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RestaCOVE
VET Excellence in Sustainable
Collective Catering & Restaurants

WP 1 - D1.5: RISK PLAN AND REPORTS

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this document is to present Deliverable D1.5 - Risk Plan and Reports for the RestaCOVE project. The Plan establishes the common framework through which the 18-partner consortium identifies, evaluates, monitors, mitigates and reports risks throughout the 48-month implementation period. It integrates risk management into the project governance architecture, the monthly Task File monitoring cycle and the quarterly review of the Project Steering Committee. The document distinguishes systemic risks linked to the technological, pedagogical and institutional environment from topical risks arising from management, operations and partnership dynamics. It also defines the risk profile of each Work Package, consolidates the nine critical risks identified for the action, specifies preventive and corrective practices, and provides common templates for risk reporting, the central Risk Log, corrective actions, annual Risk Reports and risk closure. D1.5 is a living and sensitive management document coordinated by UCSC and periodically updated on the basis of evidence supplied by Project Managers, Work Package Leaders and the Project Steering Committee.

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Contents

1. INTRODUCTION 4
1.1 Purpose and status of D1.5 4
1.2 Project reference information 4
1.3 Scope and guiding principles 5
2. RISK EVALUATION AND MONITORING MANAGEMENT 6
3. Typologies of Risks 7
3.1 The systemic risks 7
3.2. The topical risks 7
3.3. Main Risks 8
4. SPECIFIC RISKS AND MITIGATION MEASURES. 9
5. UPDATING MECHANISM 11
6. RISK REPORTING TEMPLATE 12

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose and status of D1.5

This document presents Deliverable D1.5 - Risk Plan and Reports. It establishes the common risk management framework adopted by the RestaCOVE consortium to anticipate, identify, evaluate, monitor and address threats that could affect project implementation, the quality and timely delivery of outputs, the achievement of Key Performance Indicators, financial and contractual compliance, participant safety, stakeholder engagement and the long-term exploitation of results.

The Risk Plan is formally released in Month 1 under the responsibility of Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore (UCSC), reviewed by all 18 partners and validated through the project governance structure. It is conceived as a living management instrument rather than a static list of threats. New risks may be recorded at any time, while existing risks may be reclassified when probability, impact, urgency or contextual conditions change.

- Harmonise risk identification and reporting across the six participating countries and the different institutional profiles represented in the consortium.
- Embed risk monitoring into the Task File, monthly Project Manager meetings, Work Package coordination and quarterly Project Steering Committee reviews.
- Distinguish systemic risks arising from the external environment from topical risks arising from internal management and operational dynamics.
- Define preventive measures, corrective practices, escalation thresholds, responsibilities, deadlines and evidence requirements.
- Provide the common templates required for the central Risk Log, annual Risk Reports, corrective actions and formal closure of risks.

1.2 Project reference information

Item	Project information
Project number	101260578
Project acronym	RestaCOVE
Project name	VET Excellence Pathways for Sustainable Collective Catering and Restaurants
Call / Topic	ERASMUS-EDU-2025-PEX-COVE
Type of action	ERASMUS-LS
Project duration	48 months
Project start date	1 April 2026
Consortium	18 partners in 6 countries
Deliverable	D1.5 - Risk Plan and Reports
Lead beneficiary	1 - UCSC
Work Package	WP1 - Project Management
Deliverable type	R - Document, report
Dissemination level	SEN - Sensitive
Initial due date	Month 1

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Item	Project information
Reporting updates	Annual Risk Reports at M12, M24, M36 and M48

1.3 Scope and guiding principles

Risk management applies to all Work Packages, tasks, deliverables, milestones, mobilities, research and piloting activities, digital platforms, dissemination actions, financial processes and sustainability measures. It is based on the following principles.

