BLUE CAREER CENTRE OF EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN AND BLACK SEA (MENTOR)

AGREEMENT NUMBER—EASME/EMFF/2016/1.2.1.2/06/SI2.749365-MENTOR

"Blue Careers in Europe"

D1.3. Risk Assessment

T 1-3: Risk Management

(Start: M1, End: M24)

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Abstract	D1.3.-Risk Assessment has been developed by NTUA within WP1. The present deliverable identifies all the possible risks that might occur during the lifetime of the project and may influence the implementation of all the modules comprising the MENTOR goals.

Keywords	Project Management, Managing Risks, Contingency Plan, Mitigation Actions.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This deliverable is dedicated to the Risk Management Plan for MENTOR Project, Grant Agreement EASME/EMFF/2016/1.2.1.2/06/SI2.749365-MENTOR. The Deliverable 1.3 is part of the Work Package 1 of Project Management and defines how risks associated with the MENTOR (Blue Career Centre of Eastern Mediterranean and Black Sea) project will be identified, analyzed, and managed. It outlines how risk management activities will be performed, recorded, and monitored throughout the lifecycle of the project and provides templates and practices for recording and prioritizing risks.

Analysis of risk events that have been prioritized using the qualitative risk analysis process and their effect on project activities has been estimated, a numerical rating applied to each risk based on this analysis, and then documented in this section of the risk management plan.

For each risk that will be mitigated, the project team will identify ways to prevent the risk from occurring or reduce its impact or probability of occurring. This may include prototyping, adding tasks to the project schedule, adding resources, etc.

No risk has been identified that has a high probability of occurrence and the likelihood of most risks is low, which facilitates their management. The corresponding mitigation actions as mechanisms to partially or completely prevent these risks, as well as contingency plans to solve them in case of their occurrence have been carefully elaborated and are detailed in this document. The deliverable D.1.3 Risk Assessment will be thoroughly applied throughout the lifecycle of the MENTOR Project under the supervision of the Project Coordinator and the Project Officer.

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List of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Explanation
AUA	Agricultural University of Athens
CCCI	Cyprus Chamber of Commerce and Industry
CMU	Constanta Maritime University
EASME	Executive Agency for Small & Medium Enterprises
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
M	Milestone
MCB	Marine Cluster of Bulgaria
MEA	Maritime Economic Activities
Mar.In.E.M	Maritime Institute of Eastern Mediterranean
NTUA	National Technical University of Athens
UCY	University of Cyprus
PC	Project Coordinator
PO	Project Officer
RP	Reporting Periods
WP	Work Package

1. INTRODUCTION

A risk is an event or condition that, if it occurs, could have a positive or negative effect on a project's objectives. Risk Management is the process of identifying, assessing, responding to, monitoring, and reporting risks. This deliverable is dedicated to the Risk Management Plan for MENTOR Project, Grant Agreement EASME/EMFF/2016/1.2.1.2/06/SI2.749365-MENTOR. The Deliverable 1.3 is part of the Work Package 1 of Project Management and defines how risks associated with the MENTOR (Blue Career Centre of Eastern Mediterranean and Black Sea) project will be identified, analysed, and managed. It outlines how risk management activities will be performed, recorded, and monitored throughout the lifecycle of the project and provides templates and practices for recording and prioritizing risks.

The Risk Management Plan has been developed by the NTUA with delivery date month 9 (M9) of the project and will be monitored and updated throughout the lifecycle of the project.

The intended audience of this document is the consortium consisted of the full list of participants, i.e. the University of Cyprus (UCY), the National Technical University of Athens (NTUA), the Agricultural University of Athens (AUA), the Maritime Institute of Eastern Mediterranean (Mar.In.E.M), the Cyprus Chamber of Commerce and industry (CCCI), the Marine Cluster of Bulgaria (MCB) and the Constanta Maritime University (CMU), the project officer designated by the EASME, the Project Coordinator and the management bodies of the project.

