EU·PM²

for managing
EU-funded projects

Guide v.1.0

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EUPM² Guide v.1.0

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1 Introduction

1.1 The EUPM² Guide

The EUPM² Guide describes the main steps for formulating and managing EU-funded projects based on a tailored version of the PM² methodology. It maintains the same lean but comprehensive approach, making it useful for all EU-funded project practitioners.

While PM² is suitable for any project, it is best suited for managing EU-funded projects. These latter account for almost 80% of the EU budget, and PM² can significantly contribute to increasing project management competency and success in this area by enabling better monitoring and control of EU-funded projects and grants.

Aligning the PM² methodology to the specific context rules and methods used in EU-funded projects is crucial to exploiting such potential benefits. This guide fills this gap by providing a practical methodological guide for EU Project Managers willing to apply PM² project management methodology to improve the design and management of EU-funded projects and optimise the achievement of project goals.

Different studies report that organisations using any project management methodology better meet budget, stay on schedule, and meet scope, quality standards, and expected benefits. Consequently, the average project failure rate is lower compared to low-performing organisations.

This guide also includes the description and functioning of the different typologies of the EU-funding programmes.

Who is this Guide for?

- Students willing to learn how to design and manage EU-funded projects.
- Professionals and organisations involved in the EU funds management.
- Public officials involved in the management of EU-funding Programmes.

1.2 The EUPM² Project

The EUPM² Guide has been elaborated in the framework of the Erasmus+ project "*A New Academic Path for EU Project Managers: narrowing the Gaps to enable better Project Design and Management in Europe (EUPM²),*" whose main objective was to create a common academic path based on a shared curriculum that integrates EU project design and management methodologies to manage EU- funding projects more effectively.

The EUPM² project pooled seven universities and organisations with relevant expertise in EU project design and management to better align higher education sector curricula with job market opportunities and requests for the EU Project Manager profile.

The integration work was based on the European Commission's "Open PM²" initiative to promote a common European-wide project management methodology. The PM² methodology is particularly suitable for creating a standardised university-level curriculum. PM² is a European open-source methodology that is light, lean, easy to understand, and significantly flexible to be adapted to the specific rules and context of the EU funds and with the most common EU project design methodologies.

Factsheet of the EUPM² Project:

Program:	Erasmus+	
Key Action:	Cooperation Partnership (KA220)	
Title:	A New Academic Path for EU Project Managers: Narrowing the Gaps to Enable Better Project Design and Management in Europe (EUPM²)	
Number:	2021-1-IT02-KA220-HED-000035769	
Coordinator	P1 - CEIS University of Rome Tor Vergata (Italy)	
Partners	P2 - Technical University of Madrid (Spain) P3 - Alma Mater Europaea ECM (Slovenia) P4 - University of Tartu (Estonia) P5 - FH JOANNEUM University of Applied Sciences (Austria) P6 - Nova University of Lisbon (Portugal) P7 - University of Pardubice (Czech Republic)	
Associate Partners	AP1 - Unioncamere Europa asbl (Belgium) AP2 - Coordinadora de ONGD (Spain) AP3 - ARCI (Italy) AP4 - PM² Alliance (Belgium)	
Project Results	1. PR1. A Tailored Guide on EU Funds Management based on PM² Methodology. 2. PR2. A New Curriculum for university students based on the tailored PM² Methodology. 3. PR3. Web Based Tool Kit of available resources to support the design and management of EU projects.	
Web site and Contacts	Project website: http://www.eupm2project.eu Email contacts: eupm2_projectmanagement@ceistorvergata.it	

2 EU-funding Programmes and Projects

This section briefly introduces how EU-funding Programmes and Projects are managed, the management frameworks used, and their complementarity with the EUPM² Guide.

The European Union (EU) provides various grants and funding schemes to support the development of different sectors and regions within the EU. These grants and funding schemes support specific policy areas and initiatives, such as research and innovation, education and training, environment and energy, and regional development. The European Commission, its Executive Agencies, and the member states' national and regional administrations manage EU funds using different management modes.

2.1 Management Modes

The European Union has three main management modes for its programmes, depending mainly on the assignation of accountability and management of the funds. The management modes are direct, indirect, and shared. While the EU provides the funding for a specific programme or project, there may be differences in the assignation of responsibilities and accountability regarding the allocation and use of the funds, involvement during implementation and monitoring, and the day-to-day management between the EU and the Member States. However, whereas the Member States oversee the implementation of most of the EU budget, the Commission has the ultimate responsibility for its execution.

2.1.1 Direct Management

In Direct Management, **the EU is directly responsible** for the management and implementation of a programme, and the role of the member states is mainly limited to providing input and feedback on the programme's design and implementation. This is typically the case for programmes with a solid EU-wide dimension that require a consistent and coordinated approach across all member states. In this model, the tasks are carried out by the Commission's directorates, at its headquarters, in the EU Delegations, or through **EU Executive Agencies** (specialised bodies to support the European Commission in managing and implementing EU-funding Programmes by providing expert knowledge and technical assistance, as well as carrying out administrative and operational tasks). There are no third parties. Programmes implemented in direct management account for around 20% of the EU budget 2021-2027. The European Commission (or its bodies) is responsible for all aspects of programme management, including:

- Setting the policy objectives and priorities of the programme.
- Developing the legal framework and regulations.
- Allocating the budget for the programme.
- Managing the funds and resources of the programme.
- Monitoring and evaluation of the programme's performance.
- Reporting on the programme's implementation and results.

EU institutions also have the power to make decisions on the programme's implementation, such as awarding contracts and grants, and can take enforcement actions if necessary. There are several programmes run directly by the European Commission. Here are a few examples:

- **Horizon Europe** is the EU's research and innovation funding program. It aims to support the development of new technologies and innovations that can benefit the EU and its citizens.
- **Competitiveness of Enterprises and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (COSME)** aims to support the creation and expansion of SMEs.
- **Erasmus+** is the EU's education, training, youth, and sports programme. It aims to support the development of skills and knowledge among EU citizens and promote cross-cultural understanding and cooperation.
- **Connecting Europe Facility (CEF)** funds digital infrastructure like high-speed internet networks and e-government services.

2.1.2 Indirect Management

Indirect management of EU funds refers to a system where the **European Commission entrusts the management and implementation of EU funding Programmes to external entities**. Instead of executing all the operational tasks, the Commission delegates specific responsibilities to these external organisations, such as national authorities, agencies, or international bodies. The Commission sets the strategic framework, regulations, and funding priorities, while the implementing entities handle the day-to-day management and project selection.

Indirect management allows the European Commission to leverage the expertise and resources of external organisations to implement EU-funding Programmes effectively. It also enables a decentralised approach, considering the diverse needs and circumstances across member states and sectors. The Commission ensures that the funds are used in line with EU objectives and regulations through proper monitoring and reporting mechanisms. Here are a few examples:

- **Asylum, Migration, and Integration Fund (AMIF).** The primary objective of AMIF is to promote the efficient and fair management of migration flows and the integration of third-country nationals legally residing in the EU. AMIF funding is allocated based on national programmes developed by each EU member state, considering the specific needs and priorities identified. The program promotes cooperation and exchange of best practices among member states to enhance the effectiveness of policies and actions related to migration, asylum, and integration.

- **European Solidarity Corps.** The EU-funding Programme called the European Solidarity Corps aims to support young individuals who desire to participate in various acts of solidarity. These activities include assisting disadvantaged individuals, providing humanitarian aid, and contributing to health and environmental initiatives within the EU and beyond. The program's objective extends beyond inclusivity to focus on environmental sustainability and digitalisation. Implementing these activities involves direct and indirect management by the Commission through a network of EU national agencies. Funding is primarily provided in the form of grants. The potential beneficiaries of this program include individuals aged 18 to 30 (or 35 for humanitarian aid) and organisations in the EU and partner countries.

The specific arrangements and responsibilities of each program may vary depending on the initiatives' objectives, nature, and scope.

2.1.3 Shared Management

Shared management is a form of implementing EU funds where the **responsibility for management and implementation is shared** between the European Commission and national or regional authorities of the member states. In shared management, the Commission and the national authorities work together to manage the funds, each playing a specific role.

Under shared management:

1. **The European Commission** sets the strategic framework, establishes the legal and financial regulations, and defines the priorities for the funding program. It provides overall guidance, monitors the implementation, and ensures compliance with EU rules and objectives. The Commission is responsible for approving the national or regional programmes proposed by the member states and disburses the funds to the implementing authorities.

2. **National or Regional Authorities** of the member states are responsible for the day-to-day management and implementation of the funds. They prepare and submit program proposals to the Commission, outlining how to use the allocated funds to achieve the programme's objectives. The implementing authorities select projects, distribute funds, monitor progress, and report on the outcomes. They also ensure compliance with EU rules and regulations in project management.

Shared management differs from indirect management regarding the level of involvement and control exercised by the European Commission. In indirect management, the Commission delegates the

management and implementation of the funds to external entities, such as agencies or international organisations. These entities have greater autonomy in project selection, disbursement of funds, and monitoring. The Commission maintains oversight but relies on the implementing entities to carry out the operational tasks.

In shared management, however, the Commission and the national or regional authorities collaborate, sharing responsibilities and decision-making. The Commission maintains a higher level of involvement and control over the implementation process, providing guidance, monitoring progress, and ensuring compliance. The member states' authorities play a more direct role in project selection and management but operate within the framework and guidelines established by the Commission.

Shared management is a collaborative approach that combines EU-level expertise and oversight with national or regional knowledge and implementation capacity, ensuring effective and efficient utilisation of EU funds while respecting each member state's specific needs and circumstances. Here are a few examples:

- **European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).** The ERDF supports economic and social cohesion in the EU by investing in regional development projects. It focuses on innovation, infrastructure, and sustainable development and is managed jointly by the European Commission and national or regional authorities.
- **European Social Fund (ESF).** The ESF aims to promote employment, enhance skills, and support social inclusion across the EU. It supports education, training, employment, and social inclusion initiatives, with management responsibilities shared between the European Commission and national or regional authorities.
- **European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF).** The fund provides funding for Programmes that aim to improve the competitiveness and sustainability of the fishing and aquaculture sectors, such as investment in new technologies and training Programmes.
- **European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD).** The EAFRD supports rural development projects, including agricultural modernisation, environmental protection, and rural business development. The fund is managed jointly by the European Commission and national or regional authorities responsible for agriculture and rural development.

2.2 Project Cycle Management: Linking EU-funding Programmes and Projects

Regardless of the management modes, EU-funding Programmes generally follow a common framework used to guide project planning, implementation, and evaluation, called Project Cycle Management (PCM). The PCM framework ensures that projects funded by the different EU funding Programmes are well-planned, implemented efficiently and effectively, and monitored and evaluated to improve their impact. It also helps ensure that the projects are aligned with the overall strategy of the organisation as well as with the EU-funding Programmes objectives.

While PCM was initially introduced in the field of development cooperation, where programmes are mainly implemented through direct arrangements, it provides - with the appropriate adaptations - a helpful framework for those involved in managing the EU-funding programmes implemented through the calls for proposals.

PCM generally includes six steps:

1. Programming.
2. Identification.
3. Formulation.
4. Financing.
5. Implementation.
6. Evaluation.

Figure 2.1.- The Project Cycle Management steps
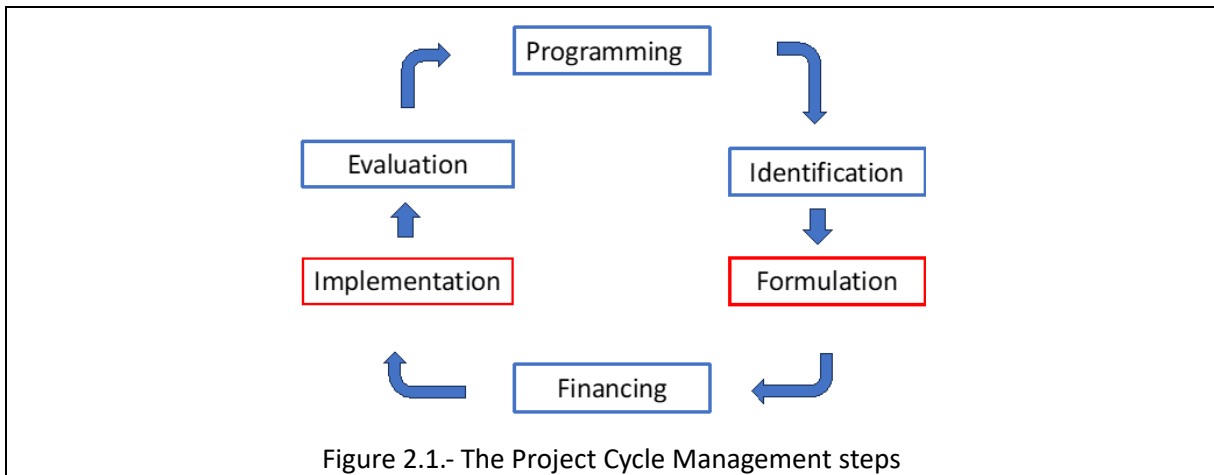
Programming

The Programming step has a multi-year duration and leads to the elaboration of the EU funding Programme. The strategic objectives and overall Programme priorities are set out in this step.

- Output: Multi-year EU-Funding Programme.
- Responsible organisation: European Commission (or delegated authority) / National Authority.

Identification

The Identification step includes all the necessary activities leading to elaborating and publishing the calls for proposals.

- Output: Calls for Proposal.
- Responsible organisation: European Commission (or delegated authority)/National Authority.

Formulation

The Formulation step includes all the activities needed to submit a project proposal in response to a call for proposals published in the previous (identification) step.

- Output: Project proposal.
- Responsible organisation: Implementing organisations/Leader organisations.

Financing

The Financing step includes selecting the project proposals submitted that better meet the evaluation criteria identified in the call for proposals.

- Output: List of projects eligible for funding.
- Responsible organisation: European Commission (or delegated authority)/National Authority.

Implementation

The Implementation step includes managing the project to achieve the objectives as defined in the project proposal.

- Output: Project deliverables/Project results
- Responsible organisation: Implementing organisations/Leader organisations.

Evaluation

The Evaluation step includes all the activities to assess the project's effective and efficient realisation, respect for the financial rules, correct delivery of the project deliverables, and achievement of the project results. It provides feedback, lessons learned, and recommendations to be incorporated in the following programming exercise, closing the cycle.

- Output: Evaluation Report.
- Responsible organisation: European Commission (or delegated authority)/National Authority.

2.3 EUPM² Guide and the Project Cycle Management

Project Cycle Management (PCM) focuses on the relationship between the EU-funding Programme and the projects funded, describing who does what in the different steps to ensure overall coherence, objectives alignment, and recurrent improvement in cyclical learning. Specifically, the EU-funding Programme authorities will deal with the (see Fig. 2.2, blue boxes):

- Elaboration of the EU-funding Programme (programming step).
- Identification and publication of the call for proposals (identification step).
- Financing of the project proposals (step financing).
- Evaluation of the results achieved by the program (evaluation step).

The organisations wishing to answer the call for proposal will deal with the (see Fig. 2.2, orange boxes):

- Formulation of the project proposal (formulation step).
- Implementation of the project proposal, if admitted to financing (implementation step).

EUPM² Guide guides the EU Project Managers on how single projects should be designed and managed, linking the formulation, financing, and implementation steps. EUPM² Guide thus supports all the organisations that intend to formulate project proposals and implement projects in an integrated and coherent way within PCM.

Fig. 2.2.- The integration of EUPM² Guide within the Project Cycle Management
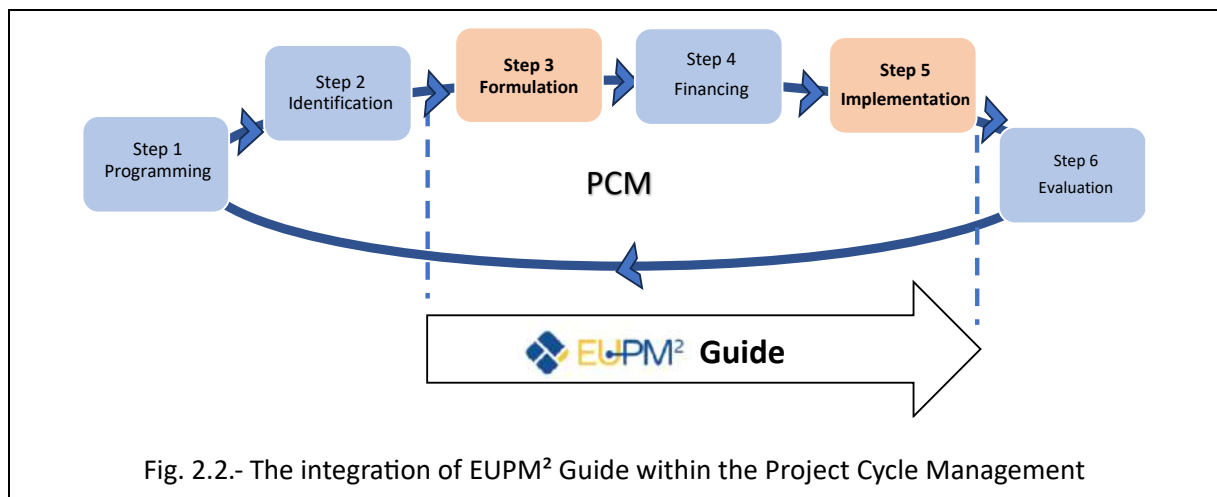
Following the EUPM² Guide, the project starts as soon as the organisation decides to formulate a project proposal in response to a call for proposals. It includes all the activities needed to submit and implement the proposal after the favourable financing decision of the EU funding Programme authorities. EUPM² Guide provides complementarity and coherence with PCM, providing a standardised project design management methodology for EU-funded project practitioners.

2.4 Characteristics of Projects

A project is a temporary organisational structure set up to create a unique product or service within certain constraints such as time, cost, and quality. Projects are ubiquitous in our society today. Projects are present at home, with friends, in the community, in business, in politics, and public administration. Here are some key characteristics present in all of them:

- Projects have a strong **time dimension** and have a start and an end.
- Projects are activities performed in a specific order or structure to generate **deliverables**.
- Projects aim to **achieve objectives** declared upfront because of the performed activities and the generated deliverables.
- Projects usually involve many **people** who need to be organised in teams through clear leadership and clear assignment of roles and responsibilities. Project expectations also need to be analysed in detail and adequately managed.
- Projects occur in specific **contexts** that must be considered for success (political, legal, social, economic, environmental, etc.).

- Projects entail a certain degree of **uniqueness**, setting them apart from routine or repetitive tasks and avoiding a 'one size fits all' approach.
- Projects work in a **constrained** environment (limited time, funds, resources, etc.).
- Projects face **uncertainty** and must deal with risks and opportunities and their potential negative or positive effects.

Simplifying projects is a means of planning and implementing changes in the human world, and this applies to all sectors and forms of human activity.

2.5 Peculiarities of EU-funded Projects

The European Union provides funding for numerous projects in many sectors every year. EU-funded projects usually conform to the characteristics of projects defined in Paragraph 2.4 but also present some additional peculiarities.

- EU-funded projects must align **with EU policy** objectives defined by the EU funding Programme that provides the funding.
- EU-funded projects are funded through **competitive procedures** (such as calls for proposals) to justify their merit to receive funding. These competitive procedures ensure that the best value for money is provided and that all interested organisations may participate equally.
- Project **design is a crucial element in EU-funded projects. It characterises** the internal logical chain of the projects and justifies the cause-effect links between project activities and the EU funding Programme objectives.
- EU-funded projects are usually implemented by a **partnership**, i.e., a series of organisations that jointly contribute to the formulation and implementation of the project.
- EU-funded projects follow **strict norms** throughout the project lifecycle in terms of activity implementation, financial justification, and other specific contractual obligations.

These peculiarities guided the tailoring work, designed to better unleash PM² benefits to EU-funded projects (see details on tailoring in Appendix C).

2.6 PM² Advantages in EU-funded projects

Since 1990, the EU has funded many projects, investing hundreds of billions of Euros. Available data show that more than 35.000 grants were signed solely for the Horizon 2020 Programme. This means that projects are a substantial form of work for the EU and that project management is part of the daily work of most EU organisations.

PM² has been built on operational experience from projects run within European Institutions, combined with elements from a wide range of globally accepted project management best practices, standards, and methodologies. It has also been built to fit EU Institutions and programmes' specific needs, culture, and constraints.

While the EU has developed the PM² Methodology to fit a wide array of project types, with some adjustments, it is highly suitable for efficiently managing EU-funded projects. Several good governance practices are already built into the Grant Agreement procedures, and documentation of the EC and PM² governance elements may be used to complement them. Similarly, streamlining the project lifecycle with distinct phases and processes is a good practice that PM² guides.

There are many advantages to the incorporation of PM² as a project management practice:

- It combines **globally recognised** project management methodologies and standards with project management best practices from European institutions.
- Offers a **shared vocabulary** for effectively managing projects within and across organisations.
- Enables improved accountability, transparency, and better stakeholder communication and collaboration.
- Provides a robust **governance and organisational structure** with clearly described project roles and responsibilities.

- Makes provisions for customisation and **tailoring** to suit specific project needs and organisational environment.
- This document offers **guidelines** for project initiating, planning, executing, and closing phases and describes activities to Monitor & Control project performance.
- Provides a complete **set of artefact** templates to help document and manage the project.
- It is **promoted by the European Commission** and thoroughly documented.

The tailoring and adoption of PM² bring benefits and alignment to organisations working with different work methods and approaches from other countries, organisations, and cultural backgrounds. This streamlines the project implementation process and brings the international team together. It is also essential to understand that PM² methodology should be adjusted to the project, either by scaling it up or down depending on the content and scale of the project. The control each project needs depends on the content, partnership, and scale of the project; thus, the level of control should be adjusted while bearing in mind the extra effort increased control requires. However, when adapting the PM² methodology, the overall approach and mindset should stay the same, meaning not using only some parts of the methodology, as the different pillars and levels complement each other. A well-managed project ensures that the project activities and deliverables are executed well and highly quality.

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3   Overview

3.1   The House of PM²

The EUPM² Guide follows the same structure as the "The House of PM²". This "house" is built on the foundation of the project management best practices.

The House of PM² is supported by four pillars:

1. The project **governance and organisation** model.
2. The project **lifecycle.**
3. The project **processes.**
4. A set of project **artefacts**.
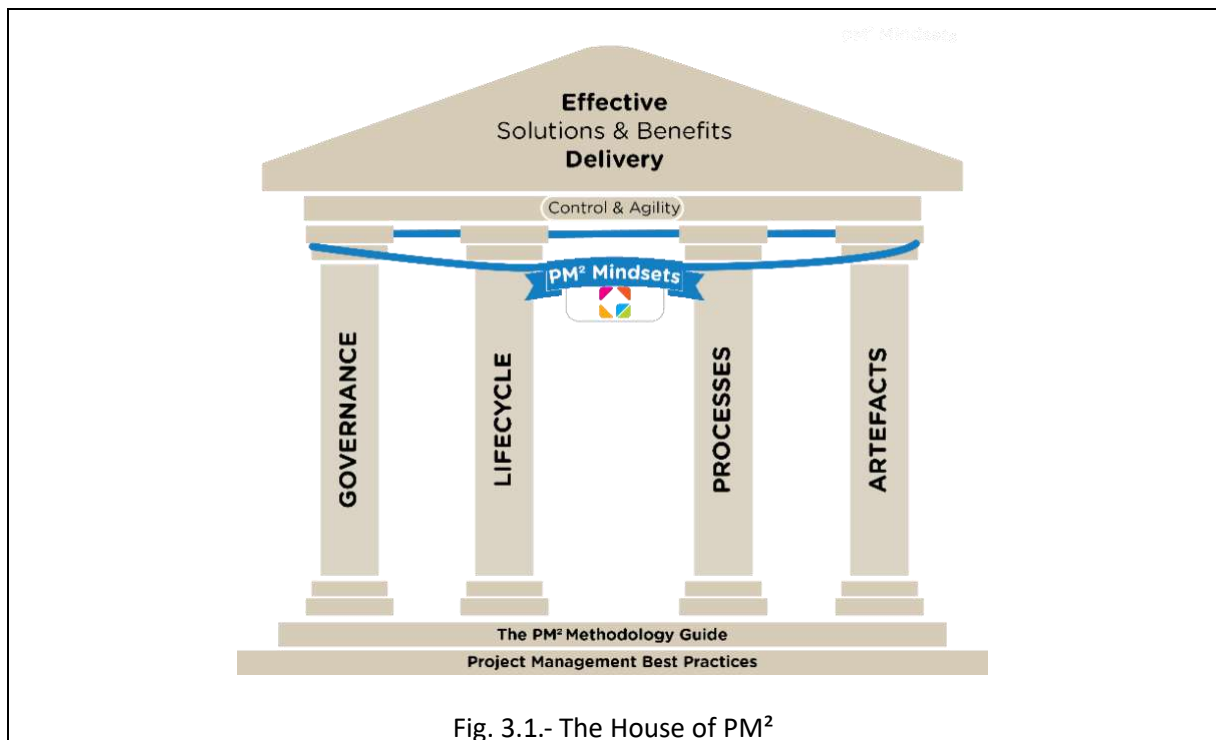
Fig. 3.1.- The House of PM²

The spirit of the PM² is further defined by the **PM² Mindsets**, which provide the glue that holds together the PM² practices and provides a standard set of beliefs and values for PM² project teams. The Mindsets focus on the **"why"** we need PM², which is the original purpose of PM², to deliver solutions and benefits for projects and project teams effectively.

PM² improves the effectiveness of Project Management by:

• Improving communication and the dissemination of information.
• Clarifying expectations as early as possible in the project lifecycle.
• Defining the project lifecycle (from Initiating to Closing).
• Providing guidelines for project planning.
• Introducing monitoring and control activities.
• Proposing management activities and outputs (plans, meetings, decisions).

3.2 The Project Lifecycle

The EUPM² Guide project lifecycle has four sequential and not overlapping phases with a different type of activity prevalent in each phase (i.e., initiating activities are prevalent in the Initiating Phase, etc.). The Planning Phase is divided into two stages: Designing and Preparing. The Designing Stage ends with submitting the project proposal to the Contracting Authority (CA), while the Preparing Stage starts after its (favourable) financing decision.

However, while phase-related activities peak in terms of effort during a specific phase/stage, activities of this type can also be executed during neighbouring phase(s) (e.g., planning activities are also repeated in the Executing Phase).

A project moves on to the next phase when its current phase/stage goals have been deemed achieved as the result of a formal (or less formal) phase/stage exit review supported by a checklist.
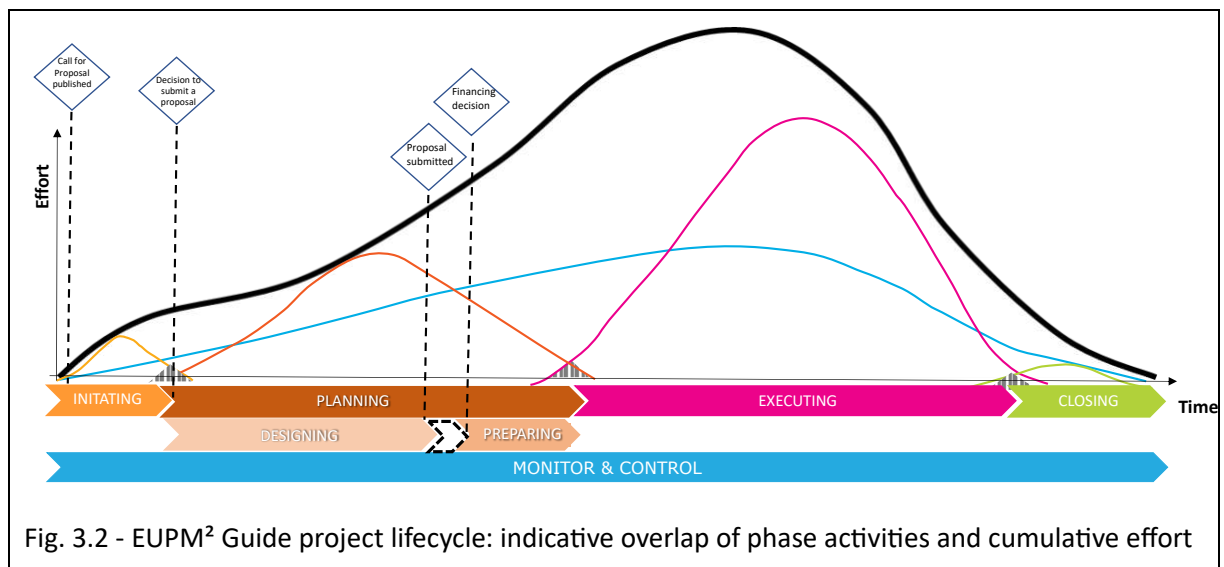
Fig. 3.2 - EUPM² Guide project lifecycle: indicative overlap of phase activities and cumulative effort

EUPM² project shifts from Initiating to Planning after the decision to submit a project proposal in response to a call for proposals. Once the decision is made, the project moves to the planning phase, divided into two stages. The project proposal is formulated and submitted in the Designing Stage. If the project proposal is accepted for funding, the Project Work Plan is updated, and the project management plans are elaborated in the Preparing Stage. After the Planning Phase, the project moves to the Executing Phase, with acceptance and closing activities at the end. Monitoring and Control activities happen throughout the lifecycle, although they peak during the Executing Phase.

