

D1.1 Project Handbook



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

ERASMUS-EDU-2025-CBHE - EMPOANDES - 101236788



Deliverable	Version	Author(s)	Date
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	1.0 . Consolidated	Jon Xavier Olano (URV) Maria Martínez (URV) Enric Aguilar (URV)	21/05/2026
	1.1 Review of Consolidated	Julie Catherine Tobon on behalf of IDEAM Team (IDEAM) Jorge Espinosa (UCE)	26/05/2026
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	Review of 2.0	Pablo Cornejo (INHAMI-e)	28/05/2026
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Foreword

This Project Handbook establishes the common operational framework for the implementation of EMPOANDES. It has been conceived as a practical reference document to support coordinated project management, clear allocation of responsibilities, transparent governance, internal communication, reporting, and the timely preparation of project outputs. By translating the contractual and organisational framework of the project into shared working procedures, the Handbook aims to ensure that all partners operate under a coherent, efficient and accountable implementation model throughout the project lifecycle. It should be understood as a living document, aligned with the Grant Agreement and Consortium Agreement, and designed to support the collaborative delivery of EMPOANDES across institutions, countries and work packages



Contents

Introduction	7
2. Project Overview	8
2.1 Context.....	8
2.2 Objectives	9
2.3 Expected Results	10
2.4 Work Package Structure.....	13
3. Consortium and Roles	17
3.1 Consortium composition	17
3.2 Role of the coordinating institution	18
3.3 Functional role of the partner institutions.....	18
3.4 Shared responsibilities and collaborative logic	19
4. Governance Structure	21
4.1 General governance approach	21
4.2 General Assembly	21
4.3 Executive Board	22
4.4 Communication Board	24
4.5 Interaction between governance bodies.....	26
4.6 Decision-making logic within the governance structure	26
5. Project Management Procedures.....	28
5.1 General management approach.....	28
5.2 Role of the coordinator in day-to-day management	28
5.3 Role of work package leaders in implementation follow-up	29
5.4 Role of partner institutions in implementation	30
5.5 Planning and operational follow-up	30
5.6 Internal communication in support of management.....	31
5.7 Meetings as management instruments.....	33
5.8 Management of delays and implementation bottlenecks.....	34
5.9 Documentation and traceability of management processes	35
5.10 Relationship between management procedures and quality assurance	35
5.11 Respectful Participation and Internal Concerns Handling	36
6. Work Package Implementation and Reporting.....	37
6.1 General approach to work package implementation	37
6.2 Responsibilities of work package leaders.....	37
6.3 Responsibilities of contributing partners within work packages.....	38
6.4 Coordination between work packages.....	39



6.5 Planning and monitoring at work package level	39
6.6 Reporting lines	40
6.7 Periodicity and content of internal reporting	41
6.8 Reporting in relation to deliverables and milestones	41
6.9 Escalation of implementation issues through reporting	42
6.10 Contribution of reporting to project coherence and accountability	43
7. Deliverables and Milestones Management.....	45
7.1 General approach	45
7.2 Responsibilities	45
7.3 Planning and preparation.....	45
7.4 Internal review and validation	45
7.5 Submission and record-keeping.....	46
7.6 Management of delays.....	46
7.7 Internal timeline for deliverables and milestones	46
8. Administrative and Financial Arrangements.....	48
8.1 General approach.....	48
8.2 Responsibilities	48
8.3 Internal procedures and communication flows	49
8.4 Documentation and record-keeping.....	49
8.5 Lump Sum Justification under Erasmus+ Rules.....	50
8.5.1 General rationale.....	50
8.5.2 What must be justified in practice	50
8.5.3 Relation between the proposal budget and implementation.....	50
8.5.4 What is not required under lump sum reporting	51
8.5.5 What evidence should be retained.....	51
8.5.6 Periodic reporting and the role of work packages.....	52
8.5.7 Completion, deviations and equivalent work	52
8.5.8 Consequences of insufficient implementation.....	52
8.5.9 Internal implications for consortium management	53
8.5.10 Reference documents	53
9. Risk and Issue Management.....	55
9.1 General approach.....	55



9.2 Identification and notification	55
9.3 Assessment and categorisation.....	56
9.4 Escalation and corrective action	56
9.5 Follow-up and documentation	56
10. Quality, Compliance and Communication References.....	60
10.1 General quality principle.....	60
10.2 Link with the Quality Management and Monitoring Plan.....	60
10.3 Compliance with project obligations	61
10.4 Communication and visibility references	61
10.5 Coherence between quality, compliance and communication	61
10.6 Operationalisation of EU Fundamental Values in Project Implementation ...	62



1. Introduction

This Project Handbook has been prepared as an internal reference document for the implementation of the EMPOANDES project. Its main purpose is to provide a common operational framework for all partner institutions, supporting a coherent, transparent and efficient management of the project throughout its lifetime. In this sense, the Handbook is intended to translate the project's contractual and organisational framework into practical guidance for day-to-day coordination, internal communication, decision-making, reporting, and the management of joint activities and outputs.

The scope of this document covers the main management and coordination arrangements required for the implementation of EMPOANDES at the consortium level. It defines the general governance structure of the project, clarifies the roles and responsibilities of the coordinator, work package leaders and partner institutions, and outlines the main internal procedures related to meetings, reporting, document management, deliverables, milestones, administrative coordination and issue escalation. The Handbook is therefore addressed to all project partners as a shared working document to support a common understanding and consistent implementation practices across the consortium.

This document should be understood as a living internal reference. While its core principles are expected to remain stable throughout the project, specific operational elements may be updated as needed to reflect decisions adopted by the project governance bodies, implementation needs, or practical adjustments agreed by the consortium. Any such updates should remain fully aligned with the official project framework and improve coordination and implementation without altering the partners' contractual obligations.

The Project Handbook does not replace the Grant Agreement or the Consortium Agreement. These documents remain the formal and legally binding references for the project's implementation. Instead, the Handbook complements them by providing an internal operational layer that helps partners apply those provisions in a practical and coordinated manner. In case of inconsistency, the Grant Agreement and, where applicable, the Consortium Agreement shall prevail.



2. Project Overview

2.1 Context

EMPOANDES is an Erasmus+ Capacity Building in Higher Education project focused on strengthening climate services capacity in the Andean region through education, training, co-creation, and open resources. The project is a capacity-building initiative that links curricula development, staff training, and openly accessible educational assets with sectoral, national, and regional needs, while aligning its educational approach with WMO-related climate services competencies.

The rationale for the project is rooted in the Andean region's high vulnerability to climate variability and change. This region is among the most sensitive worldwide to changing climate conditions and to the growing occurrence and impacts of extreme events, including extreme precipitation, floods, droughts, cold waves, and heatwaves. These impacts affect territories, institutions, productive sectors, and communities unevenly, but systematically, creating a strong need for more robust capacities to interpret, adapt, and act upon climate information.

At the same time, the project will address a structural gap between the growing availability of climate data and the capacity of institutions and users to translate that information into decisions. EMPOANDES emphasises that although climate datasets, methods, and modelling tools are expanding, translating climate information into practical action remains constrained by limitations in usability, institutional interfaces, and workforce competencies. In this sense, the project is not only about producing educational content but also about strengthening the broader climate services ecosystem through a needs-led, application-oriented capacity-building process.

EMPOANDES is positioned at the intersection of higher education, institutional strengthening, and adaptation practice. Rather than treating climate services as a purely technical domain, the project frames them as a field that requires co-definition of needs, interdisciplinary training, sustained cooperation between universities and meteorological institutions, and stronger interfaces with the communities and sectors that ultimately use climate information. This framing is central to the project's



identity and explains why the initiative combines academic development, staff capacity building, pilot implementation, and community-oriented engagement within a single architecture.

2.2 Objectives

The overall objective of EMPOANDES is to empower Andean societies to improve adaptation to climate change through the co-creation of climate service capacities. The Grant Agreement (GA) defines this objective in educational and societal terms: the project seeks to develop official educational actions at different levels for students, professionals, and citizens, while operating across local, national, and regional scales to strengthen the ability of organisations, governments, and communities to face climate-related challenges more effectively.

Beyond this general objective, the project has a clearly articulated operational ambition. EMPOANDES aims to place communities and users at the centre of the co-creation, computation, and communication of climate information for decision-making. This implies moving beyond one-directional knowledge transfer and instead building a framework in which educational actions, tools, and training pathways are shaped by real institutional and sectoral needs. The project's public narrative consistently presents this user-centred and co-creative logic as one of its defining features.

Operationally, this overall objective can be understood as translating into four linked strategic aims. First, EMPOANDES seeks to diagnose educational, institutional, and skills needs in a structured way, so that project activities respond to actual gaps rather than assumed ones. Second, it aims to convert those needs into competency-based academic and professional training offers, including revised or newly developed courses and pedagogical materials. Third, it seeks to improve access to climate information, climate-data tools, and enabling technologies, while reinforcing understanding of the regional climate context. Fourth, it aims to ensure that this capacity-building effort is sustainable through open resources, instructional strengthening, and community building. This formulation is an analytical synthesis of the project's official public descriptions and implementation pathway.



A further strategic dimension of EMPOANDES is that it does not restrict itself to formal university curriculum reform alone. The project is also designed to support professional and societal learning, which broadens its impact logic considerably. By explicitly targeting students, professionals, and citizens, EMPOANDES recognises that adaptation capacity depends not only on future specialists trained in higher education institutions, but also on the current practitioners and communities who must already engage with climate risks, uncertainty, and adaptation choices.

2.3 Expected Results

The expected results of EMPOANDES can be understood as a sequence of interrelated educational, institutional, and applied outputs. According to the project's narrative in the Description of the Action (DoA) and GA, EMPOANDES is expected to produce a co-defined assessment of education and skills needs, a regional synthesis of common capacity gaps and priority themes, a structured portfolio of courses to be developed or updated, competency guidelines for climate service provision, revised and newly created teaching materials, and a train-the-trainers programme to strengthen delivery capacity across participating institutions. These results are not isolated products; they are designed to build progressively from diagnosis to educational design, and from educational design to implementation and refinement.

The project is expected to generate open and sustainable educational assets. The official project website highlights educational platform development, open resources, and community building as core features of EMPOANDES. This means that the expected outputs go beyond internally used curricula and materials: they are intended to support broader accessibility, continuity, and transferability. This is important because it helps ensure that the project's value does not end with the funding period, but remains embedded in teaching structures, training practices, and regional cooperation networks.

