



PILLAR ROBOTS

*Purposeful Intrinsically motivated
Lifelong Learning Autonomous Robots*

D12.7 Quality and Risk Management Plan



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1. Change Control

1.1. Document Properties

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3. Executive summary

Quality and Risk management are vital processes throughout the lifetime of a project and address the processes of planning, management, identification, analysis, monitoring and control. This document outlines policies and procedures for the quality of deliverables and documents and uncommon causes of project deviations that may compromise objectives, i.e. risks.

PILLAR-Robots' Quality and Risk Management Plan will be updated throughout the project lifecycle as unexpected sources of risk can be identified at any time. It is the objective of the risk management plan to decrease the probability and impact of events adverse to the project. In contrast, any event that could have a positive impact should be exploited.

The goal of this document is to allow the Management Team to accurately and timely try to avoid unwanted risks and, as necessary, take action in mitigating or applying corrective measures to control potential negative effects to the project, also assure a quality level for all project results.

4. List of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Explanation
EC	European Commission
GA	Grant Agreement
IT	Information Technologies
MC/GA	Management Committee / General Assembly
QMP	Quality Management Plan
RMP	Risk Management Plan
WP	Work Package

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7. Introduction

The objective of the PILLAR-Robots Quality and Risk Management plan is to provide guidelines on project quality requirements, risk identification and mitigation measures to be implemented by all partners in the consortium. This document describes the quality definitions relevant to project activities, results, and deliverables as well as the quality standards these activities shall comply with.

The plan also prescribes the procedures for quality standards implementation by all partners in the consortium. It presents the processes to be implemented for quality monitoring and controlling, in terms of:

- Quality assurance – evaluation on regular basis of the project activities, results and deliverables in order to provide confidence they will satisfy the project quality standards;
- Quality control – monitoring of project activities, results and deliverables in compliance with the quality standards outlined in the Quality management plan; identification of measures and actions to eliminate causes of unsatisfactory quality.

By implementing the Quality and Risk Management plan the consortium will guarantee that project activities, results and deliverables will meet the requirements of the Grant Agreement.

• 7.1 Relation with other tasks and deliverables

As per the figure below, D12.7 “Project Quality and Risk Management Plan” is a key deliverable for maintaining the quality of project deliverables, activities, results and facing risk that may appear during the project and is related to the following tasks:

- Task 12.2: Scientific & technical management;
- Task 12.3: Quality assurance & risk management.

Additionally, this deliverable is closely related to Task 12.1 Project Administration as the smooth overall management of the project depends on a coherent Quality Management Plan and the correct identification, monitoring and controlling of risks during the PILLAR-Robots project lifecycle.

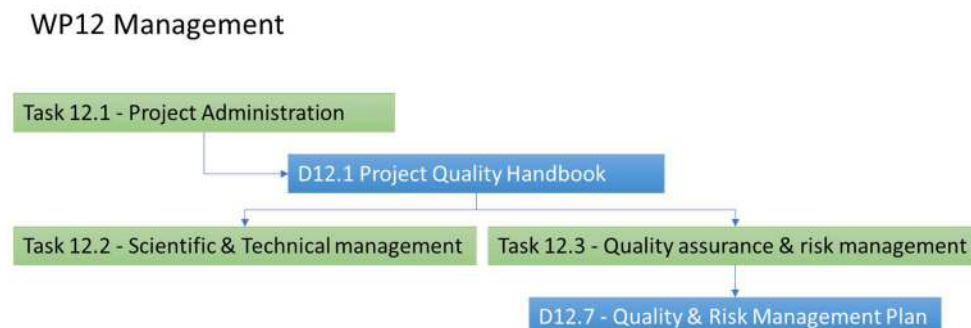


Figure 1 - Deliverable relation with other tasks and deliverables

- **7.2 Methodology**

The current deliverable is based on an initial assessment that was made during the proposal phase and GA Preparation (section 'Critical risks & risk management strategy'). Additionally, the Project Coordinator along with the Management Committee have made a second assessment, in the Operational Plan, where WP Leaders have further identified dependencies that can be considered additional risks that may appear during the project.

