

VIRTUAL EXCHANGE FOR GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP AND DIGITAL SKILLS Project 101252513





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The information, documentation, and materials included in this handbook are prepared by the V-EXCHANGE consortium under Grant Agreement No. 101252513 and are intended to support the effective implementation, coordination, monitoring, and management of the project.

This handbook contains guidance for consortium partners regarding governance, communication, financial management, reporting obligations, quality assurance, risk management, dissemination, and compliance procedures.

Document history

Version	Date	Prepared by	Reviewed by	Notes
V0	[15 April 2026]	MTU	Consortium	Initial Draft
V1	[29 May 2026]	MTU	Consortium	Final Version





EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The V-EXCHANGE (Virtual Exchange for Global Citizenship and Digital Skills) project is a three-year Erasmus+ initiative that brings together higher education institutions and civil society organizations from North Macedonia, Bulgaria, Kosovo, and Albania to strengthen international cooperation, digital transformation, and intercultural learning through innovative Virtual Exchange (VE) methodologies.

The project has been developed in response to the persistent barriers that limit participation in traditional international mobility programmes, particularly among students and young people with fewer opportunities. Financial constraints, geographical limitations, social circumstances, and institutional challenges continue to restrict access to international learning experiences for many individuals across the Western Balkans. At the same time, rapid digitalization and the growing importance of global competencies have created new opportunities for meaningful cross-border engagement through technology-enabled learning environments.

V-EXCHANGE seeks to address these challenges by promoting Virtual Exchange as an inclusive and sustainable approach to internationalization. Through structured online dialogue, collaborative learning activities, intercultural engagement, and the use of innovative digital tools, the project aims to provide participants with opportunities to develop digital, intercultural, communication, and civic competencies while fostering mutual understanding and active citizenship.

The project combines the expertise of universities, research organizations, and youth-focused civil society organizations, creating a multidisciplinary partnership capable of addressing educational, technological, and societal dimensions of Virtual Exchange implementation. Through this collaboration, V-EXCHANGE will support the development of institutional capacities, strengthen the skills of educators and facilitators, and create opportunities for students and young people to participate in meaningful international learning experiences regardless of their geographical location or socio-economic background.

The implementation of the project is structured around a comprehensive framework that includes project coordination and management, development of Virtual Exchange methodologies and learning resources, capacity-building activities for educators and facilitators, quality assurance and evaluation mechanisms, and dissemination and sustainability actions. Particular emphasis is placed on integrating innovative pedagogical approaches, including digital facilitation techniques,





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gamification elements, and artificial intelligence-supported tools that enhance participant engagement and learning outcomes.

Beyond its immediate educational objectives, V-EXCHANGE contributes to broader European priorities related to digital transformation, inclusion and diversity, active citizenship, intercultural dialogue, and innovation in education. By embedding Virtual Exchange methodologies within participating institutions and establishing sustainable cooperation mechanisms among partners, the project seeks to create long-term impact that extends beyond the project funding period.

The expected outcomes of V-EXCHANGE include enhanced digital and intercultural competencies among participants, increased institutional readiness to implement Virtual Exchange programmes, strengthened collaboration between higher education institutions and civil society organizations, and the development of sustainable models for international cooperation in education and youth engagement. Through these outcomes, the project aims to contribute to a more inclusive, connected, and globally engaged educational ecosystem in the Western Balkans and beyond.

This Project Handbook provides the operational framework for the implementation of V-EXCHANGE. It outlines the governance arrangements, management procedures, communication mechanisms, quality assurance processes, financial management principles, monitoring and reporting requirements, and other operational guidelines necessary to ensure effective coordination and successful delivery of project activities and results. The handbook serves as a practical reference for all consortium members and supports a common understanding of roles, responsibilities, procedures, and expectations throughout the project lifecycle.





HOW TO USE THIS HANDBOOK:

This handbook is a practical reference document for all consortium partners and should be used together with:

- the Grant Agreement,
- the Description of Action (Annex 1),
- the Consortium Agreement,
- project templates and procedures.

It serves as a key reference document for project partners and stakeholders, outlining the project's objectives, structure, work packages, roles and responsibilities, operational procedures, and communication strategies. It is designed to ensure consistency in understanding and approach across the project, facilitating effective coordination, management, and execution of the project activities





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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of the Handbook

This Project Handbook serves as the primary operational and management reference document for all consortium partners involved in the implementation of the V-EXCHANGE project.

The handbook establishes the governance, management, communication, monitoring, financial, and quality assurance procedures that will guide project implementation throughout the entire project lifecycle.

The handbook aims to:

- ✓ Ensure effective and coordinated implementation of project activities;
- ✓ Clarify roles and responsibilities of all consortium partners;
- ✓ Establish transparent communication and reporting mechanisms;
- ✓ Support compliance with the Grant Agreement and Erasmus+ rules;
- ✓ Facilitate quality assurance, monitoring, and risk management;
- ✓ Ensure consistency in project implementation across all partner institutions.
- ✓ This document should be used by all project partners as a practical implementation and coordination tool.

1.2 Project Overview

The V-EXCHANGE (Virtual Exchange for Global Citizenship and Digital Skills) project was developed in response to the increasing need for inclusive, accessible, and innovative forms of international education and intercultural engagement. While traditional physical mobility programmes remain a cornerstone of international cooperation in higher education, significant barriers continue to limit participation among many students and young people, including financial constraints, geographical limitations, social disadvantages, family responsibilities, disabilities, and other factors that restrict access to international learning opportunities. At the same time, rapid digital transformation, accelerated by technological advancements and changing educational practices, has created new opportunities for meaningful cross-border collaboration and





intercultural dialogue through virtual environments. The COVID-19 pandemic further demonstrated both the necessity and potential of digital learning and international cooperation through online platforms. In this context, Virtual Exchange (VE) has emerged as an innovative educational approach that enables individuals from different cultural, social, and geographical backgrounds to engage in structured online dialogue, collaborative learning, and intercultural interaction. Virtual Exchange contributes not only to the development of digital competencies but also to critical thinking, global citizenship, intercultural awareness, civic participation, and social inclusion.

The V-EXCHANGE project seeks to capitalize on these opportunities by developing sustainable Virtual Exchange models that can be integrated into higher education institutions and youth work practices across the Western Balkans and neighboring European countries. Through strategic cooperation among universities and civil society organizations, the project aims to strengthen institutional capacities, promote innovative digital pedagogies, and create long-term opportunities for international engagement beyond physical mobility.

1.3 Project Objectives

The main goal of the V-EXCHANGE project is to strengthen intercultural understanding, digital competencies, and civic engagement through structured virtual exchange methodologies. The overall objective of the V-EXCHANGE project is to enhance international cooperation, intercultural understanding, digital competencies, and civic engagement through the systematic integration of Virtual Exchange methodologies into higher education and youth engagement programmes.

Specific objectives include:

- To design and implement high-quality Virtual Exchange programmes involving students and young people from participating countries.
- To strengthen digital, intercultural, communication, and collaboration skills among students and youth participants.
- To build the capacity of educators, academic staff, and youth workers to facilitate and manage Virtual Exchange activities using innovative digital pedagogies.
- To integrate Artificial Intelligence (AI)-supported tools and gamification approaches to enhance participant engagement, interaction, and learning outcomes.





- To support the institutionalization of Virtual Exchange methodologies within partner universities and youth organizations.
- To develop policy recommendations and practical guidelines that contribute to wider adoption of Virtual Exchange within the European Education Area.
- To establish sustainable cooperation mechanisms and networks that continue beyond the project lifetime.

1.4 Target groups

The project addresses a diverse range of target groups, including:

- *Primary Target Groups*
 - Higher education students;
 - Young people participating in youth engagement programmes;
 - Academic staff and university educators;
 - Youth workers and facilitators.
- *Secondary Target Groups*
 - University management and decision-makers;
 - Policy-makers and educational authorities;
 - Civil society organizations;
 - Researchers and education practitioners;
 - Local communities and stakeholders interested in digital and intercultural education.

