

The logo for the Austrian Research Promotion Agency (FFG) is positioned in the upper right. It consists of a grey circle containing a cluster of red dots, with a horizontal trail of red brushstrokes extending to the left. To the right of the circle, the letters 'FFG' are written in a bold, grey, sans-serif font.

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## **Project Implementation**

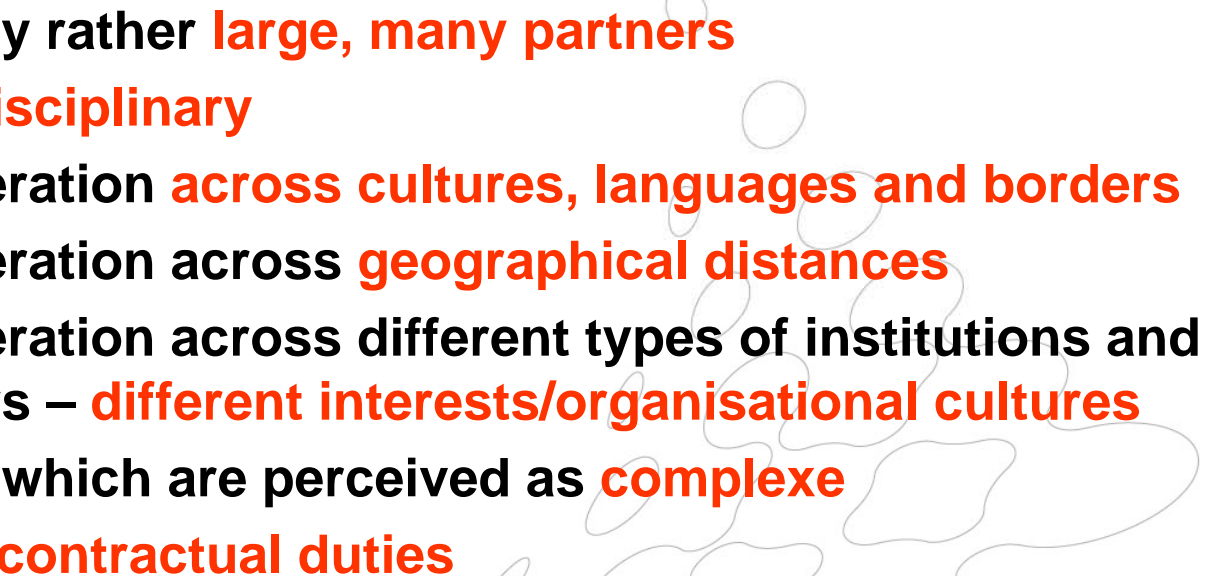
**Moscow, 16 October 2008**

**Petra Reiter**

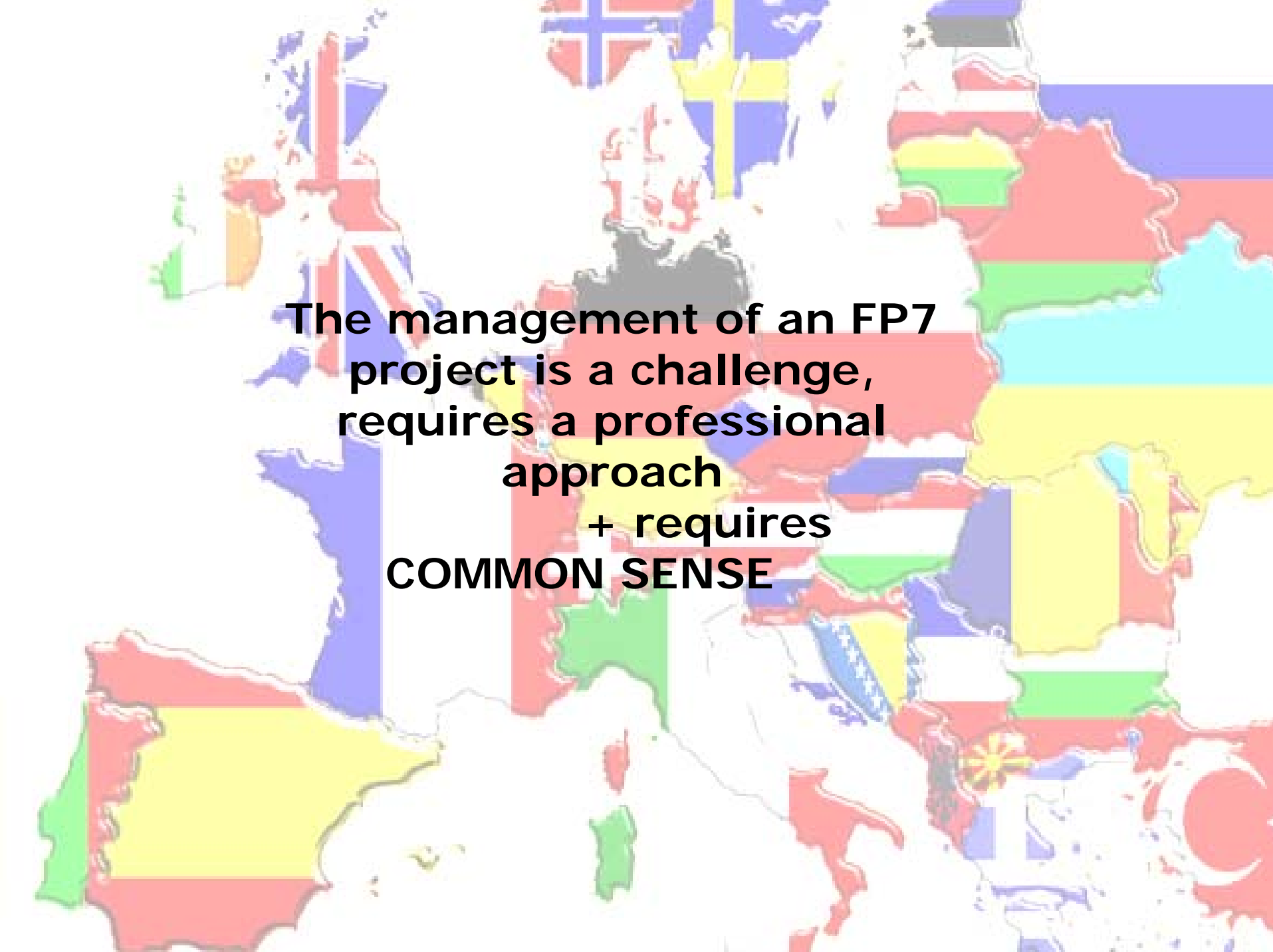
European and International Programmes (EIP)