Regarding quality management, a set of procedures and guidelines have been set out in the document based on previous experience and lessons learned.

- **7.3 Deliverable structure**

The current deliverable is structured in two sections:

- **Quality Management Plan** – related to processes to be followed in order to ensure a certain quality level for all project deliverables;
- **Risk Management Plan** – In this section are presented the identified risks that may appear during the project and the mitigation plan that will be applied.

8. Quality Management Plan

PILLAR-Robots' Quality Management is defined as all the processes and activities performed by project partners that determine quality policies, objectives, and responsibilities so that the project objectives and deliverables will be met, and all obligations and requirements specified in the GA are validated.

Project Quality Management addresses the management of the project, the WP Leaders and the deliverables of the project. Quality measures and techniques are specific to the type of deliverables being produced by the project.

The Quality Management Plan (QMP) defines procedures and tools for quality management.

Through the implementation of the quality management the following results are expected:

- High quality of PILLAR-Robots overall implementation;
- High quality of project scientific and management, training and dissemination deliverables.

- **8.1 Responsible bodies**

Activity related to quality management will be implemented by the MC/GA representatives, the Project Manager and the Project Coordinator. They will be responsible for ensuring high quality in project implementation. As to the quality requirements for the scientific deliverables, these will be implemented by researchers and innovation staff members participating in project activities.

The Project Coordinator will have the overall responsibility for PILLAR-Robots quality.

The Project Manager will carry out the administration of the Quality Management Plan in terms of:

- Ensuring the Quality Management Plan is implemented by all project partners and participants;
- Monitoring of project implementation quality;
- Quality problems identification and development of suitable solutions.

While implementing these tasks, the Project Manager will work in close cooperation with the Management Committee / General Assembly (MC/GA) and will maintain regular contacts with all WP Leaders, Task Leaders and managers of the project teams.

The MC/GA will take all decisions related to PILLAR-Robots overall quality of scientific deliverables.

- **8.2 Documentation Management**

The official documentation repository for the PILLAR-Robots project is the TEAMS Platform. This documentation repository will contain the final project deliverables, together with other general information about the project content and its progress. The main folders that can be found by the project partners through the TEAMS Platform are the following:

- Grant Agreement folder: Grant Agreement with the EC and its annexes;
- Consortium Agreement folder: Consortium Agreement with its annexes;
- Communication / Contact List folder: contact list, the complete contact list of the project partners;
- Deliverables – Final Version folder: deliverables as final form submitted to EC;
- Communication / Meetings folder: meeting agenda, minutes and presentations for/from consortium meetings;
- WP related folders: deliverables and other documentation of the project grouped on each WP;
- Templates folder: All project templates.

- **8.3 Administrative information of the project**

When referring to administrative information, it is understood any information related to all administrative procedures of the project, including financial issues. Information related to all organisations that participate in the PILLAR-Robots project is also an important part of the administrative information of the project and any modification made in this information (legal information, change of name of the organisation, change of authorized representatives of each partner, etc.) has to be transmitted as soon as possible to the Project Coordinator.

- **8.4 Templates of the project**

All the official documentation of the project such as: presentations, deliverables, meeting agenda/minutes, etc. has its related project template available on TEAMS. The project logo must also be present in all the templates.

Initially, the following templates will be available:

- Deliverable template;
- Internal Progress Report;
- Risk Evaluation Report;
- Dissemination & Exploitation Activity factsheet;
- Presentation template.

During the project lifetime current templates may be updated and more templates will be added based on future needs.

- **8.5 Quality Management System**

The Project Manager will be responsible for quality management and for the implementation of the Quality Management System throughout the project lifecycle. The plan will be carried out in close cooperation with all partners in the consortium according to the descriptions presented below. For the overall implementation of the Quality Management System, the Project Manager will also cooperate with the MC/GA and as for the review of the quality of the scientific deliverables, the Project Manager will work along with the Project Coordinator.

