

D1.2 Quality Data and Monitoring Plan

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Foreword

This Quality Data and Monitoring Plan defines the framework through which EMPOANDES will ensure quality, consistency, traceability and timely follow-up of project implementation. It complements the Project Handbook by focusing specifically on quality assurance, monitoring of work packages, deliverables and milestones, internal review procedures, evidence collection, risk follow-up and corrective action. The Plan is intended as a practical management instrument for the consortium, supporting both day-to-day implementation and reporting readiness under the Erasmus+ lump sum model. By embedding quality and monitoring throughout the project lifecycle, it helps ensure that EMPOANDES activities and outputs remain aligned with the approved objectives, work plan and expected results.

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1. Introduction

This Quality Data and Monitoring Plan sets out the framework through which EMPOANDES will support quality, consistency, traceability, and timely follow-up of project implementation throughout its lifecycle. It defines the principles, responsibilities, procedures, and monitoring mechanisms that will support the effective delivery of work packages, activities, deliverables and milestones in line with the approved project framework.

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This Plan should be understood as a practical management instrument for the consortium. It complements the Project Handbook by focusing specifically on quality assurance, implementation monitoring, internal review, evidence collection, risk follow-up, and corrective action. While the Project Handbook establishes the broader operational and governance framework of the project, this Plan defines how implementation quality will be monitored and how progress and deviations will be assessed in a structured manner.

The scope of this Plan covers all work packages and all partners involved in the implementation of EMPOANDES. It applies to project management, technical and educational activities, staff capacity-building actions, pilot and community-oriented actions, dissemination outputs, and all formal project deliverables and milestones. Its provisions are intended to support both project-wide oversight and work package-level follow-up.

This Plan is aligned with the Grant Agreement, the Description of the Action, the Consortium Agreement, and the internal procedures adopted by the Consortium. In the event of any inconsistency, the provisions of the Grant Agreement and the applicable contractual framework shall prevail. The Plan may be updated, where necessary, to reflect justified implementation needs or agreed improvements in internal monitoring practice, provided that such updates remain consistent with the approved project framework.



2. Quality Management Approach and Principles

2.1 General approach

The quality management approach of EMPOANDES is based on the principle that quality must be embedded throughout the entire project implementation cycle and not treated as an isolated control exercise carried out only at the stage of final submission. Quality is therefore understood as a continuous and structured process that begins with sound planning, continues through coordinated implementation and internal review, and is reinforced through monitoring, documentation, corrective action and learning from experience.

The quality management in EMPOANDES is not limited to verifying whether a deliverable has been produced or whether an activity has formally taken place. It also concerns whether the activity or output has been prepared in a timely and coherent way, whether responsibilities were clearly assigned, whether the process was adequately documented, whether internal review took place where required, and whether the result is aligned with the objectives and implementation logic of the project.

This approach is particularly important in EMPOANDES because the project combines multiple types of activity within a single implementation architecture, including project management, needs assessment, curricula development, staff capacity building, piloting, community-oriented activities, dissemination and visibility. As these dimensions are interdependent, weaknesses in one area may affect the quality and timing of implementation in others. For this reason, quality management must operate as a cross-cutting function supporting coherence across work packages rather than as a set of isolated checks applied to individual outputs.

The quality management approach is also designed to remain proportionate. The purpose of the system is to support reliable implementation and early problem detection without placing excessive administrative burden on partners. Quality procedures should therefore be sufficiently robust to ensure traceability and



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consistency, while remaining practical and workable within the operational realities of a multi-partner Erasmus+ project.

The approach is designed to be fully compatible with the Erasmus+ lump sum model. Under this model, the core issue is not the reconstruction of actual expenditure, but the proper implementation of the approved action. The quality framework of EMPOANDES focuses on monitoring whether work packages, activities, deliverables and milestones are being implemented as planned, whether deviations are properly identified and justified, and whether sufficient documentary evidence exists to support technical reporting and implementation verification.

In this context, quality management in EMPOANDES must cover both the academic dimension led by higher education institutions and the technical-operational dimension contributed by the NMHS partners. The participation of institutions such as INAMHI, SENAMHI and IDEAM (and DMC as Associated Partner) is therefore understood as a quality-relevant element of project implementation, since these partners help ensure that training, curricular outputs, piloting activities and academic integration remain connected to operational climate-service practice and to the real conditions of climate information production and use in the Andean region

2.2 Objectives of the quality management and monitoring system

The quality management and monitoring system of EMPOANDES has five main objectives.

- First, it aims to ensure that project activities, outputs and results remain aligned with the approved objectives, work plan and expected outcomes of the project. This alignment function is essential in order to preserve the internal logic of the action and to avoid fragmentation between work packages or implementation drift over time.
- Second, it aims to support timely delivery by making implementation progress visible and by identifying delays, bottlenecks, or weaknesses sufficiently early to enable corrective action. In this sense, monitoring is not conceived as a retrospective reporting exercise, but as an anticipatory management tool.



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- Third, it aims to strengthen the substantive quality of project outputs by ensuring that relevant review, consolidation, and validation procedures are applied before formal submission or public use. This is particularly relevant for deliverables, training materials, pilot outputs, communication products and other results that contribute directly to the project's credibility and impact.
- Fourth, it aims to ensure traceability and accountability. The quality system should allow the consortium to determine what was implemented, by whom, with what evidence, and through which review or follow-up process. This contributes not only to sound project management, but also to reporting readiness and institutional reliability.
- Fifth, it aims to promote continuous improvement. Monitoring and internal review should not only identify whether implementation is on track but also generate information that helps the consortium improve coordination practices, review procedures, documentation habits and cross-work-package cooperation over time.

2.3 Quality principles

The implementation of EMPOANDES will be guided by the following core quality principles.

Relevance. Activities, outputs and processes should remain clearly connected to the objectives, expected results and overall intervention logic of the project. Relevance means that work should not be assessed only in terms of completion, but also in terms of whether it meaningfully contributes to the approved aims of EMPOANDES.

Coherence. Implementation should be internally consistent at project level and across work packages. This includes coherence between needs identification, educational design, staff training, piloting, dissemination and management arrangements. Coherence also implies that the outputs of one work package should be compatible with the requirements and sequencing of related work packages.

Timeliness. Tasks, outputs, reviews and decisions should be carried out with sufficient anticipation to reduce avoidable delays. Timeliness is not only a scheduling



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concern but also a quality criterion, because delayed preparation often reduces the capacity for internal review, coordination and improvement.

Completeness. Outputs and implementation processes should be developed with the level of substance, structure and supporting evidence required by the project. Completeness concerns both content and process: a deliverable may be formally submitted, but quality will remain insufficient if relevant components, contributions or supporting records are missing.

Traceability. Key actions, decisions, outputs and review steps should be documented in a way that allows continuity, verification and accountability. Traceability is especially important in a multi-partner project and under the lump sum model, where documentary evidence of implementation is central.

Responsiveness. Risks, delays, inconsistencies and implementation issues should be identified and addressed in a timely and proportionate manner. A quality system is credible only if it is capable of triggering follow-up and corrective action when needed.

Shared responsibility. Quality is a collective responsibility distributed across the consortium. Although some actors have stronger coordination roles, quality depends on the timely, reliable and well-documented contribution of all partners.

Continuous improvement. Monitoring results, review comments, implementation difficulties and feedback from activities should be used constructively to improve subsequent actions and processes. The system should therefore support learning as well as control.

2.4 Cross-cutting quality dimensions

EMPOANDES recognises a set of cross-cutting quality dimensions that should inform the implementation of project activities and outputs. These dimensions include equality, inclusion, non-discrimination, transparency in decision-making, participatory fairness and respect for the dignity of all persons involved in project activities.



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These dimensions are relevant because quality in a project such as EMPOANDES cannot be understood only as technical correctness or timely delivery. It also includes the way in which activities are organised and participation is enabled. Training events, workshops, piloting actions, stakeholder engagement processes and dissemination activities should therefore be implemented in a manner that is respectful, transparent and inclusive, and that is consistent with the project's wider institutional and societal commitments.

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This means that the project should, where relevant and proportionate, consider aspects such as clarity and fairness of participation criteria, reasonable accessibility of formats and materials, balanced and transparent participation processes, appropriate communication practices, and the availability of channels to raise concerns related to participation, exclusion or conduct. These dimensions do not require excessive formalisation in every case, but they should be sufficiently visible in the project's management and monitoring practice to demonstrate that they are being actively considered.

The monitoring of these dimensions will rely on practical evidence where relevant, including participant lists, agendas, invitations, calls for participation, records of feedback, accessibility measures taken, and documented follow-up of any related issue. In this way, cross-cutting values are incorporated into the quality system as operational elements rather than remaining only at declarative level.

2.5 Levels of quality assurance and monitoring

Quality assurance and monitoring in EMPOANDES will operate at three complementary levels: project level, work package level and output level.

At **project level**, monitoring will focus on the overall implementation of the work plan, the coherence of progress across work packages, major risks, timing of reporting obligations, and the general alignment between activities and expected results. This level provides the broader oversight necessary to ensure that implementation remains consistent with the strategic and operational framework of the project.

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At **work package level**, monitoring will focus on task implementation, partner coordination, sequencing of activities, preparation of outputs, internal dependencies and progress towards milestones and deliverables. This level is particularly important because most implementation issues first become visible within work package processes before they affect the project as a whole.

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At **output level**, quality assurance will focus on concrete products and actions, including deliverables, milestones, training materials, workshop outputs, pilot results, communication products, events and other identifiable project results. At this level, attention will be given to completeness, internal consistency, review status, documentary evidence and readiness for validation or submission.

These three levels are interdependent. Project-level oversight depends on the quality of work package-level monitoring, while work package-level control depends on the visibility and quality of individual outputs and activities. The quality framework of EMPOANDES is therefore designed to connect these levels rather than to treat them as separate monitoring systems.

2.6 Quality criteria for outputs and activities

Outputs and activities in EMPOANDES should, where relevant, be assessed against a common set of quality criteria. These criteria are intended to provide a shared reference for internal review without imposing unnecessarily rigid formats on the different types of outputs generated by the project.

The main criteria are the following:

- alignment with the objectives and scope of the relevant work package and of the project as a whole.
- internal consistency and logical structure.
- adequacy and completeness of the content developed.
- timeliness of preparation and delivery.
- clarity of presentation and usability for the intended audience.



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- adequacy of supporting evidence and traceability of the implementation process.
- compliance with applicable review, validation, visibility and documentation requirements.
- where relevant, consideration of cross-cutting dimensions such as inclusion, transparency and respectful participation.