1.1 Management Bodies

Whilst everyone on the project has a responsibility to deliver high quality deliverables and project outcomes, the key project roles in this area are illustrated in Figure 1.1 and is described below.

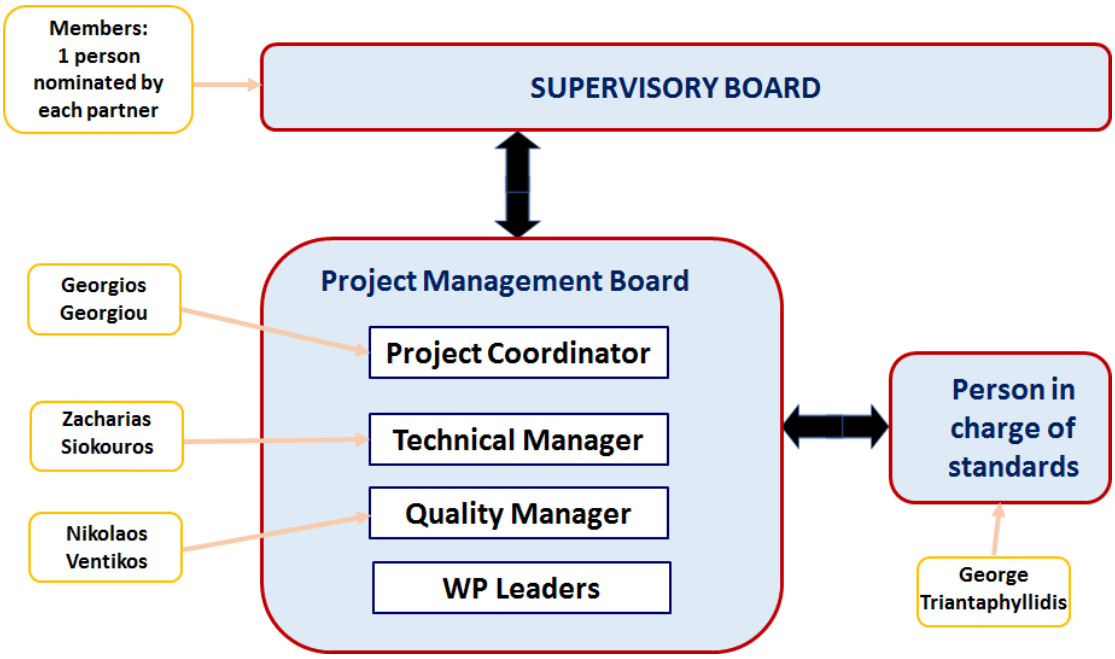


Figure 1.1 Management Bodies for the MENTOR Project

1.2. Implementing the project

The implementation of projects is closely monitored by the EASME on behalf of the European Commission (EC) to ensure that projects realise their full potential and deliver the expected results. To facilitate this monitoring, projects have to submit reports at different stages of the project lifetime.

The frequency and number of reports is defined in the grant agreement and can differ for each project, depending on the objectives, activities and expected outcomes as well as the duration of the project. There are three types of reports: progress, interim and final reports. All report types require technical information on the implementation of the project, to varying levels of detail. However, only interim and final reports include also a financial report.

For grants awarded to consortia, a declaration on the distribution of the EU support among the partners is required after the project closure.

1.3 Reporting Obligations

The reporting process allows the EC to follow the project closely and to ensure that it is implemented as stated in the GA and in conformity with the financial rules. The GA gives an overall picture of the progress of the project, in relation to the original and revised plans. It also provides a review of incurred costs.

The MENTOR project lasts for 24 months (Start of the Project - Month 1 - is March of 2017) and is divided into the following 2 Reporting Periods (RP):

- Reporting period 1: from month 1 to month 12 included.
- Reporting period 2: from month 13 to month 24 included.