Principle	Operational meaning
Prevention	Risks are considered during planning and before activities begin, so that preventive safeguards can be integrated into schedules, methods and resource allocation.
Proportionality	The intensity of the response reflects the probability, impact and urgency of the risk.
Shared responsibility	Every partner is responsible for identifying and reporting risks; UCSC coordinates the consortium-level process.
Evidence and traceability	Assessments and decisions are supported by the Task File, KPI data, quality feedback, financial records and documented project evidence.
Early intervention	Minor deviations are addressed locally before they can develop into structural delays or project-wide failures.
Continuous improvement	Risk findings are used to revise implementation practices, reporting tools and future prevention measures.
Confidentiality	Sensitive management information and personal data are handled under restricted access and in accordance with GDPR and the Grant Agreement.

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2. RISK EVALUATION AND MONITORING MANAGEMENT

Risk evaluation and monitoring is embedded into the operational organization of the management of the project.

The foundational architecture of the RestaCoVE project relies on a multi-tiered governance structure that ensures seamless transnational cooperation and rigorous accountability. At the apex of this hierarchy is the Project Steering Committee (PSC), which serves as the consortium's supreme executive and decision-making body. Comprising one formally appointed senior representative from each participating organization, the PSC is entrusted with the overarching strategic direction and ultimate authority over project implementation. The PSC is mandated to meet formally quarterly. During these quarterly evaluations, among its duties, the PSC evaluates the dynamic evolution of project risks. The PSC analyzes macro-environmental shifts, policy changes, and internal consortium dynamics to proactively identify emerging threats that may not have been captured in the initial Month 1 Risk Plan.

Beneath the strategic oversight of the PSC, the crucial operational layer is managed by the Project Managers (PMs). Each constituent organization is contractually obligated to designate a dedicated PM, who holds the primary, day-to-day responsibility for executing the project's local and transnational activities. To prevent informational silos and ensure real-time transparency across the 18-partner consortium, the PMs are required to diligently maintain the "Task File." The Task File is the project's official, centralized digital monitoring instrument—a dynamic, cloud-based matrix that tracks the granular progress of every single task, sub-task, and milestone across all five Work Packages. It is the strict responsibility of the PMs to continuously update this file and submit formal monthly reports detailing any deviations from the established Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). These KPIs are meticulously defined metrics encompassing financial burn rates, participant engagement numbers, milestone completion percentages, and dissemination reach. By enforcing this strict monthly reporting cadence, the consortium ensures that minor operational deviations are identified and rectified immediately, long before they can compound into critical project failures. In this respect, this practice is a constituent part of risk evaluation and monitoring.

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3. Typologies of Risks

The advancement of the project is subject to different types of risks, linked to the context in which it operates (systemic risks) and to the internal dynamics of its functioning (topical risks).

3.1 The systemic risks

The sustainable collective catering industry is undergoing a massive transition driven by the EU's Farm to Fork Strategy, the Green Claims Directive, and urgent public health mandates. Addressing these macro-systemic challenges requires the RestaCoVE consortium to implement highly ambitious interventions. Because of the scale and ambition, the nature of the risks affecting the project is highly complex and multidimensional. These risks can be categorized into four primary domains:

- **Technological and Digital Risks:** A core pillar of RestaCoVE is the modernization of Vocational Education and Training (VET) through digital innovation. Consequently, the project is highly exposed to technological risks. The development and deployment of the VLFSCC, MOOCs, and digital micro-credentials assume a baseline of digital infrastructure and literacy. The primary risk in this domain is the potential "digital divide": if VET educators lack the necessary digital competencies to teach using these new platforms, or if learners face usability and accessibility barriers, the core deliverables of the project could fail to gain traction. Furthermore, technical bugs, platform instability during pilot testing, or non-compliance with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.3) represent acute technological threats that require constant IT monitoring and robust technical support buffers.
- **Pedagogical and Academic Risks:** RestaCoVE aims to bridge a critical skills gap in the catering workforce. The pedagogical nature of the risks involves the quality, relevance, and recognition of the educational content produced. There is a tangible risk that the newly developed curricula might quickly become outdated or fail to accurately reflect the immediate, practical needs of the labor market. If the learning outcomes are overly theoretical or the micro-credentials fail to achieve formal validation across the national qualification frameworks of the six participating countries, the project's impact will be severely compromised.
- **Institutional Risks:** RestaCoVE is subject to external risks linked to the broader political and institutional environment. The nature of these risks is highly strategic and often outside the consortium's direct control. Rejection of funding applications, shifts in regional political priorities, or a lack of receptiveness from local policymakers could stall the project's long-term integration goals. Mitigating these systemic risks requires aggressive early-stage lobbying, building resilience into application processes, and developing contingency pathways to ensure that, even if overarching systemic goals face hurdles, individual partners can still achieve sustainable local impact.

