



D5.10 | Conflict and Risk Management Plan (II)



Funded by the
European Union



Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or European Innovation Council and SMES Executive Agency (EISMEA). Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

Grant agreement number	101072248
Project acronym	Food-scalEU
Project name	Food-scalEU: Expanding the European digital agri-food acceleration ecosystem

Deliverable number	D5.10
Deliverable responsible	Clusaga
Work package	5
Editor	Ana Felgueiras
Deliverable type	Report
Dissemination level	Public

DOCUMENT VERSION HISTORY			
Version	Date	Modification introduced	Modified by
0.1	30/09/2023	Identification of main aspects to update	Clusaga
0.2	28/11/2023	Draft version for partners input	Clusaga
1	30/11/2023	Final version	Clusaga

Abstract

The purpose of this document is to update the initial Conflict and Risk Management Plan (D5.3) prepared in M4, include risks that had not been pre-identified and additional mitigation measures.



Table of content

1	INTRODUCTION	4
2	CONFLICT AND RISK MANAGEMENT	4
3	RISK MANAGEMENT AND PROCESSING	5
3.1	Risk identification.....	6
3.2	Risk analysis.....	6
3.3	Response planning	6
3.4	Risk monitoring and control	7
3.5	Risk registry.....	7
3.6	Pre-identified Food-scalEUUp risks.....	7
4	Unforeseen risks and updated mitigation measures.....	9

List of figures

Figure 1.	process for solving conflicts and risks	5
Figure 2.	Process for managing risks.....	5
Figure 3.	Analysis of the level of identified risks	6
Figure 4.	Risk Registry.....	7
Figure 5.	Pre-identified risks analysis.....	9

1 INTRODUCTION

A planned and controlled approach to conflict situations and project risks is an imperative and indispensable step within project management. Conflict and risk management is a continuous process and addresses the planning of risk management, identification, analysis, monitoring and control. During the proposal stage, the consortium has identified the foreseen risks, analysed their level in terms of likelihood and severity or impact in the project, and planned mitigation measures to both prevent and correct the identified risks.

In this document, by conflict and risk we refer to potential situations that may affect the relationships between the project partners and/or cause an undesirable change in the project objectives and/or planned activities.

Risk identification and assessment in terms of impact or severity form the basis for the development of mitigation measures and determine how the risks should be best managed. Both the risks that have been pre-identified during the proposal preparation and unforeseen risks that might arise during project implementation will be managed, according to the procedures laid down in this document. The management process will identify and monitor technical and management risks as well as any other issues that might affect the project progress towards its objectives, in order to carry out corrective actions as early as possible.

This document is to be considered as a complement to the Grant Agreement and the Consortium Agreement (D5.2) of Food-scalEU. Furthermore, it should be read in combination with the Evaluation and Monitoring Plan (D5.4) and the Coordination and Management Plan (D5.1).

2 CONFLICT AND RISK MANAGEMENT

The Food-scalEU consortium consists of 8 partners and 2 Linked Third Parties / Associated Entities from 5 different countries. Regular, open communication and transparency between the Coordinator, Work Package Leaders (WPL) and Task Leaders (TL), and the Steering Committee (SC) are key to avoid conflicts and issues before they arise or at the very early stage.

All partners are expected to be on the alert to identify situations that may lead to conflict or risks and to put in their best efforts to avoid escalating any situation that might undermine the good implementation of the project and the relationships between the project partners.

Each partner has the responsibility to report immediately to their respective WPL and, if needed, to the Coordinator any risk situation that may arise and may affect the project objectives or their successful completion. A registry will be in place so that risks and mitigation and correction measures are documented.

Any change in the foreseen time schedule or in the foreseen estimated effort to conduct the work, as well as any administrative, technical, or financial issue experienced by a partner must be reported first to the corresponding WPL, who will try to solve it within the WP. If needed, the issue will be put forward to the Coordinator who will try to solve it by consensus between the conflicting parties. In case that is not possible, the Steering

Committee may be consulted, and it may set up task forces to take the necessary actions. In case there is no resolution, the SC will establish mitigation plans to reduce the impact of risk. If needed, the Project Advisor at EISMEA and/or other third parties may be consulted.

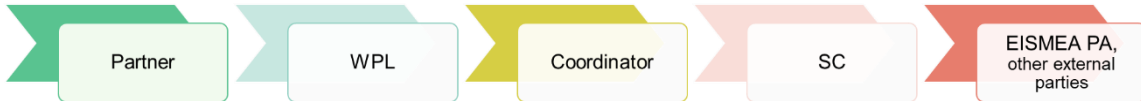


Figure 1. process for solving conflicts and risks

Templates are provided to keep a record of the risks identified and the actions undertaken to monitoring and solve them, according to the risk processing and management procedures described in the following section.

