SP-EU

Social Prescribing to promote and improve access to health and care services for people in vulnerable situations in Europe

Horizon Europe – 101155873

D1.1. – Rules of Procedure

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Version	V1
Due date of delivery	31.03.2025
Actual date of delivery	24.03.2025
Dissemination level	PU

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Executive Summary

This document outlines the Rules of Procedure for the Horizon Europe project entitled "*Social Prescribing to promote and improve access to health and care services for people in vulnerable situations in Europe*" (SP-EU). These rules *complement* the regulations of the Consortium Agreement, which is based on the DESCA model.

The Rules of Procedure include additional regulations concerning the General Assembly, the Executive Board, the Ombuds Committee, and other aspects of working collaboratively.

RULES OF PROCEDURE

This document outlines the Rules of Procedure for the Horizon Europe project titled "*Social Prescribing to Promote and Improve Access to Health and Care Services for People in Vulnerable Situations in Europe*" (SP-EU). These rules *complement* the regulations of the Consortium Agreement, which is based on the DESCA model. The rules were approved by the 1st General Assembly meeting in Berlin on March 20, 2025.

1.   Core values

The conduct of the project is based on four core values that inform our actions:

- **Impact:** Our research is deeply embedded in society, striving to create meaningful and lasting impact.
- **Rigor:** We uphold the highest standards of methodological excellence, ensuring trustworthiness in our research.
- **Joy:** We foster a collaborative environment where joy, curiosity, and shared enthusiasm drive innovation.
- **Diversity:** We embrace and leverage the diversity of our team and the European society to enrich our perspectives and solutions.

2.   Decisions on resolutions

2.1   Proposed resolutions

- **General Assembly (GA):** The coordinator shall send out the proposed resolutions to all partners five working days before the first day of the assembly. For example, if the General Assembly meeting starts on a Thursday, the resolutions shall be sent out by the previous Thursday at the latest.
- **Executive Board (EB):** The coordinator will send out the proposed resolutions to all partners at least three working days before the Executive Board meeting. For example, if the meeting starts on a Thursday, the resolutions should be sent out by the preceding Monday.

2.2   Types of voting

Votes at the GA and EB are usually open and non-personalized. Votes are recorded as *Yes/ No/ Abstention/ Absent*.

Votes on positions can be conducted as block voting unless a party requests individual votes.

As an exemption, the ombuds committee members are elected by secret ballot.

3.   Appointment of a substitute/proxy

In accordance with Consortium Agreement (CA) 6.2.1, any member unable to attend a meeting of a consortium body shall appoint a substitute or proxy. The member must notify the coordinator of the appointed substitute or proxy at least five working days prior to the meeting. In the event of unforeseen circumstances, the coordinator may permit a shorter notification period.

4.   Deviation from Grant Agreement

Deviations from the Grant Agreement regarding content and tasks need to be communicated to the EB. The EB approves these changes and the coordinator communicates these to the European Commission if necessary.

5.   Communication and collaboration

The parties commit to maintaining open, transparent, and regular communication channels to facilitate the timely exchange of information and address any issues promptly. Effective

communication is essential for the success of the project and involves regular meetings, updates, and the use of collaborative tools.

Each party is responsible for ensuring that relevant information is shared with all stakeholders in a timely manner. The communication strategy includes scheduled meetings, progress reports, and the use of digital platforms to ensure continuous and efficient information flow.

To ensure effective collaboration, the following guidelines should be adhered to:

Meeting attendance and participation
- o   Parties are required to attend all scheduled meetings and actively engage in their roles.
- o   If a party is unable to attend, they name a substitute who can attend.
- **Open communication:** Address issues or problems openly and at an early stage to facilitate timely resolutions.
- **Email etiquette**
  - o   Practice targeted communication and avoid unnecessary "*Reply-to-All*" responses
  - o   Use clear and accurate subject lines, for example:
    - ▪   Correct: SP-EU // WP 16 - TC 07.01.25 – Minutes
    - ▪   Incorrect: RE: RE: RE: RE: RE: FWD: Out of Office
  - o   When appropriate, opt for a phone call instead of an email, as it can often be more efficient and effective.

6.   Work Streams

The project is organized into four Work Streams, each focusing on specific aspects of the project to ensure comprehensive coverage and efficient management. These Work Streams include:

- **Work Stream 1: Co-Creation and Co-Interpretation**
- **Work Stream 2: RCT/Clinical Trial**
- **Work Stream 3: Process Evaluation/Qualitative Study**
- **Work Stream 4: Dissemination, Exploitation and Communication**

Each Work Stream is led by a designated leader. The project coordinator will assist by facilitating the work streams, coordinating activities, monitoring progress, and reporting to the General Assembly.

6.1   Sprint Cycles

Each work stream will implement Sprint Cycles with the following structure:

I.   **Sprint**

- **Duration:** 2-4 weeks, depending on the work stream.
- **Objective:** Deliver a task increment.
- **Participants**: All work stream participants including work stream leader and project coordinator.

II.   **Sprint Meetings** (total duration around 1 hour)

Each Sprint Meeting follows the following structure:

- **Sprint Review**
  - o   **Purpose:** To inspect the increment and adapt the Backlog if needed.
  - o   **Activities:**
    - ▪   Presentation of the work completed during the sprint.