- *8.5.1 Quality management of project activities and results*

PILLAR-Robots overall quality control covers project implementation in terms of activities and results. To this end all project teams will produce regular (M12, M30, M48) quality evaluation reports. The Project Manager will summarize the reports presented and will produce the overall quality evaluation reports which will be approved by the MC/GA. Main findings of these reports will be discussed at regular consortium meetings.

- *8.5.2 Quality control of project deliverables*

Under PILLAR-Robots three types of deliverables will be produced:

- Reports;
- Demonstrators;
- Ethics.

All types of deliverables will prove the successful implementation of PILLAR-Robots therefore it is important to produce them with high quality, comprising content and design.

- *8.5.2.1 Deliverable design*

PILLAR-Robots deliverables should follow the template provided on the TEAMS platform, in the Templates folder.

- *8.5.2.2 Deliverable content*

The content of each deliverable depends on the type of information it is presenting. All partners involved should preliminarily agree on the content and the structure of the deliverable they are contributing to. The content of each deliverable produced under PILLAR-Robots should be of the highest quality in terms of relevance, significance, integrity, exactness.

- *8.5.2.3 Deliverable's format*

PILLAR-Robots deliverables will be produced in Microsoft Word Online. Each version will be circulated within the consortium, by using the TEAMS platform. This will ease the review process and improve collaborative work as all changes/modifications on a version will be done in real-time, allowing multiple partners to work simultaneously on a document.

Once a version is uploaded, the Editor must inform the partners involved in the process and ensure that they will be making changes on the document in the “Reviewing” mode in order to have all changes visible.

The Project Coordinator will send the final version of each deliverable as a PDF file. The PDF version of each deliverable will be made available to all partners on the TEAMS platform and will be used in the reporting process to the European Commission.

- *8.5.2.4 Deliverable's elaboration procedure and timing*

For all PILLAR-Robots deliverables the following procedure should be implemented:

At least 15 days from the task start the partner responsible for the respective deliverable will propose a calendar of development to the other partners involved in the deliverable.

Based on the defined milestones proposed deliverable development, authors will start writing a first version of a given deliverable and all partners contributing will send to the responsible partner their contributions. The responsible partner will carry out all internal consultations on the content and its revisions with the partners involved. Once the internal version is finalised, the deliverable will go to the next stage of be externally reviewed. The WP Leader and the Project Coordinator will review the deliverable and will provide the feedback to the responsible partner in order to address the comments. After external review is finalised, the responsible partner will provide the final version of the deliverable. The Project Coordinator will be responsible for the submission to Commission of the final version of the Deliverable.

For a smooth submission of the deliverables, the following steps will be followed:

- *8.5.2.4.1 Defining roles*

Defining the Editor and Reviewers roles is a TO DO for each Task Leader, also involving the WP Leader at the beginning of each task. If any unexpected change of roles during the writing of a deliverable is needed, it must be communicated and agreed upon with the Project Coordinator.

EDITOR

Every Task Leader must define an Editor for each of the deliverables produced within the task. The Editor will be the person leading the writing of each deliverable. They must act as the main point of contact for the assigned deliverable. The Task leader would act as Editor as well often, but it is not mandatory. The editor will appoint Author/s, Contributor/s and a Reviewer, at start-up of the deliverable development process.

AUTHOR/S:

All the project participants that are directly involved in the writing of the different versions of a deliverable. Author/s will collect contributions from partners and integrate them into a coherent whole.

CONTRIBUTORS

All the project participants that have contributed to the writing of each version of the deliverable. This field is meant to be completed after each deliverable version is submitted.

REVIEWERS

The Reviewer will not be directly involved in the Task where this deliverable pertains; acting as external reader. The Reviewer must be able to provide a neutral view of the deliverable. The responsibilities of the Reviewer are:

- Agree on the review deadlines with the editor before starting the review work;
- Review the document on the specific aspects agreed with the Editor;
- Agree on the way to provide feedback;
- Come up with constructive suggestions for improvement;
- Provide written comments directly in the document, using “insert comment” and/or “track changes” where applicable. In either case, reviewed document must be uploaded as a new item to the folder provided by the editor;
- Notify the editor when done;
- Discuss with the editor the review comments given, and make sure that the editor documents how the comments are dealt with and can argue convincingly if the editor chooses to discard review suggestions.