3 RISK MANAGEMENT AND PROCESSING

Risk processing and managing procedures are organised around 5 steps:

1. Risk identification
2. Risk analysis
3. Response planning
4. Risk monitoring and control
5. Risk registry

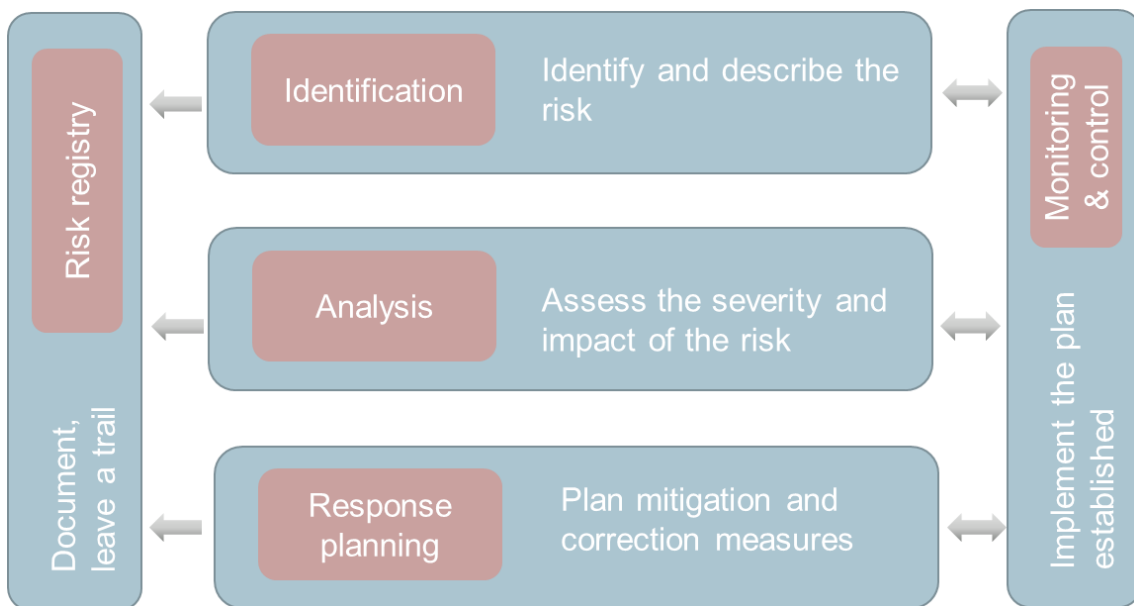


Figure 2. Process for managing risks

3.1 Risk identification

Risk identification will be done throughout the life-cycle of the project. Emphasis is put on early identification so that effective response planning and following monitoring and control can take place. Risk identification will be performed within each WP. Identified risks will be noted down in a clear concise manner in the Risk Registry.

3.2 Risk analysis

Following a risk (or group of risks) has been identified, it is important to assess the level of the risk according to a 4-level scale (Low → Medium → High → Critical) showing an increase of the severity or size of the impact it may have in the project, with *Low* being given lowest priority and *Critical* the highest priority. The level of risk and thus, the priority it will be given, is defined in relation to the negative effect it may have in the achievement of the project objectives.

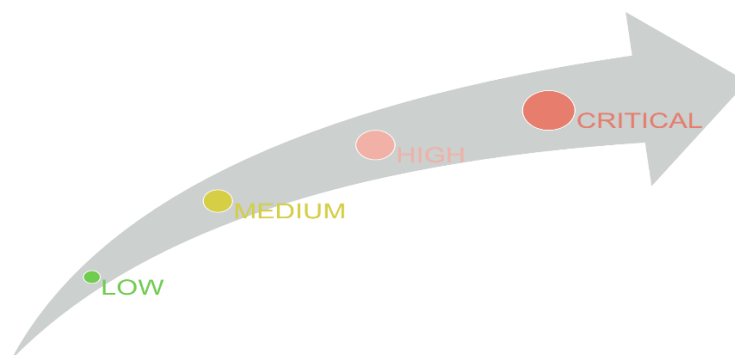


Figure 3. Analysis of the level of identified risks

3.3 Response planning

Strategies and plans, i.e., mitigation measures, are established to minimise the effects of the risk to a point where it can be controlled and managed. Higher priority risks should receive more attention than lower priority risks. A responsible will be assigned to every risk that poses a serious threat to the achievement of project objectives during response planning.