There will be two progress reports, one interim report and a Final report submitted by the Project Coordinator during the project (see below). These will be used to follow the progress and the budget use of the project, as well as to detect any deviations from the work plan. The internal progress reports focus on the progress of the activities and on the financial reporting (expenses). The reports will be requested in the following months:

- Month 6 (August 2017). Progress Report + 15 days: September 15, 2017.
- Month 12 (February 2018). Interim Report + 60 days i.e. April 30, 2018 at the latest.
- Month 18 (August 2018). Progress Report + 15 days: September 15, 2018.
- Month 24 (February 2019). Final Report + 60 days i.e. April 30, 2019 at the latest.

A final report must be submitted within 60 days following the end of the last reporting period (in addition to the periodic report for the last reporting period). It must include:

1) A final technical report (overview of the results and their exploitation and dissemination; the conclusions of the action; the socio-economic impact);

2) A final financial report (final summary financial statement).

2. THE METHODOLOGY

The project coordinator working with the work package leaders and project officer will ensure that risks are actively identified, analysed, and managed throughout the life of the project. Risks will be identified as early as possible in the project so as to minimize their impact. The steps for accomplishing this are outlined in the following sections. The project coordinator will serve as the Risk Manager for this project.

2.1 RISK IDENTIFICATION

Risk identification will involve the project consortium, appropriate stakeholders, and will include an evaluation of environmental factors, organizational culture and the project management plan including the project scope.

These decisions diverge, depending on their significance. There is a simple group of decisions, such as choosing to watch a movie at home or going to the cinema and another group which is characterized by complexity: for instance, the decision of investing money in a new car or in a new house. These examples prove that almost every decision contains risk on a daily basis. Risk is a combination of two parameters, the likelihood and the consequences of an event. An event could be a car accident or the failure of a pipeline due to corrosion. At mathematical terms, risk is defined as:

Risk = Probability x Impact

Careful attention will be given to the project deliverables, assumptions, constraints, cost/effort estimates, resource plan, and other key project documents.

3.1.2 Likelihood

A Risk Management Log will be generated and updated as needed and will be shared electronically via email with all partners and designees.

2.2 RISK ANALYSIS

All risks identified will be assessed to identify the range of possible project outcomes. Qualification will be used to determine which risks are the top risks to pursue and respond to and which risks can be ignored. The top risks are presented Table 2.1.

2.2.1 Qualitative Risk Analysis

The probability and impact of occurrence for each identified risk has been assessed by the participating partners, by evaluating their probability to happen and their possible impact on the project. The following approach has been used.

Probability

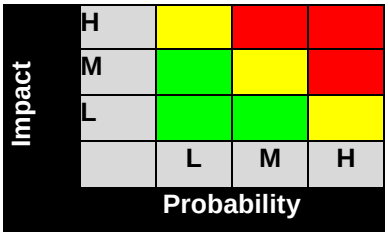
- High – Risk that has the potential to greatly impact project cost, project schedule or performance

- Medium – Risk that has the potential to slightly impact project cost, project schedule or performance
- Low – Risk that has relatively little impact on cost, schedule or performance

Impact

- High – Risk that has the potential to greatly impact project cost, project schedule or performance
- Medium – Risk that has the potential to slightly impact project cost, project schedule or performance
- Low – Risk that has relatively little impact on cost, schedule or performance
-

Table 2.1 Risk Matrix Impact-Probability function



Risks that fall within the RED and YELLOW zones will have risk response planning which may include both a risk mitigation and a risk contingency plan.

2.2.2 Quantitative Risk Analysis

Analysis of risk events is usually being under prioritization using quantitative approaches. In these cases the qualitative risk analysis process and their effect on project activities are being estimated and a numerical rating applied to each risk based on this analysis. In the present deliverable the identified risks have been analysed using the qualitative approach for the risk management plan.