3.2. The topical risks

While navigating the overarching systemic and external threats is essential for RestaCoVE's long-term legacy, the immediate viability of the project hinges on mastering its internal complexities. Shifting focus from the macro-environmental challenges to the day-to-day mechanics of the project, it becomes clear that managing a consortium of 18 diverse partners across six countries presents its own intricate web of operational vulnerabilities. In this respect, we can identify some specific typology of risks that affect the project:

- **Management Risk:** Operating a complex, multi-year project involving a highly diverse array of partners from six different European countries inherently introduces a high degree of scheduling vulnerability. Disparate national holidays, varying institutional administrative speeds, and unforeseen local disruptions can easily lead to cascading delays that threaten the entire project timeline. Despite these robust preventive measures, the consortium recognizes that severe, unforeseen delays may still occur.
- **Operational Risks:** Managing a large-scale, four-year project with 18 diverse partners across 6 European countries inherently breeds operational and logistical risks. The nature of these risks is tied to human resources, coordination, and physical execution. High staff turnover within partner

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organizations, misaligned administrative procedures, or unequal task distribution can lead to severe implementation delays. Additionally, physical mobilities—such as the planned transnational Summer and Winter Camps—pose critical logistical and health risks, necessitating strict travel protocols, insurance mandates, and emergency preparedness. Furthermore, maintaining the active engagement of external stakeholders represents a significant operational vulnerability; local enterprises may withdraw from hosting Work-Based Learning (WBL) or pilot testing due to unexpected economic pressures or administrative fatigue.

- **Conflict Risk:** In a large-scale international consortium comprising universities, vocational training centers, regional authorities, and private enterprises, divergent institutional cultures and competing operational priorities can occasionally result in inter-consortium disputes. If left unmanaged, such conflicts can paralyze decision-making and stall project momentum.

3.3. Main Risks

Each Work Package (WP) is subject to specific risks that derive from systemic and topical risks. Specifically:

- **WP1: Project Management and Coordination** The primary operational risks involve administrative fragmentation, financial non-compliance, and implementation delays across the large, 18-partner consortium.
- **WP2: Excellence in Curriculum Design and Vocational Training** Within the educational core, the central vulnerability is the potential misalignment between the newly developed VET curricula (including the micro-credentials and the Virtual Learning Factory) and the rapidly evolving needs of the sustainable catering sector.
- **WP3: Strategic Partnerships and International Mobility** As this package drives the physical execution of transnational activities—such as the Summer and Winter Camps—the risks are heavily concentrated on logistical failures, participant health, and safety emergencies.
- **WP4: Governance, Policy Integration, and Sustainable Funding** Operating at the intersection of internal execution and external policy, this WP's risk profile centers on a potential lack of receptivity from regional and national policymakers.
- **WP5: Communication, Dissemination, and Exploitation of Results** The primary execution risk is insufficient visibility or low uptake of project outcomes among key target audiences.

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4. SPECIFIC RISKS AND MITIGATION MEASURES.

Based on the RestaCoVE project framework, the following critical risks have been identified:

Risk 1: Dissemination and promotion indicators not achieved

- WPs Affected: 5 (with upstream dependencies on 2, 3 and 4)
- Probability: Low | Impact: Medium
- **Preventive Measures:** Use of existing audiences (database of 200,000 members), newsletters, and starting dissemination prior to the release of major deliverables to build anticipation.
- **Corrective Practices:** Activate a multi-level corrective plan, redesigning dissemination methods (e.g., video-based campaigns). Use the allocated online advertising budget (€1000 per partner) to boost visibility. Organize a project-wide online meeting with the Dissemination leader (Karaman MEM) and PMs to define an optimization strategy using quantitative analytics. Replicate physical events if attendance falls short of the target.