A further expected result is the reinforcement of practical climate-services capacity for decision-making. DoA emphasises improved access to climate information, stronger capacity in climate-data tools and technologies, and deeper understanding of the regional climate context. These project documents also point to the need to



improve representativeness and interfaces between climate knowledge and impact-oriented applications. In this sense, EMPOANDES is expected to strengthen not only educational provision but also the broader ability of partner institutions and associated actors to work with climate information in ways that are more decision-relevant, more usable, and more context-sensitive.

The expected results also include piloting and iterative refinement. The DoA of the project states that pilot roll-out, learner feedback, and stakeholder validation will form part of the implementation process, and that EMPOANDES is expected to deliver an operational portfolio of educational assets together with early-stage climate service prototypes and defined pathways to impact. This is especially important from a project-design perspective, because it shows that EMPOANDES is not limited to content production; it is also concerned with testing relevance, usability, and adoption potential in real or near-real implementation settings.

These expected results give EMPOANDES a layered impact logic. At the most immediate level, the project is expected to improve courses, materials, and staff capacities. At the intermediate level, it is expected to strengthen institutional cooperation and climate-services education ecosystems. At the longer-term level, it is expected to contribute to more robust regional capacity for climate-informed adaptation planning and action across Andean contexts. This interpretation follows directly from the way the project's objectives, open-resource approach, train-the-trainers model, and pilot logic are presented in its official descriptions.



D1.1 Project Handbook

Table 1. Summary of the project objectives and expected results

Objective	Expected results	Related WPs
Empower Andean societies to improve adaptation to climate change through the co-creation of climate service capacities.	Strengthened regional capacity to interpret, use and apply climate information for adaptation planning and decision-making.	WP1, WP2, WP3, WP4, WP5, WP6
Develop official educational actions at different levels for students, professionals and citizens.	Revised and newly developed courses, pedagogical materials and educational pathways for different target groups.	WP3, WP4, WP5
Diagnose educational, institutional and skills needs in the Andean region.	Co-defined assessment of education and skills needs; regional synthesis of common capacity gaps and priority themes.	WP2
Translate identified needs into competency-based academic and professional training offers.	Structured portfolio of courses; competency guidelines for climate service provision; revised and newly created teaching materials.	WP3
Place communities and users at the centre of the co-creation, computation and communication of climate information.	User-centred and needs-led training pathways; stronger interfaces between climate knowledge, institutions, sectors and communities.	WP2, WP5, WP6
Improve access to climate information, climate-data tools and enabling technologies.	Improved practical capacity to work with climate information, climate-data tools and technologies in decision-relevant contexts.	WP3, WP4, WP5
Strengthen staff capacity for climate services education and training.	Train-the-trainers programme; improved delivery capacity among academic and technical staff; stronger institutional capability.	WP4
Pilot and validate educational assets and early-stage climate service prototypes.	Pilot roll-out, learner feedback, stakeholder validation and refinement of outputs based on usability and adoption potential.	WP5
Generate open and sustainable educational assets.	Open resources, educational platform development and community-building mechanisms supporting accessibility, continuity and transferability.	WP3, WP5, WP6
Ensure effective coordination, dissemination and sustainability of project results.	Coherent project governance, communication of activities and results, wider uptake, replication and long-term sustainability.	WP1, WP6

2.4 Work Package Structure

EMPOANDES is organised into six work packages that together provide the project's implementation logic. According to official project descriptions, these are: WP1 Project Management and Coordination; WP2 Definition of Higher Education Institutions and Community Needs; WP3 Curricula Development; WP4 Staff Capacity Building; WP5 Piloting Capacity Development and Community Empowerment; and WP6 Dissemination and Communication. This structure was also presented in the public summary of the project kick-off meeting, where work packages, tasks, milestones, and governance arrangements were discussed as part of the project launch.

WP1 provides the management backbone of the project. Its role is to ensure that the consortium functions coherently through coordination, governance, monitoring, and administrative follow-up. In practical terms, WP1 creates the conditions under which the more thematic and implementation-oriented work packages can progress in a structured and accountable way. For a project such as EMPOANDES, which involves multiple countries, institutional types, and implementation layers, this managerial backbone is not merely administrative; it is essential to the coherence of the whole project architecture.

WP2 plays a foundational role because it identifies the needs that justify and shape the rest of the project. Its focus on higher education institutions and community needs and the current technical staff of the NMHSs is particularly relevant, considering that these are the actors responsible for putting acquired knowledge and capacities into practice and applying them in real-world contexts. In this sense, creating these spaces as focal points for strengthening and continuous updating is expected to consolidate capacities over time. All of this indicates that EMPOANDES begins with diagnosis rather than prescription.

WP3 translates that diagnosis into curricula development. Its purpose is not simply to generate course titles or isolated modules, but to build structured educational responses aligned with competencies, target groups, and decision contexts. In the logic of the project, WP3 is where the identified needs are converted into academic architecture, learning outcomes, pedagogical pathways, and teaching materials that



can then be implemented and scaled through subsequent actions. This makes WP3 the core design package of the project.

WP4 focuses on staff capacity building, which is critical for the sustainability and credibility of the educational reform process, while also promoting the continuous updating of teachers' knowledge. This will be achieved through agreements that enable technical experts to transfer their knowledge, creating a two-way model of exchange between experts and teaching staff. New or revised curricula cannot generate lasting impact without adequately prepared academic and technical staff.

New or revised curricula cannot generate lasting impact without adequately prepared academic and technical staff. The project's public implementation pathway explicitly includes a train-the-trainers dimension, indicating that instructional capacity is treated as a strategic condition for continuity rather than as a secondary support activity. WP4 therefore helps convert project outputs into institutional capability.

WP5 moves the project from capacity building into piloting, application, and community empowerment. Its title makes clear that EMPOANDES is expected not only to design and train, but also to test, engage, and empower. This package gives the project its practical and societal orientation by connecting developed capacities with users, communities, and applied settings. WP5 is where the value of the preceding work packages is most directly confronted with real-world relevance, feedback, and adoption conditions.

WP6 completes the structure by ensuring dissemination and communication. This includes visibility, outreach, and the communication of activities, outputs, and results to relevant audiences. In a project built around capacity development, co-creation, and open resources, dissemination is not only a formal requirement but also an enabling mechanism for uptake, replication, and sustainability. The public summary of the kick-off meeting also shows that WP6 was treated early on as a strategic component, linked to communication governance and wider project structures.

The six-work-package structure reflects a clear implementation sequence: governance and coordination; diagnosis of needs; design of educational responses; strengthening of staff capacities; piloting and community-oriented application; and dissemination of results. This gives EMPOANDES an architecture that is both



internally coherent and externally oriented, combining academic reform, institutional strengthening, and climate-services usability within a single project logic.

The table 2 provides a synthetic overview of the six work packages of EMPOANDES, including their main objectives, leadership, key deliverables, milestones and principal operational dependencies across the project structure.



D1.1 Project Handbook

Table 2. Project Logical Workflow (**Note:** Dependencies shown in the table refer to the main operational sequencing and interrelation between work packages. They are intended to clarify implementation logic and do not replace the formal task structure established in the Description of the Action)

WP	Main objective	Lead beneficiary	Key deliverables	Key milestones	Main dependencies
WP1	Ensure the overall management, coordination, financial follow-up, quality assurance and smooth implementation of the project.	URV	D1.1 Project Handbook; D1.2 Quality Data and Monitoring Plan; D1.3 Kick-off Report; D1.4 Mid-Term Report	MS1 Consortium Agreement; MS2 EMPOANDES launched; MS11 Mid-term; MS13 EMPOANDES closing	Foundational WP for all other work packages; supports governance, coordination, reporting and implementation continuity across the project.
WP2	Identify educational needs, stakeholder expectations and climate services capacity gaps, and define the educational strategy and courses to be developed.	CIIFEN	D2.1 Educational Needs and Gap Analysis Report; D2.2 Climate Services Educational Strategy; D2.3 List of courses selected to be developed during EMPOANDES	MS5 Completion of Climate Services Education Analysis; MS6 Stakeholder Engagement and Community of Practice Establishment	Provides the analytical basis for WP3, WP4 and WP5; informs course design, staff capacity-building needs and later piloting actions.
WP3	Develop the competency-based academic framework, course rationales, educational platform and course materials for climate services education.	UNAP	D3.1 Rationales of Selected Courses; D3.2 Handbook with Guidelines on Curricula Development in the field of Climate Services; D3.3 Educational Platform; D3.4 Courses Materials	MS8 Competency guide development; MS9 Paving the way for EMPOANDES Education Platform	Depends primarily on WP2 for needs analysis and course selection; provides core academic outputs for WP4 and WP5.
WP4	Strengthen staff capacities in climate services provision and education through targeted training aligned with WMO-related competencies.	UNAC + URV	D4.1 Report on Staff Capacity Building Needs for EMPOANDES institutions; D4.2 Mid Training Report; D4.3 Final Trainings Report	MS7 Training start; MS10 First courses completed	Depends on WP2 for identified needs and on WP3 for curricular and competency development; feeds implementation and uptake in WP5.
WP5	Pilot academic integration, professional training and community-oriented climate services capacity development and empowerment actions.	UCE + UDLA + YT	D5.1 Climate Services Academic Integration Report; D5.2 Professional and General Training Program Toolkit	MS12 Engagement and Educational Resources Development	Depends on WP2, WP3 and WP4; uses the educational strategy, developed materials and trained staff to test and embed results.
WP6	Ensure project visibility, communication, dissemination, sustainability and wider uptake of project activities and results.	URV	D6.1 Communication and Dissemination Plan; D6.2 Dissemination Report v1; D6.3 Dissemination Report v2; D6.4 EMPOANDES Handbook; D6.5 Final Conference Proceedings	MS3 Constitution and start of Communication Board; MS4 Web portal running; MS13 EMPOANDES closing	Transversal WP depending on inputs and results from all WPs; particularly linked to WP1 for governance and to WP2–WP5 for substantive content to disseminate.



3. Consortium and Roles

3.1 Consortium composition

EMPOANDES is implemented by a multidisciplinary consortium composed of sixteen institutions from Europe and Latin America. The partnership brings together higher education institutions, national meteorological and hydrological services, and a specialised regional research centre, thereby combining academic capacity-building potential with operational climate expertise and regional anchoring. The consortium includes the Coordinator, Universitat Rovira i Virgili (Spain); as beneficiaries the University of Patras (Greece), University of Helsinki (Finland), Universidad de las Américas, Universidad Central del Ecuador, Yachay Tech University, Universidad Nacional del Altiplano, Universidad Nacional Agraria La Molina, Universidad del Valle, Universidad Nacional de Colombia, CIIFEN, INAMHI, SENAMHI Peru, IDEAM; Universidad de Concepción, and Dirección Meteorológica de Chile as Associated Partners. This composition reflects the project's intention to connect educational development, technical climate knowledge, and territorial relevance within a single implementation structure.

