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## **Deliverable 5.1**

### **Dissemination and Exploitation Plan**

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviation/Acronym	Meaning
DP-EAB	Data Protection and Ethics Advisory Board
EC	European Commission
EDC	Exploitation and Dissemination Committee
EDP	Exploitation and Dissemination Plan
ESR	Early-stage researchers
GA	General Assembly
GrA	Grant Agreement
ITM	Institute of Tropical Medicine
KPI	Key performance indicators
OA	Open Access
TU	Trnavska Univerzita v Trnave
UP	Universidade do Porto
UPM	Universidad Politécnica de Madrid
USN	Universitete i Sorost-Norge
UTH	University of Thessaly
WP	Work package



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The main objective of the unCoVer Dissemination and Exploitation Plan is to ensure that the project's results and outputs can be widely disseminated to the designated and appropriate target groups communities (health professionals, scientists, policy-makers, general public and other stakeholders including pan-European infrastructures and Research Organisations). This communication should take place at appropriate times throughout the lifetime of the project and specifically at key milestones. It is also designed so that all the key stakeholders, including those that can contribute to the development, evaluation and benefit from unCoVer outputs can be identified, reached and encouraged to participate.

During the project, this Dissemination and Exploitation Plan will be a dynamic document that will be updated and adapted depending on the progress and evolution of the project and incorporating the feedback of the community and project office.



## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Objectives, scope and content of the Deliverable

This deliverable compiles and presents the strategies and activities regarding the communication, dissemination and exploitation plans for the unCoVer project. It takes into account the preliminary information presented in the project proposal, which has since then been adapted according to the changing social, scientific and project execution conditions, as well as the activities already developed in the first months of the project.

In the present deliverable, the following topics are to be addressed:

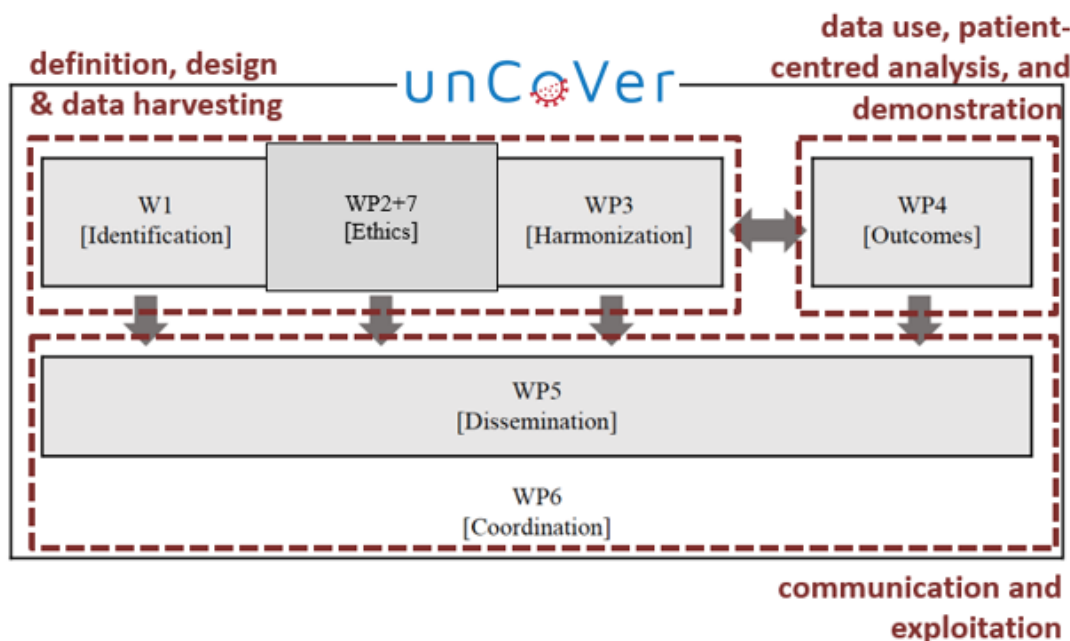
- The strategy and implementation timeline for the communication and dissemination activities;
- The key stakeholders to be targeted by the communication and dissemination activities;
- The channels identified as strategic and adequate to achieve the intended impact in the multiple areas and target audiences of the project;
- The Key Performance Indicators (KPI) that will be used to assess the degree of penetration and success of the disclosed objectives;
- The exploitation philosophy for unCoVer, focusing not only the global intended impacts for the project but also taking into consideration the individual expectations of the partners.