For a certain number of key deliverables, members of the Advisory Board will act as additional reviewers.

- *8.5.2.4.2 Defining milestones, document status and reviews*

The Editor must be responsible of updating the status of the document by indicating which was the last milestone reached. The document status will be automatically changed once a new milestone is selected.

The Editor (with the overview of Task Leader, WP leader and Project Coordination supervision) must define specific due dates for each of the deliverable’s milestones, by indicating how many days each one of them will last. The deadlines will be automatically calculated in relation with the due date for

the structure of the document being proposed, also defined by the Editor. All due dates must be added within 15 days from the start of the task associated with a deliverable.

The milestones that all documents should reach are:

- **Not started** – no work has been done yet on this deliverable;
- **Start** – The Editor (and contributors) is working in configuring a Structure for the deliverable. The Structure might also contain instructions on which partners must be involved in completing each section of the deliverable;
- **Structure proposed** – The Editor and author/s have reached an agreement on the document Structure. There has been a consensus and now the Structure is ready to be reviewed;
- **Structure approved** – The Contributor/s and Reviewer/s of the document have provided their feedback on the Structure. The next stage of the document writing (the drafting of the first version of the document) must address any modification proposed by the deliverable Reviewer;
- **Internal version proposed** – The Author/s considers that the first draft of the document is ready for contributions;
- **Internal version approved** – The Contributor/s have provided feedback by means of comments in the draft and the Reviewer/s have completed the review of the document. If any necessary major changes have been detected, this must be addressed before considering the Internal version approved;
- **External version proposed** – The Editor considers that the document is ready for its delivery. All comments from previous reviews should have been resolved before considering the External version ready for review;
- **External version approved** – The Reviewer consider that the document is ready for its delivery. Any last changes to the document should have been done before considering the External version ready;
- **Final version approved** – The Project Coordinator must conduct a final review of the document before considering it ready to submit it to the EC;
- **Pre-delivery** – Short grace period where any partner is welcome to suggest any last-minute change, that will only be accepted with previous approval of the MC/GA;
- **Delivered** – The document is uploaded by the Project Coordinator to the Participant Portal;
- **EC Approved/EC Rejected.**

Milestone	Status
Not started	–
Start	Defining deliverable Structure
Structure proposed	Reviewing deliverable Structure
Structure approved	Writing Internal version of the deliverable
Internal version proposed	Reviewing Internal version of the deliverable
Internal version approved	Writing External version of the deliverable
External version proposed	Reviewing External version of the deliverable
External version approved	Reviewing Final version of the deliverable
Final version approved	Document ready for Consortium last comments
Pre-delivery	Document ready for Delivery
Delivered	Delivered
EC Approved	Approved
EC Rejected	Rejected

Table 1 - Correspondence between milestones and status

- **8.5.2.5 Information on EU funding**

In compliance with Article 29.4. of the Grant Agreement, PILLAR-Robots dissemination and communication deliverables must display the EU emblem and include a text. The following one will be used: *“This project has received funding from the European Union’s Horizon Europe research and innovation programme under grant agreement no. 101070381”*.

- **8.5.2.6 Disclaimer excluding the European Commission responsibility**

In compliance with Article 17.3. of the Grant Agreement any dissemination or communication deliverable must indicate that it reflects only the author’s view, and that the European Commission is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information it contains: *“Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Commission. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.”*

- **8.6 Quality assurance and control of demonstrators delivered**

The main objective of the overall quality of the demonstrators (architecture, software) delivered is to ensure fairness and functionality according to the requirements, following characteristics such as suitability, usability, performance efficiency and security.

Methodology to be used will be established by the IT Standards Committee and will be done according with industry best practices.

