SOUTH EAST EUROPE
Transnational Cooperation Programme

Programme co-funded by the EUROPEAN UNION

NEWADA

"NETWORK OF DANUBE WATERWAY ADMINISTRATIONS"

South-East European Transnational Cooperation Programme

COMMUNICATION HANDBOOK

MANUAL OF COOPERATION

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1 GLOSSARY - JUSTIFICATION OF TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Term	Abbreviation	Explanation
Activity	Act.	Former "Sub Work Package", project phase unit.
Activity Leader	AL	Responsible person who co-ordinates the Activity workflow.
Advisory Council	AC	Consultation body of the project consisting of Observers.
Application for Reimbursement	AfR	Document including expenditures reported (SEE Implementation Manual, Chapter 4)
Board of Directors	BoD	Steering Committee of the project, the waterway authorities delegate their Director/Manager/President. It is chaired by the Lead Partner's Representative.
Budget line	BL	BL is the cost categorisation of the budget. Categories are staff, overheads, travel and accommodation, external experts and services, equipment, investments, financial charges and guarantees.
Co-ordinator (of the Project Partner)	-	Every Project Partner should assign a Co-ordinator for the project, who is responsible for co-ordination of organisational issues on PP level. The Co-ordinator is also a main contact point for its organisation and responsible for facilitating internal PP communication. Technical co-ordination is not a task of the Co-ordinator.
Communication Handbook	CH	Guideline about internal procedures and communication between partners to enhance project workflow and co-operation.
D4D	D4D	▪ Abbreviation for the project "Data warehouse for Danube waterway", http://www.d4d.info/ ▪ D4D is also an infrastructure to convert GIS data into maps (ENCs, CdP, etc.).
DANewBe Data	-	Abbreviation for the project "Digitally Advanced New Cross-Border Exchange of Waterway Data" http://www.d4d.info/index.php?id=11
Description of Work	DoW	Detailed definition of project activities based on the approved project proposal.
DISC Conference	-	Danube Information Services Conference; main dissemination event for the project NEWADA, organised once a year.
Dissemination	-	External communication of project activities and results to

		provide transparency and publicity on European co-funding and implementation of project according to EU aims.
Dissemination Plan	DP	Strategy for external communication of project activities and results.
First Level Control	FLC	The Programme body which certifies the costs of the Project Partner as a first level check. When costs are approved, the FLC issues the "Declaration on validation of expenditures".
Joint Technical Secretariat	JTS	The main administrative body of the Programme, which executes the Programme (supporting the MA) and communicates between the Programme actors such as the LPs, MA, FLCs.
Lead Partner	LP	The Leading Project Partner, responsible for the overall co-ordination, management and representation of the project. Personally the Project Manager (employee of the Lead Partner) represents the Lead Partner on operative level.
Lead Partner Principle	LPP	The Lead Partner acts as an administrative link between the project and the programme, and as such, bears responsibility for ensuring the project's implementation. However, each partner bears full responsibility for its own actions. A Partnership Agreement serves as the contractual basis of this co-operation.
Managing Authority	MA	The body that officially manages the Programme and signs Subsidy Contract with the LPs. The MA is supported by the JTS.
Observer	-	Representative of relevant authorities and organizations, which submitted observer declaration to the NEWADA proposal.
Partnership Agreement	PSA	The contract where the PPs agree on the common work and its conditions. It is a mandatory document for SEE projects.
Project Core Team	-	Operative project body consisting of the Project Manager and Work Package Leaders.
Project Manager (of the Lead Partner)	PM	Employee of the LP, who is responsible for executing LPs tasks on operative level. Main Manager and contact person for the project.
Project Partner	PP	Official partner within the SEE project with budget and responsibilities. It has signed the PA.
Project Team	PT	Or consortium. The aggregate of Project Partners including the Lead Partner. The Project Team members (PPs) should have signed the partnership agreement.
Quality Manager	QM	The person who was appointed by the LP to be responsible for the

