



Deliverable 1.1:

Project Management Handbook

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Deliverable

Table 1

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Project Acronym	SchoolMedDiet
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Project Coordinator	University of Western Macedonia (UOWM)-Greece
Project Website	To be launched

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Table 4

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List of Abbreviations

ABBREVIATION	– Explanation
ACTIA	– Association de Coordination Technique pour l'Industrie Agroalimentaire
AI	– Artificial Intelligence
CA	– Consortium Agreement
DMP	– Data Management Plan
EU	– European Union
EVAV	– EVAVEO SAS Ingénierie en Innovation
FAIR	– Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable
GA	– General Assembly
GDPR	– General Data Protection Regulation
GLC	– Gzira Local Council
IAV-CHA	– Agronomic and Veterinary Institute Hassan II
iED	– Institute of Entrepreneurship Development
INAT	– University of Carthage, National Institute of Agronomy of Tunisia
IPR	– Intellectual Property Rights
PAB	– Project Advisory Board
PC	– Project Coordinator
PMO	– Project Management Office
PRIMA	– Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area
QA	– Quality Assurance
QC	– Quality Control
RDEWM	– Regional Directorate of Primary and Secondary Education of Western Macedonia
TL / TLs	– Task Leader / Task Leaders
UOMA	– University of Malta
UOMO	– University of Monastir
UOWM	– University of Western Macedonia
VR	– Virtual Reality
WP / WPs	– Work Package / Work Packages
WPL / WPLs	– Work Package Leader / Work Package Leaders

Executive Summary

The SchoolMedDiet Project Management Handbook establishes the common management framework, responsibilities, procedures and working practices that will support the effective implementation of the project throughout its 36-month duration. Developed within WP1 – Project Management & Coordination, led by the University of Western Macedonia (UOWM), it serves as a practical operational reference for all consortium partners and supports coordinated implementation across the project.

The Handbook defines the main governance and coordination arrangements of SchoolMedDiet and establishes common procedures for project monitoring and reporting, financial management, meetings and internal coordination, deliverable preparation, review and submission, quality assurance, risk management and the handling of issues, deviations and corrective actions. It also identifies the principal contractual and programme documents governing project implementation and clarifies the responsibilities of partners in applying the agreed management procedures.

Particular attention is given to data management and protection, ethical compliance, Intellectual Property Rights (IPR), Open Science, gender equality and inclusion. Given the involvement of school communities, including children and adolescents, the Handbook also addresses appropriate safeguards, consent procedures and the protection of minors in relevant project activities. Common arrangements for project documentation, version control, templates, internal communication and collaboration tools further support consistency, traceability and effective information exchange across the consortium.

D1.1 is intended to function as a living operational management document and may be updated or further specified during project implementation where necessary. Through this common framework, the Handbook aims to promote efficient coordination, transparency, accountability and the timely and high-quality implementation of SchoolMedDiet activities and outputs.

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Project Management Handbook

The purpose of this deliverable is to establish the common management framework, procedures, responsibilities and working practices that will support the effective implementation of the SchoolMedDiet project throughout its entire duration.

The Project Management Handbook serves as the main operational reference document for all consortium partners, providing practical guidance on the organizational, administrative, financial, scientific, technical and operational aspects of project management. Developed within WP1 – Project Management & Coordination, led by UOWM, it supports the coordination of activities across all WPs and clarifies the roles, responsibilities and decision-making processes within the consortium.

The Handbook defines the common procedures for project monitoring and reporting, meetings and internal communication, deliverable preparation and review, QA and risk management, management of issues and deviations, and project documentation. These procedures aim to support the timely implementation of tasks, deliverables and milestones, while facilitating effective cooperation, information exchange and coordination among consortium partners.

Particular attention is also given to ethical compliance, data protection, research data management and IPR. Given the involvement of school communities and other stakeholders in the project's Living Labs and digital interventions, appropriate safeguards are required to ensure the responsible implementation of project activities, particularly those involving children and adolescents.

The Project Management Handbook is intended to be a living operational document. Its procedures may be updated or further specified during project implementation in response to operational needs, consortium decisions, requirements of the Funding Authority or changes affecting the project work plan. Relevant updates will be communicated to the consortium to ensure the consistent application of the agreed management procedures.

1.2 Scope and Objectives of the Project Management Handbook

The Project Management Handbook applies to all SchoolMedDiet consortium partners and covers the management and coordination procedures to be followed throughout the 36-month project implementation period. It provides a common operational framework to support consistent, transparent and efficient collaboration across the consortium and between the different WPs, tasks and project activities.

The scope of the Handbook encompasses the main aspects of project governance and day-to-day management, including administrative and financial coordination, scientific and technical monitoring, internal communication, meetings and decision-making, progress and financial reporting, deliverable and milestone monitoring, QA, risk management, data and intellectual property management, ethical compliance and document management. It also establishes common procedures for addressing delays, deviations, emerging risks and other issues that may affect the timely and successful implementation of the project.

The main objectives of the Project Management Handbook are to:

- establish a clear governance and management framework for SchoolMedDiet, defining the roles, responsibilities and interactions of the different project management bodies and consortium partners
- provide common procedures for planning, monitoring and coordinating project activities across WPs and tasks
- ensure the timely preparation, internal review, approval and submission of project deliverables and the achievement of project milestones
- support effective administrative and financial monitoring and ensure compliance with the applicable contractual and funding requirements
- establish consistent QA and risk management procedures to identify, assess, monitor and address potential implementation challenges
- facilitate effective internal communication, information exchange and coordination among consortium partners, WPLs, TLs and other relevant project actors
- provide a common framework for meetings, decision-making, documentation, follow-up actions and the management of potential conflicts or deviations

- ensure that ethical, data protection, intellectual property, open science, gender equality and inclusion requirements are appropriately considered throughout project implementation and
- promote accountability, transparency, traceability and consistency in project management and documentation across the consortium.

The procedures described in this Handbook are intended to complement the contractual and technical documents governing SchoolMedDiet.

Through this common framework, the Handbook aims to support the consortium in maintaining alignment between project objectives, activities, responsibilities, timelines and resources, while enabling the timely identification and resolution of issues that could affect project performance.

1.3 Relation with Other Project Deliverables and Work Packages

The Project Management Handbook is a horizontal reference document supporting the implementation of all WPs, tasks, deliverables and milestones of SchoolMedDiet. Although developed within WP1 – Project Management & Coordination, the procedures and working arrangements defined in this Handbook apply across the entire project and provide a common management framework for all consortium partners.

