Initial mission
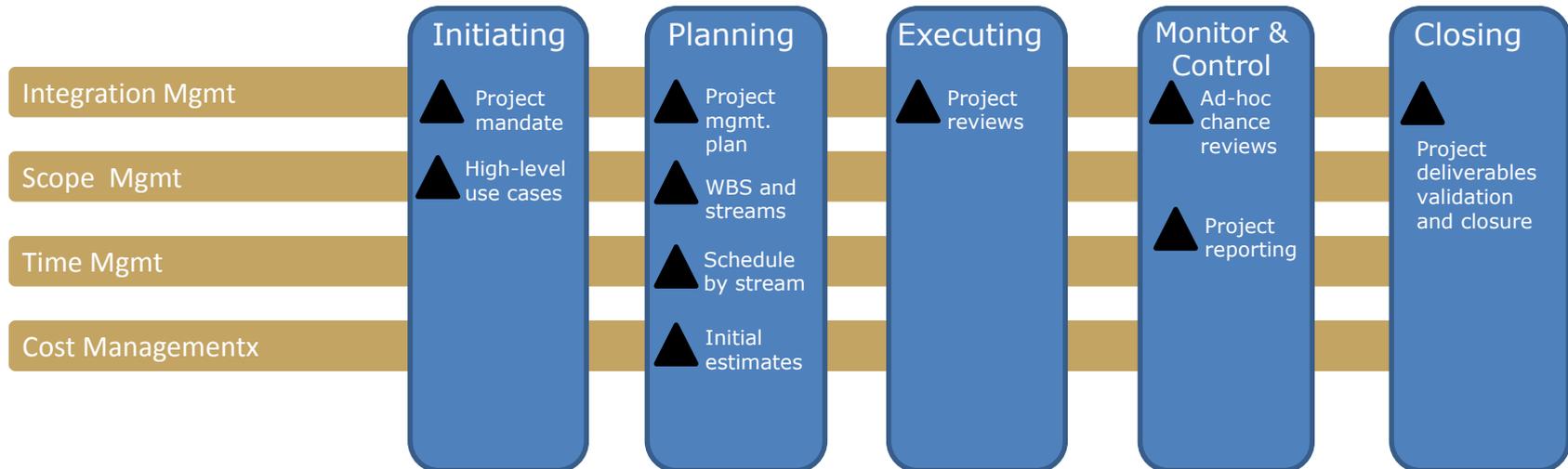
► Create a **collaborative portal** to enable European interjurisdictional cooperation

► The platform had to be **evolutive**

► Has to be delivered within a **7-month period**, on the 3rd of January 2018

► The new portal would combine **two data sources** → the ECJ's internal documents and metadata and certain data from EUR-LEX (not defined at the time)

► Project was not planned on the budget year's execution plan so it started with a small budget and a very small team

► Had to be multilingual, interface and data should be displayed on **all EU languages**

Initial mission

Project approach… to live to tell the story

- Standard Project Management Lifecycle approach, PM² Framework driven, highly customized Lean approach using streams

	Initiating	Planning	Executing	Monitor & Control	Closing
Integration Mgmt	▲ Project mandate	▲ Project mgmt. plan	▲ Project reviews	▲ Ad-hoc chance reviews	▲
Scope Mgmt	▲ High-level use cases	▲ WBS and streams			Project deliverables validation and closure
Time Mgmt		▲ Schedule by stream		▲ Project reporting	
Cost Managementx		▲ Initial estimates			

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Project approach - streams

Product functions
- Search
- Calendar
- Static content
- Decentralized user management
- EUR-LEX search
- Video streaming
- Use cases – high level
- Use cases - detailed

Visual Identity and layout
- Model
- Layout production
- Approval
- Implementation

Data acquisition
- Data model definition
- Production
- Integration and test
- Automation

Development
- Plans
- Specifications
- Config management
- Tests
- Security
- Data models
- Delivery

Hosting
- Specifications
- Environment topology
- Environment initial setup
- Environment adaptations
- Testing
- Load balancer configuration
- Security tests @EC
- CERT testing

Rollout planning
- Final configuration
- Production data export and import
- Final sanity checks
- License setup
- User creation
- Communication (written letters)

Translations
- Identify areas to translate
- Create master data
- Data export
- Establish operational mode
- Meetings with translators (23 languages)
- 1to1 sessions with translators
- Breakdown of translation items in subsets
- Data aggregation in 23 languages
- Translation coherence tests

Licensing
- Contractual aspects
- Administrative file
- Budget acquisition
- Asset creation
- License generation

Procurement
- Contractual setup
- Creation of statements of work
- Budget negotiations
- Contractual regular follow-up

User guides
- Design of functionalities to cover
- External contracting
- Guide tailoring to allow easier translating
- Reviews with key stakeholders
- Translation on all languages
- Iterative corrections
- Creation of scripts for videos
- Creation of videos based on scripts

Project setup

- **Small team** which already delivered projects using a similar technology e.g. the ECJ's Curia website
- **Strong mandate** was asked for and delivered from the beginning with a very strong sponsor, ECJ's President
- ECJ Delivery **team composition has been highly selective** and included key stakeholders from main services involved, highly empowered (champions)
- Development was done using two **Fixed Price contracts** with clearly identified deliverables
- **Budgetary constraints** have been managed since Day 1

Challenges

- ► **Service alignment** → being a very transverse project, not all services were aligned or prepared for the work to come
- ► **Complexity** → once the use cases have been defined and the website layout came to fruition, we realized the task was much more complex then initially laid out
- ► **Data architecture complexity** → highly complex, undocumented data had to be defined (both ECJ and EUR-LEX), properly scoped, integrated in SOW, developed upon, tested
- ► Extremely **aggressive planning** and a project which started beginning of summer (…holiday period) ☀
- ► **External hosting** using @EC hosting with different standards
- ► Highly **complex data export** from ECJ's own systems and development against EUR-LEX webservices and SparQL backend

Challenges… continued

► **Budget** had to be secured, which wasn't the case at the beginning

► **Multilingualism** → all data had to be fetched in all available languages

► **Search** → before we knew it, the collaborative portal turned into a highly complex judicial search engine

► **Testing** → a test team was needed to tackle the needed complexity

► ECJ IT **internal changes** → structural changes were ongoing

► Highly **visible** → the President's and the Registrar's staff were regularly informed of the project progress and shown great interest

► **Translations** → usage of translation resources required training, close and an incredible amount of micro-management

► **Holidays** → the team members had planned holidays (and enjoyed them) ☺

Responses to challenges

Responses to challenges

- **Avoidance** of typical project management **pitfalls** such as Scope creep, shifting deadlines and failing to communicate (transparence is key)
- Creation of a **super-team of "champions"** instead of a typical "project core team" with sometimes flat response to challenges
- Usage, whenever possible, of **proven approaches**
- **Involvement** of additional services whenever needed, **delegation**
- Built **strong partnerships** with key stakeholders and services
- Adapted **communication** to a **highly efficient** one, while maintaining adequate levels of hierarchical information dissemination
- Identified, engaged and relied on **key facilitators** whenever needed to get things done (mainly Heads of Units)
- **Challenged** status quos "day in, day out" in a non-conflictive way

Key takeaways

Key takeaways (before holidays ☺)

► **Close collaboration** between various services and creation of strong partnerships helped a lot

► **Team engagement**, dedication and sharing of a vision of an improved judicial cooperation between ECJ and member states was a strong driver throughout the whole project duration

► **Personal dedication** and involvement of each team member played a key role in a flat project team setup (all were colleagues regardless of grades, roles, functions)

► **Strong sponsorship and servant leadership**

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