		Quality Management of the project. The system is defined in Chapter 4.2 of the CH.
Request of quality revision	-	Quality management tool that provides a standardized way how to ask the PPs for revision of the document or other output delivered.
SEE Programme	-	South East Europe Transnational Cooperation Programme of the European Union http://www.southeast-europe.net/en/
Subsidy Contract	-	The legal document to be undersigned between the MA and the LP defining duties and responsibilities within the SEE Programme.
Task	-	Activities are divided into tasks. Smallest unit of the project description.
Work Package	WP	The project is divided into work phases. Largest unit of the project structure. Work Packages are further divided into Activities (formerly called Sub Work Packages).
Work Package Leader	WPL	The person responsible for the overall technical co-ordination and management of the Work Package. Also serves as a contact point for WP-related technical issues before contacting the Project Manager.
WP Implementation plan	-	Detailed implementation guideline informing about the necessary steps on outputs of each WP.

2 SCOPE OF DOCUMENT

The Communication Handbook (CH) is an agreement between the Project Partners on common project work procedures and internal communication. General rules for the project co-operation are outlined in the document. The CH shall be discussed by the Project Partners and approved by the Board of Directors.

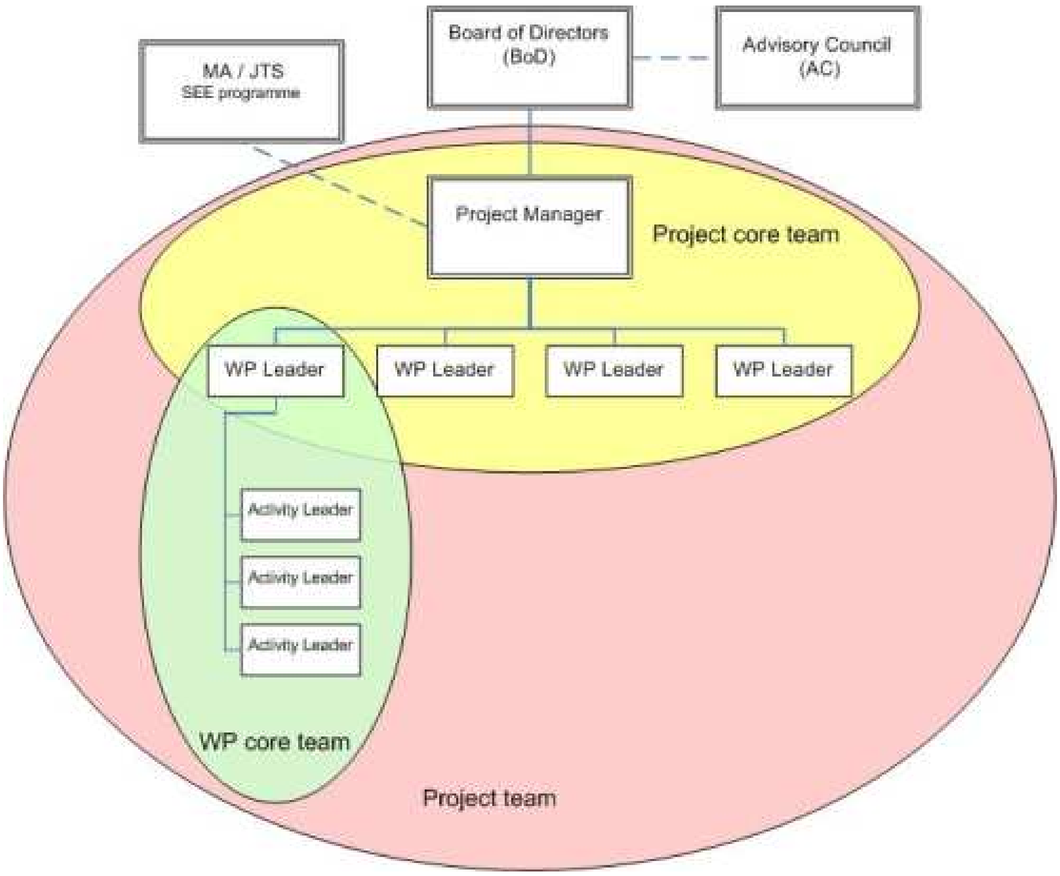
The whole project is based on co-operation and partnership. Only, if all the Project Partners work together the project goals can be achieved and will lead to a better co-operation within the Danube area. Therefore it is necessary that all Project Partners are aware of the responsibilities and duties they have in the course of the project. Each member of the Project Team shall be aware of the content of the Communication Handbook and give all necessary support to the Project Manager, to the Work Package Leaders and to the Activity Leaders for their work.