WP1 interacts continuously with the other WPs to ensure coherence between scientific, technical, implementation, evaluation, policy and communication activities. In particular, the management procedures established in D1.1 support the coordination and monitoring of:

- **WP2 – Methodology & Living Lab Design**, by facilitating the coordination of methodological development, co-creation activities and preparation for the implementation of the School Living Labs
- **WP3 – School Living Labs Implementation**, by supporting coordination between the national implementation activities, monitoring progress and ensuring timely communication of implementation-related issues

- **WP4 – Digital Tools for Empowerment (AI & VR)**, by providing the management and monitoring framework for the development, testing and integration of the project's digital solutions
- **WP5 – School-Based Evaluation of Interventions & Digital Tools**, by supporting coordination of evaluation activities, progress monitoring and timely exchange of information between implementation and evaluation teams
- **WP6 – Piloting Public Food Procurement & Policy Uptake for the Mediterranean Diet**, by facilitating coordination of procurement and policy-related activities and their integration with the wider project implementation and
- **WP7 – Communication, Dissemination & Exploitation**, by ensuring coordination between project management and the communication, dissemination, stakeholder engagement and exploitation activities of the project.

The deliverable also provides the procedural basis for the preparation, internal review, approval, monitoring and submission of subsequent project deliverables. The partners responsible for the deliverables, WPLs, TLs and contributing partners are expected to follow the common procedures established in this Handbook to ensure consistency, quality and timely delivery of project outputs.

This is also closely connected with other management-related documents and outputs developed during the project, particularly those concerning QA and risk management, data management and IPR, ethical management and communication, dissemination and exploitation. These documents complement D1.1 by providing more detailed provisions for their respective areas, while the Project Management Handbook establishes the overarching framework through which they are coordinated and monitored.

As project implementation progresses, relevant procedures described in D1.1 may be further specified or updated to reflect the evolving needs of the project and the outcomes of consortium decisions. In this way, the Handbook will remain aligned with the implementation of the different WPs and provide a consistent management reference throughout the lifetime of SchoolMedDiet.

1.4 Handbook Overview

The Project Management Handbook is structured to provide consortium partners with a clear and practical reference for the management and implementation of SchoolMedDiet. It first presents the project's governance structure and key reference documents, followed by the procedures for project monitoring and reporting, internal coordination, deliverable management, QA and risk management. It also addresses data protection, ethical compliance, IPR, document management and the common tools and templates supporting collaboration across the consortium. The Handbook concludes by reinforcing its role as a common operational framework to be applied throughout project implementation.

2. SchoolMedDiet Project Governance and Management Structure

SchoolMedDiet governance and management structure establishes the roles, responsibilities and decision-making arrangements required for the effective coordination of the project. It combines central coordination by the University of Western Macedonia (UOWM) with distributed responsibility across WPs and consortium partners, supported by appropriate management and advisory bodies. The following subsections describe the main governance bodies and coordination roles and their respective responsibilities.

2.1 Overall Governance Structure

The SchoolMedDiet governance structure is based on clearly defined roles and responsibilities, combined with regular coordination and information exchange between the different management levels of the project. The structure aims to facilitate both strategic decision-making at consortium level and efficient operational management of the activities carried out within individual WPs and Tasks.

Table 5: SchoolMedDiet Governance Roles and Responsibilities

GOVERNANCE ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES				
Body/Role		Main Responsibility	Composition	Frequency/Reporting line
Project Coordinator (PC)		Overall project coordination; monitoring of implementation, deadlines, resources, risks and reporting	UOWM	Continuous; coordinates across the consortium and interfaces with the Funding Authority
Project Management Office (PMO)		Supports day-to-day project implementation, communication and reporting	Led by UOWM, supported by experienced project management and financial staff	Ongoing: supports the PC
General Assembly (GA)		Monitors overall progress, shares findings, resolves challenges and takes key project decisions	All consortium partners	At least every six months

Project Advisory Board (PAB)	Provides independent strategic advice, assesses scientific progress and supports policy alignment	External experts in food science, AI, VR, Living Lab, education and food systems policy	Annually
Work Package Leaders (WPLs)	Oversee timely implementation of their respective WPs and coordinate contributions from participating partners	Partner leading each WP	Throughout WP implementation; coordinate with the PC
Task Leaders (TLs)	Coordinate implementation of the respective task and contributions of the participating partners	Partner responsible for each task	Throughout task implementation; report through the relevant WPL
Quality Assurance & Risk Management	Supports QA/QC, internal review processes, risk identification and mitigation	UOWM, supported by UOMA, UOMO, IAV-CHA and INAT	Throughout project implementation
Ethical Advisor	Provides guidance and support on project-wide ethical compliance	To be appointed by UOWM	Throughout project implementation following appointment

The detailed composition, responsibilities, interactions and operating procedures of the individual governance bodies and management roles are described in the following subsections.

2.2 Project Coordinator

The University of Western Macedonia (UOWM) acts as the Coordinator of SchoolMedDiet and is responsible for the overall administrative, financial, scientific and technical coordination of the project. The PC serves as the main intermediary between the consortium and the Funding Authority and ensures that the project is implemented in accordance with the approved work plan and the applicable requirements.

The main responsibilities of the PC include:

- monitoring the overall progress of the project, including activities, deliverables, milestones, deadlines, budgets and expenditures
- coordinating administrative and financial management and reporting
- maintaining regular communication with consortium partners, WPLs and TLs
- facilitating consortium meetings and following up on key decisions and actions
- monitoring project risks, delays, and deviations and coordinating corrective actions where necessary
- overseeing the application of QA procedures and relevant ethical and legal requirements and
- keeping the consortium informed about project progress, upcoming deadlines, risks, and matters requiring action.

The PC is supported by the PMO in the day-to-day coordination, administration, financial monitoring, communication and reporting of the project.

2.3 Project Management Office

The PMO, led by UOWM, supports the PC in the day-to-day management and coordination of SchoolMedDiet. It is supported by experienced staff, including project management and financial management personnel, and facilitates effective communication and coordination across the consortium. The main responsibilities of the PMO include:

- supporting project and scientific coordination and the implementation of the project work plan
- providing administrative and organizational support to the PC and consortium partners
- supporting financial management and monitoring, including the collection and coordination of relevant financial information
- monitoring project progress, timelines, deliverables and milestones
- supporting project reporting and the preparation of relevant management documentation

- facilitating internal communication, meetings and follow-up of agreed actions and
- supporting the identification and follow-up of project risks, implementation issues and deviations

The PMO works closely with the PC throughout the project to ensure the smooth implementation of project activities and the timely follow-up of management and reporting requirements.

2.4 General Assembly

The GA is composed of representatives of all SchoolMedDiet consortium partners and constitutes the main consortium-level body for overseeing project progress and taking key decisions concerning project implementation.

The main responsibilities of the GA include:

- monitoring the overall progress of the project and the achievement of its objectives
- reviewing progress across WPs, deliverables, milestones and major project activities
- discussing and addressing significant implementation challenges, risks or deviations
- taking key decisions concerning the strategic direction and implementation of the project
- facilitating coordination and information exchange among consortium partners and
- supporting the resolution of issues that require consortium-level agreement.

