Grant agreement nº: 101069994
Call identifier: HORIZON-CL4-2021

Deliverable D7.3

Risk monitoring procedure, first report

Work Package 7

Project management

Document Type	**:**	Report
Version	**:**	V20092023
Date of issue	**:**	25/09/2023
Dissemination level	**:**	PUBLIC
Lead beneficiary	**:**	CEA

DOCUMENT HISTORY

Version	Date	Changes	Stage	Distribution
	20/09/2023		Final draft	CEA
Final	25/09/2023	Correction of Spelling and grammatical errors, rephrasing.	Final version	IKL

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report intends to present the risk monitoring procedure to be carried out during the course of EARASHI in order to follow up on the risks identified during the proposal phase, and to account for the unexpected risks whenever they occur or are likely to occur. The risk procedure will be monitored by the project coordinator with the support and in collaboration with all the WP leaders, and all the partners directly involved in the identified risk and the mitigation procedure.

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1   INTRODUCTION

EARASHI project, HORIZON Europe, aims to improve working conditions, trust, and acceptance of collaborative embodied AI within robotic systems. In particular, this project supports the production machine/tool sector by assisting Industry, particularly start-ups and SMEs, in adopting advanced digital and eco-friendly technologies, specifically AI, data, and robotics. This approach will help employees in their daily activities and improve their working conditions, ultimately leading to a productivity increase. EARASHI adopts a worker-centric approach by considering workforce well-being and health (e.g., MSD and stress), design thinking methodology of production machines, worker acceptance, and ethics.

EARASHI will set up and publish 2 open calls (M6 and M13) with focus areas and challenges to improve working conditions in the production machines field, specifically with regards to health, safety, and well-being, while also promoting productivity via human-centred collaborative embodied AI, data & Robotics. The 10 selected projects/beneficiaries will:

➢ benefit from Financial support to Third parties (FSTP, Cascade funding) – up to 200 k€ (100% funding rate for Start-Ups and 70% for SMEs);
➢ get access to EARASHI leading-edge technologies (BB) and test facilities from RTOs and industrial partners, business support, mentoring by industrial pairs, support in ethics, system integration, and user acceptance, thus lowering both their technical and business barriers.

EARASHI targets to fund 10 projects, foster pan-European collaboration with at least 50% of selected projects being cross-border, enable agile responses to urgent needs, and open strategic autonomy in digital and future emerging enabling technologies, with 80% of the selected AEs having market potential, and more than 20% of the selected AE reaching TRL8-9 two years after the end of their project.

To that purpose, by means of the open calls and the FSTP, EARASHI partners will provide access to Technological BB and Key Competencies for the selected application experiments. The foreseen BBs available through the open calls (technology transfer support) and the key competencies will be provided to the granted projects.