FFG - Austrian Research Promotion Agency

## What qualifies FP7-projects?

- Usually rather **large**, many partners
  - **Interdisciplinary**
  - Cooperation **across cultures, languages and borders**
  - Cooperation across **geographical distances**
  - Cooperation across different types of institutions and sectors – **different interests/organisational cultures**
  - **Rules** which are perceived as **complexe**
  - Fixed **contractual duties**
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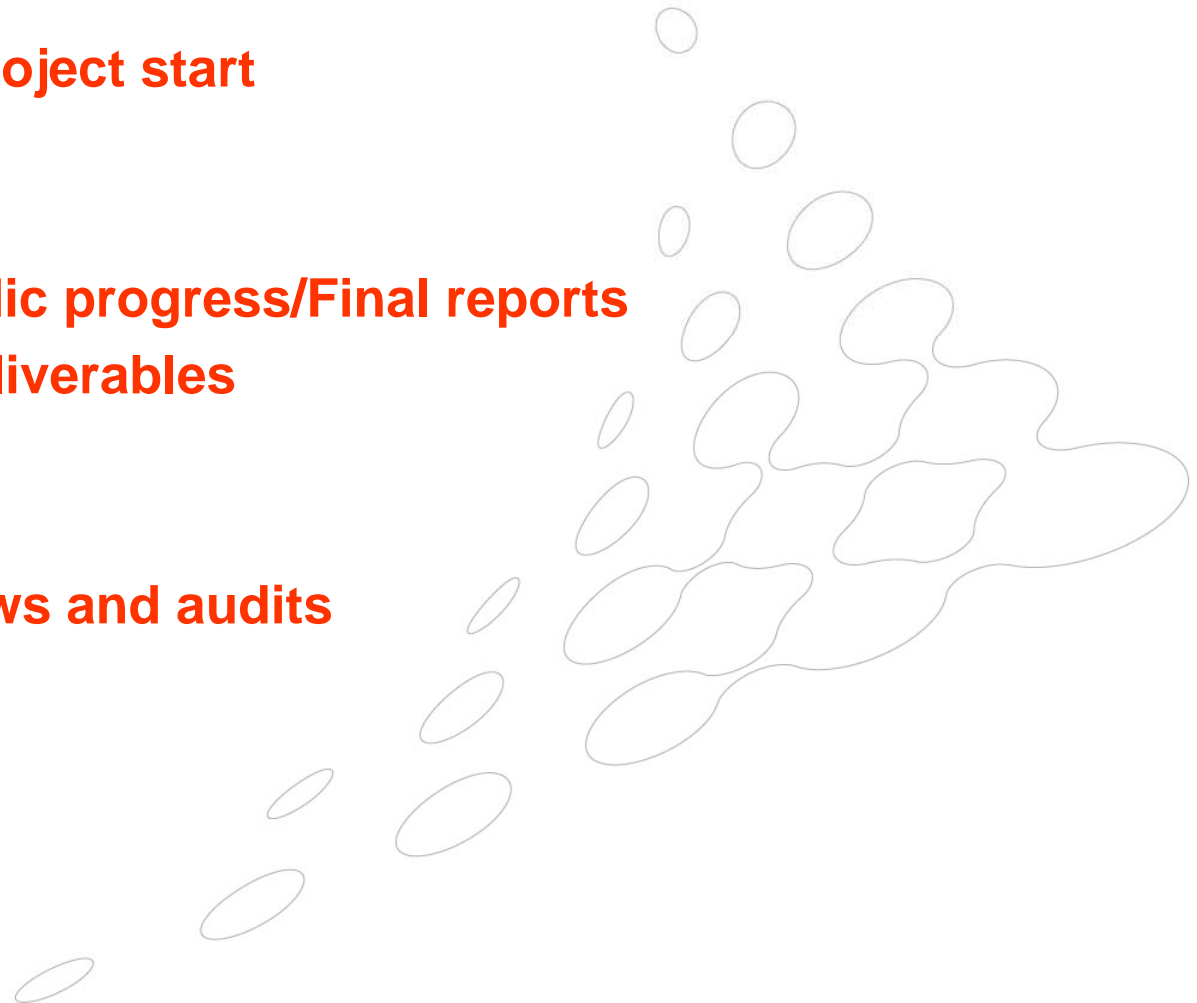
**The management of an FP7  
project is a challenge,  
requires a professional  
approach  
+ requires  
COMMON SENSE**