The GA will meet at least every six months throughout the project to review progress, discuss upcoming activities and priorities and ensure continued alignment among all consortium partners.

Regarding quorum issues, voting rights and formal decision-making procedures are governed by the CA.

2.5 Project Advisory Board

The PAB is an independent external advisory body established to provide strategic and scientific guidance to the SchoolMedDiet consortium. It will consist of external experts covering key areas relevant to the project, including food science, AI, VR, Living Labs, education and food systems policy.

The main responsibilities of the PAB include:

- providing independent strategic and scientific advice to the consortium
- reviewing project progress and providing recommendations for improvement
- contributing to the QA of major project outputs
- advising on relevant scientific, technological, educational and policy developments and
- supporting the alignment of SchoolMedDiet activities and results with relevant Mediterranean and European priorities.

The PAB will meet annually and its recommendations will be considered by the PC and the consortium in the planning and implementation of subsequent project activities. The PAB has an advisory role and does not replace the formal decision-making responsibilities of the Project Coordinator or the General Assembly.

2.6 Work Package Leaders

The WPLs are responsible for the overall coordination, implementation and monitoring of their respective WPs. They will make sure that planned activities are carried out in accordance with the project work plan and within the agreed timeframe.

The main responsibilities of the WPLs include:

- coordinating the activities and contributions of partners involved in their respective WP
- monitoring the progress of tasks, deliverables and milestones
- ensuring timely and high-quality completion of WP outputs

- identifying and communicating potential delays, risks or deviations to the PC
- facilitating coordination with other WPs where activities are interdependent and
- providing regular progress updates and relevant information for project monitoring and reporting.

WPLs work closely with the PC, TLs and participating partners to ensure effective implementation and coordination across the project.

2.7 Task Leaders

The TLs are responsible for coordinating and monitoring the implementation of the individual tasks assigned to them within each WP.

Their main responsibilities include:

- coordinating the contributions of partners participating in the task
- monitoring the timely implementation of planned activities and outputs
- maintaining regular communication with the respective WPL
- identifying and reporting potential delays, risks or implementation issues and
- providing the necessary information and updates for project monitoring and reporting.

TLs work closely with the respective WPL and participating partners to ensure that task-level activities contribute effectively and on time to the objectives and expected results of the relevant WP.

2.8 Quality Assurance and Risk Management

QA and risk management activities are coordinated by UOWM with the support of IAV-CHA, INAT, UOMA and UOMO. These activities support the implementation of the project's QA/QC and risk management procedures.

The main activities include:

- supporting the application of agreed quality standards and procedures across the project
- monitoring the quality, completeness, consistency and timely preparation of project outputs
- identifying and assessing potential risks that may affect project implementation
- proposing appropriate mitigation measures for identified risks and supporting corrective actions where issues or deviations arise
- supporting the internal review of key project deliverables and
- cooperating with the PC and the PAB on quality and risk-related matters.

Quality and risk management will be carried out throughout the project, with identified risks and mitigation measures regularly reviewed and updated as project implementation progresses. Detailed risk identification, assessment, mitigation and monitoring procedures, including the dynamic Risk Log, are further specified in the project Risk Management Plan.

2.9 Ethical Advisor and Ethical Management

An Ethical Advisor will be appointed by UOWM in accordance with the project work plan. The Ethical Advisor will support project-wide ethical compliance, provide guidance on applicable ethical standards and work with WP Leaders on relevant ethical aspects of project activities, including recruitment procedures, information sheets, informed consent protocols and the safeguarding of minors in school-based activities. The main responsibilities related to ethical management include:

- providing guidance on the ethical requirements applicable to project activities
- supporting compliance with relevant ethical and legal standards throughout project implementation
- identifying and addressing ethical issues that may arise during the project
- supporting the appropriate protection of participants involved in project activities, particularly minors and other vulnerable groups

- advising partners on ethical requirements related to research and pilot activities and
- communicating relevant ethical issues and requirements to the PC and consortium, where necessary.

Ethical compliance will be monitored throughout the project and implemented at the appropriate national and institutional levels.

2.10 Data Management and IPR Responsibilities

Data management and IPR are coordinated by UOWM, with the support of ACTIA, EVAV and IED. These activities aim to ensure the appropriate management, protection, use and sharing of data and knowledge generated throughout SchoolMedDiet.

The main responsibilities include:

- coordinating the preparation and regular update of the project Data Management Plan (DMP)
- ensuring that project data are managed in accordance with FAIR principles and applicable data protection requirements
- supporting appropriate procedures for data collection, storage, anonymization, access and sharing
- monitoring compliance with GDPR requirements where applicable
- supporting the identification, protection and appropriate management of project-generated knowledge and IPR and
- coordinating IPR considerations with the project's dissemination and exploitation activities.

Data management and IPR procedures will be reviewed and updated throughout the project to reflect the evolving needs and outputs of SchoolMedDiet.

2.11 Communication, Dissemination and Exploitation Coordination

Communication, dissemination and exploitation activities are coordinated by iED, as leader of WP7 – Communication, Dissemination & Exploitation, with the contribution of the consortium partners. These activities aim to ensure the visibility of SchoolMedDiet, effective stakeholder engagement, broad dissemination of project results and their long-term uptake.

The main responsibilities include:

- coordinating the communication, dissemination and exploitation activities of the project
- ensuring consistent communication of SchoolMedDiet activities, results and achievements
- supporting engagement with relevant stakeholders, including schools, families, public authorities, policymakers and other target groups
- coordinating partner contributions to communication and dissemination activities
- supporting the dissemination and exploitation of project results through relevant networks and channels and
- monitoring the implementation and progress of communication, dissemination and exploitation activities.

iED works closely with the PC and consortium partners to ensure that communication and exploitation activities are aligned with project progress, results, and overall objectives.

2.12 Living Lab Coordination

The implementation of the Living Labs requires close coordination between the participating countries and the relevant WPs. Living Lab coordination supports the consistent implementation of project activities while allowing their adaptation to the specific educational, cultural and institutional context of each pilot setting.

The main responsibilities related to Living Lab coordination include:

- coordinating the implementation of Living Lab activities at national and local level

- facilitating communication between schools, project partners and relevant local stakeholders
- supporting the implementation of common project methodologies and protocols across the Living Labs
- monitoring progress and identifying implementation challenges or deviations at national level
- facilitating coordination with the relevant WP and TLs and
- supporting the exchange of experiences, lessons learned and good practices between the Living Labs.

Living Lab coordination will help ensure coherence across the different pilot settings while preserving the flexibility required to adapt SchoolMedDiet interventions to local needs and conditions.

2.13 Decision-Making and Escalation Procedures

Decision-making within SchoolMedDiet follows a transparent and collaborative approach, aiming to resolve issues at the appropriate management level and ensure the timely implementation of project activities.

