The strategy will be aimed at all stakeholders and beneficiaries such as universities, public administration institutes, government employees in education and social services (especially public libraries, for support, implementation). Local communities and the General Public in the PC countries will be systematically informed about the new library reforms through a 10 year Library National Awareness Day.

The National Awareness Day will be held twice within the lifetime of the project with a SWOT analysis after the first one. The strategic aim is to target society as a whole in two countries and make the national radio, television and appear in the national print media. The activities will be supported by the Module 2 Marketing - Introduction to Theory and Practice - Creating Awareness Campaign Strategies.

Thus, this WP is the culmination of the Marketing Module of the DECIDE curriculum. As such, training development for this activity will have taken place in WP2; at DECIDE Curriculum training in LIT.



Each Partner Country will appoint an Action Group who will create press-releases and arrange press-conferences for the local mass media at least twice between month 12 and month 36. EU partners will finance attendance and other EU conferences to publicise this project.

Dissemination strategy will be supported by the website platform (information, downloadable modules, forum, and to deliver all supporting documents e.g. reports, guidelines, guides.) available also as a link on all PC and EU websites.

### **WP5: Management of the Project**

UTBV will undertake activities to ensure sound management of the project and will perform the duties of authorising officer and Coordinator of the project. With its significant experience the Curriculum design & ECTS area, TU Dresden will focus in partnership with EU and PC's on developing the Development Strategy for the project, specifically- the design and implementation of the DECIDE modular curriculum in partnership with the PC target group and partners as well as implementation of the Train the Trainer programme for the project.

Management structure for this project will be as follows:

Project Management Committee (PMC) responsible for:

-General monitoring of progress, project implementation & project management, conflict resolution.

Principal outcomes and outputs incorporate a start off QA module called English for Specific Purposes (Special Needs & Disability) training for all target groups (led by EU partners - with travel from EU to PC at); DECIDE training, (led by EU partners-travel by PC to Limerick). Complete Curriculum for all PC institutions developed with EU-TUNING via video conferencing - this action will be led by the PMC and PC lead for each country). Piloting of 8 DECIDE Introductory and Advanced Modules (see Project Content) through Piloting during 2 semesters (each institution will lead the piloting).

Quality Plan aspects focus on monitoring and evaluation of the 8 module Curricula, and of both the dissemination/sustainability friendly "Action Group" (who will create the 10-year National Awareness Day in both countries) and the "Access Liaison Officer" (helping students with special needs issues in each tertiary organisation).

This is all overseen by a total quality management via project structures and meetings and daily project management. The Total Quality Management will be led by the PMC and will involve video conferencing, QA visits to each PC institution and QA meetings at the 'kick off', intermediate and final meetings.

The important connection with the Government Servants will be provided through the EU & PC Consortium and relevant specialists from relevant spheres. NGOs are not well developed in these countries in this area but those that do exist will collaborate with various committees and relevant Government Departments.

However, all quality-proved trainings will be done as the result of multiplication trainings received from the PC University staff for government & NGOs owing to the training interventions made possible by the project

### **3.2. Work Package Management**

Each Work Package will be led and co-ordinated by a Work Package Lead. It is their responsibility to co-ordinate the activities in the work package. They are responsible for:

- ✓ The performance and progress of the WP with regard to the planned milestones
- ✓ The transfer of information to other WPL and to the partners.
- ✓ Reporting of any possible problems to the Project Coordinator.

The leaders of each Work package are as follows:

- ✓ University of Crete: Lead Preparation WP
- ✓ TU Dresden lead: Development WP
- ✓ Middlesex University: Lead Quality WP
- ✓ Limerick Institute of Technology: Lead Dissemination WP
- ✓ Transilvania University of Brasov: Lead Management WP

EU partners activities will be supported by all the PC institutions but particularly TUIT, Tashkent, Uzbekistan; KATU, Astana, Kazakhstan and KSUBG, Khujand, Tajikistan who will lead the project on the Country level and will provide important support to EU partners.

A Work Package Management plan will be completed for each Work Package and used by the Work Package leader to manage progress of the Work Package. The WP

Management table is intended to assist WPLs in managing the project and includes provision for key activities per task, estimated person month per activity per partner, a schedule with key dates by which key actions must be completed by, and the specific inputs required by each WP partner. This may be supplemented by a project management

### **3.3. Work Package Tasks**

#### **WP1 Tasks**

Special Needs in education detection and Analysis Strategic Review, Training needs detection. Preparation for meeting and Conference activities, Training packages, Training programmes.