From an institutional perspective, the consortium has been designed to ensure complementarity across different types of organisations and across different operational scales. The European partners contribute experience in higher education reform, climate services, and project implementation within international cooperation frameworks, while the Latin American universities provide the national and institutional environments in which curricular development, capacity-building actions, and long-term educational uptake are to be embedded. In parallel, participating meteorological and hydrological institutions and CIIFEN reinforce the project's scientific, technical, and applied dimensions, helping ensure that educational and training developments remain aligned with climate information systems, operational practices, and user-oriented needs. This structure is fully consistent with the project's stated emphasis on curricula, training, open resources, and need-driven capacity-building for climate services in the Andean region.



3.2 Role of the coordinating institution

The coordinating institution of EMPOANDES is Universitat Rovira i Virgili, through IU-RESCAT. In this capacity, the coordinating institution is responsible for the overall strategic and administrative coordination of the project, ensuring coherence between work packages and partners, and serving as the primary interface with the programme framework at the project level and ensuring that project implementation remains consistent with EU values and Grant Agreement obligations. Within the project's internal management logic, this coordinating role also entails facilitating common implementation standards, supporting the functioning of the governance bodies, and promoting timely communication and follow-up across the consortium. Beyond the formal coordination function, the coordinator's role is particularly relevant in a project such as EMPOANDES, given the diversity of actors involved and the need to articulate academic, technical, and regional dimensions within a coherent implementation pathway. The coordinator, therefore, has a cross-cutting responsibility not only for procedural compliance but also for maintaining overall alignment between objectives, educational outputs, institutional participation, and project timelines. In practical terms, this means that coordination is not limited to administrative oversight but also supports integration between governance, work package delivery, communication processes, and collective decision-making. This reading is consistent with the project architecture presented publicly, in which management, curricula, staff capacity building, piloting, and dissemination are conceived as interdependent components rather than isolated strands of work.

3.3 Functional role of the partner institutions

The partner institutions contribute to EMPOANDES through differentiated but complementary functions. Higher education institutions constitute the core environment for curricular development, course implementation, staff training, and the integration of project outputs into teaching and learning structures. Their role is central to the project's capacity-building rationale, since EMPOANDES is explicitly framed as an Erasmus+ initiative aimed at strengthening higher education through curricula, training, and open educational resources aligned with climate services



competencies. Within this framework, university partners are expected to act both as beneficiaries of institutional strengthening and as active co-developers of the project's academic outputs.

The participation of national meteorological and hydrological services provides a second essential layer of contribution. Given that EMPOANDES is oriented towards climate services, adaptation, and the practical use of climate information, the presence of operational climate institutions is a structural asset for the consortium. Their inclusion supports the technical grounding of the project and strengthens the connection between education and real-world climate information systems, tools, and decision-support environments. In parallel, CIIFEN's participation adds a regional climate research and coordination dimension that is particularly valuable for a project operating across local, national, and regional scales. Taken together, these partners help ensure that the project does not remain confined to academic design alone but remains connected to applied climate-service practice and regional relevance.

In operational terms, the NMHS partners, notably INAMHI, SENAMHI and IDEAM and DMC as Associated Partner, contribute to EMPOANDES not only as institutional beneficiaries but also as technical-operational actors that help connect educational development with real climate-service practice. Their role includes contributing operational knowledge to the diagnosis of needs, validating the relevance of competencies and course content against service provision realities, supporting staff capacity-building activities, and providing feedback on the usability of the materials, tools and pilot actions developed under the project. This contribution is particularly important for ensuring that project outputs remain aligned with national climate-information systems, institutional workflows and decision-support needs in the Andean region.

3.4 Shared responsibilities and collaborative logic

Although individual responsibilities are further specified through work package leadership, task allocation, and internal management arrangements, the consortium as a whole shares responsibility for the project's coherent implementation. This includes contributing to the achievement of project objectives, participating in governance and coordination processes, supporting the preparation and review of



project outputs, and ensuring that project activities are implemented in a way that is institutionally embedded and consistent with the overall capacity-building rationale. In this sense, EMPOANDES relies on a collaborative model in which institutional diversity is not incidental but constitutive of the project design itself.

The collaborative logic of the consortium is particularly important because EMPOANDES is explicitly needs-driven, competency-based, and oriented towards open and sustainable educational development. These characteristics require active interaction among academic partners, technical institutions, and regional actors throughout the project lifecycle. The consortium is therefore not simply a formal grouping of beneficiaries, but the operational mechanism through which sectoral needs are identified, educational responses are developed, staff capacities are strengthened, pilot actions are tested, and project results are disseminated. The value of the consortium lies precisely in this ability to connect knowledge production, institutional implementation, and user-oriented climate service development within a shared project framework.



4. Governance Structure

4.1 General governance approach

The governance structure of EMPOANDES has been designed to ensure effective coordination, clear allocation of responsibilities, timely decision-making, and appropriate interaction between strategic, operational, and communication-related functions. Given the scope of the project, the diversity of participating institutions, and the combination of academic, technical, and dissemination-oriented activities, the project requires a governance model capable of supporting both institutional oversight and day-to-day implementation.

The governance framework is therefore based on a limited number of clearly defined bodies, each with a specific role within the overall management architecture. This structure aims to facilitate transparency, internal accountability, and efficient coordination across work packages, while ensuring that project implementation remains aligned with the approved objectives, timeline, and expected results. In operational terms, the governance model combines a general strategic and representative level, an executive coordination level, and a dedicated structure for communication and dissemination follow-up.

EMPOANDES' governance approach is guided by four main principles. First, governance should support implementation rather than create unnecessary administrative burden. Second, decision-making should remain as close as possible to the appropriate operational level, while ensuring adequate escalation routes for strategic or cross-cutting matters. Third, governance should promote shared ownership of project progress among partners, while respecting the specific responsibilities of the coordinator and work package leaders. Fourth, the governance structure should ensure coherence between internal management, quality assurance, and external communication.

4.2 General Assembly

The General Assembly is the project's broadest governance body and serves as its main representative and strategic forum. It brings together the participating partner



institutions and provides a space in which the project's overall progress can be reviewed, major implementation issues discussed, and the project's general direction confirmed when required. As such, the General Assembly plays an important role in ensuring collective ownership of the project and maintaining institutional alignment across the consortium.

Its main functions include reviewing the overall implementation of the project, assessing progress in relation to objectives and work plan, discussing major cross-work-package issues, and validating strategic orientations when such validation is required at consortium level. The General Assembly also provides a forum for the discussion of major risks, delays, inter-institutional coordination matters, and any relevant issue affecting the project as a whole. In this respect, its role is not limited to formal endorsement but extends to maintaining a shared understanding of project evolution and supporting strategic coherence across the partnership.

As a general principle, the General Assembly operates as a deliberative and strategic body rather than as a mechanism for routine management. Day-to-day operational coordination is expected to take place through more agile structures, while the General Assembly provides broader oversight and a setting for collective discussion of major matters. Meetings of the General Assembly are expected to take place at key moments in the project lifecycle, including major consortium meetings and other occasions deemed necessary by the coordinator or by the project's governance needs.

4.3 Executive Board

The Executive Board is the main body responsible for the operational coordination and management follow-up of the project. It is conceived as the central executive structure through which implementation progress is monitored, coordination issues are addressed, internal follow-up is organised, and operational decisions are prepared and, where appropriate, adopted. The Executive Board, therefore, constitutes the core management forum for ensuring that project activities progress in a timely, coherent, and coordinated manner.

Its role includes monitoring the implementation of work packages and deliverables, supporting coordination between the project coordinator and the work package



leaders, reviewing upcoming deadlines and internal responsibilities, identifying implementation bottlenecks, and proposing corrective actions where needed. The Executive Board is also expected to contribute to the preparation of strategic matters that may later require discussion at the General Assembly level. In practice, it serves as the link between the broader governance architecture and the practical needs of project execution.

The Executive Board is especially relevant in a project such as EMPOANDES because the successful implementation of the project depends not only on institutional participation, but also on regular follow-up, anticipatory coordination, and the ability to resolve issues before they affect delivery. For that reason, the Executive Board is expected to meet more regularly than the General Assembly and to operate as the primary forum for project management dialogue among the institutions with direct coordination responsibilities.

The next table lists the members of the EMPOANDES Executive Board.

Table 3. . Members of EMPOANDES EB as of June od 2026

Member	Partner	Country	Role
Enric Aguilar Anfrons	URV	Spain	Project Coordinator, WP 1 Leader
Jon Xavier Olano Pozo	URV	Spain	Project Manager, WP6 Leader
Pier Luigi Maquilón Lipari	CIIFEN	Ecuador	WP2 Leader
José Mamami	UNAP	Perú	Wp3 Leader
Erasmus Rodríguez	UNAL	Colombia	WP4 Leader, UNAL team leader
Jorge Espinosa	UCE	Ecuador	Wp 5 Leader, UCE team leader
Athanasios Argyrou	UPAT	Greece	UPAT team leader
Hanna K. Lappalainen	UHEL	Finland	UHEL team leader
Rasa Zalakeviciute	UDLA	Ecuador	UDLA team leader



Luis Pineda	YT	Ecuador	YT team leader
Jhon Jairo Barona	UNIVALLE	Colombia	UNIVALLE team leader
Weidi Flores	UNALM	Peru	UNALM team leader
Roberto Alfaro	UNAP	Peru	UNAP representative
David Galarza	INAMHI	Ecuador	INAMHI team leader
Paola Bernal	IDEAM	Colombia	IDEAM team leader
Giovana Egas	SENAMHI	Peru	SENAMHI team leader
Felipe Costa	CIIFEN	Ecuador	CIIFEN team leader
Jorge del Rio	UC (Associated)	Chile	UC team leader
Claudia Villaroel	DMC (Associated)	Chile	DMC team leader

4.4 Communication Board

The Communication Board is the governance body specifically dedicated to communication, dissemination, visibility, and related coordination matters under the project. Its creation reflects the importance of WP6 within EMPOANDES and the need to ensure that communication activities are not treated as an isolated or purely formal requirement, but rather as an integrated component of the project's implementation and impact pathway.

The role of the Communication Board is to support coordination on communication planning, dissemination priorities, visibility requirements, and the use of common communication materials and project identity. It provides a structured space for discussing communication outputs, campaign opportunities, institutional dissemination channels, dissemination timing, and the coherence of public-facing messages across partners. It also facilitates interaction between WP6 leadership and the communication focal points or institutional representatives involved in dissemination-related tasks.