Special attention will be given to ensuring participation of individuals with fewer opportunities, including those facing economic, geographical, social, cultural, or educational barriers.





1.5 Expected Results and Impact

Through the implementation of project activities, V-EXCHANGE is expected to achieve the following results:

○ *Institutional Results*

- ✓ Increased institutional capacity for implementing Virtual Exchange programmes;
- ✓ Integration of Virtual Exchange methodologies into educational curricula and youth programmes;
- ✓ Strengthened cooperation among higher education institutions and civil society organizations.

○ *Individual results*

- ✓ Improved digital competencies among students and young people;
- ✓ Enhanced intercultural communication and collaboration skills;
- ✓ Increased civic engagement and global citizenship awareness;
- ✓ Greater participation in international learning opportunities.

○ *Project level results*

- ✓ Development of structured Virtual Exchange programmes and educational resources;
- ✓ Training of educators and youth workers in digital facilitation methodologies;
- ✓ Creation of a Best Practices Guide for Virtual Exchange implementation;
- ✓ Establishment of a sustainable Virtual Exchange cooperation network.

Long-Term Impact

The project aims to contribute to a more inclusive and digitally connected European education ecosystem by expanding access to international learning experiences and promoting intercultural dialogue, democratic participation, and social cohesion.





1.6 Sustainability perspective

Sustainability is a cross-cutting principle of the V-EXCHANGE project. The consortium is committed to ensuring that project results remain relevant and usable beyond the funded project period.

Key sustainability measures include:

- Integration of Virtual Exchange methodologies into institutional curricula;
- Continued use of developed educational resources and digital tools;
- Establishment of long-term cooperation agreements among partners;
- Capacity building of educators and facilitators;
- Dissemination of best practices and policy recommendations at national and European levels.

These measures will support the long-term continuation and scaling-up of Virtual Exchange initiatives within the participating institutions and beyond.





2. CONSORTIUM STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE

2.1 Governance approach

The V-EXCHANGE project is implemented through a collaborative governance model designed to ensure efficient coordination, transparency, accountability, and shared ownership among all participating organizations. The governance framework combines strategic oversight with operational management, allowing partners to contribute their expertise while ensuring coherence across all project activities.

The management structure has been designed to facilitate timely decision-making, effective communication, continuous monitoring of progress, and proactive resolution of challenges that may arise during implementation. The governance arrangements are guided by the principles of partnership, mutual trust, inclusiveness, transparency, and collective responsibility for achieving project objectives and delivering high-quality results.

2.2 Consortium Composition

The V-EXCHANGE consortium brings together six organizations representing higher education institutions, research organizations, and civil society actors from North Macedonia, Bulgaria, Kosovo, and Albania.

PARTNER	COUNTRY	ROLE
MOTHER TERESA UNIVERSITY IN SKOPJE (MTU)	NORTH MACEDONIA	COORDINATOR
Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski	Bulgaria	Partner
Universiteti Publik Kadri Zeka	Kosovo	Partner
Universitet Aleksander Xhuvani Elbasan	Albania	Partner
Research and Innovation for Future Education (RIFE)	Albania	Partner
Youth Rights & Citizenship Initiative (YRCI)	Albania	Partner





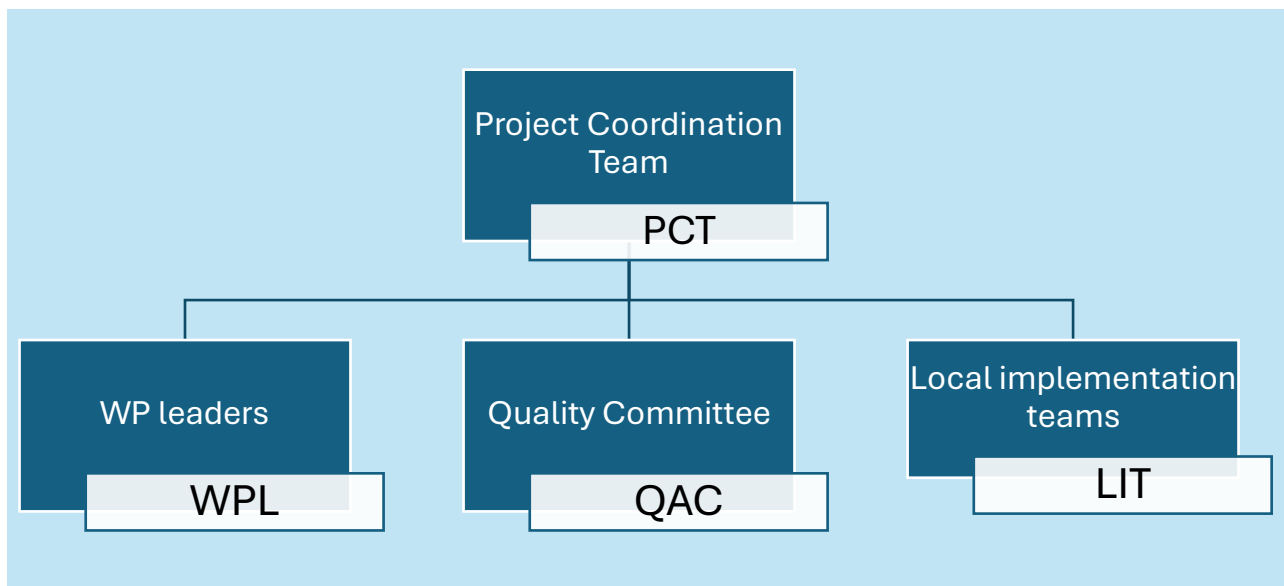
The consortium combines complementary expertise in:

- ✓ Higher education and curriculum development;
- ✓ Digital learning and educational innovation;
- ✓ Youth engagement and civic participation;
- ✓ Research and policy development;
- ✓ International cooperation and project management;
- ✓ Capacity-building and training activities.

This multidisciplinary partnership ensures a balanced combination of academic knowledge, practical experience, and stakeholder engagement necessary for successful project implementation.

2.3 Project governance and bodies

To ensure effective implementation, the project governance system is organized through several interconnected management bodies, each with clearly defined responsibilities and reporting relationships.



The governance structure consists of:





Project Coordination Team (PCT)

The Project Coordination Team serves as the central management body responsible for the overall supervision of project implementation. The PCT provides strategic guidance and ensures that project activities remain aligned with the approved work plan, expected outcomes, and contractual obligations. Key responsibilities include:

- Overall oversight of project implementation;
- Coordination among partner institutions;
- Monitoring project progress and performance;
- Review of implementation challenges and corrective measures;
- Validation of major operational decisions;
- Coordination of reporting obligations;
- Liaison with the funding authority.

The PCT is chaired by the project coordinator and includes designated representatives from all partner organizations.

Work Package Leadership Structure

Each Work Package is led by an organization possessing relevant expertise in the thematic area concerned.

Work Package Leaders are responsible for:

- Planning and coordinating activities within their respective work package;
- Monitoring implementation progress;
- Ensuring timely completion of outputs and milestones;
- Facilitating communication among partners involved in the work package;
- Contributing to reporting and quality assurance procedures.

Work Package Leaders act as the primary operational coordinators for their respective thematic areas and report regularly to the Project Coordination Team.

Quality Assurance Committee (QAC)





The Quality Assurance Committee functions as an independent oversight mechanism responsible for maintaining quality standards throughout the project lifecycle. The committee supports evidence-based monitoring and contributes to continuous improvement processes. Its responsibilities include:

- Reviewing the quality of deliverables and outputs;
- Monitoring achievement of indicators and milestones;
- Providing recommendations for quality enhancement;
- Supporting evaluation activities;
- Identifying areas requiring corrective actions.

The committee works closely with Work Package Leaders while maintaining an objective perspective on project performance.

Local Implementation Teams

Each participating organization establishes a Local Implementation Team responsible for coordinating activities at institutional level. These teams ensure that project activities are effectively integrated into local contexts and that institutional commitments are fulfilled.