#### **WP2 Tasks**

English for specific purposes training for PC partners in the project, Preparation of ECTS Module Training programme using EU Tuning Method; DECIDE Curriculum Training for PC institutions; Pilot 1 of DECIDE Curriculum; Pilot 2 of DECIDE Curriculum Special Focus on NGO and Gov Dissemination Training, DECIDE website.

#### **WP3 Tasks**

Action Group Strategic Review; Evaluation of Pilots 1 and 2 (in Russian & English for NGO & Gov) of DECIDE Curriculum, Quality Assurance Reports, Quality Assurance Training.

#### **WP4 Tasks**

Mass media campaign, Website population, International conference, Sustainability of Modules, final conference

#### **WP5 Tasks**

DECIDE Project Coordination Reports, Project Kick Off Meeting, Intermediate Management Meeting and Final Project Meeting

### **3.4. Work Plan**

A full description of Work plan, is contained in Annex 1 of this handbook. This will be used as the main reference point for the project.



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### **3.5. Project Deliverables**

All project deliverables are associated with a specific work package task. It will be the responsibility of the Task Lead to coordinate the drafting of the deliverable and ensure the inputs of other partners where necessary.

Annex 2 provides an overview of all the deliverables, the lead partner and the deadlines for internal review and submission to the Commission.



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## **4. Project Progress Monitoring**

### **4.1. Periodic Reporting**

All partners will provide a yearly Progress Report. This will enable the coordinator to monitor the technical progress of the project in relation to work package plans, deliverable submission and project milestones as well as providing an overview of resources committed by all partners.

As well as monitoring progress on achieving work plan objectives, the progress report is also a useful monitor in terms of financial reporting, and will complement the financial recording template, referred to in Section 8 below.

## **5. Internal Consortium Communication**

### **5.1. File Sharing**

In order to facilitate efficient internal communication among partners an electronic project management facility, Google Docs will be utilized at the request of partners. The Google Docs environment has been created and has been shared with all PIs and day-to-day partner contacts. Further information will be circulated to partners when the Google Docs environment is complete. This will include important information about editing MS Office documents on this platform. Google Docs will capture the day to day activities of the project, facilitating the upload and circulation of draft and final documentation, important references and other material including:

- ✓ A list of consortium partners and their contact details, addresses, telephone details, email address, messaging details etc;
- ✓ An electronic directory for storage of project related documents, which can be uploaded, viewed and downloaded by all partners. Partners will be invited to provide their comments/opinions on draft versions of project-related documents, where appropriate;
- ✓ List of project milestone and actions;

### **5.2. Email Correspondence**

In recognition of the fact that many organisations participate in multiple projects under various European and international programmes, in addition to domestic projects, it is important that all email correspondence is headed with ‘DECIDE’ in the title, followed by a short title giving context to the content contained therein, e.g. DECIDE: [Subject].

It is recommended that each participant creates a dedicated ‘DECIDE’ folder within his/her email inbox, in order to facilitate ease of filing and referencing.

It is important to ensure that the relevant partners 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.

Partners are encouraged to retain all project emails including copies of sent emails. Day-to-day contacts should inform the co-ordinator of any period when they will be out of contact, the dates of this and an alternative contact. In the absence of this information it will be assumed that the PI will be covering the absence and will deal with correspondence.

### **5.3. Video, Tele-Conference, E-meetings and Skype Calls**

It has been agreed, in the interest of an efficient and transparent project programme, that conference calls will take place on a monthly basis. E-meetings will take place for the duration of the project.

### **5.4. Project Meetings**

Six meetings of the consortium are planned to be held over the course of the project. Each of these meetings will constitute a PMC meeting.

A meeting agenda will be issued 3 weeks prior to the meeting (in draft format and allowing partners to make contributions). Minutes will be issued within 2 weeks of each meeting and uploaded to Google Docs.

### **5.5. Travel / Accommodation**

Travel/accommodation details should be circulated during the Workshop preparation by the host organisation but at least 8 weeks in advance of the meeting.