Given the particular nature of unCoVer, a data-driven initiative to fully use the capacity of real-world data towards positive health impacts, to be able to communicate and disseminate the knowledge produced is, in itself, an iteration of exploitation. In fact, if the project succeeds in delivery evidence-based data to key stakeholders such as other scientists, decision bodies, policy-makers and overall society, then it has succeeded in its pivotal objective of making sure that our knowledge on COVID-19 makes use of all the data available.



## 1.2 (Inter) connection of communication and dissemination activities with other activities in the project

Notwithstanding the fact the dissemination and communication strategies are fully supported by a dedicated Work Package (WP5 - Communication, Exploitation and Dissemination), these activities are horizontal in the project and span the work of WP1, WP2, WP3, WP4, WP6 and WP7, as it can be seen in Figure 1.



**Figure 1.** Connection of the dedicated Dissemination WP5 to the other WPs in the project

Apart from the dedicated WP5, an Exploitation and Dissemination Committee (EDC) has also been created. This committee, which includes 12 members from 7 different partners, has the responsibility of overseeing, planning and organizing the multiple communication, dissemination and exploitation activities in the project, by its initiative or suggestion of the partners.

The composition of the EDC can be seen in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Composition of the EDC

No.	Partner	Partner Contact(s)
1	ITM	José L. Peñalvo Gloria Soriano Louise O’Connor (Communication expert)
3	UPM	Ernestina Menasalvas Alejandro Rodríguez González (Communication expert)





5	UP	David Pereira Tiago Pinto (Communication expert)
12	TU	Marek Majdan
16	UTH	Polychronis Kostoulas
17	USN	Jorn Klein Knut Jul Meland (Communication expert)
19	Sciensano	Miriam Saso

## 2. COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

### 2.1 Goals and objectives

The main priorities of the unCoVer Exploitation and Dissemination Plan (EDP) are:

- To identify and pursue opportunities to disseminate and circulate information on the evolution of the project and its adherence to the overall objectives;
- To clearly identify channels, methods and messages to reach, engage and trigger engaging with stakeholders.

### 2.2 Target audiences

The unCoVer consortium shares the vision of disseminating project results to their maximum visibility requires a throughout identification of all the different types of audience thus maximizing the reach of message to be communicated and hence the attainment of the project's objectives.

Given the complexity of the technical results that will be generated throughout the project, it is pivotal to correctly segment the target audience in order to properly adjust the message and chose the adequate channels later on. Table 2 summarizes the groups targeted by unCoVer's initiatives and how such targets will be reached.

**Table 2.** Identification of the multiple targets of unCoVer dissemination, the rational for their identification and the activities planned.

To Whom	Why?	How?
Scientists	unCoVer will use real-world data to create new models, mostly based in ML, to shed a new light in COVID-19, not only in regards to other diseases but also efficacy of treatments. As so, the tools developed and conclusions	Scientific publications; datasets; interactive graphics; communications in conferences; website; newsletter

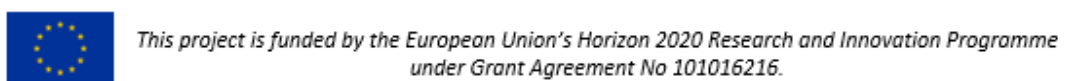


	reached will be of interest to other researchers.	
Other EU projects	There are several EU projects that share the aim to use data towards evidence-based decisions. Some of these projects target COVID-19 specifically, thus being within the scope of unCoVer.	Co-organization of dissemination events; discussion between Assembly Generals in order to avoid duplication of efforts; website; newsletter
Policy-makers	The results generated in the framework of unCoVer can be pivotal to guide public health decisions.	Seminars; Technical workshops
General public	unCoVer results are of interest to the general public, as they will be reliable, evidence-based and with significant detail.	Website, social media, general press, videos, newsletter
Patient associations and clinicians	Given the foreseen impact of unCoVer's results, patients and clinicians are identified as end-users that can benefit from these data-oriented results.	Seminars, lectures, dissemination of informative material available at the project's website

### 2.3 Graphic identity

Early on in the project, the graphic identity that identifies unCoVer was created and is intended to be used in all communication and dissemination activities.

In compliance to European Commission (EC) guidelines, all dissemination materials issued by the project include the necessary information and graphic identity of the funding entity, as reproduced in Figure 2.