Responsibilities include:

- Organizing local project activities;
- Mobilizing participants and stakeholders;
- Supporting data collection and reporting;
- Contributing to dissemination and sustainability actions;
- Ensuring institutional engagement in project implementation.

2.4 Distribution of responsibilities

Responsibility within the consortium is distributed according to expertise, capacity, and thematic relevance. While specific tasks are assigned to individual organizations, successful implementation depends on active participation and cooperation across the entire partnership.

All consortium members are expected to:

- ✓ Contribute to the achievement of project objectives;
- ✓ Participate actively in project activities and meetings;
- ✓ Share information and expertise;





- ✓ Respect agreed timelines and procedures;
- ✓ Support quality assurance and monitoring activities;
- ✓ Promote project visibility and dissemination.

This shared responsibility model strengthens ownership and fosters collective commitment to project success.

2.5 Accountability and Reporting Lines

- The project applies a clear reporting hierarchy to facilitate communication, monitoring, and accountability.
- Local Implementation Teams report to their respective institutional representatives and Work Package Leaders.
- Work Package Leaders provide regular updates to the Project Coordination Team regarding implementation progress, deliverables, milestones, and identified risks.
- The Project Coordination Team consolidates project information, oversees overall progress, and communicates with the funding authority on behalf of the consortium.
- This reporting structure ensures that information flows efficiently across all levels of project implementation and supports timely decision-making when challenges arise.

2.6 Decision-Making Framework

The consortium promotes a participatory decision-making culture that values dialogue, consultation, and consensus-building. Routine operational decisions are taken at work package level, while strategic decisions affecting project implementation, resource allocation, timelines, or major outputs are discussed collectively within the Project Coordination Team. The preferred approach is consensus-based decision-making. However, where consensus cannot be achieved, decisions may be adopted through majority agreement among consortium partners, while ensuring that all viewpoints are adequately considered and documented.

This approach balances efficiency with inclusiveness and promotes a strong sense of shared ownership among consortium members.

2.7 Principles Guiding Consortium Cooperation

Collaboration within the consortium is guided by the following principles:

- ✓ Transparency in communication and decision-making;





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- ✓ Mutual respect among partners;
- ✓ Timely sharing of information and resources;
- ✓ Equal opportunities for participation;
- ✓ Accountability for assigned responsibilities;
- ✓ Commitment to quality and continuous improvement;
- ✓ Respect for cultural diversity and institutional differences.

These principles provide the foundation for constructive cooperation and contribute to the effective implementation and long-term sustainability of the V-EXCHANGE project.

3. WORK PACKAGES AND DELIVERABLES

3.1 Implementation architecture

The implementation of the V-EXCHANGE project is organized through a structured system of interconnected work packages that collectively contribute to the achievement of the project's objectives and expected outcomes.

The work package structure provides the operational framework for planning, coordinating, monitoring, and evaluating project activities throughout the implementation period. Each work package addresses a specific thematic area while maintaining strong links with the other components of the project, ensuring coherence and complementarity across all activities.

The work packages have been designed to reflect the project's intervention logic, progressing from project management and coordination through the development and implementation of virtual exchange activities to quality assurance, dissemination, and sustainability actions.

Together, the work packages form an integrated implementation pathway that supports the achievement of both short-term outputs and long-term project impact.

3.2 Work package structure

The project is structured around five interconnected work packages.

WORK PACKAGE	TITLE
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WP1	Project Management and Coordination
WP2	Virtual Exchange Design and Development
WP3	Capacity Building and Training
WP4	Quality Assurance and Evaluation
WP5	Dissemination, Exploitation and Sustainability

Each work package is managed by a designated lead organisation responsible for coordinating activities, monitoring progress, facilitating partner collaboration, and ensuring timely delivery of planned outputs.

Work Package Leaders work closely with the Project Coordination Team and other partners to ensure alignment between activities and overall project objectives.

3.3 Interconnection of Work Packages

Although each work package has distinct objectives and responsibilities, successful implementation depends on continuous interaction among all project components.

WP1 provides the overall management and coordination framework necessary for the implementation of all project activities.

WP2 focuses on the development and adaptation of Virtual Exchange methodologies, learning resources, and digital learning approaches that constitute the foundation of the project's educational activities.

WP3 builds upon the outputs generated in WP2 by supporting the implementation of training programmes, capacity-building initiatives, and Virtual Exchange activities involving students, educators, and youth workers.

WP4 operates across the entire project lifecycle, ensuring systematic monitoring, evaluation, and quality enhancement of project activities, outputs, and outcomes.





WP5 supports the visibility, sustainability, and long-term exploitation of project results through communication, dissemination, stakeholder engagement, and policy-oriented activities.

The interaction among these work packages ensures a coherent implementation process and maximizes the effectiveness and sustainability of project outcomes.

3.4 Deliverables and Milestones

Deliverables represent the tangible outputs produced during project implementation and serve as evidence of progress and achievement.

WP	Deliverable	Lead Partner	Due Month
WP1	Project Handbook	MTU	M3
WP1	Consortium Agreement	MTU	M2
WP2	Training Curriculum	Sofia University	M8
WP3	Virtual Exchange Sessions	UKZ	M24
WP4	Evaluation Report	RIFE	M30
WP5	Sustainability Strategy	YRCI	M34

Deliverables include:

- ✓ Methodological frameworks;
- ✓ Educational resources and learning materials;
- ✓ Training programmes and curricula;
- ✓ Reports and guidelines;





- ✓ Evaluation documents;
- ✓ Dissemination materials;
- ✓ Policy recommendations;
- ✓ Sustainability and exploitation plans.

Each deliverable is assigned to a specific work package and has a designated lead partner responsible for coordinating its preparation and submission. All deliverables must comply with the following principles:

- ✓ Comply with Erasmus+ visibility and quality requirements.
- ✓ Relevance to project objectives;
- ✓ High technical and academic quality;
- ✓ Timely completion;
- ✓ Internal quality review before submission;
- ✓ Accessibility for intended target groups.

The preparation of deliverables is considered a collective responsibility of the consortium, with contributions expected from all relevant partners.

3.5 Milestones

Milestones are key implementation checkpoints used to assess progress towards project objectives and to verify that critical stages of implementation have been successfully completed. Unlike deliverables, which are concrete outputs, milestones represent significant achievements or implementation stages that demonstrate advancement within the project. Milestones serve several important functions:





- ✓ Tracking implementation progress;
- ✓ Supporting internal monitoring processes;
- ✓ Facilitating early identification of implementation challenges;
- ✓ Providing evidence of project advancement;
- ✓ Supporting reporting obligations towards the funding authority.

Milestones are monitored regularly by the Project Coordination Team and the Quality Assurance Committee as part of the overall project monitoring framework.

3.6 Deliverable Development and Approval Process

To ensure consistency and quality across project outputs, all deliverables follow a standard development and approval procedure. The process consists of the following stages:

➤ *Stage 1: Planning*

The lead partner prepares an implementation schedule and identifies contributions required from participating organizations.

➤ *Stage 2: Development*

Consortium partners contribute content, expertise, and supporting materials according to agreed responsibilities.

➤ *Stage 3: Internal Review*

Draft deliverables are reviewed internally by relevant partners and, where appropriate, by the Quality Assurance Committee.

➤ *Stage 4: Revision*

Feedback received during the review process is incorporated into the final version of the deliverable.

➤ *Stage 5: Validation*





The final deliverable is approved by the responsible Work Package Leader and the Project Coordinator.

➤ *Stage 6: Submission*

The coordinator submits the approved deliverable through the appropriate reporting and management channels.

This procedure promotes consistency, accountability, and quality across all project outputs.

3.7 Monitoring of Work Package Progress

The implementation status of each work package will be reviewed regularly throughout the project lifecycle. Monitoring activities will focus on:

- ✓ Completion of planned activities;
- ✓ Achievement of milestones;
- ✓ Progress towards deliverables;
- ✓ Compliance with timelines;
- ✓ Identification of implementation risks;
- ✓ Corrective actions where necessary.