In practical terms, the Communication Board helps ensure that dissemination efforts are planned, documented, and aligned with project progress. It also supports



consistency in the public presentation of the project and helps reduce fragmentation in communication practices across institutions. This is particularly relevant in a consortium in which partners operate within different institutional environments and communication cultures. The Communication Board therefore contributes not only to visibility, but also to the orderly governance of dissemination activities and to the traceability of communication-related actions.

The Communication Board was established with volunteer representatives from the organisations participating in the project, and its composition as of June 2026 is as follows:

Member	Partner	Country	Role
Jon Xavier Olano	URV	Spain	WP6 Leader, Project Manager
Maria Martínez	URV	SPAIN	URV-IURESCAT social media manager
Angela Diaz	CIIFEN	Ecuador	CIIFEN social communication manager
Hanna K. Lappalainen	UHEL	Finland	UHEL Team Leader
Tii Suokivi	UHEL	Finland	ACCC Project coordinator
Athanassios Argiriou	UPAT	Greece	UPAT Team leader
Cristina Valdivielso	INAMHI	Ecuador	INAMHI technician
Francisco Luis Hernandez Torres	UNIVALLE	Colombia	UNIVALLE team member
Ellana Amparito Boada Cahueñas	Yachay Tech	Ecuador	YT team member



4.5 Interaction between governance bodies

The governance bodies of EMPOANDES are complementary and are intended to function as an articulated system rather than as separate or parallel structures. The General Assembly provides the broad strategic and representative forum. The Executive Board ensures operational coordination and follow-up. The Communication Board focuses on dissemination and visibility-related governance. Together, these bodies support the full range of governance needs required by the project.

Their interaction should be guided by functional clarity and proportionality. Matters of routine implementation and operational follow-up should normally be addressed at Executive Board level. Matters relating specifically to dissemination and communication planning should be channelled through the Communication Board, with appropriate reporting or alignment with the broader management structure where necessary. Strategic matters, major cross-cutting issues, and questions requiring broad consortium-level discussion should be brought to the General Assembly.

This interaction model is intended to ensure both efficiency and coherence. It avoids concentrating all governance functions in a single body, while also preventing dispersion or duplication of responsibilities. In this way, the governance structure of EMPOANDES supports a balanced model in which strategic oversight, operational management, and communication coordination are each addressed through an appropriate institutional mechanism.

4.6 Decision-making logic within the governance structure

As a general rule, EMPOANDES governance bodies should seek to operate through consultation and consensus. This approach is consistent with the consortium's collaborative nature and the need to preserve a constructive, solution-oriented working environment among partners. Wherever possible, decisions should be prepared in advance, supported by adequate information, and documented through meeting records or internal follow-up tools.



At the same time, the governance structure should allow for timely decisions when operational needs so require. For this reason, routine implementation decisions should normally be handled at the most appropriate management level, without overburdening broader governance forums. Escalation to a higher governance level should occur when a matter has strategic implications, affects multiple work packages or partners, poses significant implementation risk, or requires institutional endorsement beyond ordinary operational follow-up.

This governance logic reinforces the project's overall management model. It supports efficiency in execution, clarity in responsibility, and transparency in the handling of relevant issues, while remaining proportionate to the scale and complexity of the project.

The governance structure outlined in this section establishes the strategic and institutional basis for the implementation of EMPOANDES. Its effectiveness, however, depends on its translation into clear operational procedures that guide the day-to-day management of the project. The following section therefore explains how the functions of the governance bodies are reflected in practical management arrangements, including coordination processes, communication routines, meeting organisation, follow-up procedures and the handling of implementation issues. This ensures continuity between governance oversight and the operational execution of the action.



5. Project Management Procedures

5.1 General management approach

The management of EMPOANDES is based on a coordinated, partner-oriented and implementation-focused approach intended to ensure that activities are carried out in a timely, coherent and accountable manner throughout the project lifecycle. The management procedures are designed to support the effective execution of work packages and deliverables, while also ensuring that the consortium can respond appropriately to operational challenges, emerging needs and adjustments required during implementation.

This management approach combines central coordination by the coordinating institution with distributed responsibility across work package leaders and partner institutions. In practice, this means that project implementation is not managed through a purely centralised model, but through a structured division of roles in which each partner contributes within its area of responsibility while remaining aligned with the project's common objectives, timelines and procedures. The purpose of the management procedures described below is to ensure that this distributed structure operates in an orderly and transparent way.

The procedures are guided by the principles of proportionality, traceability, responsiveness and shared responsibility. Proportionality means that management arrangements should be sufficiently robust to support implementation without creating unnecessary administrative complexity. Traceability means that relevant decisions, exchanges, outputs and follow-up actions should be documented in an accessible and verifiable manner. Responsiveness means that emerging issues should be identified and addressed in due time. Shared responsibility means that implementation quality depends on the coordinated contribution of all partners, not only on the coordinator or governance bodies.

5.2 Role of the coordinator in day-to-day management

The coordinating institution is responsible for the overall day-to-day management of the project at consortium level. This includes ensuring general continuity of



implementation, monitoring progress across work packages, facilitating communication among partners, supporting compliance with agreed procedures and timelines, and maintaining an overview of project-wide risks, bottlenecks and reporting needs. In addition, the coordinator acts as the main organisational reference point for the consortium and ensures that operational management remains aligned with the project's approved framework.

In practical terms, the coordinator supports implementation by organising follow-up processes, maintaining contact with work package leaders, preparing or supporting the preparation of governance meetings, consolidating project-wide information, and helping anticipate upcoming deadlines or coordination needs. Where implementation issues arise, the coordinator is expected to promote timely clarification and, when necessary, initiate appropriate escalation to the relevant governance body. The coordinator also has a facilitating role in ensuring coherence across work packages, especially when activities, outputs or timelines are interdependent.

This role should not be interpreted as replacing the responsibilities of work package leaders or partner institutions. Rather, the coordinator ensures overall consistency and continuity, while implementation remains a shared responsibility across the consortium. The effectiveness of day-to-day management therefore depends both on central coordination and on timely and reliable engagement from all partners.

5.3 Role of work package leaders in implementation follow-up

Work package leaders are responsible for guiding and monitoring the implementation of the activities falling within their respective work packages. Their role includes planning work package-level actions, coordinating contributions from the partners involved, monitoring progress against expected timelines and outputs, identifying deviations or operational challenges, and reporting relevant information to the coordinator and, where appropriate, to the Executive Board.

As part of this function, each work package leader is expected to maintain a clear overview of ongoing and upcoming tasks within the work package, ensure that partner contributions are mobilised in due time, and promote internal coherence between tasks, outputs and deliverables. Work package leaders also play a key role



in ensuring that project activities remain connected to the approved objectives and to the broader logic of the work plan, rather than being managed as isolated tasks. Where difficulties arise within a work package, the work package leader is expected to act as the first coordination point for clarification, reorganisation or mitigation, in close contact with the coordinator where necessary. This makes work package leadership a central layer in the operational structure of the project, linking partner-level implementation with project-wide management.

5.4 Role of partner institutions in implementation

All partner institutions are responsible for contributing actively and reliably to the implementation of the tasks, outputs and project processes to which they are assigned. This includes participating in meetings and coordination exchanges, delivering agreed inputs within the established timeframes, reviewing draft outputs when required, and ensuring that their institutional contributions are technically sound, internally validated where relevant, and consistent with the broader objectives of the project.

In addition to their task-specific obligations, partners are expected to maintain adequate internal coordination within their own institutions, especially where several individuals or units are involved in the same project component. This internal organisation is important to ensure continuity, clarity of communication and timely responses to project needs. Partners are also expected to notify the relevant work package leader and the coordinator in due time if any delay, constraint or institutional issue may affect their contribution to implementation.

The management model of EMPOANDES assumes active institutional engagement rather than passive participation. For that reason, partners are not only recipients of coordination requests, but operational actors responsible for helping sustain the rhythm, quality and coherence of implementation across the consortium.

5.5 Planning and operational follow-up

Project implementation should be supported by regular planning and follow-up processes at both project-wide and work package level. These processes are intended to ensure that activities are scheduled in a realistic manner, that upcoming



milestones and deliverables are anticipated with sufficient lead time, and that the consortium maintains an updated understanding of implementation status throughout the project lifecycle.

At project-wide level, operational follow-up should include periodic review of timelines, deliverable preparation, meeting planning, inter-work-package dependencies and any other issue with potential implications for overall progress. At work package level, follow-up should include review of task implementation, partner contributions, draft outputs, internal coordination needs and potential delays. The purpose of these processes is not only to monitor completed work, but also to identify in advance the actions required to secure future implementation steps.

Where appropriate, planning and follow-up may be supported by internal work plans, tracking tables, action lists or shared calendars. The specific tool may vary according to the nature of the activity, but the underlying requirement remains the same: implementation should be planned proactively and followed up through identifiable and documented mechanisms.

5.6 Internal communication in support of management

Effective internal communication is a core condition for the sound management of EMPOANDES. Given the multi-partner nature of the project and the interdependence between work packages, internal communication must be organised through clear channels, defined responsibilities and predictable response practices. The objective is to ensure that project-related information is transmitted in a timely, traceable and operationally useful manner across the consortium.

As a general rule, **email shall remain the preferred and official channel for formal project communication**, especially for matters related to deliverables, deadlines, approvals, requests for contribution, circulation of documents for review, validation of outputs, and any exchange requiring traceability. Meetings may be used for discussion and coordination, but relevant decisions, follow-up actions and agreed responsibilities should subsequently be reflected in written form.

The consortium may use WhatsApp or equivalent instant messaging tools for rapid operational coordination, reminders, urgent practical exchanges, and day-to-day follow-up where speed of communication is helpful. However, such channels shall be



considered complementary and not a substitute for formal communication. Any decision, instruction, approval, deadline-related commitment or information of relevance for project management, reporting or traceability should be confirmed by email and, where relevant, reflected in the shared project documentation.

The consortium shall also use the shared project repository and collaborative working environment as the common reference space for document storage, version control and access to key project materials. This repository shall contain, as appropriate, governance documents, templates, work package files, draft and final deliverables, milestone evidence, meeting records, dissemination materials, and monitoring-related documentation. Documents should be organised in a consistent folder structure and named in a clear and traceable manner. The shared project repository is already accessible to all consortium partners via the EMPOANDES workspace on the URV Microsoft Teams platform and the associated OneDrive linked to the URV EMPOANDES account. Access details have been shared with the consortium, and these spaces serve as the common reference points for collaborative work and document storage.