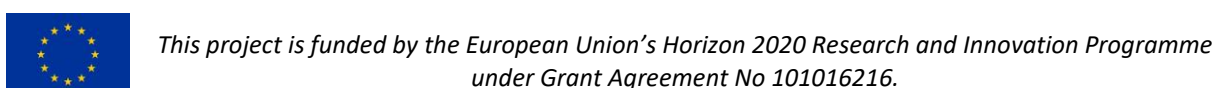


*Figure 2. Information regarding funding source and Grant Agreement number included in all documents of the project*

#### 2.3.1 Logo

The project logo can be seen in Figure 3. Alternative logos, based in the same matrix were also created to be used in different situations, such as darker backgrounds.

These logos are to be used in all activities, channels and materials, such as the website, deliverables, technical documents, guidelines and social media.





*Figure 3. Logo for the unCoVer project and its variations.*

### 2.3.2. Templates

In order to unify the contents generated and presented by the different partners in their dissemination activities (e.g.: lectures, seminars, public presentations), a PowerPoint template will be created.

All partners will have access to these resources in the project's intranet folder, being readily available to use in the several communication and dissemination activities they take part in.

### 2.3.3 Resources

All the communication materials are accessible to all partners in the project's internal file sharing framework. This includes all logos for print or web materials as well editable files of all materials. Additionally, a dedicated document, the Logo Identity Guidelines, was also produced and is available to all partners.

## 3. DISSEMINATION AND EXPLOITATION PLAN: FOSTERING UNCOVER RESULTS FOR REAL-WORLD DECISIONS

### 3.1. Scientific Publications

Given the high degree of innovation involved in the framework of unCoVer's activities, as well as the high interest in COVID-19 nowadays, several scientific publications are expected to be produced and published. These publications intend to reach other scientists and contribute to the body of knowledge in the field.

The unCoVer project's ideals are in full harmony with the Open Science philosophy and its inclusive framework of accessible science. In particular, we will ensure that:

- Scientific papers arising from unCoVer results will be published in journals indexed at the Journal Citation Reports, of international circulation and with impact factor;



- Scientific papers are published under Open Access (OA) schemes, in harmony with EC guidelines;
- Other types of data may be published in technical publications or scientific meetings, such as conference proceedings, monographs, data dictionaries, compendia, among others;
- Code and associated data will be public, when possible due to data protection issues and with the positive feedback from the Data Protection and Ethics Advisory Board (DP-EAB);
- Early access to research results are available by publishing the outcomes as preprints in open repositories.

Whenever possible, “green” OA will be preferred, with full-text documents being made available at the project’s website and other online channels, such as the Twitter/LinkedIn account and in the partners’ own websites. Online repositories, such as ArXiv.org or preprints.org will be used for all publications.

### 3.2. Dissemination and exploitation activities

One of the major goals of unCover is to generate evidence-based data regarding COVID-19. As so, the capacity to clearly communicate and disseminate its main results is, in itself, an exploitation of the knowledge produced. To this end, and aiming to contribute to strengthening the scientific profile of different players in the health sector, a number of activities, from virtual trainings to workshops and conferences had been proposed in the project application. These activities are now part of the dissemination activities that are scheduled (Table 3). Apart from these initiatives already planned, other activities will be organized following the suggestion of the EDC or initiative of any partner. Table 3 highlights the actions that are planned at this moment.

*Table 3. Type of activity planned, topic and expected date.*

Type of action	Topic	Expected date
Virtual training	Burden of disease assessment for COVID-19	M6 <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This training was initially planned by M4. A first virtual training on BoD took place in December 2020. Therefore, this virtual training has been delayed two months to ensure a correct distribution of activities over time.



Scientific workshop	Communicating COVID-related science to the general public and press	M9 <sup>2</sup>
Virtual training	Utilization of unCoVer toolbox for COVID-19 data analysis	M12
Scientific workshop	Comparative analysis of cross country systems response to COVID-19 and associated socio-economic inequalities	M15
International conference	Unravelling data for rapid, evidence-based response to COVID-19	M24

### 3.3. Human resources capacity building

The ability to train and educate senior early stage researchers (ESR) in the new tools and paradigms generated in the framework of unCoVer is also regarded by the consortium as a strategy to exploit project results by ensuring that a new generation of researchers are well-versed in the new knowledge created. To this end, we envisage a number of initiatives to this end, including:

- Short-term staff exchanges;
- PhD students exchanges;
- Invited lectures;
- Practical seminars;

In addition to its pedagogical value, these initiatives are also intended to serve the purpose of being effective links between the different partners and further strengthen their cooperation. In fact, these cooperative activities will not only be an effective tool for exchanging knowledge, skills and technical know-how between the partners, but also as opportunities to fulfill unCoVer's objective of being a knowledge-based network.