Work Package Leaders are responsible for providing regular updates on progress and reporting any issues that may affect implementation.

The Project Coordination Team consolidates this information and uses it to support informed decision-making and effective project management.

3.8 Contribution to Project Objectives

Each work package contributes to the achievement of the project's overall objective of strengthening digital competencies, intercultural dialogue, civic engagement, and inclusive international learning through Virtual Exchange methodologies.

The successful completion of all work packages is essential for achieving the intended project outcomes and ensuring the long-term sustainability of project results.





The work package structure therefore serves not only as an organizational framework but also as the primary mechanism through which the project's vision, objectives, and expected impact are translated into practical actions and measurable result

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 General principles

The successful implementation of the V-EXCHANGE project depends on the active engagement, cooperation, and commitment of all consortium members. Responsibilities are distributed according to the expertise, experience, and institutional capacities of participating organizations, while maintaining a shared commitment to achieving the project's objectives and expected results. The project follows a collaborative implementation model based on the principles of:

- ✓ Shared ownership of project results;
- ✓ Transparency and accountability;
- ✓ Mutual support and cooperation;
- ✓ Timely communication and information sharing;
- ✓ Respect for agreed procedures and deadlines;
- ✓ Continuous quality improvement.

Although specific responsibilities are assigned to individual organizations and project bodies, the achievement of project outcomes remains a collective responsibility of the consortium.

4.2 Responsibilities of the Project Coordinator

Mother Teresa University in Skopje (MTU) acts as the coordinating institution and serves as the primary point of contact between the consortium and the funding authority.





As the organization responsible for the overall management of the project, MTU ensures that implementation progresses according to the approved work plan, contractual obligations, and quality standards. The coordinator is responsible for:

- ✓ Providing overall strategic and operational leadership;
- ✓ Ensuring effective coordination among consortium partners;
- ✓ Supervising implementation of project activities and work packages;
- ✓ Monitoring progress against planned objectives, milestones, and deliverables;
- ✓ Coordinating reporting processes and submission of required documentation;
- ✓ Facilitating communication within the consortium;
- ✓ Organizing consortium meetings and coordination activities;
- ✓ Managing relations with the granting authority;
- ✓ Supporting risk management and problem-solving processes;
- ✓ Monitoring compliance with contractual, administrative, and procedural requirements.

In addition, the coordinator facilitates collaboration among partners and ensures that information, resources, and decisions are communicated effectively across the consortium.

4.3 Responsibilities of Consortium Partners

Each consortium partner contributes specialized knowledge, experience, and institutional capacity to the implementation of project activities.

Partners are expected to actively participate in the planning, implementation, monitoring, and dissemination of project activities while fulfilling their assigned responsibilities within the relevant work packages. Key responsibilities of all partners include:

- ✓ Implementing activities assigned to their organisation;
- ✓ Contributing to the development of project outputs and deliverables;
- ✓ Participating in project meetings, workshops, and coordination activities;





- ✓ Supporting data collection, monitoring, and evaluation activities;
- ✓ Providing timely information required for project reporting;
- ✓ Ensuring the quality of contributions and deliverables;
- ✓ Supporting dissemination and visibility activities;
- ✓ Identifying and communicating implementation risks or challenges;
- ✓ Contributing to sustainability and exploitation actions.

Partners are expected to allocate adequate human and organizational resources to ensure the successful implementation of their responsibilities.

4.4 Responsibilities of Work Package Leaders

Each work package is coordinated by a designated lead organization responsible for overseeing the implementation of activities within its thematic area. Work Package Leaders play a central role in translating project objectives into operational actions and ensuring effective coordination among contributing partners. Their responsibilities include:

- ✓ Planning and coordinating work package activities;
- ✓ Monitoring implementation progress;
- ✓ Facilitating collaboration among participating organizations;
- ✓ Ensuring timely achievement of milestones and deliverables;
- ✓ Monitoring risks associated with work package implementation;
- ✓ Coordinating preparation and review of deliverables;
- ✓ Reporting progress to the Project Coordination Team;
- ✓ Supporting quality assurance processes.

Work Package Leaders act as the primary focal points for communication regarding their respective work packages.





4.5 Responsibilities of the Project Coordination Team

The Project Coordination Team serves as the central management body responsible for overseeing project implementation and supporting strategic decision-making. Its main functions include:

- ✓ Reviewing project progress and implementation status;
- ✓ Monitoring achievement of objectives and expected results;
- ✓ Addressing implementation challenges and operational issues;
- ✓ Supporting coordination among work packages;
- ✓ Reviewing monitoring and reporting information;
- ✓ Facilitating informed decision-making;
- ✓ Ensuring alignment between project activities and strategic objectives.

The Project Coordination Team meets regularly throughout the project implementation period and serves as the principal forum for consortium-level coordination.

4.6 Responsibilities of the Quality Assurance Committee

The Quality Assurance Committee is responsible for supporting the quality management framework of the project and ensuring that outputs and activities meet agreed standards. The committee contributes to:

- ✓ Reviewing deliverables and outputs;
- ✓ Monitoring implementation quality;
- ✓ Assessing progress towards indicators and targets;
- ✓ Providing recommendations for quality enhancement;
- ✓ Supporting evaluation activities;
- ✓ Identifying areas requiring corrective action.

The committee operates independently from day-to-day implementation activities, enabling objective assessment of project performance.





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4.7 Shared Responsibility for Project Results

While responsibilities are distributed across different governance bodies and organizations, project success depends on effective cooperation and collective commitment. All consortium members share responsibility for:

- ✓ Achieving project objectives;
- ✓ Maintaining implementation quality;
- ✓ Respecting agreed timelines;
- ✓ Contributing to project sustainability;
- ✓ Promoting project visibility and impact;
- ✓ Ensuring compliance with project requirements and procedures.

This shared responsibility approach strengthens accountability, encourages active participation, and supports a culture of partnership throughout the implementation period.

4.8 Responsibility Assignment Matrix

To facilitate clarity and accountability, a detailed responsibility matrix will be maintained throughout the project implementation period.

Activity	Coordinator	WP Leader	Partners	QAC
Activity planning	A	R	C	I
Deliverable preparation	I	A/R	C	I
Deliverable review	I	C	I	A/R
Financial monitoring	A/R	I	C	I
Dissemination	C	C	A/R	I
Risk monitoring	A	C	I	R





Final reporting	A/R	C	I	I										
	<table border="1"> <tr> <td colspan="2">Legend</td> </tr> <tr> <td>R</td> <td>Responsible</td> </tr> <tr> <td>A</td> <td>Accountable</td> </tr> <tr> <td>C</td> <td>Consulted</td> </tr> <tr> <td>I</td> <td>Informed</td> </tr> </table>				Legend		R	Responsible	A	Accountable	C	Consulted	I	Informed
Legend														
R	Responsible													
A	Accountable													
C	Consulted													
I	Informed													

The matrix identifies:

- ✓ Lead organizations for each work package;
- ✓ Organizations contributing to specific activities;
- ✓ Deliverable owners;
- ✓ Reporting responsibilities;
- ✓ Quality assurance responsibilities;
- ✓ Dissemination responsibilities.

The responsibility matrix will be reviewed periodically and updated whenever necessary to reflect implementation needs and organizational arrangements.

4.9 Expected standards of participation

All consortium members are expected to demonstrate a high level of professional engagement throughout the project lifecycle. This includes:

- ✓ Active participation in meetings and project activities;
- ✓ Timely completion of assigned tasks;
- ✓ Constructive collaboration with other partners;
- ✓ Respect for agreed procedures and deadlines;
- ✓ Responsiveness to communication requests;
- ✓ Commitment to quality and continuous improvement.





These standards provide the foundation for effective cooperation and contribute to the successful delivery of project results and long-term impact.

5. PROJECT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES

5.1 Purpose of Project Management Procedures

The purpose of the project management procedures is to provide a structured and consistent framework for the execution of project activities throughout the implementation period.

