

## Innovation Agent Task Force

### Participating organisations:

Responsible Project Partner	ISCN (author, manager task force) Dr Richard Messnarz Damjan Ekert	Contributing Project Partners	EuroSPI (co-author, manager task force) Laura Aschbacher  TRIEME partners as members in task force: ASA, TU Graz, Intertrade, CETTI
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### Geographical scope:

Based on the job role innovation agent and the new innovation assessment model developed for ISO 5600x innovation management system assessment a framework for a task force has been created and signed so far by 34 experts from 22 countries.

Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Egypt, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Japan, Latvia, Netherlands, Nigeria, North America, Romania, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, UK, joined already.

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### Target group(s)

Innovation agents

Innovation assessors applying the ISO 5600x series innovation assessment method

An expert panel that reviews and manages the skills and training program for an innovation agent and an ISO 5600x innovation (benchmarking) assessor.

### Summary/short description:

In the EU blueprint project FLAMENCO services for re-skilling the automotive and IT industry are established in cooperation with the Automotive Skills Alliance as the pact for skills partner for automotive in Europe. A task force is currently being set up to qualify innovation agents (as a job role) and provide innovation agents with a set of methods and tools. The EU project TIMS developed a set of training modules and an innovation assessment tool which has been packaged and used for the innovation agent services in the ASA.

There is a SPRINGER published white paper which describes the background of the innovation agent task force and provides an insight into the innovation assessment tool and services which are applied to support the implementation of innovation management systems. The paper also outlines the need for innovation and how the new ISO 56000 norm series for innovation management systems has been adapted for the need of the ASA task force.

<https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-031-71142-8>

The task force scope is described in the below figure 1:

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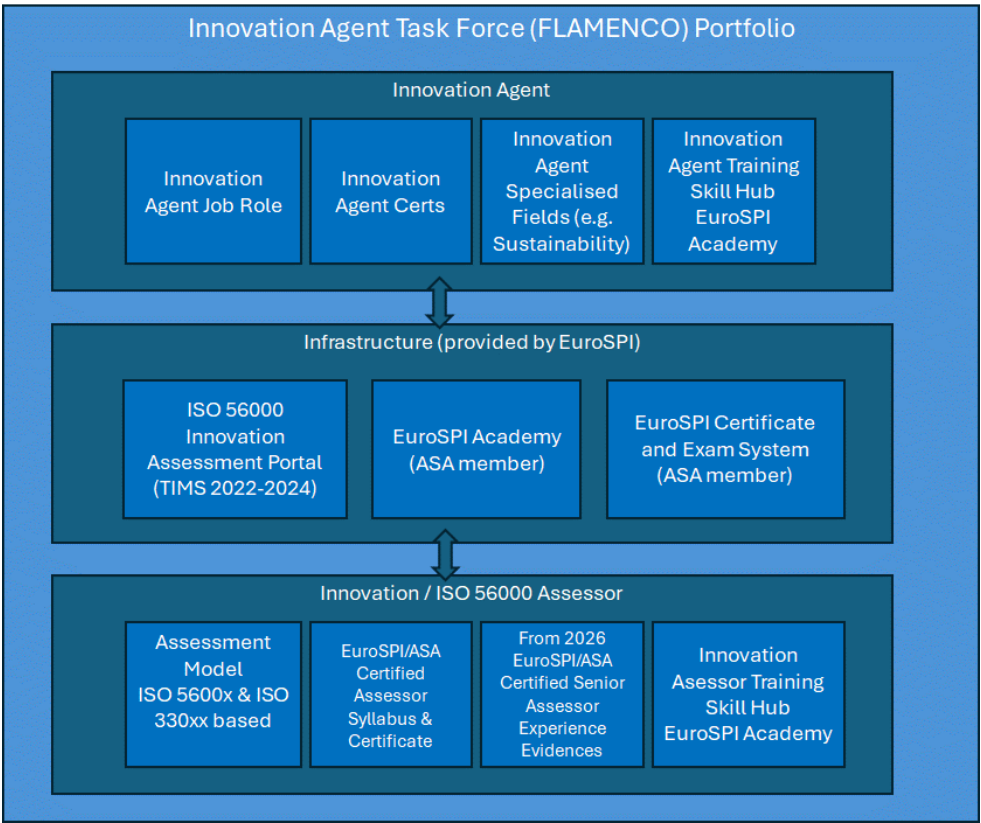


Figure 1: Innovation Agent Task Force Portfolio

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Objectives:

A standard inniovation agent task force agreement has been established and signed by so far 34 experts from 22 countries. This standard agtreement outlineres the following objectives:

See also the elaborated agreement template: *Innovation-Agent-Task-Force-Committee-Agreement-EN-v3.docx*

§2 Duties of the ASA and the task force management team EuroSPI and ISCN

ASA	EuroSPI and ISCN
<p>ASA promotes the innovation agent task force to the automotive industry in Europe. The innovation agent portfolio contains: skill set, training materials, innovation assessment portal, and related services like innovation assessments.</p> <p>ASA acts as a management board that decides in case of conflict and reviews annually the work of the task force committee.</p> <p>ASA and the management team organise quarterly meetings and distributes status reports to all innovation agent task force members.</p>	<p>EuroSPI acts as one of the independent certification bodies for the examination and certification of innovation agents. ASA promotes additional certifiers Europe wide to promote innovation agent certificates.</p> <p>ISCN developed an ISO 56000 based innovation assessment portal which is included in the innovation agent training and services. ISCN maintains that innovation assessment portal.</p> <p>EuroSPI provides exam portals and maintains the certification services at a market start up phase. It is planned to include more certifiers.</p>

<p>ASA ensures that information about actual skill set is available to all ASA members.</p> <p>ASA receives an annually updated skills set, and information about innovation assessment portal and training sets updates.</p> <p>ASA promotes the innovation agent task force on the ASA web site and in flyers.</p> <p>ASA grants the innovation agent task force committee members the right to use the ASA logo in their brochures, solely for the purpose to promote the innovation agent task force.</p>	
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### §3 Duties of the Innovation Agent Task Force Committee Member

The innovation agent task force committee member can have different roles based on their existing profile:

Certifier	Training provider	Development Partner	Expert / Reviewer
<p>The certifier supports the innovation agent skills set and issues certificates based on this skills set. Additionally, developing test questions and offering an exam system are responsibilities of a certifier.</p> <p>Note: The certificates based on an exam system are provided EuroSPI.</p>	<p>The training provider mainly performs training based on the skills set and must send the innovation agent task force committee a mapping between the training materials and the skills set. Only training material, which covers the skills set can be used.</p>	<p>Development partners for: Training material, Assessment model</p> <p>Note: The assessment tool is provided by ISCN and EuroSPI.</p>	<p>Experts and Reviewers review the skills set, the assessment model, the training and other outputs.</p>

The task force committee member meets at least quarterly per year to discuss and agree updates of the skills set and the assessment model.

Clarification of the scope of work in detail – **what are core activities:**

- Updating the skills set
- Updating the elaborated assessment model
- Update exam questions pool
- Defining the course syllabus

**Case Study per focus group (Task Force - TF) / T4.4**

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- Review training material to fit with the syllabus
- Jointly promote the innovation agent qualification

Clarification of the scope of work in detail – what are sub-team activities: Sub-teams are developing materials which have commercial value, such as training material, and assessment tools. Those subgroups have the right to offer a license option for use to all members of the innovation agent task force. Task force members will have special conditions. Sub-team activities are:

- Developing training material
- Developing an exam system
- Configuring an assessment system

**Methodology:**

*This task force is based on the following working approach:*

**1. Building a critical mass of innovation experts.**

Based on 2 training events (8.5.2024, 12.6.2024) , one conference in Riga (16.5.2024) and the EuroSPI conference (4.-6.9.2024) innovation experts have been gathered and the new ISO 56000 materials, an assessment portal and the training materials have been exchanged and discussed

<https://conference.eurospi.net/index.php/en/workshop?id=53>

<https://conference.eurospi.net/index.php/en/workshop?id=74>

Also the workshops on 8.5.2024 and 12.6.2024 have been configured into the innovation agent MOOC in the ASA skills hub and the participants of the workshops accessed all new materials via this ASA infrastructure.

<https://learn.skills-framework.eu/enrol/index.php?id=38>

This networking to grow the group will continue.

**2. Involving lead industry for best practice exchange.**

The assessment portal for ISO 5600x has been used in trials by leading industry and feedback was given about how to improve the assessment approach. Under FLAMENCO a MBA thesis at TU Graz has been performed (2023 – Oct 2024) to elaborate the business model for the innovation agent task force.

[https://iso56000.eurospi.net/innovation\\_bench/index.php](https://iso56000.eurospi.net/innovation_bench/index.php)

Note: While the former EU project TIMS configured the portal, FLAMENCO creates the innovation agent task force around it.