### 3.4. Synergies with European initiatives and platforms

The partners that compose unCoVer are aware that true impact cannot be achieved without close contacts to other groups, projects and entities that share the similar goals and overall objectives than us. For this reason, and given the multitude of initiatives that dwell both in the field of data-driven decision-making and specifically the response to COVID-19, it is critical to

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<sup>2</sup> This workshop was initially planned by M7. It has been delayed two months in order to guarantee its planning on a presence-based modality if COVID-19 allows it in M9.



identify key players in these fields and work in tandem in order to maximise impacts and, importantly, avoid overlapping efforts and resources.

To this end, unCoVer intends to reach out and, when possible, work together with the following initiatives/entities, among others:

- EC-COVID-19 Data Platform
- Population Health information Research Infrastructure for COVID-19, based on the work of the Joint Action on Health Information (InfAct).
- European Health Data Space
- Health Research and Innovation Cloud
- COST Action – CA18218 – European Burden of Disease Network
- COST Action – CA18208 - Harmony network: Novel tools for test evaluation and disease prevalence estimation

Apart from the third parties presented, others may be added to the plan depending on the evolution of the work and our knowledge of other projects or entities that act in the field of interest of unCoVer.

The cooperation with these third parties can take the form of :

- Shared datasets (when deemed possible following data protection assessment);
- Co-organized and co-chaired events such as seminars, workshops and lectures;
- Share of analytical tools developed in the progress of each party's respective work;
- Mutual dissemination of each partners planned events, to increase the reach, awareness and participation.

### **3.5. unCoVer international conference**

In the last semester of the project, a final conference will be organised. This activity is intended to be a forum of knowledge exchange between all the partners, showcasing the results, methods and tools developed within the project. However, this final conference will also be an opportunity to interact with stakeholders external to the project, such as scientists, policy-makers, citizens and health professionals.



The conference will include communications from several partners, including ESR, as well as international speakers of recognized expertise in the field.

### 3.6 Website

unCoVer aims to have a solid online presence, not only by the means of its social media channels, but also *via* its website. Being a data-driven project whose outputs are mostly data-based, it is important that this website is responsive and can be used to query data and as a source of reliable and evidence-based information.

Given the fact that results from unCoVer, in the form of epidemiological data, will only be available later on in the project when appropriate tools have been developed, the implementation of the website will follow a two-phase model. Initially, and in harmony with Deliverable 5.2 due in month 4, a simpler website was created in order to ensure the project had an online presence. In this website ([www.uncover-eu.net](http://www.uncover-eu.net)), one can find the project's aims, partners, their contacts and ongoing tasks. The website also hosts all public deliverables in a dedicated section, thus fulfilling the level of public dissemination preconized at the proposal stage. In order to maximize reach and impact, the website activity will be periodically monitored with the use of tools such as Google Analytics, thus keeping track of relevant information such as the page's traffic and the sections to which visitors interact the most, these being also KPI as presented in Section 4.1.

Later on, when results from earlier tasks are available, a web-based app will be added, in which the users will be able to query and search for COVID-19-related health metrics in multiple dimensions, such as age, geography, gender, outcome, among others.

The website will also serve as a repository of information for the consortium, where relevant files such as publications, lectures, expert documents and dissemination actions can be hosted for access by the partners or stakeholders, depending on the level of dissemination decided by the Coordination.

The website will feature the following capabilities:

- News on relevant topics or actions conducted by the network;
- Links to the project's social media accounts, e.g. on LinkedIn and Twitter;
- Events calendar;



- Documents intended to public dissemination, such as deliverables, guidelines, data dictionaries, etc.;
- Links to the unCoVer repository of results (data, outputs, graphs).

The website will also host a Backoffice access with host files and folders to be accessed only by the partners and project staff. It will serve as a hub of internal information and will be accessible *via* specific credentials. In this private area, the partners will be able to access information related to the status and evolution of the different WP, as well as meeting minutes, reports, agenda, and other relevant information.



*Figure 4. Homepage of the unCoVer website*

### 3.7 Social media

Like other initiatives, the consortium of unCoVer recognizes the remarkable importance that social media plays nowadays, being a pivotal tool towards impact and reach in communication and dissemination activities. As so, the project identified social media (Table 4) as very relevant channels to achieve the project's dissemination goals.