This document deals only with internal project issues, all other issues concerning external communication and dissemination will be included in the Dissemination Plan.

The Communication Handbook and the Dissemination Plan are both in line with the SEE Implementation Manual 1.2 document.

3 ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

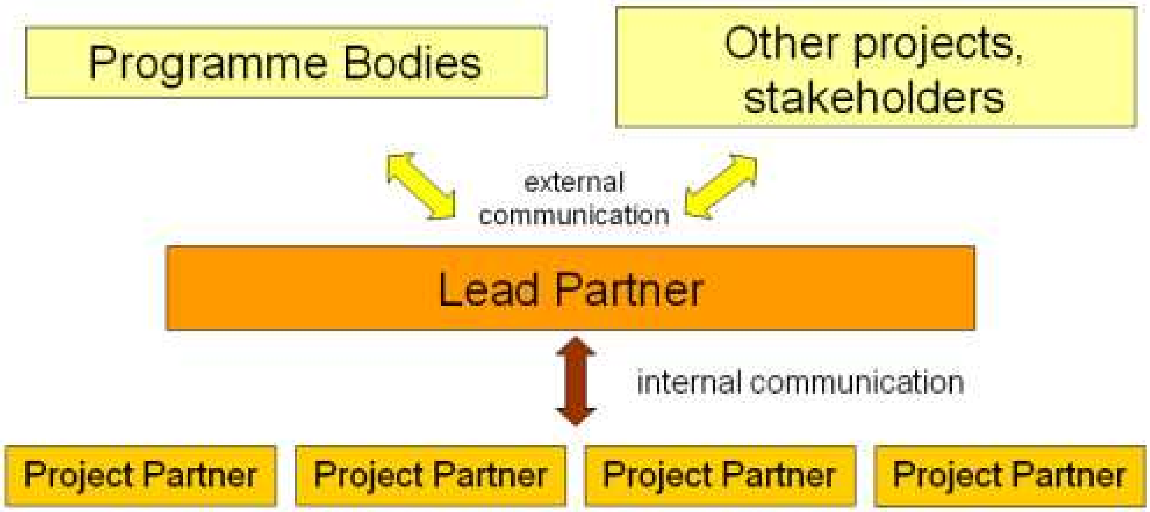
The Board of Directors is the strategical supervising body of the project supported by experts of the Advisory Council. The Project Manager is the operative co-ordinator and manager of the project, who reports regularly to the BoD. He is also the contact point for the SEE Programme bodies. The Project Team consists of all persons who execute the project on operative level.



NEWADA project structure

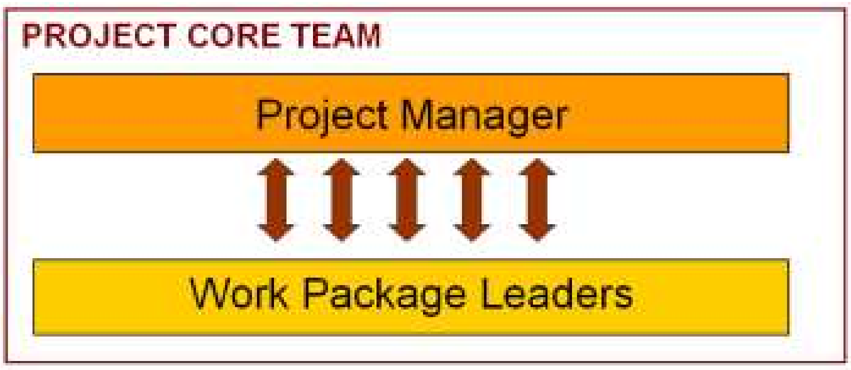
The organisation of the project is structured according to the Lead Partner Principle, which is clearly defined by the SEE Programme. The Lead Partner (LP) co-ordinates the whole project internally and represents it to the Programme bodies and to the other stakeholders. The LP shall transfer all information to the Project Partners (PP). The PPs should not communicate in relevant issues about the project without approval of the LP. The LP should know about all relevant project issues and should serve as a main contact point for the SEE Programme bodies, external stakeholders and for the PPs as well.