The following companies participated in the first trials and reported experiences back for the MBA thesis by Laura Aschbacher from EuroSPI reviewed and coached by TU Graz business and innovation institute:

Rheinmetall AG, <https://www.rheinmetall.com/de>

EVIDEN/ATOS, <https://eviden.com/about-us/>

Coloplast, <https://www.coloplast.com/about-coloplast/>

Turner Wright, <https://turnerwrightbio.org/>

Further trials are planned, the group will grow by experience exchange of leading industry shared with the experts panel. This knowledge will be required as an input for the automotive industry which currently undergoes dramatic changes.

### 3. Roll out of Skills, training, assessments

What is rolled out:

- Innovation agent skills set (to be updated for ISO 56000 new norm)
- Training material integration for the innovation agent
- EuroSPI / ASA Certificate for innovation agent
- First training Europe wide
- Innovation Assessment System ([https://iso56000.eurospi.net/innovation\\_bench/index.php](https://iso56000.eurospi.net/innovation_bench/index.php))
- Innovation assessor skills set
- EuroSPI / ASA Certificate for innovation assessors
- Training material integration for the innovation assessors
- Best practice list shared by leading industry participating in the trial assessments so far and in future

How it is rolled out:

- Based on ISO 5600x Assessment System Infrastructure ([https://iso56000.eurospi.net/innovation\\_bench/index.php](https://iso56000.eurospi.net/innovation_bench/index.php))
- Based on ASA Skills Hub (<https://learn.skills-framework.eu/enrol/index.php?id=38>) // Badges and EuroSPI Academy / Certificates (<https://academy.eurospi.net>)
- Based on annual innovation workshop series at EuroSPI conference (<https://conference.eurospi.net/index.php/en/workshop?id=53>)
- Set up as a task force in the EU Project FLAMENCO
- Development resources available by members of the EU project TRIREME and by the signed effort commitment as part of the signed innovation agent task force agreements
- Innovation Agent Task Force as the expert panel and distributor across Europe, as well as the innovation agent ambassadors / representatives in Europe (by 20.9.2024 – 34 experts from 22 countries)

### Activities:

*This task force has been set up in the following steps:*

### **1. Standard Agreement Establishment**

First a set of innovation workshops and conferences took place (see point 1. under methodology section).

Then based on all discussions with all participating experts a standard innovation agent task force agreement has been set up.

This included a formal agreement for joining members which outlined (See the file: Innovation-Agent-Task-Force-Committee-Agreement-EN-v3.docx)

§1 Scope of the Agreement

§2 Duties of the ASA and the task force management team EuroSPI and ISCN

§3 Duties of the Innovation Agent Task Force Committee Member

§4 Effort and ASA Commercial Flows

§5 Liability & Restrictions

§6 Changes / Duration / Cancellation

§7 Non Disclosure

§8 Law

Any new member has to sign that agreement. So far 34 experts signed the agreement. The agreement template will remain as the standard template to be used.

### **2. Scope of Work and Objective Definition for the Task Force**

Based on the discussions in the meetings with the experts, and based on the standard innovation agent task force agreement, a white paper has been written and published in the SPRINGER book series at the EuroSPI conference 2024.

- This paper then clearly outlines as a statement
- The objectives
- The approach
- The activities planned
- and with which infrastructure that will be achieved
- as well as first experiences from ISO 56000 assessments in leading industry

See also:

<https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-031-71142-8>

This white paper will be annually updated and presented annually at EuroSPI from 2024 onwards.

Based on the signed agreements (34 experts from 22 countries) and leading industry participating in ISO 56000 assessment trails and the project TRIREME that will further develop the materials after the FLAMENCO task force set up, an innovation agent kick off meeting is organised.

### **3. Work Program and Meetings**

### Case Study per focus group (Task Force - TF) / T4.4

The task force identified work packages, and sub-work packages which will be integrated and maintained to build up an innovation agent service portfolio under the ASA umbrella. See also Figure 1: Innovation Agent Task Force Portfolio in the summary section of this case study.

The Figure 2 below outlines the status of each work package which needs to be integrated to build the future innovation agent service portfolio.

