



## QUALITY MANAGEMENT PLAN

Work package: **Quality Control and Monitoring**

Responsible Partner: **WUS Austria**

Author: **WUS Austria**

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## INTRODUCTION

Quality control and monitoring are important keys to the successful implementation of a project and to achieve its objectives. The principle objectives for QM within the frames of the project are:

- providing quality in the structure, processes and results of the project,
- responding effectively to emerging changes and challenges in the project environment,
- ensuring sustainability of project outputs/outcomes beyond the lifetime of the project.

Therefore, the procedures and tools related to quality management target at project progress and outputs on the one hand and the quality of project management and work flow on the other hand, and are planned to meet the objectives above. The Quality Management Plan (this document), is developed together with the project coordinator and the consortium at the launch of the project. It will primarily evolve around planning, implementing, measuring and improving the project at each stage of its execution.

WP leaders will be provided with a report template to complete throughout the implementation of the WP in order to provide an in-depth analysis of the major achievements and further areas of improvement. Further, each major activity will have its evaluation tool to better understand the implementation processes and ensure that obstacles are removed and the necessary details of the plans are improved/modified if needed. In year 2 and 3 a monitoring visit will be organized to the PC institutions to observe the developments, evaluate the situation and provide recommendations for improvement. Apart from the internal measures, external quality assurance tools will be applied in the form of interim and final financial audits and interim and final reporting to the European Commission.

This Quality Control Plan is a working document that can be adapted in accordance to changing circumstances during project implementation. Potential changes are brought forward by WUS Austria and/or the consortium leader and are subject to mutual consent by all consortium partners.

## ABOUT THE PROJECT

INCLUSION (Development and Implementation of Social Dimension Strategies at HEIs in Armenia and BiH through Cross-regional Peer Learning) is a three-year cross-regional joint project under EAC/A04/2015 call and Key Action 2 - Capacity Building in the Field of Higher Education. The wider objective is to mobilize the HE capacity in Armenia and BiH in contributing to the implementation of the social dimension (SD) strategies through capitalizing on knowledge transfer and cross-regional cooperation.

The specific **objectives** are:

- Capacity building of HE sector for designing and implementing SD strategies;
- Development of a harmonized approach to the implementation of SD strategies in line with country specific objectives;
- Fostering access to/participation in and completion of higher education for persons from vulnerable/ underrepresented groups.
- The project targets the major problems in Armenia and BiH related to the promotion of SD strategies through broader involvement of HEIs.

The principle **outputs** and **outcomes** are:

- National level guidelines on development and operationalization of SD strategies
- Institutional level master plans and mechanisms to implement SD strategies related to fostering access to, participation in and completion of HE for students from vulnerable and underrepresented groups;
- Reviewed roles, functions and ongoing initiatives at HEIs in promoting SD strategies;
- Capacity building of HEIs and respective government authorities for operationalization of SD strategies;
- Ensuring resources for inclusive teaching and learning;
- Capacity building materials to raise awareness of high school pupils & teachers on equal access to higher education and trained highschool teachers.

The cross-regional nature of the project ensures learning from existing practices, successful experience exchange, long-standing cooperation between the two regions and EU partners – with a major aim of promoting voluntary convergence with EU developments.

## **OVERALL APPROACH AND VALUES**

### *Objectives of ensuring quality*

- To assure quality in the structure, processes and results of the project.
- To be able to respond effectively to emerging changes and challenges in the project environment.

### *Principles of quality management*

- *Quality management concerns all partners.* WUS Austria coordinates quality management but all partners are responsible for implementing the quality procedures laid out in this workbook and support the implementation of activities for quality assurance.
- *Quality management does not happen automatically if you work well.* The project has to provide a platform for discussions, supervision and conclusions.
- *Quality management is not about finding fault in our work.* It is about discussing and using our experience for improving the project implementation and its deliverables.

Proper documentation and sharing information is key to quality management. All partners need to have access to relevant information at all times/at the earliest stage possible in order to ensure a quality culture, trusting relationships between partners and an environment that supports an effective work flow.

## METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

This section outlines the specific evaluation and quality assurance procedures planned in INCLUSION. To this end the table below gives a brief overview on the activities, tools/deliverables, responsibilities and time schedule related to quality management.