Operational decisions related to individual tasks and WPs are primarily addressed by the relevant TLs and WPLs, in consultation with the participating partners. Issues affecting several WPs, the overall work plan, project resources, deadlines or contractual obligations are communicated to the PC for further coordination.

Where an issue cannot be resolved at operational or coordination level or where a decision has significant implications for the consortium, it will be escalated to the GA for discussion and decision, in accordance with the applicable project agreements.

All significant decisions and agreed follow-up actions will be appropriately documented and communicated to the relevant consortium partners to ensure transparency and effective implementation.

Significant ethical, legal, financial or contractual issues, as well as issues that may affect a contractual deadline or milestone, should be communicated to the PC without waiting for the next regular reporting cycle.

3. Documents of Reference

The implementation and management of SchoolMedDiet are governed by the project's contractual documents and the applicable rules and requirements of the PRIMA Programme. The Project Management Handbook complements these documents by translating the relevant requirements into practical management and coordination procedures for the consortium. In the event of any inconsistency, the applicable contractual and programme provisions shall prevail.

For the avoidance of doubt, the Grant Agreement and its approved technical description prevail over this Handbook, while matters concerning the internal organisation of the consortium shall be governed by the Consortium Agreement where applicable.

3.1 Grant Agreement and Approved Project Proposal

The Grant Agreement, together with the approved SchoolMedDiet project proposal and its technical description, constitutes the primary contractual and technical reference for project implementation. These documents define the project's objectives, work plan, activities, deliverables, milestones, implementation schedule, partner responsibilities and applicable financial and reporting requirements.

All project activities should be implemented in accordance with the approved project scope and contractual commitments. Any significant change affecting the approved work plan, implementation schedule, budget or partner responsibilities should be assessed against the applicable contractual provisions and, where required, addressed through the appropriate approval or amendment procedure.

3.2 Consortium Agreement

The CA defines the internal arrangements governing cooperation among the SchoolMedDiet consortium partners.

It establishes the principles and procedures applicable to the internal organization of the consortium, including partners' rights and responsibilities, decision-making arrangements,

financial provisions, confidentiality, IPR, access rights, and procedures for addressing internal project matters.

All partners are expected to comply with the provisions of the CA throughout project implementation. Where relevant, the management procedures described in this Handbook should be applied in conjunction with the corresponding provisions of the Agreement.

In case of any inconsistency between this Handbook and the CA, the provisions of the applicable contractual agreements shall prevail.

3.3 PRIMA Rules and Guidance

SchoolMedDiet implementation is also subject to the applicable PRIMA rules, guidelines and procedures, including requirements concerning project implementation, reporting, financial management, eligibility of costs, communication and dissemination, and other obligations applicable to PRIMA-funded projects.

The consortium will follow the latest applicable guidance and instructions issued by PRIMA-IS throughout project implementation. Where clarification is required, the PC will coordinate the interpretation and application of the relevant requirements at consortium level.

4. Project Monitoring and Reporting

4.1 Project Progress Monitoring

Project progress will be continuously monitored to ensure that the project's activities are implemented in accordance with the approved work plan, timeline, objectives and available resources. The PC, supported by the PMO, will oversee the overall progress of the project in close cooperation with the WPLs and TLs.

Progress monitoring will focus primarily on the status of tasks, deliverables and milestones, achievement of planned objectives and results, use of resources and any risks, delays or deviations that may affect project implementation.

WPLs and TLs will regularly provide updates on the progress of their activities and promptly inform the PC of any significant issue or expected deviation. Progress will also be reviewed during project coordination and WP meetings, allowing the consortium to identify potential problems at an early stage and agree on appropriate corrective actions where necessary.

The PMO will maintain an overview of key project deadlines and implementation progress, supporting timely follow-up and communication with the partners concerned. This monitoring process will provide the basis for internal progress reporting and for the preparation of the periodic reports required by the Funding Authority.

4.2 Deliverables and Milestones Monitoring

Deliverables and milestones will be regularly monitored to ensure their timely completion and compliance with the approved project work plan. The PC and the PMO will maintain an overview of the relevant deadlines and monitor progress in cooperation with the responsible WPLs, TLs and partners.

WPLs will monitor the preparation of deliverables and the achievement of milestones within their respective WPs and will inform the PC of their status and any potential delays or issues. Particular attention will be given to dependencies between activities and outputs that may affect subsequent tasks or WPs.

Potential delays or deviations should be communicated as early as possible to allow sufficient time for corrective measures to be agreed and implemented. Where necessary, the PC will

coordinate with the responsible partners to assess the impact of the deviation and determine the appropriate follow-up actions.

The detailed procedures for the preparation, internal review, approval and submission of deliverables are described in Section 6 – Deliverable Preparation, Review and Submission.

4.3 Internal Progress Reporting

Internal progress reporting will support the regular monitoring of project implementation and provide the PC with an up-to-date overview of progress across all WPs.

WPLs will provide progress updates on the activities under their responsibility, with input from TLs and participating partners. In accordance with the project work plan, six-monthly WPL reports will be used to summarize the progress of each WP.

These updates will provide concise information on:

- progress of tasks, deliverables and milestones
- main activities and results achieved during the reporting period
- upcoming activities and deadlines
- identified risks, delays or deviations and proposed corrective actions and
- relevant issues requiring coordination or support from the PC.

The PMO will consolidate the information received from the WPLs and use it to support overall project monitoring, coordination meetings, and the preparation of reports required by the Funding Authority. A common WP Progress Report template will be maintained in the project SharePoint and used by all WPLs. The PMO will communicate the specific internal submission deadline for each six-month reporting cycle sufficiently in advance.

4.4 Financial and Periodic Reporting

Financial and periodic reporting will be coordinated by the PC, with the support of the PMO and the contribution of all consortium partners, in accordance with the requirements and deadlines established by the Funding Authority.

Each partner is responsible for maintaining appropriate accounting records and supporting documentation concerning the implementation of its activities and the use of project resources, ensuring an adequate audit trail in accordance with applicable funding requirements and its usual accounting and management practices. Partners are responsible for ensuring that reported costs are eligible and duly justified and for providing accurate and timely technical and financial information required for project monitoring and reporting. The PC and PMO will coordinate the collection and consolidation of the required technical and financial information at consortium level.

Periodic reporting will provide an overview of project progress, activities performed, results achieved, use of resources, and any significant deviations from the approved work plan. Partners will be informed in advance of the relevant reporting requirements, deadlines and documentation to be provided.

The PC will coordinate the preparation and submission of the required reports to the Funding Authority and will support partners in addressing reporting-related issues or requests for clarification.

Any significant deviation from the planned use of resources or approved budget should be communicated to the PC before implementation, so that its eligibility and any need for prior approval or amendment can be assessed.

4.5 Project Monitoring Overview

The main project monitoring tools and their indicative frequency of use are summarized below. These tools support the PC, PMO and WPLs in maintaining an up-to-date overview of project implementation and identifying issues requiring follow-up or corrective action.