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Not all criteria will apply in exactly the same way to every activity or output. For example, a formal deliverable requires a more structured review than a routine coordination meeting, while a training event may require stronger attention to participation evidence and feedback collection. Nevertheless, the use of common criteria helps maintain consistency in the project's understanding of quality and supports comparability across different components of implementation.

2.7 Relationship between quality management, monitoring and project management

Quality management, monitoring and project management are closely interrelated in EMPOANDES and should not be treated as separate functions. Monitoring provides the information needed for management decisions. Quality assurance ensures that implementation processes and outputs meet the required standards. Project management provides the structures, responsibilities and follow-up mechanisms through which both monitoring and quality assurance can operate effectively.

This relationship is particularly important because many implementation issues are mixed in nature. A delay may initially appear to be a scheduling issue, but it may also reduce the time available for internal review and therefore affect output quality. A documentation gap may seem administrative, but it may weaken traceability and thus affect the project's reporting robustness. A coordination problem between partners may begin as an organisational issue but eventually affect deliverable completeness or milestone achievement. For this reason, the quality framework of EMPOANDES is designed to interact directly with the management procedures established in the Project Handbook.



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Quality assurance is a structured layer of the project's overall management model. Its effectiveness depends on the quality of planning, reporting, coordination and documentation across the consortium.

2.8 Review and adaptability of the quality approach

The quality management approach established in this Plan is intended to provide a stable framework for the project, but it should also remain capable of adjustment were justified by implementation experience. If monitoring practice reveals the need for clearer templates, more suitable review timing, stronger evidence collection or more efficient follow-up mechanisms, such improvements may be introduced through the project's internal coordination procedures, if they remain aligned with the approved project framework.

This adaptability is consistent with the principle of continuous improvement. A quality system should not only evaluate implementation, but also improve itself, when necessary, to remain useful, proportionate and effective. Any significant update to the quality and monitoring arrangements should be documented and communicated appropriately within the consortium.

3. Roles and Responsibilities for Quality Assurance and Monitoring

3.1 General responsibility structure

Quality assurance and monitoring in EMPOANDES are based on a shared responsibility model. This means that quality is not concentrated in a single actor or body but is distributed across the consortium according to the role of each participant in project implementation. Such an approach is necessary in a multi-partner project where the achievement of results depends on coordinated contributions from different institutions, work packages and activity streams.

Within this model, the coordinator, work package leaders, contributing partners and governance bodies each play a specific role in ensuring that project activities are

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implemented in a coherent, timely and traceable manner. The quality system is therefore organised around differentiated but complementary functions: project-wide oversight, work package-level follow-up, partner-level responsibility for the quality of contributions, and governance-level support for escalation, validation and strategic review where needed.

The purpose of this role allocation is to ensure that quality assurance is both operational and accountable. It should be possible at all times to identify who is responsible for monitoring a given process, who is expected to act when a problem arises, and how relevant information is transmitted across the project structure. This clarity of responsibility is essential for preventing ambiguity, avoiding delays in follow-up, and ensuring that monitoring information can effectively support decision-making.

3.2 Role of the coordinator

The coordinator has overall responsibility for ensuring that EMPOANDES operates under a coherent and functional quality management and monitoring framework. In this capacity, the coordinator maintains project-level oversight of implementation progress, supports the application of common monitoring procedures, and ensures that the different layers of quality assurance remain connected to the broader management structure of the project. More specifically, the coordinator is responsible for monitoring the general progress of work packages and formal outputs, keeping visibility over key deadlines, supporting the organisation of internal review processes where relevant, and ensuring that monitoring information from different areas of the project is sufficiently consolidated to allow project-wide follow-up. The coordinator also plays a central role in identifying cross-cutting issues that may not be visible at the level of an individual work package but that may affect the coherence or timing of the project.

The coordinator supports the escalation and handling of quality-related concerns when they cannot be resolved at operational level. This includes delays affecting deliverables, weaknesses in partner follow-up, gaps in documentation, inconsistencies between work packages, or broader risks affecting implementation

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quality. In such cases, the coordinator acts as the main point of integration between routine monitoring, corrective action and governance-level follow-up. The coordinator also has an important role in relation to reporting readiness. Under the Erasmus+ lump sum model, technical implementation and work package completion must be demonstrated clearly and coherently. For this reason, the coordinator must ensure that quality monitoring contributes not only to internal management, but also to the availability of the evidence and implementation visibility needed for periodic and final reporting.

3.3 Role of work package leaders

Each work package leader is responsible for the quality follow-up of implementation within the corresponding work package. This role is central to the quality system because the work package constitutes the main operational unit through which project activities, outputs and formal commitments are delivered. Work package leaders therefore act as the first structured layer of monitoring between individual partner contributions and the project-wide oversight exercised by the coordinator.

Work package leaders are expected to monitor the progress of tasks under their responsibility, check whether contributions are being provided in line with the agreed scope and timing, identify potential risks or weaknesses affecting implementation, and ensure that outputs are prepared through an organised and traceable process. They are also responsible for maintaining a sufficiently clear overview of work package status so that relevant information can be communicated to the coordinator in a timely manner.

Where a work package includes deliverables, milestones, training actions, pilot activities, communication outputs or other significant results, the work package leader is responsible for ensuring that preparation is initiated with sufficient anticipation, that internal review needs are identified early, and that the necessary partner contributions are coordinated effectively. This makes work package leaders not only technical supervisors of content, but also key actors in monitoring quality, completeness and readiness for validation.



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Work package leaders also play an important role in the first-line handling of implementation problems. Where delays, inconsistencies or gaps are identified within a work package, the work package leader should initiate clarification, request corrective inputs, adjust internal follow-up where possible, and inform the coordinator when the issue may have broader implications or cannot be resolved within routine work package management.

3.4 Role of contributing partners

All contributing partners are responsible for the quality of the activities, inputs and outputs to which they contribute. This responsibility begins at the level of day-to-day implementation and includes ensuring that contributions are technically sound, delivered within the agreed timeline, sufficiently documented, and consistent with the objectives and expectations of the relevant work package.

Partners are expected to engage actively in monitoring their own assigned responsibilities and not only to react when requested by the coordinator or work package leader. This includes maintaining internal follow-up of deadlines, preparing inputs with adequate anticipation, alerting the relevant actors when implementation difficulties arise, and ensuring that supporting evidence is preserved in a way that contributes to project traceability.

Contributing partners also have a role in internal review processes. When asked to review a draft deliverable, training material, pilot output, dissemination product or other project result, partners should provide substantive and timely feedback within the agreed timeframe. In this way, partner institutions do not only contribute content but also participate in collective quality assurance.

Because several partners may involve more than one internal unit or person in project implementation, each institution should also ensure sufficient internal coordination so that its project participation remains continuous and reliable. Weak internal organisation at partner level may affect the quality and timing of the project. For this reason, partner responsibility includes both content contribution and institutional capacity.



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In addition to their general contribution as project partners, the NMHS institutions have a specific technical-operational role within the quality and monitoring framework. In practical terms, they contribute to the validation of technical relevance in needs assessment, the consistency of climate-services competencies and materials with operational practice, the quality of training and piloting activities that rely on climate information tools or workflows, and the identification of implementation evidence demonstrating practical applicability. Their inputs should therefore be considered not only as substantive contributions to project content, but also as part of the project's quality assurance function where operational relevance is concerned.

3.5 Role of governance bodies

The governance bodies of EMPOANDES support quality assurance and monitoring at different levels and in different ways. Their role is not to replace routine monitoring by the coordinator and work package leaders, but to provide the institutional structure through which significant issues, strategic concerns and cross-cutting implementation matters can be reviewed and addressed.

The Executive Board has a particularly relevant role in operational quality . It provides a forum for reviewing implementation status, discussing risks and delays, identifying bottlenecks, and considering corrective measures where routine indicates the need for escalation or reinforced coordination. It therefore acts as the main governance-level structure linking monitoring information to management decisions.

The General Assembly provides broader oversight and may review significant matters affecting the overall quality, coherence or direction of project implementation. Its role is particularly relevant for issues with strategic implications, cross-consortium relevance, or broader institutional significance. While it is not expected to engage in routine monitoring, it contributes to the quality framework by ensuring collective visibility over major implementation matters and by supporting shared accountability at consortium level.

The Communication Board contributes specifically to the quality and consistency of dissemination and visibility-related outputs and processes. Since communication activities form part of the project's formal implementation and may also contribute



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to reporting evidence, the Communication Board supports quality assurance in relation to dissemination planning, coherence of external messaging, visibility compliance, and traceability of public-facing actions.

3.6 Responsibility for internal review and validation

Responsibility for internal review and validation is distributed according to the nature of the output concerned. As a general rule, the drafting lead or responsible work package leader initiates the review process, identifies the relevant reviewing actors, and ensures that the review is carried out in time to allow consolidation before final validation.

Reviewing partners are responsible for providing feedback that is relevant, sufficiently specific and submitted within the agreed review period. Their role is to contribute to completeness, consistency, clarity and alignment with project objectives, rather than merely to acknowledge receipt of the draft. Where comments are provided, the drafting lead should assess them and integrate them as appropriate into the final version.

Final validation normally takes place at the level defined by the internal procedures of the project, with project-wide outputs or formal deliverables requiring coordinated review and final clearance before submission or public release. The exact review depth may vary depending on the output, but the principle remains that outputs of relevance to project reporting, visibility or institutional credibility should pass through an identifiable internal validation process.

3.7 Responsibility for evidence and traceability

Responsibility for documentary evidence is distributed across the consortium in line with implementation roles. Each partner should preserve the evidence linked to the activities and contributions for which it is responsible. This may include draft materials, agendas, minutes, participant records, training resources, communication evidence, pilot documentation, feedback records and other implementation-related materials relevant to the action carried out.

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Work package leaders are responsible for ensuring that work package-level outputs and their supporting records are sufficiently organised for monitoring and follow-up purposes. This includes maintaining visibility over the documentary basis needed to demonstrate that the work package has been implemented in accordance with the approved plan and that any relevant deviations or adjustments are adequately reflected in the internal record.

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At project-wide level, the coordinator should ensure that the main documentary basis required for consolidated monitoring, reporting and traceability is available and accessible. This function is especially important under the lump sum model, where the capacity to demonstrate proper implementation depends heavily on the existence of clear and retrievable implementation evidence rather than on cost-based justification.

The preservation of evidence should therefore not be understood as a purely administrative obligation, but as an integral component of quality assurance and monitoring. Without adequate documentary traceability, the consortium cannot reliably demonstrate implementation quality, support reporting, or respond effectively to internal or external review needs.

