



▶ **new millennium, new media**

# **Managing a strong project consortium**

**Managing European research projects –  
Best practices from NM2 for FP7 projects**  
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- My credentials
- A few words on forming a consortium
- Managing the consortium
  - Main objectives and requirements of an effective project management
  - Effective project management structures – the example of NM2
- Some conclusions and lessons



- Telecom engineering background
- Involved in international and collaborative projects for more than 15 years
  - Lots of chances to exercise not to make mistakes twice
- Earlier involved in several European R&D projects in different roles
- Since more than two years coordinator of the Integrated IST Project NM2 (“New Media for a New Millennium”)

# A few words on forming a strong consortium

- You have a strong idea on what should be done
- Your idea helps Europe to become *“the most dynamic and competitive knowledge-based economy in the world”*
- You are willing to spend several person weeks at your own (company's) risk
- You don't expect to start with the real work for about another year
- You need to select your consortium partners very carefully; accept only really committed partners
- Your partners need to cover all required fields of experience
- Don't underestimate the English problem

- Allow up to 2 years from first idea to start of project
- Allow up to 100 k€ preparation cost (not refundable)

# Managing the consortium

# Objectives and requirements

- Bringing an appropriate team together
  - Ensuring good teamwork
  - Overseeing the project strategy and direction
  - Resource planning and controlling
  - Financial project controlling
  - Linking together the project components
  - Conflict resolution
  - Risk management
  - Knowledge management including IPR issues
  - Quality assurance
  - Providing appropriate electronic management tools
  - Particularly for FP6/FP7 projects:
    - ensuring communication with the European Commission
    - reporting to the Commission
    - controlling audits and reviews as required by the Commission
- All those points need to be supported by the management structure

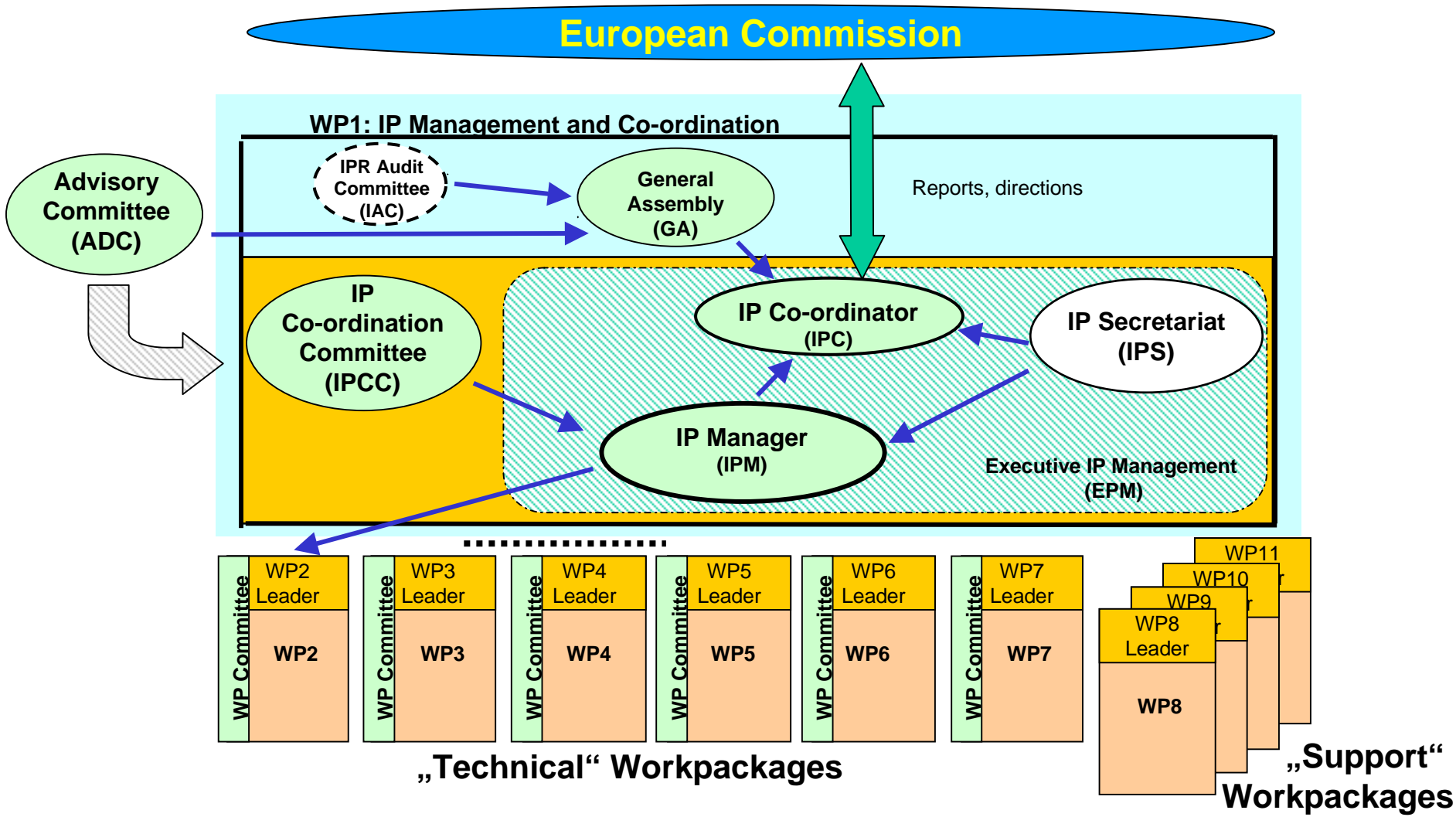
- Bringing an appropriate team together
- Ensuring good teamwork ←
- Overseeing the project strategy and direction ←

