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Project management handbook

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Abstract	Project management handbook represents the manual, accepted by project Consortium, and it is setting out the procedures by which the partners will manage the Project, and in particular contains cross references and checklists between the partner's own normal reporting procedures and the required procedures by EACEA, as such manual may be amended or updated from time to time by agreement in writing between the project partners.
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VERSIONING AND CONTRIBUTION HISTORY

Version	Date	Description	Responsible members
1.0	20/04/2023	First draft	Tatjana Brankov
1.1	28/04/2023	Final	Tatjana Brankov and Bojan Matkovski



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ABBREVIATIONS

AGROKAZ	Development of bachelor program in agroecology with dual education in Kazakhstan
DE	Dual education
HEI	Higher Education Institution
LC	Local Committee
SC	Steering Committee
QC	Quality Committee
WP	Work package
IR	Interim Report



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1. INTRODUCTION

The main aim of AGROKAZ project is to develop and implement the sustainable dual study bachelor program in Agroecology at three higher education institutions (HEIs) in Kazakhstan and to establish lifelong courses for professionals.

The overall aims of the project are:

- to reduce the gap in the structure, volume and quality of labour resources from the real requirements of specific farms/enterprises and to educate professionals with competencies related to modern technologies,
- The (re)design of the educational program in agroecology in Kazakhstan through establishment of sustainable, internationally oriented dual study program will make students better prepared for all challenges facing agriculture in the future,

The project started on February 1st, 2023, and it will last until January 31st 2026.

One of the first steps is to establish sound organization of the consortium and understandable procedures for project management, reporting, quality assurance, dissemination etc.

Project management handbook represents the manual, accepted by project Consortium, and it is setting out the procedures by which the partners will manage the Project, and contains cross references and checklists between the partner's own normal reporting procedures and the required procedures by EACEA, as such manual may be amended or updated from time to time by agreement in writing between the project partners.

A project management handbook contains all the relevant information and rules to successfully execute the project. It documents the project, its management, and procedures according to a selected project management standard. The project management handbook is intended to be a work of reference for the involved project participants and facilitates project management by providing structured processes that can be followed. The handbook will be a living document and updated as required throughout the life of the project, typically during project controlling.



2. PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Project management activities, overall project management, organization of coordination meetings, and conducting monitoring and reporting, will be led by the University of Novi Sad (UNS). UNS (coordinator) will perform the planning, organization, coordination and control functions to ensure effective implementation of the project. UNS will establish functional connections with all partners and support them in achieving their goals and planned project tasks. The relationship between parties is defined in the Grant Agreement and Consortium Agreements. The agreements will be uploaded to Teams AGROKAZ team of the project.

Partner institutions and members of project management will communicate on a daily basis via e-mail, phone, Zoom, Microsoft Teams, etc. In the case of the continuation of the Covid19 pandemic, all project meetings will be organized virtually, by ZOOM, Teams, or other available software for online meetings. For the exchange and keeping of documents, Teams AGROKAZ team is prepared, and all partners have the access.

Coordination of overall project activities and work packages will be done by the Steering Committee (SC). SC will be responsible for continual project management, providing major channels for communication, interaction and monitoring of partners. SC will provide input into strategic and organizational issues and define the project standards and agree on all project policies that must be formally and explicitly stated. At first SC meeting in Kostanay, on March 15th, the SC was established, with the following representatives of partner institutions:

University of Novi Sad	BE 001	UNS	Tatjana Brankov
Kostanay Engineering and Economics University named after M. Dulatov	BE 002	KEnEU	Zhanat Jabassova
Kazakh National Agrarian University	BE 003	KazNAU	Abzal Abdramanov



Toraigyrov University	BE 004	PSU	Viktor Kamkin
Dimokrito Panepistimio Thrakis	BE 005	DUTH	Kostas Galanopoulos
Sveuciliste Josipa Jurja Strossmayera	BE 006	UNIOS	Tihana Sudaric
Agricultural experimental station Zarechnoye	BE 007	Zarechnoye	Saniya Tulkubayeva
Kazakh research institute of plant protection and quarantine named after Zhazken Zhiyembayev	BE 008	KRIPPQ	Alua Rysbekova

