

Working Group on DEVCO's new operational information system

Mission and organisation

I. Main objectives

The Working Group (WG) should provide an implementation roadmap by December 2014 to the IT Steering Committee covering recommendations in the following areas:

1. Define the functions of the future operational information system along the following objectives:

- i. Automate DEVCO's core business processes: first and foremost, functions designed for allowing operational managers to achieve better and easier daily project management activities.
- ii. Implement the operational functions of CRIS: residual functions when financial functions of CRIS have been transferred to financial information systems.
- iii. Identify operational data needed to run DEVCO operation and clear definition of data to be published either for internal or external purposes.
- iv. Provide enablers for knowledge management: functions allowing access to similar projects, good practice, lessons learned, etc.

Simplification and effectiveness should be cross-cutting concerns in the functions definitions:

- A new IT system should not only automate existing processes, but also make shortcuts or synergies possible. Lessons learned from the simplification exercise should be integrated and alignment of the whole DG behind revised harmonised business processes should be pursued.
- The WG should avoid over-engineering and the ambition to cover every single exception.

2. Define the scope and architecture of the new operational system

- Map and assess the existing processes.
- Elaborate a gap analysis based on the “As is” situations and propose relevant “To be” situations.
- Update when relevant the glossary of business entities to be used across all business processes.
- Map and assess the existing tools (DEVCO and Commission-wide), their opportunities in terms of operational value, their constraints and the related corporate requirements (Prospect, Financial Forecasting, CRIS operational functions, ARES, Capacity4Dev, websites, GIS, ABAC, etc.).
- Taking into account users' needs, make proposals in terms of interoperability and reuse (interfacing, merging and service provision from one system to another).
- Define the system architecture both in terms of internal components and as an ecosystem of tools to which the user will be confronted, taking into account recommendations recently formulated by Gartner.

3. Define technology, processes and tools

Map and assess possible technological solutions for fulfilling the desired functions. Possible solutions are among others: "Commercial Off the Shelf" products, a tool from another donor, open source frameworks, custom-built solution based on existing tools or custom-built solution from scratch.

A possible benchmark and cooperation with other comparable organisations involved in a similar process could be envisaged.

For each option, the WG recommendations should be elaborated in close cooperation with unit R6 and include a brief assessment in terms of:

- i. time to make the system available to users,
- ii. total cost of ownership: cost (investment and maintenance) and workload (during development and during operation),
- iii. value for users,
- iv. degree of agility during development, as well as the ability to establish a direct link between business and developers,
- v. flexibility once developed to adapt to constantly evolving business requirements,
- vi. risk associated to the option and dependency to other systems or DG roadmaps,
- vii. Interoperability (interfacing with other systems, etc.)

II. Organisation

1. Composition and reporting

The WG will be made up of 4 full time equivalent members. The Head of the WG is placed under the functional authority of DDG1. Members of the WG are placed under the functional authority of the Head of the WG for the implementation of the tasks related to the WG. However, each member of the WG will remain attached administratively to his/her unit of origin for the duration of the WG.

Permanent members of the WG are anticipated to include the following¹ (TBC): Denis Thieulin, (DEVCO/04), as Head of the WG, P. Riembault (DEVCO/06), L. Etienne (DEVCO/02), and an expert in Business Process Analysis for technical support².

The WG will be entitled to draw on the expertise and resources from other relevant units, in particular R1 and R6. Both units will nominate representatives in the WG that will participate in the WG activities when necessary. It will develop the roadmap in close consultation with a User Group reflecting the interests and needs both in headquarters and Delegations. Members of the User Group will be appointed on the basis of their operational and field experience and will be allocated the time necessary to actively contribute to the WG activities: system and process gap analysis, business process update, need identification, etc. If needed, the WG should be able to rely on external expertise to advise on technical solutions.

¹ Preliminary requirements:

- Approval of the Heads of Unit of the permanent officials in the WG
- Modification of the Job Description of the permanent officials in the WG

² To be determined

The WG is meant to be a temporary structure until the delivery of the roadmap. Its possible continuation should be reviewed in the light of the implementation roadmap.

It is expected that a monthly reporting prepared by the WG and endorsed by DDG1 to the User Group and the IT Steering Committee would take place from September onwards.

2. Workplan and methods

In order to achieve its mission, the WG will establish a work plan. It will also take into account and use as much as possible the efforts deployed by the DG until now in building operational tools: PCM functionalities, prototype tools like the internal monitoring toolkit, testing possibilities deriving from Capacity4Dev or custom-built tools used by Delegations.

Building on the above and other experiences, the WG should as far as possible validate the feasibility of their recommendations through prototypes.