Table 6: Overview of Project Monitoring Tools and Responsibilities

MONITORING			
Monitoring Tool	Main Purpose	Main Responsibility	Frequency
WP Progress Reports	Monitor progress of WP activities, tasks, deliverables, milestones, risks and upcoming actions	WPLs, with input from TLs and partners, coordinated by PC/PMO	Every six months

Deliverable and Milestone Monitoring	Track preparation, progress and timely completion of deliverables and milestones	PC/PMO and relevant WPLs	Ongoing, according to project deadlines
Risk Log	Record, assess and follow identified risks, mitigation measures and their status	PC/UOWM, with WPLs and relevant partners	Every six months
Meeting Action Lists	Record agreed actions, responsible persons/partners and deadlines	Meeting organizer/PC/WPL/TL, as appropriate	Following relevant project meetings and until closure of actions
Financial Monitoring	Monitor expenditure, resource use and information required for financial reporting	PC/PMO, with input from all partners	Ongoing and in line with reporting requirements
Issue / Decision Log	Record significant implementation issues, key consortium decisions and agreed follow-up actions.	PC/PMO with WPLs	Continuous / updated after relevant meetings or decisions

5. Meetings and Internal Coordination

Effective internal communication and regular coordination are essential for the smooth implementation of SchoolMedDiet, particularly given the transnational and interdisciplinary nature of the consortium. A combination of online and face-to-face meetings, supported by appropriate communication and collaboration tools, will facilitate the timely exchange of information, coordination of activities, and follow-up of project progress.

Project meetings will be organized at different levels according to operational and strategic needs, involving the PC, WP and TLs, consortium partners and other relevant project bodies. Internal communication will aim to ensure that partners remain informed about project activities, decisions, deadlines, risks and upcoming actions throughout the project.

5.1 Project Meetings

SchoolMedDiet meetings will be organized throughout the project to support coordination, monitor progress, facilitate decision-making and ensure effective information exchange among consortium partners. Meetings may be held online or face-to-face, depending on their purpose and the needs of the project.

The main types of project meetings include:

- **GA meetings**, held at least every six months, involving all consortium partners and focusing on overall project progress, strategic issues, key decisions and upcoming priorities
- **WPLs Group meetings**, held every month to monitor project implementation, coordinate activities across WPs and address matters requiring cross-WP coordination. Extraordinary meetings may also be convened when required for project implementation
- **Work Package and Task meetings**, organized by the relevant WPLs and TLs according to implementation needs and, in particular, around key activities, milestones, deliverables and reporting deadlines

- **Project coordination meetings**, involving the PC, PMO, WPLs, TLs and/or other relevant partners. These meetings will be organized on a monthly basis to address cross-WP, administrative, technical or financial matters and upcoming deadlines
- **PAB meetings**, organized annually to review project progress and provide independent strategic and scientific advice and
- **Living Lab coordination meetings**, organized according to implementation needs and key stages of the Living Lab activities to facilitate coordination between the partners and stakeholders involved in the School Living Labs

Additional meetings may be organized whenever specific implementation, technical, administrative or financial issues require coordination among the relevant partners.

5.2 Meeting Preparation, Minutes and Follow-Up

Project meetings should be prepared and documented in a consistent manner to ensure effective participation, transparency and appropriate follow-up of decisions and agreed actions.

For formal project meetings, an agenda will be prepared and shared with participants in advance, indicating the main topics to be discussed and, where relevant, the expected contributions from partners.

Meeting minutes will be prepared for key consortium and coordination meetings and will summarize the main points discussed, decisions taken, agreed actions, responsible partner(s) and relevant deadlines. Minutes will be circulated within 10 calendar days of the meeting to the participants. Minutes will be considered approved if no comments are received within 10 calendar days following circulation. Then, they will be stored in the project's appropriate folder in SharePoint.

Agreed actions will be followed up by the responsible meeting organizer, PC, WPL or TL, as appropriate. Outstanding actions and relevant decisions may be reviewed during subsequent meetings to ensure their timely implementation.

5.3 Internal Communication and Collaboration Tools

SchoolMedDiet will use common communication and collaboration tools to facilitate efficient information exchange, document sharing, and coordination among consortium partners.

The main internal communication and collaboration tools will include:

- Email and project mailing lists for official communication, announcements, deadlines and exchange of information among partners (schoolmeddiet@uowmgr.onmicrosoft.com)
- a shared SharePoint for the storage and exchange of project documents, deliverables, templates, meeting materials and other relevant files

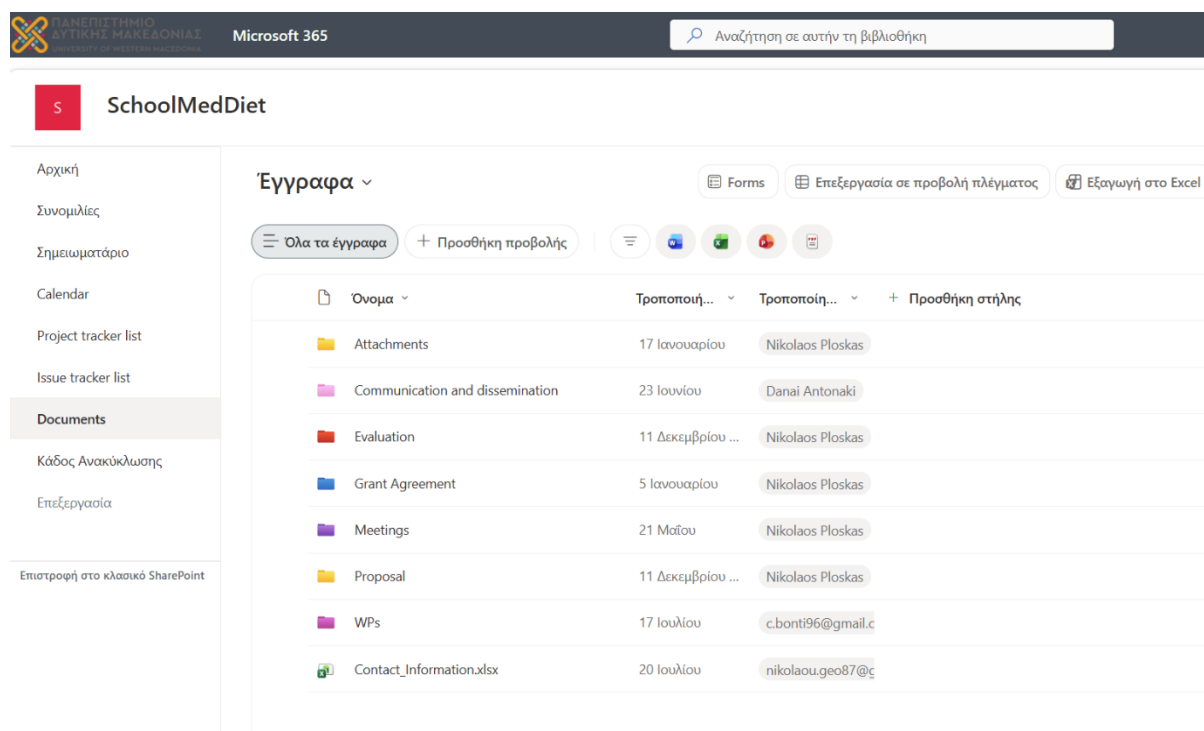


Figure 1: The SchoolMedDiet page on SharePoint

- online meeting platforms for consortium, Work Package, Task and other coordination meetings and
- other collaboration tools, where necessary, to support the efficient implementation and monitoring of project activities.

