



ASK THE PPM

Ask the Project Manager: Mario Protulipac, using P3.express to roll out hybrid working in a national health insurance fund

Mario Protulipac is a project management trainer and consultant who has worked with public-sector organisations for several years and produced one of the national-language translations of the P3.express manual. In this interview, he describes how a large national health insurance fund used P3.express to structure its first formal project: the rollout of hybrid working across its offices under the NextGenerationEU recovery programme.

Mario, thank you for joining us. Can you tell us about the organization and the project?

It is a national social health insurance fund, one of the larger public institutions in the country, with a central directorate, around twenty branch offices, and roughly 2,500 employees. It collects the country's compulsory health contributions and funds medicines and health services, so it is the main source of health financing for the population.

The project was the introduction of hybrid working. Under the NextGenerationEU recovery programme, the government funded public bodies to become more resilient to crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic, and the Fund used that

mandate to let staff work both on site and from home, where before they had only worked from their official offices. In practice, that meant equipment, secure remote access to the Fund's internal systems, and a phased plan. The first phase covered about 110 staff, with the central directorate and one of the northern branch offices as the pilot sites.

This was not a small trial to test the method. It was a real, substantial programme in an institution with strong governance and many departments, so the method had to carry real weight.

What made you choose P3.express for a project of that size, especially as a first attempt?

The people running the project were not project managers by profession, so they needed a method they could pick up quickly. The Fund did not usually run projects with a defined method at all, and this was its first structured attempt.

P3.express is minimalist, it works step by step, and it is built around a small set of clear artefacts, which made it approachable for a team meeting structured project management for the first time. The open Creative Commons licence also mattered: I was free to adapt it as needed, and I had already produced the translation of the manual into the local language, so the language was ready for the team.

We had worked together on project management training for several years before this, so there was already trust in place when the Fund's PMO lead proposed using the method.

What has the Fund gained from working this way?

The clearest benefit has been shared visibility. A



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large number of internal stakeholders now hold the big picture of the whole process and of how decisions are made. I have seen a marked improvement in how the teams work together and reach decisions, with departments cooperating directly rather than routing every choice to a senior director. For me, that is the real value of the implementation.

The artefacts carry that change. They are simple, but I would call them strong. The project description, the deliverables map, the Follow-Up Register, and the Health Register give the monthly meetings a clear shape, and the PMO and working group are now closely involved in delivery. When a practical constraint came up during the rollout, the team logged it in the Follow-Up Register, weighed the options together, and recorded the decision, which is exactly what the register is for.

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The clearest benefit has been shared visibility of the system

How did the team come to accept a new method?

Acceptance came from seeing the structure work. Some team members were unsure what to expect at the start. By the second, third, and fourth meetings, once the processes and activities were visible and running, the team had taken it on. The visual structure is a very strong argument for P3.express. For people who manage projects alongside their other responsibilities, that clarity is the point.

You mentioned a PMO lead. How important was that person to the outcome?

Very important. Much of this rested on having a clear champion. The Fund's PMO lead had taken part in all of the earlier training, proposed the pilot, coordinated the activities, and acted as project manager throughout. Having the same person serve as both PMO lead and project manager is not the usual arrangement, but here it worked well and helped the team take up the method easily.

Where does the Fund plan to take this next?

It is still piloting and is now preparing its monitoring reports, and that work is going well. The plan is to apply P3.express across the Fund's other internal projects, of which there are around 50 to 55 a year. As the Fund develops its portfolio management and brings its projects into a single view, this programme is the first it has run with a defined project management method, and it is the basis for wider use across the institution.

Thanks a lot for your time, Mario!