Responsibility for maintaining internal communication flows is distributed across the project structure. The coordinator is responsible for project-wide communication related to overall management, governance, reporting, major deadlines and formal interactions affecting the consortium as a whole. Work package leaders are responsible for communication within their work packages, including follow-up of tasks, requests for contributions, circulation of drafts and progress-related exchanges. Partners are responsible for ensuring timely responses, internal coordination within their institutions, and the proper transmission of project-relevant information to the appropriate level.

To support timely implementation, the consortium should aim at reasonable response times for internal communication. As a general operational reference, partners should acknowledge or respond to management-related requests within a reasonable timeframe, and in any case with sufficient anticipation to avoid affecting deliverables, milestones, events or reporting processes. More urgent requests linked to imminent deadlines or implementation risks should receive priority attention.



Meeting documentation forms part of the internal communication system. Agendas should be circulated in advance where appropriate, and meetings with management, governance or work package relevance should result in brief minutes or action notes identifying the main issues discussed, decisions taken, responsibilities assigned and expected follow-up. These records should be stored in the shared repository and remain accessible to the relevant actors.

In this way, internal communication and document management are treated not as secondary administrative functions, but as operational components of project implementation, essential for coordination, traceability and timely delivery.

The table below summarises the main internal communication channels of EMPOANDES and their intended use within the project management system.

Table 4. Internal communication channels and uses

Channel	Main use	Status
Email	Formal communication, requests for contribution, circulation of drafts, approvals, deadline-related exchanges, validation of outputs and any communication requiring traceability	Preferred and official channel
WhatsApp	Rapid coordination, reminders, urgent practical exchanges and day-to-day operational follow-up	Complementary channel; relevant decisions or commitments should be confirmed by email
Shared repository / collaborative workspace	Storage of project documents, draft and final deliverables, milestone evidence, templates, minutes, dissemination materials and monitoring files	Official document reference space
Meetings (online/presential)	Discussion, coordination, clarification of issues and follow-up of actions	Operational coordination tool; outcomes should be reflected in written records

5.7 Meetings as management instruments

Meetings constitute one of the main instruments for project management and operational coordination. Their function is not limited to information sharing, but



includes planning, decision preparation, progress review, clarification of responsibilities and collective follow-up of agreed actions. To be effective as management tools, meetings should be prepared in advance, focused on clearly defined objectives and followed by documented action points where appropriate.

Different types of meetings may serve different management purposes, including overall coordination meetings, governance meetings, work package meetings, bilateral coordination exchanges and ad hoc problem-solving meetings. Regardless of their format, meetings should contribute to implementation by clarifying next steps, identifying outstanding issues and reinforcing alignment among those involved. When a meeting produces relevant operational or strategic decisions, these should be reflected in meeting records or internal follow-up tools.

The use of meetings should remain proportionate and purpose driven. Meetings should support implementation and collective coordination, not replace them. Their frequency and format should therefore respond to actual management needs and to the specific rhythm of project activities.

5.8 Management of delays and implementation bottlenecks

The project management procedures of EMPOANDES are intended to support early identification and timely handling of delays, bottlenecks or other implementation difficulties. Such issues may arise at the level of individual tasks, partner contributions, work packages, deliverables or cross-cutting coordination processes. The management system should therefore ensure that these issues are not only detected but also communicated and addressed before they create broader impact on project delivery.

As a general rule, the partner or actor first identifying a delay or bottleneck should inform the relevant work package leader and, where appropriate, the coordinator as soon as reasonably possible. This early communication is essential to enable mitigation measures, workload redistribution, adjustment of sequencing, reinforcement of follow-up, or escalation to the appropriate governance level if needed. Delayed notification significantly reduces the consortium's capacity to respond effectively and should therefore be avoided.



The handling of implementation bottlenecks should follow a pragmatic and solution-oriented approach. The first objective should be to restore progress through measures that remain proportionate to the nature of the issue. However, where the difficulty has broader implications for timing, quality, interdependence between work packages or institutional participation, the issue should be addressed through the relevant governance and monitoring mechanisms.

5.9 Documentation and traceability of management processes

A core requirement of the management system is that relevant processes and decisions remain traceable. Traceability supports continuity, accountability and internal clarity, and is particularly important in a multi-partner project where responsibility and information are distributed across institutions and work packages. For this reason, key management elements should be documented in a sufficiently structured manner.

This includes, as appropriate, meeting agendas and minutes, action lists, deliverable planning records, updated responsibility allocations, shared calendars, follow-up exchanges on implementation issues, and records of decisions taken by governance bodies or management actors. Traceability does not imply excessive formalisation of every exchange, but it does require that the project maintain a reliable documentary basis for its main management and coordination processes.

Adequate documentation also supports quality assurance, internal review, reporting and audit readiness. It enables the consortium to reconstruct how decisions were taken, how issues were handled, and how implementation progressed over time. In this sense, documentation is not an administrative afterthought, but a structural component of sound project management.

5.10 Relationship between management procedures and quality assurance

The management procedures described in this Handbook are closely connected to the project's quality assurance and monitoring framework. Good management is a precondition for quality implementation, just as quality assurance mechanisms depend on orderly coordination, clear responsibilities, timely



follow-up and documented evidence. For that reason, project management and quality management should be understood as mutually reinforcing dimensions of the same implementation system.

In practical terms, management procedures support quality by helping ensure that activities are planned in advance, that contributions are reviewed and consolidated appropriately, that issues are detected early, and that project outputs are prepared through structured internal processes. Conversely, quality monitoring helps management by identifying risks, weaknesses, delays or inconsistencies that require action. The connection between these two dimensions will be further developed in the Quality Management and Monitoring Plan, but it should already be recognised as a central feature of the overall project management model.

5.11 Respectful Participation and Internal Concerns Handling

EMPOANDES shall be implemented in a manner that promotes respectful interaction, equal treatment, inclusive participation and transparency in project-related processes. All partners are expected to contribute to a working environment consistent with these principles across meetings, trainings, workshops, pilot actions and other collaborative activities.

Where concern arises in relation to discriminatory treatment, exclusion, inappropriate conduct, or lack of transparency affecting project implementation, the matter should be communicated through the relevant operational channel whenever feasible. If the issue cannot be resolved at that level, it may be raised with the coordinator, who will assess the matter and, where appropriate, refer it to the relevant governance body for follow-up.

Concerns shall be handled with due discretion, proportionality and respect for all parties involved. The purpose of this procedure is to support a safe, inclusive and professionally sound implementation environment throughout the project lifecycle. This procedure operationalises the EU Fundamental Values approach further described in section 10.6



6. Work Package Implementation and Reporting

6.1 General approach to work package implementation

The implementation of EMPOANDES is structured through six interrelated work packages that together translate the project objectives into coordinated activities, outputs and results. Work package implementation is based on the principle that each work package constitutes a distinct operational domain, while at the same time remaining functionally connected to the overall logic of the project. For this reason, implementation should combine work package-level responsibility with continuous cross-project coordination.

Each work package is expected to progress according to the approved work plan, including its objectives, tasks, expected outputs, milestones and deliverables. At the same time, implementation should remain sufficiently adaptable to accommodate justified operational adjustments, provided that these do not alter the overall objectives, expected results or compliance obligations of the project. The purpose of the work package implementation framework is therefore to ensure both fidelity to the approved plan and responsiveness to implementation needs.

Work package implementation should also be understood as a collective process rather than as a series of isolated institutional contributions. Although leadership and task allocation are distributed, the achievement of work package results depends on timely interaction among partners, coordinated sequencing of activities, and a shared understanding of responsibilities and deadlines. This requires regular follow-up, structured reporting and adequate communication between the actors involved.

6.2 Responsibilities of work package leaders

Each work package leader is responsible for guiding the implementation of the corresponding work package and for ensuring that its internal activities are organised in a coherent, timely and results-oriented manner. This includes overseeing the progress of tasks, coordinating the contributions of participating partners, monitoring timelines, promoting internal consistency between outputs, and acting as the main reference point for the coordinator in relation to that work package.



In practical terms, work package leaders are expected to maintain an updated overview of the implementation status of the work package, including completed actions, ongoing activities, upcoming deadlines, pending partner contributions, draft outputs and any issue that may affect progress. They are also responsible for facilitating internal exchanges among the partners involved in the work package and for ensuring that relevant information reaches the project coordinator in a timely and sufficiently structured manner.

Where a work package includes deliverables, milestones, training actions, pilot activities or other outputs requiring coordinated preparation, the work package leader is expected to ensure that preparation begins with sufficient anticipation and that the relevant partners are mobilised in due time. In this sense, work package leadership includes both substantive and organisational responsibility. It is not limited to technical expertise in the subject matter but also requires active management of the implementation process.

6.3 Responsibilities of contributing partners within work packages

Partners contributing to a given work package are responsible for carrying out their assigned tasks in accordance with the agreed scope, schedule and quality expectations of the project. Their responsibilities include providing technical or institutional inputs, participating in relevant coordination exchanges, reviewing documents when requested, supporting the preparation of outputs and deliverables, and informing the work package leader of any issue that may affect timing, content or feasibility.

Contributing partners are expected to engage proactively in the work package activities to which they are assigned. This means not only responding to direct requests but also maintaining sufficient internal follow-up to ensure that their contributions remain timely and aligned with the evolving needs of implementation. Where a partner has a substantive role in a task or output, it is expected to contribute actively to its preparation, refinement and internal validation.

In addition, each partner should ensure appropriate internal organisation so that project responsibilities are not dependent on a single communication point or delayed due to internal uncertainty. This is particularly important in activities



involving educational design, staff training, piloting, dissemination or institutional coordination, where continuity of contribution may affect the overall pace of implementation. Partners should therefore treat work package participation as an organised institutional commitment rather than as an individual or ad hoc contribution.

6.4 Coordination between work packages

Although each work package has its own objectives and implementation pathway, the project requires regular coordination between work packages in order to preserve overall coherence. Several activities and results depend on sequential or parallel interaction between work packages, particularly where diagnostic work informs educational design, where developed materials feed into training or piloting, or where dissemination activities depend on progress in other areas of the project. For this reason, work package implementation should not be managed in isolation. Work package leaders, in coordination with the project coordinator, should identify relevant dependencies between work packages and ensure that these are reflected in planning, communication and reporting processes. Where necessary, specific coordination exchanges should be organised in order to align timelines, clarify interfaces or prevent duplication of effort.