The ***Board of Directors*** is the supervising body of the project on strategical level supporting the work of the consortium. The BoD consists of the directors of the waterway administrations and acts as the steering committee of the project, dealing with strategic issues like objectives of waterway administrations, communication strategies and the exchange of trainees and experts. Chairman of the Board of Directors is Mr. Manfred Seitz from the via donau. The activities of the BoD are supported by the ***Advisory Council***, consisting mainly of observers like representatives of river commissions (Danube Commission, Sava Commission), the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR), the GIS Forum Danube as well as other relevant organisations. Their expert knowledge will support the execution of the tasks and will help to disseminate the project results on national and international level.



Division of external and internal communication

In order to improve the work, the project was structured into Work Packages (WP) and Sub Work Packages, so called Activities (Act.) and responsible WP Leaders (WPLs) and Activity Leaders (ALs) were selected by the LP to support the Project Management. The so called Project Core Team consists of the Project Manager and the Work Package Leaders. Project Core Team is an operative project management body that discusses project issues and prepares material. It is chaired by the Project Manager.

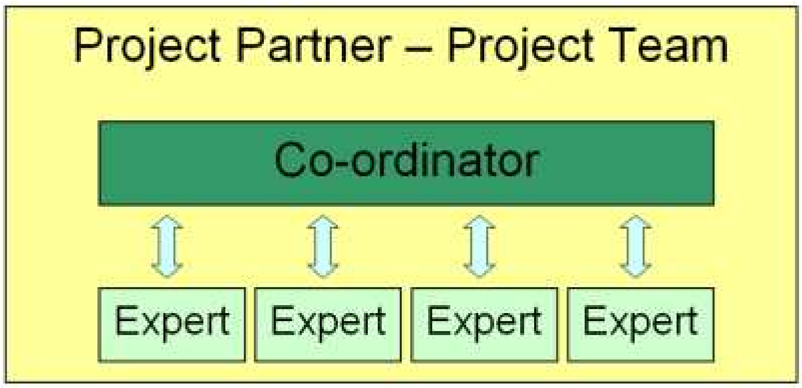


Structure of the Project Core Team

The Project Manager delegates tasks to the Work Package Leaders (WPLs) to decentralise work to Work Package level. Therefore all PPs should try to solve problems, discuss issues with Activity Leaders - AL (if exist) or Work Package Leaders first. If the issue cannot be solved on Work Package level, the Project Partner can contact the Project Manager.

Main communication channels and workflow inside the project

All Project Partners shall have a project staff, which is co-ordinated by the Co-ordinator of the Project Partner. The PP's Co-ordinator is the contact person for the Project Management and for other PPs as well. The Co-ordinator is responsible for co-ordinating organisational issues and supporting his/her Project Team consisting of experts to fulfill project duties. The Co-ordinator should have an overview of all the activities where his/her organisation is involved. The Co-ordinator or expert of the Project Team should inform the Project Manager or WPLs in advance when he/she can foresee any obstacles that can influence project work.