2.3 RISK RESPONSE PLANNING

Each major risk (those falling in the Red & Yellow zones) has been assigned to a project partner according to their roles in relevant WP, for monitoring purposes to ensure that the risk will not “fall through the cracks”.

For each major risk, one of the following approaches has been selected to address it:

- Avoid – eliminate the threat by eliminating the cause
- Mitigate – Identify ways to reduce the probability or the impact of the risk
- Accept – Nothing will be done
- Transfer – Make another party responsible for the risk (replacement of a partner, outsourcing, etc.)

For each risk that will be mitigated, the project team will identify ways to prevent the risk from occurring or reduce its impact or probability of occurring. This may include prototyping, adding tasks to the project schedule, adding resources, etc.

For each major risk that is to be mitigated or that is accepted, a course of action will be outlined for the event that the risk does materialize in order to minimize its impact.

2.4 RISK MONITORING, CONTROLLING, AND REPORTING

The level of risk on a project will be tracked, monitored and reported throughout the project lifecycle.

A "Top 10 Risk List" will be maintained by the project coordinator and the consortium and will be reported as a component of the project status reporting process for this project.

All project change requests will be analysed for their possible impact to the project risks.

Project Officer will be notified of important changes to risk status as a component to the Executive Project Status Report.

3. IDENTIFICATION OF RISKS

3.1 Identification of risks related to research

The MENTOR Project will establish the Blue Career Centre in Cyprus with representatives in the other three participating countries aiming to increase the dialogue between business stakeholders, education & training institutions, research organizations, regulators, the civic society as well as the European Union (EU) and the Union for the Mediterranean allowing them to jointly develop and carry out measures to close the skill gap, tackle unemployment and make "blue careers" more attractive to the young people of the area.

It has also been highlighted that in order to achieve Blue Growth i.e. the sustainable growth in the marine and maritime sectors we need highly qualified and skilled professionals. Yet many Blue Sectors are still experiencing difficulties in finding the right employees and many expect that these difficulties will continue throughout the foreseeable future. It is for these reasons that four Marine and Maritime Economic Activities (MEAs) have been selected – at this stage - as of strategic importance in the EM & BS region:

1. Maritime Transport (i.e. shipping, ports, shipbuilding and ship-repairs)
2. Cruise Tourism,
3. Marine Aquaculture (mainly in the Eastern Mediterranean) and
4. Offshore oil and gas.

Of these, Maritime Transport is a mature MEA whereas aquaculture and cruise tourism are growing MEAs and offshore oil and gas is an emerging MEA in this area.

The main results expected at the end of the project include:

1) The establishment of the Blue Career Centre of Eastern Mediterranean and Black Sea Secretariat in Cyprus with representations in Greece, Bulgaria and Romania (1 Secretariat, 3 representations.

2) Mapping of the provided maritime education and training in the East Med (Greece and Cyprus) and BS region (Bulgaria and Romania), including availability of infrastructure (overall 4 catalogues will be produced from EU Countries);

3) Development of re-training schemes for blue professionals in the maritime sector, cruise tourism, fishermen and offshore oil and gas (4 re-training seminars).

4) Mentoring and career guidance to students (age 15-18) for the Blue sectors in schools in Cyprus, Greece, Bulgaria, Romania (at least 200 schools will be visited).

5) Re-train blue professionals in the maritime sector (40 people), cruise tourism (40 people), fish tourism and ichthyotourism (40 people) and offshore oil and gas sectors (40 people).

6) Establish introductory e-learning courses for maritime sector, for cruise tourism, for offshore oil and gas sector, for marine aquaculture sector and for fish tourism and ichthyotourism (5 introductory e-learning courses).

7) Inventory of available resources, such as maritime and engine simulators with the aim of sharing wherever feasible.

