



College of Europe
Collège d'Europe



Natolin

European Political and Governance Studies
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OPTIONAL COURSE

A PRACTICAL APPROACH TO PREPARING AND MANAGING EU PROJECTS

*"If you wish them to be brothers, have them build a tower;
But if you would have them to hate each other throw them corn"*
Antoine de Saint-Exupery, Citadelle

Objectives

In 2021, a new Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) will enter into force. Though largely impacted by the COVID-19 crisis, this MFF is setting the political priorities for using the EU Budget for the period 2021-2027.

Projects and Programmes are developed using available funds and produce "concrete achievements" impacting lives of citizen around the world.

Each project is participating, on the ground, to the construction or consolidation of an EU Policy, from regional development to health, from climate change to the financing of EU External action.

Beyond the multiple projects and the wide variety of their objectives, they all must follow similar rules related to financial and result-based management. Each Euro invested in these projects must be spent in line with the necessary requirements for transparency and accountability to taxpayers.

Managing EU funded projects and programmes requires a specific professional expertise combining an overall understanding of EU Policies, funds and instruments; an in-depth knowledge of applicable rules related to EU budget, as well as acquaintance with the main tools and methodologies used in a result-based management system.

The main objective of this course is to prepare future managers of organisations (Public Institutions, Non-Governmental Organisations, Consultancies etc...) to successfully design, manage or evaluate programmes or projects financed by the EU Budget.

Course material and structure

I- Setting the scene of EU Funded projects (8h):

- Overview of EU Policies, Funds and financial instruments
Our starting point to our journey into EU Project management will be the new MFF 2021-2027 that is supposed to start in 2021. The first session will be an overview of the main EU policies and respective available funds and financial instruments. We will analyse in details some of the most important funds and financial instruments: Recovery fund, European Structural and Investment Fund, Horizon 2020 and External Action. (3 h)
- Overview of the rules and procedures applicable for the use of the EU Budget
During this session, we will study the current Financial Regulation related to the EU Budget, which set the basic rules and procedures for the implementation and control of implementation of the EU funds. We will particularly insist on the methods of implementation and on the definition of the 2 main types of funding: grants and procurement. At each step, we will refer to real case examples to illustrate the theory. (3h)
- Exercise: The main exercise for this part will be to spot and discuss the main differences between terms of reference for a service contract (procurement) and guidelines for a grant scheme. The main objective of this exercise will be to understand the rules related to public contracts and grants as defined in the financial regulation of the EU and put into practise the theory learned so far (2h)

II- Project development methodology and project management tools (15h)

- The EU Project Cycle Management (PCM) (2h)
On the basis of the PCM guidelines used by the European Commission, each step of the project cycle (from programming to evaluation) will be presented and explained in details using a case study from EU External Action.
- Project Design methodologies: Intervention Logic, Theory of change and Logical Framework Approach (LFA) (11 h)
The 3 methodologies will be explained and compared. Both the analytical and planning phase of the LFA will be presented as well as the used methodology for the LogFrame matrix development. Each phase will be detailed and studied through different exercises:
 - a) Developing a relevant Problem Tree (2h+ Homework, Approx.2h)
 - b) Developing a relevant Objective Tree (1 h+ Homework, Approx.2h)
 - c) Filling in a Log frame Matrix (2h+Homework, Approx.3h)
 - d) Developing a Concept Note (3h+ Homework, Approx.2h)
 - e) Evaluation Committee Simulation (1 h+Homework, Approx.2h)These are group exercises that will be part of the assessment of the course.
- Definition of relevant indicators (2h)
This session will introduce the different methods for indicators definition. Drawing from case studies, best practices will be presented as well as common errors to avoid.

III- Tools for managing and monitoring an EU Project (7h)

- Work Breakdown Structure (WBS), Activities Planning and budget (2h)

On the basis of the Log Frame Matrix developed in the previous sessions, we will develop our WBS, activity planning and budget. In order to do so, we will examine some concrete examples and learn from their errors and best practice.

- Monitoring, evaluation and Learning (M&E; MEL) (2h)
Setting up a specific monitoring, evaluation and learning system for each project is a must do to ensure a proper measurement of the achieved results; it is as well as a powerful learning instrument. We will therefore study what are the necessary tools, human resources and processes to be put in place in order to develop a relevant monitoring, evaluation and learning system for your project, that will allow for accountability, evidence informed decision making and learning.
- Communication and visibility (2h)
Communicating about the project and its results, as well as making it clear that the EU funded it, are contractual obligations. This session will present the main communication tools used and how to embed a communication plan in your projects activities.
- Audit (1 h)
This session will be dedicated to the definition of Audit and how to ensure its smooth development.