The present report intends to outline the risk monitoring procedure to be implemented throughout EARASHI in order to monitor identified risks from proposal phase and address any unexpected risks as they arise. The risk procedure will be monitored by the project coordinator with the support and in collaboration with all the WP leaders, and all the partners directly involved in the identified risk and the mitigation procedure. The procedure will be updated as needed throughout the course of the project, based on EARASHI progress, and identified requirements.
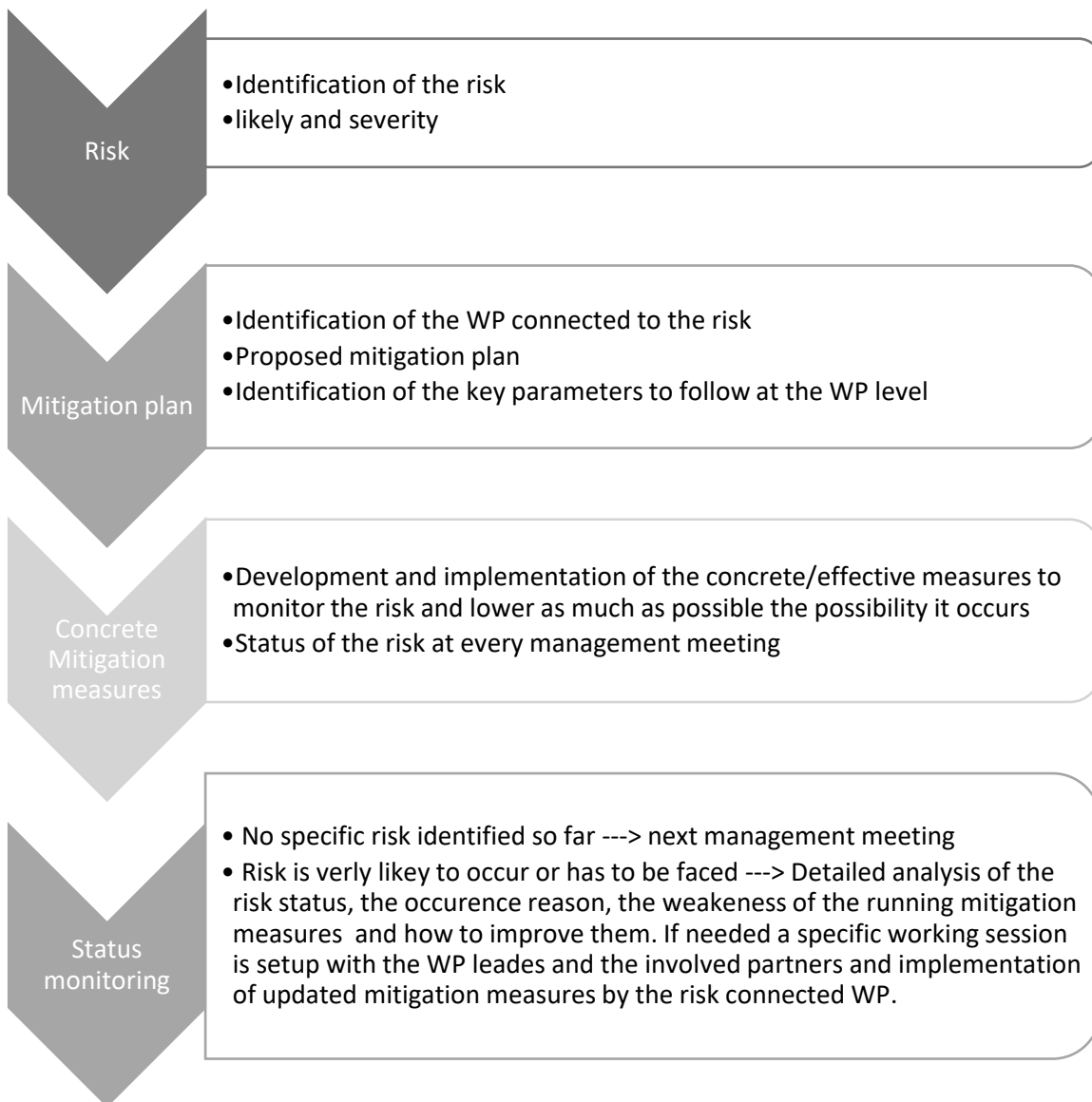
2 RISK MONITORING PROCEDURE

The risk monitoring procedure is defined at the project set-up to ensure that the different project risks are identified, monitored, and mitigated, continuously along the project course.

All the risks, planned ones as in the Critical risks table of the DoA, (see **Erreur ! Source du renvoi introuvable.**) and unexpected ones, are listed in the **CRITICAL RISK DASHBOARD** available on EARASHI collaborative platform Talkspirit (*EARASHI > WP7 > Task7.3*) to all partners.

For every risk, the critical dashboard lists:

- The risk description
- the WP(s) linked to the identified risk
- The risk likely
- The risk severity
- The mitigation plan and associated measures
- status

RISK MONITORING is an integral part of project management, discussed as such during every **MANAGEMENT MEETING,** both as part of the general agenda and at the WP level whenever the mitigation measures interfere with the WP tasks and/or the risk outcomes and may impact the WP results and associated KPI. The risk dashboard is thus regularly reviewed and updated, especially during dedicated sessions during the monthly management meetings.