**Green:** means that the work is available and can be taken as is

**Yellow:** means that there is material from a working party or project available but needs to be updated.

**Red:** means that the materials are new and need to be developed.

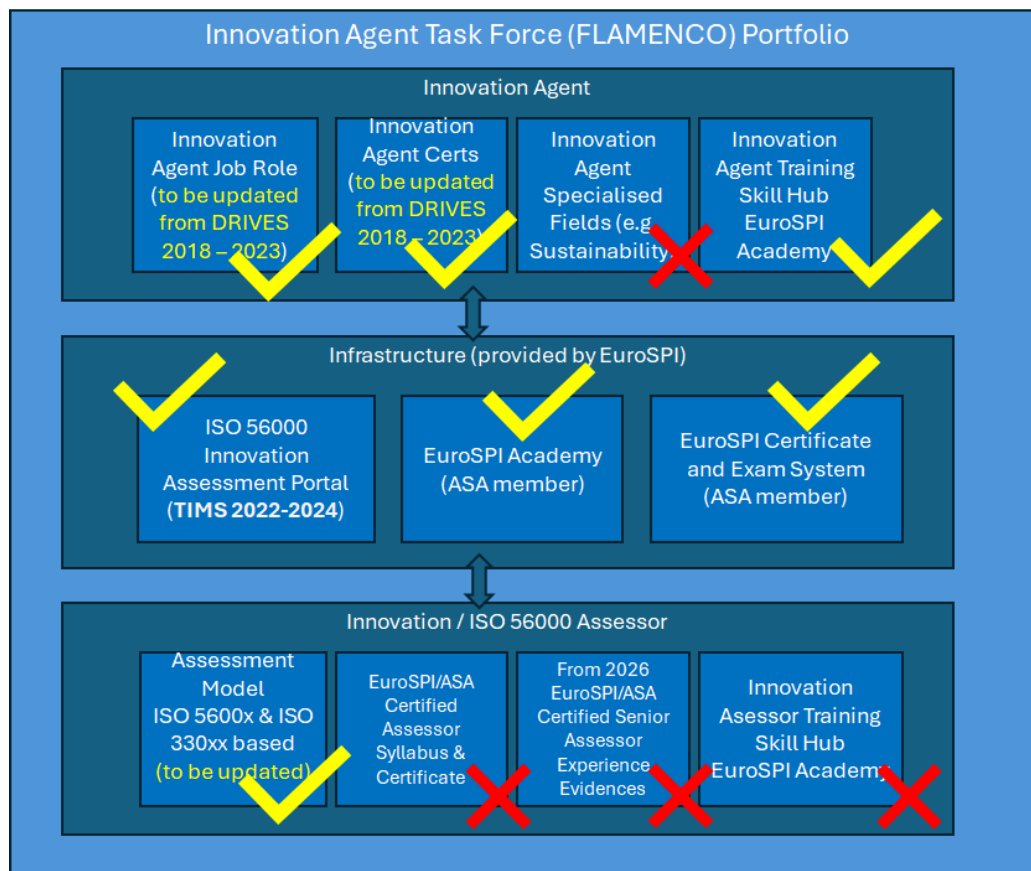


Figure 2: Work Packages based on the portfolio in Fig.1 and status for the integration work

#### Meetings:

- It started with a series of workshops (8.5.2024, 12.6.2024), an innovation conference in Riga on 16.5.2024, and the EuroSPI conference 4.-6.9.2024.
- The members (34 from 22 countries) who signed the agreement meet for the kick off in Oct/Nov 2024, a Doodle has been sent out.
- A work program has been established where members can assign themselves to work packages in the kick off.



**Case Study per focus group (Task Force - TF) / T4.4**

- Each mini-team will have its own online meetings and meet quarterly to report progress to all. The quarterly meetings are online.
- The communication is supported by a cloud, by using a joined infrastructure (ASA skills hub, EuroSPI academy, ISO 56000 assessment portal online) and meetings are done in MS Teams.
- Annually there is a gathering at the EuroSPI conference (<https://conference.eurospi.net/index.php/en/>) which can be attended onsite and online
- The overall management (see attended innovation agent task force agreement is by ISCN and EuroSPI).