8) Organise 8 Annual Blue Career Fairs (Days) in the Eastern Mediterranean (2 in Greece and 2 in Cyprus) and Black Sea (2 in Bulgaria and 2 in Romania);

9) Promote the mobility of 30 students and 6 staff within the region;

10) A matching database for maritime professionals in the region will be established, in an effort to balance the demand and supply of maritime, aquaculture and offshore oil and gas professionals in the region.

11) Organization of the first Regional Conference of Maritime Education & Training providers to address the issue of harmonisation of training programs.

12) Submit at least 1 joint application for an EU funded project (such as an Erasmus+ or a ENPI-CBC MED or an Interreg or other EU initiative proposal) or a Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) program.

13) We envisioned that the successful operation of the first Blue Career Centre for the Eastern Mediterranean and the Black Sea will set an example and model for all other sub-basins so that in the near future we can have a European Network of Blue Career Centres that will bring together all the stakeholders of the various European Marine and Maritime Clusters in the common effort to close the skill gap, tackle unemployment and make “blue careers” more attractive to the young people of Europe and its neighbourhood.

3.2 Identification of risks related to management

Despite the fact that most of the MENTOR project partners have previously participated in other successful projects funded by the EC, in which they acquired valuable experience in project management and financial tasks, several risks were identified ant thoroughly examined during the project design. The coordination team is in charge of supervising the project execution, reminding deadlines to partners and contacting the Project Officer in case of major changes in the project execution. Anticipated management risks include those connected to financial deviations, collaboration between partners and on-time, quality project execution. In order to mitigate these risks, day-to-day communication among partners is encouraged by the coordination team to assure that all activities are implemented on time and at a high-quality level.

Moreover, management bodies have been created to enhance a smooth management of the project. These are: i) the supervisory body and ii) the project management board. The Supervisory Body is formed by a representative of each partner. The project management board consist of the WP leaders, the quality manager, the technical manager and the project coordinator.

MENTOR Project uses an internal peer-reviewing system to improve the quality of the deliverables. The project will also be evaluated by an external and independent Evaluators, at the mid-term and the end of the project.

3.3 Identification of risks related to dissemination and exploitation of the results

Most partners of the MENTOR consortium have previously participated in various EU funded projects with a focus on dissemination and outreach. Many of them have also been focused on e-learning techniques and required skills for blue sector professionals. The previous experience of the partners is crucial for implementing a sound communication strategy for the dissemination and exploitation of the results of the MENTOR Project. The project aims at widely disseminating all the material and research results produced by MENTOR in order to foster a multiplying effect on the familiarization of the public regarding the career opportunities the Blue Growth offers. The MENTOR project aims at translating the industry needs by introducing an innovative career guidance framework to attract the next generation of highly qualified professionals in the blue economy. Targeted groups for dissemination are students (15-18), undergraduate and postgraduate students, young professionals who would like to enter the blue economy and unemployed people. Several tasks are dedicated to this including seminars, career fairs speeches, e-learning material.

4. RISK ASSESSMENT

Risks related to possible impact on the project have been identified and addressed at Table 4.1. The table describes each risk as well as the mitigation measure and contingency plan to ensure that the research will not be intrusive, that participants will be respected in their privacy, that ethical issues will be taken into account, and that a comfortable atmosphere of collaboration between MENTOR partners and participants will be created.

Table 4.1 Risk Matrix for MENTOR Project

n/n	Identified Risk	WP	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Rate	Mitigation Action	Contingency Plan	Likelihood	Impact	Risk
1	Low student's interest in participating in events and semester projects	2	Low	Medium	Medium	Participants are informed consent to participate in events and semester projects. All the collected data will be treated with confidentiality. Input from their point of view will be collected and assessed to improve the educational process and encourage their participation in those events.	If students of a school do not participate in focus groups, the career guidance will focus on undergraduate and postgraduate students.	Low	Low	Low
2	Small financial deviation from initially planned budget may be request by partners during the project, which do not imply a change in the overall budget amount.	1-5	Medium	Medium	Medium	The project proposal was thoroughly thought in order to provide appropriate budget to each task and partner to achieve the project plan. Partners send interim technical and financial report yearly to the designated Project Officer.	If a partner needs to change the allocation of financial resources, the Supervisory body will discuss the situation and request the change to the Financial Project Officer.	Medium	Low	Low
3	Deadlines are not respected	1-5	Low	Medium	Medium	The Supervisory Body keeps track of deadlines and send reminders to partners through regular communication by email and phone calls.	If a partner does not meet a deadline, the Supervisory Body will inform the Project Officer in advance to explain the reasons for the delay and to ask for an extension. The Supervisory Body will send a reminder to the partner	Low	Low	Low