Phases	Stages	Description
1. Initiating		Identify the project idea to submit to the call for proposals and assess its coherence with the organisation's objectives. Share the project idea to find project partners. Get the project idea off for the Designing Stage.
2. Planning	Designing	Define the project partnership and develop the project idea by elaborating the Project Logical Framework, plan the work, accordingly, fill and submit the Project Application Form to the Contracting Authority (CA).
	Preparing	Elaborate and update the Project Work Plan, finalize the project plans and governance model, assign the Project Core Team (PCT).
4. Executing		Coordinate the execution of project plans. Produce deliverables and assure internal acceptance, submit the project reports.
5. Closing		Coordinate formal acceptance of the project by the Contracting Authority (CA). Report on project performance. Capture Lessons Learned and post-project recommendations. Close the project administratively.

The importance of the Initiating and Planning phases is often underestimated, and inexperienced project teams may start working on formulating the project proposal without developing a solid project logical framework. This may result in poor-quality project proposals, ineffective deliverables, delays, reduced impact, and stressful implementation. It is a common and costly mistake often the root cause of project proposal rejection by the Contracting Authority (CA).

3.2.1 Initiating Phase
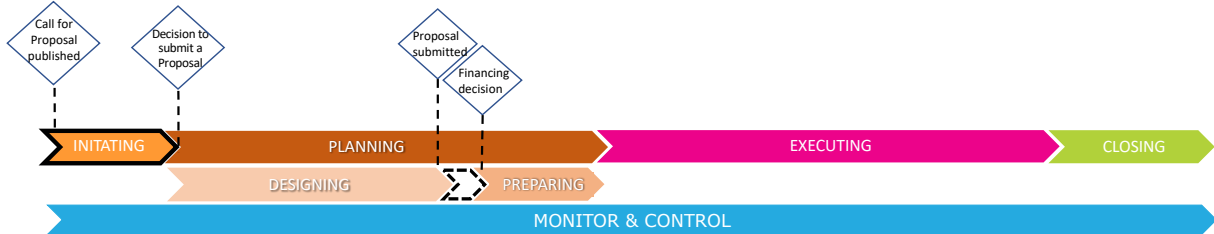
During the Initiating Phase, the people involved ensure the project idea aligns with the call for proposals and the organisation's strategic objectives and gather the information required to gain approval to proceed to the Designing Stage. The main input of this phase is the call for proposals, which defines the overall objectives, priorities, and procedures for participating in the call.

The following activities are part of the Initiating Phase:

- Creating the **Project Submission Request** containing information about the requirements set in the call for proposals, the project idea, the needs addressed, and the benefits for the organisation. It is an internal document to the leader organisation as it justifies the proposed project according to its strategy.
- Creating the **Project Fiche** provides information about the project idea to share with potential project partners and key stakeholders. It aims at building the consortium partnership to present the project. It is a document created by the leader organisation and shared with potential project partners.

Fig. 3.3 - Overview of the Initiating Phase

The Project Submission Request and the Project Fiche define the initial project's scope based on the actions and objectives set in the call for proposals. The EU Project Manager (EUPM) and the Project Core Team (PCT) reference and use both throughout the project.

At the end of the Initiating Phase, the Grant Owner (GO) reviews the above documents and decides whether to allow the project to proceed.

During the Initiating Phase, setting up a **balanced partnership is crucial** as EU-funded projects are generally carried out by a consortium of several organisations from different EU or third countries. Three different kinds of organisations may be found in a consortium:

- Leader organisation (or Lead partner, Coordinator, or Lead Beneficiary).
- Partner organisation (or Implementing Partner).
- Associate Partner Organisation.

For more information on partnerships, see Appendix D.

The Leader organisation generally invites potential partner organisations to join the consortium through a Project Fiche. After receiving a partnership invitation, each organisation must evaluate

participation internally by drafting a Project Submission Request and ask for approval by its organisation board.

The activities and artefacts of the Initiating Phase are explained in Section 5.

3.2.2 Planning Phase
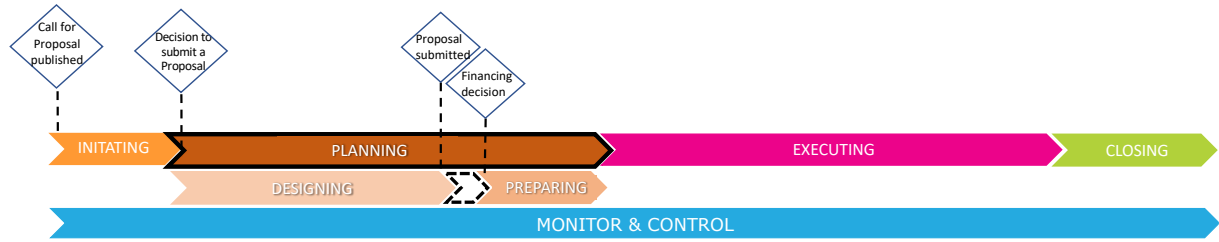
The second phase of an EUPM² project is the Planning Phase. In an EUPM² project, the Planning Phase is divided into the Designing and Preparing Stages.

3.2.2.1 Designing Stage
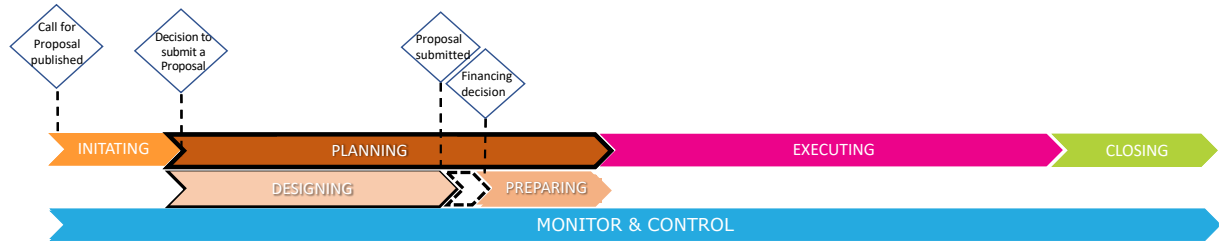
The first stage of the planning phase of an EUPM² project is the Designing Stage. During the Designing Stage, the project idea is transformed into a project proposal and submitted to the appropriate Contracting Authority (CA) for the financing decision. The project idea is developed into a specific proposal using the template (Project Application Form) provided by the Contracting Authority (CA).
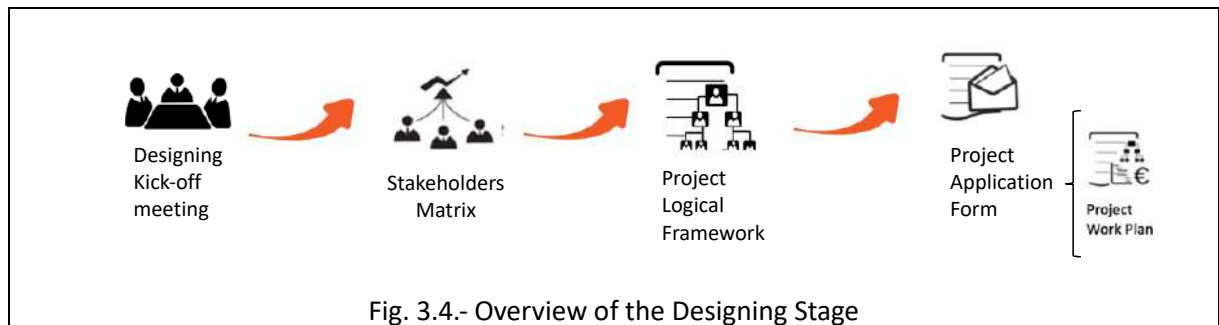
Fig. 3.4.- Overview of the Designing Stage

The following activities are part of the Designing Stage:

- Identifying project stakeholders and preparing the **Project Stakeholders Matrix,** including initial partnership and team members, as well as target groups, beneficiaries, and potential project audiences for communication and dissemination strategies.
- Creation of the **Project Logical Framework,** which describes the analytical process for identifying the project's hierarchy of objectives and linking them with outputs and activities needed to achieve them. The Project Logical Framework is an input for elaborating the Project Application Form.
- Elaboration of the **Project Application Form**, whose content and structure are defined by the Contracting Authority (CA). Generally, this includes justification of the project in terms of impact and excellence, alignment of the project idea with the call objectives, the specific objectives, the outputs produced, the resources, costs, and time needed to implement and achieve the impact, as well as the project governance model.

3.2.2.2 Preparing Stage
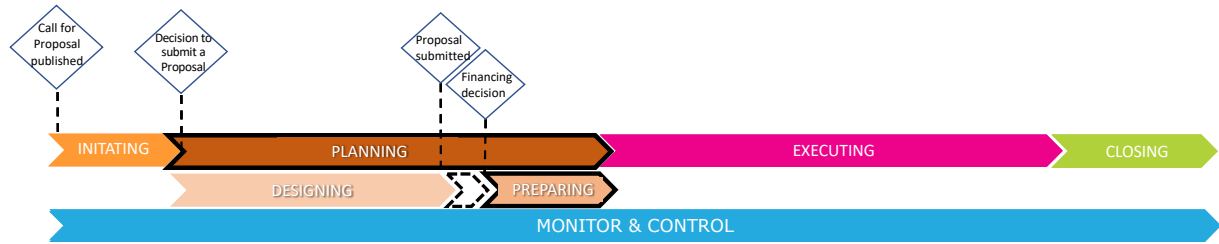
The Preparing Stage starts after the favourable financial decision by the Contracting Authority (CA). In case the project proposal is not financed by the Contracting Authority (CA), the project moves to the closing phase (see Section 8 – Closing Phase).

Based on the Project Application Form, during the Preparing Stage, the Project Work Plan is updated by detailing the project scope, the estimated resources, and the project schedule, including all activities' start and end dates. The Project Handbook is elaborated, including the project management approach and the governance model.
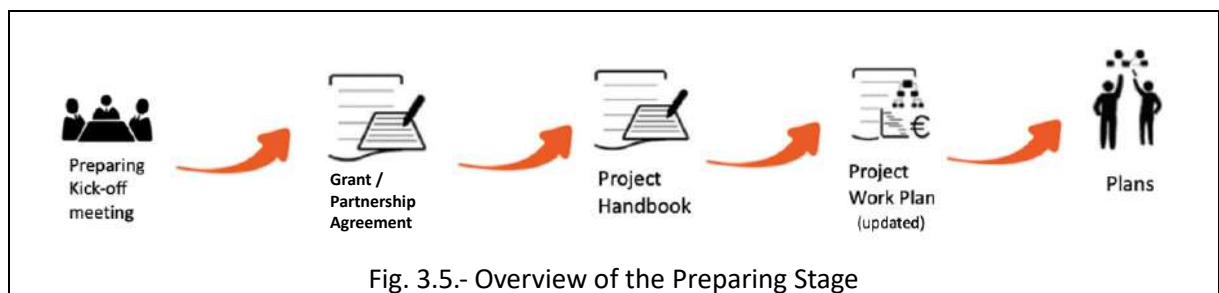
Fig. 3.5.- Overview of the Preparing Stage

The following activities are part of the Preparing Stage:

- Running the Preparing Kick-off Meeting to start the Preparing stage officially.
- Creating the Project Handbook, which defines the project's management approach.
- Updating the Project Stakeholders Matrix, which identifies all project stakeholders.
- Updating the Project Work Plan (Work Breakdown, Effort, Costs, Schedule).
- Creating other essential plans such as the Communication and Dissemination Plan, Risk Management Plan, Outsourcing Plan etc.

The EU Project Manager (EUPM) uses the outputs of the Planning Phase to request approval to proceed to the Executing Phase. The Project Steering Committee (PSC) is accountable for this decision.

The activities and artefacts of the Planning Phase are explained in Section 6.

3.2.3 Executing Phase
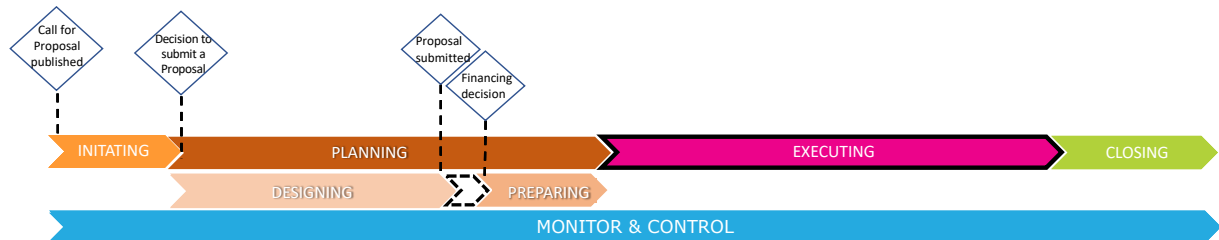
The third phase of an EUPM² project is the Executing Phase. During this Phase, the Project Core Team (PCT) produces the project deliverables outlined in the Project Work Plan. This project lifecycle stage typically involves the most resources and requires the most monitoring.
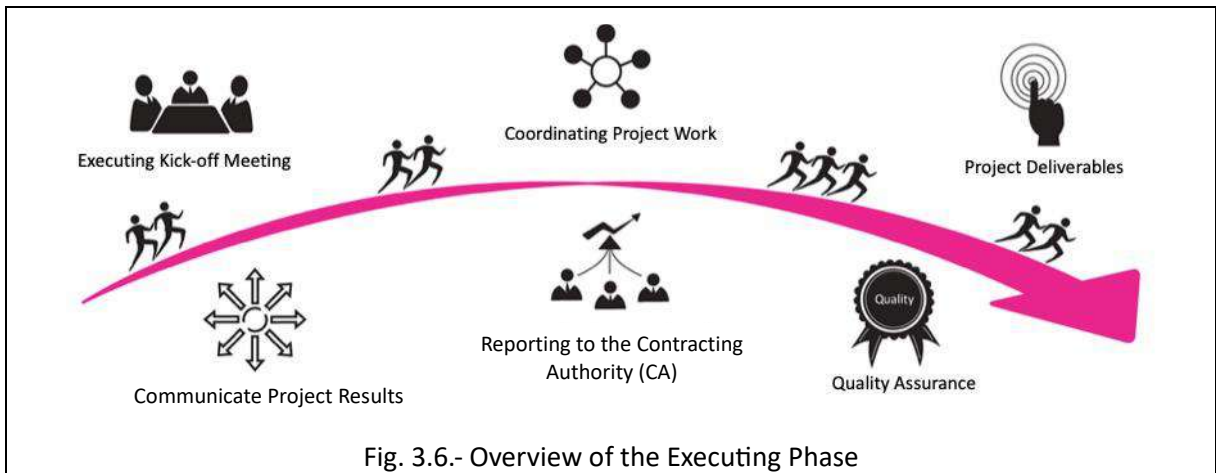
Fig. 3.6.- Overview of the Executing Phase

The following activities are part of the Executing Phase:

- Running the Executing Kick-off Meeting.
- Coordinating project, work people and resources, and resolving conflicts and issues.
- Producing the project deliverables by the project plans.
- Elaborating the Project Reports.

The activities and artefacts of the Executing Phase are explained in Section 7.

3.2.4 Closing Phase
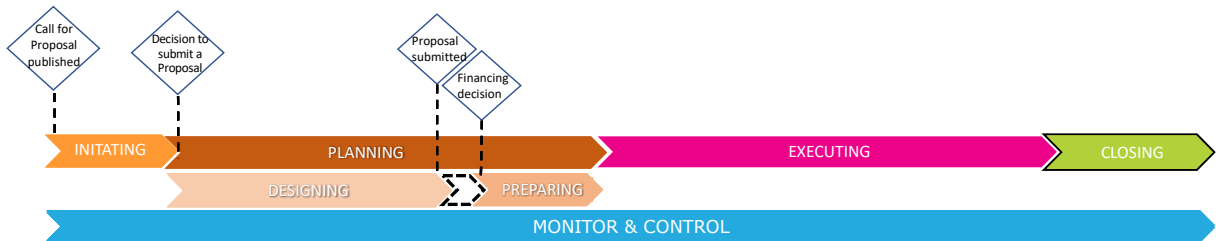
During a project's Closing Phase, the Final Project Report is elaborated and sent to the Contracting Authority (CA). After the Final Project Report assessment, the project is administratively closed, and the Lessons Learned are captured. All project documents are correctly filed and archived, and all resources used by the project are formally released.
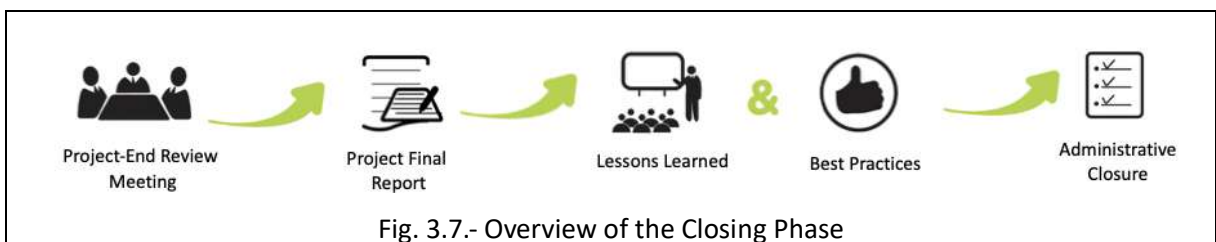
Fig. 3.7.- Overview of the Closing Phase

The following activities are part of the Closing Phase:

- Finalising all activities to close the project formally.
- Elaborating the Final Project Report.
- Discussing the overall project experience and Lessons Learned with the project team.
- Documenting Lessons Learned and best practices for future projects.
- Closing the project administratively and archiving all project documents.

The activities and artefacts of the Closing Phase are explained in Section 8.

3.2.5 Monitoring and Control
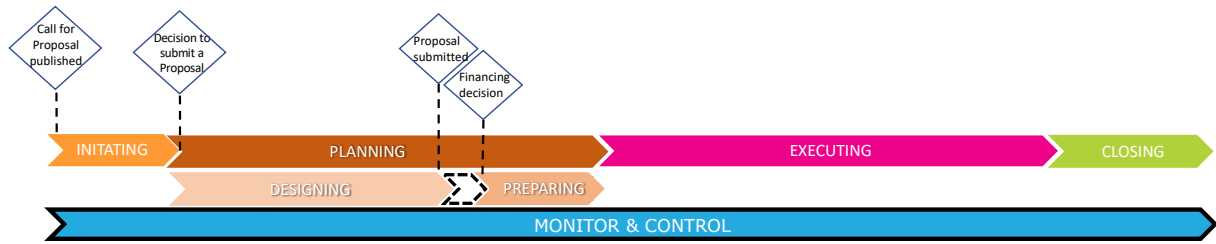
Monitor & Control activities run throughout the project's lifecycle. Monitoring is about measuring ongoing activities and assessing project performance against project plans. Controlling is about identifying and taking corrective action to address deviations from plans, issues, and risks.
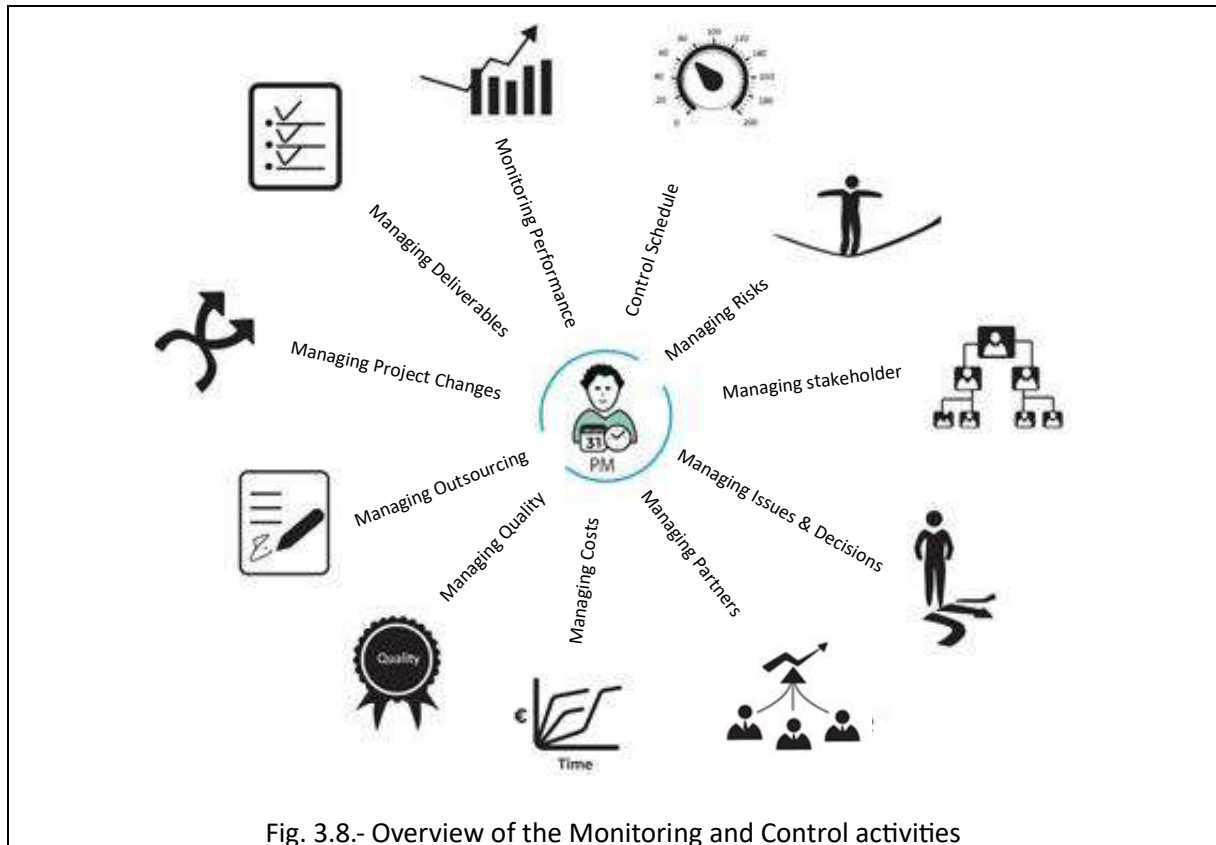
Fig. 3.8.- Overview of the Monitoring and Control activities

The activities and artefacts for Monitoring and Control are explained in Section 9.

3.2.6 Phases Gates and Approvals

At the end of each phase, the project passes through a review and approval gate. This ensures that the appropriate people/body reviews the project before it moves to the next phase. These checkpoints contribute to the overall quality of project management and allow the project to proceed more controlled.

The three EUPM² Guide phase gates are:

- **RfP** (Ready for Planning) at the end of the Initiating Phase.
- **RfE** (Ready for Executing): at the end of the Planning Phase.
- **RfC** (Ready for Closing): at the end of the Executing Phase.

3.2.7 The PM² Mindsets

The EUPM² Guide incorporates the PM² Mindsets, which are attitudes and behaviours that help project teams focus on what is crucial to achieving their project goals. These mindsets help project teams navigate the complexities of managing projects in organisations and make the EUPM² Guide more effective and complete.

Thus, EU Project Managers (EUPMs), Partner EU Project Managers (PtEUPM), and project teams that practice EUPM² Guide:

1. Apply PM² **best practices** to manage their projects.
2. **Remain mindful** that project management methodologies are there to serve projects and not the other way around.
3. Maintain an **outcomes orientation** about all projects and project management activities.
4. Are **committed to** delivering project results with **maximum value** rather than just following plans.
5. Foster a project culture of collaboration, clear **communication, and accountability**.
6. Assign project roles to the most **appropriate people** for the benefit of the project.
7. **Balance** the often-conflicting project management "Ps" of product, purpose, process, plan, people, pleasure/pain, participation, perception, and politics in the most productive way.
8. Invest in developing technical and behavioural **competencies** to become better project contributors.
9. **Involve project stakeholders** in the organisational change needed to maximise project benefits.
10. **Share** knowledge, actively manage Lessons Learned, and contribute to improving project management within their organisations.
11. They are always oriented to maintain **ethical and professional behaviour**.

The PM² Mindsets:

- Help project teams navigate through the complexities of project realities.
- Help project teams (re)position project management goals in a broader organisational context.
- Remind project teams what is essential for project success.
- Are helpful reminders of practical attitudes and behaviours.

To remain mindful of the PM² Mindsets, EU Project Managers (EUPMs), Partner EU Project Managers (PtEUPM), and project teams that follow the EUPM² Guide should ask themselves the following important Infrequently Asked Questions (IAQs):

- **Do we know what we are doing?** Develop a clear and shared project vision. Manage the project holistically and optimise the whole project, not just parts.
- **Do we know why we are doing it? Does anyone really care?** Make sure your project matters. Understand its goals, value, impact, and relationship to the organisational strategy.
- **Are the right people involved?** People make projects work. The primary criterion for involving people and assigning project roles should be serving the project's needs and objectives.
- **Do we know who is doing what?** Clearly define and understand roles, responsibilities, and accountabilities.
- **Deliver at any cost or risk?** Avoid high-risk behaviour and tactics. Always remember that it is not just about the result - how you get there also matters.
- **Is this a task for "them" or for "us"?** Ensure that all project partners work as one team towards a common goal. Real teamwork works, so foster clear, effective, and frequent communication.
- **Have we improved?** Commit to ongoing self- and organisational improvement by gathering and sharing knowledge. Project teams should reflect on how they can become more effective and adjust their behaviour accordingly.

4 Governance and Project Organisation

This section presents the importance of a structured organisation and an adequate assignment of roles and responsibilities to facilitate informed decision-making, accountability, and efficiency.

4.1 Project Structure Organisation

EUPM² Guide provides a model for project organisation structured in layers and sides, adapted to generic EU-funded projects. The diagram below provides an overview of this structure, with the corresponding roles on each layer and side.