All partners are expected to use the agreed communication channels and shared working environment consistently and to ensure that relevant project information and documentation are made available to the appropriate consortium members.

The PC and PMO will support the organization and maintenance of the main internal communication channels and ensure that partners are informed of relevant project updates, deadlines and coordination requirements.

6. Deliverable Preparation, Review and Submission

A common procedure for the preparation, review, approval, and submission of project deliverables will be applied throughout SchoolMedDiet to ensure that all deliverables are completed on time and meet the required scientific, technical and quality standards.

6.1 Deliverable Preparation

Each project deliverable will be coordinated by the partner responsible for the deliverable, who will organize its preparation and ensure its timely completion in cooperation with the relevant WPL and contributing partners.

For deliverables consisting primarily of software, digital tools, demonstrators or other non-report outputs (e.g. DEM/OTHER), the “complete draft” for internal review may take the form of a sufficiently mature and testable build, accompanied by the documentation necessary for its assessment. The responsible partner shall provide reviewers with appropriate access instructions and, where relevant, information on any software, equipment or hardware required to test the output.

The partner responsible for the deliverable is responsible for:

- coordinating the contributions of the partners involved in the deliverable
- ensuring that the content is consistent with the objectives, tasks and expected results defined in the project work plan
- preparing and consolidating the contributions into a coherent draft
- ensuring the use of the official SchoolMedDiet deliverable template and appropriate document formatting and
- respecting the internal deadlines established for preparation and review.

Contributing partners are responsible for providing complete and accurate input within the agreed timeframe and for supporting the partner responsible for the deliverable in addressing any comments or revisions required during the preparation process.

As a general internal planning rule, a complete draft of each deliverable should be made available for internal review at least 15 calendar days before the official submission deadline

6.2 Internal Review and Quality Control

Before final submission, each deliverable will undergo an internal review and quality control process to ensure that it meets the scientific, technical and presentation standards of the project. The internal review should normally be completed within 7 calendar days following receipt of the complete draft.

Internal reviewers will be designated in coordination with the PC, taking into consideration the subject matter of the deliverable and the relevant expertise within the consortium. Where possible, reviewers should not have been directly involved in the main preparation of the deliverable, in order to ensure an independent assessment. Where appropriate, partners supporting QA/QC activities under WP1 may also contribute to the internal review process.

The review will assess, as appropriate:

- consistency with the objectives and activities described in the project work plan
- consistency with contractual terminology, deliverable scope and applicable dissemination level
- compliance, where relevant, with ethical, data protection, IPR and communication requirements
- scientific and technical quality of the content
- completeness, clarity, and consistency of the information provided
- appropriate contribution and integration of relevant partner inputs
- where applicable, functional testing and verification of software, digital tools, demonstrators or other technical outputs and
- compliance with the SchoolMedDiet deliverable template and formatting requirements.

Comments and recommendations resulting from the review will be communicated to the partner responsible for the deliverable, who will coordinate the necessary revisions with the contributing partners.

6.3 Approval and Submission

Following completion of the internal review process, the partner responsible for the deliverable will coordinate the incorporation of the required revisions and prepare the final version of the deliverable. As a general rule, the revision stage should be completed within 10 calendar days following receipt of the internal review comments.

The final version will be provided to the PC for final approval at least 3 calendar days before the official submission deadline. The final check will focus on completeness, compliance with project requirements and readiness for submission. Any remaining issues identified at this stage will be addressed by the partner responsible for the deliverable in cooperation with the relevant partners.

Once approved, the final deliverable will be submitted to the Funding Authority through the applicable reporting system by the PC, unless otherwise specified by the relevant contractual provisions.

The final submitted version will be stored in the project's shared repository and made available to the relevant consortium partners for reference and record keeping.

6.4 Delays and Corrective Actions

Potential delays in the preparation or submission of a deliverable should be identified and communicated as early as possible. The partner responsible for the deliverable is responsible for informing the relevant WPL and the PC of any issue that may affect the timely completion of the deliverable.

In such cases, the responsible partners, in coordination with the WPL and PC, will assess the cause and potential impact of the delay and agree on appropriate corrective actions. These may include adjustments to internal deadlines, redistribution of contributions, additional coordination or other measures necessary to support timely completion.

Significant delays or deviations that may affect the overall project work plan, related activities or contractual obligations will be addressed by the PC and, where necessary, escalated to the appropriate project governance body and communicated to the Funding Authority in accordance with the applicable contractual requirements.

7. Quality Assurance and Risk Management

QA and risk management are integral components of the SchoolMedDiet management framework and will be applied throughout the project to support the timely and high-quality implementation of project activities and outputs.

The PC, supported by the partners involved in QA and risk management activities, will oversee the application of the agreed quality and risk management procedures. WPLs, TLs and consortium partners will contribute by monitoring the quality and progress of activities under their responsibility and by promptly reporting identified risks, issues or deviations.

The SchoolMedDiet approach combines continuous quality monitoring with the early identification and management of risks. Where potential problems are identified, appropriate mitigation or corrective measures will be agreed and monitored to minimize their impact on project objectives, activities, deliverables, milestones and timelines.

The following sections describe the main principles and procedures applied for QA, risk identification, mitigation and the management of project deviations.

7.1 Quality Assurance

QA will be applied throughout SchoolMedDiet to ensure that project activities and outputs are implemented in accordance with the agreed scientific, technical and management standards.

The PC, supported by the partners involved in QA and risk management activities, will oversee the application of QA procedures. WPLs and TLs are responsible for monitoring the quality of activities and outputs within their respective areas of responsibility.

Quality monitoring will focus on:

- compliance with the project objectives, work plan and agreed methodologies
- scientific and technical quality of project activities and outputs
- completeness, consistency and clarity of project documentation
- timely implementation of activities, deliverables and milestones and
- identification and correction of quality-related issues at an early stage.

Where quality issues are identified, the responsible partners will work with the relevant WPL and the PC to implement appropriate corrective measures. The PAB may also provide independent recommendations to support the quality and scientific relevance of key project outputs.