All those points need

***Provide an environment to allow the project to work on the main tasks in an effective and coordinated way, not being burdened by administrative overhead***

- ensuring communication with the European Commission ←
- reporting to the Commission ←
- controlling audits and reviews as required by the Commission ←

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<b>General Assembly (GA)</b>	The GA is the highest body of the IP. All partners of the Consortium are represented in the GA. It meets regularly once a year.
<b>Advisory Committee (ADC)</b>	The ADC advises the IP on its scientific direction and on business opportunities. It reviews on a yearly basis the progress made and gives advises on the scientific and business aspects of the IP. High profile industry and academia representatives of related areas constitute the ADC.
<b>IPR Audit Committee (IAC)</b>	The IAC assesses all IPR relevant information that was brought in the project or was developed within the project. It gives recommendations to the GA on the handling of the assessed IPR issues.
<b>IP Co-ordination Committee (IPCC)</b>	The IPCC is responsible for the technical overall management of the IP and the co-ordination between the different workpackages. It consists of the IP Co-ordinator, the IP Manager, leaders of active workpackages, and others as agreed by the GA.
<b>Executive IP Management (EPM)</b>	The EPM is responsible for the day-by-day project management of the whole IP. It consists of the Technical IP Manager (IPM), Administrative and financial IP Co-ordinator (IPC), and the IP Secretariat (IPS).
<b>Workpackage Committee (WPC)</b>	The WPC is a quite informal but important body in charge of the co-ordination of the work within the Workpackage, and discusses solutions in case of conflicts. It consists of the Workpackage Leader, all Task Leaders, and one representative of the parties involved in the work package.

Different skills are required for admin & financial management, and for technical management. We recommend a split between:

- **IP Manager** to ensure coordination of the technical workpackages, technical progress and excellence
- **IP Co-ordinator** to ensure that admin & financial issues are running smoothly in the background, and to ensure appropriate communication with the project partners and with the European Commission (including timely delivery of reports and deliverables)