**Your own experience with FP-project management?**



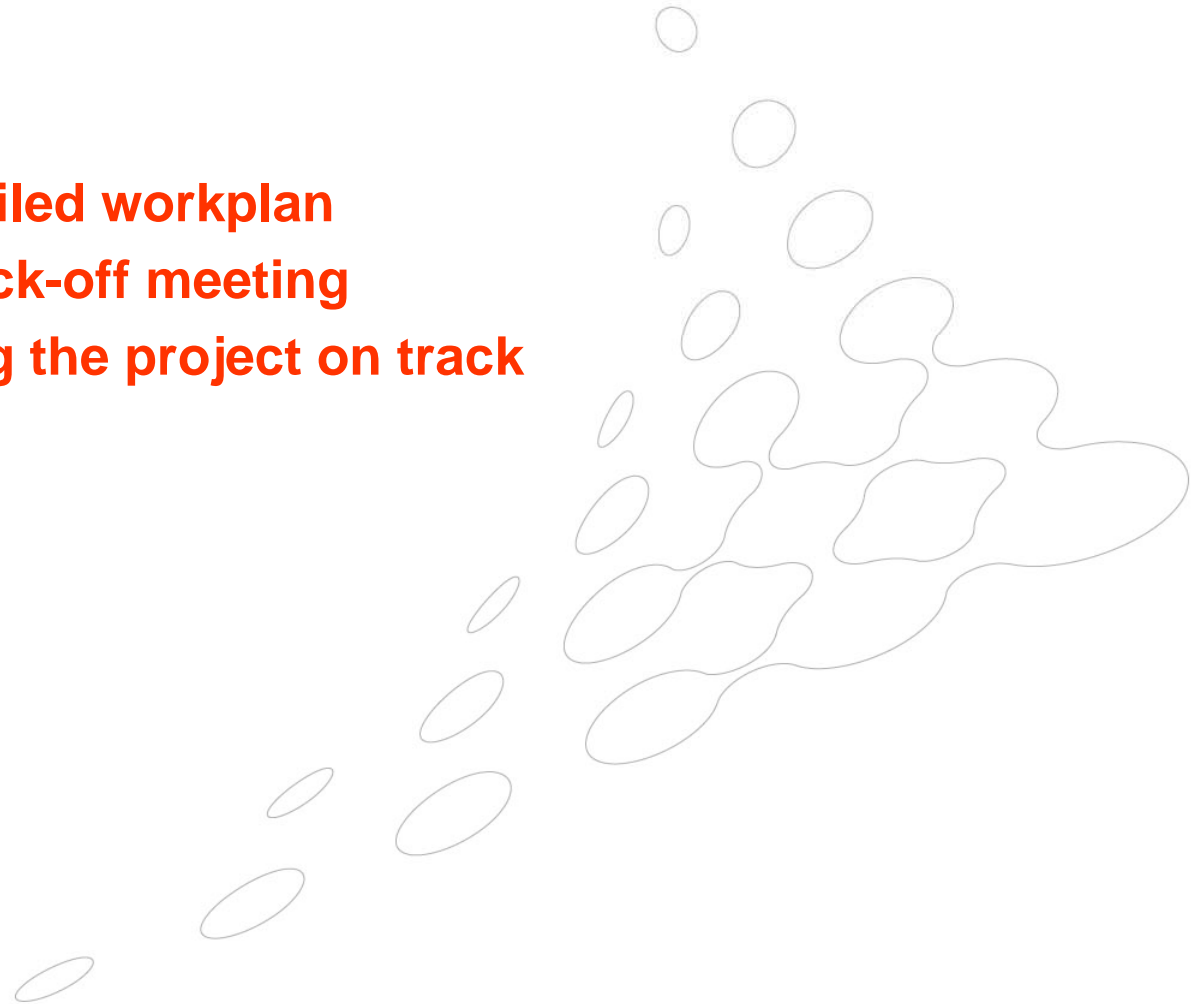
## Milestones for project implementation:

- **The project start**
- **Periodic progress/Final reports**
  - **Deliverables**
- **Reviews and audits**



## The Project Start:

- **A detailed workplan**
- **The kick-off meeting**
- **Putting the project on track**



**Project managers should be familiar with**

**The Grant Agreement and it's annexes**

- **Annex I - the TA**
- **Annex II – General Conditions**
- **Annex III / Specific Provision, if appr.**
- **Annex VI/Form C**
- **Annex VII/ToR Certificate on Financial statements (+ ToR Methodology, if appr.)**

**+ Check the Consortium Agreement and consult a legal expert**

## Project managers should be familiar with

- **Guidance notes on project reporting**
  - **Guidance notes and templates for Project Technical Review involving Independent Experts**
  - **Guide to Financial Issues related to FP7 Indirect Actions**
  - **Guidance notes on audits**
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- **Project/ Scientific managers should make sure **they themselves UNDERSTAND** the **EC-rules****
  - **Communication of rules by a competent project manager**



## The detailed workplan (project manual)

### Project /Scientific management

- **Develop task by task** (and **organisation** (and **roles**)
    - **Write this down**
  - **Make a realistic time schedule**
  - **Provide the team with a detailed workplan, discuss it**
  - **Make sure everyone understands the contractual duties**
    - **Content**
    - **Financial management (RULES!)**
- **Contact the coordinator if there are questions!**

„Russian researchers are excellent partners – if they know their tasks!“

## Actual work happens in the smallest unit: the TASK

- **Project - Coordinator**
- **Workpackages – WP-leader**
- **Tasks – Task leader**
  
- **The workplan has to be broken down to tasks**
- **For each task – clear responsibilities and roles**
- **For each task – clearly defined deliverables**