Method

This course will use different learning methodologies, using as much as possible the learning by doing approach. An active participation from students will be required during the lectures as well as during the group exercises, which will be introduced and corrected during the lectures time, but will have to be developed at home.

At least 2 tutorials and Q&A sessions will strengthen the assimilation of concepts.

The acquisition of knowledge and skills will be checked during the lectures and exercises.

Assessment

Final grades will be given on the basis of:

- Active participation (25%): Relevant participation and involvement during the class will be part of the assessment;
- Group exercises results (25%): 2 exercises will be assessed: The development of the Log frame Matrix and the development of the Concept Note. Students will be evaluated as a part of the Team on the quality and relevance of the developed documents.
- Written exam (50%): A 3-hour individual written exam mixing a practical exercise and some questions on theory. The students will be evaluated on their ability to use the different tools for designing and managing a project and their understanding of key concept in EU Project Management.

*The evaluation modalities of the final exam may be subject to adaptations in function of the evolution of the sanitary situation

Assessment at second attempt

During the second examination session the course is assessed 100% on the basis of a written resit exam. The format of the resit exam is identical to that of the first session.

Note:

1/ Submission: Papers can only be submitted once. Only the first version received will be corrected.
2/ Referencing: Any written work submitted by a student is assessed on its originality as well as the depth and breadth of research undertaken. (It follows that plagiarism, self-plagiarism, collusion and the falsification of data are all prohibited.) No written work (even if it is not strictly academic e.g. policy brief, memo, etc.) can consist of assembling existing texts, unless the sources used are clearly indicated. If an exercise does not provide for the possibility of indicating sources, verbatim reproduction of an existing document is prohibited.
3/ Language: all papers must be submitted in the language of the course.
4/ Penalties regarding late submissions: for every 24 hours of delay, or part thereof, after the specified submission deadline, 2 points will be deducted from the final mark of the paper.

Suggested readings

- EU Financial Regulation, 2018:
<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32018R1046>
- Project Cycle Management Guidelines, 2004 ([Link](#))
- Strengthening Internal monitoring, 2007:
https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/methodology-tools-and-methods-series-strengthening-project-internal-monitoring-200706_en_2.pdf
- Guidelines on linking planning/programming, Monitoring and Evaluation, DG NEAR, 2016 :
https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/pdf/financial_assistance/phare/evaluation/2016/20160831-dg-near-guidelines-on-linking-planning-programming-vol-1-v-0.4.pdf
- FPI Manual, 2018:
https://ec.europa.eu/fpi/sites/fpi/files/fpi-manual-july-2018_en.pdf
- Sector indicator Guidance, 2019:
<http://indicators.developmentresults.eu/>
- Guidance document on Monitoring and Evaluation- European Regional Development Fund and Cohesion Fund:
https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/informat/2014/guidance_monitoring_evaluation_en.pdf
- Guidance document on Monitoring and Evaluation of the European Social Fund, 2018:
<https://ec.europa.eu/sfc/en/system/files/ged/ESF%20monitoring%20and%20evaluation%20guidance.pdf>
- How the EU budget is spent, EPRS, April 2019:
[https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2019/637925/EPRS_BRI\(2019\)637925_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2019/637925/EPRS_BRI(2019)637925_EN.pdf)
- PM2 methodology: <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/0e3b4e84-b6cc-11e6-9e3c-01aa75ed71a1>

*This bibliography has been put together by the Professor. The formatting of the references does not necessarily correspond to the referencing rules applicable in the Department.

Biography

Stéphanie Horel is a Programme Officer at the EU Delegation to Brazil. She is in charge of the climate change and environment portfolio of actions of the Foreign Policy Instruments (FPI) for the Americas. Before joining the European Commission, she worked for 8 years as an independent expert with various stakeholders on short term and long-term assignments for projects financed by the European Union and other Institutions (Council of Europe, UNESCO).

Between 2011 and 2015 she was Team Leader of an ENP Project for developing capacities in EU Affairs in the Public Administration of the ENP Countries. Between 2004 and 2009, she was Lecturer and Coordinator of a MEDA Regional Programme (EuroMed Training of Public Administration Programme) at the European Institute of Public Administration (EIPA). Previously, she worked as legal advisor on public procurement and Project Manager in different Organisations (Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, DG Research of the European Commission) where she developed and managed projects funded with R&D and innovation funds and European Regional Development fund.