Fig. 4.1.- EUPM^2 Guide project organisation
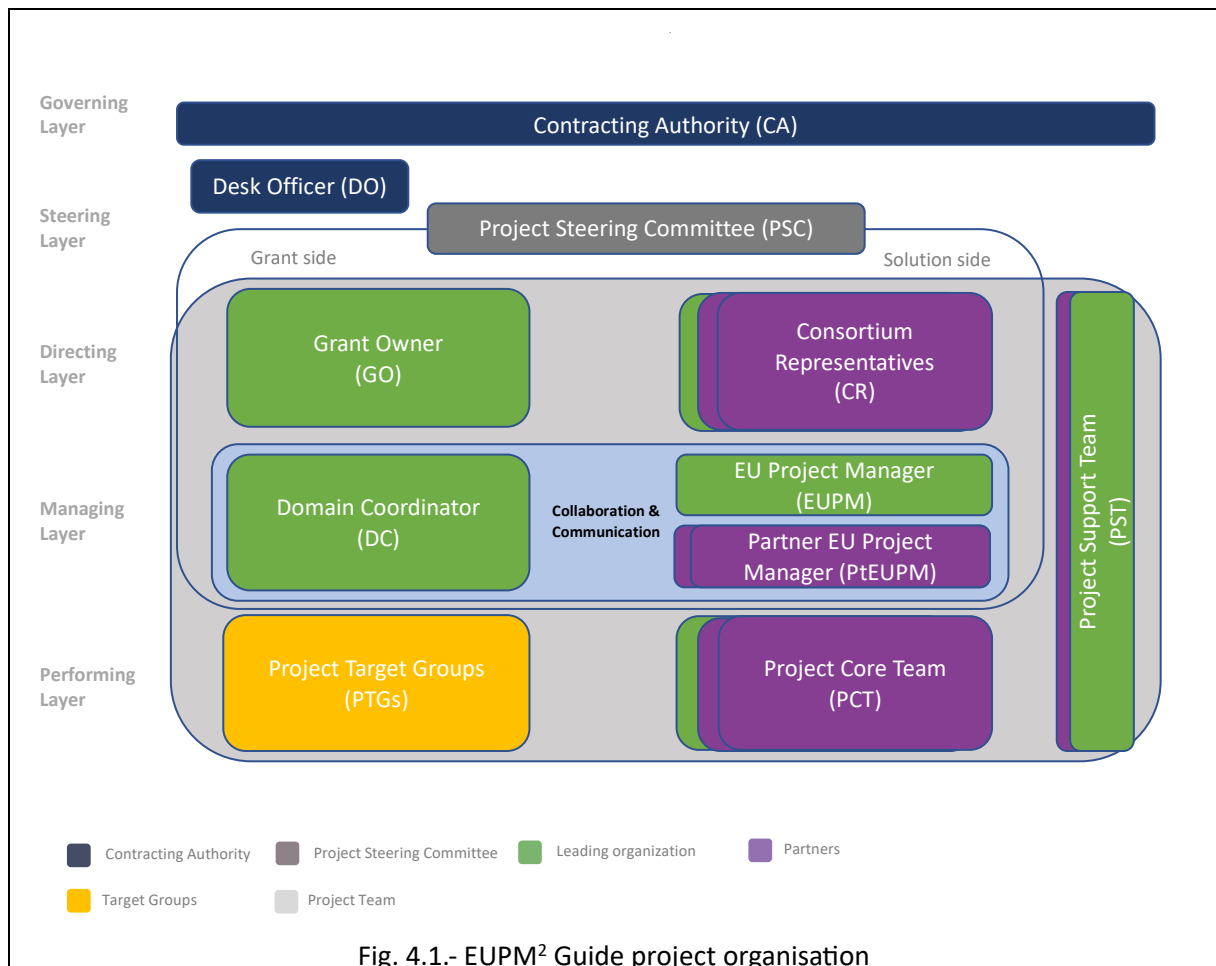
Sides allow the allocation of a degree of ownership and accountability of the project within the consortium, while **layers** provide the degree of strategic and operational involvement in the project.

Sides

Grant Requestor side

The Grant Requestor Side is mainly taken by the organisation acting as the consortium's Leader partner. It identifies the call for proposals, leads the response, gathers the partners' interest, and acts as the sole interlocutor with the Contracting Authority (CA), ultimately accountable for all project funds, activities, and deliverables.

Solution side

The Solution Side is occupied by all the organisations that participate in the project (Consortium) under the coordination of the Leader organisation. All organisations bring their know-how, expertise, and resources, supporting the project design, allocating teams to implement project activities, and producing project deliverables.

Layers

Governing Layer

The Governing Layer corresponds to the Contracting Authority (CA). It is external to the rest of the project partners and supervises the project's implementation and achieving the project objectives set in the project proposal. It operates at the highest level, where strategic priorities are defined, award decisions are made, the budget is disbursed, and reports and deliverables are assessed and approved.

Steering Layer

The Steering Layer provides general project direction and guidance, keeping the project focused on its objectives. It reports to the Contracting Authority (CA) and comprises the roles defined in the Directing and Management Layers and other optional roles.

Directing Layer

The Directing Layer champions the project and owns the Grant Agreement. It mobilises the necessary resources and monitors the project's performance to realise its objectives. The Directing Layer comprises the roles of Grant Owner (GO) and Consortium Representatives (CRs).

Managing Layer

The Managing Layer focuses on day-to-day project management. It organises, monitors, and controls work to produce and capitalise on the intended deliverables. Members of the Managing Layer report to the Directing Layer. The Managing Layer comprises the roles of Domain Coordinator (DC), EU Project Manager (EUPM), and Partners EU Project Managers (PtEUPM). Close collaboration and good communication between these roles are paramount for the project's success.

Performing Layer

The Performing Layer carries out the specialised project work to produce the deliverables. Members of the Performing Layer report to the Managing Layer. The Performing Layer comprises the roles of the Project Target Groups (PTG) and the Project Core Team (PCT).

The project team comprises people assuming the roles defined in the Performing, Managing, and Directing layers. All these people must work together as a team for the project to succeed.

4.2   Project Organisation: Roles and Responsibilities

4.2.1   Contracting Authority (CA) and Desk Officer (DO)
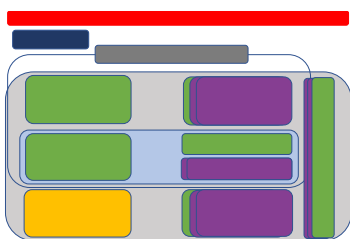
The Contracting Authority (CA) is the entity that signs the Grant Agreement with the Leader organisation to award and mobilise the funds for the project. Depending on the management mode of the call for proposals, the Contracting Authority (CA) may be the European Commission, an EU Executive Agency, or a national or regional authority. This body provides the strategic orientation and objectives; it has the authority to approve the project, release the funds and authorise major project changes.

The Contracting Authority (CA) generally appoints a Desk Officer (DO) as the role to act as direct interlocutor with the Grant Owner (GO) and to overview, follow up, resolve queries, and secure the accomplishment of the Grant Agreement conditions. The Desk Officer (DO) is not involved in the day-to-day project management but may be invited to participate in the Project Steering Committee (PSC) or request ad-hoc Project Review Meetings.

Responsibilities

- Define the strategy and objectives of the EU-funding Programme.
- Prepares and launches the Calls for Proposals.
- Evaluates the proposals and award the grants.
- Signs the Grant Agreement.
- Authorises the project payments.
- Monitors and controls the project implementation.
- Authorises major project changes.
- Validates reports and deliverables.

4.2.2   Project Steering Committee (PSC)
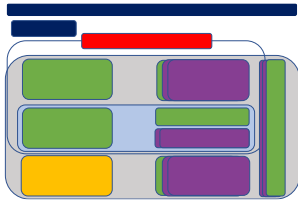
The Project Steering Committee (PSC) includes representatives of all implementing partners in the Directing Layer and Managing Layer. It provides a forum for joint monitoring, discussion, resolution of arising issues, and decision-making during the project. Other roles, including Contracting Authority (CA) representatives, may participate in PSC meetings. The PSC is chaired by the Grant Owner (GO).

Responsibilities

- Champions the project and raises awareness of it at a senior level in the partner organisations.
- Guides and promotes the successful execution of the project at a strategic level, keeping the project focused on its objectives.
- Provides high-level monitoring and control of the project.
- Authorises minor deviations and scope changes within the limits posed by the Grant Agreement and has the final say on decisions.
- Deals with escalated issues and conflicts.
- Approves reports and other relevant documents (including deliverables) to be validated by the Contracting Authority (CA).

4.2.3   Grant Owner (GO)
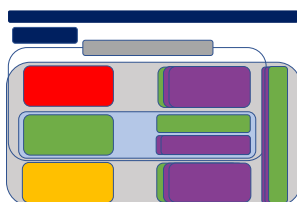
The Grant Owner (GO) is the overall and ultimate accountable for all the project (budget, activities, deliverables, etc.) vis a vis the Contracting Authority (CA). The Grant Owner (GO) ensures that the project deliverables and results align with the EU policy objectives and that all Grant Agreement conditions are met. The Grant Owner (GO) signs the Grant Agreement with the Contracting Authority (CA) for all implementing Partners.

Responsibilities

- Sets the objectives of the grant project proposal and accepts it.
- Owns the project risks and ensures project outcomes align with the call´s objectives and priorities.
- Signs the Grant Agreement with the Contracting Authority (CA) on behalf of all the partners.
- Ultimate accountability for the overall implementation of the project vis a vis the Contracting Authority (CA) and the sole focal point for communication with the Contracting Authority (CA).
- Chairs the Project Steering Committee (PSC).
- Mobilises the resources necessary for the project, using the agreed budget and distributing the funds to the implementing partners.
- Appoints the Domain Coordinator (DC) and the EU Project Manager (EUPM) on the side of the Lead Partner.
- Regularly monitors project progress.
- Coordinates the resolution of escalated issues and conflicts.
- Approves and sign off key management artefacts, reports, and deliverables.

4.2.4 Consortium Representatives (CRs)
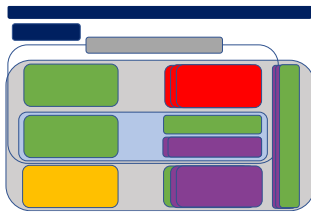
Each implementing partner will nominate a Consortium Representative (CR) who assumes overall accountability for their assigned budget share, activities, and deliverables. Each Consortium Representative generally signs a mandate allowing the Grant Owner (GO) to sign the Grant Agreement on their behalf. The Consortium Representative (CR) also signs the Partnership Agreement, which regulates the internal functioning of the consortium.

Responsibilities

- The Consortium Representatives (CRs) sign the Partnership Agreement and are accountable for their share of the project activities and budget.
- Mobilises the required resources from the partner organisations.
- Appoints the Partner EU Project Manager (PtEUPM).
- The Consortium Representatives (CRs) approve any outsourced activities' objectives and deliverables and become accountable for the contractor's performance.

4.2.5 Domain Coordinator (DC)
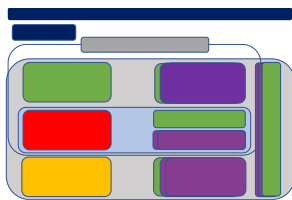
The Domain Coordinator (DC) is an expert in the project domain and keeps the project focused on the policy objectives set by the call for proposals and on achieving the results foreseen in the Project Application Form. The Domain Coordinator (DC) works closely with the EU Project Manager (EUPM) and the Partner EU Project Managers (PtEUPMs) to coordinate the smooth implementation of the project, activities, and deliverables.

Responsibilities

- Support the EU Project Manager (EUPM) in the elaboration and submission of the Project Application Form.
- Coordinate the partnership building.
- Guarantees cooperation and an efficient communication channel with the EU Project Manager (EUPM) and the Partners EU Project Managers (PtEUPM).
- Coordinates the Project Target Groups (PTG) and liaises between them and the Consortium.
- Coordinates the activities related to administrative procedures, ensures that the required resources are made available, and fulfils all reporting needs.
- Ensures that the opinions and views of the Project Target Groups (PTG) are considered when making decisions.
- Ensures that the project results are sustainable after the end of the granting period.
- Coordinates the schedule and delivery of reports and oversees the overall quality and coherence in the grant domain.

4.2.6 EU Project Manager (EUPM)
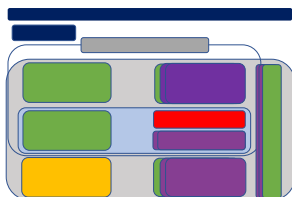
The EU Project Manager (EUPM) manages the project daily to ensure efficient resource use and high-quality deliverables. He also deals with risk and issue management, internal project communication, and stakeholder management. He is also responsible for designing the project proposal with the Domain Coordinator's (DC) support.

Responsibilities

- Coordinates the preparation of the Project Logical Framework and the Project Application Form, being responsible for its duly submission.
- Executes the project proposal as reflected in the Grant Agreement.
- Coordinates the Partner EU Project Managers (PtEUPMs).

- Coordinates the Project Core Team (PCT) with the Partner EU Project Managers (PtEUPM), ensuring the effective use of the allocated resources.
- Ensures project objectives are achieved within the identified constraints, taking preventive or corrective measures where necessary.
- Manages stakeholder expectations.
- Oversees the creation of all management artefacts and secures approval from the Grant Owner (GO) or the Project Steering Committee (PSC).
- Ensures the controlled evolution of deliverables through proper change management.
- Performs risk management activities for project-related risks.
- Monitors project status and reports to the Project Steering Committee (PSC) and Contracting Authority (CA) on project progress at predetermined intervals.
- Escalates unresolvable project issues to the Project Steering Committee (PSC).
- Liaises between the Directing and Performing Layers of the project.

4.2.7 Partner EU Project Manager (PtEUPM)
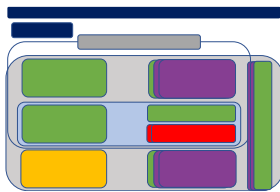
The Partner EU Project Manager (PtEUPM) plays the role of the EU Project Manager (EUPM) in each implementing partner, supervising the daily work for the share of budget, activities, and deliverables assigned to the implementing partner.

Responsibilities

- Support the EU Project Manager (EUPM) in executing the project as indicated in the Grant Agreement.
- Support the EU Project Manager (EUPM) in coordinating the Project Core Team (PCT), ensuring the effective use of the allocated resources from implementing partners.
- Contribute to ensuring project objectives are achieved within the identified constraints,.
- Manages stakeholder expectations in the implementing partners.
- Supports the EU Project Manager (EUPM) in creating all management artefacts.
- Helps the EU Project Manager (EUPM) in performing risk management activities for risks related to the project activities of the implementing partners.
- Contribute and support the EU Project Manager (EUPM) in elaborating all project reports.

4.2.8 Project Target Groups (PTG)
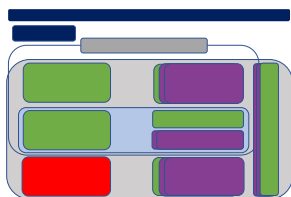
The Project Target Groups (PTG) represent the project's final beneficiaries. They are part of the Grant Requestor side as they use the project results more than producing the deliverables. They can be internal or external to the implementing partners and play a key role in designing, testing, and validating the project deliverables.

Responsibilities

- Help to define the needs of the grant beneficiaries.
- Ensure that the project specifications and deliverables meet the needs of the grant beneficiaries.
- Review the project specification and acceptance criteria on behalf of the grant beneficiaries.
- Communicate opinions in the Project Steering Committee (PSC) and ensure that these are considered when deciding whether to implement a proposed change.
- Participate in demonstrations and pilot phases as needed.
- Sign off on grant beneficiaries-related documents (requirements documents, deliverable acceptance testing, etc.).

4.2.9 Project Core Team (PCT)
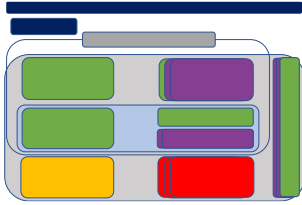
The Project Core Team (PCT) comprises specialists responsible for implementing the project activities, leading to the realisation of the deliverables. As project activities are generally split into work packages, the Project Core Team (PCT) comprises Work Packages Leaders (WPLs) and Work Packages Team Members. Its configuration depends on the size and type of project and is determined by the EU Project Manager (EUPM).

Responsibilities

- Participates in developing the project scope and planning project activities.
- Carries out project activities based on the Project Work Plan and schedule.
- Produces project deliverables.
- Provides the EU Project Manager (EUPM) and the Partner EU Project Managers (PtEUPM) with information on the progress of activities.
- Participates in project meetings as needed and helps resolve issues.
- Participates in the Project-End Review Meeting during the collection of Lessons Learned.

4.2.10 Project Support Team (PST)
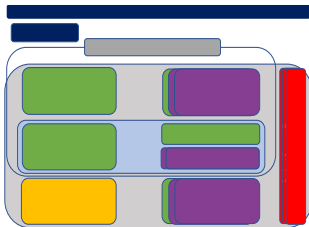
The Project Support Team (PST) consists of people supporting the project. It often comprises representatives from various horizontal services, such as accounting, finance, human resources, legal affairs, communication, etc. Its composition and structure will depend on the project´s needs.

Responsibilities

- Provides administrative and financial support to the project.
- Defines requirements for reporting and communication.
- Administers Project Steering Committee (PSC) meetings and drafts related reports.
- Supports the EU Project Manager (EUPM) and the Partners EU Project Managers (PtEUPMs) in project planning, monitoring, and controlling.
- Advises on project management tools and administrative services.
- Manages the project documentation (versioning, archiving, etc.).

Key roles in the Project Support Team (PST)

In EU-funded projects, key roles in the Project Support Team (PST) are performed by those dealing with financial management and project external communication and dissemination.

4.2.10.1 Financial Manager (PST-FM)

The Financial Manager (PST-FM) manages project expenses and supports the EU Project Manager (EUPM) in project budgeting and reporting. Each partner organisation appoints a Partner Financial Manager (PST-PtFM) to handle the costs of their share of project activities.

Responsibilities

- Setting up the project expenses recording system.
- Supervising the purchasing procedures.
- Support the EU Project Manager (EUPM) in elaborating on the budget.
- Supporting the EU Project Manager (EUPM) in reporting project expenses.

4.2.10.2 Communication Manager (PST-CM)

The Communication Manager (PST-CM) is responsible for designing and implementing the project's external communication and dissemination strategy. It is generally appointed by the lead partner but can be supported by the communication officers of each implementing partner.

Responsibilities

- Defines the project's external communication and dissemination strategy requirements, including the appropriate social media approach.
- Implements the project's external communication strategy in coordination with the EU Project Manager (EUPM).
- Manages the relations with the press and media.
- Refers to the Project Steering Committee (PSC) for information about project visibility and media matters.
- Coordinates with the partner communication officers to design and implement the external communication and dissemination strategy.

4.2.11 Other Roles

Contractor's Project Manager (CPM)

The Contractor's Project Manager (CPM) leads the contractor's staff working on the project, planning, controlling, and reporting on the production of outsourced deliverables. Working closely with the EU Project Manager (EUPM) or Partner EU Project Manager (PtEUPM), the Contractor's Project Manager (CPM) ensures that all work is carried out on time and to the agreed standards, guaranteeing the successful completion and delivery of subcontracted activities.

Project Support Office (PSO)

The Project Support Office (PSO), also called the Project Management Office or Project Office, is an optional structure that can provide services to project teams, such as applying methodology and using artefacts, information systems, governance, logistics, and various support.

Project Quality Assurance (PQA)

Assigned by the Project Steering Committee (PSC) and working independently of the EU Project Manager (PM), the Project Quality Assurance (PQA) ensures the high quality of the project and its deliverables by reviewing processes and artefacts, identifying non-conformities with the set quality standards and recommending corrective actions. This is an optional role in an organisation, reporting directly to the Project Steering Committee (PSC), and may take the form of either a group or individual staff member.

4.3 Responsibility Assignment Matrix (RAM)

The Responsibility Assignment Matrix (RAM) represents and clarifies the roles and responsibilities for a given activity. The RAM is also known as an ARSCI table, which stands for:

ARSCI		Description
A	Accountable	Ultimately answerable for the correct and thorough completion of the work. There is only one accountable person for any given task.
R	Responsible	Does the work. Others can be asked to assist in a supporting role. There is only one responsible person for any given task.
S	Supports	As part of a team, roles with a support function work with the person responsible. The support role helps complete the task. There may be several Support roles.
C	Consulted	Those whose opinions are requested and with whom there is two-way communication. The consulted role does not help complete the task. There may be several Consulted roles.
I	Informed	Those who are kept informed of progress. There may be several Informed roles.

Stakeholders should be reminded of their roles and responsibilities during the project. The EUPM² Guide includes a RAM (ARSCI) table for all artefacts in the project lifecycles in Appendix F.

Example: The RAM for the EUPM² Guide roles involved in creating the Project Application Form:

RAM (ARSCI)	CA	PSC	GO	DC	PTG	CR	EUPM	PtEUPM	PCT	PST
Project Application Form	I	**A**	C	**S**	C	C	**R**	**S**	C	n.a.

- **Accountable**: The Project Steering Committee (PSC) is accountable (is ultimately and collectively responsible for the artefact).
- **Responsible**: The EU Project Manager (EUPM) is responsible for submitting the Project Application Form.
- **Supports**: The EU Project Manager (EUPM) works with the Partner EU Project Managers (PtEUPM) and the Domain Coordinator (DC) to complete the Project Application Form. However, the final responsibility lies with the EU Project Manager (EUPM).
- **Consulted**: The Grant Owner (GO) and the Project Target Groups (PTG) are consulted.
- **Informed:** The Contracting Authority (CA) will be informed about the submission of the Project Application Form.

5 Initiating Phase

The first phase of an EUPM² Guide project is the Initiating Phase. It begins with identifying a project idea, following the publication of the call for proposals, contributing to achieving both an objective set in the EU-funding Programme and an organisation's strategic objective. The primary **purpose** of this phase is:

- Ensuring the project idea is aligned with the call for proposals and the organisation's strategic objectives.
- Searching for potential project partners to build up the consortium necessary for the project (if needed).
- Putting together the information required to gain formal approval to elaborate on the Project Application Form.

Fig. 5.1.- EUPM² Guide Initiating Phase activities and main artefacts
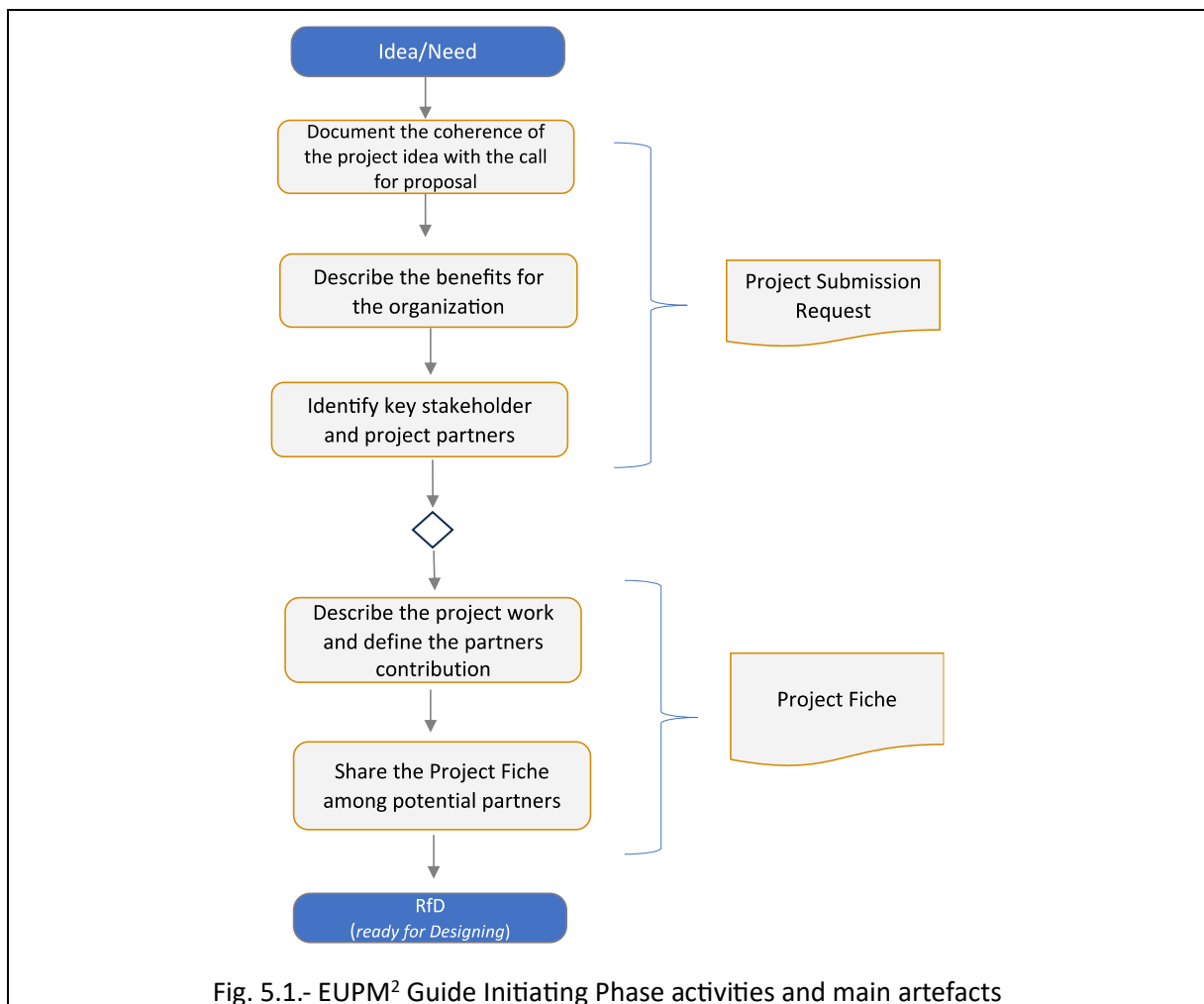
Key artefacts

The key project artefacts created during the Initiating Phase are the **Project Submission Request** and the **Project Fiche**. Some Project Logs are also set up (e.g., Risk Log, Issue Log, Decision Log), while the Change Log is typically set up during the Planning Phase (Designing Stage).

Artefact	Description
Project Submission Request	Formalises the project initiation and includes the key data from the call for proposals and the key elements of the project idea.
Project Fiche	Describes the project idea, the relevance to the call for proposals, including expected objective, and preliminary estimation of work, time and cost.
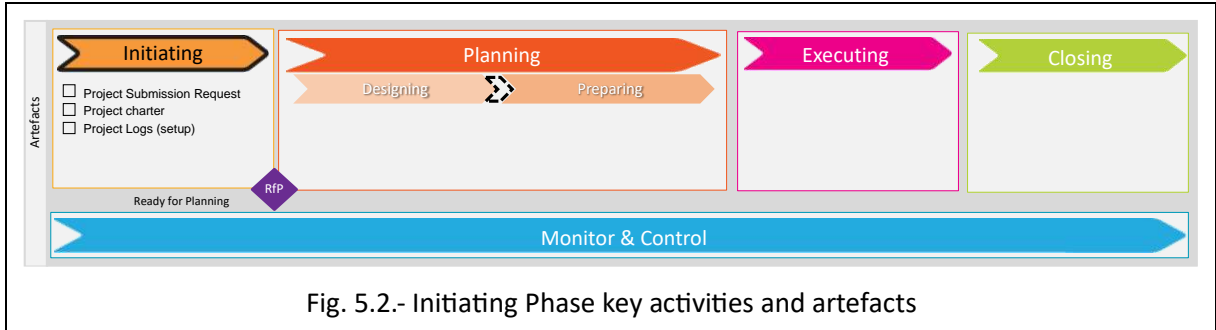
Fig. 5.2.- Initiating Phase key activities and artefacts

5.1 Initiating Meeting

This is an informal meeting, usually between the project initiator - generally the Domain Coordinator (DC) - and the Grant Owner (GO), with other relevant people from the Leader organisation who could contribute to creating the Initiating Phase documents.

This meeting aims to examine the call for proposals and discuss a possible project idea for submitting a project proposal. The goal is to better understand the context of the project idea and decide whether to move forward with creating the Project Submission Request.

Documentation and lessons learned from previous similar projects submitted under the same EU-funding Programme can also be used as input for this meeting.

5.2 Project Submission Request

The Project Submission Request is the EUPM² project's starting point and formalises its initiation. By creating a Project Submission Request, the project initiator ensures that the key information on the call for proposals and the project idea is formally captured and can be used to decide whether to submit the Project Application Form.

The Project Submission Request is an internal document and contains basic information about the call for proposals requirements in terms of budget, timing, eligibility conditions, and criteria against which the leader organisation evaluates the project idea. It also includes:

- Basic information about the project idea.
- Link with the objectives of the EU-funding Programme and the organisation's strategic goals.
- The main deliverable to be produced.
- The key assumptions, constraints, and risks are assessed at this stage.
- The potential partners to be involved.
- A rough estimation of the time and cost of the project.
- Overall estimation of internal resources for designing (staff, resources).

The document outlines the project idea's relevance to the call for proposals and the organisation's benefits of getting the internal approval to move to the designing stage and submit the project proposal.

Key participants	Description
Initiator	Anyone within the organisation can introduce a Project Submission Request.
Approver	Depending on the project, the Grant Owner (GO) or higher-level Governance Body can accept the Project Submission Request and authorise to move forward.

Inputs

- Organisation´s strategy document.
- Opportunity Map.
- Call for proposals.
- A problem, a need, or an opportunity expressed by the project initiator.