3.8 Shared accountability and operational culture

Beyond the formal allocation of roles, the quality and monitoring system of EMPOANDES depends on a broader culture of shared accountability across the consortium. Procedures and responsibilities are necessary, but they are only effective if partners actively use them to support reliable implementation. This requires timely communication, openness in reporting difficulties, willingness to participate in review processes, and common understanding that quality assurance is part of normal project work rather than an additional burden external to implementation.

For this reason, all actors involved in EMPOANDES should treat monitoring, review, documentation and corrective actions as integral elements of responsible project participation. The effectiveness of the quality system ultimately depends not only on formal structures, but also on the consistency with which these structures are applied in day-to-day practice.



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4. Monitoring Framework for Work Packages, Deliverables and Milestones

4.1 Purpose of the monitoring framework

The monitoring framework of EMPOANDES is designed to ensure that project implementation remains visible, verifiable and manageable throughout the full project lifecycle. Its purpose is to provide the consortium with a structured basis for following progress, identifying delays or weaknesses at an early stage, supporting internal coordination, and ensuring that the implementation of the action can be demonstrated in a clear and traceable manner.

In practical terms, the monitoring framework serves five main functions. First, it provides visibility over the implementation status of work packages, activities, deliverables and milestones. Second, it supports timely management action by making deviations, risks or bottlenecks identifiable before they significantly affect the project. Third, it strengthens quality assurance by linking progress monitoring with internal review and validation procedures. Fourth, it supports the collection of evidence needed for technical reporting and implementation verification under the Erasmus+ lump sum model. Fifth, it contributes to project coherence by ensuring that the consortium maintains an integrated view of implementation rather than a fragmented set of isolated task updates.

The monitoring framework is therefore not limited to formal reporting moments. It is conceived as a continuous internal management instrument that supports both routine actions and the preparation of periodic and final project reporting. In this sense, monitoring is closely linked to project management, quality assurance, risk handling and documentation practices.

4.2 General architecture of the monitoring system

The monitoring system of EMPOANDES is structured around three complementary levels: project level, work package level, and output level. These levels are



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interdependent and should be understood as parts of a single monitoring architecture.

At project level, monitoring provides an integrated view of overall implementation progress. It focuses on whether the project is advancing in line with the approved timeline, whether the work packages remain coherent with one another, whether formal outputs are being prepared on time, and whether there are cross-cutting risks or bottlenecks requiring management attention.

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At work package level, monitoring focuses on the progress of tasks, sequencing of activities, contribution of partners, preparation of outputs, and achievement of expected intermediate steps. This level provides the main operational basis for implementation and is the point at which most issues first become visible.

At output level, monitoring focuses on concrete products and actions, including deliverables, milestones, curricula, training activities, workshops, pilot actions, dissemination outputs and other identifiable results. This level is essential for ensuring that individual outputs are not only completed but prepared through a traceable and quality-assured process.

The architecture of the monitoring system is designed to allow information to move upwards from tasks and outputs to work packages and project-wide coordination, while also allowing guidance and corrective action to move downwards from project-wide monitoring to specific implementation processes. This two-way logic is essential for maintaining both strategic oversight and operational responsiveness.

4.3 Monitoring logic under the Erasmus+ lump sum model

The monitoring framework of EMPOANDES is fully aligned with the logic of the Erasmus+ lump sum model. Under this funding model, the core issue is not the reporting of actual expenditure, but the proper implementation of the approved action. Monitoring must therefore focus on whether the work described in the approved project framework is being carried out in accordance with the Description of the Action, whether work packages are being completed as planned, whether



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deliverables and milestones are achieved, and whether deviations are identified, justified and documented appropriately.

This has important implications for the design of the monitoring framework. The primary unit of structured follow-up is the work package, since work package completion is central to technical implementation and reporting. At the same time, work package-level monitoring must be supported by sufficient visibility over the activities, outputs and evidence that substantiate implementation. Monitoring therefore needs to combine a structured overview of work package completion with detailed visibility over the underlying actions and products.

For EMPOANDES, this means that the monitoring system must be capable of answering the following questions at any stage of implementation: what has been done, what is ongoing, what remains pending, what evidence exists, what risks have been identified, what corrective action has been taken, and whether the relevant work remains on track for proper implementation. This is the core monitoring logic that underpins the entire D1.2.

4.4 Project-level monitoring

Project-level monitoring provides the consortium with an integrated view of overall progress and supports the general coordination and governance of the project. Its purpose is to ensure that implementation remains aligned with the approved objectives, work plan, timeline and expected results, while also making visible any cross-cutting issue that may affect the project as a whole.

At this level, monitoring should cover at least the following elements: general progress of each work package; proximity of upcoming deliverables and milestones; overall implementation rhythm; cross-work-package dependencies; major risks and bottlenecks; readiness for reporting periods; and the state of project-wide documentation and evidence. Project-level monitoring should also identify whether there are patterns of delay, weak feedback or coordination difficulties that cannot be fully understood at the level of an individual work package.



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The coordinator has the main responsibility for maintaining this project-wide overview, supported by the reporting provided by work package leaders. The Executive Board constitutes the main forum through which project-level monitoring findings should be discussed, especially where they require coordination decisions, reinforced follow-up or escalation. The General Assembly may also review project-level monitoring results when broader strategic or institutional implications arise.

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Project-level monitoring should not attempt to replace detailed work package review. Its function is rather to integrate that information into a coherent picture of the project's implementation status. In this sense, it is the level at which the consortium can determine whether the project is progressing satisfactorily as a whole and whether any corrective or preventive action is required beyond the routine work package domain.

4.5 Work package-level monitoring

Work package-level monitoring is the central operational layer of the EMPOANDES monitoring framework. Because work packages are the main organisational units through which the project is implemented, this level of monitoring is essential for ensuring that activities progress in a timely, coherent and well-documented manner.

Each work package leader is responsible for maintaining visibility over the implementation of the work package, including ongoing tasks, completed activities, pending contributions, internal sequencing, preparation of outputs, and any issue affecting timing, quality or feasibility. Work package-level monitoring should not be limited to the final production of deliverables. It should begin from the earliest implementation stages and include the monitoring of intermediate steps that make later outputs possible.

The monitoring of a work package should normally include: the status of each major task; the degree of partner engagement; internal dependencies between tasks; expected and actual timing of activities; preparation status of outputs and formal deliverables; milestone achievement; risks and implementation concerns; and evidence availability. Where relevant, work package monitoring should also include visibility over training events, workshops, meetings, consultation processes, pilot



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actions, dissemination products or other key implementation elements that contribute to the work package's results.

The purpose of work package-level monitoring is both descriptive and managerial. It should describe the implementation status in a sufficiently structured way, but it should also support decision-making by identifying whether stronger follow-up, clearer task allocation, additional partner input or corrective action is needed. In this sense, work package monitoring is not merely a reporting obligation; it is the main mechanism through which implementation quality is protected on a day-to-day basis.

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4.6 Monitoring of tasks and intermediate implementation steps

A robust monitoring framework cannot rely only on final outputs. For this reason, EMPOANDES should also monitor relevant intermediate steps at task level, particularly where the completion of a deliverable or milestone depends on a sequence of preparatory actions. These intermediate steps may include data collection, consultation rounds, draft preparation, event organisation, internal validation processes, platform development steps, or any other identifiable stage necessary for the later completion of work package results.

Monitoring intermediate steps is especially important where delays may accumulate invisibly if attention is placed only on the final deadline. A deliverable may appear on track at a general level while essential preparatory work has not yet begun, partner inputs have not been mobilised, or evidence is not being collected. Task-level monitoring helps address this risk by making implementation maturity visible before the final stage.

The depth of task-level monitoring should remain proportionate. It is not necessary to create excessive micro-tracking for every small activity. However, for tasks that are critical to the achievement of formal outputs, involve several partners, or present a higher implementation risk, monitoring should include clear visibility over intermediate progress and pending actions. This allows the consortium to intervene early rather than only at the point of deadline pressure.



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4.7 Monitoring of deliverables

Deliverables require a dedicated monitoring approach because they constitute formal project commitments and are central to technical reporting, implementation verification and the visibility of project progress. Monitoring of deliverables should therefore begin sufficiently in advance of the formal submission deadline and continue throughout the drafting, review, consolidation and validation process.

For each deliverable, monitoring should normally cover the following elements: responsible work package and lead partner; drafting lead; contributing partners; internal timetable for drafting and review; preparation status; pending inputs; review status; validation status; risk of delay; and evidence supporting the underlying implementation. This monitoring should make it possible to determine not only whether the deliverable exists as a draft, but whether it is progressing through a credible and manageable preparation process.

Deliverable monitoring should also distinguish clearly between the implementation evidence behind the deliverable and the deliverable document itself. In many cases, a deliverable summarises, consolidates or formalises work that has been carried out across activities and partners. Monitoring should therefore ensure that the documentary basis for the deliverable exists and is organised, so that the output rests on traceable implementation rather than on retrospective reconstruction.

Where a deliverable is at risk of delay or weakness, this should be identified as early as possible and addressed through targeted follow-up. Depending on the case, corrective action may involve reminder and mobilisation of partners, revision of internal drafting deadlines, additional review support, closer review by the coordinator, or escalation through the appropriate governance structure. Because deliverables are highly visible elements of project implementation, their monitoring must be proactive rather than reactive.

4.8 Monitoring of milestones

Milestones differ from deliverables in form, but they are equally important within the monitoring framework because they indicate the achievement of key



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implementation steps. Monitoring of milestones should therefore ensure that their status is not assumed informally but supported by clear confirmation and evidence.

For each milestone, monitoring should cover the expected achievement date, the implementation condition or result that defines the milestone, the work package responsible, the evidence available to confirm achievement, and any dependency on previous tasks or outputs. Milestones should be considered achieved only when the relevant condition can be demonstrated through appropriate documentation or validated progress evidence.

In practice, milestone monitoring is often lighter than deliverable monitoring, since milestones may not always require a full document. However, they should still be visible within the monitoring framework and included in work package and project-level. This is particularly important because milestones often serve as internal signals that a work package is progressing as expected and that the project is ready to move to the next implementation phase.

Where a milestone is delayed or achieved only partially, this should be explicitly recorded and assessed. A missed or delayed milestone may indicate wider implementation difficulties even when no formal deliverable is immediately affected. For this reason, milestone monitoring should be treated as an early-warning instrument within the project's broader quality and monitoring system.

4.9 Monitoring of trainings, workshops, pilot actions and dissemination outputs

In EMPOANDES, the monitoring framework must go beyond formal deliverables and milestones to include key implementation actions such as trainings, workshops, meetings with stakeholders, pilot activities, community-oriented actions and dissemination outputs. These actions may be central to the substantive progress of the project even when they do not always correspond to stand-alone deliverables.