*Table 4. Social media accounts for unCoVer and their access handles/links.*

Social media	Account	Link
Twitter	@uncoverEU	<a href="#">Link</a>
Youtube	unCoVer	<a href="#">Link</a>





Twitter (Figure 5) will be used to communicate rapid and short messages which content are relevant to the project. It can be used for highlighting recent advances in the field of COVID-19, to inform the public of recent publications of the network or to communicate the adherence of the project to its milestones. These tweets will frequently include a link towards the website, where full-fledged posts on the topics may be found.

A Youtube channel for unCoVer has also been created. This platform will be used to make the project's videos available to the general public. These videos can include lectures by the network members, scientific presentations disseminated at specialized events such as congresses and scientific meetings or other instances in which the project produces video content for dissemination.



*Figure 5. Profile page of the unCoVer Twitter account and corresponding pinned tweet.*

unCoVer will also have presence through LinkedIn to strengthen the impact of the project and to reach the widest possible audience.

### 3.8 Newsletter

unCoVer will have a dynamic trimestral newsletter in order to reach its target audience and communicate impact. This activity will compile a set of news, press releases, job openings, project results and achievement of milestones related to the project. It will also have a dedicated section where upcoming events will be published in order to increase awareness and promote engagement. In order to increase the visibility of the website, each newsletter will be hosted directly in the website, being disseminated to the audience via an email with a link to the newsletter, as well as *via* the Twitter account. All partners will be asked to contribute to the newsletter with content every month.



#### 4. INTERNAL COORDINATION OF COMMUNICATION AND DISSEMINATION STRATEGIES

The unCoVer consortium, through its EDC, keeps track of all communication, dissemination and exploitation activities *via* a “Dissemination Matrix” which is managed by WP5 Leader and is accessible to all members of the project’s General Assembly (GA).

This document includes all relevant fields for each communication and dissemination activity and is summarized in Table 5.

*Table 5. Dissemination Matrix used internally by unCoVer.*

Type of action	Status	Responsible partner	Completion date	KPI
Type of communication or dissemination action	Status of the activity (planned, ongoing, concluded)	Project partner responsible for creating/conducting the activity	Date in which the activity was concluded	Indicators used to assess the reach, completeness or success of the activity

This dynamic document is updated every 2 months and includes past and future actions and events, as approved by the EDC.

For the purpose of communication and dissemination materials, the final decision will be of the GA or, in case it is not possible to convene in due time, the Coordinator, in written. Each partner or substructure of the project will send its idea or suggestion for communication or dissemination activity, identifying the message to be passed, the intended channel and target audience to the EDC. After analysis, the EDC will make a suggestion to the GA or the Coordinator to either advance or halt the initiative. For simpler materials, such as news coverage or website posts, the EDC will decide independently.

In the case of scientific publications (original papers, congress proceedings, book chapters), the originating partner should communicate its intention to publish to the EDC by submitting a 1-page abstract with identification of the contributing partners. In cases where data protection may be at stake, the EDC will then ask the DP-EAB for clearing. Except in cases expressly agreed and decided in EDC meetings or the GA, the order of authorship will be alphabetical, with the exception of the first and senior authors. Detailed guidelines on the workflow to be followed in cases of publication eligibility and can be found in D6.1 ‘Project Management Handbook’.



The internal communication of the consortium takes place by email in a daily basis, with videoconference meetings being held when needed by the means of the Zoom platform. Internal documents for the network are organized in a Google Drive cloud and all partners have access.

#### 4.1. Metrics and KPI

For all activities involving dissemination and communication, it is important to have tools to access the reach, success and status of each initiative. For these reasons, quantitative metrics should be used, so that the success of the initiative can be measured and, if necessary, adapted towards achieving project goals.

Table 6 summarizes the KPI to be used in each dissemination channel, as well as their quantitative targets throughout the project.

*Table 6. KPI and targets for each of the channels used for dissemination.*

Channel	KPI	Year 1 target	Year 2 target
Website	Number of visitors	500	1200
Social media	Number of posts	15	25
	Number of followers/subscribers	150	400
Press releases	Number of press releases	5	8
Scientific publications	Number of journal papers/conference papers	2	6
Workshops/Seminars	Number of workshops/seminars organized	3	2
Events with other EU projects	Number of events co-organized with other EU projects or with the participation of unCoVer partners	2	3

## 5. CONCLUSION

This document presents the consortium strategy for the dissemination, communication and exploitation for unCoVer. It identifies the projects objectives, tools, channels and overall strategies to efficiently communicate, disseminate and exploit towards the projects objectives and intended outputs.



This Plan will be updated every 6 months and will be followed by a related deliverable, namely D5.3 (Dissemination and Exploitation Report, M12, M24).

