



April 2020

Risk Assessment for ZSI Horizon 2020 projects

Critical implementation risk and mitigation actions related to COVID-19 and the following socio-economic crisis			
Description of risk	Likelihood	Affected project aspect (WP, etc.)	Proposed risk mitigation measures
ZSI not able to fulfil coordinator duties	low	coordination, overall project	ZSI office structures are strengthened for home-office and replacements, ZSI coordinated projects are closely monitored; if coordinating person falls sick for a few weeks a contact person is going to be available; intensified information sharing and documentation in close coordination with other project leaders at ZSI
Coordinator of projects in which ZSI participates is not able to fulfil coordinator duties	medium	coordination, overall project	assess specific risks per project, small or medium sized companies might be prone to bankruptcy; important to ask coordinator for pro-active information sharing and preparation.
Partners not able to fulfil project activities, reporting duties, etc.	moderate, depends on many aspects	all	keep in touch with the partners, implement the quality assurance activities with great care, remain flexible with allocation of tasks (and eventually related budget if a partner is in a prolonged difficulty to charge on the project), shift tasks to do remote work, encourage sound documentation at any time, reinforce spirit of cooperation. In case a prolongation is needed: consider amending the project by 6 months (speedy granting of request is ensured; longer amendments granted on a case-by-case basis).
Communication with partners and data sharing become difficult due to home working	moderate	all	GDPR rules need to be reviewed based on the necessity of home-office access; use as far as possible and needed secure channels of communication



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Participation in (international) physical meetings not possible in the next 2 months (April/May) (different reasons - which have a different likelihood - can lead to the same result: gatherings of more than 2/5/20/100 people remain discouraged, whole countries / locations might stay in quarantine, whole industries in tourism/hospitality might be struggling to provide services, etc.)	very high	participation in external meetings need to be cancelled	Attempt to negotiate with local hotel/service providers (providing contingent of rooms or catering or transfers by bus etc.) about possibility to transfer the signed contracts to a later period without any penalty
Participation in international physical meetings not possible in the next 6 months (until September)	moderate to high; it is possible that during summer it calms down, but a new wave comes in autumn	see above	transfer into virtual meetings, explore possibility to postpone the meeting to autumn (in dependence on developments and respective EU and national regulations), even if situation calms down, consider virtual participation options for some participants (e.g. from still affected regions, those that don't want to travel, etc.), prepare that meetings might need specific safety measures (masks available, temperature checking, etc.)
Participation in international physical meetings not possible in the next 9 months (until December)	moderate, see above	organisation of / participation in all meetings 2020	transfer into virtual meetings, explore if an amendment is needed to prolong the project if objectives cannot be reached
Participation in international physical meetings not feasible beyond 2020 and in particular several participants might stay reluctant or unable to participate in events	high	organisation of / participation in all meetings	consider strong virtual component to physical meetings, if needed building of small working groups (virtual and physical) with a strongly coordinated documentation and information exchange (e.g. recordings, minutes, etc.), prepare that meetings might need specific safety measures to allow people to feel comfortable (masks available, enable social distancing, temperature checking, etc.)
Low participation in events due to an overload of events and deadlines in autumn / winter 2020 (all spring	high	organisation of all meetings in autumn / winter 2020, dissemination of results	revise expectations for events, make recordings available, plan participation in dissemination events well (e.g. distribute among the partners who are close)



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events currently postponed to Sept.-Dec.)			
Price hikes at venues and in the hospitality industry	moderate, might depend on the location	financial planning, conference organisation	reconsider budget planning, consider organising the meeting in different locations (e.g. while prices in Brussels will go up, they might go down in tourist areas), consider more time for looking for suitable offers and planning
Price hikes at travels / flights	high	financial planning, conference organisation, dissemination activities such as presentations at third party events	reconsider budget; might affect specific locations only (e.g. Brussels) - consider different locations
Partners not able to participate in virtual meetings (e.g. for technical reasons)	moderate, depends on the location of the partners / bandwidth of the networks	all	consider supporting partners allocating costs to increase bandwidth at home, explore meeting possibilities that require low bandwidth (e.g. turn off video, etc.)
Virtual meetings do not yield the desired results of physical meetings (e.g. in the case of co-creation workshops involving hard-to-reach groups)	high	all, conference organisation	consider innovative tools that might allow you to get closer to the experience of physical meetings (see e.g. https://alternativeto.net/category/remote-work-and-education/) and plan budget for their implementation
Co-workers, partners are on long-term leaves (for different reasons, sick-leaves, leaves for caring for dependent sick family or worse)	high	depends on the person	ensure / encourage institutional capacities for replacements; find encouraging personal words for the concerned partners
Continued insecurity and weak decision making on contractual issues (for various reasons at different levels, e.g. POs not available, EC overloaded, no clear processes)	high	depends on potential amendment needs	consider potential amendment needs early and keep contact with EC officials



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Stakeholders necessary for the implementation of activities not available (e.g. for planned interviews, co-creation workshops, etc.) due to various reasons (overwhelmed, not accessible, changed priorities, etc.)	high (although it depends on the stakeholder community)	interviews, workshops, stakeholder engagement/interaction	consider phone/skype interviews and online workshops, review the timeline how to postpone the phase that needs interaction, consider amendment needs, reflect on exclusion of stakeholders due to technical limitations, consider approaching intermediaries
Proposals to change the content of some activities to address the current crisis (e.g. take up infectious diseases / reaction to COVID)	moderate, depends on the topic of the project	revision of deliverables/tasks	consider positive to increase impact and relevance of the project (needs to fit into the project and address relevant challenges), if adequate: increased relevance of infectious diseases / health topics in project communication; but not to overdo it: in case it is a significant change of the content of the project, an amendment would be needed
Increased requests from outside to comment on the current crisis	high	project communication and impact	be prepared to answer questions of journalists, create adequate channels of communication with the project partners (e.g. COVID-task-force) to collect statements and inputs
PR disaster if the project / institution becomes the core of a new cluster (or e.g. a new outbreak in autumn)	low	project communication	events are cancelled already, in autumn (expected "second wave") special attention has to be paid (worst case: temperature control at the event entrance?), yet media attention for small clusters is actually unlikely
Impact gaps and differences due to shifted priorities	high	project impact	impact needs to be carefully measured and assessed at the end of the project duration taking different effects of the crisis into account