These procedures establish the operational mechanisms through which project activities are planned, coordinated, documented, monitored, and adjusted when necessary. They are intended to support effective implementation, facilitate collaboration among consortium partners, and ensure that project activities remain aligned with agreed objectives, timelines, and expected outcomes. The procedures described in this section apply to all consortium members and should be followed throughout the entire project lifecycle.

5.2 Activity Planning and Scheduling

Project activities shall be organized according to the implementation timetable approved by the consortium and reflected in the project work plan. To support effective planning:

- ✓ Annual implementation schedules will be prepared when necessary;
- ✓ Detailed activity plans may be developed for specific work packages;
- ✓ Internal deadlines may be established in advance of official submission dates;
- ✓ Critical implementation periods will be identified and monitored.

Partners are expected to review implementation schedules regularly and notify the coordinator of any circumstances that may affect planned timelines.

5.3 Internal Workflow Procedures

The project follows a structured workflow process to ensure consistency in the preparation, implementation, and completion of project activities.





For each major activity or output, the following workflow should be followed:

- ✓ Activity initiation and planning;
- ✓ Allocation of responsibilities;
- ✓ Implementation and coordination;
- ✓ Internal review and validation;
- ✓ Finalization of outputs;
- ✓ Documentation and archiving.

This workflow helps ensure transparency, accountability, and traceability throughout project implementation.

5.4 Management of Deadlines

Timely implementation is essential for the successful delivery of project outputs and achievement of project objectives.

To support effective deadline management:

- ✓ Official deadlines will be communicated well in advance;
- ✓ Internal deadlines may be established to allow sufficient time for review and validation;
- ✓ Progress against deadlines will be monitored regularly;
- ✓ Delays must be communicated as early as possible.

Where implementation risks may affect planned deadlines, appropriate mitigation measures will be discussed and agreed upon at consortium level.

5.5 Issue Identification and Escalation Procedure

Implementation challenges may arise during the project lifecycle and require timely attention. All partners are expected to identify and communicate issues that may affect:

- ✓ Activity implementation;





- ✓ Deliverable completion;
- ✓ Participation levels;
- ✓ Resource availability;
- ✓ Institutional commitments;
- ✓ Project timelines.

Whenever an issue is identified, the following process should be followed:

➤ *Step 1: Local Resolution*

The partner concerned should first assess the issue internally and explore possible solutions.

➤ *Step 2: Notification*

If the issue cannot be resolved internally or may affect project implementation, the coordinator and relevant Work Package Leader should be informed.

➤ *Step 3: Assessment*

The issue will be reviewed to determine its potential impact on project implementation.

➤ *Step 4: Corrective Action*

Appropriate actions will be agreed upon and implemented to minimize negative consequences.

This procedure supports proactive problem-solving and helps prevent minor issues from becoming significant implementation challenges.

5.6 Change Management Procedure

Project implementation may occasionally require adjustments resulting from unforeseen circumstances, evolving needs, or external factors. Any proposed changes affecting:

- Activities;
- Timelines;





- Deliverables;
- Partner contributions;
- Project outputs;

must be discussed with the coordinator before implementation. Where necessary, proposed modifications will be reviewed at consortium level to determine their implications for project implementation and contractual obligations. Changes should only be introduced after appropriate consultation and approval procedures have been completed.

5.7 Documentation and Traceability

Effective project management requires systematic documentation of activities, decisions, and implementation processes. The consortium will maintain documentation that enables transparent tracking of project implementation and supports institutional memory throughout the project lifecycle. Documentation may include:

- Activity records;
- Meeting documentation;
- Internal planning documents;
- Implementation schedules;
- Progress updates;
- Deliverable drafts and final versions;
- Decision records.

All documentation should be organized in a manner that facilitates retrieval, review, and future reference.

5.8 Performance Monitoring at Operational Level

In addition to formal monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, operational performance will be reviewed regularly to ensure smooth implementation of project activities. Operational reviews may focus on:





- ✓ Completion of planned tasks;
- ✓ Adherence to schedules;
- ✓ Responsiveness of implementation teams;
- ✓ Efficiency of internal processes;
- ✓ Coordination effectiveness;

The purpose of these reviews is to support continuous improvement and strengthen implementation efficiency throughout the project lifecycle.

5.9 Continuous Improvement

The consortium is committed to fostering a culture of learning and continuous improvement. Partners are encouraged to:

- ✓ Share good practices and lessons learned;
- ✓ Identify opportunities for optimization;
- ✓ Propose improvements to implementation processes;
- ✓ Contribute to collective problem-solving.

Continuous improvement is considered an essential element of effective project management and contributes to the quality, sustainability, and long-term impact of project results.

5.10 Compliance with Management Procedures

All consortium partners are expected to comply with the procedures outlined in this handbook. The consistent application of these procedures contributes to:

- ✓ Efficient project implementation;
- ✓ Improved coordination;
- ✓ Enhanced accountability;
- ✓ Better decision-making;





- ✓ Reduced implementation risks;
- ✓ Successful achievement of project objectives.

Adherence to common procedures strengthens cooperation among partners and supports the overall effectiveness of the V-EXCHANGE project.

6. COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION

6.1 Communication Objectives

Effective communication is essential for maintaining alignment among consortium partners, supporting timely implementation, and ensuring that project information is shared accurately and consistently. The communication framework aims to:

- ✓ Facilitate the exchange of information among partners;
- ✓ Support collaboration across work packages;
- ✓ Promote transparency in project implementation;
- ✓ Ensure timely dissemination of operational updates;
- ✓ Strengthen engagement and cooperation among consortium members.

6.2 Internal Communication Principles

Internal communication shall be guided by the following principles:

- ✓ Timeliness and responsiveness;
- ✓ Accuracy and clarity of information;
- ✓ Transparency and openness;
- ✓ Respectful and professional interaction;





- ✓ Equal access to information for all partners.

Partners are expected to communicate proactively and inform relevant stakeholders of developments that may influence project implementation.

6.3 Communication Channels

The consortium will utilize a combination of communication channels to support project implementation, including:

- ✓ Email correspondence;
- ✓ Online collaboration platforms;
- ✓ Shared document repositories;
- ✓ Virtual meeting platforms;
- ✓ Internal communication groups.

Communication channels shall be used consistently to ensure traceability and facilitate efficient information exchange.

6.4 Coordination Mechanisms

Coordination activities shall support alignment between work packages and ensure that implementation remains coherent throughout the project lifecycle. Coordination mechanisms may include:

- ✓ Regular implementation reviews;
- ✓ Technical consultations;
- ✓ Cross-work-package coordination sessions;
- ✓ Joint planning activities;
- ✓ Internal information-sharing processes.





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These mechanisms contribute to maintaining consistency and facilitating collaborative problem-solving.

6.5 Communication Standards

All communication produced within the project shall:

- ✓ Reflect professional standards;
- ✓ Be consistent with project objectives;
- ✓ Respect confidentiality requirements where applicable;
- ✓ Use agreed project terminology and branding;
- ✓ Support inclusive and respectful collaboration.

6.6 Meetings and Coordination Schedule

The following table presents the meeting and coordination schedule:

Project Coordination Team Meetings	Work Package Meetings	Consortium Meetings	Extraordinary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Monthly ✓ Online ✓ Chaired by Coordinator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Monthly or bi-monthly ✓ Led by WP leaders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Every six months ✓ Rotating host institution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Convened whenever necessary





7. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND LUMP SUM RULES

7.1 Financial Management Principles

Financial management within V-EXCHANGE shall be guided by the principles of transparency, accountability, sound financial stewardship, and compliance with the provisions established by the Grant Agreement and applicable Erasmus+ regulations.

The consortium is committed to ensuring that project resources are used responsibly and effectively to support the achievement of project objectives and expected results.

Although the project is funded through a lump sum mechanism, partners are expected to maintain appropriate internal financial management practices and ensure that sufficient resources are allocated to successfully implement their assigned activities.

7.2 Lump Sum Funding Approach

The project is funded under the Erasmus+ Lump Sum model. Under this approach, funding is linked to the successful implementation of project activities and the achievement of agreed outputs rather than to the reimbursement of actual expenditure.