Monitoring such actions should normally include: planned and actual implementation date; organising partner and supporting partners; target audience; evidence of participation; agenda or activity structure; materials produced; feedback collected



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where relevant; implementation concerns identified; and documentary evidence available. For pilot and community-oriented activities, monitoring should also include, where relevant, observations on uptake, participation conditions, practical issues encountered and lessons relevant for later project stages.

This broader action-based monitoring is important for two reasons. First, many deliverables and work package results depend directly on the successful implementation of such actions. Second, under the lump sum model, the consortium must be able to demonstrate that the approved activities were actually carried out. Monitoring these actions in a structured way therefore contributes both to implementation quality and to reporting robustness.

Special attention should be given to the monitoring of actions involving external participants, since these are also the activities where cross-cutting dimensions such as inclusion, transparency, participation fairness and accessibility may become particularly relevant. The monitoring framework should therefore allow these dimensions to be noted where appropriate, together with the evidence supporting them.

4.10 Monitoring criteria and traffic-light assessment logic

To make monitoring operational and comparable across work packages, EMPOANDES should apply a common assessment logic to the main monitored elements. A practical way of doing so is to use a simple status classification, supported by qualitative commentary where needed.

A three-level traffic light logic may be used for internal purposes:

Green indicates that implementation is progressing as planned, with no significant concern affecting timing, quality or evidence availability.

Amber indicates that implementation is ongoing but presents a relevant risk, such as partial delay, incomplete partner input, emerging coordination problems, or weaknesses that require active follow-up to avoid broader impact.



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Red indicates that implementation is significantly delayed, blocked, incomplete, or at serious risk of affecting work package completion, deliverable submission, milestone achievement, or project coherence.

This status logic should not replace substantive assessment but support it. Each amber or red status should be accompanied by a brief explanation of the issue, its likely implications and the action proposed or already initiated. The aim is to make monitoring results usable for management rather than merely classificatory.

The same logic may also be applied, where relevant, to dimensions such as review status, evidence readiness or risk severity. However, it should be used proportionately and kept simple enough to remain workable for the consortium. Its value lies in creating common visibility over implementation conditions, not in generating unnecessary internal bureaucracy.

4.11 Monitoring indicators and reference points

The monitoring framework of EMPOANDES should rely on a combination of qualitative and implementation-based reference points rather than on an excessively rigid indicator system. Given the nature of the project, many important aspects of progress are better captured through structured status assessment and evidence review than through purely numerical indicators. Nevertheless, a set of common monitoring reference points can support consistency across work packages.

These reference points may include: progress status of tasks; completion status of planned activities; level of partner contribution received; readiness status of deliverables; milestone achievement status; existence and organisation of implementation evidence; review status of outputs; timing against internal planning; and presence of unresolved implementation issues. For selected types of action, additional reference points may include participation levels, feedback collected, dissemination reach, or number and type of materials produced.

The use of reference points should support comparability and discipline in monitoring practice but should remain adapted to the diverse nature of project actions. A training event, a curriculum design process, a project meeting and a formal



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deliverable are different types of monitored objects and cannot always be assessed through exactly the same lens. The monitoring framework should therefore combine shared reference points with context-appropriate judgement.

4.12 Monitoring cycle and frequency

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Monitoring in EMPOANDES should operate as a continuous cycle rather than as a set of isolated reporting moments. This cycle should combine routine follow-up at work package level, periodic consolidation at project level, and reinforced monitoring around key deadlines or high-risk implementation stages.

At work package level, monitoring should take place regularly enough to ensure timely visibility over task progress, partner contributions and upcoming outputs. The exact frequency may vary depending on the implementation rhythm of each work package, but monitoring should be active whenever major tasks are underway, key outputs are approaching, or implementation complexity increases.

At project level, monitoring should be consolidated periodically through the coordinator and reviewed through the relevant management and governance channels, especially the Executive Board. Such periodic consolidation helps identify broader patterns, cross-work-package implications and project-wide readiness for deliverables, milestones and reporting obligations.

Reinforced monitoring should apply where a deliverable deadline is approaching, a milestone is at risk, a pilot or training action is pending, or significant implementation difficulties have been identified. In these situations, follow-up should become more frequent and more targeted, with the aim of preventing slippage and securing completion.

The monitoring cycle should therefore be understood as dynamic and risk-sensitive. It is not defined only by calendar regularity, but also by implementation intensity and the need for anticipatory management.

4.13 Evidence sources supporting monitoring

Monitoring findings must be supported by identifiable evidence. For this reason, the monitoring framework of EMPOANDES should be explicitly linked to the collection, preservation and organisation of documentary evidence. Without evidence, monitoring remains impressionistic and does not provide a reliable basis for technical reporting or implementation verification.

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Relevant evidence sources may include draft and final deliverables, agendas, minutes, attendance lists, partner inputs, internal work plans, task trackers, curricula drafts, training materials, pilot records, screenshots of platforms or repositories, dissemination products, communication evidence, feedback forms, records of review comments, and any other document that demonstrates that the corresponding work has been carried out.

Monitoring should not require that all evidence be centralised immediately in every case, but it should ensure that the consortium can identify where the evidence is stored, who holds it, whether it is complete, and whether it is retrievable when needed. This is particularly important under the lump sum model, where the ability to demonstrate proper implementation depends fundamentally on the existence and accessibility of implementation evidence.

4.14 Escalation logic within the monitoring framework

The monitoring framework must not only observe implementation; it must also trigger action when needed. For this reason, EMPOANDES should apply a clear escalation logic linked to monitoring results.

Where monitoring identifies a minor issue that can be solved within routine follow-up, action should normally take place at work package level. This may include reminders, clarification of responsibilities, adjustment of internal sequencing or closer coordination among contributing partners.

Where monitoring identifies a more significant issue, such as repeated partner delay, serious drafting weakness, lack of evidence, blocked task progression, or a risk affecting a formal deliverable or milestone, the issue should be communicated to the



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coordinator and, where needed, discussed by the Executive Board. Escalation should occur early enough to allow effective corrective action rather than only once failure becomes unavoidable.

Where the issue has strategic implications, affects multiple work packages, threatens overall project coherence, or raises an institutional concern beyond ordinary operational management, it may be referred to the relevant governance body for broader review. In this way, monitoring becomes functionally connected to the governance and risk-management structure of the project.

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4.15 Use of monitoring results for management and improvement

The monitoring system of EMPOANDES is intended not only to record progress, but also to improve implementation. Monitoring results should therefore be used actively in project management, internal review, risk handling and planning of subsequent actions.

At operational level, monitoring results should inform reminders, reallocations of attention, internal review planning, evidence collection, preparation of meetings and scheduling of follow-up actions. At project level, they should inform strategic oversight, readiness for reporting, identification of recurring weaknesses, and adjustments in coordination practice where justified.

Monitoring results may also support continuous improvement by revealing patterns that are not limited to a single output or delay. For example, repeated late drafting, inconsistent documentation practices, weak review participation or unclear division of responsibility may all emerge through monitoring and lead to practical improvement measures. In this sense, the monitoring framework is both a control mechanism and a learning mechanism.

4.16 Operational conclusion

The monitoring framework of EMPOANDES is built to ensure that implementation remains visible, manageable and demonstrable throughout the project lifecycle. By connecting project-level oversight, work package-level follow-up and output-level review, it provides the consortium with a structured basis for monitoring progress,



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supporting quality assurance, documenting implementation and responding to deviations in a timely manner.

Its central function is to translate the approved project architecture into a practical system of follow-up that is compatible with both the collaborative nature of the consortium and the implementation logic of the Erasmus+ lump sum model. For this reason, the monitoring framework constitutes the operational core of the D1.2 Quality Management and Monitoring Plan.

5. Internal Quality Review Procedures

5.1 Purpose of the internal review system

The internal quality review system of EMPOANDES is designed to ensure that project outputs and implementation processes are subject to a structured process of verification, improvement and validation before formal submission, use or dissemination. Its purpose is to strengthen the substantive quality, internal consistency, traceability and reliability of project results, while also reducing the risk of avoidable weaknesses, omissions or misalignments at later stages.

Within the overall quality management and monitoring framework, internal review constitutes the main mechanism through which draft outputs are assessed against agreed expectations before they become final project products. It is therefore distinct from routine progress monitoring. Monitoring provides visibility over whether an output is being prepared and whether risks or delays exist; internal review focuses on whether the output or process itself is sufficiently complete, coherent, accurate and ready for validation.

The review system is particularly important in a project such as EMPOANDES, where many outputs depend on the combined contribution of multiple partners and where several forms of result coexist, including formal deliverables, training materials, curricula-related outputs, pilot documentation, dissemination products and organisational records. In such a context, internal review is necessary not only to



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improve quality, but also to ensure that the project speaks with procedural and substantive coherence across its different components.

5.2 General review approach

The internal review approach of EMPOANDES is based on the principle that review should be proportionate, timely and fit for purpose. Not all outputs require the same depth or format of review, but all outputs of relevance to project implementation, reporting, visibility or institutional credibility should pass through an identifiable process of checking and validation before they are considered final.

This means that review procedures should vary according to the nature of the output concerned. A formal deliverable requires a more structured review process than a routine coordination email; a training package or curricular output may require substantive review of content, structure and usability; a dissemination product may require focused review of consistency, clarity, visibility compliance and appropriateness for the intended audience. The review system should therefore combine common principles with differentiated application.

At the same time, the review process should begin sufficiently early to allow real improvement. Review has limited value if it is conducted only at the final stage, when no meaningful revision is still possible. For this reason, the review procedures of EMPOANDES are designed to operate in advance of formal deadlines and, where needed, to include more than one internal iteration before validation.

5.3 Scope of internal review

The internal review system applies to a broad range of project outputs and, where relevant, to selected implementation processes. At minimum, the following categories fall within the scope of structured internal review:

- formal deliverables to be submitted under the Grant Agreement.
- milestone-related evidence where internal confirmation is required.
- educational and training materials developed within the project.
- curricula-related outputs and associated methodological documents.



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- pilot and community-oriented outputs requiring structured documentation.
- major dissemination and communication outputs, especially those with external visibility.
- strategic internal documents related to project management, quality, monitoring or governance, where relevant.

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In addition, selected implementation processes may also be subject to internal quality review where their quality has a direct effect on project results. This may apply, for example, to the organisation of training, workshops, stakeholder consultations, pilot activities or dissemination actions where documentation, participation conditions, feedback mechanisms or implementation evidence are particularly relevant.