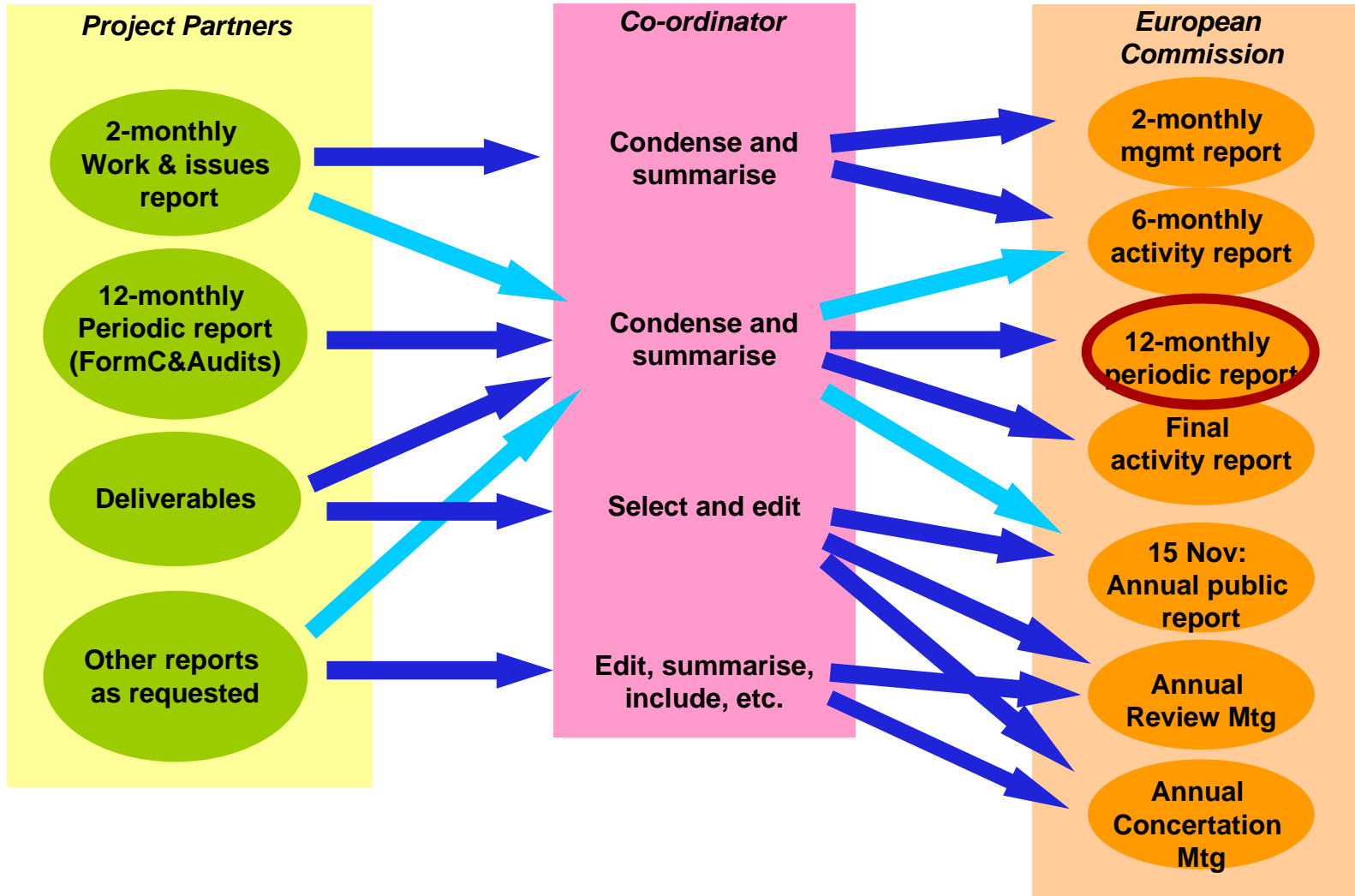
- A clear structure into Workpackages and Tasks is crucial
  - Take the EU funding rules into account when you create your WPs. For FP6:
    - Management: 100% (but only up to 7% of EU funding)
    - R&D work: 50% (this includes dissemination & exploitation)
    - Training: 100%
    - Demonstration: 35%
- Avoid having all partners work in all WPs; concentrate instead according to skills and expertise
- Keep clear record on clear documents

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**Different rules in FP7!**

<i>All figures in person-months</i>		Leader	Partner 1	Partner 2	Partner 3	Partner 4	Partner 5	Sum
<b>WP1</b>	<b>IP co-ordination and management</b>	Partner 1	17	10	1	1	1	30
Task 1	Overall IP co-ordination and management	Partner 1	12	8				20
Task 2	Quality assurance, reviews and audits	Partner 1	2	1				3
Task 3	Knowledge management	Partner 1	3	1	1	1	1	7
<b>WP2</b>	<b>Architecture and Requirements</b>	Partner 4	0	33	12	42	0	87
Task 1	WP management and co-ordination	Partner 4				2		2
Task 2	Users	Partner 3		1	6	2		9
Task 3	Devices	Partner 2		17	3	4		24
Task 4	Technologies	Partner 4		15	3	34		52

# Reporting and Reviewing in FP6



# 12-monthly Periodic Report



For example:

- Reporting tools → **Project Reporter**
- Resource controlling tools → **Project Reporter**
- Information exchange tools → **E-mail lists, Wikis**
- Communication tools → **Phone**  
→ **Audio/video conference**
- Knowledge Management tools → **BSCW**
- Filestore → **BSCW**

1. Life works never as predicted
2. Murphy is still alive
3. The human is always prevailing
4. Using tax payers money is not always easy
5. Organisations perform differently than the individuals working for them
6. “I am suspicious against everyone, except against the people I know”
7. Not every red car with a horse is a Ferrari

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4. Using tax payers money is not easy
5. Organisations perform worse than the individuals working for them
6. "I am suspicious of everyone, except against the people I love"
7. No car with a horse is a Ferrari

**The management structure cannot make those issues disappear, but it can help to make life much easier**

# Conclusions and lessons learned

- All partners need to be properly represented (if there are many partners, a split in a General Assembly and a Board can help)
- A body which takes care of the day-to-day management is required („Executive IP Management“ available „round the clock“)
- Advice from outside the project is important for fresh ideas, and for exploiting the results (Advisory Committee)
- If the work is structured logically into „Workpackages“ and/or „Tasks“, life is much easier. To avoid „projects within a project“ a proper co-ordination structure is essential! (IPCC)
- Good electronic tools can make life much easier
- But: despite all electronic means early planned physical meetings are crucial
- Simplicity wins: the project management structure should be as simple as possible

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