

WHITE RESEARCH

**D8.1**

# DISSEMINATION AND COMMUNICATION PLAN

FIRST VERSION

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## ABBREVIATIONS

CA	Consortium Agreement
D&C	Dissemination & Communication
DCP	Dissemination and Communication Plan
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
FIMI	Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference
GA	Grant Agreement
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
HEU	Horizon Europe
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
M#	Month #
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
SMAs	Social Media Accounts
SMEs	Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
WP	Work Package
WR	White Research

## Executive Summary

The Dissemination and Communication Plan (DCP) of the Horizon Europe research project DE-CONSPIRATOR, “Detecting and Countering Information Suppression from A Transnational Perspective”, is a strategic framework that aims to increase the visibility of the project, disseminate its outcomes effectively, and engage with diverse stakeholders. The plan is based on the principles outlined by the European Commission and emphasises the commitment to share research results with the scientific community, policymakers, and civil society, as well as leverage these outcomes to address societal challenges and inform policymaking.

This document presents the first version of DE-CONSPIRATOR's Dissemination and Communication Plan (DCP). Firstly, it provides guidelines for all consortium partners in disseminating and communicating the project's goals, progress, and outcomes during the implementation process. Secondly, it summarises the overall dissemination and communication strategy of the project by outlining the objectives, methodologies, channels and tools to ensure the successful implementation of the engagement efforts of the project.

Furthermore, the plan elaborates further on the variety of dissemination and communication channels, including digital and traditional channels, scientific publications, and participation in relevant events, ensuring a broad reach and engagement with key audience segments. Moreover, it outlines a control mechanism to monitor and quantitatively evaluate the impact of these activities, employing key performance indicators (KPIs) to assess progress and adapt strategies as necessary.

In summary, the DE-CONSPIRATOR project's DCP is designed to be a dynamic and adaptable framework that meets the legal obligations under Horizon Europe and demonstrates a strategy to amplify the project's outcomes, ensuring they resonate with and benefit a wide spectrum of stakeholders.

## Introduction

This deliverable represents the initial version of the Dissemination and Communication Plan (DCP). This document contains detailed guidance on the approach, structure and timeline of the dissemination and communication activities of the Horizon research project DE-CONSPIRATOR. Furthermore, it defines the operational framework for the DE-CONSPIRATOR partners to promote the project effectively, communicate its activities, and disseminate its outcomes. This will further help to achieve the successful unfolding of the project, in line with the contractual obligations that the consortium has undertaken with the European Commission.

The purpose of this document is to define and outline a strategic plan to promote the project's vision by ensuring a dynamic implementation process throughout the project's lifespan. Over the next pages, this document explores and elaborates on the actions, methods, and tools to effectively disseminate and communicate the project's research findings to multiple audiences. Specifically, this plan provides a more detailed outline of the dissemination and communication strategy by further elaborating on the **objectives** (what do we aim to achieve), the **target audiences** (whom we are addressing), the **key messages** (why is it important), the **promotional material** (what to disseminate), the **channels** (how we will plan to reach out). Additionally, it defines the measurable **goals** (KPIs) and an indicative **timeline** (when to disseminate) while allowing room for ad-hoc and on-demand actions. Answering these questions is essential for developing a robust and impactful dissemination and communication action plan that maximises the project's impact.

Moreover, this deliverable acts as a yarding stick for all consortium partners, providing them with specific guidelines to spread the project's vision and capture valuable information and insight from engaged stakeholders. As part of a horizontal working package (WP8 – Dissemination and communication), this deliverable is interconnected to all parts of the work plan. As such, dissemination and communication activities will be carried out throughout the entire duration of the project's mandate (M1-M36), aiming at both raising awareness of the project activities and functioning as an additional feedback mechanism that will lead to further refinements of the consortium's work. To that end, it should be underlined that a well-developed and effective dissemination and communication strategy requires the active involvement of all partners, who should devote time and resources with the intention of spreading awareness about the project and successfully interacting with the intended audiences. In each following section, the roles and responsibilities of the partners are elaborated on a separate box, indicating clear-cut instructions and tips.