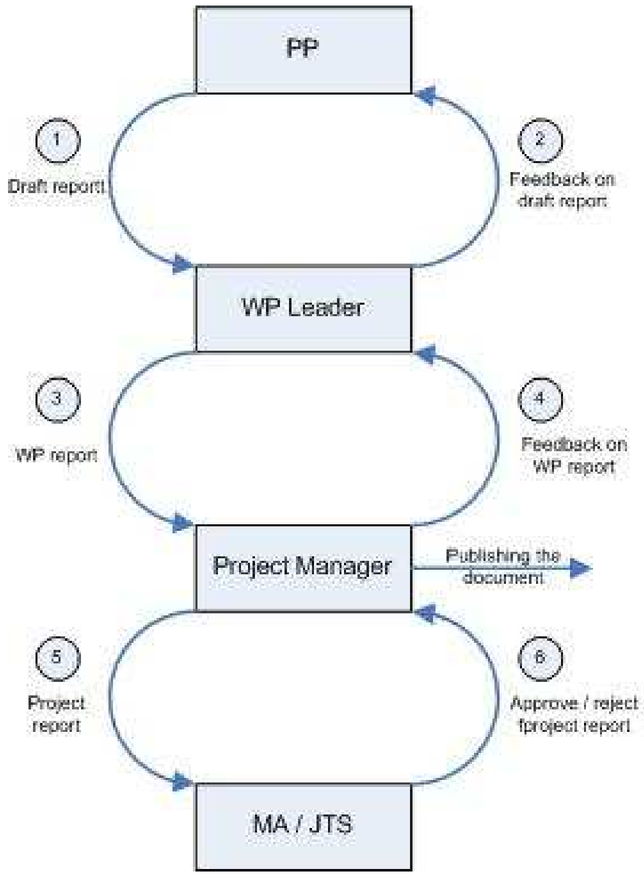
Project Team structure of a Project Partner (PP)

4 PROCEDURE

4.1 *Progress and financial reporting*[1]

4.1.1 *Progress reporting*

(Reference to the SEE Implementation Manual Chapter 4)

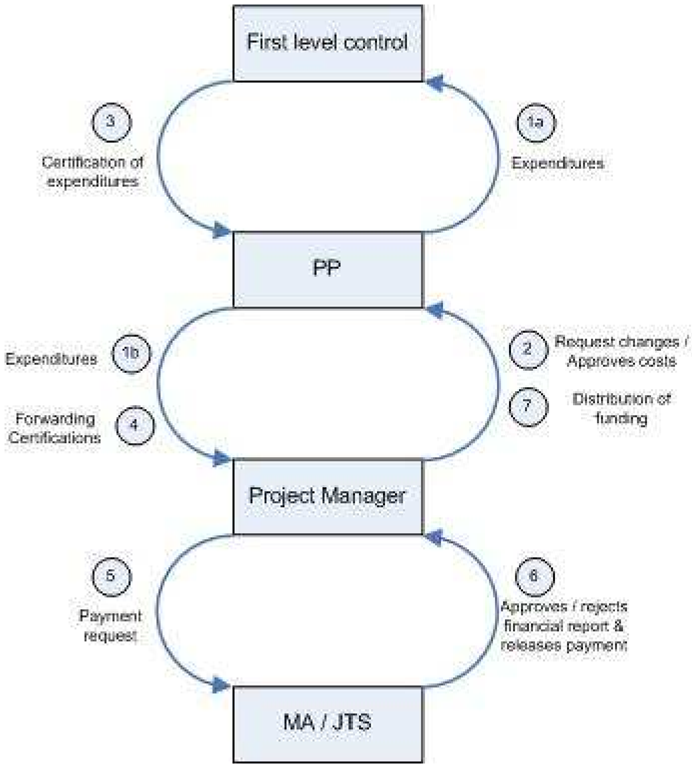


The reporting deadlines of the SEE funding programme are fixed events taking place twice a year. Each Project Partner has to foresee appropriate time – depending on his national procedures – to deliver necessary information to the Work Package Leader or Lead Partner. Templates will be worked out within the Project Team which have to be used for reporting. These templates will be based on the SEE Implementation Manual. When the provided input has to be corrected, the whole template has to be resubmitted. In general, two weeks before the reporting deadline of the SEE Programme the input from the Project Partners has to be finalised. Hence, it's recommended to submit the input earlier so that there is enough time to make corrections. The internal reporting procedures and deadlines will be evaluated after each reporting deadline. Each member is asked to contribute to the optimisation of the process.

[1] This chapter does not apply to the IPA Financing Partners. Their procedure is not included in this document.

4.1.2 *Financial reporting*

(Reference to the SEE Implementation Manual Chapter 5)



The Lead Partner is responsible for the implementation of the overall project. Consequently he is also responsible for costs handed in by the Project Partners (refer to Partnership Agreement Article 5-2d). Even if there are costs which have been certified by the First Level Control, the Lead Partner has the power not to accept costs if he is in doubt of their relevance for the project. Therefore, all Project Partners are asked to stick to the project application handed in and discuss planned purchases within the Work Package and also with the Lead Partner.