The inclusion of these various elements in the review framework reflects the fact that quality in EMPOANDES is not limited to formal reporting documents. It also concerns the substantive and procedural quality of the actions through which project results are generated.

5.4 Review criteria

For internal quality review purposes, outputs and activities should be assessed against a common core set of criteria, adapted as necessary to the specific nature of the item under review. These criteria provide a shared reference for reviewers and support consistency across different parts of the project.

The principal review criteria are the following:

Alignment with project objectives and work package scope. The output should be clearly related to the objectives, tasks and expected results of the corresponding work package and of the project as a whole.

Completeness. The output should contain the expected elements, address the relevant content requirements, and include the necessary supporting information or evidence.



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Internal consistency and coherence. The structure, argument, terminology, logic and internal organisation of the output should be coherent and not contain contradictions or avoidable fragmentation.

Substantive quality. The content should be sufficiently developed, accurate and appropriate for its intended purpose and audience.

Clarity and usability. The output should be understandable, well organised and fit for its intended use, whether as a formal deliverable, training resource, pilot document or communication product.

Traceability and evidentiary basis. Where relevant, the output should rest on identifiable implementation evidence and should be supported by a sufficiently clear documentary basis.

Compliance with procedural and formal requirements. The output should respect the applicable internal review, formatting, visibility, documentation and validation requirements.

Consideration of cross-cutting dimensions where relevant. Outputs or actions involving participation, communication or stakeholder engagement should, where appropriate, reflect inclusion, transparency, respectful participation and non-discrimination considerations.

These criteria are intended to guide the internal review process in a structured yet flexible manner. Reviewers should apply them proportionately, taking into account the purpose and significance of the item under review.

5.5 Review roles and actors

The review process in EMPOANDES involves several actors, depending on the nature of the output concerned. As a general rule, the responsible work package leader or designated drafting lead initiates the review process and ensures that the draft under review is sufficiently mature to justify review. This initial responsibility includes identifying the relevant reviewers, communicating the review timeline, and clarifying the type of feedback required.



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Reviewers may include contributing partners, other work package leaders, the coordinator, members of the relevant governance body, or other internal actors with appropriate expertise or institutional relevance. The selection of reviewers should reflect the nature of the output. Technical or methodological outputs may require review by subject-relevant partners, whereas management documents may require review by those involved in project coordination or compliance. Communication products may require review through the dissemination structure of the project.

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The coordinator has a particular role in relation to project-wide documents, formal deliverables of broader relevance, and outputs whose quality may affect reporting readiness, institutional credibility or project coherence. The coordinator may therefore participate directly in review or ensure that review has been adequately organised and documented.

Review responsibilities should be sufficiently clear to avoid ambiguity or passive review practice. Where an actor is designated as reviewer, that role implies a substantive contribution to quality assurance and not merely a formal acknowledgment of receipt.

5.6 Review process for formal deliverables

Formal deliverables should follow the most structured review process within the project. Given their relevance for reporting, project credibility and implementation verification, each deliverable should be reviewed through a sequence that includes draft preparation, internal circulation, review, consolidation, validation and final readiness check before submission.

The process should normally include the following steps:

First, the lead partner or drafting lead prepares a sufficiently advanced draft based on the relevant work package activities, partner contributions and available evidence. This draft should not be circulated for review in a clearly incomplete form unless an earlier concept-level consultation is explicitly intended.



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Second, the draft is circulated to the designated reviewers within an agreed review period. The circulation should indicate clearly the deadline for comments, the type of feedback expected, and any specific aspect requiring particular attention.

Third, reviewers provide comments within the agreed timeframe. These comments should be substantive, sufficiently precise and focused on the criteria relevant to the deliverable, including alignment, completeness, consistency, clarity, evidence base and readiness for formal use.

Fourth, the drafting lead consolidates and addresses the comments received. Where comments diverge or require interpretation, the drafting lead should resolve them in coordination with the work package leader and, where appropriate, the coordinator.

Fifth, the revised version is prepared for validation. Depending on the type of deliverable and the internal procedures of the project, this may involve final review by the coordinator or a final check confirming that the deliverable is complete, coherent, compliant and ready for submission.

This process should be documented to a degree proportionate to the importance of the deliverable. At minimum, the consortium should be able to demonstrate that an internal review took place, who was involved, and that comments were considered before finalisation.

5.7 Review process for milestones

Milestones do not always require a full document, but they do require internal confirmation that the corresponding implementation condition has been met. For this reason, milestone review focuses less on textual revision and more on validation of achievement and adequacy of supporting evidence.

The work package leader responsible should ensure that the milestone is clearly defined, that the expected condition or result can be identified, and that the evidence supporting achievement is available. Where relevant, this evidence may consist of completed materials, implementation records, meeting outcomes, activity completion proof, or other documentation showing that the intended step has been reached.



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Internal review of a milestone should confirm three elements: that the milestone condition has in fact been achieved; that the achievement is supported by identifiable evidence; and that any relevant deviation or partial completion has been explicitly noted and assessed. This review may be lighter than in the case of a deliverable, but it should still be recorded through the project's monitoring and documentation framework.

5.8 Review of training, educational and curricular outputs

Educational and training outputs developed within EMPOANDES require a specific type of internal review because their quality depends not only on completeness and formal consistency, but also on pedagogical relevance, usability and coherence with the project's capacity-building objectives.

For such outputs, internal review should normally address: alignment with the intended learning purpose; consistency with the target audience; appropriateness of content structure; clarity of presentation; internal consistency of terminology and concepts; and, where relevant, practical usability in teaching, training or piloting contexts. If the output is intended for wider institutional use or transfer, review should also consider whether it is sufficiently robust and understandable beyond the immediate drafting context.

Where such outputs have been developed collaboratively, review should pay particular attention to internal coherence across contributions from different partners. This is especially important for curricular frameworks, course materials, training packages and associated methodological resources, where uneven contributions may otherwise affect clarity or pedagogical consistency.

5.9 Review of dissemination and communication outputs

Dissemination and communication products also require internal review, although the review logic differs from that of formal technical or management deliverables. For these outputs, the main review dimensions typically include consistency of messaging, clarity, relevance for the intended audience, compliance with project identity and visibility rules, and overall suitability for public dissemination.



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The Communication Board, WP6 leadership, the coordinator and relevant communication focal points may all have a role in this review process, depending on the nature and importance of the product. Reviews should ensure that public-facing materials are factually sound, appropriately framed, visually and institutionally coherent, and properly aligned with the project's communication procedures.

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Where relevant, review should also consider whether the communication output accurately reflects the stage of project progress, avoids overstatement, and is supported by underlying implementation evidence. This is particularly important in order to preserve the reliability and professional credibility of project communication.

5.10 Review timing and internal review windows

A quality review system is only effective if adequate time is reserved for it. For this reason, EMPOANDES should define internal review windows that are clearly separated from final submission or release deadlines. Review should not be treated as a last-minute step, but as an integral phase of output preparation.

As a general operational rule for formal deliverables and other significant outputs, the following sequence shall apply, as also described in D1.1:

- **T-21 calendar days (3-weeks):** circulation of the first complete draft by the drafting lead or responsible work package leader;
- **T-15 to T-17 (2-3 weeks):** internal review window for comments from the designated reviewers and contributing partners;
- **T-7 (week before):** consolidation of comments and circulation of the revised near-final version;
- **T-3:** final validation by the responsible work package leader and, where relevant, project-level readiness confirmation;
- **T:** formal submission or release.

Stage	Standard timing before official deadline	Main responsible actor
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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

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The exact duration of the review window may vary depending on the type and complexity of the output, but the internal planning of each significant output should explicitly include time for review, consolidation and final validation. Where several partners are expected to comment, the review period should be realistic enough to permit meaningful participation.

In practice, insufficient review time is one of the main causes of weak internal quality assurance. For this reason, the monitoring framework described in Section 4 should track not only final deadlines, but also whether review stages are being initiated with sufficient anticipation. Review timing is therefore a monitoring issue as much as a review issue.

5.11 Management of review comments and revision

The value of review depends on how documents are handled. EMPOANDES should therefore ensure that review comments are managed through a structured and transparent revision process.

Following the internal review window, the drafting lead or responsible work package leader shall examine the comments received, determine how they should be addressed, and prepare the revised near-final version by **T-7**. Not all comments necessarily require full incorporation, but all relevant comments should be considered and treated in a reasoned manner. Where comments raise contradictions, ambiguities or structural issues, the drafting lead should resolve them through consultation where necessary rather than ignoring them informally.

A proportionate documentary trail of this process should exist, especially for formal deliverables and other major outputs. This does not require an overly complex



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system, but it should be possible to demonstrate that review led to revision and that the final version was not produced independently of the comments received.

5.12 Validation and final approval

Review and validation are related but distinct steps. Review examines a draft and identifies necessary improvements. Validation confirms that the revised output is acceptable for formal submission, internal adoption or public release.

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In line with the internal timeline described above, final validation should normally take place by **T-3**. For formal deliverables, validation normally requires confirmation by the responsible work package leader and final project-level readiness confirmation before submission. For major communication outputs, validation may involve the relevant WP6 or communication structure. For educational or pilot outputs, validation may rest with the responsible work package in coordination with the coordinator where needed.

The purpose of validation is to ensure that outputs do not move to final status without explicit internal confirmation that the relevant review and revision steps have been completed. Validation therefore functions as the final control point within the internal quality review system.

5.13 Review of implementation processes

Although most internal review activity focuses on outputs, selected implementation processes may also be reviewed where their quality significantly affects project results. This may apply to trainings, workshops, stakeholder consultations, pilot actions or internal procedures that generate important evidence or feed directly into later outputs.

Process review may address issues such as adequacy of preparation, participation conditions, clarity of objectives, quality of documentation, collection of feedback, transparency of organisation, or consistency with the intended methodology. The purpose is not to over-formalise routine activities, but to ensure that important project actions are also subject to learning and quality reflection.



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This kind of process review is particularly useful in a capacity-building project such as EMPOANDES, where the way an activity is implemented may be as important as the fact that it took place. Reviewing processes therefore supports both continuous improvement and stronger evidence for later reporting and transfer.

5.14 Link between internal review, monitoring and corrective action

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Internal review should not be treated as a stand-alone exercise separated from monitoring and corrective action. On the contrary, these three functions form a connected system.

Monitoring identifies whether an output or process is on track and whether risks or delays exist. Internal review assesses the quality and readiness of the output or process once a draft or implementation stage exists. Corrective action responds to the weaknesses or issues identified through monitoring or review. The three functions therefore support one another.