### **5.6. External Communication**

External communication is outlined in The Communication and Dissemination Strategy & Plan.



## **5.7. Conflict Resolution**

As a general rule, the approach to project management in DECIDE will aim at a consensus building and promoting in order to ensure the maximum cooperation within the consortium. However, in the unlikely event that a conflict arises, a majority rules approach will be adopted so that the issue may be resolved through a fair and transparent decision-making process. Decisions will be taken according to the majority of votes (one vote per consortium partner). Where possible, issues will be resolved at WP level; with each consortium partner participant in the WP allocated one vote. Where the issue could not be resolved at the WP level then the matter will be reported to the GA with appropriate supporting evidence, which may include a full report or a presentation of the main issues of contention. The PMC will review the issue and report back with a final decision, which will be taken by majority vote, within one month from receipt of report/presentation. In the unlikely event that the PMC cannot resolve a dispute within the consortium on a legal matter, the consortium agreement will provide for the use of a court of arbitration in a neutral country.

## **6. Quality Control**

### **6.1. Procedures**

Administrative quality control procedures will be disseminated by the coordinator to WP leaders. These procedures will address both the execution of the project WP and tasks and the actual deliverables of each WP. An internal quality control process will be established to ensure compliance with project standards and to ensure proper feedback channels.

### **6.2. Deliverables**

To ensure the quality of all project deliverables to following conventions:

**6.2.1 Template** DECIDE project deliverables will all use the deliverable template in MS Word.

**6.2.2 File Naming Convention** Deliverables will use a file name convention as follows:

- ✓ The name of the project as the first part of the title;
- ✓ The deliverable number;
- ✓ The Deliverable Title

**6.2.3 Internal Review** All deliverables will be subject to an internal review.

Reviewers will be appointed from within the consortium for each deliverable. It will be their responsibility to review the deliverable in accordance with the review criteria. The review criteria will be It will be the responsibility of the task leader to ensure the deliverable is submitted to the co-ordinator at least 2 weeks before the deliverable is due for submission to ensure this process. Reviewers will provide feedback one week after this date. Task leads will have one week to finalise the report and provide to the co-ordinator 1 day before the submission deadline.

## **7. Ethical Considerations**

### **7.1. Risk, Quality and Ethics Management Plan**

The DECIDE project draws heavily on the participation of stakeholders involved in the area of inclusion; in particular, relating to persons with disabilities.

Because of the nature of the project, it is crucial to consider the ethical and legal implications of the project activities. This includes matters of privacy, legality, authorisation, protection, ethics and general conduct regarding environmental data, personal information and research results.

The DECIDE project coordinator will have overall responsibility for the ethical management of the project. Each WP includes quality control, assessment and review as an integral component of the work. Included in this will be a strong focus on whether any ethical issues could arise. Any issues or questions that may arise in relation to ethics must be reported to the co-ordinator for final decision. The DECIDE project coordinator is responsible for the proper documentation and review of any issue that arises which may have an ethical implication. The project reports will contain a comprehensive account of the ethics management over the duration of the reporting period.

The Quality Plan will establish procedures to ensure all ethical and legal issues are dealt with appropriately and will seek to ensure that all project activities are carried out in accordance with data protection and privacy directives. The plan will provide strict guidelines and requirements for dealing with data, persons and observations.

## **8. Periodic Monitoring, Reporting and Budgets**

### **8.1. Periodic Reporting**

Over the course of the project, three formal Periodic Reports must be submitted to the European Commission.

All partners must keep time records of the hours worked on the action. The technical progress reports described in Section 5 will assist partners in keeping track of their efforts in carrying out tasks.

These reports should include:

a) Periodic technical report:

- ✓ An explanation of the work carried out,
- ✓ An overview of the progress towards the objectives of the action,
- ✓ A summary for publication,
- ✓ A questionnaire, on economic and societal impact

b) Periodic financial report:

- ✓ An individual financial statement,
- ✓ An explanation of the use of resources

In accordance with the criteria of Erasmus Plus, it is the responsibility of all partners to complete the financial report for their organisation on the ECAS participant portal.

### **8.2. Timesheets**

All partners must keep time records of the hours worked on the action in accordance with the rules outlined for Erasmus Plus projects.

Partners will report the person resource used by work package in the quarterly and periodic monitoring reports.