4.1.3 *Workflow, decision making process for deliverables*

Activity Leader co-ordinates the technical work with the involved partners. Furthermore, the AL is responsible for planning the work in accordance with the time schedule as defined in the project application and in the "Description of Work". A draft of the deliverable has to be sent to the WP Leader for review and feedback. This sends the document to the Lead Partner and to the Quality Manager for review and feedback. The LP and the QM shall check the general quality and compatibility with the "DoW". The LP and the QM shall do the proof-reading to improve readability of the document. The LP or the QM forwards comments & questions to the WPL and AL. Once the Project Team defines the deliverable as finalised, it shall be forwarded to the Board of Directors for approval. If the deliverable has been approved, it can be published on the project website or the intranet site of the project (depending on sort of document).

4.2 Meetings

4.2.1 General

Generally, meetings shall take place on Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday. Monday and Friday shall not be chosen for meetings. These two days shall be reserved for travelling. Meetings shall not start earlier than 09:00 and last longer than 18:00. The host of the meeting shall organise beverages during the meeting. Lunch breaks shall be foreseen within the agenda but the lunch itself is not an obligation to be paid by the host. For meetings lasting several days a common dinner shall be offered to the participants, which doesn't has to be paid by the host.

The meeting schedule of the project is in general defined within the project application. At the end of each meeting the dates for the next two meetings of such kind have to be defined. The dates agreed have to be indicated in the Meeting Minutes. Is there a need for a meeting, which is not foreseen within the project application, the date for the meeting shall be announced at least 4 weeks prior to the event. In general, the meetings are co-ordinated by the WP Leaders in order to minimise time for travelling for the overall Project Team. WPL shall define a proper meeting schedule at WPL meetings. The involved participants shall be informed as soon as possible.

4.2.2 Meeting equipment

For each meeting the host shall make available power supply for the participants, a beamer and a PC for the presentations.

4.2.3 Meeting participants

Due to the fact that most of the project meetings will be held as expert-workshops, the Project Partners are asked to send appropriate experts. A workshop in the field of hydrology for example has to be attended by hydrological experts. It shall not be the case that people attend expert meetings without having knowledge of national processes within the specific field.

4.2.4 Meeting Minutes

For each meeting (national or international), Meeting Minutes have to be provided. For these Minutes the appropriate template has to be used, which contains the following information:

- Date of the meeting
- Duration of meeting
- Location of the meeting
- Reason for the meeting
- Participants
- Keeper of the minutes
- Agenda of the meeting
- Results, outcomes, conclusions, etc. (depending on kind of meeting)
- Next meeting
- Action points out of the meeting (incl. responsible person and deadline)

In general, the host is responsible for the moderation of the meeting and the preparation of the Meeting Minutes. A draft version of the Meeting Minutes has to be provided for the participants within one week after the meeting. They shall have the opportunity to make comments or request changes within the Meeting Minutes. After all participants have agreed, the Meeting Minutes shall be declared as final. The final version of the Minutes has to be forwarded for information to relevant persons within the Act. or WP. In all cases the responsible WP Leader and the Lead Partner have to be informed.

4.2.5 Language of meetings and Minutes

All project meetings are in English language. Meetings on national level are not affected by this agreement. If there is a need for interpreters, the project member has to organise and pay the service on his own. Meeting Minutes always have to be provided in English language independent of the meeting language.

4.3 Internal communication

4.3.1 Project Intranet

In order to enhance the project workflow and communication a common virtual workplace, a web-accessed intranet site has been established, where the following tools support the project implementation:

- Project calendar
- File manager (download area)
- Address book
- News

Link of NEWADA Intranet is: *http://intranet.newada.eu*

Furthermore, a public website (*http://www.newada.eu*) will be established with general information and news about the project. The details are included in the Dissemination Plan.