Guidelines

- Note that although anyone can initiate a Project Submission Request, the Grant Owner (GO) often delegates its creation to the Domain Coordinator (DC).
- Depending on the project size and the organisation's approval process, approval can be informal or formal (i.e., the Grant Owner or a Governance Body from the Leader organisation reviews and approves it).
- Ensure all the relevant information is included, but at this point, limit details to high-level information. Finer points will be added to other documents (Project Fiche, Project Application Form, etc.).
- Be mindful of the timeframe of the call for proposals (i.e., the available time before the submission deadline).

Steps

1. The Project Submission Request is drafted.
2. The Project Submission Request is sent for approval to the relevant Organisational Governance Body of the Leader organisation. Depending on the project size and the organisation's approval process, approval can be informal.
3. Once the Project Submission Request is approved, the project is defined in more detail with a preliminary project scope description in the Project Fiche.
4. The Grant Owner (GO) assigns the EU Project Manager (EUPM) after the Project Submission Request is approved (or at the latest before the completion of the Project Fiche). The Project Core Team (PCT) is typically assigned before the Planning Kick-off Meeting.

ARSCI

Initiating	CA	PSC	GO	DC	PTG	CR	EUPM	PtEUPM	PCT	PST
Project Submission Request	n.a.	n.a.	**A/S**	**R**	**S**/C	I	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.

5.3 Project Fiche

The leader organisation elaborates the Project Fiche to search for potential partners to contribute to the project's realisation. It includes the leader organisation's profile, the project idea based on the call for the proposals' objectives, and an estimation of the work needed in terms of scope, time, and cost. It must be tailored to highlight each potential partner's expected contribution to the project.

Thus, the Project Fiche is shared with potential project partners to obtain their approval to join the consortium that will submit the Project Application Form and implement the project.

Key participants	Description
Domain Coordinator (DC)	Reviews the Project Fiche, elaborate the list of potential partners.
Grant Owner (GO)	Contribute to the elaboration of the list of potential partners.
EU Project Manager (EUPM)	Draft the Project Fiche.

Inputs

- Call for proposals.
- Project Submission Request.

Guidelines

- The Project Fiche should be brief so that it can be sent to potential partners as soon as possible. It must also highlight the expected contribution requested from each partner to achieve the project objectives and assure the EU added value (when needed).
- Refrain from presenting detailed requirements. Instead, present high-level needs and features and outline the relevance of the project idea to the call for proposals.
- Tailor the Project Fiche, including the description of the main tasks that potential partners should perform and the estimated budget.

Steps

1. The Domain Coordinator (DC) contributes to drafting the Project Fiche, while the EU Project Manager (EUPM) is responsible for delivering the document.
2. The Domain Coordinator (DC) and the Grant Owner (GO) elaborate on a list of potential project partners.
3. The EU Project Manager (EUPM) sends the Project Fiche to potential partners and monitors the building of partnerships.

ARSCI

Initiating	CA	PSC	GO	DC	PTG	CR	EUPM	PtEUPM	PCT	PST
Project Fiche	n.a.	n.a.	**A/S**	**S**	**S**/C	I	**R**	I	n.a.	n.a.

5.4 Phase-Gate RfP (Ready for Planning)

This is the first phase gate. A review and approval are recommended before the project can move to the next phase. The EU Project Manager (EUPM) assesses whether the project is ready to commence the Planning phase by checking the correct approval of the Project Submission Request and the feedback from potential partners invited to join the project partnership.

EUPM² Guide provides a template Phase Exit Review Checklist for each phase that the EU Project Manager (EUPM) can use to guide the assessment and review the phase's specific goals.

6   Planning Phase

The second phase of an EUPM² Guide project is the Planning Phase, in which most of the project's artefacts are created. It is divided into two different stages: the Designing Stage and the Preparing Stage. The **purpose** of this phase is two-fold:

- To ensure that a competitive Project Application Form, including a strong and balanced partnership and a relevant and well-structured project proposal, is submitted on time (Designing Stage).
- To prepare for the effective and efficient management and implementation of all the project activities (Preparing Stage).

6.1   Designing Stage

The Designing stage begins with the Designing Kick-off Meeting and ends once the application form has been submitted to the Contracting Authority (CA). This stage aims to ensure a relevant, coherent, and well-designed project proposal with a strong and balanced partnership matching all the requirements and award criteria set in the call for proposals.
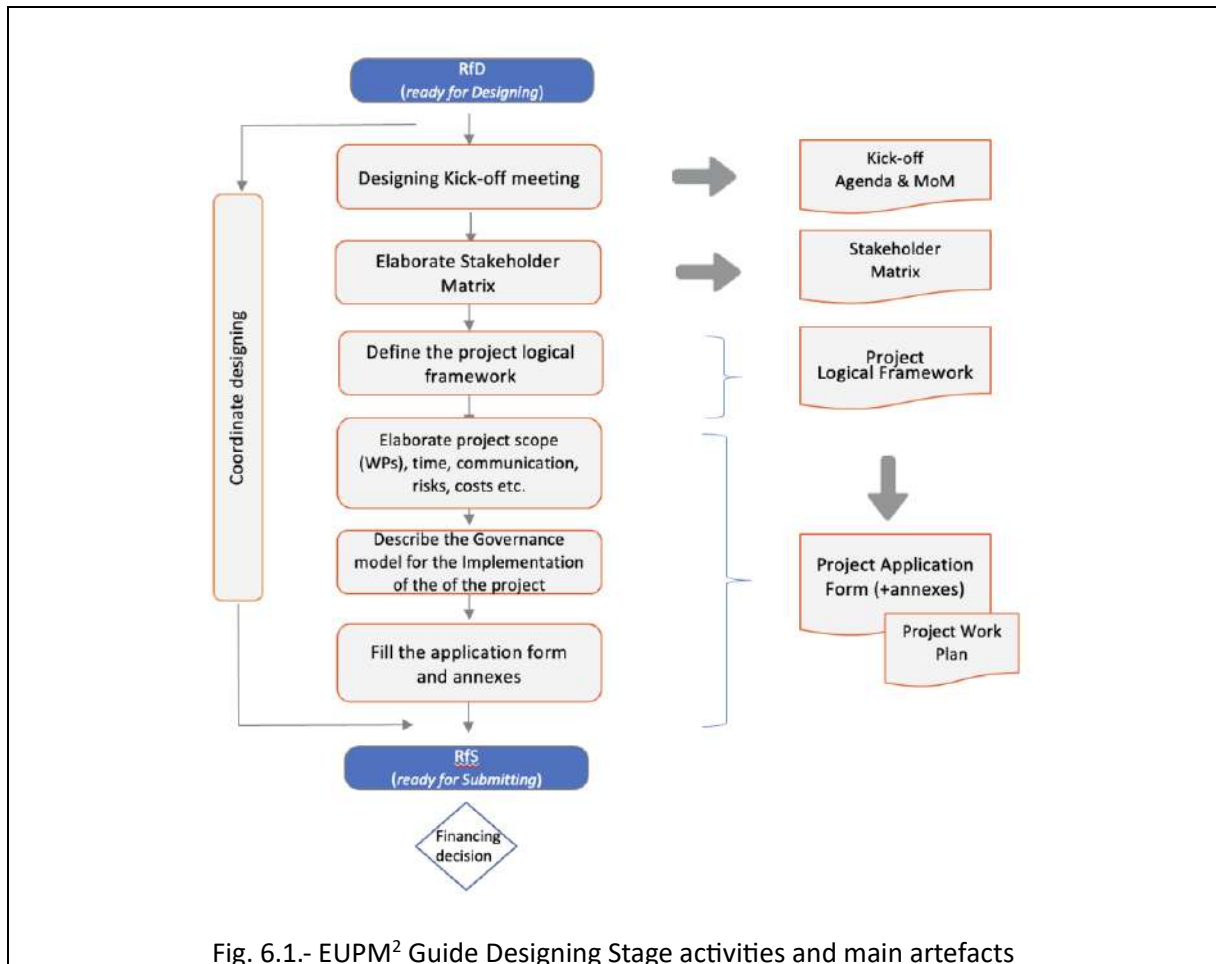
Fig. 6.1.- EUPM² Guide Designing Stage activities and main artefacts

Key artefacts

The key project artefacts created during the Designing Stage are the **Project Stakeholder Matrix**, the **Project Logical Framework,** and the **Project Application Form**.

Artefact	Description
Project Stakeholder Matrix	The Stakeholder Matrix is a preliminary analysis to map all those people, or groups of people, that may affect or be affected by the project and identify their capacities, needs, and constraints, to design communication and/or engagement strategies that may favour the success and sustainability of the project.
Project Logical Framework	The Project Logical Framework describes the logical links between the general objective of the EU-funding programme, the specific objectives of the proposed project and the deliverables and activities to achieve them. It also includes the analysis of the main stakeholders as well as the problems addressed by the project. The Project Logical Framework is an in input for the elaboration of the Project Application Form.
Project Application Form	Although the structure and content of the Project Application Form is defined by each Contracting Authority (CA), it generally includes: the justification of the project in terms of impact, the alignment of the project idea with the call objectives, the specific project objectives, the project governance model, the deliverables produced as well as the resources, costs and time needed to implement the project and the achieve objectives and impact.
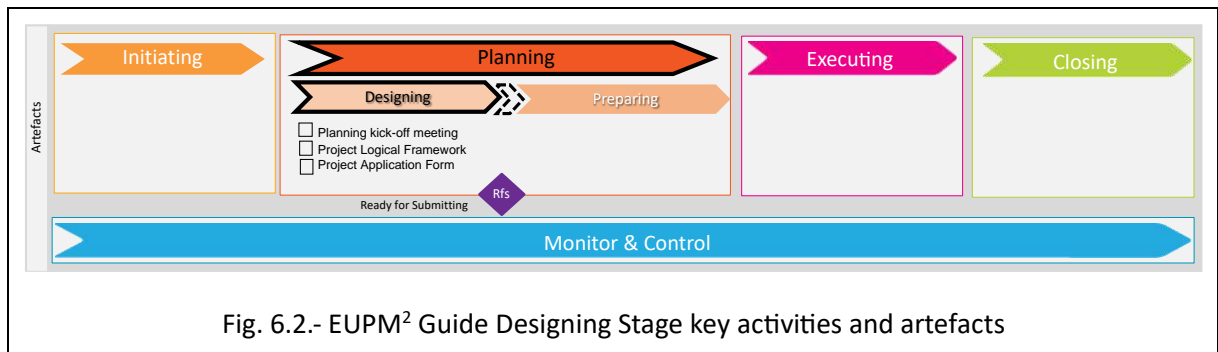
Fig. 6.2.- EUPM^2 Guide Designing Stage key activities and artefacts

6.1.1 Designing Kick-off meeting

The Designing Stage starts with an official Designing Kick-off Meeting, the aim of which is to:

- Ensure that everyone understands the call for proposals and the project idea.
- Clarify the expectations of all project partners and key project stakeholders.
- Discuss the project idea.
- Examine the structure and content of the Project Application Form.
- Identify project risks.
- Share the work for submitting the Project Application Form within the deadline.

At this early stage, the project team will significantly benefit from past experiences of EU-funded projects, especially lessons learned from previous similar projects. All project partners should contribute with their knowledge and expertise.

This Designing Kick-off Meeting should be planned and run effectively, as all actors involved in the Designing stage must be aligned. EUPM² provides templates for the Meeting Agenda and the Minutes of the Meeting (MoM).

Key participants	Description
EU Project Manager (EUPM)	Organise the meeting.
Partner EU Project Managers (PtEUPM) Project Core Team (PCT) Domain Coordinator (DC) Project Target Groups (PTG) Consortium Representatives (CR)	Required Participants.
Communication Manager (PST-CM)	Required to attend (if assigned).
Other project roles or stakeholders	Optional participation (as per the project's needs).
Financial Manager (PST-FM)	Required to attend (if assigned).

Inputs

- Call for Proposals.
- EU-funding Programme guidelines.
- Project Fiche.

Steps

Before the Designing Kick-off Meeting:

1. Plan the meeting.
2. Draft the Meeting Agenda indicating the points to be discussed.
3. Send out the Meeting Agenda in advance.
4. Ensure the attendance of required participants.
5. Address any logistical needs and prepare documentation or hand-outs for the meeting.

During the Planning Kick-off Meeting:

1. Introduce the meeting participants.
2. Ensure a minute-taker is identified so that notes can be made identifying action items. These will be compiled and sent to participants after the meeting.
3. Walk the participants through the Project Fiche so they understand the project idea and scope.
4. Outline the Designing Stage's goals, expectations, and activities and discuss the timeline to respect the submission deadline.
5. Describe the structure of the Project Application Form and related Annexes to be submitted.
6. Assign roles and responsibilities for designing.
7. Discuss the project timeline.
8. Discuss the overall approach to the project.
9. Discuss risks, constraints, and assumptions.
10. Discuss or present any project-supporting tools with input from the Project Support Team (PST).
11. Allow time for any other business (questions and answers).
12. Summarise the discussion (decisions, actions, and risks).
13. Communicate the next steps.

ARSCI

Designing stage	CA	PSC	GO	DC	PTG	CR	EUPM	PtEUPM	PCT	PST
Designing stage Kick-off Meeting	n.a.	**A**	C	**S**	C	C	**R**	**S**	C	n.a.

6.1.2 Project Stakeholder Matrix

A stakeholder is any individual, group, or organisation that can affect, be (positively or negatively) affected by, or even perceive itself to be affected by the project. The Project Stakeholder Matrix lists all (key)-project stakeholders and their contact details and clearly states their role(s) in the project. It also includes the project beneficiaries or end users of the project's deliverables. A stakeholder can influence the project and its deliverables; thus, stakeholders can also be classified according to their relevance.

The purpose of the Project Stakeholder Matrix is to support the EU Project Manager (EUPM) in effectively managing the project's stakeholders based on their power and positive or negative attitude. The information captured in the Matrix should be tailored to the project's needs and used to define communication and engagement activities (see Appendix D).

Key participants	Description
EU Project Manager (EUPM)	Prepares the Project Stakeholder Matrix.
Partners EU Project Managers (PtEUPM)	Support the EU Project Manager (EUPM) in the preparation of the Project Stakeholder Matrix.
Domain Coordinator (DC)	Assists the EU Project Manager (EUPM).

Inputs

- Project Application Form.
- Preparing Kick-off Minutes of Meeting (MoM).

Guidelines

- It is crucial to identify and analyse the people dimension of the project from all possible perspectives.
- It is important to consider internal stakeholders (i.e., partners and team members) and external stakeholders (i.e., end beneficiaries, deliverables users, etc.) that will be part of the Project Target Groups (PTG).
- Assess each stakeholder's importance and relevance to the project. This will also allow for a more effective engagement and communication strategy.

Steps

1. Using the Project Stakeholder Matrix, identify every person, group, or organisation that will have a role in the project or will be directly or indirectly affected by the project activities positively or negatively.
2. Summarise each person or group's characteristics, capacities, interests, and influence in the project and the contact details.
3. Define communication and engagement activities for the stakeholders identified to increase external support and reduce opposition to the project.

Note: When establishing and handling the Project Stakeholder Matrix, respect all applicable privacy and personal data rights regulations.

ARSCI

Preparing stage	CA	PSC	GO	DC	PTG	CR	EUPM	PtEUPM	PCT	PST
Project Stakeholder Matrix	n.a.	**A**	C	**S**	C	I	**R**	**S**	C	C

6.1.3 Project Logical Framework

The elaboration of the Project Logical Framework constitutes the foundation of the project proposal. It describes the project intervention logic, highlighting the following:

- The problems addressed.
- How the project contributes to the general objectives of the EU-funding Programme.
- The project-specific objectives.
- The deliverables needed to achieve the specific objectives.
- The activities needed to realise the project deliverables.

The elaboration of the Project Logical Framework follows the Logical Framework Approach (LFA), an analytical process used to support the design of EU-funded projects (see Appendix D). The Project Logical Framework should be completed and shared among partners before filling out the Project Application Form.

Key participants	Description
EU Project Manager (EUPM)	Elaborate the Project Logical Framework.
Domain Coordinator (DC)	Involved in defining the document's key elements.
Partner EU Project Manager (PtEUPM)	Consulted in developing the document.
Other stakeholders	Consulted in developing the document.

Inputs

- Call for Proposals.
- Project Fiche.
- Minutes of the Designing Kick-off meeting.
- Project Stakeholder Matrix.

Guidelines

- The EU Project Manager (EUPM) is responsible for drafting the Project Logical Framework, although the Domain Coordinator (DC) supports him/her.
- The Partner EU Project Managers (PtEUPMs) collaborate in drafting the Project Logical Framework.
- The Project Target Groups (PTG) should be involved in elaborating the Project Logical Framework.

Steps

1. Describe the project idea based on the objectives and eligible actions set in the call for proposals.
2. Identify the problems linked to the project idea and their cause-effect link.
3. Transform the problems represented through a problem tree into future objectives.
4. Identify the project strategy.
5. Elaborate the Logical Framework Matrix defining:
   - How the project contributes to the general objectives of the EU-funding Programme.
   - The project-specific objectives.
   - The deliverables needed to achieve the specific objectives.
   - The activities needed to realise the project deliverables.
   - The identified assumptions and risks.
   - Reflect on and include the necessary indicators, targets, and sources of verification.

ARSCI

Designing stage	CA	PSC	GO	DC	PTG	CR	EUPM	PtEUPM	PCT	PST
Project Logical Framework	I	A	C	S	C	C	R	S	C	n.a.

6.1.4 Project Application Form

The Project Application Form is the document to be filled out to submit a project proposal following the publication of the call for proposals by the Contracting Authority (CA). The Project Application Form provides the Contracting Authority (CA) with all the information needed to assess the relevance and quality of the project proposal against the criteria set in the call for proposals. This leads to the financing decision.

The Project Application Form generally includes two main parts. The first part aims to capture the reasoning behind the project, describe the alignment of the project idea with objectives and activities as described in the Call document, and discuss the project's relevance and impact on the overall EU funding programme objectives. The second part includes the project's *what*, *how*, and *when* fundamentals. Based on the complexity and the dimension of the project, the level of estimation of the main project variables requested can vary. Generally, a **Project Work Plan** split into work packages is required at his stage.

Key participants	Description
EU Project Manager (EUPM)	Elaborate the Project Application Form.
Domain Coordinator (DC)	Support the EU Project Manager (EUPM) in the elaboration of the Project Application Form, focusing on the narrative section.
Partner EU Project Managers (PtEUPMs)	Support the EU Project Manager (EUPM) in the elaboration of the Project Application Form.
Other stakeholders	Should be involved in the elaboration of the Project Application Form.
Project Support Team (PST) Financial Manager (PST-FM) Communication Manager (PST-CM)	Support in the preparation of budget, communication and dissemination activities, and any other required aspects.

Inputs

- Call for proposals.
- Project Fiche.
- Project Stakeholder Matrix
- Project Logical Framework.

Guidelines

- Note that the form and depth of analysis required for the Project Application Form depend on the project's dimension and complexity, the partners involved, and the budget available.
- Identify a clear Project Logic Framework with measurable criteria that will be used to determine the project's success and contribution to the EU funding Programme strategy before starting to fill out the Project Application Form.
- Describe the overall approach to executing the project (project strategy).
- Ensure that input from all project partners and concerned project stakeholders is considered.

Steps

1. Elaborate on the **project rationale** and highlight how the proposed solution contributes to achieving the priorities and objectives of the EU-funding Programme and its relevance to the Project Target Groups (PTG). Also, describe the proposed solution regarding innovation, scalability, transferability, and sustainability.
2. Identify the **project management approach** and describe the consortium implementation capacity.
3. Develop the **project scope** and identify and organise the work and **deliverables** needed to achieve the project goals (see Project Logical Framework). Elaborate on the first version of the Project Work Plan, including:

- The **Work Breakdown. It** provides a hierarchical breakdown (subdivision) of all the work that must be done to meet the project goals. The activities must be grouped into work packages linked with the outputs to be delivered.
- The **Effort and Cost Estimates.** Outline the expected resources and time required to complete each project task within resource availability and capabilities constraints. The effort and duration estimates create the project schedule and budget.
- The **Project Schedule.** Identify dependencies between tasks, pinpoint their start and end dates, and then establish the overall project duration.
4. Identify high-level **risks** and constraints.
5. Identify the main **Communication and Dissemination** activities.
6. Prepare all the **Annexes** included in the Project Application Forms. They generally concern the formalisation of the partner's involvement in the project (ex., Partners mandate, etc.).
7. All partners approve the Project Application Form before it is submitted for financing.

ARSCI

Designing stage	CA	PSC	GO	DC	PTG	CR	EUPM	PtEUPM	PCT	PST-FM	PST-CM
Project Application Form	I	**A**	C	**S**	C	C	**R**	**S**	C	S	S

6.1.4.1 Work Breakdown

This section of the Project Work Plan aims to break the project into smaller and more manageable components, such as deliverables, **work packages**, activities, and tasks. The breakdown has multiple levels, each with progressively more detailed deliverables and work. These define the project deliverables and the work involved in producing them.

Sometimes, the Contracting Authority (CA) requires the project activities to be split into compulsory work packages (WPs). They include WP Project Management, WP Communication, and several WP(s) related to the project implementation.

Inputs

- Call for proposals
- Project Logical Framework

Outputs

- Work Breakdown (Work Plan section of the Project Application Form)

6.1.4.2 Effort & Cost Estimates

This section of the Project Work Plan estimates the effort needed for each project task identified in the Work Breakdown based on resource availability and capabilities. After a task is assigned to a resource (or to a resource profile), its cost can be calculated according to the different cost estimation methods foreseen.

In EU-funded projects, the cost estimation method follows one of the calculation forms provided by Article 125 par.1 of the EU Regulation 2018/1046, which includes:
- (a) **Financing not linked to the costs** of the relevant operations based on the fulfilment of conditions set out in sector-specific rules or Commission decisions; or the achievement of results measured by reference to previously set milestones or through performance indicators.
- (b) **Reimbursement** of eligible costs incurred.
- (c) **Unit costs**, which cover all or certain specific categories of eligible expenses that are identified in advance by reference to an amount per unit.
- (d) **Lump sums**, which cover in global terms all or certain specific categories of eligible costs that are identified in advance.

- (e) **Flat-rate financing**, which covers specific categories of eligible costs that are identified in advance by applying a percentage.
- (f) A **combination** of the forms referred to in points (a) to (e).

Inputs
- EU-funding Programme financial rules.
- National financial rules.
- Organisation financial rules.
- Project Work Plan (section of Project Application Form).

Outputs
- Budget (Budget section of the Project Application Form).

6.1.4.3   Project Schedule

This section of the Project Work Plan aims to document the dependencies between work packages and tasks, pinpoint their start and end dates, and calculate the overall project duration. The required level of detail is set by the Contracting Authority (CA) and can vary depending on different EU funding Programmes.

Detailed scheduling can be done for the entire project upfront, or it can be worked out (in adequate detail) only for some early parts of the Executing Phase and then progressively developed in full detail. The EU Project Manager (EUPM) uses the schedule to authorise, coordinate, accept project work, and monitor overall progress.

Inputs
- EU funding Programme financial rules.
- Project Work Plan (section of Project Application Form).

Outputs

- Project Schedule (Work Plan section of the Project Application Form).

6.1.4.4   Risks identification

This step aims to identify the main risks that can impact the project's objectives (*see column "Conditions" of the Logical Framework Matrix*). Note that new risks may arise at any point during the project and should be added to the Risk Log for further analysis/action. (see Section 9.7 for details)

The required level of risk identification is set by the Contracting Authority (CA) and can vary depending on different EU-funding Programmes.

Inputs
- Project Logical Framework Matrix.
- Project Work Plan (section of Project Application Form).

Outputs

- Risks list (Risks section of Project Application Form)

6.1.4.5   Communication and Dissemination Activities

This section aims to identify information and communication activities to raise awareness of media, institutions, key stakeholders, and the public of the project objectives and demonstrate the value for money of EU funding.

Generally, the Contracting Authority (CA) requires designing a comprehensive work package focusing exclusively on communication and dissemination. The contents of this work package shall guide the partnership in communicating effectively.

Inputs

- Call for proposals.
- EU funding Programme communication and visibility rules.
- Project Logical Framework Matrix.

Output

- Work Package Communication and Dissemination (part of the Project Work Plan section of the Project Application Form).

6.1.5 Financing Decision

Once the Project Application Form is submitted, the Contracting Authority (CA) will evaluate the proposal based on the evaluation criteria set in the call for proposals and decide whether to finance it or not. In either case, the Leader organisation will receive the notification and the **Evaluation Report**, which it must share with all other relevant partners and stakeholders.

- If the Project proposal **is approved**, the project moves to the Preparing stage (for details, see Paragraph 6.2).
- If the Project proposal **is rejected**, the EU Project Manager (EUPM) should then proceed to the Closing Phase (for details, see Section 8) to assess the evaluation report, which may provide useful insights and recommendations for re-submitting the Project proposal in a future call for proposals.

Note: In some cases, the Contracting Authority (CA) can make the financing decision based on a two-stage procedure. The organisation must submit an initial summary proposal (concept note) in the first stage. In the second stage, only shortlisted proposals will be detailed in a complete application.

ARSCI

Designing stage	CA	PSC	GO	DC	PTG	CR	EUPM	PtEUPM	PCT	PST
Financing Decision	**A**	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	n.a.

6.2 Preparing Stage

The Preparing stage begins after the Contracting Authority (CA) makes a favourable financing decision, which can happen several months after the submission of the Project Application Form. The purpose of this stage is to prepare for the effective and efficient management and implementation of all project activities. During this stage, the Grant Agreement and the Partnership Agreement will be signed, the Project Handbook elaborated on, the Project Work Plan further developed, and all project plans prepared and baselined.

Fig. 6.3 - EUPM^2 Guide Preparing Stage activities and main artefacts
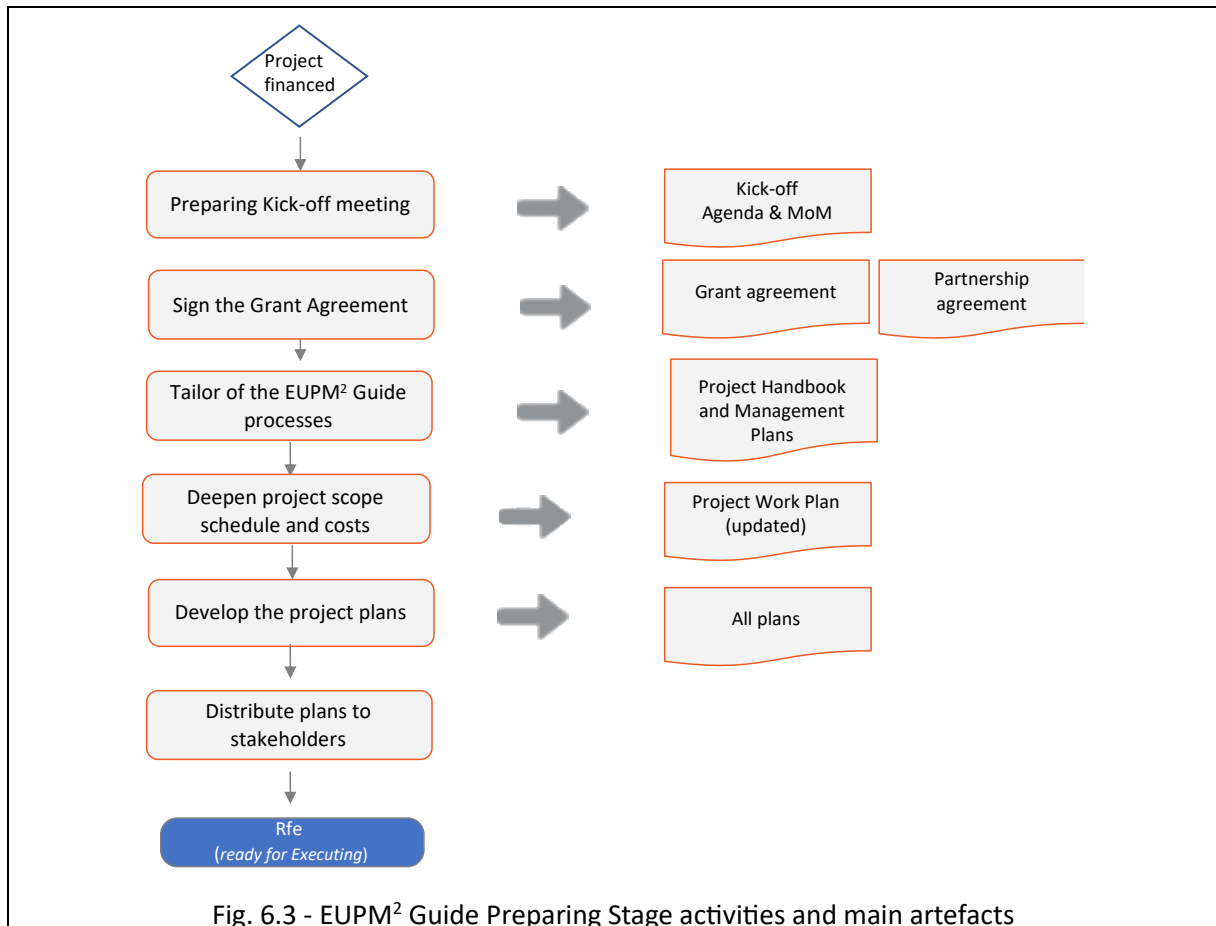
Key artefacts

Artefact	Description
Grant Agreement	The Grant Agreement is a document reflecting the terms and conditions of the awarded grant for the implementation of the project. The structure and content of the Grant Agreement may vary based on the different EU-funding Programmes. The document is provided by the Contracting Authority (CA).
Partnership Agreement	The Partnership Agreement is an internal consortium document describing the duties and obligations of the consortium partners for the implementation of the project. EUPM² Guide provides a template for the Partnership Agreement.