At national level, the Local Committee (LC) is formed by institutions in Kazakhstan. LC will be responsible for implementation of project activities and reporting to the overall project management. LC will be responsible for the implementation of local institutions (participants), preparation of an action plan at the national/local level and a clear allocation of responsibilities for tasks and results of the project to local partners. The continual local project management structure will ensure regular communication with the project coordinator and their involvement in the project activities. At first SC meeting in Kostanay on March 15th, the LC was established, with the following representatives of partner institutions:

Kostanay Engineering and Economics University named after M. Dulatov	BE 002	KEnEU	Gainiya Yesseyeva
Kazakh National Agrarian University	BE 003	KazNAU	Yesbol Omirzhanov
Toraigyrov University	BE 004	PSU	Oksana Ermakova
Agricultural experimental station Zarechnoye	BE 007	Zarechnoye	Saniya Tulkubayeva



Kazakh research institute of plant protection and quarantine named after Zhazken Zhiyembayev	BE 008	KRIPPQ	Bakhytzhan Duissembekov
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At the level of the entire project, the Steering Committee (SC) will be the one to make decisions, and it will be done via a consensus. The SC meetings will be organized at least twice a year. At the LC level, the decisions will be made from bottom to the top, and on the level of the entire project, from top to bottom. Coordination between the SC and LC will be conducted in English. The stakeholders can participate in meetings as advisors but will not have the right to make decisions (vote).

After every meeting, the minutes of the meeting will be prepared, and a draft version will be distributed to partners for approval. The template for the agenda and minutes of the meeting can be found at the Teams AGORKAZ team of the project.



3. WORK PACKAGES

The project has the following work packages:

No.	WP title	WP leader
1. Management	Project management	UNS
2. Preparation	Preparation for development of dual study program in agroecology	KEnEU
3. Preparation	Curriculum development	KEnEU
4. Preparation	Preparation for implementation of new bachelor and LLL programs	PSU
5. Implementation	Implementation of the program	KazNAU
6. Quality Plan	Quality control and monitoring	UNIOS
7. Dissemination & Exploitation	Dissemination and exploitation of project activities and results	DUTH

Each WP has its WP leader. The WP leader is coordinating activities and distributing tasks to other project partners for WP in question. All activities must be finished according to the schedule in the project application.

Description of all work packages, tasks, deliverables and complete application of AGROKAZ project can be found in the document "AGROKAZ Application Form". This document is also on Teams AGROKAZ team of the project.

The focus of all project activities is on the project deliverables (outputs). All deliverables must be finished on time, as declared in the project application. The list of project deliverables with deadlines as separate documents can also be found on Teams AGROKAZ team of the project.

After the finalization of specific project activity, the WP leader is sending the deliverable to coordinator and UNIOS for quality control. Afterwards, the coordinator is sending the



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deliverable to other partners for comments and suggestions. At the end, deliverable is uploaded to the project platform and on Teams AGORKAZ team of the project.



4. QUALITY ASSURANCE

The quality control and monitoring process will be performed following the conditions and requirements of the project, especially relying on the experience of EU partners during the course of the project, quality control will be carried out according to developed quality and assessment plan. The kick-off meeting at the beginning of the project ensured that all project members have the same notions about the quality assurance process. They will be in contact with each other and resolve problems about reaching milestones. All partners will generate and submit internal reports about performed quality control activities. All internal reports will be submitted to the Steering Committee, which will generate and submit the final report about quality.

Quality Control consists of the list of measurable indicators about the quality of dual study program in AE and about the project. The following tasks will be a part of this activity:

- defining metrics for operation of the study program,
- defining metrics for number of contacts with companies,
- defining metrics for number of engaged students,
- defining metrics for AGROKAZ influence on preparing for a carrier,
- defining metrics for employability of students.

Quality assurance is explained in detail in the document "*M8 Plan for Quality Control and Monitoring*". This document can be found on Teams AGROKAZ team of the project.