Cross-work-package coordination is particularly important for EMPOANDES because the project combines management, needs analysis, curricula development, staff capacity building, piloting and dissemination within a single implementation logic. Delays or inconsistencies in one work package may therefore affect progress in others. The reporting system described below is intended in part to support this coordination function by making implementation status visible beyond the immediate work package level.

6.5 Planning and monitoring at work package level

Each work package should be supported by a basic planning and monitoring process that allows the consortium to track implementation in a structured manner. This does not necessarily require complex management tools, but it does require that the main



work package actions, deadlines, responsibilities and pending steps are sufficiently visible to those involved in implementation and follow-up.

Work package-level planning should identify the main phases of implementation, anticipated outputs, partner roles, expected timing and any critical dependencies. Monitoring should then assess progress against these planned elements and identify whether implementation remains on track, whether adjustments are needed, or whether specific issues require attention from the coordinator or governance bodies. In this sense, monitoring is not limited to retrospective reporting but also supports forward-looking management.

Where relevant, work package monitoring may include internal action lists, task trackers, annotated timelines, progress summaries or shared review tools. The specific instrument may vary according to the nature of the work package, but the underlying requirement remains that implementation can be followed in a sufficiently regular, transparent and documented manner.

6.6 Reporting lines

The reporting structure of EMPOANDES is designed to ensure that implementation-related information flows effectively from the level of tasks and activities to the level of project-wide coordination and governance. As a general rule, partners report operational progress, pending issues and relevant contributions to the corresponding work package leader. Work package leaders, in turn, consolidate the relevant information and report it to the project coordinator and, where appropriate, to the Executive Board.

This reporting structure serves multiple purposes. First, it helps maintain a clear view of implementation status at work package level. Second, it supports project-wide oversight by enabling the coordinator to identify interdependencies, risks or delays that may not be visible from isolated task-level exchanges. Third, it contributes to internal accountability by clarifying who is expected to communicate what, to whom, and at what stage of the implementation process.

The reporting lines should remain sufficiently flexible to allow direct exchanges where necessary for efficient problem-solving or coordination. However, this flexibility should not undermine the general principle that work package leaders act



as the primary reporting interface for their respective implementation domains, while the coordinator maintains an integrated overview of project progress.

6.7 Periodicity and content of internal reporting

Internal reporting should take place with a frequency that is proportionate to the rhythm and needs of implementation. Some activities may require relatively frequent follow-up, particularly when deliverables, pilot actions, training events or time-sensitive coordination tasks are approaching. Other activities may require more periodic status updates. In all cases, reporting should be sufficiently regular to support anticipation and management, rather than limited to end-stage summaries. The content of internal reporting should normally include, as relevant, the status of ongoing tasks, completed actions, pending contributions, upcoming deadlines, draft outputs under preparation, risks or delays identified, support required from other partners or from coordination, and any decision or clarification needed. Reporting should be concise enough to remain usable, but specific enough to support actual management follow-up.

Where appropriate, internal reporting may also include short analytical observations regarding implementation quality, partner engagement, feasibility of upcoming steps or the need for adjustment in sequencing or workload distribution. This helps ensure that reporting is not treated as a purely descriptive exercise, but as a management instrument linked to action and decision-making.

6.8 Reporting in relation to deliverables and milestones

A specific dimension of work package reporting concerns deliverables and milestones. Because these represent formal implementation commitments within the project, their preparation requires enhanced visibility and more structured follow-up. Work package leaders responsible for deliverables or milestone-related activities should therefore ensure that reporting on these elements begins sufficiently in advance of the formal deadline and continues through the drafting, review and finalisation phases.

Reporting related to deliverables and milestones should make explicit the current preparation status, lead drafting responsibility, partner inputs expected, internal



review needs, anticipated timeline for consolidation, and any issue that may affect submission readiness. This is particularly important where the output depends on contributions from several partners or where content development and formal submission processes are closely linked.

Early and structured reporting on deliverables and milestones is essential to prevent avoidable delays and to ensure that the project retains adequate time for internal quality review, coordination and validation. For this reason, such reporting should be treated as a priority management function within the relevant work package and at project-wide level.

6.9 Escalation of implementation issues through reporting

The reporting framework also serves as the primary mechanism for identifying and escalating implementation issues. When a task, output, timeline or institutional contribution encounters a problem that cannot be resolved at the immediate operational level, that issue should be made visible through the reporting line without delay. The purpose of this is not only to record the difficulty, but to enable timely intervention, mitigation or escalation.

Issues may relate to delays, lack of clarity in responsibilities, insufficient partner response, technical challenges, sequencing problems, or broader organisational constraints affecting implementation. Where possible, the initial reporting of an issue should include a brief indication of its nature, its likely implications, and any immediate action already taken or proposed. This helps the work package leader and coordinator assess the situation more effectively and determine the appropriate next step.

Escalation through reporting should be understood as a normal and constructive element of project management, not as an exceptional or negative event. In a multi-partner project, difficulties are not in themselves unusual; the main management concern is whether they are identified early, communicated clearly and handled in a timely and proportionate way.



6.10 Contribution of reporting to project coherence and accountability

A well-functioning reporting system contributes directly to the coherence, accountability and resilience of the project. It creates a shared evidence base regarding implementation progress, helps ensure that responsibilities remain visible, supports collective anticipation of deadlines and reinforces the connection between day-to-day activities and the strategic objectives of the project.

From an accountability perspective, reporting also enables the consortium to demonstrate that implementation is being actively monitored and managed, rather than passively observed. This is particularly important for a project such as EMPOANDES, where the diversity of actors and activities requires a structured yet workable approach to follow-up. Reporting helps transform distributed implementation into an intelligible and governable process.

For these reasons, internal reporting should be regarded as a substantive component of project management and not merely as a formal requirement. Its value lies not in volume or complexity, but in its capacity to support informed coordination, early action and consistent implementation across the consortium.



D1.1 Project Handbook

Table 5. Internal reporting and escalation arrangements

Reporting element	Periodicity	Responsible actor	Format	Internal deadline	Main recipient	Escalation route
WP implementation status update	Regular / ongoing	WP Leader	Short written update or monitoring note	Before each internal coordination checkpoint	Coordinator	Executive Board if delays, bottlenecks or cross-WP impacts arise
Task-level delay or implementation issue	As needed	Responsible partner / WP Leader	Email notification or short issue note	Without undue delay after identification	WP Leader and/or Coordinator	Executive Board if the issue affects timing, deliverables or several partners
Deliverable preparation status	Reinforced near deadlines	Drafting lead / WP Leader	Deliverable tracker and short status note	At least 2–4 weeks before internal review and again before final validation	Coordinator	Executive Board if risk of delay or incomplete partner input persists
Milestone achievement confirmation	At milestone stage	WP Leader	Short verification note with supporting evidence	Before the milestone due month closes	Coordinator	Executive Board if achievement is delayed, partial or insufficiently evidenced
Training / workshop / pilot implementation summary	After each relevant activity	Responsible partner / WP Leader	Activity summary with agenda, attendance, materials and feedback	Within 10 working days after the activity	WP Leader and Coordinator	Coordinator first; Executive Board if the issue affects continuity or quality
Evidence and documentation readiness check	Periodic; reinforced before reporting	WP Leader with contributing partners	Evidence checklist / repository review	Before each reporting consolidation point	Coordinator	Executive Board if major documentation gaps affect reporting readiness
Cross-WP coordination issue	As needed	WP Leader / Coordinator	Short coordination note or email	As soon as dependency becomes visible	Coordinator	Executive Board if sequencing or coherence across WPs is affected
Project-level implementation summary	Periodic	Coordinator	Consolidated project progress summary	Before Executive Board meetings and before formal reporting steps	Executive Board	General Assembly where broader strategic implications arise



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

ERASMUS-EDU-2025-CBHE - EMPOANDES - 101236788



7. Deliverables and Milestones Management

7.1 General approach

Deliverables and milestones are key instruments for monitoring the implementation of EMPOANDES and for assessing progress against the approved work plan. Their management must therefore be timely, coordinated and clearly documented. The objective is to ensure that all formal outputs are prepared with sufficient anticipation, internally reviewed, and submitted in accordance with the project timeline and quality requirements.

7.2 Responsibilities

Responsibility for each deliverable or milestone lies primarily with the corresponding work package leader or designated lead partner. This lead responsibility includes coordinating the drafting process, requesting and consolidating partner contributions, monitoring progress, and ensuring that the output is ready for internal review and final validation.

Contributing partners are responsible for providing the agreed inputs within the required timeframe and with the necessary level of quality and completeness. The coordinator supports the overall process by monitoring upcoming deadlines, facilitating follow-up where needed, and ensuring consistency at project level.

7.3 Planning and preparation

The preparation of deliverables and milestones should begin sufficiently in advance of the formal deadline. Internal planning should identify the drafting lead, the partners expected to contribute, the internal review period, and the target date for final consolidation. This forward planning is necessary to reduce the risk of late preparation and to ensure that adequate time is available for quality review.

7.4 Internal review and validation

Before submission, each deliverable should undergo an internal review process. This review should assess the completeness, coherence and quality of the document, as



well as its alignment with the objectives and scope of the corresponding work package. Where relevant, comments from contributing partners and the coordinator should be incorporated before final validation.

Milestones, although generally lighter in format, should also be internally confirmed before being considered achieved. Their status should be supported by clear evidence and documented through the appropriate internal follow-up mechanisms.

7.5 Submission and record-keeping

Once validated, deliverables are finalised for submission according to the project procedures. The final version should be stored in the agreed project repository together with the relevant supporting documentation, including draft history or review records where appropriate. This ensures traceability and supports both internal management and future reporting needs.

7.6 Management of delays

Any risk of delay affecting a deliverable or milestone should be communicated as early as possible to the relevant work package leader and to the coordinator. Early notification is essential in order to assess the situation, define corrective measures and, where necessary, escalate the issue through the project governance structure. The management of delays should follow a preventive and solution-oriented approach, with the aim of protecting overall project implementation.

7.7 Internal timeline for deliverables and milestones

To ensure sufficient time for consolidation, quality review and final validation, all deliverables in EMPOANDES shall follow a common internal preparation timeline, unless the specific nature of the output requires a different arrangement agreed in advance.

As a general rule, the first complete draft of a deliverable should be available at least four weeks before the official submission deadline. This draft shall be circulated by the responsible lead partner or work package leader to the relevant contributing partners and reviewers.



The internal review phase should normally take place during the following two weeks, during which partners provide comments, corrections and suggested improvements. The drafting lead shall then consolidate the feedback received and prepare a revised near-final version.