Risk 2: Quality indicators not reached

- **WPs Affected:** 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
- Probability: Low | Impact: High
- **Preventive Measures:** Massive use of digital piloting activities before full launch to identify usability/accessibility issues. Strict adherence to the Quality Assurance and Evaluation Plan (QAP) led by STHEV.
- **Corrective Practices:** If threshold values are not met, all PMs and WP leaders will participate in an online meeting to analyze gaps and enact corrective measures. Use a triangulation approach leveraging EQAVET principles, external quality assessors, and peer reviews to optimize outcomes. Incorporate user feedback into subsequent activities if an event cannot be replicated.

Risk 3: Health problems during mobilities

- WPs Affected: 2, 3, 4, 5
- Probability: Low | Impact: High
- **Preventive Measures:** Provide participants with a thorough information document including emergency numbers and hospital locations prior to travel. Require the EU Health card and travel insurance covering medical aid, hospitalization, and repatriation.
- **Corrective Practices:** PMs will offer immediate on-the-ground support to affected participants, especially learners and those with fewer opportunities.

Risk 4: Partnership Conflicts

- **WPs Affected:** 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
- Probability: Low | Impact: Medium
- **Preventive Measures:** Rely on clear contracts, mapped roles, and equal task distributions to prevent disbalances. Leverage pre-existing trust from past successful partnerships among key partners.
- **Corrective Practices:** UCSC will moderate conflict resolution using the Delphi approach. If ineffective, the Project Steering Committee (PSC) will formalize a meeting to reach a consensus, or default to majority voting if consensus fails.

Risk 5: Delays in Implementation

- **WPs Affected:** 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
- Probability: Medium | Impact: Medium

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- **Preventive Measures:** Adopt the Early Completion Scheduling approach to finish tasks weeks before formal deadlines. Guarantee internal capacity buffers.
- **Corrective Practices:** PMs will provide monthly updates on shared platforms for real-time delay detection. For persistent delays (over 3 months), the PSC will convene to enact binding resolutions via consensus or majority vote.

Risk 6: Low engagement in pilot testing or validation by employers

- WPs Affected: 2, 3, 4
- Probability: Medium | Impact: Medium
- **Preventive Measures:** Partner with trusted local enterprises. Offer mutual benefits such as visibility, logistical support, and public recognition.
- **Corrective Practices:** Maintain a reserve list of enterprises to quickly replace any that withdraw from hosting pilot testing or Work-Based Learning activities.

Risk 7: Digital skills gap among VET educators and learners

- WPs Affected: 3, 4
- Probability: Low | Impact: Medium
- **Preventive Measures:** Design highly user-friendly digital tools compliant with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.3.
- **Corrective Practices:** Provide robust technical support, instant messaging assistance, and detailed tutorials for registering and using micro-credentials. Optimize platforms based on initial piloting activity feedback.

Risk 8: Unsuccessful Applications Process (Pact for Skills, EAfA, EU Grants)

- WPs Affected: 1, 4, 5
- Probability: Medium | Impact: Medium
- **Preventive Measures:** Apply at an early stage (Months 1-12) to allow time for adjustments.
- **Corrective Practices:** If applications are rejected, use the report feedback to improve and retry the following year. Alternatively, allow single organizations to reach the Pact for Skills/EAfA individually. If regional S3 proposals are rejected, evaluate synergies with complementary sectors (tourism/agriculture) and prepare new proposals for post-2035.

Risk 9: Partners' different levels of expertise in funded projects

- WPs Affected: 1-5
- Probability: Low | Impact: Medium
- **Preventive Measures:** Implement mutual internal training on managing national/EU funds to elevate the consortium's overall capacity.
- **Corrective Practices:** Experienced CoVE organizations (UCSC and STHEV) will provide individual, tailored support to partners needing management assistance.

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5. UPDATING MECHANISM

New risks can be identified in the process of the project, and risk management is an ongoing process. PMs from all partner organizations are responsible for continuously monitoring the project landscape.

Any new risks identified will be reported to the Project Steering Committee (PSC) using the Risk Reporting Template.