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5. DISSEMINATION

The aim of dissemination is to bring project aims, benefits, and results close to participants and stakeholders in the academic as well as non-academic world of the participating countries and beyond. The key goal of this WP is to raise awareness of all stakeholders of benefits of AGROKAZ which should ensure sustainability of project results and initiate development of dual study program in Agroecology in Kazakhstan. Additionally, this will be a possibility to promote development of study programs based on dual education. With help of non-academic partners (the Ministry of Education and Science, Chamber of Entrepreneurs of Kostanay region, Kazakhstan Agency of applied ecology, Independent agency for accreditation and rating, Peasant farm "Zamandas", Non-profit joint-stock company national Agrarian Science and Educational Centre), wide range of stakeholders will be reached with our dissemination activities and products. This WP starts with the project's visual identity (project logo, motto and web site). Further on, different kinds of activities are considered: social media sites, participation at education fairs, presentations of specific model of dual education to college students, etc. The final dissemination report is to be prepared in the last stages of the project. At the end, the final conference will be organized with the aim of demonstration of achievements of the project and working out plans for the sustainability of project result.

Dissemination is explained in detail in the document "D7.1 Strategy for dissemination", including the visual identity of the project. This document and templates for the reporting, logo of AGROKAZ, logo of European Commission and disclaimer can be found on Teams AGROKAZ team of the project.



6. MEETINGS

Preparation of the meeting

The time and location of the meeting must be decided at least two months before the meeting if it is international, and two weeks if it is on the national level.

The room for the meeting must have an internet connection and media equipment.

Necessary documents

Before the meeting:

- Agenda – it must be sent to all participants at least three weeks before the meeting. The agenda includes the time and place of the meeting, contacts from the host, and link for online participation if necessary.
- Travel list if it is international meeting (list of all participants coming to the meeting). The host is asking all partners to fill out the list before the meeting.
- Attendance list (all participants are signing the list during the meeting)

After the meeting:

- Report about the meeting developed based on the template.
- The minutes of the meeting if it is Steering Committee meeting or Local Committee meeting. Minutes for SC will be prepared by coordinator, while in the case of LC prepared by the host institution.
- Presentation of all presenters at the meeting.
- Feedback survey about the quality of the meeting (conducted by UNIOS)



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After the meeting, the host is sending the pdf version of attendance list to all participants and sending the information to DUTH for dissemination on website, social networks, and in media.

All documents related to the meeting must be sent to the coordinator (UNS). The coordinator will upload all documents on Teams AGORKAZ team of the project.

All documents must be in line with the data protection regulations.

The templates of all documents can be found and downloaded from the Teams AGORKAZ team of the project.



7. REPORTING

Every partner is obligated to submit the reports to coordinator, as stated in the Article 7 of the Consortium Agreement. The following table is showing the time frame of reporting during the project lifetime:

Reporting period:	From-To	Deadline for submission of the partnership reports by the beneficiary to the coordinator
The 1 st reporting period	1/02/2023-31/07/2023	10/08/2023
The 2 nd reporting period	1/08/2023-31/01/2024	10/02/2024
The 3 rd reporting period	1/02/2024-31/07/2024	10/08/2024
The 4 th reporting period	1/08/2024-31/01/2025	10/02/2025
The 5 th reporting period	1/02/2025-31/07/2025	10/08/2025
The 6 th reporting period	1/08/2025-31/01/2026	27/02/2026

Deadlines for submission of the final report are the following:

Type of the report	Deadline for submission of the report by the coordinator to the EACEA	Deadline for submission of the report by the beneficiary to the coordinator
Final report	60 days after the end of the contractual period	27/02/2026



For every reporting period the following reports must be submitted:

- AGROKAZ Financial Statement.xls
- AGROKAZ Dissemination Report.docx (submitted to UNS and DUTH)
- Internal QA report (submitted to UNS and UNIOS)

The file "AGROKAZ_Financial Statement.xls" is the overview of the grant management and all costs occurred during the reporting period. The partner must fill out the worksheet "Reporting". UNS will check the submitted report and after corrections, if necessary, the report will be added to the same document for the whole consortium.