Risk
- Identification of the risk
- likely and severity

Mitigation plan
- Identification of the WP connected to the risk
- Proposed mitigation plan
- Identification of the key parameters to follow at the WP level

Concrete Mitigation measures
- Development and implementation of the concrete/effective measures to monitor the risk and lower as much as possible the possibility it occurs
- Status of the risk at every management meeting

Status monitoring
- No specific risk identified so far ---> next management meeting
- Risk is verly likely to occur or has to be faced ---> Detailed analysis of the risk status, the occurence reason, the weakeness of the running mitigation measures and how to improve them. If needed a specific working session is setup with the WP leades and the involved partners and implementation of updated mitigation measures by the risk connected WP.

Figure 1: EARASHI Risk monitoring procedure

➢ The critical Risk dashboard is thus updated at every monthly management meeting, following the process illustrated in **Erreur ! Source du renvoi introuvable.**

➢ If needed because of the risk occurrence likelihood, the need to either put into place new mitigation measures or analyze and improve the running mitigation measures, a dedicated working session will be set up by the coordinators gathering the WP leaders and the involved partners (e.g., partners involved in the associated activity(ies), impacted by the risk outcomes, etc.).

3 CRITICAL RISK ANALYSIS STATUS AT M12

Ten critical risks were identified at the proposal level (§3.15. "Critical risks" of the DoA). They were monitored, following the process described in §2. The Critical risk dashboard is illustrated in Table 1.

During the first 12 months, the main risks of attention were the risk connected to the open call phase and potentially having an impact on the open call results as for instance risk #8 "Number and quality of AE projects not reached":

- The activity on the open call page, and then the status of the open call registration page were regularly (weekly) monitored by the partner in charge of the website (CECIMO) and reported to the consortium.
- The open call text was disseminated on various platforms (EC platform, AI4EU, National Contact Point, EEN, E-DIH networks, etc.).
- Individual contact of companies with the partners was collected and shared with the partner in charge of the communication and dissemination (CECIMO) so that these companies were regularly informed of the various events and webinars set up by the consortium, etc.
- All partners, particularly cluster associations, were tasked with promoting the call. Their efforts were emphasized after a couple of weeks when not-so-activity was observed on the open call page.
- The companies were encouraged to contact the Building Block owners while writing their proposal in order to check the feasibility of their project, the added value of the building blocks and receive tailored guidelines and recommendations for their projects.
- Two specific Q/A webinars were organized in order to explain the open call scope and requests and answer questions online, and one webinar was proposed to present the overall strategy of the open call, the recording being available online (https://earashi.eu/our-events/).

One risk has been added (risk #11) following the first open call after the Open call submission page crashed on the last day of the open call 1 and applicants were not able to upload either their application or mostly their business video pitch. All the data were then collected manually by email and big file transfer by CEA and FM (in charge of the open call setup). The information was relayed on the website and by all the partners of the consortium. The crash was due to the huge number of very large files (business pitch video, e.g., 32) uploaded over a very short period of time. For the 2nd open call, the submission page has been reinforced for the 2nd open call and a crash test will be run before the call 2 opening.

Table 1: EARASHI critical risk dashboard – M12 status

Risk	Description of risk	WP	Likelihood	Severity	Proposed risk mitigation measures	M12 status
1	Poor data quality (AI), data availability (AI), high implementation costs	5	Medium	High	Focus on the most critical factors (Pareto analysis...); Use databases of similar cases; Apply statistical tools to provide the data with the same behaviour.	N/A
2	High legal cost and time-consuming process of protecting IP	6	High	High	Using the internal human resources of partners; Providing Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR Tools) and their building blocks such as Arbitration and Mediation.	N/A
3	Unwillingness of the involved parties to supply data due to the sensitive concept of information leakage	6	Low	High	Technology providers have been chosen for their willingness to share relevant information. Further planning and protection of data will be defined in the Standard Agreement.	The standard agreement was written and validated by all the partners' legal, including IP and data protection. For each AE, the selected BB owner co-signs - with the Third-party - the standard agreement and therefore is engaged to supply data as needed in the AE implementation
4	Low quality of outputs, procrastinating in milestones or deliverables	All	Low	Low	The WP leader will observe continuously the performance and the quality of the progress and will report each quarter to mitigate the risk.	N/A
5	Infringe on existing patents	All	Low	High	The E&I managers will observe the IP environment and update the consortium in a planned manner. This risk could be avoided	N/A