The PSC will formally review the Risk Plan quarterly and update it as necessary with new risks, refined probabilities, or adjusted mitigation strategies.

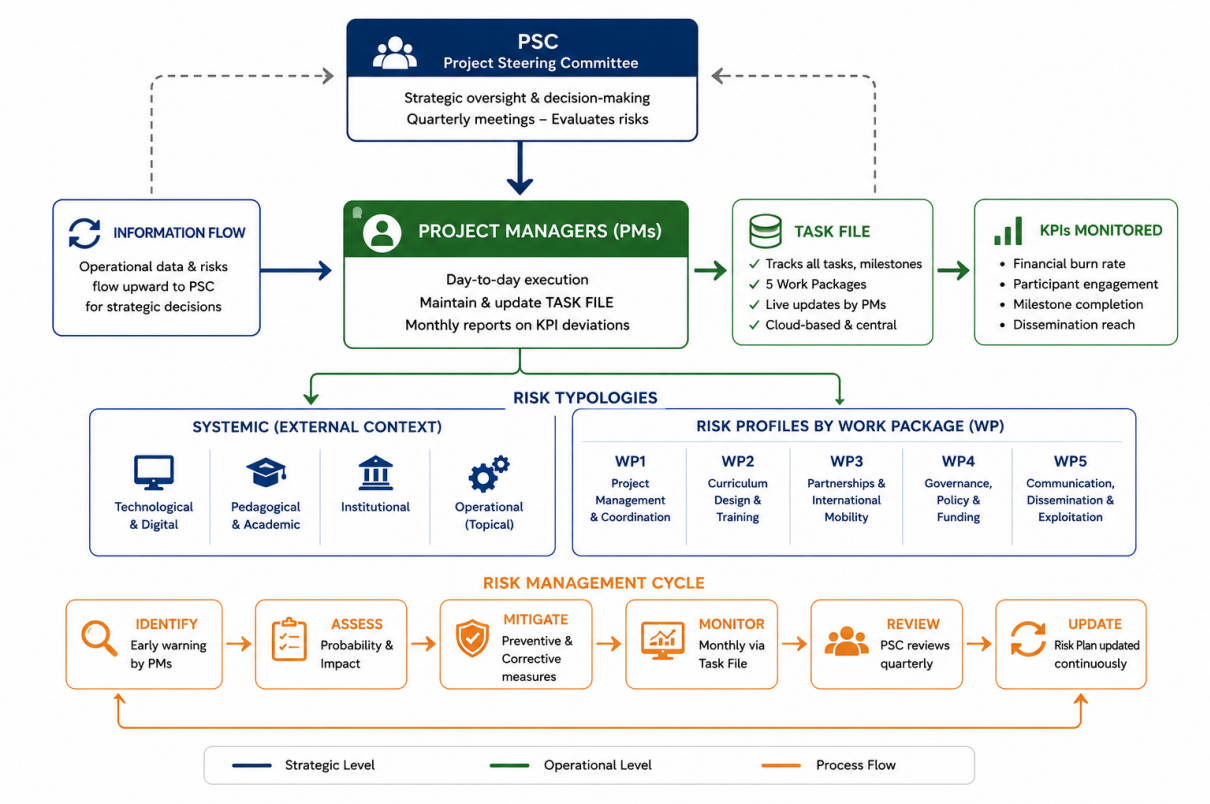


Fig. 1: Risk management procedure.

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6. RISK REPORTING TEMPLATE

	Description
Date of Report:	[DD/MM/YYYY]
Reported By (Partner/Name):	[Partner Name / PM Name]
Risk Title:	[Short name for the newly identified risk]
Work Package(s) Affected:	[e.g., WP2, WP3]
Description of Risk:	[Detailed explanation of the threat or challenge]
Probability (Low/Med/High):	[Assessment of likelihood]
Impact (Low/Med/High):	[Assessment of severity if the risk materializes]
Proposed Preventive Measures:	[Actions to stop the risk from happening]
Proposed Corrective Practices:	[Actions to fix the issue if the risk occurs]
Status:	[Open / Mitigated / Closed]