## Why participation in the Kick-off meeting is ESSENTIAL

- Face-to-face meeting of **ALL partners**
- Discussion of the **Consortium Agreement (IPR!)**
- Presentation of the **entire project/workplan**
- Presentation/ discussion of **detailed implementation plans of each work package**
- **Clarification** of open points/expected challenges/risks
- Presentation of **legal and financial rules**
- Fixing of **next steps**
  - **Project/Scientific managers should, by all means, try to participate! !EARLY PLANNING – VISA!**
  - **Participation of accountancy staff recommendable**

## **Put the project on track in the own institution**

**Provision and discussion of revised detailed workplan, timetable, list of deliverables**

### **Follow-up of kick-off with**

- **the director/head of unit/rector**
  - **the team in their own organisation**
  - **the partners in tasks/workpackages**
  - **any third party involved**
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- **Project/ Scientific managers are mediators in their organisation**
  - **Best solution: a project manager with thematic background**
  - **Ownership of host institution facilitates success**

## Put the project on track in the own institution

Ensure an **appropriate** documentation of the staff resources:

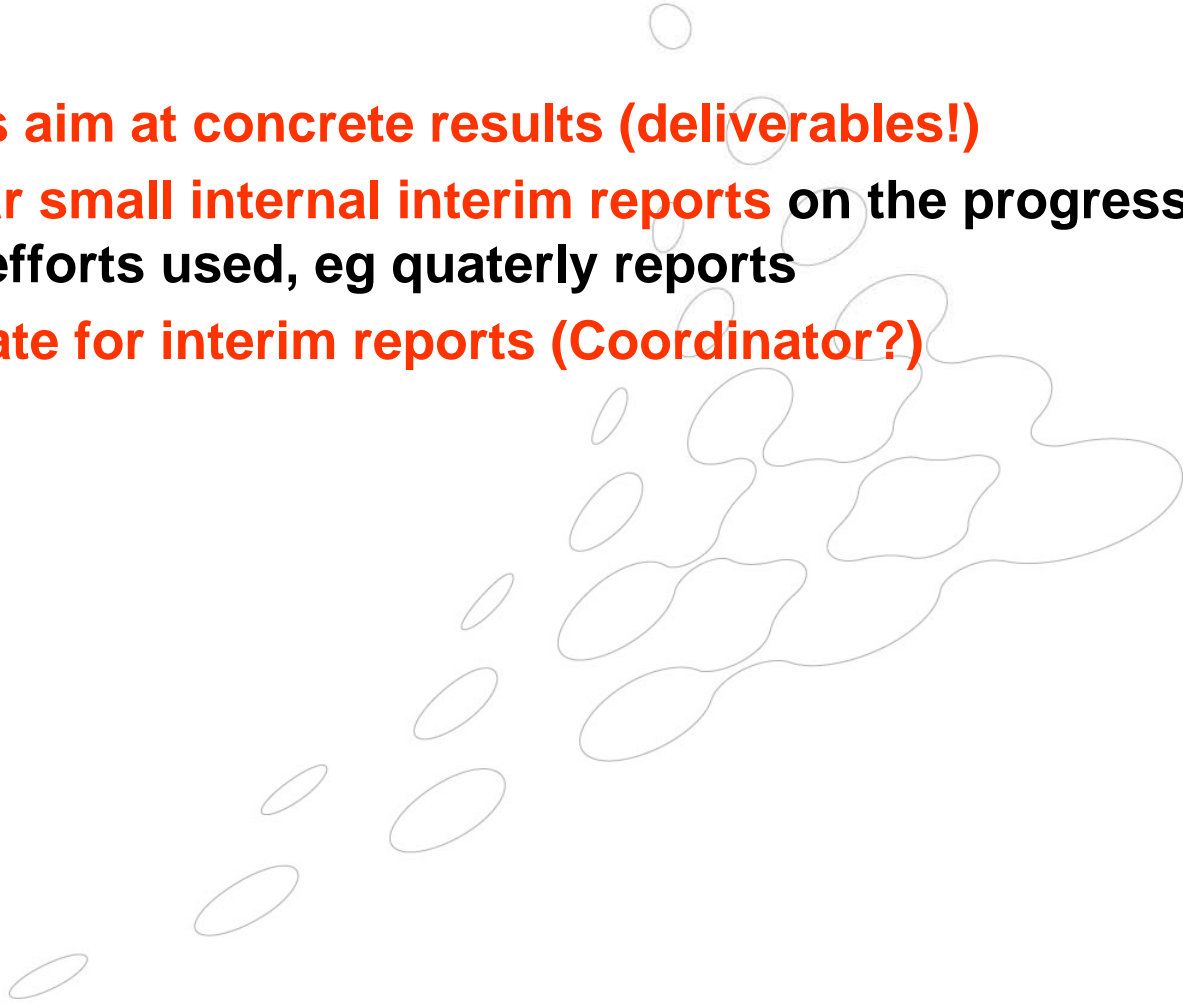
- **per project**
- **per work package**
- **per person involved**