- - - Discussion of what went well, any problems encountered, and how those problems were solved.
    - Feedback from stakeholders to ensure the work steam is on the right track.

- **Sprint Retrospective**
  - o **Purpose:** To reflect on the past sprint and identify improvements.
  - o **Activities:**
    - Review of the sprint to discuss what went well, what didn't, and why.
    - Identification of actionable improvements for the next sprint.
    - Creation of a plan to implement these improvements.

- **Sprint Planning**
  - o **Purpose:** To define what can be delivered in the next sprint and how that work will be achieved.
  - o **Activities:**
    - Setting the sprint goal.
    - Selecting items from the Backlog to include in the sprint.
    - Creating a plan for delivering the selected items.

The aim of this structure is:

- **Continuous improvement:** facilitated through regular reflection and feedback loops, enabling teams to consistently enhance their processes.
- **Transparency:** maintained by frequent reviews and stakeholder involvement, ensuring that the team's efforts are aligned with business goals and that communication remains clear.
- **Adaptability:** the iterative approach allows teams to respond swiftly and efficiently to changes, ensuring they can pivot as needed to meet evolving requirements and challenges.

7.   Conflict resolution and Ombuds Committee

7.1   General idea

The parties agree to adopt a proactive approach to conflict resolution, aiming to resolve disputes amicably and efficiently through dialogue and mediation before resorting to formal procedures. Initially, parties involved in a dispute should attempt to resolve the issue through direct communication and negotiation. If direct negotiation fails, the parties may seek the assistance of an Ombuds Person to facilitate discussions and help reach a mutually acceptable solution. Should mediation not resolve the conflict, the parties may resort to formal procedures as outlined in the Consortium Agreement.

7.2   Election of Ombuds Committee

The Ombuds Committee is composed of representatives appointed by the General Assembly. The Ombuds Committee members are proposed by the coordinator. They will be elected by a majority of partners in a secret ballot. The general assembly can elect at least one and up to three members for the Ombuds Committee.

7.3   Work of Ombuds Committee

The members of the ombuds committee shall be impartial and possess the necessary expertise to address breaches of project obligations. Upon identifying a breach, the Ombuds Committee ensures

that corrective actions are taken within 30 days. The Committee consults with the General Assembly on the consequences of unresolved breaches and recommends appropriate actions. Additionally, the Ombuds Committee reports to the Executive Board on the status of conflict resolution. The Ombuds Committee has the authority to recommend measures to the Executive Board in cases of unresolved breaches or repeated non-compliance.

7.4   Ethical conduct, inclusivity and diversity

The parties commit to upholding the highest standards of ethical conduct, including integrity, accountability, and respect for all stakeholders involved in the project. This commitment also extends to promoting equality, inclusivity, and diversity within the project, ensuring equal opportunities and fostering a collaborative environment that values different perspectives and backgrounds.

In addition, the parties will adhere to the principles outlined in the Declaration of Helsinki, ensuring that all research and activities are conducted with the utmost regard for ethical standards and the protection of human rights.

All parties were required to have gender and equality plans when the grant application was submitted. Additionally, a Gender and Diversity Report will be developed for the project as part of Deliverable 3.2. This report will detail how gender and diversity are represented within the consortium and the project, the measures taken to improve gender and diversity balance, and any incidents of discrimination based on gender or diversity background that were reported as part of the ethics and diversity monitoring.

Observed breaches of these ethical commitments can be reported confidentially to the Ombuds Committee. The Ombuds Committee ensures that concerns are addressed promptly and appropriately, with corrective actions taken within 30 days.

8.   Submission of Deliverables

For deliverable quality control, the responsible party shall adhere to the following internal review process:

Author starts with preparations, set-up of structure
Deadline: as early as possible
Author discusses Deliverable in Stream Meeting: Procedure (incl. structure of the deliverable) is discussed and it is determined who is responsible for writing which section of the Deliverable template.

Author reports to Project Management Office
Deadline: min. 8 weeks before deadline
Short written feedback to the Project Management Office concerning above points (author names + structure of Deliverable).

1) Authors provides 1st version, discussed within stream
Deadline: 6 weeks before deadline
Author discusses Deliverable draft in a Stream Meeting for internal review.

2) Author updates Deliverable + sends Deliverable to Project Coordinator
Deadline: 4 weeks before deadline
After author received feedback from their stream members, they finalize Deliverable with stream input and send the final Deliverable to Project Coordinator.

3a) Review Project Coordinator + sent back to author
Deadline: 3 weeks before deadline
Project Coordinator reviews the Deliverable and gives feedback to the author.

3b) Update by Deliverable Author + sent back to Project Coordinator
Deadline: 2 weeks before deadline
Author updates the Deliverable with Project Coordinator's feedback and sends it back to Project Coordinator.

3c) Approval Project Coordinator + sent to Project Management Office
Deadline: 1 week before deadline
Project coordinator approves the Deliverable and sends it to the Project Management Office.

4) Submission by the Project Management Office
Deadline: 1 day before day of deadline
The Project Management Office formats and submits the Deliverable to the European Commission on time.