**Challenges and risks:**

- The ISO 5600x innovation management standard series is brand new and some parts are still in publication. This means that the material will have to be updated along with the updates of the standard.
- To get fully recognised it will be critical to involve even more leading industry in the innovation assessment trials applying ISO 56000.
- The innovation agent task force focuses on the innovation agent skills and innovation assessor skills and in terms of the innovation assessor plans its own qualification schema. This means that it is not planned to share the innovation assessor qualification with an organisation like INTACS, an own assessor schema will be set up under the ASA umbrella. A liaison is later possible.
- It will be a challenge in 2025/2026 to apply for an ISO 330xx number for the innovation assessment model, an application to ISO is planned in cooperation with the ISO 56000 working group members.
- Note: Resources are less risk, see the section financial support. Risks are rather related to communication risks with stakeholders (see above bullet points)

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**Results / Assesed Progress**

The following results have been achieved so far:

- The innovation agent workshops have been performed and all materials published in the ASA innovation agent section of the ASA skills hub (<https://learn.skills-framework.eu/enrol/index.php?id=38> )
- Based on annual innovation workshop series at EuroSPI conference (<https://conference.eurospi.net/index.php/en/workshop?id=53>)
- An innovation agent task force white paper has been published in SPRINGER (<https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-031-71142-8>) and attached InnoAgentTaskForce-White-Paper-SPRINGER-978-3-031-71142-8\_10.pdf.
- Based on ISO 5600x Assessment System Infrastructure ([https://iso56000.eurospi.net/innovation\\_bench/index.php](https://iso56000.eurospi.net/innovation_bench/index.php)) trial assessments have been performed.
- An innovation agent task force agreement as basis for the collaboration has been developed and applied (See attached file Innovation-Agent-Task-Force-Committee-Agreement-EN-v3.doc)
- Set up as a task force in the EU Project FLAMENCO. The figure 5 above shows the current members that signed the agreement.
- The kick off takes place in Oct/Nov 2024 and the expert panel and project TRIREME partners are committed to continue with this work.



### Financial support:

#### Resources:

The established expert panel is committed to invest each 6 days effort per year, according, makes currently an expert budget of  $34 \times 6 = 204$  man days volunteer work by world wide recognised innovation experts per year.

In addition it was agreed that in the TRIREME Blurring the full innovation services will be developed (see section activities) and resources can be used in the time span 2024 – 2028.

In addition leading European industry already participates (they cover their own staff cost) in the ISO 56000 assessment trials which makes an additional volunteer work budget of significant size.

### Replication and Sustainability:

The task force is based on signed agreements and industry trial partners, plus an EU project that will continue to develop the service.

The different work packages have been grouped into work phases which can be used as a framework for an operational work plan.

Figure 4 shows the first draft phase plan, and the Figure 5 shows how the work packages are grouped into the phases.