**!Every hour worked needs to be identifiable!**

- **Maintain a tool enabling the contractor to monitor costs** in an appropriate manner (often provided by the coordinator)
- **Cooperate closely** with the accountancy department
- **Briefing of the auditor: „Engagement letter“** to the auditor (Annex VII of the GA)
- **40 % of EC-spending on FP7 projects will be audited**

- **The project start shapes the whole project**
  - **A bad start – difficult project**
  - **A good start – motivating, builds trust, confidence and reliability among partners**

## Some simple principles for the implementation

- **Always aim at concrete results (deliverables!)**
  - **Regular small internal interim reports on the progress made/efforts used, eg quaterly reports**
  - **Template for interim reports (Coordinator?)**
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## Periodic and final reports

- Pre-financing of the EC after 45 days
- Reporting Periods – fixed by the Commission
- Submission of reports - 60 days after the end of the reporting period
- EC – 105 days, option to suspend
- „Guidance notes on project reporting“ need to be followed
- **Recommendations of previous reviews to be listed/considered**
- **Acceptance – linked to payment**



## The deliverable – reflects the quality of a participant's work

- Deliverables **indicate clearly** what should be **achieved**
- **Project Officers/Reviewers** study deliverables
- Deliverables have an **impact on the payment**
  - **High quality deliverables raise the attractiveness of a partner for the future + lead to a positive record in the databases of the EC**

## **Deliverables should follow a clear structure**

### **Suggestion:**

- **Background/rationale/introduction**
- **Aims/objectives**
- **Intended results**
- **Activities**
  - **Particular challenges, as appropriate**
  - **Timetable**
- **Outcomes and conclusions**
- **Annexes**

**Normally, coordinators provide a template**

- **if not, should be requested**



## Deliverables are no scientific report

- A **brief, precise and concise writing** will be appreciated
- Diagramms, charts etc ensuring **a quick overview** are welcome
- Provide all necessary **facts required** for a complete **understanding** of the work by an **outsider**
  - Reviewers do **not interpret**



## The review

- Based on the **periodic/ final report/ deliverables**
- Acceptance – rejection of deliverables/reports

### Possible **recommendations – linked to payment:**

- Project to continue, with minor modifications
- Project only continue, if major modifications
- Termination of the project
- Recovery of funds

Reviewers recommend - **final decision** by the EC

**!Guidance notes and templates for reviews involving Independent experts!**

## **40 % of EC-spending on FP7 projects will be audited**

The beneficiary is liable towards the EC for the audit

Project Manager should

- **Read** the „Guide to Financial Issues relating to FP7 Indirect Actions“
- **Read** the „Certificates issued by external auditors. Guidance Notes for beneficiaries and auditors“
- **FAQ - Visit and consult <http://cordis.europa.eu/audit-certification>**
- **Read Annex VII**
- **Select an auditor at an early moment and provide her/him with ALL necessary documents („Engagement letter“)**
- **Closely cooperate with the accountancy department**

**Audits are possible until five years after the end of a project**

# Understanding the culture of the EC project officer



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- Their interest is **to assist** the coordinator if needed

## What they like:

- No problems with the contract
- Reports as requested
- Participants who understand the system (Hierarchy, formalities, deadlines, etc. )
- Successful projects

## What they do not like:

- Problems without solutions
- Surprises
- Insufficient up-dating on the project, particularly in case of problems

## What they fear:

- Problems with contract
- Lack of respect of deadlines (and delays)
- Money left over from the contract

## Their limits:

- Time (follow many projects, evaluation processes, negotiations, etc.)