To ensure a high level of quality control on demonstrators, assurance will take place across all the technical WPs of the project; however, relevance will be intensified in WPs 6 to 9.

- **8.7 Quality assurance of project reporting**

The project reporting is the procedure used by the European Commission to assess and follow up the financed project. Therefore, it is important for the Consortium as it conditions in a direct way the good image and good assessment of the project by the EC.

It is crucial to remark that the project is under the responsibility of the whole Consortium and every partner is involved in it. UDC, as project coordinator, is responsible for gathering the information and reports from the different partners, monitoring and controlling the overall progress and for consolidating the reports before sending them to the European Commission.

- **8.7.1 Interim & final technical report**

During the PILLAR-Robots project, all contractual reports shall be submitted to the European Commission in English. Those reports are in the responsibility of the project coordinator, but all the partners are responsible to send required information in the mentioned deadline.

- **8.7.3 Parts of the EC reporting**

The periodic report consists of two parts, the Technical Report and Financial Report.

The Technical Report is itself also divided in two parts, Parts A and B:

- Part A: contains the structured tables with project information (retrieved from the Grant Management System).
- Part B (the narrative part): mirrors the application form and requires the participants to report on differences (delays, work not implemented, new subcontracts, budget overruns etc.) It must be uploaded as PDF document.

The Financial Report consists of the structured individual and consolidated Financial Statements (retrieved from the Grant Management System). In addition, most programmes require either a detailed cost reporting table (Excel table) or the use of resources report (online wizard) and, for payments above a certain thresholds, a certificate on the financial statements (CFS).

- **2.7.2 Internal financial and technical report**

As agreed in the Kick-off Meeting, the project partners will send to the Project Coordinator a form with their contribution to the Evaluation Reports (financial and technical) the month before the end of each reporting period. This report will follow the EC contractual report's structure, in order to facilitate regular monitoring of the project and also help partners in preparing the contractual reports.

In this internal reporting, an explanation of the work carried per WP and the deviations from Annex 1 and Annex 2 will be requested. Also, a set of qualitative and quantitative indicators for each work package will be available in order to further control the gap between expected results and current actions.

- **8.8 Quality audits**

An increased understanding with respect to the weaknesses and success factors has a significant contribution on both the prevention of the ensuing problems and a series of improvements that translate into an increased quality of the envisaged results.

The conclusions of Quality Assurance activities entail a full commitment to constantly assess the factors influencing quality levels, as illustrated through relevant metrics. The goal of a quality Improvement process is precisely to enhance quality by implementing evidence-based changes to procedures. The Project Coordinator and the Project Manager will conduct internal audits following a request from the MC/GA. They shall create an audit plan that includes the following items:

- The objective of the audit;
- A list of relevant documents and information repositories that will be used as input material for the audit;

Figure 2 - PILLAR-Robots' risk management process

• 9.2 Responsible bodies

The Project Manager will carry out constant monitoring and control of the risk management plan, and actively communicate with the MC/GA. This involves identifying project risks and assessing their probability and the nature of the consequences, should the risk be incurred. If the risk level is considered high, changes in project planning may be necessary.

The consortium will carry out reviews of the Risk Management Plan over the period of PILLAR-Robots implementation. Internal risk evaluation reviews will take place in months 12, 30 and 48 of the project, which will be submitted to the EC.

Internal reporting will be preparatory and previous to the compulsory EC Reporting, according to the following calendar:

Reporting periods #	Period	Deadline external EC reporting	Deadline internal reporting
1	M1 – M12	M14	M12
2	M13 – M30	M32	M30
3	M31 - M48	M50	M48

• 9.3 Risk Identification and Management at Work Package/Task level

A risk is the product of the probability of an event happening, and its consequences. The impact can be either positive or negative. In the context of PILLAR-Robots and this document, we are essentially concerned with the possibility and the approach to be applied to negative events, so risk is defined as an uncertain future event that will prohibit the project from achieving its goals and objectives within cost, schedule, and performance constraints.