4.3.2 Templates for documents

The use of project templates is obligatory during the project. For the following documents templates are available on the intranet under „file manager" :

- Meetings: Agenda(.dot), List of Participants (.dot), Meeting Minutes (.dot)
- Study (.dot)
- Presentation (.pot)
- Request for quality revision (.dot)

4.3.3 Document names and identification of deliverables

The documents should be named precisely in order to have a common understanding what is behind the title. Suggestion for document name:

NEWADA_{Number of activity}_{Document name}_{version}.doc

e.g.: NEWADA_2-1_Communication_Handbook_v10.doc

Meeting documents should start with the date (YY.MM.DD) and include document type (agenda, minutes...), meeting (Status, WP, WPL, BoD...) and venue (city, where the meeting is hosted).

{Date}_{Document type}_{Meeting}_{Venue}.doc

e.g.: 20090512_Agenda_Status_Meeting_Vienna.doc

All outputs are defined and numbered in the Description of Work. Here is an abstract as an example:

Output No.	Output Name	WP No.	Resp. PP	Deadline
O 2.0	WP 2 work plan	WP 2	RSOE	May 09
O 2.1	Intranet site	WP 2	RSOE	May 09
O 2.2	Communication handbook incl. templates and quality management	WP 2	RSOE	Aug 09

4.3.4 File format

The partners agree to use Microsoft Office 2002 and Adobe PDF standard file formats for project administration. Special exceptions can be made if it is agreed by all stakeholders.

4.3.5 Distribution of Meeting Minutes

Distribution of meeting related documents	Act. Team	Act. Leader	WP Leader	Project Manager (LP)	Co-ordinator (PP)	PP Representatives	Board of Directors	Advisory Council
Agenda, minutes of WPL Meeting			X	X				
Agenda, minutes of Status Meeting			X	X	X	X		
Agenda, minutes of BoD Meeting			X	X			X	X
Agenda, minutes of WP / Act. Meeting	X	X	X	X				
Minutes of any other project related meeting (e.g. internal meeting, meeting with national contact point)		X	X	X				
Agenda, Notes of LP Meeting			X	X				

The progress reports that will be forwarded to the SEE Programme will be distributed to all project members.

4.3.6 Replying

The project members agree to reply on emails or telephone calls – if feedback, comments or any other type of inputs are requested – within 3 working days. If a defined deadline can't be achieved, information has to be sent to the appropriate team member. It has to be pointed out until when the requested input will be available.

4.3.7 Emailing

Due to the fact, that the number of emails sent during the project will be enormous, the partners should keep to some basic rules when sending electronic mails to each other.

The subject of the email should indicate references to the relevant part of the project as described below:

NEWADA {Number of activity} : {Subject of email}

e.g. Subject of email: NEWADA Act.2.1: Input on Communication Handbook

4.3.8 Language

The official language for deliverables, communication including meetings (see point 4.3) shall be British English. All Project Partners should provide a certain level of quality. (See chapter 5)

4.3.9 Internal newsletter

Electronic newsletters shall be sent out during the lifetime of the project providing latest information about the status of project activities. The newsletter will be a standard communication channel for the LP to inform the PPs. It is planned to be distributed regularly – 4 times per year – but there can be special editions if there is a need for instant communication.

4.3.10 Dissemination plan

External newsletters, as dissemination tools, will be provided for project stakeholders. Details will be defined in the Dissemination Plan, which provides a communication strategy for NEWADA project, to define how to use dissemination tools during the project in order to provide publicity and transparency, thus to reach the above mentioned objectives.

Due to the large number and diversity of partners and countries taking part in this project, a pragmatic and effective communication campaign is required.

4.3.11 Troubleshooting

If a problem (e.g. missing input of a partner) occurs in the Project Team, four different levels of escalation are foreseen.

Level 1, the responsible AL. or WPL shall address the responsible person (Project Co-ordinator) and ask for the fulfilment of the obligation. An appropriate deadline (in general 1 week) shall be set. The legal representatives of both companies as well as the LP shall receive a copy of the written confirmation that the deadline was extended.

Level 2 is reached if the deadline set (of level 1) of the AL or WPL is passed without the fulfilment of the obligation. The LP shall now get into personal contact with the Project Manager and legal representative of the company which owes the fulfilled task. An appropriate deadline shall be set.