7.2 Risk Identification and Monitoring

Risk management will be conducted throughout the project to identify potential events or circumstances that could negatively affect the implementation of SchoolMedDiet, its objectives, activities, deliverables, milestones or expected results.

For the purposes of project monitoring and management, the following distinction applies: a risk is a potential future event or circumstance that may negatively affect project implementation; an issue is a problem or event that has already occurred and requires attention or resolution; and a deviation is a departure from the approved work plan, timeline, budget or expected implementation of project activities.

Risks may be identified by the PC, WPLs, TLs and consortium partners during project implementation. Identified risks will be communicated to the PC and the relevant WPL and recorded in the project's Risk Log.

The Risk Log will include, as appropriate, the risk description, likelihood, impact/severity, risk level, WP(s) concerned, responsible partner/risk owner, mitigation measures, status and review date. Each risk will be assessed using a 3×3 risk matrix, based on its likelihood and impact/severity (Low, Medium or High), allowing risks to be prioritized according to their overall level.

The Risk Log will be formally reviewed at least every six months and updated whenever a new significant risk is identified or the status of an existing risk changes, in line with the project's risk management approach. Particular attention will be given to changes in the likelihood or impact of existing risks and to newly emerging risks. High-likelihood/high-impact risks will require timely intervention and appropriate mitigation or corrective measures.

7.3 Risk Mitigation

Appropriate mitigation measures will be defined and implemented for identified risks according to their likelihood, potential impact and relevance to project implementation. The objective is to reduce either the probability of a risk occurring or its potential consequences for SchoolMedDiet.

The relevant WPL, TL, and responsible partner(s), in coordination with the PC, will define and implement appropriate mitigation measures. These measures will be recorded in the Risk Log and monitored as part of the regular project monitoring process.

Where the level or nature of a risk changes, mitigation measures may be revised or additional actions introduced. Risks with significant potential impact on the overall project will be brought to the attention of the PC and, where necessary, the appropriate project governance body.

The effectiveness of mitigation measures will be periodically reviewed to ensure that risks remain under control and that further action is taken where required.

7.4 Issues, Deviations and Corrective Actions

Issues or deviations affecting project implementation should be identified and communicated as early as possible to enable timely resolution and minimize their impact on SchoolMedDiet activities and objectives.

The responsible partner, together with the relevant WPL or TL, will inform the PC of significant issues or deviations and assess their potential impact on the work plan, deliverables, milestones, resources or timelines.

Where necessary, appropriate corrective actions will be agreed and implemented. These may include adjustments to activities or internal timelines, additional coordination between partners or other measures required to restore progress.

Significant deviations that cannot be resolved at operational level or that may affect contractual obligations will be escalated to the appropriate project governance body and, where required, communicated to the Funding Authority in accordance with the applicable contractual provisions.

Significant issues and deviations will be recorded in the relevant project monitoring log together with the agreed corrective action, responsible person/partner and target resolution date.

8. Data, Ethics and IPR

The management of data, ethical issues and IPR is an integral part of the SchoolMedDiet management framework. These aspects will be addressed throughout the project to ensure responsible implementation, compliance with applicable requirements and appropriate management and protection of project data and results.

Particular attention will be given to the management and protection of data generated through project activities, compliance with applicable data protection requirements and the ethical conduct of research and Living Lab activities. Given the involvement of school communities, including children and adolescents, in SchoolMedDiet activities, appropriate safeguards and ethical procedures will be applied throughout project implementation.

Data management and IPR activities are coordinated by UOWM, with the support of relevant consortium partners, while ethical management is coordinated by UOWM with the involvement of all partners and the support of the project's Ethical Advisor once appointed.

Detailed provisions and procedures will be further specified in the relevant project documentation, including the DMP and applicable ethical documentation. The following sections summarize the main management principles related to data protection, ethical compliance and IPR.

8.1 Data Management and Data Protection

Data generated and collected within SchoolMedDiet will be managed in accordance with applicable data protection requirements and the principles defined in the project's DMP. The DMP will provide the detailed framework for the collection, storage, processing, anonymization and/or pseudonymisation, access, sharing and preservation of project data, as appropriate.

SchoolMedDiet will apply the FAIR principles, ensuring that research data are Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, and Reusable, where appropriate. Personal data will be processed in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and other applicable national and institutional requirements.

Particular attention will be given to data collected through school-based activities and digital tools. Appropriate technical and organizational measures will be applied to protect personal data and ensure that access is limited to authorized people.

All consortium partners are responsible for complying with the agreed data management and protection procedures when collecting, processing, storing or sharing project-related data. The DMP will be reviewed and updated during the project to reflect evolving data management needs and project activities.

8.2 Ethics Compliance

All SchoolMedDiet activities will be conducted in accordance with applicable ethical, legal, national, and institutional requirements. Ethical considerations will be monitored throughout the project, with particular attention to research and Living Lab activities involving school communities, particularly children and adolescents.

Where project activities involve children or adolescents, appropriate informed consent procedures and safeguards for minors will be applied in accordance with applicable ethical and legal requirements. Where applicable, these procedures will include parental or legal guardian consent and age-appropriate assent of the participating children or adolescents.

Consent for participation in research or Living Lab activities shall be distinguished, where relevant, from consent for the use of photographs, videos, audio recordings or testimonials for communication and dissemination purposes.

Appropriate ethical approvals and informed consent procedures will be obtained where required before the implementation of relevant project activities. Particular care will be taken to ensure the protection, privacy, safety and rights of participants, especially minors and to ensure that participation in research and pilot activities is voluntary and appropriately documented. Ethical approval procedures may vary between participating countries and institutions. Each partner will therefore follow the requirements and procedures of its competent national and/or institutional ethics committee, while ensuring compliance with the common ethical principles and requirements of the SchoolMedDiet project.

Gender equality and inclusion will be considered throughout SchoolMedDiet activities in line with the project work plan. Project interventions and participatory activities will seek to

ensure equitable participation across genders, avoid gender stereotypes and support the inclusion of participants from diverse socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds. Where relevant to project evaluation, sex-disaggregated data will be collected and analyzed to support the assessment of participation and outcomes across different groups.

The Ethical Advisor, once appointed, together with the PC and relevant partners, will provide guidance on ethical requirements and support the identification and management of ethical issues that may arise during project implementation.

Each partner is responsible for ensuring compliance with the applicable ethical requirements at national and institutional level and for promptly communicating any significant ethical issue to the PC and Ethical Advisor once appointed.

Any significant ethical concern involving minors, personal data, digital tools or project interventions should be promptly communicated to the PC and the Ethical Advisor.

8.3 Intellectual Property Rights and Open Science

IPR generated within SchoolMedDiet will be managed in accordance with the applicable contractual provisions and relevant European and international requirements. Appropriate management of project knowledge and results will support their protection, dissemination, exploitation and potential further use.