Where internal review identifies substantial weaknesses, gaps in content, lack of evidence, inconsistency, weak usability or non-compliance with project requirements, these findings should feed back into the management and monitoring framework. This may result in stronger follow-up, revised drafting responsibilities, additional review, and closer coordination or escalation where needed. In this way, the review system contributes actively to implementation quality rather than remaining a purely editorial exercise.

5.15 Evidence and traceability of the review process

The review process itself forms part of the project's traceability system and should therefore leave an appropriate documentary trail. The depth of documentation may vary according to the type of output, but for all significant outputs the consortium should be able to identify that a review took place, who reviewed the item, when the review occurred, and whether revisions were made before finalisation.

This evidence may consist of annotated drafts, tracked comments, consolidated feedback files, email exchanges, version histories, validation notes or other appropriate records. The specific format is less important than the ability to



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demonstrate that the output underwent an identifiable internal quality assurance process.

This requirement is especially relevant under the lump sum model, where the credibility of project implementation depends heavily on the existence of structured, well-documented processes showing that outputs were genuinely prepared, reviewed and finalised in line with the approved action.

5.16 Operational conclusion

The internal quality review procedures of EMPOANDES provide the practical mechanism through which draft outputs and selected implementation processes are transformed into validated project results. By combining proportionate review, differentiated procedures, structured revision and explicit validation, the system strengthens the reliability, coherence and usability of project outputs across all work packages.

Together with the monitoring framework described in Section 4, the review procedures established in this section ensure that EMPOANDES does not rely solely on output production, but on a traceable quality process capable of supporting sound implementation, technical reporting and continuous improvement throughout the project lifecycle.

6. Quality Indicators and Monitoring Reference Framework

6.1 Purpose of the indicator framework

The quality indicators of EMPOANDES are intended to provide a clear and operational basis for assessing whether the project is progressing in a satisfactory, timely and coherent manner. Their purpose is not to create an unnecessarily complex measurement system, but to ensure that project monitoring is based on explicit and verifiable reference points.



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In line with the project design, the indicator framework must serve four complementary functions. First, it must make quality expectations visible across work packages, deliverables, milestones and key implementation actions. Second, it must support timely action by allowing the consortium to identify delays, weaknesses or gaps early. Third, it must provide a structured basis for internal review, corrective action and reporting. Fourth, it must support the documentation of proper implementation under the Erasmus+ lump sum model, where the focus lies on completed work packages, achieved outputs and substantiated implementation rather than on actual-cost reporting.

For this reason, the indicator framework of EMPOANDES combines three types of reference points:

- (a) **fixed project-level KPIs**, directly linked to the approved work plan, deliverables and milestones;
- (b) **process and quality indicators**, used to assess timeliness, completeness, review compliance and evidence readiness; and
- (c) **specific piloting indicators**, used to monitor the implementation and quality of pilot courses and academic integration activities.

6.2 General indicator logic

The indicators used in EMPOANDES follow five general principles. They must be **relevant** to project objectives and work package commitments; **proportionate** to the scale and management needs of the project; **evidence-based** and linked to identifiable documentary sources; **usable** for follow-up and corrective action; and **comparable** enough to support consolidated project-wide monitoring.

Given the nature of EMPOANDES, the monitoring system will combine quantitative and qualitative indicators. Quantitative indicators are appropriate for elements such as the number of deliverables completed, milestones achieved, trainings implemented, pilot actions documented, or dissemination products released. Qualitative indicators are necessary for dimensions such as completeness of outputs, adequacy of course materials, coherence of implementation, quality of evidence, usability of training products, and effectiveness of pilot actions.



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At the start of the project, the baseline value for the formal project KPIs is generally **zero**, since the outputs, milestones and structured actions are to be generated during implementation. Target values are derived from the approved Description of the Action, including the list of work packages, deliverables, milestones and major outputs. In cases where the exact numerical volume of a later-stage activity is not fixed ex ante, the target will be formulated as completion of the full scope foreseen in the relevant work package and supported by the corresponding evidence.

6.3 Fixed project-level KPIs

The following project-level KPIs are directly derived from the approved project structure and should be monitored throughout implementation.

KPI 1. Completion of work packages

This KPI measures whether the six work packages of EMPOANDES are progressing and being completed in accordance with the approved project plan.

Unit of measurement: number of work packages completed or substantially on track.

Baseline: 0.

Target: 6 work packages completed by the end of the project.

Evidence sources: work package monitoring sheets, deliverables, milestones, periodic reports, Executive Board feedbacks and minutes.

Review frequency: periodic, with reinforced attention near reporting deadlines.

KPI 2. Timely completion of deliverables

The approved work plan includes **21 deliverables** across WP1 to WP6, including D1.1 to D1.4, D2.1 to D2.3, D3.1 to D3.4, D4.1 to D4.3, D5.1 to D5.2, and D6.1 to D6.5. This KPI measures whether these deliverables are prepared, reviewed and submitted within the agreed internal and formal deadlines.

Unit of measurement: number of deliverables submitted on time / total number of deliverables.

Baseline: 0/21.

Target: 21/21 deliverables completed and submitted within project implementation.

Evidence sources: deliverable tracker, internal review records, submission



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confirmations, repository records.

Review frequency: periodic, with reinforced review before each deadline.

KPI 3. Achievement of milestones

The approved DoA includes **13 milestones**, ranging from Consortium Agreement and project launch to training start, competency guide development, first courses completed, educational resource development and project closure.

Unit of measurement: number of milestones achieved / total number of milestones.

Baseline: 0/13.

Target: 13/13 milestones achieved by the planned due month.

Evidence sources: milestone verification records, agendas, minutes, reports, platform evidence, participant records, final documentation.

Review frequency: periodic and milestone-specific.

KPI 4. Project start-up and governance operationalisation

This KPI covers the early operationalisation of the project through the start-up milestones foreseen in the DoA: Consortium Agreement, EMPOANDES launched, Constitution and start of the Communication Board, and Web portal running.

Unit of measurement: number of start-up governance milestones achieved.

Baseline: 0.

Target: 4 start-up milestones achieved by Month 3.

Evidence sources: signed consortium agreement, meeting minutes, launch records, web portal evidence, kick-off documentation.

Review frequency: early-stage monitoring, Months 1–3.

KPI 5. Completion of educational needs and strategy phase

This KPI measures completion of WP2 through the delivery of D2.1 Educational Needs and Gap Analysis Report, D2.2 Climate Services Educational Strategy, D2.3 List of courses selected to be developed, and related milestones on educational analysis and stakeholder/community-of-practice establishment.

Unit of measurement: number of core WP2 outputs and milestones achieved.

Baseline: 0.



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Target: full completion of D2.1, D2.2, D2.3, MS5 and MS6 by Months 6 to 10.

Evidence sources: reports, workshop records, attendance lists, community-of-practice records, strategic documents.

Review frequency: periodic during Months 1–12.

KPI 6. Curricula development outputs completed

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This KPI measures progress in WP3 through D3.1 Rationales of Selected Courses, D3.2 Curricula Development Guidelines, D3.3 Educational Platform, D3.4 Course Materials, and the related milestones on competency guide development and platform readiness.

Unit of measurement: number of WP3 outputs and milestones achieved.

Baseline: 0.

Target: full completion of the WP3 output package by Month 24, with intermediate milestones by Month 18.

Evidence sources: course rationales, guidelines, platform records, course materials, user feedback or pilot testing reports.

Review frequency: periodic during Months 10–24.

KPI 7. Staff capacity-building outputs completed

This KPI measures progress in WP4 through D4.1, D4.2 and D4.3, together with milestone evidence for training start and first courses completed.

Unit of measurement: number of training outputs and milestones achieved.

Baseline: 0.

Target: full completion of D4.1, D4.2, D4.3, MS7 and MS10 by Month 24.

Evidence sources: training agendas, participant lists, reports, feedback summaries, completion certificates, course calls and supporting graphic materials.

Review frequency: periodic during Months 6–24.

KPI 8. Piloting, academic integration and community empowerment outputs completed

This KPI measures WP5 progress through D5.1 Climate Services Academic Integration Report, D5.2 Professional and General Training Program Toolkit, and the milestone on



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engagement and educational resources development.

Unit of measurement: number of WP5 outputs and milestones achieved.

Baseline: 0.

Target: completion of D5.1 by Month 30, D5.2 and MS12 by Month 36.

Evidence sources: academic integration documentation, toolkit files, repository of resources, use/access data, testimonials and feedback forms.

Review frequency: periodic during Months 18–36.

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KPI 9. Dissemination and communication outputs completed

This KPI measures implementation of WP6 through D6.1 to D6.5 and the associated project communication milestones.

Unit of measurement: number of dissemination outputs and milestones achieved.

Baseline: 0.

Target: completion of D6.1–D6.5 and associated communication milestones by Month 36.

Evidence sources: communication plan, dissemination reports, website evidence, final conference proceedings, meeting minutes, media and event records.

Review frequency: periodic throughout the project.

KPI 10. Evidence readiness for reporting and verification

This KPI measures whether the documentary basis required to substantiate implementation is available, organised and retrievable.

Unit of measurement: implementation evidence completeness status.

Baseline: initial documentary structure under establishment.

Target: complete and traceable evidence set for all relevant work packages, deliverables, milestones and major actions by each reporting stage.

Evidence sources: shared repositories, agendas, minutes, attendance lists, draft archives, screenshots, evaluation forms, pilot records and validation notes.

Review frequency: periodic, with reinforced checks before reporting deadlines.



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6.4 Specific quality indicators for piloting courses

Because piloting is a central component of EMPOANDES, specific indicators are required for monitoring pilot courses and related academic integration actions. These indicators are directly linked to DoA, which requires evidence for first courses completed, including course agendas, participant signatures, completion records, course duration, achievement of learning objectives, and participant feedback and evaluation summaries.

The following indicators shall be used for piloting courses and related pilot learning actions for WP4:

PI 1. Pilot course implementation

Measures whether the planned pilot course or pilot learning action has actually taken place.

Unit: number of pilot courses implemented.

Baseline: 0.

Target: all pilot courses selected for piloting under the approved project pathway implemented within WP4/WP5.

Evidence: agendas, course calls, implementation records, schedules.

PI 2. Participation in pilot courses

Measures the number and profile of participants involved in the pilot course.

Unit: number of participants per pilot course.

Baseline: 0.

Target: participation documented for all pilot actions.

Evidence: registration forms, signed participant lists, attendance records.

PI 3. Completion rate of pilot courses

Measures the proportion of participants who effectively completed the pilot activity.

Unit: number and percentage of participants completing the pilot course.

Baseline: 0.

Target: completion data available for every pilot course.

Evidence: completion certificates, course reports, attendance logs.



PI 4. Achievement of learning objectives

Measures whether the pilot course demonstrates that intended learning objectives were addressed and achieved to a satisfactory degree.