WUS Austria coordinates the process for quality management, collects and processes the information and ensures -where necessary- that all partners take part in activities related to quality management.

<i>INCLUSION activities, schedule and responsibilities for QA</i>				
Activity	Description of activity	Tools and deliverables	Responsible partner/s	Timeline/Deadlines
Monitoring visits	Monitoring visit by WUS Austria and Coordinator to PCUs in Armenia and BiH.	Concept note for monitoring visit including QA questionnaires targeting HE staff and students Monitoring visit report for each PCU including findings and recommendations	WUS AT and project coordinator	Year 2
Follow up to monitoring visits	During year 3, bilateral face-to-face meetings with each PCU to follow up on findings from the monitoring visits	Minutes from bilateral meetings with each PCU Guiding questions for PCUs to be addressed during bilateral meetings	WUS AT and project coordinator	Year 3
Review of project products/outputs	A template to check the progress and finalization of individual WPs is provided by WUS Austria and filled in by WP leaders.	Template provided in Annex	WUS AT, all WP leaders	Ahead of meetings and/or at strategic points of project implementation (eg ahead of monitoring visits) and final

	The template should be updated by the WP leaders before consortium meetings, and a final version has to be submitted to WUS AT and the project coordinator after finalization of the WP.			version upon finalization of WP.
Feedback on products/outputs	Pre-final versions of products/outputs must be sent to project coordinator and WUS AT and uploaded to dropbox. Partners are encouraged to provide feedback as appropriate.	Template provided in Annex. Where appropriate, feedback can be also provided through other channels (e.g. via adapted feedback forms or via e-mail correspondence between involved partners, through discussions at joint meetings).	All partners	Upon submission of drafts or pre-final versions of product/outputs
Self-assessment of contributions to the development of deliverables by partners	Each partner will provide a self-assessment in line with an established template, identifying contributions made	Template presented and discussed during the meeting in Graz (Feb 2019)	All partners	Self-assessment of partners until 23 April 2019; consolidation of results until end May 2019.
Interim and overall external and financial audit	Interim financial and audit reports and overall external and financial audit reports – will be organized by project coordinator.	Audit reports	Project coordinator + external evaluation (tbd)	To be decided/confirmed by project coordinator
Quality assurance sessions	A quality session or briefing is integrated to every consortium meeting in order to provide space to discussions on risks and challenges with a focus on changes to risk log, particular threads that need to be discussed and mitigated jointly etc.). as preparation for the quality sessions, WP	Conclusions from QA sessions, updated WP reporting templates	WUS AT in cooperation with project coordinator	At all consortium meetings (6x)

	leaders send their updated WP reporting template in advance to WUS AT and to the project coordinator.			
Event reporting and quality assessment of events/trainings	Events are evaluated via a questionnaire including a summative narrative of the results and recommendations for further events if applicable.	Template provided in Annex	Hosting institution	

## RISK MANAGEMENT

One of the major pillars of quality management in the project is risk management. This includes regular updates to the risk log and mitigation strategies based on risk-focused quality session during consortium/partner meetings.

### *Principles of risk management*

- Give internal quality assurance a platform; if necessary include QA sessions on particular topics during meetings.
- Make an effort to identify risks and challenges (risk analysis update)
- Communicate risks and challenges amongst partners and discuss the issue openly with all parties involved – do not hold back information, make compromises.
- View the situations from different angles and different points of view and include all partners into the discussion.
- Make sure all partners feel informed and involved – if they don't, they are less likely to contribute to solutions and compromises.