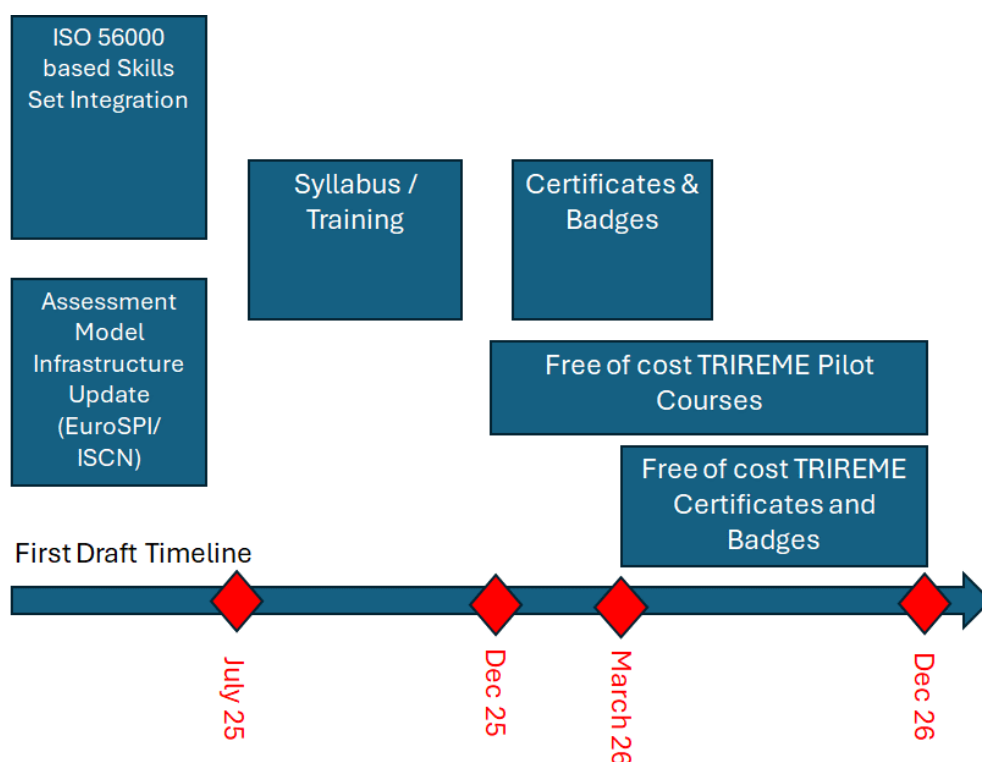


Figure 4: Draft phase plan of the innovation agent task force

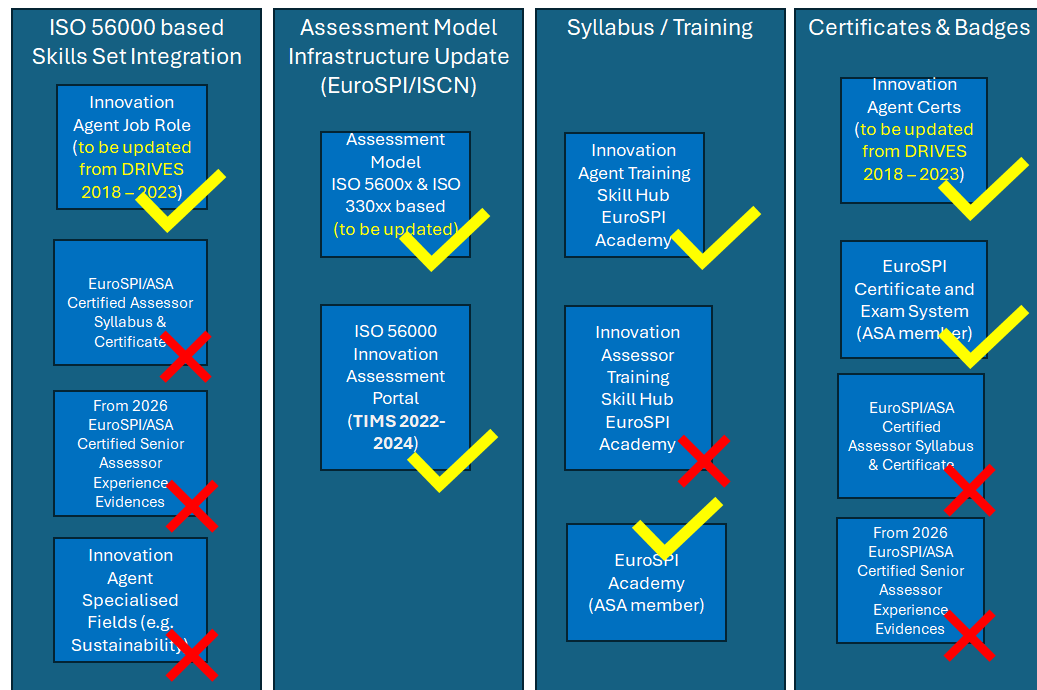


Figure 5: Work packages grouped by phases

### ASA- Automotive Skills Alliance

The role of ASA has been defined by the innovation agent task force agreement and included in the task force kick off material.

The innovation agent task force agreement includes the following:

- ASA promotes the innovation agent task force to the automotive industry in Europe. The innovation agent portfolio contains: skill set, training materials, innovation assessment portal, and related services like innovation assessments.
- ASA acts as a management board that decides in case of conflict and reviews annually the work of the task force committee.
- ASA and the management team organise quarterly meetings and distributes status reports to all innovation agent task force members.
- ASA ensures that information about actual skill set is available to all ASA members.
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- ASA promotes the innovation agent task force on the ASA web site and in flyers.
- ASA grants the innovation agent task force committee members the right to use the ASA logo in their brochures, solely for the purpose to promote the innovation agent task force.

## Further Reading and Acknowledgements:

File/Link	Description
InnoAgentTaskForce-White-Paper-SPRINGER-978-3-031-71142-8_10.pdf, and <a href="https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-031-71142-8">https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-031-71142-8</a>	Innovation Agent Task Force White Paper
<a href="https://iso56000.eurospi.net/innovation_bench/index.php">https://iso56000.eurospi.net/innovation_bench/index.php</a>	ISO 56000 Assessment Portal
<a href="https://learn.skills-framework.eu/enrol/index.php?id=38">https://learn.skills-framework.eu/enrol/index.php?id=38</a>	Innovation Agent in ASA Skills Hub – updated for the workshops to build the critical mass