The final internal version should be completed at least one week before the official submission deadline, allowing time for final validation by the coordinator and, where relevant, for final technical or editorial adjustments prior to submission.

As an operational reference, the internal sequence should therefore be understood as follows:

- T minus 3 weeks: first complete draft circulated
- T minus 1.5 weeks: internal review completed
- T minus 1 week: final validated version ready
- T: formal submission

For milestones, a lighter but equivalent logic shall apply. The responsible work package leader should ensure that the necessary supporting evidence is available and internally confirmed sufficiently in advance of the milestone due date, so that any gap in implementation or documentation can be addressed before formal reporting.

This internal timeline is intended to reduce last-minute preparation, strengthen the quality of deliverables, and ensure that submission is supported by an adequate review and validation process.

Table 6. Standard internal timeline for deliverables

Stage	Standard timing before official deadline	Main responsible actor
First complete draft	3 weeks before	Drafting lead / WP Leader
Internal review	Between 3 and 2 weeks before	Reviewing partners
Revised near-final version	1 week before	Drafting lead
Final validation	Within the final week before submission	Coordinator / responsible lead
Formal submission	Official deadline	Coordinator



8. Administrative and Financial Arrangements

8.1 General approach

The administrative and financial arrangements of EMPOANDES are intended to support orderly implementation, sound internal coordination, and appropriate traceability of project-related activities and records. These arrangements should facilitate the practical management of the project across the consortium while remaining fully aligned with the applicable programme rules, the Grant Agreement, the Consortium Agreement, and the internal procedures of the participating institutions.

Given the diversity of organisations involved in the project, administrative and financial management must be based on clarity of responsibility, timely communication, and adequate preservation of supporting documentation. The aim is not to create unnecessary internal complexity, but to ensure that the consortium can operate in a reliable and auditable manner throughout the project lifecycle.

8.2 Responsibilities

The coordinator has overall responsibility for project-level administrative and financial follow-up and acts as the main reference point for these matters within the consortium. This includes coordinating internal exchanges related to administrative and financial implementation, providing guidance where needed, monitoring compliance with agreed procedures, and maintaining the overall documentary basis required for project coordination and reporting.

Each partner institution remains responsible for the correct internal management of its own participation in the project. This includes organising the necessary institutional procedures, maintaining its own supporting records, ensuring that project-related actions are properly documented, and responding in due time to requests linked to project management, financial follow-up, reporting or audit preparation. Partners are also responsible for ensuring that their internal administrative practice remains consistent with the obligations associated with the project.



8.3 Internal procedures and communication flows

Administrative and financial exchanges within the consortium should follow clear and predictable internal communication flows. Requests for information, supporting documents, clarifications or confirmations should be addressed through the appropriate channels and with sufficient anticipation. This is particularly important in relation to reporting deadlines, project meetings, events, dissemination activities, and any project action requiring supporting evidence or internal traceability.

Where specific templates, reporting formats, or documentary requirements are established at project level, these should be applied consistently by all partners. Consistency in internal procedures contributes to smoother project management, reduces the risk of omissions or misunderstandings, and facilitates the consolidation of information at consortium level.

8.4 Documentation and record-keeping

All partners should ensure that the main administrative and financial records related to project implementation are properly archived and can be retrieved when needed. This includes, where relevant, records associated with meetings, travel, events, institutional approvals, contractual or organisational arrangements, dissemination actions, and other implementation-related activities requiring documentary evidence.

Documentation should be stored in a way that ensures accessibility, clarity and traceability. The level of internal detail may vary according to the nature of the activity and the institutional context of each partner, but the general principle remains that project implementation should be supported by an adequate documentary basis. Proper record-keeping is essential not only for financial and administrative management, but also for reporting, internal follow-up and audit readiness.

8.5 Lump Sum Justification under Erasmus+ Rules

8.5.1 General rationale

EMPOANDES is implemented under the Erasmus+ lump sum funding model applicable to Capacity Building in Higher Education. Under this model, the grant is awarded as a fixed amount and is linked to the proper implementation of the action rather than to the reimbursement of declared actual expenditure. For CBHE specifically, the Programme Guide states that the action follows a lump sum funding model and that the granting authority fixes the lump sum based on the estimated budget of the action, the evaluation result, the applicable funding rate, and the maximum grant set in the call. More generally, the Erasmus+ financial conditions define lump sums as financing not linked to costs, while the Commission's lump sum guidance explains that the fixed grant amount is paid if the project is implemented as set out in the Description of the Action (Annex 1 of the Grant Agreement).

8.5.2 What must be justified in practice

Under this model, justification is centred on implementation. This means that the consortium must be able to demonstrate that the work packages, activities, deliverables and outputs foreseen in the Grant Agreement and its annexes have actually been carried out in accordance with the approved project design. The Erasmus+ financial conditions specify that, for lump sums, the work must be properly implemented by the beneficiary in accordance with the grant agreement and that the deliverables or outputs must be achieved within the implementation period. The Commission's lump sum guidance further clarifies that project reviews assess implementation against the work described in Annex 1 and are based on deliverables, milestones and technical periodic reports, while not focusing on financial and budgetary aspects.

8.5.3 Relation between the proposal budget and implementation

Although implementation is not justified through actual-cost reporting, the original estimated budget remains relevant because it is the basis on which the lump sum was



fixed. In CBHE, applicants must prepare a detailed budget table organised in coherent work packages and describing the activities and deliverables covered by each work package, together with the estimated cost share per work package and per beneficiary. The Programme Guide also states that the lump sum for CBHE is fixed on the basis of that estimated project budget. In other words, the budget table is important as an *ex ante* construction tool for the grant, but once the grant is awarded, justification during implementation shifts from proving expenditure to proving delivery of the approved work.

8.5.4 What is not required under lump sum reporting

A key consequence of the lump sum model is that beneficiaries do not justify the grant by declaring real costs, invoices, payrolls, time sheets or other expenditure records for reimbursement purposes. The Commission's guidance expressly states that lump sum grants require no cost reporting and that beneficiaries have no contractual obligation to keep financial records for the project for the purpose of reporting actual costs or resources. The same guidance also notes that project reviews in lump sum grants do not focus on financial or budgetary aspects. For EMPOANDES, this means that the central justification logic is technical and operational rather than cost based.

8.5.5 What evidence should be retained

The absence of actual cost reporting does not remove the need for evidence. On the contrary, the consortium must maintain sufficient documentary evidence to demonstrate that the work described in DoA has been implemented. Since the assessment is based on work package completion, deliverables, milestones and technical reporting, the most relevant evidence is implementation evidence: draft and final deliverables, agendas and minutes, attendance records, training materials, curricular documents, pilot documentation, dissemination outputs, screenshots of online platforms or repositories, communication evidence, and any other records that substantiate that the approved activities were actually carried out. This is consistent with the Commission's guidance that monitoring and reviews focus on proper implementation of the action and with the portal reporting workflow, which



requires beneficiary contributions to the Technical Part and to the Status of Work Packages.

8.5.6 Periodic reporting and the role of work packages

In practical reporting terms, lump sum justification is articulated through the periodic reporting process in the Funding & Tenders Portal. According to the portal guidance, each beneficiary contributes to the Technical Part and to the Status of Work Packages, while the coordinator completes and includes the Status of Work Packages, indicating the completion status of each work package. The same guidance explains that, once the Status of Work Packages is completed, the system automatically generates the Financial Statement for the coordinator. The Commission's lump sum guidance adds that the technical report must focus on the completion of work packages and must explain and justify cases in which a work package is declared as completed. Therefore, for EMPOANDES, the primary reporting unit under the lump sum model is the work package, and internal management should be organised accordingly.

52

8.5.7 Completion, deviations and equivalent work

Lump sum implementation does not require absolute rigidity, but it does require that any deviation be explainable and acceptable within the framework of the grant. The Commission's guidance states that a work package can normally be declared completed when the work has been carried out as described, but it may also be accepted where some elements are missing if all essential work has been completed, if equivalent work has been carried out, or if deviations have been duly justified. The same guidance also states that, where deviations arise, they may be reported and justified in the technical report or addressed through an amendment if needed. This is particularly important for EMPOANDES, because any change affecting sequencing, activities or outputs should be documented early and, where necessary, formally channelled through the appropriate project procedures.

8.5.8 Consequences of insufficient implementation

The lump sum model is simplified, but it is not less demanding in terms of implementation responsibility. The Commission's guidance states



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Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

ERASMUS-EDU-2025-CBHE - EMPOANDES - 101236788



that a work package may be rejected where a significant or essential part of the work has not been completed and the deviation is not justified or not acceptable. At final reporting stage, partially completed work packages may be accepted only in line with the accepted degree of completion, and unjustified under-implementation may lead to partial or full rejection of the corresponding lump sum share. In parallel, the Erasmus+ financial conditions provide that if activities are not realised as approved, or if outputs are poorly implemented, the grant may be reduced in proportion to the degree of completion. For this reason, timely internal reporting, early identification of risks and robust documentary evidence are not optional administrative practices, but core safeguards for the financial protection of the project.

8.5.9 Internal implications for consortium management

For internal management purposes, the lump sum model implies that the consortium should organise its justification system around work package delivery rather than around expenditure reconstruction. This means that each work package leader should maintain a clear documentary trail of implemented activities, partner contributions, outputs produced, and any deviation from plan. Partners should likewise preserve the internal evidence needed to demonstrate their substantive contribution to the approved work. At the same time, the consortium should remain attentive to the fact that the estimated budget table used to establish the lump sum had to comply with the basic eligibility conditions for EU actual-cost grants and that purchases and subcontracting must respect best value for money and avoid conflicts of interest. Even under a lump sum model, weak implementation governance or non-compliant purchasing practices may still create grant risk.

8.5.10 Reference documents

The interpretation provided in this section is based on the project's binding and operational reference documents. In particular, the implementation of EMPOANDES under the lump sum model is guided by:

- the Grant Agreement of EMPOANDES, including the Data Sheet and the Terms and Conditions;



- Description of the Action (DoA), which defines the work packages, deliverables, milestones and implementation logic of the project;
- Estimated budget for the action, which sets out the lump sum breakdown by participant and work package;
- the applicable Erasmus+ and EU lump sum implementation framework, including the relevant provisions of [the Erasmus+ Programme Guide](#), [the European Commission guidance on lump sum grants](#), and the [Funding & Tenders Portal reporting and deliverables instructions](#) applicable to lump sum projects:

Accordingly, the justification logic described above should be understood as project-specific and grounded in the contractual framework governing EMPOANDES. Where necessary, the Grant Agreement and its annexes shall prevail as the primary reference for interpretation and implementation.