Unit: qualitative achievement status, supported where possible by participant completion data or course evidence.

Baseline: not applicable at project start.

Target: documented evidence of achievement for all pilot courses.

Evidence: course reports, assessment results where applicable, trainer summaries, completion records.

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PI 5. Participant feedback and course effectiveness

Measures participant perceptions of relevance, clarity, usefulness and overall effectiveness of the pilot course.

Unit: feedback collected / qualitative assessment.

Baseline: 0.

Target: feedback collected and analysed for all pilot courses.

Evidence: evaluation forms, participant surveys, feedback summaries.

PI 6. Usability of course materials and platform

Measures whether course materials and, where relevant, the educational platform are usable and adequate for later implementation or refinement.

Unit: usability status based on structured review and/or pilot feedback.

Baseline: draft stage.

Target: documented evidence of usability and readiness for further refinement or deployment.

Evidence: platform walkthroughs, user feedback, pilot testing reports, revised materials.

PI 7. Revision after piloting

Measures whether lessons from the pilot phase have been incorporated into updated versions of the course or related materials.

Unit: revised/not revised; extent of update.



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Baseline: 0.

Target: documented revision process for all pilot courses requiring refinement.

Evidence: version history, updated course documents, review notes.

And, the last indicator shall be used for academic integration defined in WP5:

PI 8. Academic integration of climate services education

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Measures whether pilot learning activities feed into the objectives of D5.1 Climate Services Academic Integration Report and broader institutional embedding.

Unit: integration status per course or pilot pathway.

Baseline: 0.

Target: pilot results documented and reflected in academic integration outputs.

Evidence: D5.1 drafts and final report, course mapping records, institutional integration notes.



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Table 1. Project-level and piloting monitoring indicators

Indicator	Unit	Baseline	Target	Main evidence source	Actor
Work packages completed	No. of WPs	0	6	WP monitoring sheets, periodic reports	Coordinator + WP leaders
Deliverables completed on time	No. of deliverables	0/21	21/21	Deliverable tracker, submissions	Coordinator + WP leaders
Milestones achieved	No. of milestones	0/13	13/13	Milestone records, verification evidence	Coordinator + WP leaders
Start-up governance milestones	No. achieved	0	4 by M3	CA, launch records, portal, minutes	Coordinator
WP2 needs/strategy outputs	No. achieved	0	Full completion by M10	D2.1–D2.3, workshop evidence	WP2 leader
WP3 curricula outputs	No. achieved	0	Full completion by M24	D3.1–D3.4, platform evidence	WP3 leader
WP4 capacity-building outputs	No. achieved	0	Full completion by M24	D4.1–D4.3, MS7, MS10	WP4 leader
WP5 piloting/integration outputs	No. achieved	0	D5.1 by M30, full by M36	D5.1, D5.2, MS12	WP5 leader
WP6 dissemination outputs	No. achieved	0	Full completion by M36	D6.1–D6.5, dissemination evidence	WP6 leader
Evidence readiness	Status	Initial	Complete at each reporting point	Repository and evidence files	All partners + coordinator
Pilot course implementation	No. of pilots	0	All planned pilots implemented	Agendas, pilot records	Responsible partner / WP leader
Pilot participation	No. participants	0	Recorded for all pilots	Registration and attendance	Responsible partner
Pilot completion	No./% completed	0	Recorded for all pilots	Completion records	Responsible partner
Learning objectives achieved	Status	n/a	Documented for all pilots	Course reports, assessments	WP leader
Participant feedback collected	Status	0	Collected for all pilots	Evaluation forms, surveys	Responsible partner
Revision after piloting	Status	0	Documented where needed	Revised materials, version history	Drafting lead / WP leader



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6.5 Review frequency and use of indicators

Indicators shall be reviewed at three levels. At **work package level**, they shall be reviewed regularly by the relevant WP leader in relation to ongoing tasks, deliverables, milestones and major activities. At **project level**, they shall be consolidated periodically by the coordinator and discussed through the Executive Board where needed. At **critical implementation points**, including approaching deliverable deadlines, milestone deadlines, training periods, piloting periods and reporting stages, they shall be subject to reinforced review.

For internal use, indicators may be assessed using a simple traffic-light logic:

- **Green:** on track.
- **Amber:** concern requiring active action.
- **Red:** significant delay, weakness or implementation risk.

Any amber or red status should be accompanied by a short explanation, the evidence available, and the action proposed. In this way, the indicators are not merely descriptive but directly connected to management follow-up and corrective action.

6.6 Operational conclusion

The quality indicators of EMPOANDES are designed to make monitoring more explicit, measurable and operational. They translate the approved project architecture into a practical monitoring framework based on project-level KPIs, work package outputs, deliverables, milestones, evidence readiness and piloting-specific indicators. This approach responds directly to the need for a more explicit and usable quality framework by linking each monitored area to units of measurement, baseline values, targets, evidence sources and responsible actors. It also ensures consistency with the project's lump sum implementation logic, which requires the consortium to demonstrate proper implementation of work packages and results through traceable evidence and structured monitoring. This assessment logic operationalises the traffic-light approach introduced in Section 4.10.



7. Risk Monitoring and Corrective Actions

7.1 General approach

Risk monitoring in EMPOANDES is intended to support the early identification, assessment and handling of any factor that may affect the timely, coherent or effective implementation of the project. This includes operational, organisational, technical, institutional, financial and coordination-related risks that may influence the completion of work packages, the achievement of milestones, the quality of outputs, or the overall progress of the action.

The approach is preventive and proportionate. Its purpose is to detect relevant issues early enough to allow corrective action before they generate wider consequences for project delivery.

7.2 Main risk areas

The project already identifies a set of critical risks in the approved Description of the Action. These include lack of active participation of beneficiaries, changes in responsible staff, delays in tasks, low stakeholder involvement, limited access to information for needs diagnosis, low availability of target actors for capacity-building activities, insufficient interest in training actions, political or security instability, weak stakeholder engagement in workshops, disruptions linked to pandemics or other unexpected events, and uncertainty regarding sustainability after project completion.

These risks constitute the main reference areas for risk monitoring throughout project implementation.

7.3 Identification and assessment

Risks and implementation issues may be identified by the coordinator, work package leaders, contributing partners or governance bodies. All partners are expected to communicate relevant concerns as soon as they become visible, especially where



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they may affect deadlines, partner contributions, deliverables, milestones or cross-work-package coordination.

Once identified, a risk or issue should be assessed in terms of likely impact, urgency and possible effect on other parts of the project. For internal purposes, risks may be classified according to a simple logic of low, medium or high relevance, depending on whether they can be managed through routine actions or require reinforced coordination and possible escalation.

7.4 Corrective actions

Corrective actions should be proportionate to the nature and seriousness of the issue identified. Depending on the case, such actions may include closer follow-up, clarification of responsibilities, revision of internal timelines, reinforced review, adaptation of implementation sequencing, additional partner support, or stronger coordination at project level.

Where relevant, corrective action may also involve practical mitigation measures already foreseen in the project design, such as flexible scheduling of participatory or training sessions, use of virtual formats, stronger communication with stakeholders, knowledge transfer in case of staff changes, or adjustments in implementation arrangements.

7.5 Escalation

Where a risk or issue cannot be resolved at routine operational level, it should be escalated through the corresponding management channels. As a general rule, work package-level issues should first be addressed by the responsible work package leader in coordination with the coordinator. Where the issue has broader implications for deliverables, milestones, project timing or consortium coherence, it should be brought to the Executive Board and, where necessary, to the relevant governance body.

This escalation logic ensures that significant issues receive visibility at the appropriate level and that corrective action is not delayed.



7.6 Follow-up and documentation

Relevant risks and corrective actions should be followed up until the issue is resolved or sufficiently mitigated. Their status should be reflected in the project's monitoring and reporting mechanisms, so that the consortium maintains a clear overview of open issues, actions taken and remaining implications.

This documentation is important both for internal management and for demonstrating that project implementation is being actively monitored and managed in a structured manner.

7.7 Link with the quality framework

Risk monitoring and corrective action are integral parts of the quality management system of EMPOANDES. They complement the monitoring reference framework and the internal review procedures by ensuring that identified weaknesses lead to practical follow-up and, where necessary, to adjustments in implementation.

7.8 Risk Matrix

To complement the general approach described above, EMPOANDES shall maintain a risk register to support the structured follow-up of the main implementation risks identified in the project. This register is intended to provide operational visibility over each relevant risk, its likely cause, assessed impact and probability, the actor responsible for follow-up, the corrective or mitigation action foreseen, the next review date, and its status.

The risk register shall be reviewed periodically by the coordinator and the relevant work package leaders, and updated whenever significant new issues arise or when the status of an existing risk changes. It is intended to function as a practical management tool within the broader quality and monitoring system of the project.



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Table 2. 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.

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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.
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.



8. Evidence Collection, Documentation and Traceability

8.1 General approach

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Evidence collection, documentation and traceability are essential components of the quality and monitoring system of EMPOANDES. Under the Erasmus+ lump sum model, the project is not justified through the reporting of actual costs, but through the proper implementation of the action, the completion of work packages and the achievement of the corresponding results. For this reason, the consortium must maintain a clear and reliable documentary basis showing that project activities, outputs, milestones and deliverables have been effectively implemented in accordance with Annex 1.

The purpose of this section is to define the minimum internal approach that the consortium will follow in order to ensure that implementation evidence is generated, preserved, organised and retrievable throughout the project lifecycle. This is necessary both for internal monitoring and review, and for continuous reporting, periodic reporting, checks, reviews, audits or other verification procedures that may take place during or after the project.

8.2 Types of evidence to be collected

The evidence retained by the consortium shall be proportionate to the nature of the action carried out, but sufficiently robust to demonstrate proper implementation. In practical terms, this evidence may include agendas, minutes, attendance lists, signed presence lists, participant registration records, training materials, presentations, feedback forms, evaluation summaries, platform screenshots, curricula drafts, course materials, internal review records, communication products, dissemination evidence, workshop documentation, pilot summaries, deliverable versions and milestone verification files. The DoA explicitly foresees this kind of documentation for key outputs such as meetings, trainings, workshops, manuals, guides, reports and milestone verification.



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Evidence should not be limited to final outputs. The consortium should also preserve the materials that demonstrate the implementation process, including preparation, participation, review, revision and validation. This is particularly important for deliverables, milestones, trainings, piloting actions and dissemination activities, since these are central both to project monitoring and to the demonstration of proper implementation under the grant.