Risk	Description of risk	WP	Likelihood	Severity	Proposed risk mitigation measures	M12 status
					by applying a project development trajectory.	
6	COVID or any other pandemic or reason prohibits traveling for implementation	All	Medium	Low	An alternative plan would be provided by the consortium to minimize the delays by applying all the possibilities suggested to monitor virtually, to visit the installation virtually, etc.	N/A
7	SMEs' low interest in the proposed call	All (4)	Low	High	Calls will be made appealing and oriented to SMEs' interests. Scope of the calls / Challenges defined with the support of the Advisory board. Lessons learnt and feedback from the first open call to improve the process, e.g., open call 2. Targeted communication activities and proactive outreach.	N/A so far. The 10 challenges proposed for the open call 1 were defined with the support of the Advisory board. All but one were addressed through the 46 applicants. The list of challenges is reviewed for the 2nd open call based on open call 1 feedbacks and the selected projects. The challenges well addressed through the first selected AE will be removed from the Open Call challenges.
8	Number and quality of AE projects not reached	4	Low	High	Quality is reassured by a transparent selection process with realistic evaluation criteria. If the number of projects is not reached, a 3rd call will be set up.	N/A so far 46 proposals fully finalized were received through the 1st open call and 33 of them were above the eligibility threshold, thanks to the active involvement of all the partners in promoting, networking, and supporting the companies during the application phase (open call scope, technical feasibility, etc.).

Risk	Description of risk	WP	Likelihood	Severity	Proposed risk mitigation measures	M12 status
						5 projects were successfully selected. The same strategy will be put into place for the 2nd open call.
9	AEs not complying with communication and dissemination requirements	6	Low	Medium	Setting clear dissemination KPIs at the application stage. Last payment suspended until KPIs are met. Communication leader as POC for communication and dissemination activities.	Mandatory WP and deliverables are defined and imposed in the Application template/implementation description. The CF payment is then correlated to their submission and the validation by the monitoring partners of all the required deliverables and milestones. Clearly identified in the AE monitoring process N/A so far - implementation phase of the OC1 selected projects.
10	Selected SMEs and start-ups face difficulties (technical, business oriented) to resolve the challenge and reach the AE expected outcomes.	5	Low	High	Open call process is exhaustive (both technical and business-oriented), minimizing the chance of selecting start-ups and SMEs without the required skills. Tailored monitoring process with identified checkpoint and milestones will be carried out for each granted AE, to early identify issues, and propose mitigation actions. Technical support through various channels will be proposed. Last payment suspended until AE outcomes are validated and reached.	The open call selection process put into place combines both a sturdy technical evaluation performed by 3 external evaluators with varying profiles and technical competencies and EARASHI internal evaluation + a business evaluation performed independently by Blumorpho. A tailored monitoring process conducted by the monitoring partner is put into place involving both technical and business supervision. Monthly status will be made and shared with the consortium in order to follow closely all the selected projects,

Risk	Description of risk	WP	Likelihood	Severity	Proposed risk mitigation measures	M12 status
						anticipate as much as possible any difficulty, and propose solutions as early as possible, thus preventing any blockage. The cascade funding payment is correlated to the achievement of the deliverables and milestones identified as such in the signed SAEA. N/A so far - implementation phase of the OC1 selected projects.
11	<u>NOT PLANNED</u> Crash of the registration/submission platform on the last day of the open call	4		High	The crash happened for the open call 1 closure day. All the data were then collected manually by email and big file transfer by CEA and FM (in charge of the open call setup). The information was relayed on the website and by all the partners of the consortium. Actually, 32 proposals (of 46) were concerned by the crash. This was due to the huge number of very large files (business pitch video) to be uploaded over a very short period of time.	For the 2nd open call, the submission page has been reinforced in order to avoid the crash that occurred during the OC1 last day. It is proposed to set up a crash test before the call 2 opening (sometime in September).