Level 3 is reached if the deadline set of the Lead Partner is passed without the fulfilment of the obligation. Now the Board of Directors (BoD) will be informed. Depending on the urgency of the topic the problem shall be put on the agenda of the next BoD meeting or tackled via email and phone calls. An appropriate deadline shall be set. ERDF funding will not be forwarded to the company owing the fulfilled task.

Level 4 is reached if the deadline set by the BoD is passed without the fulfilment of the obligation. The Lead Partner will report the problem to the SEE Programme. Depending on the dispute and the co-operation so far the Lead Partner will make an arrangement with the programme authorities which is most suitable for the overall project (refer to Partnership Agreement Article 9). ERDF funding of the company – which owes the fulfilled task – shall not be forwarded. According to the programme documents the programme bodies have the power to decommit funds, remove a Project Partner and withdraw it from the subsidy contract which is equal to cancel the whole project.

4.3.12 Hierarchy of project documents

As there are many documents used for the implementation of the project, a clear hierarchy has to be defined between them. The following order should be applied:

1. Application form, Subsidy Contract, Partnership Agreement, SEE Implementation Handbook, SEE Programme Manual
2. Description of Work
3. Communication Handbook, Dissemination Plan, WP Implementation plan

	Order for work content & finances	**Order for cooperation rules**
1	Application form	Subsidy Contract, SEE Implementation Handbook, SEE Programme Manual
2	Description of Work	Partnership Agreement
3		Communication Handbook, Dissemination Plan

5 PROJECT QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

5.1 General

The Project Partners and the financial supporters (including the European Union) have decided to develop and execute the project in order to achieve results. In the project development phase the project factors were defined:

After basic definition of the project a detailed requirement specification (DoW) shall be elaborated, which is the basis of the project work. The main financial support will be accompanied by a Subsidy Contract, which will define the tasks and conditions of support. The requirements are basically laid down in the Description of Work. During the project monitoring and quality management the quality of the work shall be ensured. The establishers of the project will be satisfied if the project delivered the defined outputs in a good quality and the project reached its goals. The project results and goals achieved can be found in the Final report.

The project shall be administrated precisely, which is a basic condition of the quality management. The Project Team should be committed to produce high quality results.

The Project Partners should provide proper human resources for the project. High quality tasks can be executed only by highly educated, English-speaking staff. Project Team members should master both oral and written English on a high level. The selection and training of proper persons is the responsibility of the Project Partner. The project should provide adequate circumstances for the Project Team members (e.g. travelling, office...etc.)

5.2 Quality management system

5.2.1 Checking the quality of workflow and deliverables

The workflow should be well administrated and the deliverables should be of high quality. All drafts and final documents should be sent to the Quality Manager in copy, which provides a continuous check of quality. If the quality does not reach a certain level, the QM sends the document back for revision. The Request of quality revision will contain which part does not conform and will set a deadline for correction.

The work of the QM is supported by the WPLs and ALs, who are responsible for the technical content of the deliverables. The WPLs and ALs are reporting to the QM about the content quality of their WP. The QM reports to the PM on the status of quality level regularly.

5.2.2 Purchase, subcontracting

In order to produce high quality results, the purchase and sub-contracting procedures should be executed carefully. The partners should be able to choose from several offers and select the best quality goods or services for the price. All contracts should be well-prepared and the special project aspects should be taken into account (e.g. ERDF and IPA financial rules).

The Project Partner should guarantee that its subcontractors are also committed to ensure high quality.

5.2.3 Monitoring system

The Project Team is monitored by the Board of Directors and discusses issues with the Advisory Council. The Board of Directors meetings are organised three times a year.

5.2.4 Internal and external quality feedback

Feedbacks – internal and external – will be collected about the project continuously. For this reason, a feedback-section (questionnaire) will be made available on the website. The internal feedbacks are provided by the Project Partners (anonymous feedback is an option too) to revise the project management system if needed. The external feedback will be collected from the stakeholders and from the visitors of the webpage. At every status meeting the feedbacks are evaluated and the management or dissemination system can be revised if needed.

6 ANNEX A - CONTACT INFORMATION

Coordinators for PPs			
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