Low-level risks may be accepted in a passive way, where no action is planned because of the irrelevant impact in the project. Nevertheless, monitoring is advisable to avoid escalating.

Medium-level risks should be usually dealt within the WP. They require a response and monitoring until its status is considered as solved.

High- and Critical-level risks are to be addressed in an active way to reduce the estimated impact to acceptable levels, i.e., to a level where they do not undermine the achievement of project objectives.



3.4 Risk monitoring and control

WPL are responsible for managing risks within their assigned WP. Each project partner is expected to communicate any possible risks and response planning to their WPL. Together, they will analyse the level of risk to plan a response and decide if the Coordinator must be involved. It is the responsibility of WPL to inform the Coordinator about the status and effectiveness of each risk response plan and to maintain the Risk Registry updated to facilitate that required modifications be designed and results of monitoring and control well documented.

3.5 Risk registry

A tool has been developed to document risk management. It is accessible by all partners through the MS Teams shared folder (2nd tab of the Food-scalEU_status log spreadsheet). The Risk registry is to be continuously updated and include both pre-identified risks and unforeseen ones.

It should include the identification of the risk with a clear, concise description; indicate whether the risk has been identified or it is a new risk; who identified it; the WP and T it affects; the risk level; the response planning; who is responsible to implement the mitigation measures; and an updated indication of its status.

WP	Task	Partner who identified the risk	Ruisk identification	Pre-identified risk nº or new	Severity / Impact	Response	Responsible for implementing response	Identification date (YY.MM.DD)	Update date (YY.MM.DD)	Status

Figure 4. Risk Registry

3.6 Pre-identified Food-scalEU risks

Key risks that may occur during Food-scalEU have been pre-identified during the project application phase and have been discussed in the context of the related WPs during the kick-off meeting so that the WPL are aware and pay particular attention to preventive measures. Such risks and mitigation measures are presented below, grouped by WP.

WP1. Analysing regional acceleration ecosystems

Description of risk	Risk-mitigation measures
<p>Low participation of regional stakeholders for the preparation of the ecosystems mapping <i>Likelihood: low; severity: medium</i></p>	<p>Partners are mainly cluster organisations and innovation agencies, key elements in their regional innovation ecosystems, with access to different regional structure to get in contact and engage the relevant type of stakeholders to participate.</p>
<p>Low answer to questionnaire for start-ups and scale-ups <i>Likelihood: medium; severity: low</i></p>	<p>We will also be able to rely on other acceleration structures who can support us in reaching out as well as feeding data.</p>

WP2. Connecting and engaging business acceleration stakeholders

Description of risk	Risk-mitigation measures
Low engagement of key stakeholders in knowledge exchange peer groups <i>Likelihood: low; severity: medium</i>	An engagement strategy will be developed in WP4; partners will proactively be involved in the engagement of key stakeholders in their regions.
Low utilisation of the virtual forum for agri-food digital innovation and acceleration ecosystems <i>Likelihood: medium; severity: medium</i>	The virtual forum will be a relevant tool for the visibility of the European regional acceleration ecosystems. Specific actions for the dissemination of this tool will be established in WP4.

WP3. Co-creating and piloting improved business acceleration services

Description of risk	Risk-mitigation measures
Low participation of SMEs in the pilots to test the new/improved acceleration services, making difficult their testing <i>Likelihood: low; severity: high</i>	The services will be implemented by business acceleration providers with a track record in the provision of these kind of services and a demonstrable experience in supporting SMEs. Also, partners will cooperate to share best practices and cooperate to define ways to ensure impact is as desired.

WP4. Communicating, disseminating, exploiting and reaching global

Description of risk	Risk-mitigation measures
Not being able to hold final event for stakeholders due to pandemic travel restrictions. <i>Likelihood: low; severity: medium</i>	In case there are international travel restrictions during the preparation of the final event, an online event will be considered.
Low engagement of international representatives of acceleration actors in innovation hubs in third countries <i>Likelihood: medium, severity: medium</i>	The engagement strategy (WP4) will consider specific actions for the identification, contact and engagement of international actors relevant for acceleration. Engagement will be monitored to be able to apply contingency measures