<i>INCLUSION risk log</i>		
<b>Risk</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Mitigation Strategy</b>
There may be turnover of key representatives/project team members which might cause disruption to the project.	high	At institutional level: proper documentation and collection of key project documents; share these documents and key information with all project team members and beyond to ensure that knowledge about the project does not lay with only one person and project implementation is not dependent on one person only.
PCU staff/students may not understand the importance of promoting access to/participation	high	Work out a list of arguments how working on the topic will

in/successful completion of HE for students from vulnerable/underrepresented groups.		be beneficial to all staff/students (e.g. exploring the boundaries of the institution, fostering creativity in finding solutions for complex questions, how would the improved infrastructure be beneficial etc.).
Lack of awareness and openness related to the possibilities afforded by the internet as a training tool.	low to medium	If staff/students do not see or appreciate the possibilities of resources/tools offered through the internet, extra training may be needed for particular user groups to use internet-related tools.
Constant fluctuation of euro's exchange rate will cause burden to the grant-holding HEI in particular;	medium	Medium losses through exchange rates is usually covered by each institution themselves. Considerable loss can be discussed within the project team to find fair solutions.
Political tensions might cause problems and delay implementation of the project.	medium	Political tensions at institutional level occur often in countries in transition, which will have significant impact on project implementation (e.g. decision making/getting signatures is delayed if senior staff is fired etc.). In cases as these it is particularly important to keep project staff at the

		<p>institution stable (the same), who can argue for the project at management level and to visibly involve other project partners outside the institution to make a case for the project (e.g. through an internal field/monitoring visit, promotion event etc.).</p> <p>Tensions at national level need to be tackled at level of the funding agency, and it may be necessary to adapt the project schedule and prolong the implementation of the project.</p>
PCUs/government officials in the field of education may face difficulties in identifying suitable pilot schools; pupils and parents may not fully appreciate the importance of the topic.	medium to high	Work out a communication strategy that considers potential concerns (e.g. children/parents will be worried about being stigmatised) > careful wording is essential!
High school teachers may find it difficult to work on the inclusion aspects (understanding of concept, experience, capacities, expectations)	medium to high	Carefully plan the trainings for teachers free of assumptions: think about how to explain the concept, consider their (lack of) experience, capacities, and expectations.
Selection of target – target groups chosen may not be in line with national/regional strategies	medium	Collect arguments, include people from target group, brainstorm within the project team/with other partners for solutions (meeting/skype), use literature review/survey results to make a case.
Public procurement for equipment may be complex at national level and could cause delay in purchase	medium to high	Start the process of procurement early enough, discuss it already at early stages of the project (what kind of equipment - making sure it has maximum outreach to the target group? What are the EC rules, what are the national rules? Some equipment may only have one provider? )

Target groups may not be aware they are a target group and may not be keen on working with the project (stigma)	high	Address the challenge at a systemic level and not at personal level: self-identification, have others from the target group talk to potential participants (e.g. students talking to students), be transparent about the objective of their involvement – ensure anonymity if need be, establish a trusting environment
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## ANNEXES

# INCLUSION

### REPORTING TEMPLATE – WORK PACKAGES

NUMBER AND NAME OF WORK PACKAGE:

REPORT PROVIDED BY:

#### SHORT SUMMARY OF WORK PACKAGE AS IN PROJECT PROPOSAL

*State the main outputs and activities as per Logframe*

**COMMENTS ON TIMELINE IN REFERENCE TO PROPOSAL** *(are activities/outputs delayed and if so – why?)*

**GENERAL COMMENTS ON WORK PACKAGE IMPLEMENTATION** *(describe challenges and opportunities/success stories encountered in WP implementation, success in meeting major milestones...etc )*

#### GENERAL COMMENTS ON INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITY

<b>Activity No and title</b>	
<b>Description of implementation process</b>	
<b>Challenges and opportunities/success stories</b>	
<b>Deviation from the original plan (why?)</b>	

**ANY OTHER COMMENT:**

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*The following section is to be filled in by person providing feedback to WP reporting template*

**FEEDBACK BY:**

**COMMENTS ON THE REPORT/IMPLEMENTATION OF WP:**

# INCLUSION

## *FEEDBACK FORM – MAIN PRODUCTS<sup>1</sup>*

**NAME OF PRODUCT:**

**FEEDBACK PROVIDED BY:**

**GENERAL COMMENTS:**

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Reference to chapter/page nr. in the document	SUGGESTED CHANGES

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<sup>1</sup> This template may also be updated as considered feasible by respective WP leaders. Instead of using a pre-defined template, WP leaders may also decide to collect feedback via e-mail, skype or meeting discussions. In this case, it will be up to the WP leaders to provide further evidence of the discussions held (eg mail conversation, minutes etc).