9. Risk and Issue Management

9.1 General approach

Risk and issue management is an integral part of the implementation framework of EMPOANDES. Its purpose is to support the early identification, communication, assessment and handling of any factor that may affect the timely, coherent or effective implementation of the project. This includes operational, organisational, financial, institutional, technical and coordination-related issues that may influence progress, quality or the achievement of expected results.

The general approach should be preventive and proportionate. The objective is not to create a burdensome control structure, but to ensure that relevant risks and issues are recognised early enough to allow corrective or mitigating action. In a multi-partner project such as EMPOANDES, this function is particularly important because implementation challenges in one area may quickly affect work package coordination, deliverable preparation or cross-partner collaboration.

9.2 Identification and notification

Risks and implementation issues may be identified by partner institutions, work package leaders, the coordinator, or the project's governance bodies. All actors involved in implementation share responsibility for drawing attention to relevant difficulties when they arise or when there is a reasonable indication that a problem may emerge.

Once identified, risks or issues should be communicated through the appropriate internal reporting lines without undue delay. Early notification is essential because it enables the consortium to assess the situation, determine whether the matter can be managed at the operational level, and decide whether additional action or escalation is required. Delayed communication reduces the range of available responses and may increase the issue's impact on project implementation.



9.3 Assessment and categorisation

Once notified, the issue should be assessed in terms of its nature, likely impact, urgency and possible implications for other project components. Some issues may remain limited to a specific task or partner contribution, while others may affect a full work package, a formal deliverable, the project timeline, or interactions among several partners.

This assessment need not be overly formal in all cases, but it should be sufficiently clear to support informed decision-making. At a minimum, the consortium should be able to determine whether the issue is minor and manageable through routine follow-up, whether it requires targeted corrective action, or whether it has broader implications that require escalation to the relevant governance level.

9.4 Escalation and corrective action

Where an issue cannot be resolved at the immediate operational level, it should be escalated to the appropriate management or governance level. As a general principle, routine or limited issues should first be addressed through the corresponding work package structure and the coordinator's follow-up. Escalation to the Executive Board or, where relevant, to the General Assembly should be reserved for issues with strategic implications, cross-work-package effects, substantial delays, institutional relevance, or significant impact on project coherence.

Corrective actions should be proportionate to the nature of the issue and aimed at restoring implementation conditions as efficiently as possible. Depending on the case, such actions may include closer follow-up, clarification of responsibilities, revision of internal sequencing, reinforcement of partner coordination, redistribution of workload, or targeted support from the coordinator or the relevant governance body. The preferred approach should always be solution-oriented and focused on safeguarding the continuity and quality of project implementation.

9.5 Follow-up and documentation

Relevant risks and issues should be monitored until they are resolved or adequately mitigated. Their follow-up should be reflected in the project's internal management



and reporting mechanisms, so that the consortium maintains a clear overview of their status, implications, and actions taken.

Adequate documentation of risk and issue management is important for several reasons. It supports transparency and continuity in internal coordination, provides evidence of active management of implementation challenges, and contributes to the project's broader quality and monitoring framework. It also helps the consortium learn from recurring difficulties and strengthens institutional memory throughout implementation.

D1.1 Project Handbook

Table 7. EMPOANDES Risk Matrix

ID	Risk description	WP(s) affected	Impact	Likelihood	Proposed mitigation measures
R1	Lack of active participation of beneficiaries	WP1	High	Low	The project partners, including the Project Coordinator and Project Management structures, have extensive experience in regional, national and European projects, a strong commitment to teamwork, and prior collaboration experience. Several partners have already worked together in previous initiatives, which facilitates trust, communication and implementation continuity.
R2	Change of people in responsibilities	WP1	Medium	Medium	Documents, meetings and training activities will be used to transfer know-how and preserve continuity. Stakeholders and team members will be managed according to their level of interest and influence on project actions, so that critical functions remain covered.
R3	Problems or delays with tasks	WP1	High	Medium	The consortium will apply strengthened supervision, reinforced follow-up, adjustments to project strategy where needed, changes to implementation arrangements, and, if justified, revisions in the internal allocation of efforts and resources.
R4	Low stakeholder involvement	WP2	High	Low	The co-creation approach already initiated during proposal preparation will be maintained. Early meetings with stakeholders have allowed them to contribute to defining their role and expressing their needs, which supports stronger ownership and engagement during implementation.
R5	Limitations in access to information needed for the diagnosis of educational systems	WP2, WP3	High	Medium	Stakeholders will be engaged in defining and validating the project diagnosis. Information needs will be identified explicitly and a checklist-based approach will be used to ensure that data collection and diagnosis are carried out in a complete and structured manner.
R6	Lack of time from target actors (private organisations and public authorities) to participate in capacity-building activities	WP2, WP4	High	Medium	Participatory and training sessions will be organised in a flexible manner to maximise attendance. This includes prior consultation on timing, the possibility of physical and/or online participation, and recording non-interactive parts of sessions so that materials remain accessible afterwards.
R7	Lack of interest in the training proposed	WP2, WP3, WP4	High	Low	The consortium will ensure that the quality, relevance and practical benefits of the training are clearly communicated in advance of each session. Different communication channels will be used, with adapted messages and attractive dissemination of calls in order to highlight the value of participation.
R8	Political instability or internal security issues limiting project execution	ALL	Medium	Medium	The project team will maintain close communication with key personnel in NMHSs and relevant institutions in order to anticipate disruptions and adapt schedules and activities where needed. The coordination team will assess continuity conditions country by country and determine appropriate implementation adjustments.



D1.1 Project Handbook

R9	Insufficient interest of relevant stakeholders and limited participation in workshops	WP6, WP2	High	Low	The project will deploy targeted communication tools, including website, visual identity, printed and digital materials, press releases, video and social media content. Partners will maintain open dialogue with identified stakeholders and communities of practice, focusing on influential actors who can help mobilise wider participation.
R10	Delays and losses of human or financial resources due to pandemics or other unexpected disruptions	ALL	High	Low	The consortium will optimise implementation through short-term work planning, flexible sequencing of tasks and increased use of virtual formats where needed. Digital communication channels will be maintained to ensure continuity, coordination and access to project information during disrupted periods.
R11	Uncertainty regarding the sustainability and transfer of the project after completion	WP6	Medium	High	A participatory approach will be used to define a sustainability and replicability plan, including possible transfer of methods and outputs to other sectors and contexts where feasible.



10. Quality, Compliance and Communication

References

10.1 General quality principle

The implementation of EMPOANDES should follow a general principle of quality across planning, coordination, drafting, review, delivery and communication. Quality in this context should be understood in a broad operational sense: it refers not only to the technical standard of project outputs, but also to the coherence of processes, the clarity of responsibilities, the timeliness of implementation, and the reliability of internal coordination.

This principle applies to all levels of project work. It concerns the preparation of deliverables and milestones, the organisation of meetings and reporting, the management of partner contributions, the production of dissemination materials, and the overall alignment between activities and objectives. A quality-oriented approach therefore requires both sound procedures and active engagement from all partners.

10.2 Link with the Quality Management and Monitoring Plan

The procedures described in this Handbook are complemented by the project's Quality Management and Monitoring Plan, which provides the more specific framework for monitoring implementation, reviewing outputs, identifying weaknesses, and supporting continuous improvement. The Handbook and the quality plan should therefore be read as complementary instruments within the overall management system of the project.

While the present Handbook establishes the general operational framework, the Quality Management and Monitoring Plan develops in greater detail the mechanisms for quality assurance, monitoring indicators, internal review processes, risk follow-up and corrective action. Together, these two documents support a management model that combines procedural clarity with systematic implementation follow-up.



10.3 Compliance with project obligations

All partners are expected to implement project activities in line with the approved project framework, the applicable programme rules, and the internal procedures agreed within the consortium. This includes compliance with governance arrangements, reporting expectations, documentation requirements, review processes, communication rules, and any other relevant obligation linked to sound project implementation.

Compliance should be understood not only as adherence to formal requirements, but also as a shared commitment to orderly, transparent and responsible implementation. In practice, this means that partners should respect agreed timelines, contribute to internal coordination processes, preserve the necessary supporting records, and ensure that project actions are carried out in a manner consistent with the objectives and organisational standards of EMPOANDES.

10.4 Communication and visibility references

Communication and dissemination activities should follow the project's agreed communication procedures and visual identity rules, as further developed in the relevant WP6 documents. Public-facing materials should be coherent with the project identity, include the appropriate acknowledgement of programme support, and be prepared and disseminated in a way that ensures consistency across the consortium. This also requires appropriate coordination between the partners involved in communication and dissemination activities. Visibility actions should be planned and documented in a manner that supports both consistency of external messaging and traceability of dissemination efforts. Communication is therefore not treated as a separate or purely promotional activity, but as an integral element of project implementation, accountability and impact.

10.5 Coherence between quality, compliance and communication

Quality, compliance and communication should be understood as interrelated dimensions of project implementation. High-quality outputs require sound procedures and timely internal review. Compliance depends on clear responsibilities,



traceable processes and respect for agreed rules. Effective communication requires both substantive quality and procedural consistency. For this reason, these three dimensions should not be managed separately, but as mutually reinforcing components of a coherent implementation framework.

10.6 Operationalisation of EU Fundamental Values in Project Implementation

62

EMPOANDES is implemented in line with the fundamental values of the European Union, including equality, inclusion, non-discrimination, human dignity, freedom, democracy and the rule of law. In the context of the project, these values are not treated as abstract principles only, but as operational references for the design, organisation and implementation of project activities.

In practical terms, this means that project governance, training activities, workshops, pilot actions, communication processes and stakeholder engagement mechanisms should be organised in a manner that promotes fair participation, transparent decision-making, respectful interaction and equal treatment. Attention shall be paid to inclusive access to project opportunities, balanced participation where relevant and feasible, and the avoidance of discriminatory practices in the selection, invitation or involvement of participants, contributors and stakeholders.

These principles shall be reflected in the project's day-to-day operations through documented procedures, traceable decision-making, appropriate communication practices, and the use of basic checks in the preparation of events, training actions, dissemination activities, and collaborative processes. Where relevant, partners shall also seek to ensure that project materials, formats and participation arrangements are reasonably accessible and appropriate to the diversity of target groups involved. Any concern related to discrimination, exclusion, disrespectful conduct, or a lack of transparency affecting project implementation may be raised through the project's internal coordination channels and, where necessary, escalated to the coordinator and the appropriate governance body for review and follow-up. In this way, EU fundamental values are embedded in the project's operational culture, not merely acknowledged at a declarative level.





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