Unlike traditional cost-based grants, the lump sum model does not reimburse actual costs incurred by beneficiaries. Instead, funding is linked to the successful completion of project activities, deliverables, milestones, and work package objectives as described in the approved project application and Grant Agreement.

The lump sum mechanism places particular emphasis on:

- ✓ Achievement of planned results;
- ✓ Completion of work package activities;
- ✓ Delivery of expected outputs;
- ✓ Demonstration of implementation progress;





- ✓ Compliance with contractual obligations.

The fundamental principle of the lump sum model is that funding is awarded for completed work and achieved results rather than for declared expenditure.

7.3 Financial Accountability

Each consortium member is responsible for managing its allocated resources in a manner that supports effective implementation of project activities.

Partners are expected to:

- ✓ Ensure adequate resource allocation;
- ✓ Maintain internal financial oversight mechanisms;
- ✓ Support implementation of planned activities;
- ✓ Provide information requested by the coordinator when required.

While the coordinator is responsible for the overall financial administration of the project, all partners share responsibility for ensuring that project activities are implemented in accordance with approved plans and contractual requirements.

7.4 Financial Accountability and Compliance

Although detailed financial reporting of actual costs is not required under the lump sum model, the consortium remains accountable for demonstrating that project activities have been carried out as planned.

Financial accountability is therefore closely linked to implementation performance and achievement of results.

Partners shall cooperate fully in any review, monitoring, audit, or verification process related to project implementation and shall provide relevant supporting evidence when requested.

Failure to complete agreed activities or deliverables may affect the eligibility of the corresponding lump sum contribution.





7.5 Evidence Requirements under the Lump Sum Model

Since funding is linked to the completion of activities and outputs, the consortium shall maintain adequate evidence demonstrating project implementation and achievement of results.

Depending on the nature of activities, evidence may include:

- ✓ agendas;
- ✓ participant lists;
- ✓ attendance sheets;
- ✓ meeting minutes;
- ✓ training materials;
- ✓ dissemination materials;
- ✓ photos and screenshots;
- ✓ evaluation forms;
- ✓ deliverables and reports.

Such evidence may be requested during reviews, audits, or project monitoring activities. Partners are responsible for collecting and maintaining appropriate evidence related to their activities and making it available when required for reporting, monitoring, or verification purposes.

7.6 Internal Financial Coordination

Effective financial coordination contributes to the timely implementation of project activities and the successful achievement of project objectives.

The coordinator shall oversee the overall financial management of the project and ensure the distribution of project funds in accordance with the Grant Agreement and Consortium Agreement. Financial coordination activities may include:

- ✓ Monitoring implementation progress linked to work package completion;





- ✓ Coordinating partner financial information where necessary;
- ✓ Supporting compliance with project requirements;
- ✓ Facilitating communication regarding financial and administrative matters.

8. MONITORING AND REPORTING

8.1 Purpose of Monitoring and Reporting

Monitoring and reporting provide the basis for assessing implementation progress, measuring achievements, and supporting evidence-based decision-making throughout the project lifecycle.

These processes enable the consortium to track performance, identify challenges, and implement corrective measures where necessary. They also contribute to transparency, accountability, and effective coordination among consortium partners by ensuring that implementation progress is reviewed regularly and communicated in a structured manner.

Monitoring and reporting serve not only as compliance mechanisms but also as tools for continuous learning, adaptation, and improvement throughout project implementation.

8.2 Monitoring Objectives

Monitoring activities are designed to:

- ✓ Assess progress towards project objectives;
- ✓ Verify completion of planned activities;
- ✓ Measure achievement of expected outputs;
- ✓ Support continuous improvement;
- ✓ Facilitate informed management decisions.

Monitoring shall be conducted continuously throughout the project implementation period and shall involve all consortium partners according to their respective responsibilities.





8.3 Reporting Framework

Reporting activities provide structured information regarding project implementation and contribute to accountability and transparency. Reports may include:

- ✓ Progress updates;
- ✓ Activity summaries;
- ✓ Output completion reports;
- ✓ Implementation reviews;
- ✓ Performance assessments.

The monitoring framework is intended to provide reliable information that supports project coordination, performance assessment, and informed decision-making.

8.4 Reporting Principles

Reporting within the project shall be:

- ✓ Accurate;
- ✓ Evidence-based;
- ✓ Timely;
- ✓ Consistent;
- ✓ Outcome-oriented.
- ✓ All partners are expected to contribute relevant information required for project reporting activities.

8.4 Reporting Schedule

To ensure systematic monitoring and timely information exchange, the consortium shall follow an indicative reporting schedule.





Report Type	Responsible	Frequency
WP Progress Update	WP Leaders	Quarterly
Risk Register Update	QAC	Quarterly
Dissemination Update	WP5 Lead	Quarterly
Financial Progress Update	All Partners	Semi-Annual
Consortium Progress Report	Coordinator	Semi-Annual

9. QUALITY ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK

9.1 Purpose of Quality Assurance

The quality assurance framework provides a systematic approach for maintaining high standards throughout project implementation.

Quality assurance supports the achievement of project objectives by ensuring that activities, outputs, and processes meet agreed expectations and quality criteria.

9.2 Quality Assurance Principles

The framework is based on:

- ✓ Continuous improvement;
- ✓ Evidence-based assessment;
- ✓ Consistency across project activities;
- ✓ Stakeholder orientation;
- ✓ Transparency and accountability.





9.3 Quality Assurance Cycle

Quality assurance activities follow a cyclical process consisting of:

- Establishment of quality expectations;
- Review of implementation processes;
- Assessment of outputs and results;
- Identification of improvement measures;
- Follow-up and verification.

9.4 Quality Standards

Quality reviews shall consider:

- ✓ Relevance;
- ✓ Effectiveness;
- ✓ Completeness;
- ✓ Usability;
- ✓ Accessibility;
- ✓ Sustainability.

The quality assurance process seeks not only to verify compliance but also to promote learning and continuous enhancement.

9.5 Quality Assurance Instruments

The following instruments will be used:





- ✓ Deliverable Review Checklist
- ✓ Participant Satisfaction Surveys
- ✓ Training Evaluation Forms
- ✓ Internal Peer Review
- ✓ Milestone Tracking Matrix
- ✓ KPI Monitoring Dashboard

10. RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

10.1 Purpose of Risk Management

Risk management aims to support proactive project implementation by identifying potential threats and opportunities that may influence project performance.

Risk management is an essential component of effective project implementation and contributes to the achievement of project objectives, expected results, and long-term impact. The purpose of risk management within the V-EXCHANGE project is to support informed decision-making, strengthen implementation resilience, and reduce the likelihood that unforeseen events or circumstances negatively affect project performance.

10.2 Risk Management Process

The project applies a continuous risk management process consisting of:

- ✓ Risk identification;
- ✓ Risk assessment;





- ✓ Risk prioritization;
- ✓ Mitigation planning;
- ✓ Monitoring and review.

10.3 Categories of Risk

Potential risks may arise in relation to:

- ✓ Operational implementation;
- ✓ Partner engagement;
- ✓ Technical infrastructure;
- ✓ External environmental factors;
- ✓ Sustainability and exploitation activities.

10.4 Risk Response Measures

Where risks are identified, appropriate measures may include:

- ✓ Preventive actions;
- ✓ Corrective interventions;
- ✓ Reallocation of responsibilities;
- ✓ Revised implementation arrangements;
- ✓ Additional support mechanisms.

Risk management shall be integrated into routine project management activities throughout the implementation period.





10.5 Risk Register

The Risk Register serves as the primary tool for documenting, monitoring, and managing risks throughout the implementation of the V-EXCHANGE project. It provides a structured overview of identified risks, their potential impact on project activities and outcomes, and the measures adopted to prevent or mitigate their effects.

The table below presents an indicative overview of key risks that may arise during project implementation and the corresponding mitigation measures to be applied by the consortium.