Artefact	Description
Project Handbook	The Project Handbook summarises the project objectives and documents the selected approach for achieving the project goals. It also documents the project governance roles and their responsibilities and defines the plans necessary for managing the project as well as any methodology-tailoring decisions. EUPM² Guide provides a template for the Project Handbook.
Management Plans	These plans define the various processes to be used (e.g., for Risk Management). EUPM² Guide provides Management Plan templates along with guidelines on how to tailor and customise them to the project's context and needs.
Project Plans (specific)	These plans are specific to the project (e.g., the Project Work Plan) and are built according to the project needs and the team's analysis and experience. EUPM² Guide provides templates and guidelines for these plans.
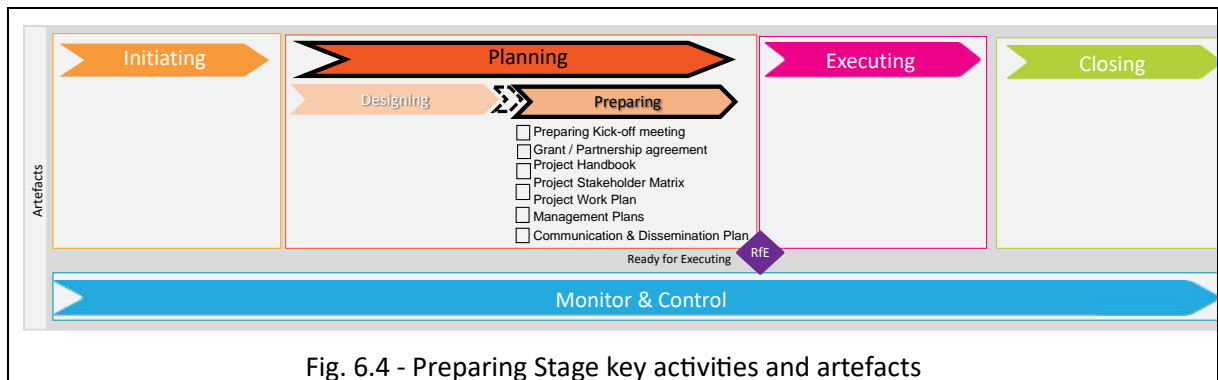
Fig. 6.4 - Preparing Stage key activities and artefacts

6.2.1 Preparing Stage Kick-off meeting

The Preparing stage starts with an official Preparing Kick-off Meeting, the aim of which is to:

- Ensure that all project partners are on board and understand their role.
- Discuss the Grant Agreement content.
- Discuss the Partnership Agreement and the project governance model.
- Examine the project scope and the project plans.
- Identify project risks.
- Facilitate team building and expectation management.

At this stage, the project team will significantly benefit from past experiences of EU-funded projects, especially lessons learned from previous similar projects.

This Designing Kick-off Meeting should be planned and run effectively as all actors involved in the Preparing stage must be aligned. EUPM² Guide provides templates for the Meeting Agenda and the Minutes of the Meeting (MoM).

Key participants	Description
EU Project Manager (EUPM)	Organise the meeting.
Partner EU Project Managers (PtEUPM) Project Core Team (PCT) Domain Coordinator (DC) Project Target Groups (PTG) Consortium Representatives (CR)	Required Participants.
Project Support Team (PST) - Financial Manager (PST-FM) - Communication Manager (PST-CM)	Required to attend.
Other project roles or stakeholders	Optional participation (as per the project's needs).
Desk officer (DO)	Can be invited to join.

Inputs

- Call for proposals.
- EU Program guidelines.
- Project Stakeholder Matrix.
- Project Logical Framework.
- Project Application Form (and annexes).

Steps

Before the Preparing Kick-off Meeting:

1. Plan the meeting.
2. Draft the Meeting Agenda indicating the points to be discussed.
3. Send out the Meeting Agenda in advance.
4. Ensure the attendance of required participants.
5. Address any logistical needs and prepare documentation or hand-outs for the meeting.

During the Preparing Kick-off Meeting:

1. Introduce the meeting participants.
2. Ensure a minute-taker is identified so that notes can be made identifying action items. These will be compiled and sent to participants after the meeting.
3. Walk the participants through the Project Application Form so they understand the project idea and scope and their specific role.
4. Outline the goals, expectations, and activities of the Preparing Stage.
5. Assign roles and responsibilities for preparing.
6. Discuss the project timeline.
7. Discuss the overall approach to the project.
8. Discuss risks, constraints, and assumptions.
9. Discuss or present any project supporting tools (with inputs from the Project Support Team, PST).
10. Allow time for any other business (questions and answers).
11. Summarise the discussion (decisions, actions, and risks).
12. Communicate the next steps.

ARSCI

Preparing stage	CA	PSC	GO	DC	PTG	CR	EUPM	PtEUPM	PCT	PST
Preparing stage Kick-off Meeting	n.a.	**A**	C	**S**	C	C	**R**	**S**	C	C

6.2.2 Grant Agreement

The Grant Agreement is a document memorialising the terms and conditions of the award granted for implementing the project proposal. It is signed by the legal responsible of the consortium leader organisation, generally the Grant Owner (GO) and the Contracting Authority (CA). The Contracting Authority (CA) typically provides the template of the Grant Agreement.

Key participants	Description
EU Project Manager (EUPM)	Support the elaboration of the Grant Agreement.
Grant Owner (GO)	Sign-off the Grant Agreement
Desk Officer (DO)	Provide the Grant Agreement template and monitor the fulfilment of contract obligations.

Inputs

- EU-funding Programme guidelines.
- Project Application Form (and annexes).

Steps

1. The Desk Officer (DO) provides the template of the Grant Agreement.
2. The Grant Owner (GO) and the EU Project Manager (EUPM) review the Grant Agreement, modifying or updating the project activities or other details in the evaluation report if requested by the Contracting Authority (CA).
3. The Legal Representative of the consortium Leader organisation sign off the Grant Agreement.

ARSCI

Preparing stage	CA	PSC	GO	DC	PTG	CR	EUPM	PtEUPM	PCT	PST-FM
Grant Agreement	I	I	A	S	C	C	R	S	C	S

6.2.3 Partnership Agreement

The Partnership Agreement is an internal consortium document that describes the roles and responsibilities of the consortium organisations in implementing the project. It defines the contribution expected from each partner and the financial and reporting duties and obligations within the consortium.

Key participants	Description
EU Project Manager (EUPM)	Elaborate the Partnership Agreement
Partners Project Managers (PtEUPMs)	Support the EU Project Manager (EUPM) in the elaboration of the Partnership Agreement.
Consortium Representatives (CR)	Sign-off the Partnership Agreement.

Inputs

- EU-funding Programme guidelines.
- Project Stakeholder Matrix.
- Project Application Form (and annexes).
- Grant Agreement.
- Evaluation Report.

Steps

1. After the Grant Agreement is signed, the EU Project Manager (EUPM) elaborates the Partnership Agreement with the support of the Partner EU Project Managers (PtEUPM) and the Project Support Team (PST).
2. The Partnership Agreement is shared among the consortium partner organisations.
3. The Legal Representatives of the consortium organisations sign off the Partnership Agreement.

Note: Attention should be paid to post-closing obligations (see Closing Phase) that may be part of the general conditions established by the EU-funding Programme.

ARSCI

Preparing stage	CA	PSC	GO	DC	PTG	CR	EUPM	PtEUPM	PCT	PST (FM)
Partnership Agreement	I	I	C	S	C	A	R	S	C	S

6.2.4   Project Handbook

The Project Handbook summarises the project objectives and documents the consortium's selected approach for achieving the project goals. It defines the critical controlling processes, the conflict resolution and escalation procedure, policies and rules, and the project mindsets.

The Project Handbook also documents the project governance roles and their responsibilities within the partnership. It defines the plans necessary for managing the project and any methodology-tailoring decisions. The project goals and scope are critical inputs to this artefact.

The Project Handbook is an important reference document for all project partners and stakeholders. Along with the Project Work Plan, it is the basis on which the project is managed and executed.

Key participants	Description
EU Project Manager (EUPM)	Prepares the Project Handbook.
Partner EU Project Managers (PtEUPMs)	Support the EU Project Manager (EUPM) in the preparation of the Project Handbook.
Domain Coordinator (DC)	Involved in defining the document's key elements.
Other project stakeholders	Review the Project Handbook.
Project Core Team (PCT)	Consulted in developing the document.

Inputs

- Call for proposals.
- Project Fiche.
- Project Stakeholder Matrix.
- Project Logical Framework.
- Preparing kick-off Minutes of Meeting (MoMs).
- Grant Agreement.
- Partnership Agreement.
- Evaluation Report.

Guidelines

- Use the Preparing Kick-off Meeting minutes to define the Project Handbook.
- The Project Handbook should be updated throughout the project's life.
- All Project Management Plans should be considered part of the Project Handbook.
- The Project Stakeholder Matrix should be updated.

Steps

1. Find documentation from similar EU-funded projects and identify possible reusable components—this could reduce the effort, cost and time required.
2. Summarise the project objectives, dependencies, constraints, and assumptions from the Project Application Form and list stakeholders.
3. Discuss possible/necessary customisations and tailoring of the EUPM² Guide according to the specific rules of the EU-funding Programme.
4. Outline the selected delivery approach and its lifecycle (including project-specific stages).
5. Define the specific project management rules that will be applied to the project (agree on the rules of conduct that will facilitate the better management and execution of the project).
6. Define a conflict resolution and escalation procedure for the project.
7. Highlight the main project controlling processes, such as change/risk/quality management.
8. Define the selected progress tracking and reporting approach. Determine which project artefacts (plans and other documents) are necessary.
9. Document the roles involved in the project along with their respective responsibilities.
10. Update the Project Stakeholder Matrix.

ARSCI

Preparing stage	CA	PSC	GO	DC	PTG	CR	EUPM	PtEUPM	PCT	PST
Project Handbook	n.a.	I	A	S	C	I	R	S	C	C

6.2.4.1   Project Roles and Responsibilities

The main purpose of the Project Roles and Responsibilities section of the Project Handbook is to document the project's roles and responsibilities. Any deviations from the standard EUPM² Guide Roles and Responsibilities should be justified and documented, and any other/new roles should be defined with their responsibilities clearly described. The Project Stakeholder Matrix may be updated now.

6.2.4.2   Project Management Plans

EUPM² Guide suggests several Project Management Plans (artefacts) outlining various project management processes. These plans identify how an organisation manages relatively standard processes. These plans are the following:

1. Project Change Management Plan.
2. Risk Management Plan.
3. Quality Management Plan.
4. Issue Management Plan.

Depending on the organisation and the project, different levels of documentation detail may be required. When sufficient, the Project Handbook can define each management process. When a more extensive and detailed description is needed, separate management plans can be created based on the EUPM² Guide templates and guidelines provided.

6.2.4.3   Project-Specific Plans

EUPM² Guide defines a set of recommended project plans, which can be used for any EU-funded project and provides templates and guidelines for each. However, in contrast to the standard Management Plans, which only require light customisation and tailoring, the Project-Specific Plans usually require more effort because their content is specific to the project.

The optimal level of detail included in Project-Specific Plans depends on the project's type, size and complexity, the project management context and environment, and the experience and competencies of the project team.

All Project-Specific Plans to be used in a project should be listed in the Project Handbook. These plans are:

1. Project Work Plan.
2. Communication and Dissemination Plan.
3. Outsourcing Plan.
4. Deliverable Acceptance Plan.

6.2.4.4   Other

Escalation Procedure

Based on the Grant Agreement, the Project Handbook should define (and tailor) an escalation procedure and tolerances. The Management Plans should reference this to ensure a consistent approach.

The purpose of the escalation procedure is to provide an agreed and effective way for escalating issues and decisions when this is required. For example, it documents how vital issues can be raised to a higher management level for resolution. This ensures that the appropriate management level is involved (or at least informed) if an issue cannot be resolved at a lower level.

Resource Needs

The Project Handbook must also define how the resources (people and equipment) allocated to the project will be used to serve the project's best interests.

As the work becomes clearer, the skills needed to perform the work will also have to be recorded in the Project Handbook. A Training Plan - for each partner - can be annexed to the Project Handbook if personnel need to be trained in missing skills. If more people with these skills need to be hired, the hiring process must be described in the same section of the Handbook. Finally, the way resources will be released at the end of the project (or when their work is complete) must also be formalised here.

6.2.5 Project Work Plan (update)

The Project Work Plan elaborated in the Designing stage and included in the Project Application Form must be reviewed and detailed. It should be baselined but kept up to date throughout the project's life and capture all project-related work identified during the planning phase or emerging during the executing phase (e.g., risks, issues, corrective actions, etc.).

Key participants	Description
EU Project Manager (EUPM)	Coordinates all activities for updating and detailing the Project Work Plan.
Partner EU Project Managers (PtEUPMs)	Support the EU Project Manager (EUPM) in the updating of the Project Work Plan
Project Core Team (PCT)	Assists the EU Project Manager (EUPM)
Financial Manager (PST-FM)	Assists the EU Project Manager (EUPM) in the detailing of the costs section of the Project Work Plan

Inputs

- Grant Agreement.
- Partnership Agreement.
- Project Application Form.
- Evaluation Report.

Steps

1. Detail the Work Breakdown. This provides a hierarchical breakdown (subdivision) of all the work that must be done to meet the project objectives. Outlining the tasks enables an estimation of their effort and cost requirements.
2. Detail the Project Schedule. This identifies dependencies between tasks, pinpoints their start and end dates, and establishes the overall project duration.
3. Update and detail the Effort and Cost Estimates. These outline expectations of the resources and time required to complete each project task within resource availability and capabilities constraints. The effort and duration estimates create the project schedule and budget.

ARSCI

Preparing stage	CA	PSC	GO	DC	PTG	CR	EUPM	PtEUPM	PCT	PST (FM)
Project Work Plan (update)	I	**A**	C	**S**/C	C	C	**R**	**S**	**S**/C	**S**

6.2.6 Communication and Dissemination Plan

The Project Communication and Dissemination Plan sets out the activities that will be planned to ensure adherence with the Grant Agreement obligations regarding Communication and Dissemination of the project´s activities and results. This Plan is oriented to external target groups to diffuse new knowledge generated by the project, increase the adoption of project results, and demonstrate the project's generated impact.

Key participants	Description
Communication Manager (CM)	Responsible for the elaboration of the Communication and Dissemination Plan.
EU Project Manager (EUPM)	Provides timely and adequate information to the Communication Manager (CM). Supports the implementation of Communication and Dissemination activities.
Partner EU Project Managers (PtEUPMs)	Provides timely and adequate information to the Communication Manager (CM). Supports the implementation of Communication and Dissemination activities.
Project Steering Committee (PST)	Approves the Communication and Dissemination Plan.

Inputs

- Grant Agreement.
- Partnership Agreement.
- Project Application Form.
- Stakeholder Matrix.
- Project Work Plan (WP Communication and Dissemination).
- Project Handbook.

Steps

The Communication and Dissemination Plan needs to cover the following elements:

1. Identify the main communication and dissemination objectives.
2. Describe the relevant target audiences in line with the Grant Agreement and the Stakeholder Matrix.
3. Develop the activities, channels, frequencies and necessary resources to effectively communicate and disseminate project activities, deliverables, and achievements.
4. Describe the visual identity of the EU-funded project, which includes all visual elements (i.e., logo, font, images) that can be associated with the project.
5. Establish and manage internal communication mechanisms to gather adequate and relevant information on project development and results achievement.

ARSCI

Preparing stage	CA	PSC	GO	DC	AIG	CR	EUPM	PtEUPM	PCT	PST (CM)
Communication and Dissemination Plan	I	**A**	C	C	C	C	**S**	**S**	C	**R**

6.2.7 Outsourcing Plan

The Outsourcing Plan defines the "what and how" for any outsourced products or services needed to carry out the project by each partner organisation. It outlines the scope of products and services to be purchased or contracted, identifies the outsourcing strategies used, and defines the responsibilities for the entire outsourcing lifecycle.

Note that the outsourcing plan must comply with the procurement procedures set by the EU funding Programme and each project partner's organisational rules and procedures.

Key participants	Description
EU Project Manager (EUPM)	Prepares the Outsourcing Plan.
Partner EU Project Managers (PtEUPMs)	Support the EU Project Manager (EUPM) to prepare the Outsourcing Plan.
Legal Representatives of the consortium organisations	Review the plan.
Financial Manager (PST-FM)	Assists the EU Project Manager (EUPM) in the identification of the procurement procedures to implement the outsourcing plan.

Inputs

- Grant Agreement.
- Partnership Agreement.
- EU-funding Programme Procurement rules
- Project Application Form.
- Project Work Plan.
- Project Handbook.
- Relevant organisational procurement rules and procedures.

Steps (for each consortium organisation)

1. Based on the share of project activities assigned, identify the products and services needed to carry out those activities and the timeframe within which the outsourcing should take place.
2. Define the relevant procurement procedure for each product and service outsourced according to the internal organisational procurement policy and the EU-funding Programme procurement rules. These procedures generally depend on the value of the goods or services purchased (e.g., direct award, an award based on a single tender, a competitively negotiated procedure, an open call for tender, etc.).
3. Decide who can interface with the contractors and who is responsible for signing the contract.
4. List the evaluation criteria for contractors. This ensures that a contractor is selected based on pre-set criteria and that no single person or group influences the decision. The requirements could include capability, previous experience in similar projects, or anything relevant.
5. Identify the people within the organisation who must approve purchases.
6. Provide a timeline for all the contracted activities and deliverables. This will ensure the contractor is committed to having resources available to meet the pre-agreed timeline.
7. Identify any documentation deliverables expected from the contractors (e.g. manuals, etc.).

ARSCI

Preparing stage	CA	PSC	GO	DC	PTG	CR	EUPM	PtEUPM	PCT	PST (FM)
Outsourcing Plan	n.a.	**A**	C	C	I	**S**	**R**	**S**	I	**S**

6.2.8 Deliverables Acceptance Plan

The Deliverables Acceptance Plan aims to ensure that project deliverables are accepted at the end of the project. It needs to be aligned with the characteristics of the project deliverables described in the Project Application Form and the conditions set out in the Grant Agreement. The plan includes the necessary activities and resources to check and control whether deliverables will be formally accepted.

Key participants	Description
EU Project Manager (EUPM)	Prepares the Deliverables Acceptance Plan.
Partner EU Project Managers (PtEUPMs)	Support the EU Project Manager (EUPM) to prepare the Deliverables Acceptance Plan.
Doman Coordinator (DC)	Reviews and validates the deliverables acceptance requirements, activities and associated metrics
Project Steering Committee (PSC)	Approves the plan.

Inputs

- Grant Agreement.
- Partnership Agreement.
- Project Application Form.
- Project Work Plan.
- Project Handbook.

Steps

1. Based on the characteristics of the deliverable set in the Project Application Form, define the overall acceptance approach and schedule and the tools to be used.
2. Define the acceptance criteria and tolerances for the project deliverables and the activities needed to validate them.
3. Define the process and timeline for dealing with non-acceptance (or partial acceptance).
4. Define clear roles and responsibilities for the acceptance of each deliverable.
5. Tailor the Deliverables Acceptance Checklist based on the acceptance activities defined.
6. In the case of outsourced work, the Deliverable Acceptance Process should be documented in the contract.
7. Ensure that the Deliverables Acceptance Plan is communicated to the relevant project stakeholders.

Preparing stage	CA	PSC	GO	DC	PTG	CR	EUPM	PtEUPM	PCT	PST
Deliverables Acceptance Plan	n.a.	**A**	C	S	I	C	**R**	S	C	n.a.

6.2.9 Phase Gate RfE (Ready for Executing)

This is the second phase gate. A review and approval are recommended before the project can move to the next phase. The EU Project Manager (EUPM) uses the outputs of the Planning Phase to assess whether the goals of this phase have been achieved and then requests approval from the Project Steering Committee (PSC) to move on to the Executing Phase.

The EUPM² Guide provides a template Phase Exit Review Checklist for each phase that the EU Project Manager (EUPM) can use to guide the assessment, alongside a review of the phase's specific goals.

7   Executing Phase

The third phase of an EUPM² project is the Executing Phase. This Phase aims to implement and manage all project activities and ensure that project deliverables are produced in a timely, efficient, and effective manner and that the planned objectives are achieved. The project deliverables are produced for the Project Target Groups (PTG) during this phase. The Executing Phase begins with a Kick-off Meeting and ends with the provisional acceptance of the project deliverables (per the Deliverables Acceptance Plan), by the Solution side.

Depending on the type of project, the Executing Phase can be divided into different implementing stages, if necessary.
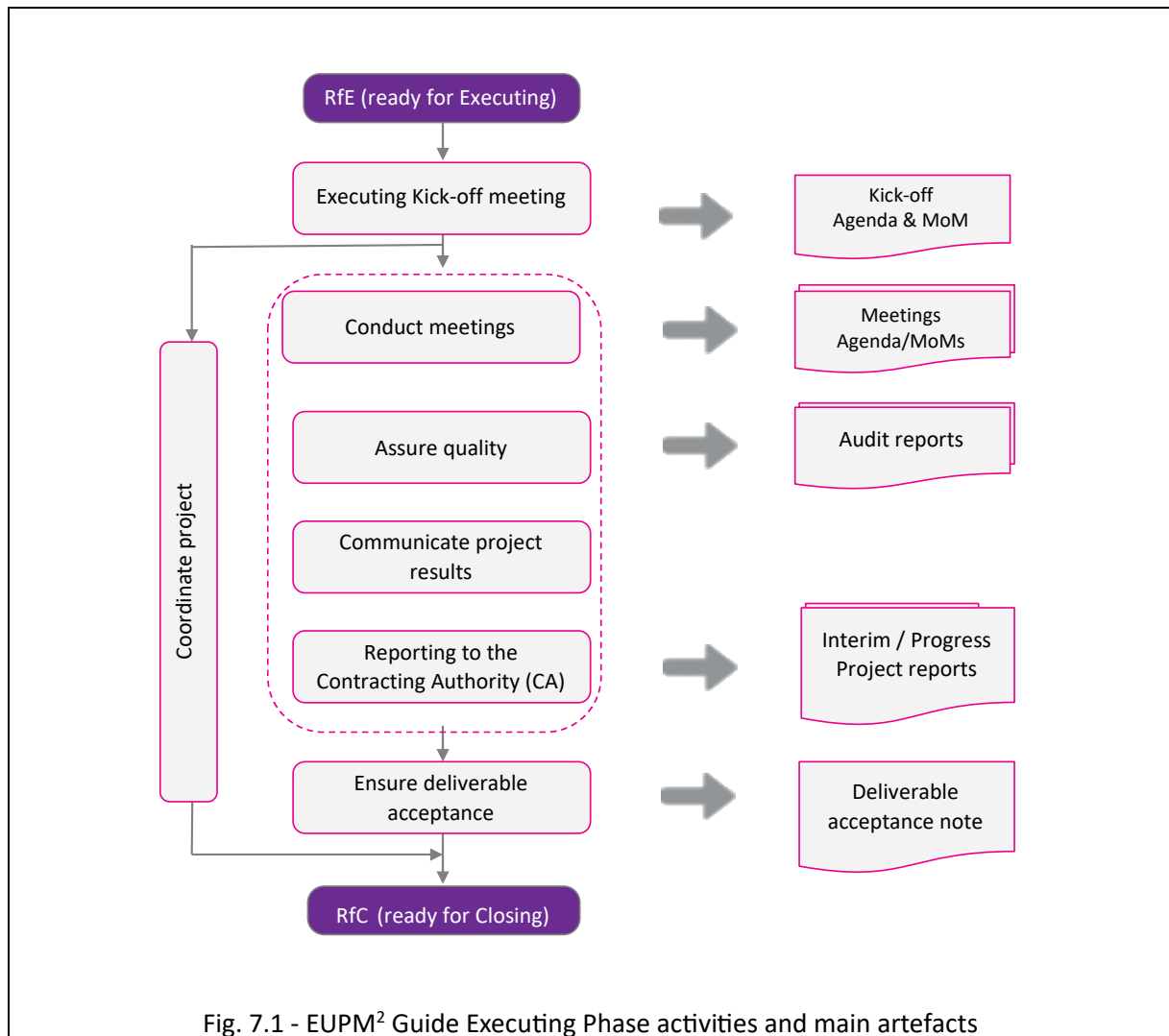
Fig. 7.1 - EUPM² Guide Executing Phase activities and main artefacts

Key artefacts

Artefact	Description
Meeting Agendas/ Minutes	Standardized templates for Agenda and Minutes of meetings increase clarity and efficiency.
Project Reports	Most likely the Grant Agreement includes references to templates for reporting, but the partners need to agree on reporting procedures and other templates, if necessary.
Change Requests	The Change Request is the official template or form that needs to be used to request a project change to the Contracting Authority.
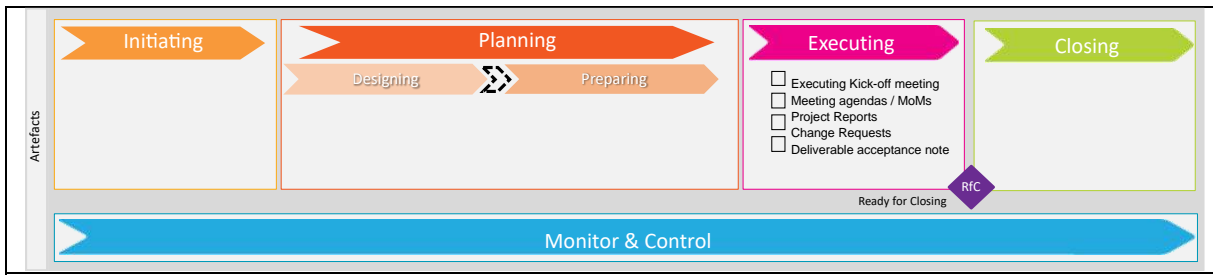
Fig. 7.2.- Executing Phase key activities and artefacts

7.1 Executing Kick-off Meeting

The Executing Phase starts with the Executing Kick-off Meeting. This meeting ensures that the whole Project Team knows the project's key elements and rules.

Key participants	Description
EU Project Manager (EUPM)	Organises the meeting.
Partner EU Project Managers (PtEUPMs)	Support the EU Project Manager (EUPM) to organise the meeting.
Project Core Team (PCT)	Required participants.
Other project roles or stakeholders	Optional participation (as per the project's needs).

Inputs

- Project Application Form.
- Project Stakeholder Matrix.
- Project Handbook.
- Project Work Plan.
- All project plans and logs.
- Any requirements document.

Steps

Before the Executing Kick-off Meeting:

1. Plan the meeting.
2. Draft the Meeting Agenda indicating the main points to be discussed.
3. Send out the Meeting Agenda in advance.
4. Ensure the attendance of the required participants.
5. Address any logistical needs and prepare documentation or hand-outs for the meeting.