WP5. Coordinating and managing Food-scalEU

Description of risk	Risk-mitigation measures
Non-performance of partners and/or delay in deliverables <i>Likelihood: low, severity: medium</i>	A management structure adequate for the project will be set. The PC will set the tools necessary for effective monitoring of project progress. A system will be implemented to early spot delays of deliverables; mitigating actions will be discussed with WPL and TL involved to keep the project on time. Long cooperation track between partners in successful projects.
Insufficient partner communication and collaboration <i>Likelihood: low, severity: medium</i>	Several communication channels will be set, including WP meetings (as required on a regular basis) and SC meetings. Moreover, email and other communication and online collaboration channels will be used.
Partner Withdrawal <i>Likelihood: low, severity: high</i>	In case of a partner's withdrawal, the SC will decide whether the predefined work can be implemented by

	another partner. Alternatively, another partner, with expertise in the same field, will be added to the project.
Poor management <i>Likelihood: low, severity: high</i>	The PC will be assisted by all WPL.

The level of each of the pre-identified risks has been analysed according to its likelihood and severity, as follows:

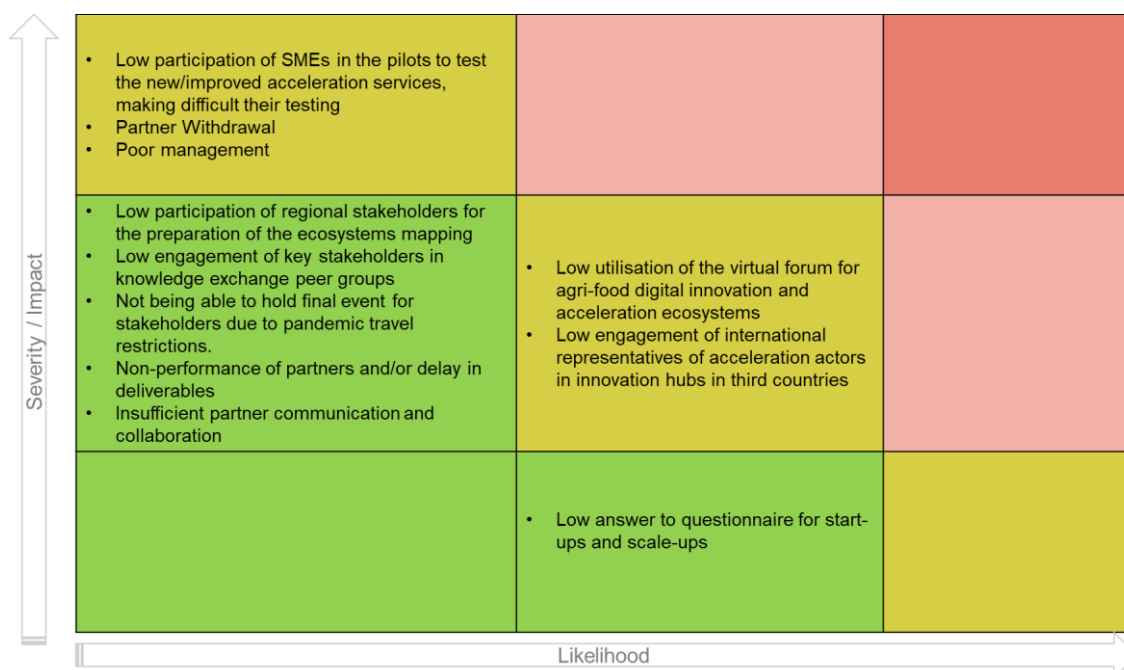


Figure 5. Pre-identified risks analysis

Most of them are low- to medium-level risks. They have been taken into consideration in the detailed methodological design of the corresponding WP and are closely monitored by WPL to avoid they escalate into potentially harmful risks.

4 Unforeseen risks and updated mitigation measures

The implementation of the project has shown additional risks that had not been foreseen, specific aspects of the pre-identified risks that are worth mentioning, and or adaptation of the mitigation measures. These are listed in the table below.

Description of risk	WP n°	Risk-mitigation measures
Low engagement of key stakeholders in knowledge exchange peer groups	2	Adapted methodology of workshops and flexibility for participants Strengthened interlink with Virtual Forum Involvement of these stakeholders in co-creation of services (WP3)
Internal issues affecting staff of the partners (e.g. staff & organisational changes, health-related issues)	all	Increased support and monitoring by project coordinator. Transfer of tasks between project partners.



More interaction between partners required to implement the work plan	all	Increased number of SC meetings – monthly-based project meetings
Planned activities falling on difficult dates (e.g. Christmas, Summer time)	all	Adjustment of the work plan calendar. Increase the duration of the project.