Risk	Probability	Impact	Mitigation
Low participant engagement	Medium	High	Early recruitment campaigns
Staff turnover	Medium	Medium	Nominate backup personnel
Delayed deliverables	Medium	High	Internal deadlines
Technical failures	Low	High	Alternative digital platforms
Communication breakdown	Low	Medium	Monthly coordination meetings

The register shall be reviewed and updated periodically during the project lifecycle to ensure that emerging risks are identified at an early stage and that appropriate corrective actions are implemented in a timely manner. Risk monitoring is a continuous process and forms an integral part of project management, quality assurance, and decision-making activities.

All consortium partners are encouraged to proactively report potential risks or implementation challenges that may affect project performance, timelines, deliverables, participation levels, or achievement of project objectives.

The Risk Register should include information on the likelihood and potential impact of identified risks, designated responsible persons or bodies, mitigation measures, and the current status of risk management actions.





11. DISSEMINATION AND VISIBILITY RULES

11.1 Purpose

Dissemination and visibility activities aim to maximize awareness, uptake, and long-term impact of project results among relevant stakeholders at local, national, regional, and European levels.

The dissemination strategy seeks not only to promote project activities and achievements but also to facilitate the transfer, replication, and sustainability of project results beyond the lifetime of the project. Through targeted communication and stakeholder engagement, the consortium aims to contribute to wider discussions on Virtual Exchange, digital education, intercultural learning, and active citizenship.

11.2 Visibility Requirements

All communication and dissemination materials produced within the project shall comply with Erasmus+ visibility requirements. Project outputs shall appropriately acknowledge the support received from the European Union and include the required funding statements and disclaimers.

Partners shall ensure that all publications, presentations, websites, social media posts, promotional materials, reports, training resources, and event-related documentation clearly identify the project and its funding source.

Failure to comply with visibility requirements may result in non-compliance with contractual obligations established under the Grant Agreement.

11.3 Dissemination Principles

Dissemination activities shall be guided by:

- ✓ Accuracy and reliability of information;
- ✓ Accessibility of project results;
- ✓ Inclusiveness of target audiences;
- ✓ Consistency of project messaging;





- ✓ Sustainability of dissemination efforts.

Dissemination activities should communicate project achievements in a clear, transparent, and evidence-based manner while ensuring that information remains understandable and relevant to different stakeholder groups.

11.4 Target Audiences

Dissemination activities may address:

- ✓ Students and young people;
- ✓ Higher education institutions;
- ✓ Educators and youth workers;
- ✓ Policymakers;
- ✓ Civil society organizations;
- ✓ Researchers and practitioners;
- ✓ Wider public audiences.

The consortium will seek to maximize the visibility and transferability of project outcomes beyond the project duration.

Special attention will be given to stakeholders involved in digital education, internationalization of higher education, youth participation, civic engagement, and Virtual Exchange initiatives.

11.5 Visual Identity Requirements

All project communication materials shall include:





- ✓ Erasmus+ emblem;
- ✓ EU funding acknowledgement;
- ✓ Project logo;
- ✓ Partner logos where appropriate;
- ✓ Official disclaimer from the Grant Agreement.

The project visual identity shall be applied consistently across all communication channels and materials to ensure a coherent and recognizable project image throughout the implementation period.

11.6 Dissemination Channels

To maximize outreach and engagement, project results may be disseminated through a variety of communication channels, including:

- ✓ Project website;
- ✓ Partner institutional websites;
- ✓ Social media platforms;
- ✓ Newsletters;
- ✓ Conferences and seminars;
- ✓ Workshops and training events;
- ✓ Academic publications;
- ✓ Policy briefs and recommendations;
- ✓ Press releases and media outreach;
- ✓ Digital and printed promotional materials.





The selection of dissemination channels shall be tailored to the specific needs and characteristics of target audiences.

11.7 Responsibilities for Dissemination

Dissemination is a shared responsibility of all consortium members.

Each partner is expected to:

- ✓ Contribute actively to dissemination activities;
- ✓ Promote project activities and results within their networks;
- ✓ Support the collection of dissemination evidence;
- ✓ Ensure compliance with visibility requirements;
- ✓ Share information regarding dissemination opportunities relevant to the project.

The Work Package Leader responsible for dissemination activities shall coordinate dissemination efforts, monitor progress, and support partners in implementing visibility actions.

11.8 Dissemination Evidence and Documentation

To facilitate project reporting and demonstrate achievement of dissemination objectives, partners shall maintain appropriate evidence of dissemination activities.

Examples of dissemination evidence include:

- ✓ Event agendas and participant lists;
- ✓ Photographs and screenshots;
- ✓ Website analytics and social media statistics;
- ✓ Copies of publications and promotional materials;
- ✓ Media coverage and press articles;
- ✓ Conference programmes and presentations;





- ✓ Dissemination reports.

Partners should store dissemination evidence in the shared project repository and make it available for monitoring, reporting, and audit purposes when required.

12. DATA PROTECTION AND ETHICS

12.1 Ethical Principles

The V-EXCHANGE project is committed to conducting all activities in accordance with recognized ethical standards and principles of integrity, fairness, inclusiveness, and respect for human dignity.

The consortium recognizes that ethical considerations are fundamental to the design, implementation, monitoring, and dissemination of project activities. All project partners shall ensure that activities are conducted in a manner that respects the rights, well-being, privacy, and dignity of all participants.

The project promotes a culture of ethical responsibility, transparency, and accountability, ensuring that participants are treated fairly and that project activities contribute positively to educational, social, and intercultural development.

12.2 Data Protection Principles

All processing of personal data shall comply with applicable data protection legislation, including the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) where applicable.

Personal data shall be:

- ✓ Processed lawfully and fairly;
- ✓ Collected for specified purposes;
- ✓ Limited to what is necessary;
- ✓ Stored securely;





- ✓ Protected against unauthorized access.

The consortium shall take appropriate technical and organizational measures to ensure the confidentiality, integrity, and security of personal data throughout the project lifecycle.

12.3 Informed Participation

Individuals participating in project activities shall be informed about the purpose of data collection, their rights, and any relevant privacy considerations.

Participation in project activities shall be based on voluntary and informed consent where required.

Participants shall receive clear and understandable information regarding:

- ✓ The purpose of participation;
- ✓ The use of collected information;
- ✓ Their rights regarding personal data;
- ✓ Contact details for further information or clarification;
- ✓ Procedures for withdrawing participation where applicable.

Particular attention shall be paid to ensuring transparency and informed decision-making among participants throughout the project.

12.4 Ethical Conduct

All consortium members shall ensure that project activities promote:

- ✓ Equality and non-discrimination;
- ✓ Respect for diversity;
- ✓ Inclusion and accessibility;





- ✓ Responsible use of digital technologies;
- ✓ Safe and respectful participation environments.

The consortium shall take appropriate measures to prevent discrimination, harassment, exclusion, or any form of unethical conduct that may negatively affect participants or stakeholders involved in project activities.

All interactions within the project shall be guided by professionalism, mutual respect, and sensitivity to cultural, social, linguistic, and institutional diversity.

12.5 GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) Compliance

All partners shall:

- ✓ collect only necessary personal data;
- ✓ obtain informed consent where required;
- ✓ ensure secure storage;
- ✓ restrict access to authorized personnel;
- ✓ delete or anonymize data when retention periods expire.

Each partner organization remains responsible for ensuring compliance with its institutional data protection policies and applicable legal obligations.

12.6 Responsible Use of Digital Technologies

As the project incorporates digital learning environments, virtual collaboration tools, and innovative educational technologies, consortium partners shall promote the responsible, ethical, and safe use of digital platforms throughout project implementation.

Partners shall seek to ensure:

- ✓ Digital inclusion and accessibility;
- ✓ Respectful online interaction;





- ✓ Protection of participant privacy;
- ✓ Responsible use of AI-supported tools where applicable;
- ✓ Awareness of digital safety and cybersecurity considerations.

The use of digital technologies shall support learning, collaboration, and intercultural dialogue while safeguarding the rights and interests of all participants.