During the Executing Kick-off Meeting:

1. Ensure that someone is designated to take the Minutes of Meeting (MoM), including action points.
2. Present the Project Handbook and the Project Work Plan with the appropriate level of detail.
3. Present the Communications and Dissemination Plan.
4. Agree on the conflict resolution process and present the escalation procedure.
5. Present the Project Stakeholder Matrix.
6. Present the Risk Management, Issue Management and Project Change Management processes and the Quality Assurance and Control activities.
7. Clarify the expectations of the Project Core Team (PCT).
8. Agree on the team's ground rules.

After the Executing Kick-off Meeting:

1. Send the Minutes of the Meeting (MoM) to the relevant stakeholders. The minutes should include a summary of project issues raised, risks identified, decisions taken, and changes proposed. The relevant logs should also record the issues, risks, decisions, and project changes.

Executing	CA	PSC	GO	DC	PTG	CR	EUPM	PtEUPM	PCT	PST
Executing Kick-off Meeting	n.a.	**A**	C	**S**/C	C	C	**R**	**S**	C	C

7.2   Project Coordination

The objective of the project coordination is to facilitate the project's progress by continuously sharing information among the EU Project Manager (EUPM) and the Partner EU Project Managers (PtEUPMs), providing information to the Project Core Teams (PCT), and supporting the completion of assigned work.

Project coordination includes allocating project resources to activities, performing regular quality checks of interim results, maintaining ongoing communication with all project team members, and keeping everyone involved in the project motivated through leadership, negotiations, conflict resolution and applying appropriate human resource management techniques.

Key participants	Description
EU Project Manager (EUPM)	Coordinates all project activities
Partner EU Project Managers (PtEUPMs)	Assists the EU Project Manager (EUPM) in the coordination of the project activities related to their share of work.
Domain Coordinator (DC)	Can support (or contribute to) project coordination depending on the context of the project.

Inputs

- Project Stakeholder Matrix.
- Project Handbook.
- Project Work Plan.

Note: Project coordination begins officially with the project's initiation and ends with its closing—however, the intensity of project coordination peaks during the Executing Phase.

Steps

1. Manage and direct project activities and stakeholders.
2. Share information between the EU Project Manager (EUPM) and Partner EU Project Managers (PtEUPM).
3. Assign tasks to the Project Core Team (PCT) and coordinate their execution per the Project Work Plan.
4. Provide information to the Project Core Team (PCT) as required for the project's progress.
5. Verify the completion of tasks and accept interim work deliverables in line with predefined acceptance criteria.
6. Provide leadership and motivate the project team.
7. Manage project team dynamics.
8. Use negotiations, conflict resolution, and people management techniques to ensure smooth collaboration among team members and effective project progress.

ARSCI

Executing	CA	PSC	GO	DC	PTG	CR	EUPM	PtEUPM	PCT	PST
Project Coordination	n.a.	I	**A**	**S**	I	I	**R**	**S**	I	C

7.3 Quality Assurance

Quality assurance is the activity of gathering evidence that proves the project work follows high-quality standards, methodologies, and best practices. It allows us to be confident that the project will satisfy the desired scope and quality requirements within the constraints.

Quality Assurance activities include determining whether appropriate project controls are in place, confirming that they are being implemented and assessing their effectiveness.

Quality Assurance activities are documented in the Quality Management Plan. These can be performed by the EU Project Manager (EUPM), the Project Quality Assurance (PQA) role, or other project roles such as the Project Core Team (PCT) and the Domain Coordinator (DC). External audits undertaken by entities outside the project can also be defined.

Key participants	Description
EU Project Manager (EUPM)	Accountable for carrying out the overall Quality Assurance activities.
Project Quality Assurance (PQA)	Establishes Quality Assurance standards and reviews project outputs and deliverables.
Project Core Team (PCT)	Adheres to the project's Quality Assurance standards.

Inputs

- Application Form.
- Grant Agreement.
- Quality Management Plan.
- Project Work Plan.

Guidelines

- These Quality Assurance activities must be integrated into the Project Work Plan.
- The Project Core Team (PCT) must provide evidence of adherence to the quality assurance standards and procedures.

ARSCI

Executing	CA	PSC	GO	DC	PTG	CR	EUPM	PtEUPM	PCT	PST
Quality Assurance	n.a.	I	I	S	C	I	A	S	R	I

7.4 Communicate Project Results

Communication of project results refers to the methods used to keep project stakeholders - other than the Contracting Authority (CA)- informed about the realisation of the project activities, relevant project details, and objective achievement based on the Communications and Dissemination Plan and project stakeholder needs.

Key participants	Description
Communication Manager (PST-CM)	Responsible for the communication and dissemination of the project results.
Communication officers	Support the Communication Manager (PST-CM) in carrying out the communication and dissemination activities.
EU Project Manager (EUPM)	Accountable for the communication and dissemination activities.

Inputs

- Communications and Dissemination Plan.
- Project Stakeholder Matrix.
- Project Work Plan.
- Project Reports and Project Logs.

Guidelines

- Communication is an essential component of any EU-funded project. It must amplify the visibility of the achievements with media, institutions, key stakeholders, the public and demonstrate the value for money of EU funding, i.e., how public money is spent and for which purposes.
- Reporting project results has to include communicating the project achievements, the deliverables and products, and the project effects on the beneficiaries and territories.
- Relevant information resulting from the execution of project plans should be communicated to appropriate parties at the right time and in the proper format following the Communication and Dissemination Plan.

Steps

1. The Communication Manager (PST-CM) carries out the information and communication activities detailed in the Communications and Dissemination Plan with the support of the Communication Officers at the partner level.
2. The Communication Manager (PST-CM) updates the Communication and Dissemination Plan in case new stakeholders or new communication channels should be identified during project implementation.
3. The EU Project Manager (EUPM) evaluates the communication work and success using the communication performance indicators detailed in the Communications and Dissemination Plan.

ARSCI

Executing	CA	PSC	GO	DC	PTG	CR	EUPM	PtEUPM	PCT	PST (CM)
Communicate Project Results	I	I	I	C	I	I	**A**	S	C	**R**

7.5 Project Reporting to the Contracting Authority (CA)

Reporting to the Contracting Authority (CA) is a commitment regulated by the Grant Agreement meant to inform the Contracting Authority (CA) of relevant progress in project implementation and demonstrate the progress for activities, deliverables and performance indicators based on the approved project description and budget.

Generally, projects are required to report using specific templates and respecting defined deadlines. The Project Reports to the Contracting Authority (CA) can be continuous and/or periodic.

A continuous report allows the project to report progress continuously. As soon as deliverables are produced and milestones have been achieved, such information must be reported according to the timing and conditions set out in the Grant Agreement.

Periodic reports are foreseen in the Grant Agreement on a fixed date and are required to request payments. Generally, include a Progress, Interim and Final report. They are structured with a narrative or technical part and a financial part:

- The <u>narrative or technical part</u> follows the structure of the project description, providing updated information on the project's state of play, upcoming project events, synergies, project results and outputs, potential risks, external conditions, corrective measures, and work package implementation.
- The <u>financial part</u> includes all the incurred expenditures in the related reporting period.

Key participants	Description
EU Project Manager (EUPM)	Responsible for the elaboration and submission of the Project reports.
Partner EU Project Managers (PtEUPMs)	Support the EU Project Manager (EUPM) in the elaboration and submission of the Project reports for the assigned part of project activities.
Financial Manager (PST-FM) / Partner Financial Managers (PST-PtFM)	Support the EU Project Manager (EUPM) in the elaboration of the financial section of the Project reports.
Grant Owner (GO)	Accountable for the submission of the Project Report.

Inputs

- Application Form.
- Grant Agreement.
- Reporting template.
- Partnership Agreement.
- Project Handbook.
- Project Work Plan.
- Project Logs.
- Project Checklists.
- Outputs of the Monitor Project Performance activity.

Guidelines

- Project Reports are an output of project monitoring and an essential input for project control and decision-making. They also contribute to the Project-End Review meeting and are an important way of capturing historical information. Therefore, they should be properly archived during the Closing Phase.
- Although the Project Report to the Contracting Authority (CA) is a contractual commitment, it can be used as an opportunity to communicate the project better at the Programme level, establishing an effective project image from the beginning.
- The Grant Owner (GO) is accountable for reporting on behalf of the partnership. However, each Consortium Representative (CR), with the support of the Partner EU Project Managers

(PtEUPMs), is responsible for providing due, precise and complete information and documents. The EU Project Manager (EUPM) harmonises the information and documents received, drafting an integrated report for the project as a whole.

Steps

1. List all reports to be submitted by the Grant Agreement in the Project Handbook. Typically, they include a Progress, an Interim and a Final Report.
2. Verify whether a continuous report system is in place, report the milestones, upload the deliverables on time, and follow the Contracting Authority (CA) 's requests for clarification.
3. Elaborate on the Project Reports using the specific templates provided by the Contracting Authority (CA), which are generally consistent with the approved project.
4. Submit the Project Reports within the set deadline.
5. If the Project Reports include a request for grant payment, an auditor's report accompanying the Project Report expenses can be requested.
6. Answer the requests for clarification that the Contracting Authority (CA) may issue after submitting the Project Report to finalise its approval.

ARSCI

Executing	CA	PSC	GO	DC	PTG	CR	EUPM	PtEUPM	PCT	PST
Project Reporting to CA	I	I	**A**	C	C	C	**R**	**S**	**S**	**S**

7.6 Phase Gate RfC (Ready for Closing)

This is the third and final phase gate. A review and approval are recommended before the project can move to the next phase. The EU Project Manager (EUPM) assesses whether all the goals of the Executing Phase have been achieved, verifies that all planned activities have been carried out, that all requirements have been met, and that the project's deliverables have been fully provided. The EU Project Manager (EUPM) also ensures that the Project Steering Committee (PSC) accepts the project deliverables. Once all the above conditions have been met, the Project Steering Committee (PSC) can authorise the EU Project Manager (EUPM) to move the project to the Closing Phase.

The EUPM[2] Guide provides a template Phase Exit Review Checklist for each phase that the EU Project Manager (EUPM) can use to guide the assessment, alongside a review of the phase's specific goals.

8   Closing Phase

The final phase of an EUPM² project is the Closing Phase. The purpose of this Phase is to capture lessons learned and recommendations, comply with the final reporting requirements in the Grant Agreement, and proceed to the administrative closure of the project. The Closing Phase starts with the Project-End Review Meeting and ends with the Contracting Authority (CA) final approval, which marks the project's administrative closure. During the Closing Phase, the project's activities are completed, the project's final state is documented, and the deliverables are officially transferred to the Project Target Groups (PTG).
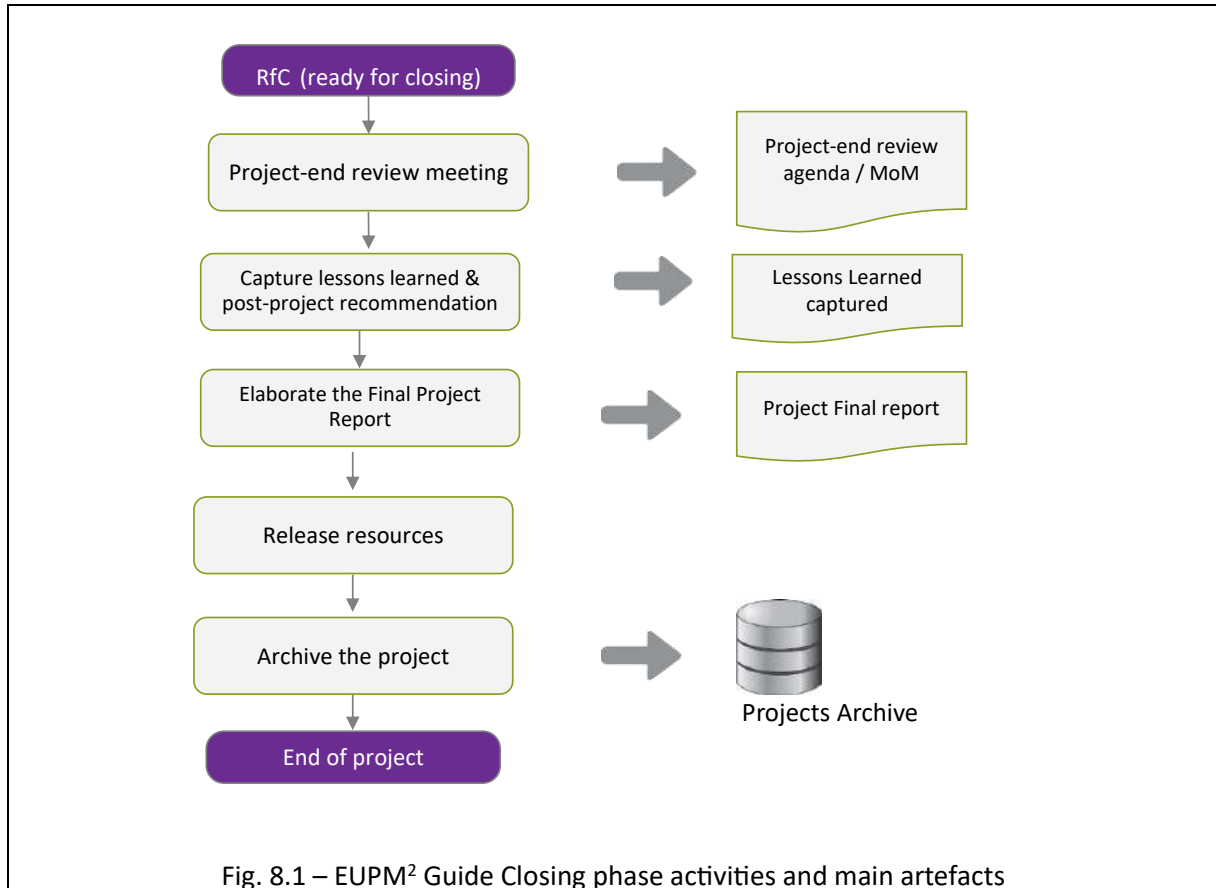
Fig. 8.1 – EUPM^2 Guide Closing phase activities and main artefacts

Key artefacts

Artefact	Description
Project-end Review Meeting Agenda and Minutes	Standardized template for Agenda and Minutes of this final meeting.
Project Final Report	Narrative and financial report covering the whole project in the template and following the requirements of the Contracting Authority.
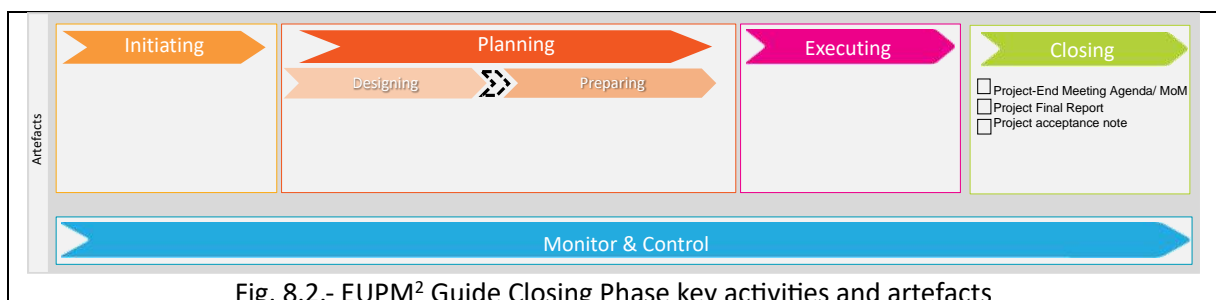
Fig. 8.2.- EUPM^2 Guide Closing Phase key activities and artefacts

8.1 Project-End Review Meeting

The Project-End Review Meeting launches the Project Closing Phase after the Executing Phase is deemed complete. This meeting aims to set up the work for the Project Final Report and ensure that project partners discuss their project experience so that Lessons Learned and best practices can be captured. Partners' performance is also evaluated, and ideas and recommendations for post-project activities are discussed.

Key participants	Description
EU Project Manager (EUPM)	Organises the meeting.
Partner EU Project Managers (PtEUPMs)	Attendance is required.
Financial Manager (PST-FM)	Attendance is required.
Communication Manager (PST-CM)	Attendance is required.
Project Core Team (PCT)	Attendance is required.
Grant Owner (GO)	Attendance is required.
Other stakeholders	Contributions from other supporting or optional roles may also be valuable.

Inputs

- Project Application Form.
- Grant Agreement and Partnership Agreement.
- Project Stakeholder Matrix.
- Project Handbook and Project Work Plan.
- All Project Plans.
- Relevant Project Reports and Logs.

Steps

Before the Project-End Review Meeting:

1. Plan the meeting and set the Meeting Agenda with the points to be discussed.
2. Send out the Meeting Agenda in advance.
3. Address and logistical needs and prepare documentation or hand-outs for the meeting.
4. Make sure participants will be present and fully prepared.

During the Project-End Review Meeting:

1. The Grant Owner (GO) usually expresses the organisation's appreciation to the whole project, team, and key stakeholders.
2. Ensure someone is designated to take the Minutes of Meeting (MoM).
3. Present project information and data on performance and achievements.
4. Discuss the overall project experience.
5. Discuss problems and challenges faced during the project and how they were addressed.
6. Discuss Lessons Learned and Best Practices that may be useful for future projects.

After the Project-End Review Meeting:

1. Compile Lessons Learned and Post-Project Recommendations.
2. Produce the Project-Final Report.
3. Communicate the results of the meeting to the relevant stakeholders.

ARSCI

Closing	CA	PSC	GO	DC	PTG	CR	EUPM	PtEUPM	PCT	PST
Project-End Review Meeting	n.a.	**A**	C	**S**	C	C	**R**	**S**	C	C

8.2 Project Final Report

Following the Project-End Review Meeting, the project's overall narrative and financial part are detailed in the Project Final Report, which documents the activities implemented, the deliverables produced, the expenses incurred, and the objectives and impacts achieved.

The structure and content of the Final Project Report are defined by the Contracting Authority (CA) in the Grant Agreement and are generally aligned with the Progress and Interim Reports. The Project Final Report should be used as a knowledge base for future projects.

Key participants	Description
EU Project Manager (EUPM)	Responsible for the elaboration and submission of the Final Project Report.
Partner EU Project Managers (PtEUPMs)	Support the EU Project Manager (EUPM) in the elaboration and submission of the Final Project Report for the assigned part of project activities.
Financial Manager (PST-FM) / Partner Financial Managers (PST-PtFM)	Support the EU Project Manager (EUPM) in the elaboration of the financial section of the Project Final Report.
Project Steering Committee (PSC)	Accountable for the submission of the Final Project Report.

Inputs

- Application Form.
- Grant Agreement.
- Reporting template.
- Partnership Agreement.
- Project Stakeholder Matrix.
- Project Handbook.
- Project Work Plan.
- Project Logs.
- Project Checklists.
- Outputs of the Monitor Project Performance activity.

Guidelines

- The Project Final Report is the final output of project monitoring and progressively includes describing all the activities performed within the project.
- The structure of the Project Final Report generally mirrors the structure of the Progress and Interim Report.
- Though written by the EU Project Manager (EUPM), relevant stakeholders should contribute to producing a well-rounded and comprehensive project assessment.
- The Project Final Report also includes the final version of the deliverables produced and accepted by the Project Steering Committee (PSC) in the Executing Phase.
- This document should be part of a central project repository or knowledge database that describes project experiences, best practices, and common pitfalls.

Steps

1. Elaborate on the Project Final Report using the specific template provided by the Contracting Authority (CA), which is generally consistent with the approved project.
2. Submit the Final Project Reports within the set deadline.
3. If the Project Final Reports include a request for grant payment, an auditor's report accompanying the Project Report can be requested.
4. Answer the requests for clarification that the Contracting Authority (CA) may issue after submitting the Project Final Report for finalising its approval.

Closing	CA	PSC	GO	DC	PTG	CR	EUPM	PtEUPM	PCT	PST
Final Project Report	I	**A**	C	**S**	C	C	**R**	S	C	**S**

8.3 Administrative Closure

The EU Project Manager (EUPM) ensures that all project deliverables have been accepted by the Contracting Authority (CA) and, with the help of the Project Support Team (PST), that all project documentation and records are up to date, reviewed, and organised. Project expenses have been paid, recorded, and archived. The Project Core Team (PCT) is officially dissolved, and all resources are released.

The project is officially closed once all Closing Phase activities are completed, and the Contracting Authority (CA) has approved the Final Report.

Key participants	Description
EU Project Manager (EUPM)	Oversees all closure activities and the release of project resources.
Partner EU Project Managers (PtEUPMs)	Support the EU Project Manager (EUPM) in all closure activities related to their assigned part of project activities.
Financial Manager (PST-FM) / Partner Financial Managers (PST-PtFM)	Support the EU Project Manager (EUPM) in in all closure activities related to the financial part of the project.
Project Support Office (PSO)	Assists in reviewing, organising and archiving all project Documentation.

Inputs

- Application Form.
- Grant Agreement.
- Reporting template.
- Partnership Agreement.
- Project Handbook.
- Project Work Plan.
- Project Logs.
- Project Checklists.
- Outputs of the Monitor Project Performance activity.

Steps

1. Ensure the Contracting Authority (CA) and stakeholders approve and accept the project.
2. Ensure that all documentation and records are reviewed, organised and archived.
3. Release all resources.
4. Verify that all contractual obligations have been fulfilled.

ARSCI

Closing	CA	PSC	GO	DC	PTG	CR	EUPM	PtEUPM	PCT	PST (FM)
Administrative Closure	n.a.	**A**	I	I	I	I	**R**	I	I	S

Post-Closing Obligations

The Grant Agreement will generally include provisions and clauses to determine the obligations after the end of the project. These will rest on the Grant Owner (GO) as responsible and accountable for the overall project. The Partnership Agreement should be revised, and responsibilities and activities assigned to the project partners for these obligations, which may include:

- Maintenance and update of communication systems (websites or platforms).
- Maintenance and support for sustainability of project deliverables.
- Documentation storage for audit purposes (sometimes up to 5 years after project closure).

9 Monitoring & Control

Monitoring & Control activities run throughout the project but peak during the Executing Phase. All project management processes are executed as part of the Monitoring and Control process group.

The Monitoring & Control activities are based on the processes described in the Project Management Plans developed during the Planning Phase. Executing these processes is ultimately the EU Project Manager's (EUPM) responsibility. The Project Management Plans provide the necessary information and tools to manage all management processes. Monitoring and Control refer to:

Manage

- Execute all management processes defined in the Project Management Plans and **manage** the outsourcing and deliverables acceptance activities as per the relevant Project Specific Plans.

Monitor

- Monitor project activities and overall project performance.
- Track the project performance against the **baseline** to facilitate reporting and controlling.

Control

- Devise, plan, propose and implement **corrective actions** to address existing or potential performance risks or issues while updating the relevant project plans and logs.

Key artefacts

Monitoring & Control artefacts comprise the Project Work Plan and a range of Project Logs and Checklists.

The Project Logs are regularly updated as new information becomes available (e.g. new issues can arise, and new information can be added to the Issue Log). Several Logs can help the EU Project Manager (EUPM) better control the project. EUPM² Guide provides the following Logs:

- Risk Log.
- Issue Log.
- Change Log.

The project Checklists are used at specific times to facilitate revision and ensure formal approval is granted. Several Checklists can help the EU Project Manager (EUPM) better control the project. EUPM² Guide provides the following Checklists:

- Phase-exit Review Checklist.
- Quality Review Checklist.
- Deliverables Acceptance Checklist.
- Stakeholders Checklist.
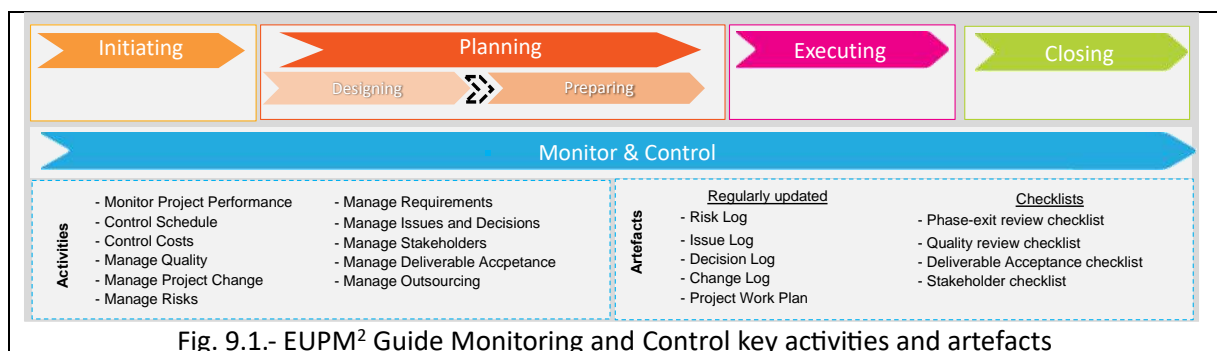
Fig. 9.1.- EUPM² Guide Monitoring and Control key activities and artefacts

9.1 Monitor Project Performance

Project Performance monitoring collects information about the project's progress and overall status. The EU Project Manager (EUPM) tracks the project dimensions of scope, schedule, cost, and quality, monitors risks, issues, and project change, and forecasts their evolution to report the overall project progress.

This information is then distributed to relevant stakeholders.

Key participants	Description
EU Project Manager (EUPM)	Undertakes all project monitoring activities.
Partner EU Project Managers (PtEUPM)	Support the EU Project Manager (EUPM) in undertaking all project monitoring activities related to their assigned project part.
Project Core Team (PCT)	Contributes information on project progress.

Inputs

- Project Application Form.
- Grant Agreement and Partnership Agreement.
- Project Handbook.
- Project Work Plan.
- Project Stakeholder Matrix.
- Project Logs (Risk Log, Issue Log, Project Change Log).
- Quality Review Checklists.
- Minutes of Meetings (MoMs).

Steps

1. **Use the baselined** Project Work Plan as a reference for monitoring project performance.
2. **Regularly exchange information** about the project's status and next steps with the Project Core Team (PCT) at formal and informal meetings.
3. **Gather information** on and monitor the progress of:
   - Tasks—i.e. the status of critical and following critical path tasks.
   - Key outputs—i.e. completed and verified deliverables and milestones achieved as planned.
   - Resource utilisation—i.e. resources used as planned and costs as budgeted.
   - Logs—i.e. the status and evolution of risks and issues, changes and decisions.
   - People—i.e. team morale, stakeholder engagement, overall project dynamics and productivity.

ARSCI

Monitoring and Control	CA	PSC	GO	DC	PTG	CR	EUPM	PtEUPM	PCT	PST (FM)
Monitor Project Performance	n.a.	I	**A**	C	C	I	**R**	**S**	C	C

Outputs

- Project Work Plan (tracked).
- Project Logs (updated).

9.2 Control Schedule

Schedule control ensures that project tasks are carried out as scheduled and project deadlines are met. The EU Project Manager (EUPM) regularly monitors the schedule and tracks the difference between planned, actual, and forecast activity timeframes/deadlines.

Approved project changes (e.g., the addition of new tasks, changes to the required effort, or the start/end dates of existing ones) that impact the overall project schedule are incorporated into the Project Work Plan (updated schedule). Suppose the schedule is at risk or considerable delays are foreseen. In that case, the Project Steering Committee (PSC) must be informed, and corrective actions must be devised, agreed upon, and implemented. If this goes beyond the thresholds defined in the Grant Agreement, a prior authorisation from the Contracting Authority (CA) is needed.

Key participants	Description
EU Project Manager (EUPM)	Monitors and controls the work schedule
Partner EU Project Managers (PtEUPMs)	Support the EU Project Manager (EUPM) monitoring and controlling the work schedule related to their assigned part of project activities.
Project Core Team (PCT)	Works to keep to the baselined schedule and quality standards. Reports on the status of their work, periodically or upon request.

Inputs

- Project Application Form.
- Grant Agreement and Partnership Agreement.
- Project Handbook.
- Project Work Plan.
- Change Log (and other relevant Project Logs).
- Minutes of Meetings (MoMs) and Project Reports from previous reporting periods.

Steps

1. **Track** the evolution of project tasks as defined in the Project Handbook.
2. **Update** the project schedule to reflect the actual task status.
3. **Review** the Project Work Plan regularly to identify potential sources of delays.
4. **Track** project changes, issues, and risks and monitor their impact on the project schedule.
5. **Devise**, agree and implement corrective actions if the schedule status has significant (or critical) deviations from the planned schedule.
6. **Inform** all affected project stakeholders about changes to the project schedule and tasks.