8.3 Responsibilities for evidence retention

Each partner institution is responsible for preserving the evidence linked to the activities and contributions for which it is responsible. Work package leaders are responsible for ensuring that work package-level evidence is sufficiently organised and visible to support monitoring, internal review and reporting. At project level, the coordinator shall maintain overall visibility over the documentary basis required for consolidated follow-up, reporting and traceability. This internal logic is consistent with the Grant Agreement, which assigns implementation responsibilities to beneficiaries, requires them to provide contributions to deliverables and technical reports in due time, and requires the coordinator to review and submit project documents and reports.

This distribution of responsibilities does not require that all original evidence be centrally always held by the coordinator. However, it does require that the consortium knows what evidence exists, who holds it, whether it is complete, and whether it can be made available without delay if needed for monitoring, reporting or verification.

8.4 Storage and organisation of records

Project evidence should be stored in an organised and traceable manner, using the shared repository and internal document management arrangements agreed by the consortium. Files should be named, grouped and versioned in a consistent way so that they can be retrieved easily and linked to the corresponding work package, task, deliverable, milestone or activity.

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The internal storage system should allow the consortium to distinguish clearly between draft materials, review versions, final outputs, milestone evidence, event documentation, dissemination evidence and formal reporting records. This distinction is important because the project must be able not only to show final results, but also to demonstrate how those results were prepared, reviewed and implemented.

8.5 Original records, digital files and admissibility

The Grant Agreement requires beneficiaries to keep original records and supporting documents. It also states that digital and digitalised documents are considered originals if they are authorised by the applicable national law, and that non-original documents may be accepted if they offer a comparable level of assurance. For this reason, EMPOANDES will accept digital documentary practice as the normal basis for project traceability, provided that documents remain authentic, legible, attributable and retrievable.

In practical terms, this means that electronic minutes, scanned signed attendance lists, archived emails, shared review files, digital platform records and stored screenshots may all form part of the project evidence base, provided that they are kept in a structured and reliable way.

8.6 Record-keeping period

The Data Sheet of the Grant Agreement sets the standard time limit for record-keeping at **five years after final payment**, with the additional requirement that where checks, reviews, audits, investigations, litigation or related procedures are ongoing, the records must be kept until those procedures are closed. This rule applies directly to the project and should therefore be reflected in the consortium's internal documentary practice.

For EMPOANDES, this means that documentary evidence should be preserved with a view to post-project verification and institutional accountability.



8.7 Link with continuous reporting and periodic reporting

The Grant Agreement requires beneficiaries to report in the Portal Continuous Reporting tool on the progress of the action, including deliverables, milestones, outputs or outcomes, critical risks and indicators. It also requires periodic reporting, including a technical part covering action implementation and a financial statement linked to the completed work packages declared during the reporting period. In this context, evidence collection is directly linked to reporting readiness.

The consortium should therefore ensure that evidence is collected progressively during implementation and not only retrospectively at reporting stage. This is particularly important because late reconstruction of evidence increases the risk of inconsistency, incompleteness and weak substantiation. Good documentation practice should make it possible to support continuous reporting, periodic reporting and internal review without relying on ad hoc recovery of information.

8.8 Traceability of review and validation

Traceability should apply not only to activities and outputs, but also to the internal quality processes through which they are prepared. For significant outputs, especially deliverables, pilot materials, training products and strategic project documents, the consortium should preserve a proportionate record of internal review and validation. This may include annotated drafts, tracked changes, review comments, consolidated feedback files, version history, validation emails or equivalent records.

This traceability is important because it shows that outputs were not only produced but passed through an identifiable process of internal checking and improvement. It therefore reinforces both the quality dimension and the evidentiary dimension of the D1.2 framework.

8.9 Consequences of insufficient documentation

The Grant Agreement explicitly states that if a beneficiary breaches its record-keeping obligations, lump sum contributions that are insufficiently substantiated may become ineligible, may be rejected, and the grant may also be reduced. For this



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reason, evidence collection and documentation should be treated as a core implementation requirement and not as a secondary administrative task.

Within EMPOANDES, insufficient documentation should therefore trigger follow-up through the monitoring and corrective action framework, especially where the missing evidence affects deliverables, milestones, work package completion or reporting readiness.

8.8 Document organisation, naming convention and evidence upload responsibilities

To ensure consistency, retrievability and traceability across the consortium, EMPOANDES shall apply a common document organisation and naming convention for project evidence, draft outputs and final records. This operational rule complements the general record-keeping obligations described above and is intended to facilitate monitoring, reporting readiness and internal review.

As a general principle, project documentation shall be organised in the shared repository by **work package**, **type of record** and **implementation stage**. At minimum, each work package folder should contain, where relevant, separate subfolders for:

- **Deliverables**
- **Milestones**
- **Meetings**
- **Trainings / Workshops / Pilots**
- **Monitoring and Review**
- **Dissemination evidence**
- **Administrative and supporting records**

File names shall follow a consistent format allowing immediate identification of the work package, the document or activity concerned, the date, the version and the responsible partner. As a standard rule, the following naming convention shall be used:

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WPx_Deliverable-or-Activity_Date_Version_Partner

Examples:

- WP3_D3.2_2026-09-15_v01_URV
- WP4_TrainingII_2027-03-21_v02_UNAP
- WP5_PilotCourse1_2028-02-10_Final_UDLA
- WP6_DisseminationEvent_2027-11-30_v01_URV

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Dates should normally be written in the format YYYY-MM-DD in order to ensure chronological consistency across the repository. Versions should be indicated clearly, for example v01, v02, review, near-final, or final, depending on the stage of preparation.

Responsibility for uploading and maintaining files shall follow the implementation structure of the project. The responsible partner or drafting lead shall upload the first complete version and the main supporting evidence related to its activity or output. The work package leader shall ensure that work package-level documentation is complete, correctly named and organised. The coordinator shall maintain overall visibility over the documentary structure and may request corrections where files are missing, inconsistently named or insufficiently traceable.

As an operational reference, repository completeness should be checked periodically, and in any case before major internal review points, deliverable deadlines, milestone due dates and formal reporting stages. This periodic review is intended to ensure that evidence remains not only stored, but also accessible, intelligible and ready for use in monitoring, reporting and verification processes.

9. Periodic Monitoring, Reporting and Continuous Improvement

9.1 General approach

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Periodic monitoring in EMPOANDES is intended to consolidate the information generated through the project's quality, review and indicator framework into a structured process of follow-up, reporting and improvement. Its purpose is to ensure that monitoring results are not only collected, but also used to support project management, reporting readiness and continuous strengthening of implementation practice.

This section therefore connects internal monitoring with the formal reporting obligations of the project. It establishes how information will be reviewed over time, how it will feed into consortium-level , and how lessons emerging from implementation will be used to improve subsequent stages of the action.

9.2 Periodic monitoring cycle

Monitoring in EMPOANDES shall operate as a continuous internal process combined with periodic consolidation moments. At work package level, implementation progress, indicators, deliverables, milestones, risks and evidence readiness shall be reviewed regularly by the relevant work package leaders. At project level, this information shall be consolidated periodically by the coordinator to maintain visibility over overall progress and readiness for formal reporting.

Reinforced monitoring shall apply around key implementation points, especially near deliverable deadlines, milestone deadlines, training and piloting phases, and reporting periods. This reinforced follow-up is intended to ensure that the consortium identifies any issue in time to take corrective action before it affects the proper implementation of the project.



9.3 Continuous reporting

In line with the Grant Agreement, the beneficiaries must report on the progress of the action through the Portal Continuous Reporting tool. For EMPOANDES, this means that internal monitoring should support the timely updating of deliverables, milestones, outputs, critical risks and indicators throughout implementation. The internal monitoring framework set out in this Plan is therefore designed to feed directly into this continuous reporting obligation.

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To support this requirement, work package leaders and responsible partners should ensure that relevant implementation information is available in a timely manner and can be consolidated without delay when reporting updates are needed.

9.4 Periodic reporting

The Grant Agreement establishes a single reporting period covering Months 1 to 36, followed by a periodic report to be submitted within 60 days after the end of the reporting period. The periodic report includes a technical part and a financial statement linked to the completed work packages declared. In practical terms, this means that the internal monitoring system of EMPOANDES must allow the consortium to demonstrate, at the end of the project, which work packages were completed, how they were implemented, and what evidence substantiates that implementation.

The technical part of reporting should be supported by the consolidated monitoring records generated during implementation. This includes work package monitoring, indicator review, risk follow-up, evidence availability, deliverable preparation and milestone achievement. The financial part, under the lump sum model, depends on the completion of work packages and not on actual-cost reporting, which further reinforces the importance of a reliable internal monitoring and evidence system.

9.5 Internal consolidation for reporting readiness

To ensure reporting readiness, the consortium shall progressively consolidate implementation evidence and monitoring results throughout the project and not only at the reporting stage. This includes maintaining updated



D1.2 Quality Data and Monitoring Plan

deliverable and milestone status, work package progress summaries, records of trainings and pilots, dissemination evidence, risk follow-up records and documentation supporting indicators and KPIs.

The coordinator shall oversee this consolidation at project level, with input from work package leaders and responsible partners. The purpose is to ensure that, when reporting is due, the necessary information is already available in a structured and traceable form.

9.6 Use of monitoring results for continuous improvement

The monitoring system of EMPOANDES is not limited to control and reporting. Its results shall also be used to improve implementation practice during the project. Where monitoring identifies recurring delays, weak review participation, inconsistent evidence collection, coordination bottlenecks or other repeated weaknesses, these findings should be used to adjust internal procedures and strengthen project execution.

Continuous improvement may include, where justified, clearer internal planning, reinforced follow-up for specific outputs, improved document management, earlier initiation of review processes, more explicit allocation of responsibilities, or refinement of monitoring tools and templates. The objective is to ensure that monitoring supports not only compliance, but also better implementation quality over time.

9.7 Review and update of the Plan

The present Quality Management and Monitoring Plan is intended to provide a stable framework for the project, but it may be refined where necessary to reflect justified implementation needs or improve the usefulness of internal monitoring practice. Any such update should remain aligned with the Grant Agreement, the Description of the Action and the overall project management framework.

Minor procedural improvements may be agreed through the normal coordination mechanisms of the project. More substantial adjustments affecting the monitoring structure should be documented and communicated clearly within the consortium.



9.8 Operational conclusion

Periodic monitoring, reporting and continuous improvement complete the quality framework of EMPOANDES by ensuring that implementation evidence, monitoring results and internal review findings are actively used for project follow-up, reporting and learning. Together with the preceding sections of this Plan, this final component provides the consortium with a coherent system for monitoring progress, supporting proper implementation and maintaining reporting readiness throughout the full lifecycle of the project.