## The anti-success factor: Projects deemed to **failure**



**„No Alignment between institutional strategies and project objectives“ \***

### **Consequences:**

**The project has no priority → low attention by this partner**

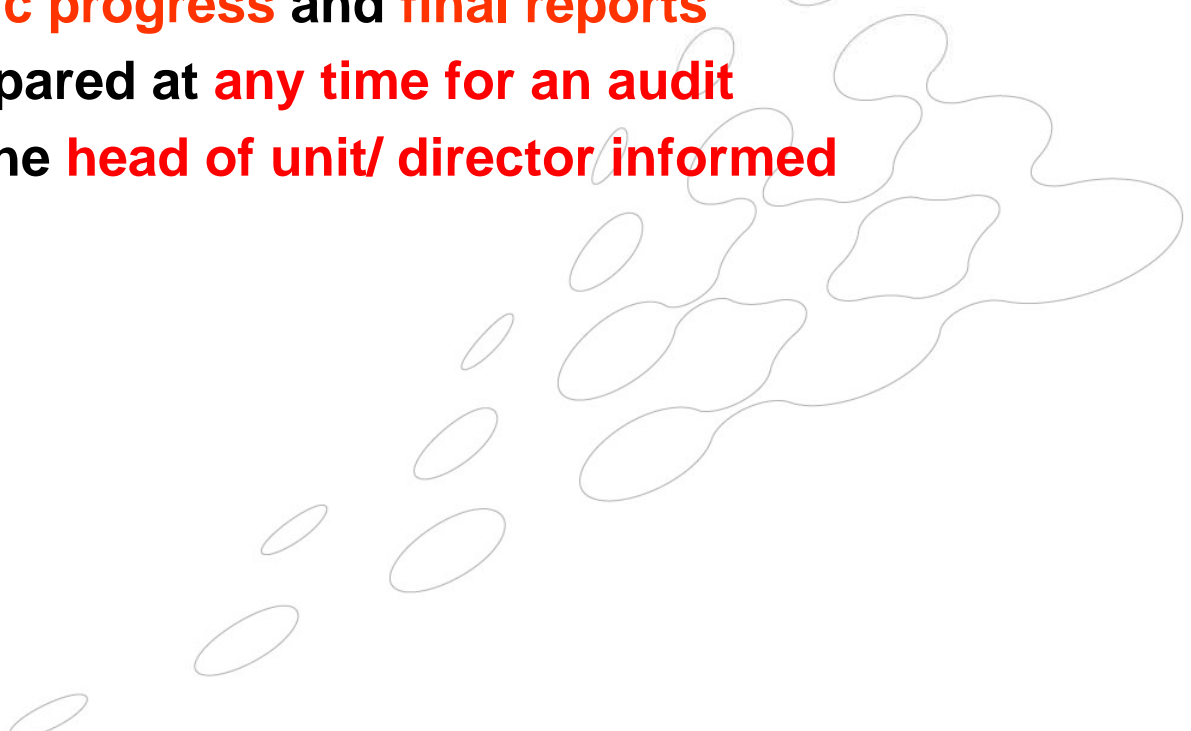
- Insufficient allocation of resources**
- Low motivation to contribute of individuals from this partner organisation**
- Inefficient research activities**
- Irrelevant project results**
- No interest in future cooperation**

see Strategies for the Management of EU Research Projects, Garais/Herlitzka, 2007

## Project manager - never wait until things happen

- Clarify, what is their **exact task**
- Make a **detailed workplan how to reach deliverables**
- Attend the **Kick-off Meeting, clarify** all open questions
- **Brief the own organisation**
- Set up a detailed **monitoring** system for the use of resources
- **Follow** the workplan, inform the coordinator about deviations

## Project manager - never wait until things happen

- Submit **well-prepared deliverables**
  - Plan and implement the dissemination/exploitation
  - Make sure, their contribution is well represented in the **periodic progress and final reports**
  - Be prepared at **any time for an audit**
  - Keep the **head of unit/ director informed**
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**Any questions?**

**FFG**

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**FFG – Austrian Research Promotion Agency**

**<http://rp7.ffg.at>**