ARSCI

Monitoring and Control	CA	PSC	GO	DC	PTG	CR	EUPM	PtEUPM	PCT	PST (FM)
Control Schedule	n.a.	I	**A**	C	C	I	**R**	**S**	C	C

Outputs

- Project Work Plan (tracked).
- Project Logs (updated).

9.3 Control Cost

The purpose of cost control is to manage the project costs to conform to the cost/effort baseline and overall project budget constraints. The EU Project Manager (EUPM) regularly monitors the budget and tracks the difference between budgeted actual and expected costs.

If the project budget is at risk, the Project Steering Committee (PSC) needs to be informed, and corrective actions must be devised, agreed upon, and implemented. If cost overruns are foreseen, they must be justified, reported to, and approved by the Grant Owner (GO) or the Contracting Authority (CA). This latter in case the thresholds defined in the Grant Agreement are exceeded.

Key participants	Description
EU Project Manager (EUPM)	Monitors and controls the budget.
Financial Manager (PST-FM)	Reports on the status of costs, periodically or upon request.
Partner EU Project Managers (PtEUPMs)	Support the EU Project Manager (EUPM) monitoring and controlling the costs related to their assigned part of project activities.
Grant Owner (GO)	Owns and approves the budgeted costs.

Inputs

- Project Application Form and Approved Budget.
- Grant Agreement and Partnership Agreement.
- Project Handbook.
- Project Work Plan.
- Outsourcing Plan (if applicable).
- Change Log (and other relevant Project Logs).
- Minutes of Meetings (MoMs) and Project Reports from previous reporting periods.

Steps

1. **Track** the project's effort/overall budget consumption as defined in the Project Work Plan.
2. Regularly **review** the project budget with the Grant Owner (GO).
3. **Evaluate and communicate** any differences between budgeted and actual project costs, securing approval by the Grant Owner (GO) or the Contracting Authority (CA). This latter in case the thresholds defined in the Grant Agreement are exceeded.
4. **Devise and plan** the implementation of corrective actions to keep the budget back on track.
5. If the project budget needs to be considerably revised, this must be justified and documented (e.g. in the Project Progress/Interim Report). **Formal approval** from the Contracting Authority (CA) is required before the affected plans can be re-baselined.
6. If the **impact** on the project schedule, risks, or quality is significant, the Grant Owner (GO) must review, approve, and communicate it to any affected project stakeholders.

ARSCI

Monitoring and Control	CA	PSC	GO	DC	PTG	CR	EUPM	PtEUPM	PCT	PST (FM)
Control Cost	n.a.	I	**A**	C	C	I	**R**	**S**	C	**S**

Outputs

- Project Work Plan (tracked).
- Project Logs (updated).

9.4 Manage Stakeholders

Managing project stakeholders is a critical project management activity that begins in the Initiating Phase, when project expectations and requirements are identified, and ends in the Closing Phase when stakeholders' overall project experience and satisfaction are recorded.

The EU project manager (EUPM) is responsible for this activity. However, all members of the Project Steering Committee (PSC) should also be involved, particularly the Domain Coordinator (DM), who should help manage stakeholders on the Grant Requestor side (e.g., the Project Target Groups), as well as the Consortium Representatives (CRs) for local stakeholders related to their share of project activities.

Key participants	Description
EU Project Manager (EUPM)	Manages project stakeholders.
Partner EU Project Managers (PtEUPMs)	Support the EU Project Manager (EUPM) in managing the stakeholders.
Domain Coordinator (DC)	Assists the EU Project Manager (EUPM) in this activity.
Consortium Representative (CRs)	Assists the EU Project Manager (EUPM) in this activity.
Communication Manager (PST-CM)	Support the EU Project Manager (EUPM) for communication and engagement activities with the external stakeholders.

Inputs

- Project Application Form.
- Grant Agreement and Partnership Agreement.
- Project Handbook.
- Project Stakeholder Matrix.
- Communications and Dissemination Plan.

Steps

1. **Analyse** the expectations, attitudes, level of interest and influence of key project stakeholders.
2. **Beware** of stakeholders who are less than enthusiastic or opposed to the project.
3. **Devise** communication and management strategies that encourage stakeholders to get involved and contribute.
4. **Continually monitor** stakeholder reactions or changing attitudes and manage accordingly. More than a one-off analysis is required, especially for longer-term and complex projects. Use the Stakeholders Checklist to identify specific actions to be taken at specific moments in the project.
5. **Ensure** that any planned stakeholder management activities are time-bound and focused. Keep in mind that the contribution/involvement of various stakeholders may be different in each project phase.
6. **Align** the Communication and Dissemination Plan with Stakeholder Management needs, particularly in project acceptance.

ARSCI

Monitoring and Control	CA	PSC	GO	DC	PTG	CR	EUPM	PtEUPM	PCT	PST (CM)
Manage Stakeholders	n.a.	I	**A**	C	C	I	**R**	**S**	C	**S**

Outputs

- Project Stakeholder Matrix (updated).
- Issues and Decisions Logs (updated).
- Stakeholder Checklist.

9.5 Manage Requirements

Requirements management is the process of gathering, documenting, validating requirements and managing their implementation and change. It runs throughout the project lifecycle and relates to other project management processes, such as quality and change management.

The Requirements Management Process can be tailored to a project's needs and documented in a Requirements Management Plan or the Project Handbook. Separate requirements documents may specify, categorise, and prioritise the requirements. These can be standalone documents or annexes to the Project Work Plan.

Key Participants	Description
EU Project Manager (EUPM)	Undertakes the requirements management process.
Domain Coordinator (DC)	Provides information required to draft the requirements and approves them.
Project Target Groups (PTG)	Participate in the gathering and validation of the requirements.

Inputs

- Project Application Form.
- Grant Agreement and Partnership Agreement.
- Requirements Management Plan
- Project Stakeholder Matrix

Guidelines

- A requirement is a capability that a deliverable must have to satisfy a stakeholder's need(s).
- High-level requirements are usually specified in the Project Application Form and can be detailed in separate documents.
- Adding further detail to the requirements produces lower-level requirements. These can be described in various formats (e.g., text, use cases or user stories, models, sketches or graphics, etc.) and documented in various requirements artefacts.
- All stakeholders' agreed and approved requirements constitute the project's baseline scope.
- Any change to the baselined requirements should be made by the change management process described in the Change Management Plan.
- For each identified requirement, a corresponding test should validate its acceptance. The test should be documented in the appropriate document (Deliverable Acceptance Plan, Deliverable Acceptance Checklist or Quality Review Checklist).
- Requirements should describe the need, not the solution. They should use non-ambiguous terms and avoid technology - or solution-oriented statements.
- Even if requirements have been gathered before the project starts, it is still the EU Project Manager's (EUPM) responsibility to ensure they are appropriately managed.

Steps

1. **Specify the requirements.** Gather the project requirements with the project stakeholders and document them clearly in the Requirements artefacts. Structure them by adding relevant metadata.
2. **Evaluate the requirements.** The project team assesses the requirements' feasibility, consistency and completeness and estimates the effort/costs needed to implement them. The EU Project Manager (EUPM) balances the list of requirements against project constraints (budget, time, etc.) and proposes to the project stakeholders.
3. **Approve the requirements.** The EU Project Manager (EUPM) and key stakeholders, such as the Domain Coordinator (DC), negotiate and agree on the project's requirements.
4. **Monitor the implementation of requirements.** The EU Project Manager (EUPM) continuously monitors the Project Core Team's (PCT) implementation, adds new requirements and changes existing ones when needed.

5. **Validate the implemented requirements.** When implemented, the Project Target Groups (PTG) assesses if the deliverable satisfies the initial needs. Formal acceptance of the project deliverables should comply with the Deliverables Acceptance process.

ARSCI

Monitoring and Control	CA	PSC	GO	DC	PTG	CR	EUPM	PtEUPM	PCT	PST
Manage Requirement	n.a.	I	A	C	C	I	R	S	C	n.a.

Outputs

- Requirements Document.
- Change Log (updated).
- Project Work Plan (updated).

9.6 Manage Project Change

Project change management defines the activities related to identifying, documenting, assessing, prioritising, approving, planning, and controlling project changes and communicating them to all relevant stakeholders. Any project partner or stakeholder can request (or identify and raise) changes throughout the project lifecycle.

The Project Change Management Process can be tailored to a project's needs and documented in a Project Change Management Plan or the Project Handbook. A Change Log documents, monitors, and controls all project changes. This makes it easier to track changes and communicate them to the project's Grant Owner (GO), Project Steering Committee (PSC), and Contracting Authority (CA) for approval.

The approval process for project changes depends on their impact and dimension. Generally, significant **project changes** need approval by the Contracting Authority (CA) through a formal amendment to the Grant Agreement. In contrast, **minor project changes** must be agreed upon at the Project Steering Committee (PSC) level. In this case, the Contracting Authority (CA) is only informed.

Key participants	Description
Contracting Authority (CA)	Approves or rejects the major project changes.
EU Project Manager (EUPM)	Collects, assesses, monitors and controls the project changes.
Partner EU Project Managers (PtEUPM)	Support the EU Project Manager (EUPM) in collecting, assessing, monitoring and controlling the project changes.
Grant Owner (GO) and/or Project Steering Committee (PSC)	Approves or rejects the minor project changes.
Project Core Team (PCT)	Involved in analysing the requested project changes (estimating the effort required to implement the changes).
Stakeholders	Informed about the approved project changes. May introduce new project changes.

Inputs

- Project Application Form.
- Grant Agreement and Partnership Agreement.
- Project Change Management Plan.
- Project Work Plan.
- Communications and Dissemination Plan.
- Relevant logs (e.g., the Issue Log for managing changes related to issue resolution).

Steps

1. **Identify the change**. This step identifies and documents change requests. The EU Project Manager (EUPM) ensures that a Change Request is appropriately documented (i.e., via a Change Request Form and in the Change Log).
2. **Assess the change** and recommend action. The purpose of this step is to:
   a. Assess whether this request is indeed a project change.
   b. Consider the impact of not implementing the proposed change.
   c. Estimate the size of the identified change based on its effect on the project objectives, schedule, cost, and effort.
   d. Determine whether it is a major or a minor change per the Grant Agreement.
   e. Prioritise the implementation of the change request about other change requests.
3. **Approve the change**. This step aims to decide on the approval of the change based on the project's escalation procedure (i.e., the change must be reviewed by the appropriate decision-makers within the Managing/Directing/Steering Layers as defined by the project's Governance Model). Specifically:

a. For **major project changes,** approval by the Contracting Authority (CA) is requested.
b. For **minor project changes,** the change is approved by the Grant Owner (GO).

There are four possible statuses for the change: approve, reject, postpone, or merge the change request. The decision details are documented in the Change Log and communicated to the Grant Owner (GO).

4. **Implement the change**. For approved or merged changes, the EU Project Manager (EUPM) should incorporate all related actions into the Project Work Plan and update the related documentation and logs (e.g., Risk, Issue, Change, Decision Logs, and other plans).

5. **Control the change**. This step monitors and controls project changes so they can be easily communicated to the various project layers for approval or status updates. The EU Project Manager (EUPM) collects information on any project changes and related actions and controls the status of each change management activity.

All stakeholders affected by the project changes should be informed, and the Change Log should be updated.

ARSCI

Monitoring and Control	CA	PSC	GO	DC	PTG	CR	EUPM	PtEUPM	PCT	PST (FM)
Manage Project Change (**major**)	A	I	S	C	I	I	R	S	C	S
Manage Project Change (**minor**)	I	I	A	C	I	I	R	S	C	S

Outputs

- Change Request Form.
- Change Log (updated).
- Project Work Plan (updated).

9.7 Manage Risk

Risk management is a systematic, ongoing process for identifying, assessing, and managing risks to conform to the organisation's accepted risk attitude. Risk management improves the project team's confidence by proactively managing any potential event that might have a positive or negative impact on project objectives.

Risk Management can be tailored to a project's needs and documented in a Risk Management Plan or the Project Handbook. A Risk Log documents and communicates the risks and relevant risk-response actions and responsibilities.

Key participants	Description
EU Project Manager (EUPM)	Monitors and controls the risks.
Partner EU Project Managers (PtEUPMs)	Support the EU Project Manager (EUPM) in monitoring and controlling the risks.
Project Steering Committee (PSC)	Monitors projects with high levels of risk exposure.
Project Core Team (PCT)	Involved in identifying and responding to risks.
Project Support Team (PST)	Contribute to risks identification.
Stakeholders	Identify and communicate risks in their areas of expertise.

Inputs

- Project Application Form.
- Grant Agreement and Partnership Agreement.
- Risk Management Plan.
- Risk Log.

Steps

1. **Identify risks**. This step identifies and documents risks that can impact the project's objectives. Note that new risks may arise at any point during the project and should be added to the Risk Log for further analysis/action.
2. **Carry out a risk assessment**. This step assesses the likelihood of each risk and the severity of its impact on project objectives. It is necessary before any risk response can be planned. Medium to high-level risks are dealt with at a higher priority level.
3. **Develop a risk-response strategy**. This step involves choosing the best possible strategy to address an identified risk and planning the actions necessary to implement this strategy.
4. **Control risk-response activities**. This step monitors and controls the implementation of risk-response activities and revises/updates the Risk Log based on a regular reassessment.
5. **Record**. Update the Project Work Plan with precise risk-response tasks whenever necessary.
6. **Report**. Regularly inform the Project Steering Committee (PSC) about risk-related activities.

ARSCI

Monitoring and Control	CA	PSC	GO	DC	PTG	CR	EUPM	PtEUPM	PCT	PST
Manage Risks	n.a.	I	**A**	C	C	I	**R**	**S**	C	S

Outputs

- Risk Log (updated).

9.8 Manage Issues and Decisions

The EU Project Manager (PM) manages project issues and decisions. Issues are identified, evaluated and assigned for resolution to relevant project stakeholders as per the Issue Management process, which can be documented in either an Issue Management Plan or the Project Handbook. The Issue Log is used to manage project issues, while the Decision Log is used to report all relevant decisions.

Depending on their importance, decisions may be implemented by the EU Project Manager (EUPM) or escalated to the Project Steering Committee (PSC). Note that issues and decisions are often linked to the resolution of other log items (e.g., risks, changes).

Key participants	Description
EU Project Manager (EUPM)	Monitors issues and decides how to manage them.
Partner EU Project Managers (PtEUPMs)	Support the EU Project Manager (EUPM) in monitoring and controlling the risks.
Project Core Team (PCT)	Reviews proposed action plan, takes action to resolve pending issues.
Stakeholders	Informed about important issues and make critical and important decisions.

Inputs

- Project Application Form.
- Grant Agreement and Partnership Agreement.
- Issue Management Plan.
- Project Logs.
- Minutes of Meetings (MoMs).

Steps (managing project issues):

1. **Ensure** that issue management activities are carried out per the Issues Management Process.
2. **Identify** issues and add them to the Issue Log.
3. **Escalate** the most significant/highest-impact issues to the Project Steering Committee (PSC) or follow the defined escalation procedure and thresholds.
4. If the size or number of issues/actions is significant, **update** the Project Work Plan with major issue management activities.
5. **Monitor & control** the resolution of issues.
6. **Update** the Issue Log regularly with new issues as they arise. Close resolved issues.
7. Regularly **report** issue status to project stakeholders.

Steps (managing decisions):

1. Document decisions taken during the project (particularly during the Executing Phase).
2. Link decisions to resolving other log items (e.g. risks, issues and changes).
3. The EU Project Manager (EUPM) regularly reports on the status of decisions to project stakeholders.

ARSCI

Monitoring and Control	CA	PSC	GO	DC	PTG	CR	EUPM	PtEUPM	PCT	PST
Manage Issues & Decisions	n.a.	I	**A**	C	C	I	**R**	**S**	C	n.a.

Outputs

- Issue Log (updated).
- Decision Log (updated).

9.9 Manage Quality

Project quality management aims to ensure that the project will achieve the expected results most efficiently and that the relevant stakeholders will accept deliverables. It involves overseeing all the activities needed to maintain a desired level of excellence. This includes performing quality planning, quality assurance, quality control and quality improvement throughout the project until the Closing Phase and the final acceptance of the project. Configuration management helps project stakeholders manage project deliverables effectively by providing a single reliable reference to these deliverables, thereby ensuring that the correct versions are delivered to the project beneficiaries.

The EU Project Manager (EUPM) must ensure that the quality management objectives, approach, requirements, activities, metrics, and responsibilities are clearly defined and documented in the Quality Management Plan.

Key participants	Description
EU Project Manager (EUPM)	Ensures that all quality controls are carried out as planned.
Partner EU Project Managers (PtEUPM)	Support the EU Project Manager (EUPM) in ensuring that all quality controls are carried out as planned for their share of assigned activities.
Project Core Team (PCT)	Assists with Quality Control.
Project Quality Assurance (PQA)	Reviews project quality.

Inputs

- Project Handbook.
- Project Work Plan.
- Quality Management Plan.
- Deliverables Acceptance Plan.

Steps

1. **Following a cost/benefit analysis, define and agree** on project quality characteristics that consider project needs, constraints, and the cost of quality.
2. **Plan and perform** quality assurance and control activities.
3. **Verify** that the configuration management procedure is being followed.
4. **Actively involve** the whole project team and relevant stakeholders.
5. **Identify any non-conformity**, analyse the root cause, and implement corrective actions.
6. **Identify opportunities** to improve the quality of both the process and the deliverables.
7. **Ensure** the relevant stakeholders accept deliverables in line with predefined and documented deliverables acceptance criteria and the agreed acceptance process.

ARSCI

Monitoring and Control	CA	PSC	GO	DC	PTG	CR	EUPM	PtEUPM	PCT	PST
Manage Quality	n.a.	I	**A**	C	C	I	**R**	**S**	C	n.a.

Outputs

- Quality Review Checklist.
- Phase-exit Review Checklist.
- Quality Review Reports.

9.10 Manage Deliverable Acceptance

A project may produce one or more deliverables. Each must be formally accepted. Deliverables acceptance management ensures that these deliverables meet the predefined objectives and criteria outlined in the Deliverables Acceptance Plan so they can be formally accepted.

Note that:

- **Provisional acceptance** takes place in the Executing Phase by the Project Steering Committee (PSC) and marks the end of the Executing phase.
- **Final acceptance** takes place in the Closing Phase by the Contracting Authority (CA) based on the assessment of the Final Report.

Key participants	Description
EU Project Manager (EUPM)	Undertakes deliverables acceptance management.
Partner EU Project Managers (PtEUPMs)	Support the EU Project Manager (EUPM) in undertaking deliverables acceptance management for their share of assigned activities.
Project Quality Assurance (PQA)	Assists the Project Manager (PM) and performs most of the quality controls.
Project Steering Committee (PSC)	Provides the general project acceptance strategy.
Grant Owner (GO)	Provides acceptance of the project's deliverables in the Execution phase.
Contracting Authority (CA)	Provides final acceptance of the project's deliverables in the Closing phase.

Inputs

- Project Application Form.
- Grant Agreement and Partnership Agreement.
- Deliverables Acceptance Plan.
- Project Work Plan.
- Quality Management Plan.
- Outsourcing Plan (if applicable).

Steps

1. The EU Project Manager (EUPM) **ensures** that the acceptance procedures and guidelines are applied and that the necessary environments (space, infrastructure, tools, etc.), materials, and information are provided for the acceptance process.
2. The Project Steering Committee (PSC) **approves** the application of the documented acceptance strategy and acceptance schedule.
3. The project deliverables are accepted if the **acceptance activities** (as described in the Deliverables Acceptance Plan) are carried out within a pre-specified tolerance range.
4. The Project Steering Committee (PSC) formally accepts the project's deliverables in the Executing phase.
5. The Contracting Authority (CA) is responsible for the final evaluation of the project deliverables in the Closing phase.

ARSCI

Monitoring and Control	CA	PSC	GO	DC	PTG	CR	EUPM	PtEUPM	PCT	PST
Manage Deliverables Acceptance	n.a.	**A**	**I**	C	C	I	**R**	**S**	C	n.a.

Outputs

- Deliverables Acceptance Checklist.
- Decision Log.

9.11 Manage Outsourcing

The EU Project Manager (EUPM) and the Partner EU Project Managers (PtEUPM) manage the delivery of all products and services that have been outsourced to perform the project activities.

This work is undertaken with the Contractor's Project Manager (CPM) to ensure that the contractor effectively manages the outsourced work and delivers according to the time, cost and quality expectations defined in the Outsourcing Plan.

Key participants	Description
EU Project Manager (EUPM)	Manages the contractor(s).
Partner EU Project Managers (PtEUPMs)	Manages the contractor(s) for their share of assigned activities.
Contractor's Project Manager (CPM)	Delivers an acceptable quality of services as defined/requested.
Project Quality Assurance (PQA)	Performs most of the quality controls.

Inputs

- Project Application Form.
- Outsourcing Plan.
- Project Work Plan.

Steps

1. The Consortium Representatives (CRs) ensure that the contractors are chosen according to the organisation's processes and standards, EU-funding Programme rules and project criteria.
2. The Project Steering Committee (PSC) ensures that all contracts clearly define the expectations of both parties.
3. The EU Project Manager (EUPM) applies the working methods detailed in the project's Outsourcing Plan.
4. The EU Project Manager (EUPM) or Partner EU Project Manager (PtEUPMs) monitor the costs and schedules of the outsourced work.
5. The Contractor's Project Manager (CPM) reports the progress to the EU Project Manager (EUPM) / Partner EU Project Manager (PtEUPM) and, if necessary, to the Project Steering Committee (PSC).
6. The EU Project Manager (EUPM) / Partner EU Project Manager (PtEUPM) manages changes to the outsourced work.
7. The EU Project Manager (EUPM) / Partner EU Project Manager (PtEUPM) and Project Steering Committee (PSC) validate interim and final deliverables and milestones based on agreed criteria and as defined in the Outsourcing Plan.
8. The EU Project Manager (EUPM) / Partner EU Project Manager (PtEUPM) ensures that the required formal approval is received on time and by organisational standards.

ARSCI

Monitoring and Control	CA	PSC	GO	DC	PTG	CR	EUPM	PtEUPM	PCT	PST (FM)
Manage Outsourcing	n.a.	I	**A**	C	C	I	**R**	**S**	C	**S**

Outputs

- Status and progress report(s).
- Signed contract(s).
- Signed purchase order(s).
- Signed timesheet(s).

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Appendix A: Contributions and Acknowledgements

The EUPM² Guide was elaborated in the framework of the Erasmus+ project: *"A new academic path for EU Project Managers: narrowing the gaps to enable better project design and management in Europe"* (EUPM²).

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Appendix B: Practices and Standards in Project Design and Project Management

B.1 Project design methodologies

The **design of EU-funded projects** refers to structuring and organising initiatives or projects funded by the European Union. It is the systematic and strategic process of conceptualising and creating a project proposal that aligns with the objectives, priorities, and guidelines set by the European Union.

The design is a **critical step in the lifecycle of an EU-funded project**, as it sets the foundation for the project's successful implementation, management, and evaluation. A well-designed project proposal is more likely to secure EU funding and effectively contribute to the EU's objectives and priorities.

From a methodological perspective, several project design methodologies have been developed to serve this goal better. Among the most known:

- The **Logical Framework Approach (LFA)** is a *de facto* standard for EU-funded project design. It is frequently used in Project Cycle Management (PCM). The LFA aims to gain a deep understanding of the context and initial conditions and to systematise and structure the information in a standardised way (the Logical Framework Matrix - LFM). Indeed, the European Commission generally requires the development of a Logical Framework Matrix (LFM) as part of its project formulation procedures, especially for external assistance projects. (See details in Appendix E).
- **Goal-oriented project Planning (GOPP)** is a project design methodology often used in international development projects, particularly by organisations such as the United Nations and other development agencies. It is a structured approach to project planning that emphasises achieving specific goals and objectives.
- The **Value Chain methodology.** While the Value Chain framework was initially developed for business analysis, it can be adapted to various contexts, including project design. In the context of design projects, the "value chain" can be thought of as the sequence of activities that lead to the creation of a successful design. Start by identifying the critical components of your design project's value chain. These might include research, ideation, concept development, prototyping, testing, and finalisation.

B.2 Project Management Standards

There are numerous definitions for **Project Management**, but it is generally acknowledged that it refers at the same time to two different concepts:

- The wide array of activities used to support and accompany the planning, configuring, organising, leading, monitoring, and deciding over the resources and work necessary to set in motion to generate deliverables and achieve project objectives effectively and efficiently.
- The professional discipline derived from practising and mastering those activities is derived from the different methods, approaches, standards, and internationally recognised practices that coexist.

Project management emerged in the 1950s and was linked to projects' increasing complexity and diversity. New solutions were necessary to face the latest problems, requirements, and challenges from this increased complexity and diversity. In parallel with those new solutions, the first Project Management associations were created to develop standards, certification schemes, and professional education and training programmes to systematise this skilled practice.

Project Management is a professional field continuously growing and evolving due to the increased role of projects in all areas of human activity.

The growth and evolution of Project Management practice have been gathered and reflected in "bodies of knowledge" by Project Management Associations to guide the professionalisation of Project Management. These bodies of knowledge focus on methodological approaches that facilitate the

definition, design, planning, organising, and implementation of a project to its completion. The leading internationally recognised practices are the following:

- The International Project Management Association (**IPMA**) emerged in Europe in 1965 and provided a Project Management standard based on **competencies**, the IPMA Individual Competence Baseline (IPMA-ICB®), currently in its 4th edition.
- Project Management Institute (**PMI**): It was established in the United States of America in 1969 and initially provided a process-oriented model for its standard, which recently evolved (2022) into a **principle-based** standard in its 7th edition.
- International Standards Organisation: 2012 the ISO released its Guidance on Project Management (**ISO21500:2012**) with a **process-oriented** model. In 2020, ISO released a new technical norm on Project Management (**ISO21502:2020**) that replaced the old one **based on project management practices**.
- Projects in Controlled Environments (**PRINCE2®**): It was initially sponsored in the United Kingdom by the British Association of Project Management (APM) and released in 1996, following a **method-oriented** approach.
- PM² Project Management Methodology (**PM²**): Developed and released by the European Commission in 2016 as an Open Edition, it incorporates elements from all the practices mentioned above and the operational experience of EU institutions.

The PM² Methodology Guide v3.1 explicitly mentions the importance for Project Managers and other key project roles to develop Project Management Competencies in line with the IPMA-ICB® standard. To contribute to project success, these competencies apply combined knowledge, skills, and abilities across three key areas: Perspective, Practice, and People.

Although EU-funded **project design** and **project management** appear to be two different disciplines, these are two separate but complementary crucial aspects of any EU-funded project. Project design is essential to define the goals, deliverables, and tasks logically intertwined to achieve project objectives and effectively contribute to the EU's priorities. On the other hand, project management is essential to define the resources and plans that will keep the EU-funded project on track throughout the whole project lifecycle.

The EUPM² Guide thus integrates the Logical Framework Approach with the PM² Project Management Methodology in a single framework, providing a comprehensive approach to managing EU-funded projects, from a robust design using the LFA to a solid methodological approach to project management using PM².

This ensures that the projects are well-designed and well-managed, based on the European Commission´s methods, increasing the likelihood of their success.

Appendix C: Tailoring rationale and guidelines

This appendix provides the guidelines and rationale for tailoring the PM² Methodology into the EUPM² Guide and an outline of the modifications introduced in the methodology's pillars.

C.1 Rationale for tailoring for EU-funds projects

EU-funded projects share characteristics that require adaptation of the standard PM² Methodology. The main one is the funding mechanism, which is frequently based on grants from Calls for Proposals. Grant projects are responsive to Calls for Proposals, where overall policy objectives and requirements are indicated within a specific EU programme's framework, and the applicants must submit their proposals. They are then evaluated, and if found suitable, a Grant Agreement is signed to allocate the necessary financial support to undertake the project. The following table provides an overview of the main differences in projects that originate from grants and public tenders:

	Public Tenders	**Grants**
Project Purpose	Procurement of goods or services (purchase oriented)	Policy implementation relying on partners (partnership oriented)
Project Design	Closed – responds to specific and descriptive Terms of Reference	Open – responds to the orientations provided in the Guidelines for Calls for Proposals
Project Ownership	The project results are owned by the EU	The project results are generally owned by the implementing partner
Economic benefit	Economic benefit is allowed	Economic benefit is generally not allowed
Project Funding	Projects are funded 100%	Projects generally require co-financing by the grant beneficiary

Table Appendix C.1 – Differences between Public Tenders and Grants (Adapted from PRAG)

Tailoring guidelines

Tailoring is firmly embedded in the PM² Methodology. It refers to changing specific parts of the methodology, such as process steps, the content of artefacts, the distribution of responsibilities amongst the various roles, etc. In addition to any tailoring, further customisation may be required at the project level to reflect the project's management needs. Examples of such customisations are the definition of decision thresholds for escalation, risk tolerances based on the risk appetite of the stakeholders, etc.

