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QUALITY CONTROL AND MONITORING

Procedures under COVID-19

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Introduction

Aim of this document is to extend already defined quality procedures and measures in order to support smooth project implementation under COVID-19 circumstances. It includes the following:

- Project communication and organisation of project meetings
- Financial management
- Analysis of additional efforts already done and those that are expected to be put due to online regime of working and implementation of all project activities
- Quality control measures

Communication and cooperation of project partners

The whole communication shall be organised online, in addition to email correspondence, additional video communication tools shall be used, such as Adobe Connect, Zoom, etc.

Project management meetings are expected to be organised each 2 months; project management meetings in online regime are expected to be more effective (duration 1 day).

Each partner can initiate organisation of online meeting related to implementation of specific activities within WP, as well as related to financial issues (meeting with project coordinator).

Supporting documentation, such as Meeting Agenda, Meeting Minutes shall be created on the same manner as specified in DELIVERABLE 1.1 'Quality Control and Monitoring Manual'. List of participants shall be created electronically, by putting scanned signatures, instead of handwritten.



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Financial management

Additional costs which occur due to COVID-19 regime shall be declared in accordance with additional measures defined by EACEA. All partners are invited to contact coordinators in case of needed additional explanations and suggestions, which are also responsible for direct contact to Project Officer in EACEA in case of specific explanations and natures of expenditures.

All supporting documentation shall be prepared by following procedures defined in DELIVERABLE 1.1 'Quality Control and Monitoring Manual'. The only change is in case of required signatures and official verification by institutional legal representative, which under COVID-19 may require additional time (or even temporary blocked procedures). In that case, institutional contact person for PH-ELIM project is required to inform coordinators and request additional time for getting signatures and official verification by institutional legal representative.

Analysis of additional efforts already done and those that are expected to be put due to online regime of working and implementation of project activities

However, due to new COVID-19 virus and consequently closed borders between the EU and Montenegro, we were forced to organize meetings and workshops initially planned for the period March 2020 - May 2020 online. The impossibility for traveling in this period resulted with unspent funds for travel costs in the amount of about 8,000.00 euros and cost of stay in the amount of about 20,000.00 euros. At the moment, we have unspent funds in total amount of 28,000.00 for travel cost and cost of stay.

In order to strengthen the project results and increase their impacts at national level of Montenegro as beneficiary country, we put special focus on newly accredited MSc study program "Health Information Management" (first generation of students was enrolled in September 2019) as well as teaching and learning process in the fields of public health at



Montenegrin universities. To this end, all project partners agreed to put additional efforts for implementation of the following tasks:

- i. Preparation of *textbook "Health Information Management"* which is accepted for publishing by well-known international publisher IOSPress. Work on textbook was not planned in project application, but in close cooperation with EU partner universities, we identified that new and unique textbook is a key source of high-quality educational materials for students of newly established MSc program. Work on textbook started in September 2019 and all partners agreed to put additional and significant efforts for its preparation, which is expected to be finalised in August 2020.
- ii. International accreditation of MSc program "*Health Information Management*" by *European Federation for Medical Informatics (EFMI)* which will significantly increase visibility and recognisability of Montenegrin universities in the field. This activity was not planned in project application, but all project partners agreed during Project Coordination meeting (organised in January 2020) to make additional efforts which will significantly benefit to project results.
- iii. Due to the emergency situation caused by new COVID-19 virus, *planned workshops* for students in summer semester were organized *online*, which required additional engagement of researchers in preparation of teaching materials, realization of the workshops as well as additional time spent in communication and interaction with students in online regime.

Given that by force of circumstance we resulted with appropriate savings on travel costs, project coordinators shall EACEA to authorize the reallocation of initially planned funds for travel expenses to the costs of staff engagement for realization of aforementioned additional tasks.

Quality control measures

Quality control measures shall follow all procedures defined in DELIVERABLE 1.1 'Quality Control and Monitoring Manual'. Meetings of QCB shall be implemented online more regularly, especially because of preparation of final report and close of the project.