The file "AGROKAZ_Dissemination Report.docx" is the overview of all dissemination activities of the partner during the reporting period. The coordinator will upload the dissemination activities to the project portal.

Internal QA report is the document prepared by UNIOS, for QA monitoring of all activities.

The templates for the reporting ("AGROKAZ_Financial Statement.xlsx", "AGROKAZ_Dissemination Report.docx, and AGROKAZ_Internal Quality Report) can be found on Teams AGORKAZ team of the project.

Each partner institution will assign one person (project manager / financial manager) who will be responsible for monitoring work activities and financial implementation, as well as preparation of Interim Report and Final Report. Interim Report (IR) will be submitted halfway through the project period. IR will include information on the implemented project activities, achieved planned results, used resources, as well as possible changes to those plans and diversion of resources to the remaining duration of the project. Upon completion of the project, Final Report (FR) will be submitted with the final results of the project, information and report on used financial resources and funds spent, the contribution of each participant in the project and suggestions for further development in order to achieve sustainability of the project results.



8. THE BUDGET

The budget of the project is uploaded on Teams AGORKAZ team of the project.

Transfer of the grant in instalments from coordinator to project partners is defined in the Consortium Agreement.

For the transfer of the instalment, each partner must send the following documents to the coordinator:

- Annex II (Request for payment)
- Instructions from the bank (with the memo of the bank, or with the signature and stamp from the bank) – only for the first installment, and only by email.

The partner will send the Word version of the document by email to coordinator, and after the approval from the project office of UNS, the partner will send the Annex II by regular mail.

Information in all documents for the transfer of the instalments must be identical with the information in the Consortium Agreement, to the letter: name and address of the partner institution, name and address of the bank, name of the signatory, amount. In the case of any change, the partner institution must send an official letter and proof about the change of the information.

The budget must be spent only according to the project proposal and the budget submitted to EACEA. In the case of any change, the coordinator must be consulted, while the coordinator will consult the project officer of EACEA if necessary and ask for approval.

All costs must be reported to the coordinator through submission of the document "AGROKAZ Financial Statement.xlsx" at the end of the reporting period. Supporting documents will be sent to the coordinator only if the coordinator specifically asks for them. The template "AGROKAZ Financial Statement.xlsx" can be found on Teams AGORKAZ team of the project.



All the costs must be justified in accordance with the national legislation of the partner institution. There are four types of costs:

1. Travelling costs

For a specific trip, each partner has at disposal the budget for traveling expenses (tickets for airplane, train, taxi, car, etc.), for accommodation, and for subsistence costs, for a specific number of project team members. For one person, it is possible to transfer the funds from one category to the other in the case of, for example, expensive airplane tickets and to cover the expenses from the budget for accommodation and subsistence. It is not possible to cover the expenses of one travelling team member from the budget of the other team members by sending one person on the trip instead of two or three.

The supporting documents from the trip must be scanned and archived.

2. Equipment costs

The equipment must be obtained through public purchase, in accordance with the national regulations. The supporting documents must be scanned and saved.

Every item of the equipment must have stickers with the logo of the project and European Commission. The pictures of all items, with the stickers, must be saved.

The report about the purchase of the equipment must be prepared by all Kazakh universities.

3. Staff costs

Behind every staff cost must be proof that the work has been done (report, presentation, other supporting documents).

It is not possible to spend the budget from other categories to staff costs.

4. Subcontracting costs

The budget for subcontracting can cover the cost of activities not performed by project partners, where project partners do not have capacities to do the activity. For example, printing, certified translation, external expertise, promotional material, etc.



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The subcontracting must be done in accordance with national legislation.



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9. DATA PROTECTION

Data protection will be done in line with Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2018 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies and on the free movement of such data.

At the beginning of the attendance list should be written: "By participating and being present during the event, you give the [organisation's name] the right to use photographs or video/audio recordings taken of you during the event for educational or promotional purposes and for sharing with external news media"