Background brought into the project by a consortium partner remains the property of that partner and shall be managed in accordance with the CA and its applicable Background provisions. Project Results incorporating or depending on such Background shall be managed in accordance with the corresponding access rights and IPR provisions of the CA.

Partners are responsible for identifying project results that may require protection and for communicating relevant IPR issues to the PC.

SchoolMedDiet will also promote Open Science principles and appropriate sharing of project knowledge and research outputs, while taking into account confidentiality, data protection, IPR and legitimate exploitation interests.

Licensing arrangements for software and digital tools developed within the project will be considered at an early stage of development, in consultation with the partners concerned and

in accordance with the Consortium Agreement. Decisions on open-source release, applicable licence conditions and any related restrictions will take into account ownership, Background, third-party components, exploitation interests and the project's Open Science objectives.

IPR and Open Science considerations will be coordinated with the project's data management, dissemination and exploitation activities to ensure an appropriate balance between openness, protection and effective use of project results.

9. Project Documentation and Tools

Consistent project documentation and the use of common management and collaboration tools are essential to ensure efficient coordination, traceability of project activities and effective information exchange across the SchoolMedDiet consortium.

Common procedures will be applied for the preparation, storage, organization, and sharing of project documentation. Partners will use the agreed templates, communication channels, and shared working environment to facilitate collaboration and ensure that relevant project information is accessible to the appropriate consortium members.

The PC and PMO will support the organization and maintenance of the main project management documentation and tools. All partners are responsible for appropriately managing the documents and information generated within the activities under their responsibility.

The following sections describe the main arrangements for document management and version control, project templates and communication and collaboration tools.

9.1 Document Management and Version Control

Project documents will be stored and shared through the common project repository, ensuring that consortium partners have access to the most recent and relevant versions of project documentation.

A consistent document management and version control approach will be followed to ensure traceability and avoid duplication or confusion between different document versions. Project documents should clearly indicate, where applicable, the document title, responsible partner, version number, date and status (e.g. draft, under review, or final). Where applicable, project files should follow a consistent naming convention indicating the project acronym, document or deliverable identifier, short title, version and date (e.g. SchoolMedDiet_D2.1_Methodology_v0.3_20260915).

Partners are responsible for maintaining and updating the documentation related to the activities under their responsibility and for ensuring that final or formally approved versions are appropriately stored in the designated project repository.

Official project documentation, including submitted deliverables, meeting minutes, reporting documents and relevant management records will be maintained throughout the project to ensure appropriate documentation and traceability of project implementation.

9.2 Project Templates

Common project templates will be used throughout SchoolMedDiet to ensure consistency, professional presentation, and appropriate documentation of project activities and outputs.

Templates may be provided for key project documents, including:

- project deliverables
- presentations
- meeting agendas and minutes
- internal progress reports and
- other management and reporting documents, where required.

The latest approved versions of the templates will be made available through the common project repository and should be used by all consortium partners when preparing the corresponding project documentation.

The templates are available for the consortium to use, to its internal SharePoint repository.

Figure 2 presents the Presentation Template of SchoolMedDiet:



Figure 2: PowerPoint Presentation Template

Figure 3 presents the Deliverable Template of SchoolMedDiet:

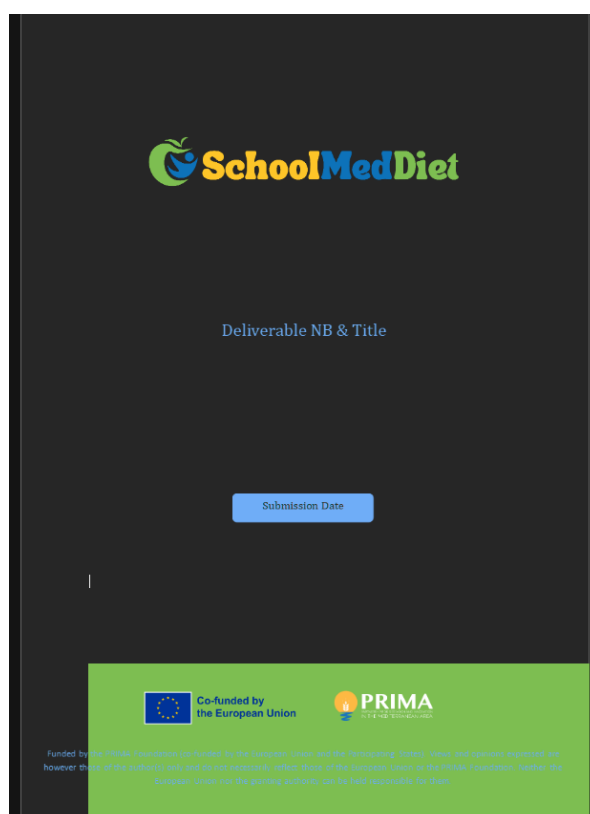


Figure 3: Deliverable Template

Figure 4 presents the General Doc Template of SchoolMedDiet:



Figure 4: General Doc Template

Figure 5 presents the SchoolMedDiet Logo:



Figure 5: SchoolMedDiet Logo

9.3 Communication and Collaboration Tools

SchoolMedDiet will use common digital communication and collaboration tools to support efficient coordination, information exchange, and document sharing among consortium partners.

As described in Section 5.3, the main tools include project mailing lists, a shared online repository, and online meeting platforms. These tools will support day-to-day communication, coordination of project activities, exchange of working documents, and organization of virtual meetings.

All partners are expected to use the agreed communication channels and collaboration tools consistently and to ensure that relevant information and documentation are shared with the appropriate consortium members in a timely manner.

The PC and PMO will facilitate access to and appropriate use of the common project communication and collaboration environment.

10. Conclusions

The SchoolMedDiet Project Management Handbook provides the consortium with a common operational reference for the coordinated and consistent implementation of the project. It establishes the governance arrangements, management responsibilities and working procedures required to support effective cooperation among partners, timely decision-making, project monitoring, reporting, quality assurance, risk management and the appropriate management of project outputs and implementation challenges.

Successful application of the Handbook depends on the active involvement of all consortium partners and on regular communication between the PC, PMO, WPLs, TLs and other relevant project actors. Partners are expected to follow the agreed procedures, comply with the applicable contractual and programme requirements and communicate identified risks, issues, deviations or delays in a timely manner.

As a living operational document, the Handbook may be updated or further specified during project implementation to reflect operational needs, consortium decisions and applicable funding requirements. Any relevant changes will be communicated to the consortium to ensure their consistent application throughout SchoolMedDiet.

Through this common management approach, the consortium aims to ensure the efficient, transparent and high-quality implementation of SchoolMedDiet and to support the timely achievement of its objectives, deliverables, milestones and expected results.



Meet our team



GREEK MINISTRY OF EDUCATION,
RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS AND SPORT
REGIONAL DIRECTORATE OF PRIMARY
AND SECONDARY EDUCATION
OF WESTERN MACEDONIA



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