13. DOCUMENTATION AND RECORD KEEPING

13.1 Purpose

Effective documentation and record keeping support transparency, accountability, organizational learning, and compliance with project obligations.

A systematic approach to documentation management enables the consortium to maintain an accurate record of project implementation, preserve institutional knowledge, support evidence-based decision-making, and facilitate internal and external review processes. Proper record keeping also contributes to the long-term sustainability of project results by ensuring that information remains accessible beyond the completion of project activities.

13.2 Documentation Principles

Project documentation shall be:

- ✓ Accurate;
- ✓ Complete;
- ✓ Accessible to authorized users;
- ✓ Securely stored;
- ✓ Organized systematically

All consortium members are responsible for ensuring that records generated through their project activities are managed in accordance with these principles.





13.3 Types of Records

Project records may include:

- ✓ Administrative documents;
- ✓ Meeting documentation;
- ✓ Deliverables and outputs;
- ✓ Dissemination evidence;
- ✓ Monitoring and evaluation records;
- ✓ Communication materials;
- ✓ Supporting implementation documentation.

Additional records may include planning documents, implementation schedules, training materials, participant-related documentation, technical resources, institutional approvals, and other materials generated during project implementation.

The scope and format of records may vary depending on the nature of activities and institutional requirements.

13.4 Record Classification and Organization

Project documentation shall be retained in accordance with the requirements established in the Grant Agreement and applicable legal provisions. Partners are responsible for ensuring that records remain accessible and retrievable throughout the required retention period.

To facilitate efficient retrieval and management of information, project documentation shall be organized according to a common classification structure agreed upon by the consortium. Documentation may be grouped according to:





- ✓ Work packages;
- ✓ Project activities;
- ✓ Reporting periods;
- ✓ Deliverables and milestones;
- ✓ Administrative and contractual records;
- ✓ Dissemination and communication activities;
- ✓ Monitoring and evaluation activities.

File naming conventions and version control procedures should be applied consistently across all project records to ensure clarity and avoid duplication.

13.5 Document Repository

The consortium shall maintain a centralized digital repository containing:

- ✓ deliverables;
- ✓ meeting minutes;
- ✓ reports;
- ✓ dissemination materials;
- ✓ monitoring records;
- ✓ financial documentation;
- ✓ templates and guidance documents. Access rights shall be defined according to project roles.

Access rights shall be defined according to project roles and responsibilities.

The repository shall serve as the primary location for storing official project documentation and facilitating collaboration among consortium members. Partners are encouraged to upload relevant records in a timely manner and maintain updated versions of project documents.





13.6 Version Control

To ensure consistency and prevent the use of outdated information, project documents shall be subject to version control procedures.

Version control should include:

- ✓ Document title and identification;
- ✓ Version number;
- ✓ Date of creation or revision;
- ✓ Author or responsible organization;
- ✓ Summary of modifications where applicable.

Only validated or officially approved versions should be considered final project records.

14. AMENDMENTS AND CHANGES

14.1 General Principles

Project implementation may require adjustments during the implementation period due to operational, institutional, or external factors.

Any proposed modification shall be assessed with regard to its potential impact on project objectives, outputs, timelines, and contractual obligations.

14.2 Types of Changes

Changes may relate to:

- ✓ Activity schedules;
- ✓ Implementation arrangements;
- ✓ Consortium composition;





✓ Deliverables and outputs;

✓ Administrative information.

14.3 Review and Approval

All significant changes shall be reviewed through the appropriate internal procedures before implementation.

Where required, modifications shall be communicated to and approved by the relevant authorities in accordance with contractual provisions.

14.4 14.4 Documentation of Changes

All approved modifications shall be documented appropriately to ensure transparency, accountability, and consistency throughout project implementation.

15. FINAL PROVISIONS

This Project Handbook serves as the principal operational reference document for the V-EXCHANGE consortium.

The handbook establishes common procedures, standards, and expectations that support effective cooperation and successful implementation of project activities.

All consortium members are expected to familiarize themselves with the contents of this handbook and apply the procedures described herein throughout the implementation period.

The handbook may be updated when necessary to reflect evolving project needs, implementation experiences, or modifications approved during the project lifecycle.

By adhering to the principles and procedures outlined in this document, consortium partners contribute to the achievement of high-quality results, effective collaboration, and the long-term sustainability of the V-EXCHANGE project.





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ANNEXES

Annex 1 - Work Packages and Key Deliverables Overview

WP	WORK PACKAGE TITLE	KEY DELIVERABLES	LEAD PARTNER	DUE PERIOD
WP1	Project Coordination & Management	Project Handbook; Consortium Agreement; Progress Reports; Financial and Technical Reports; Risk Management Register; Coordination Meeting Documentation	MTU	Throughout project
WP2	Training of Educators & Facilitators	Training Curriculum; Facilitator Training Package; Training Materials; Digital Learning Resources; Educator Capacity Building Reports	Sofia University	M1–M12
WP3	Virtual Exchange Implementation	Virtual Exchange Programme; Participant Learning Materials; Virtual Exchange Sessions; Participant Feedback Reports; Implementation Report	University of Elbasan	M6–M30
WP4	Communication, Dissemination & Policy Influence	Communication Strategy; Project Website; Social Media Campaigns; Policy Briefs; Dissemination Reports; Visibility Materials	YRCI	M1–M36
WP5	Sustainability & Long-Term Impact	Sustainability Strategy; Institutional Integration Framework; Memoranda of Understanding; Best Practices Guide; Long-Term Collaboration Network Framework	UKZ	M12–M36





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Annex II - Timetable of activities

ACTIVITY	YEAR 1				YEAR 2				YEAR 3			
	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4
T1.1 Establishment of Project Coordination Team (PCT)	■											
T1.2 Project Kickoff Meeting	■											
T1.3 Monthly Coordination Meetings	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
T1.4 Biannual In-Person Consortium Meetings		■		■		■		■		■		■
T1.5 Financial and Administrative Management	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
T1.6 Risk Management and Contingency Planning	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
T1.7 Internal Quality Assurance	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
T1.8 Preparation of Reports						■						■
T2.1 Development of the Virtual Exchange Training Toolkit		■										

T2.2 Train-the-Trainer Workshops			■									
T2.3 Online Learning Modules for Facilitators				■								
T2.4 Peer Mentoring and Educator Community of Practice						■						
T2.5 Continuous Technical and Academic Support		■	■	■	■	■	■					
T3.1 Development of Virtual Exchange Curriculum			■									
T3.2 Implementation of Virtual Exchange Sessions				■								
T3.3 AI-Powered Language Support					■	■						



Annex III - Estimated Budget (Lump Sum Breakdown)

Estimated EU contribution							Maximum grant amount ¹
Estimated eligible lump sum contributions (per work package)						Maximum grant amount ¹	
WP1 Coordination Management	Project &	WP2 Training of Educators & Facilitators	WP3 Virtual Exchange Implementation	WP4 Communication, Dissemination & Policy Influence	WP5 Sustainability & Long-Term Impact		
Forms of funding	Lump sum contribution	Lump sum contribution	Lump sum contribution	Lump sum contribution	Lump sum contribution		Maximum grant amount ¹
	a	b	c	d	e	f = a + b + c + d + e	
1 - MTU	23 684.00	11 995.00	15 044.00	13 316.00	7 420.00	71 459.00	
2 - UNISOFIA	14 739.00	14 739.00	13 215.00	12 198.00	10 165.00	65 056.00	
3 - UKZ	9 453.00	10 368.00	9 962.00	11 995.00	14 231.00	56 009.00	
4 - UNIEL	9 453.00	10 368.00	20 330.00	11 995.00	6 404.00	58 550.00	
5 - RIFE	6 404.00	8 132.00	17 281.00	11 690.00	9 149.35	52 656.35	
6 - YRCI	9 453.00	10 368.00	9 962.00	19 822.00	6 404.00	56 009.00	
Σ consortium	73 186.00	65 970.00	85 794.00	81 016.00	53 773.35	359 739.35	

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