Tailoring requires a solid understanding of the PM² Methodology to avoid over-simplifications or modifications that would deviate from the spirit of the Methodology. The following guidelines have been considered:

- First, understand the purpose and value of the methodology element to be tailored, and then proceed with its tailoring.
- Avoid simplifying the methodology by eliminating whole chunks (e.g., a phase, a role, an activity, or an artefact); rather, scale down (or up) the scope of that element.
- Balance the level of control a project needs against the extra effort such control requires.
- Eliminate waste (lean approach) but remain aligned with the spirit of the PM² Methodology, as reflected by its four pillars and mindsets.
- Remember that the methodology was designed as an integrated whole, so avoid unnecessary deviations.

Adapting and aligning the methodology to EU-funded projects' specific needs and procedures is necessary to enable the benefits of PM² Methodology.

C.2 Outline of the EUPM² Guide tailoring

Tailoring the PM² Lifecycle

The PM² Lifecycle is tailored to fit the grant mechanism regarding the following key elements reflected in the EUPM² Guide Lifecycle.

The **call for proposals** is published before the project lifecycle. Still, it strongly affects it as it sets the deadline for submitting proposals, the estimated dates for a financing decision, the estimated dates for the signature of the Grant Agreement, and the overall project timeframe. The call for proposals documents will also include the details and procedures for proposal submission and the Grant Agreement elements that need to be considered.

The Planning Phase needs to consider the elapsed time between the submission of the proposal and the notification of the grant award (financing decision), as well as the requirements of the call for proposals in terms of planning details. The level of planning detail required for submitting a Full Application for a call for proposals answers the need for the Contracting Authority (CA) to gather the information necessary to assess all the submitted proposals in equal terms. This level of detail may be defined in a **Design Stage** within the Planning Phase. If the proposal is awarded the grant, it will be necessary to update, detail, and complete the Planning Phase during the **Preparing Stage** to prepare for the effective execution of the project.

Tailoring the PM² Governance model

The PM² Governance model is tailored to fit the grant mechanism regarding the following key elements that are reflected in the EUPM² Guide Governance model.

The grant applicants define the project's purpose, design, and ownership based on the objectives and priorities fixed in the call for proposals by the Contracting Authority (CA) that launches and manages the call for proposals. This affects the **definition of the roles and responsibilities** in the project**, moving from a client-service provider relationship to a partnership relationship**.

The partnership is formed among consortium members and with the Contracting Authority (CA), which is seeking proposals aligned with EU policy objectives. Several **partners** work together and in a coordinated manner to achieve project success.

In this sense, the **sides** of the model continue to exist but respond to differences in ultimate responsibility regarding project deliverables and results. The **Grant Requestor** side focuses on achieving the project's results and benefits, while the **Provider Side** focuses on generating the project deliverables.

The **layers** continue to respond to an axis that varies from strategic to operational involvement in the project. Still, at the top, the Contracting Authority (CA) 's role is to provide strategic guidance and ultimate project approval by signing the Grant Agreement and mobilising the necessary resources.

The end beneficiaries are considered external and denominated **Project Target Groups** (PTG) (and as such, a different colour is used), and the project will have to make the necessary arrangements to ensure their participation or management as stakeholders.

Appendix D: Partnerships and Stakeholders in EU-funded projects

D.1 Types of organisations in EU-funded projects

A consortium of several project partners is generally needed for EU-funded projects. One of the project partners, usually the one that has taken the initiative to submit a proposal to an identified call for proposals and identifies the project partners, acting as a Leader organisation, Leader of the Consortium or Lead Beneficiary (terminology may vary from programme to programme), while the rest are to be considered Implementing Partners. These are the usual partner types in EU-funded projects:

1. **Leader organisation:** The Leader organisation proposes the project idea and shapes the overall concept from the start. It recruits and selects consortium partners, distributes and organises work and budget allocations, is the main interlocutor with the Contracting Authority (CA), and is accountable for activity implementation, deliverables production, and objective achievement. For that reason, it leads the project administration and coordinates the consortium. The Leader organisation becomes the Lead Partner after the signature of the Grant Agreement.
2. **Partner organisation:** Partner organisations participate in the project's design and implementation. They are responsible for allocating work and budget, sharing administrative work, and reporting to the leader organisation. Partner organisations become Implementing Partners after the Grant Agreement is signed.
3. **Associate partner organisation:** Associate partner organisations are part of the consortium and participate in the implementation, but they do not manage budgets and have limited overall responsibility.

All project partners will share project activities and budgets, describing the different responsibilities each assumes in the Partnership Agreement. However, the Leader of the Consortium acts as a representative of all the project partners vis a vis the Contracting Authority (CA) and is ultimately accountable for the entirety of the project at all levels (operationally and financially), being the sole interlocutor with the Contracting Authority (CA) for all matters.

Each project partner may have its internal procedures and teams and, in the case of multinational consortia, be subject to their respective national legislation that needs to be observed. Each project partner will have its own project coordinator. However, they are all subject to the conditions established by the Grant Agreement, and the need for internal coordination is generally significant.

Partners in the consortium may have different positions and responsibilities. The full partners participate by having part of the budget at their disposal or drawing support from it. The associate partners do not have part of the budget, and their role is limited.

The end beneficiaries/users of the project results may or may not be directly involved in the project's implementation and are, in most cases, external to any of the parties involved in the project implementation. The degree of engagement of the project with the final users may vary depending on the EU funding programme and call for proposal. They may be considered, in any case, central stakeholders in the project.

D.2 Importance of Partnerships

Effective management of EU-funded projects requires businesses, universities, governments, and non-profit organisations to form different types of partnerships on a national and international level. From the point of view of the EU Cohesion Policy, partnerships add value to the overall performance of EU projects and generally help strengthen integration in the EU.

A **prerequisite** for the creation of these partnerships is that:

- This concerns long-term mutually beneficial cooperation, which is advantageous, at least for all of the partners involved, if not for other stakeholders or society.
- The partnership in question offers specific value to all of the partners involved (each partner contributes to an area where it has strengths, whereas the combination of partners allows

them to complement each other appropriately) and is also a source of value added by the partnership (the so-called synergistic effect).

- The partners' standing within the partnership is equal, and democratic decision-making principles are applied, optimally the unanimity rule or the majority rule combined with the right of veto.

The importance of partnership lies in the benefits which it offers. Sharing the partners' resources, activities, and knowledge creates a so-called **synergistic effect** (the 2 + 2 = 5 effect), where the whole can generate more significant value than the individual parts would have developed separately. A partnership allows for an **increase in the efficiency** of the partners' activities in that it eliminates duplication of costs due to the joint provision of selected activities, economies of scale, or the use of the excess capacity of the partners. In addition, a partnership makes it possible to implement projects that could not otherwise be implemented due to their financial demands. For companies that do not have sufficient potential for their research and development, the partnership is one of the options to gain access to missing technologies or knowledge, helping to build corporate know-how. The importance of alliances also lies in the **reduction of risks**, including the reduction of the impact of possible failure to realise jointly implemented projects on the individual participants in this cooperation.

Joint exploitation of opportunities, an improved **position as regards the stakeholders**, increased **resilience** to external negative influences or transfer of currently available knowledge and technologies, and creation and **transfer** of new knowledge, technologies, as well as products and services subsequently strengthen the economic performance and competitive ability of the individual partners, the respective localities, regions, and countries.

The importance of partnerships also lies in their **contribution to sustainable development,** as the development of partnerships with different types of economic entities can be seen as an expression of social responsibility in the economic, social, and environmental spheres.

On the other hand, partnerships may also be associated with certain **risks**, e.g., misappropriation of know-how, high transaction costs, over-networking, or restriction of autonomy. As highlighted by the European Commission, when managing EU-funded projects and creating partnerships, it is necessary to:

- Choose high-quality partners who are trustworthy, compatible, and willing to share information.
- Ensure transparent relations between partners.
- Ensure compliance with the applicable legislation in the respective countries, e.g. legislation governing competition.

D.3 Stakeholders in EU-funded projects

Project stakeholders are people (or groups) who can affect, be affected by, or believe to be affected by the activities carried out during a project's lifecycle and by its output(s) and outcome(s). Stakeholders can be directly involved in a project's work, members of other internal organisations, or external to the organisation (e.g., contractors, suppliers, users, or the public).

The number of stakeholders depends on the complexity and scope of a project. However, the more people the project impacts, the more likely it is to affect people with some power or influence over the project. Since stakeholders can be helpful to supporters of the project or may choose to block it, their effective management and involvement are crucial for its success.

Stakeholder identification and engagement

Generally, there are many ways of stakeholders' stratification.

As stakeholders could be identified:

- **Internal stakeholders** - project team members, employees of project implemented organisation, top management, and owners.

- **External stakeholders** - other stakeholders from the project and organisation, such as customers, potential customers, suppliers, partners, competitors, banks, municipalities, government, media, non-profit organisations, associations, private persons, and the general society.

From a broader perspective, the environment or subjects from the past or the future can also be considered stakeholders. The stakeholders **directly** or **indirectly** impacted by the project can be identified. The attitude of stakeholders to the project could be **neutral, positive, negative, or indifferent**, in case the project affects stakeholders from some point of view positively and from others negatively. Their attitude to the project could also develop and change over time.

From the impact point of view, there could be identified:

- **Primary stakeholders –** stakeholders whose continuous involvement in the project is crucial, directly affected project (usually owners, investors, project team members, customers, suppliers, essential business partners, as well as public interested parties like governments at the international or national level, regional and local level, regulatory institutions, local community etc.);

- **Secondary stakeholders are** not directly entering the project and are optional to it. Still, they are affected by or could affect it (e.g., media, trade associations, competitors, environmental protection organisations, etc.).

EU-funded projects usually involve many stakeholders because it is in the EU's interest that as many beneficiaries use the positive effects of EU-funded projects as possible. The European Commission recommends involving especially competent regional, local, urban, and other public authorities, economic and social partners, and bodies representing civil society, such as environmental partners, non-governmental organisations, and bodies responsible for promoting social inclusion, gender quality, and non-discrimination.

It is important to identify stakeholders, analyse their attitude to the project, and develop appropriate management strategies for engaging stakeholders in project decisions and execution. Identifying stakeholders usually starts by creating a register, i.e., a complete list. An essential source for identifying all relevant stakeholders is the study of project documentation (contract documents, project charter, organisational process assets) as well as documents of past projects and, finally, a thorough brainstorming of the project team. The output is a stakeholder register containing stakeholder identification data, role in the project, expectations, interest, influence, attitude, impact, and power resulting in overall importance. The importance of stakeholders depends on the power of stakeholders, their ability to influence the project, the legitimacy of their relationships towards the project, and the urgency of the stakeholder from the project's point of view.

Based on the analysis and identification of stakeholders' positions, having a differentiated approach to different stakeholders is desirable. Various strategies are available, and it is possible to use a range of RDAP strategies (reaction, defence, accommodation, or pro-action strategy). Communication with them based on a created communication plan is an essential tool. The content of the communication plan is to clarify the scope of sharing information with stakeholders, incredibly clarifying the project's purpose, scope, risks, and stakeholder's role in the project. The communication plan should define the form and frequency of communication and the tools for further partnership development. It is necessary to decide if there are enough resources to engage in regular two-way communication with all critical stakeholders. In the case of limited resources, it is essential to define the most influential and the most interesting and choose other forms of communication for others. The communication plan with stakeholders needs to be continuously updated along with the project's progress. This is the only way to ensure that the plan will still contain different tactics to engage different stakeholder groups, depending on their interest and influence.

Stakeholder management identifies, maintains, strengthens, manages, and exploits relationships with project stakeholders. The term is closely related to **corporate ethics** and **corporate social responsibility**.

During the last two programming periods, the public administration in the Czech Republic gradually changed its view of civil society organisations as EU-funded projects´ solvers and potential partners. Previously, civil society organisations and public administration had less experience with the principle of partnership. Based on involvement in EU projects focused on several topics implemented in previous programming periods, the public administration is changing its hitherto cautious approach to these organisations and now perceives and values civil society organisations as valuable partners.

Appendix E: The Logical Framework Approach

The Logical Framework Approach (LFA) is a participatory process that helps in project analysis, design and planning. It is frequently used in Project Cycle Management (PCM). The LFA aims to gain a deep understanding of the context and initial conditions and to systematise and structure the information in a standardised way (the Logical Framework Matrix - LFM). The critical elements in the LFA process are:

- **Key stakeholders** must participate to ensure engagement, ownership, and sustainability. Through consultations and dialogue, points of view and key information are gathered, processed, and analysed to identify and justify the project.
- **Cause-effect links** are identified to address the root causes of perceived problems and define solutions and objectives. This process identifies activities and potential outputs that are likely to generate outcomes and impact in the long term.

The **LFA** is generally structured in three parts: analysis, design, and planning, each with several steps and specific outputs.
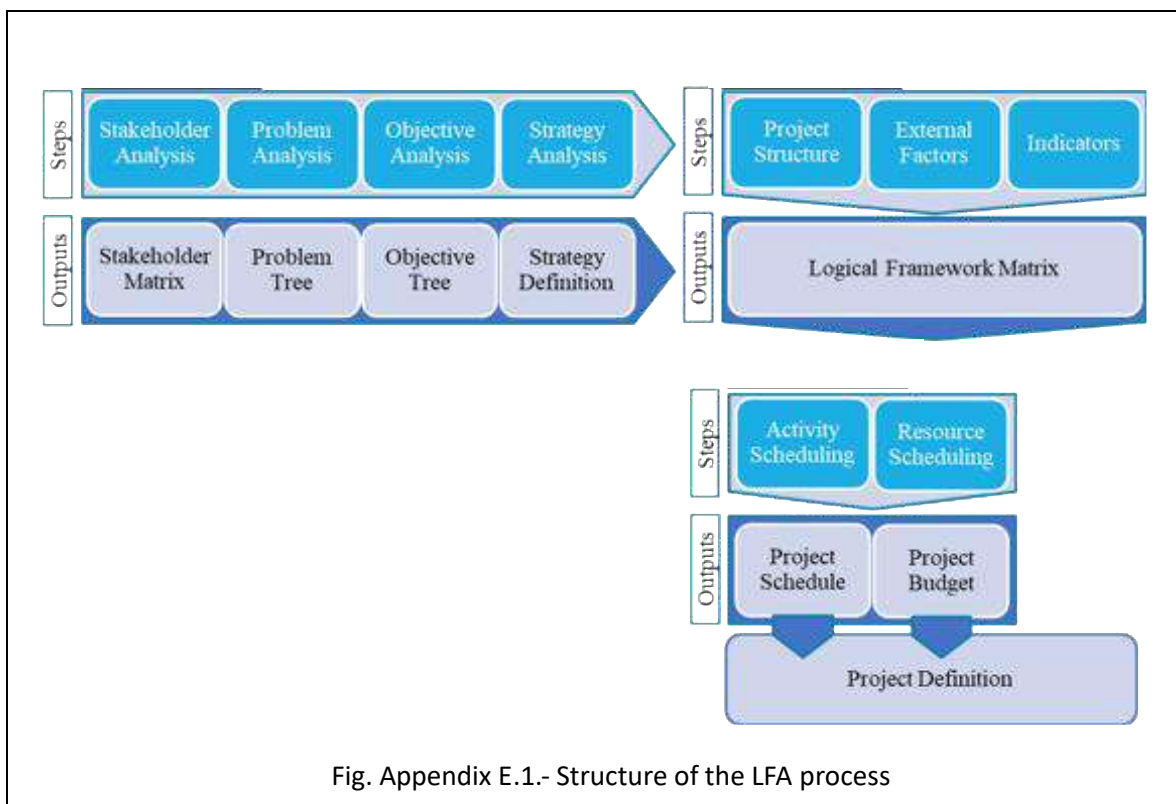
Fig. Appendix E.1.- Structure of the LFA process

It is essential to distinguish between the LFA as an analytical process and the Logical Framework Matrix (LFM). In this structured document, information and analysis are summarised and structured to facilitate the project's planning.

The Logical Framework Matrix (LFM) defines the project's structure, verifies its internal logic, and supports the formulation of objectives in measurable terms. The matrix is made up of the following rows and columns.

	Indicators	Baseline	Target	Sources data	Assumptions
Overall objective (impact)					
Specific objectives (outcome)					
Outputs/Deliverables					
Activities					

The **rows** will indicate the cause-effect links that have been identified, structured in:

- **Overall objective/Impact:** This section identifies the overall project objectives regarding long-term expected change.
- **Specific objective/Outcomes:** This section identifies the project's expected results regarding how the produced outputs are used and generate change.
- **Outputs/Deliverables:** Identifies the products or services the project will generate.
- **Activities:** Outlines the actions and tasks needed to generate the project´s outputs.

The **columns** will include additional elements that support the project plan:

- **Indicators** that will allow us to measure the progress and effect of the project.
- **Targets** to provide reasonable baselines and expectations.
- **Sources of verification** that identify the independent and reliable documentation that will be used to verify the project's achievements.
- **Assumptions** act as success factors, indicating what elements outside the project influence it so they can be adequately foreseen.

The LFM presents a standardised template summarising key project element, providing project managers with an overview of objectives, scope, activities, indicators, targets, and success factors.

Appendix F: Additional Resources

F.1 EUPM² Guide ARSCI Table

Initiating	CA	PSC	GO	DC	PTG	CR	EUPM	PtEUPM	PCT	PST FM	PST CM
Project Submission Request	n.a.	n.a.	A/S	R	S/C	I	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Project Fiche	n.a.	n.a.	A/S	S	S/C	I	R	I	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.

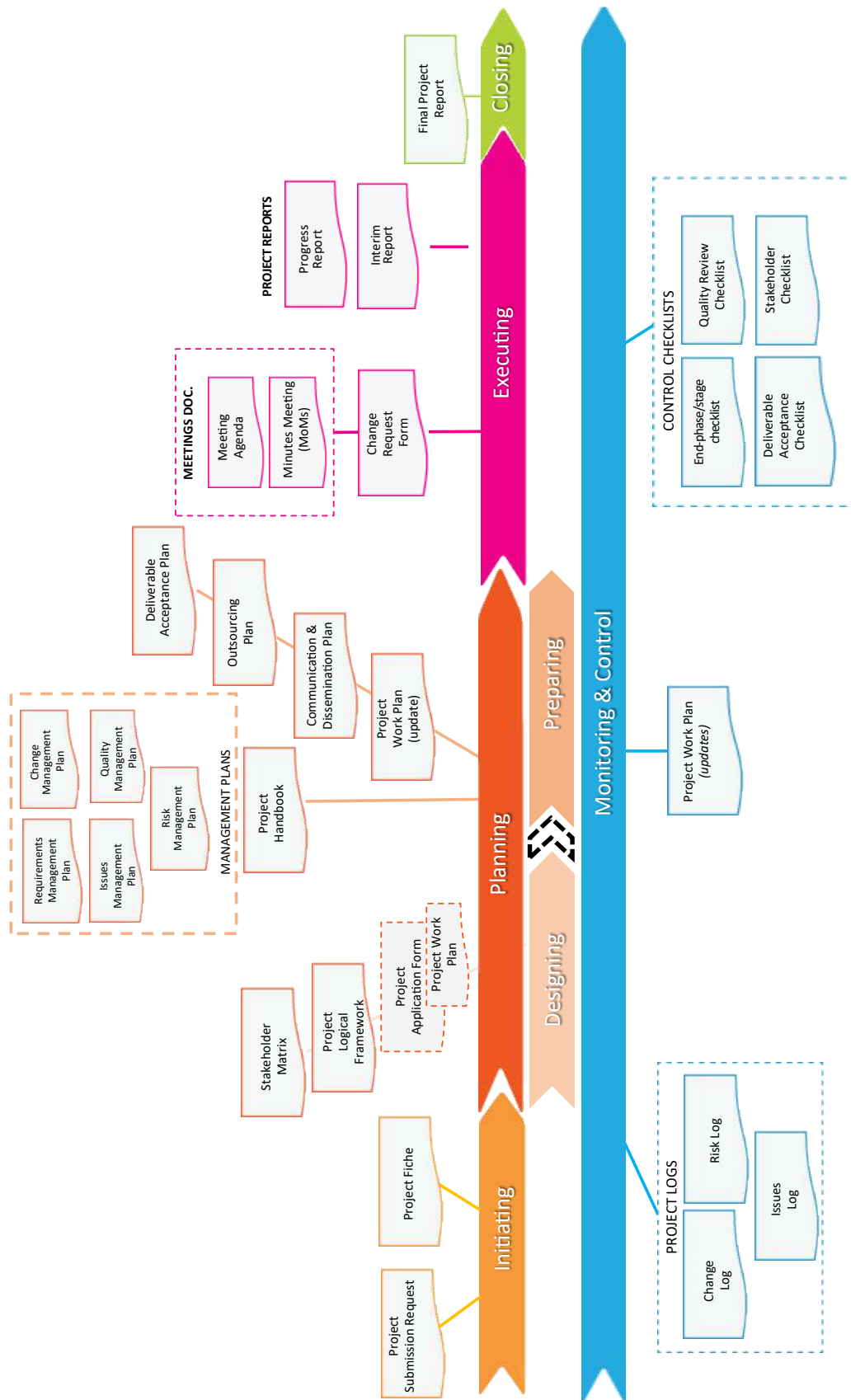| Planning	CA	PSC	GO	DC	PTG	CR	EUPM	PtEUPM	PCT	PST FM	PST CM
Designing stage											
Designing stage Kick-off Meeting	n.a.	A	C	S	C	C	R	S	C	n.a.	n.a.
Project Stakeholder Matrix	n.a.	A	C	S	C	I	R	S	C	n.a.	C
Project Logical Framework	n.a.	A	C	S	C	C	R	S	C	n.a.	n.a.
Project Application Form	I	A	C	S	C	C	R	S	C	S	S
Financing Decision	A	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	n.a.	n.a.
Preparing stage											
Preparing stage Kick-off Meeting	n.a.	A	C	S	C	C	R	S	C	C	C
Grant Agreement	I	I	A	S	C	C	R	S	C	S	n.a.
Partnership Agreement	n.a.	I	C	A	C	C	R	S	C	S	n.a.
Project Handbook	n.a.	I	A	S	C	I	R	S	C	C	C
Project Work Plan	I	A	C	S/C	C	C	R	S	S/C	S	n.a.
Outsourcing Plan	n.a.	A	C	C	I	S	R	S	I	S	n.a.
Deliverables Acceptance Plan	n.a.	A	C	S	I	C	R	S	C	n.a.	n.a.
Communication & Dissemination Plan	I	A	C	C	C	C	S	S	C	n.a.	R
Management Plans											
Project Change Management Plan	n.a.	I	A	C	I	I	R	S	I	n.a.	n.a.
Risk Management Plan	n.a.	C	A	C	I	I	R	S	I	n.a.	n.a.
Issue Management Plan	n.a.	I	A	C	C	I	R	S	C	n.a.	n.a.
Quality Management Plan	n.a.	I	A	C	C	C	R	S	C	n.a.	n.a.

Executing	CA	PSC	GO	DC	PTG	CR	EUPM	PtEUPM	PCT	PST FM	PST CM
Executing Kick-off Meeting	n.a.	A	C	S/C	C	C	R	S	C	C	C
Project Coordination	n.a.	I	A	S	I	I	R	S	I	C	C
Quality Assurance	n.a.	I	I	S	C	I	A	S	R	I	I
Communicate Project Results	I	I	I	C	I	I	A	S	C	n.a.	R
Project Reporting to CA	I	I	A	C	C	C	R	S	S	S	S

Monitor & Control	CA	PSC	GO	DC	PTG	CR	EUPM	PtEUPM	PCT	PST FM	PST CM
Monitor Project Performance	n.a.	I	A	C	C	I	R	S	C	C	n.a.
Control Schedule	n.a.	I	A	C	C	I	R	S	C	C	n.a.
Control Cost	n.a.	I	A	C	C	I	R	S	C	S	n.a.
Manage Stakeholders	n.a.	I	A	C	C	I	R	S	C	n.a.	S
Manage Requirements	n.a.	I	A	C	C	I	R	S	C	n.a.	n.a.
Manage Project Change (major)	A	I	S	C	I	I	R	S	C	S	n.a.
Manage Project Change (minor)	I	I	A	C	I	I	R	S	C	S	n.a.
Manage Risks	n.a.	I	A	C	C	I	R	S	C	S	n.a.
Manage Issues & Decisions	n.a.	I	A	C	C	I	R	S	C	n.a.	n.a.
Manage Quality	n.a.	I	A	C	C	I	R	S	C	n.a.	n.a.
Manage Deliverables Acceptance	n.a.	A	I	C	C	I	R	S	C	n.a.	n.a.
Manage Outsourcing	n.a.	I	A	C	C	I	R	S	C	S	n.a.

Closing	CA	PSC	GO	DC	PTG	CR	EUPM	PtEUPM	PCT	PST FM	PST CM
Project-End Review Meeting	n.a.	A	C	S	C	C	R	S	C	C	C
Final Project Report	I	A	C	S	C	C	R	S	C	S	S
Administrative Closure	n.a.	A	I	I	I	I	R	I	I	S	n.a.

CA	Contracting Authority	**EUPM**	EU Project Manager
PSC	Project Steering Committee	**PtEUPM**	Partner EU Project Manager
GO	Grant Owner	**PCT**	Project Core Team
DC	Domain Coordinator	**PST-CM**	Project Support Team - Communication Manager
PTG	Project Target Groups	**PST-FM**	Project Support Team - Financial Manager
CR	Consortium Representatives		

A	R	S	C	I
Accountable	Responsible	Supports	Consulted	Informed

F.2 EUPM² Guide Artefacts Landscape

Initiating

Activities
- Document the idea vs call for proposal
- Describe the benefits for the organization
- Define the project work and potential partners
- Share the Project Fiche among potential partners

Artefacts
- Project Submission Request
- Project Fiche
- Project Logs (setup)

Ready for Planning (RfP)

Planning

Designing
- Designing Kick-off meeting
- Elaborate Stakeholder Matrix
- Define the Project Logical Framework
- Elaborate Project scope (WPs)
- Describe the Governance model
- Fill the Application Form

Preparing
- Preparing Kick-off meeting
- Signing the grant and the partnership agreement
- Deepen the tailoring of the EUPM² Guide processes
- Develop the project plans
- Distribute plans to partners and stakeholders

Artefacts
- Planning kick-off meeting
- Project Logical Framework
- Project Application Form
- Preparing Kick-off meeting
- Grant / Partnership agreement
- Project Handbook
- Project Stakeholder Matrix
- Project Work Plan
- Management Plans
- Communication & Dissemination Plan

Ready for Executing (RfE)

Executing

Activities
- Executing Kick-off meeting
- Conduct meetings
- Assure quality
- Create project reports
- Communicate project results
- Ensure deliverable acceptance

Artefacts
- Executing Kick-off meeting
- Meeting agendas / MoMs
- Project Reports
- Change Requests
- Deliverable acceptance note

Ready for Closing (RfC)

Closing

Activities
- Project-End Meeting
- Capture lessons learned & post-project recommendation
- Elaborate the last report on project activities and costs
- Release resources
- Archive the project

Artefacts
- Project-End Meeting Agenda / MoM
- Project Final Report
- Project acceptance note

Monitor & Control

Activities
- Monitor Project Performance
- Control Schedule
- Control Costs
- Manage Quality
- Manage Project Change
- Manage Risks
- Manage Issues and Decisions
- Manage Stakeholders
- Manage Deliverable Accpetance
- Manage Outsourcing

Artefacts

Regurarly updated
- Risk Log
- Issue Log
- Change Log
- Project Work Plan

Checklists
- Phase-exit review checklist
- Quality review checklist
- Deliverable Acceptance checklist
- Stakeholder checklist