Description of risk (Probability/Impact)	WP	Proposed risk-mitigation measures
R01. Low performance of perception modules due to insufficient data (Low/Medium)	WP2	Modern deep learning approaches require considerable amount of training data: Extra effort would be put on data acquisition and annotation from the application scenarios.
R02. Difficulty to develop a robust autonomous dynamical balancing between motivations in the goal-selector module and between modules in the overall motivational engine. (Medium/Medium)	WP3, WP5	First hand-crafted versions of the mechanisms (even if they lack dynamic tuning) should be sufficient for implementation of modules in the cognitive architecture to be tested both in laboratory and application scenarios
R03. Possible uncontrolled generation of non-useful goals and skills: difficulty in using purpose to limit the autonomous discovery/generation of new goals (Low/High)	WP3, WP5, WP6-9	Even if this would represent a substantial downsizing of the main hypothesis of the project, the literature (e.g. [48]) will help in using strategies to prune goals (and the related skills) when not used to generate other

		goals/skills, or to solve extrinsic/user tasks, or detrimental for robot/objects/people.
R04. Too large number of interactions required to discover appropriate representations and the corresponding models during the developmental phase (High/Medium)	WP4	Combination of data augmentation methods with data generated in simulation and pretrained networks
R05. Difficulty to discover policies satisfying a purpose (Medium/Medium)	WP4	Dedicated request from the robot to ask the user for more details to help the search
R06. Lack of integration among components and subsystems (Medium/High)	WP5	All partners commit significant resources to the integration work in the specific WP devoted to it. Moreover, in the project we will adopt agile development methodology and continuous integration.
R07. Low performance of perception modules due to different sensor specifications across robots (Low/Medium)	WP6-9	Low-level perception can be affected by the sensors (e.g., camera specifications): Either a common sensory system across robots would be assumed or extra effort would be put on low-level vision tasks.
R08. Insufficient technological & societal validation; need a further, more complete validation (Low/High)	WP6-10	An extensive set of validation actions are planned, both quantitative and qualitative.
R09. Inability to motivate early adopters of the proposed cognitive architecture & applications (Medium/High)	WP11	Dissemination of PILLAR-Robots capabilities will start from the beginning of the project and networking with the scientific community will be crucial in attracting interest
R10. Stakeholders and early adopters fail to appreciate productivity gains and usability (Medium/High)	WP11	This risk is mitigated by focusing on industry-led research and realistic use cases to make sure to have the right focus from the beginning of the project. In addition, products are evaluated in a number of iterations, with constant feedback in order to ensure the best possible market focus.
R11. Delayed tasks/deliverables (Low/Medium)	All	WP leaders will undertake a self-assessment of the WP progress every 3 months. The coordinator will oversee this activity to ensure that is carried out. It will also evaluate the results of self-assessment to identify potentially problematic tasks or milestones, which might require corrective action.
R12. Loss of focus on vision, objectives and deliverables (Low/High)	All	Reassess project objectives, status, and resources regularly within the Management Committee Frequent communication of progress and results within the consortium. If needed, Management Committee decision for reassignment of tasks/subtasks and effort re-allocation. Negotiation with EC for possible Amendment

Table 2 - Initial risk identified in the Consortium Plan

Moving further, during the first three months of the project implementation, the Project Coordinator along with the Work Package and task leaders have worked in the identification and evaluation of novel risks of each task and work package. In order to offer continuity to the overall process, the same approach was used by categorizing the risks using the scoring based on their probability of occurrence and their impact.

Risks are in continuous evolution and updates will be made during the project lifetime as risk unveil in the development/testing/demonstration process.

10. Conclusions

This document presented the PILLAR-Robots project Quality and Risk Management plan outlining key information related to:

- Quality policies and procedures that shall be implemented by all partners in the consortium to ensure quality level for all project documentation and results;
- The anticipated risks that the project could be confronted with and corresponding mitigation measures to control negative effects to the overall project.

The Quality and Risk Management Plan will be used by all partners and will be regularly reviewed and updated throughout the project lifetime.



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