							and wait up to two weeks. If the partner does not react, will be scheduled an online meeting where the case will be discussed and decided upon.			
4	Low quality of the deliverables	1-5	Low	Medium	Medium	The quality of deliverables is ensured by an internal peer-review system. Every partner should send its deliverable to other partners of the consortium 10 days before the submission deadline to the Project Officer. Peer reviewers have one week to send their feedback to the corresponding partner for corrections.	If a deliverable does not have the expected quality for a EASME Project the Supervisory Body will bot submit it and ask the partner to improve its content and/or presentation. In case of delay, the Project Coordinator will inform the Project Officer in advance to explain the reasons for the delay.	Low	Low	Low
5	Low dissemination impact during the project	5	Medium	High	High	Statistics on the use of the MENTOR project website are reviewed periodically to monitor visitors flow and increase the diffusion in time.	If the consortium detects the visits flow on the website is low, other dissemination actions will be emphasised.	Medium	Medium	Medium
6	Low interest in MENTOR outputs by targeted audiences	2	Low	High	Medium	The participation of four Universities in the project consortium within the region, ensures the impact of the MENTOR project in the targeted audience.	Blue Career Centre representatives in each participating country will incorporate the MENTOR outputs and support the dissemination material and activities, focused on targeted audiences such as students and young professionals. There will be readily available to	Low	Medium	Low

							public, policy makers, and European Commission.			
7	Low interest on mobility	3	Low	High	Medium	The partners have previous experience with mobility of staff and students in the region, so it is less likely to not manage to promote mobility.	If the consortium detects that mobility will not succeed, then Faculty members are proposed to travel within the region and give lectures in the content of Dissemination Events	Low	Medium	Low
8	Difficulties in harmonization of the academic programs	3	Medium	Low	Low	The consortium consists of neighbouring countries with strong connection in the selected MEA's. A large number of synergies already exist and professionals can travel and work abroad.	The participation of the four universities in the program ensures that it is possible to suggest some changes in the relevant academic programs in order students from different countries to have access in relevant courses	Medium	Low	Low
9	Low interest for the e-learning material	3	Low	Medium	Medium	The universities participating in this task are already offer a series of e-learning courses.	If the consortium detects low interest in the project site where the courses will be available, a series of promoting actions will be suggested such as sharing preview of the material in the social media.	Low	Low	Low
10	Low access on information regarding mapping the offer of academic degrees outside of the EU (Observer countries)	2	Medium	Medium	Medium	The partners have previous experience with the offered academic degrees and/or vocational training in the observer countries	In case of lack of information the user representatives and person in charge will contact the observer countries and select all the public available information	Medium	Low	Low

5. CONCLUSIONS

The present Deliverable describes general and specific risks related to three main activities of the MENTOR Project: research, management and coordination within the consortium and dissemination and exploitation of results. No risk identified here has a high probability of occurrence and the likelihood of most risks is low, which facilitates their management. The corresponding mitigation actions as mechanisms to partially or completely prevent these risks, as well as contingency plans to solve them in case of their occurrence have been carefully elaborated and are detailed in this document. The deliverable D.1.3 Risk Assessment will be thoroughly applied throughout the lifecycle of the MENTOR Project under the supervision of the Project Coordinator and the Project Office