Finally, it should be noted that this deliverable and its accompanying supporting documents is a dynamic framework, as it is subject to modifications and updates in line with the project's overall progress and ongoing developments. As such, the dissemination and communication strategy that is presented here will be periodically updated with new guidance, input, and explanations. An updated version of the DCP is planned for M12 (interim version) and is anticipated to expand upon the knowledge gained over the first twelve months of the project. The final report on the outcomes and achieved impact of the DCP will be delivered in M36, coinciding with the end of the project.

## About DE-CONSPIRATOR

The world’s political scene is changing quickly, and with it, the kinds of threats and challenges. One such challenge is the intentional spread of false information and manipulation by foreign actors, known as Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference (FIMI). FIMI represent the ever-evolving strategic and coordinated efforts by foreign actors to twist the truth and sow fear, confusion, and division, ultimately aiming to achieve their own political and economic goals by undermining the credibility of democratic institutions. Among these foreign actors, two key perpetrators are mentioned most often: Russia and China. Both countries use FIMI as a modern warfare tool to engage in the intentional manipulation of public conversations to promote their agenda, encouraging division and polarisation within European societies and beyond. With 2024 marking a pivotal year for democratic processes – where nearly two billion people worldwide will participate in various elections, including the European Parliament elections in June – FIMI poses a major threat to liberal democracies that rely on the free and open flow of information.

DE-CONSPIRATOR aims to shed light on FIMI across Europe by analysing and examining the sophisticated information suppression tactics employed by foreign actors, notably Russia and China. Through its research outcomes, DE-CONSPIRATOR is expected to improve the understanding of how to safeguard fundamental rights against the misuse of information and disinformation, further examine how authoritarian regimes use information suppression, and evaluate the societal impacts of such actions. Additionally, the project intends to develop policy guidelines, tools, and strategies to identify and counteract information suppression attempts in the EU and beyond.

In detail, the project’s objectives include:

- Analysing the tactics of those who initiate FIMI.
- Mapping out how FIMI spreads within the EU and Partner Countries (PC) through local networks.
- Developing a comprehensive, multilingual database of FIMI incidents.
- Investigating the social and psychological mechanisms leading to the success of FIMI campaigns.
- Assessing the effectiveness of existing legal and regulatory frameworks in the EU and nationally against FIMI.

To fulfil these objectives, DE-CONSPIRATOR brings together **thirteen (13)** leading research institutions and organisations from across Europe. The list of consortium partners includes:

	Organisation/Partner Name	Short Name
1	Ozyegin University	OzU
2	AdCogito – Institute for Advanced Behavioural Research	AdC
3	Center for the Study of Democracy	CSD
4	Barcelona Centre for International Affairs	CIDOB
5	Centre for Economics and Foreign Policy Studies	EDAM
6	Georgia’s Reforms Associates	GRASS
7	Heidelberg University	UHEI
8	Instituto Affari Internazionali	IAI
9	Rīga Stradiņš University	RSU
10	University of Amsterdam	UA
11	University of Groningen	RUG
12	Vrije Universiteit Brussel	VUB
13	White Research	WR

## Risk Management

Due to the project's thematic scope and the challenges posed by Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference (FIMI), the DE-CONSPIRATOR initiative must include a strong risk management plan, specifically regarding its dissemination and communication activities. To that end, the project's dissemination and communication plan aims to proactively identify, evaluate, and mitigate potential risks that may endanger the credibility and efficiency of the project's dissemination and communication efforts.

Recognising the risks evolve, DE-CONSPIRATOR commits to ongoing risk assessment and management throughout the project's lifespan. This will involve regular risk evaluation meetings, updating risk mitigation strategies as needed, and maintaining open lines of communication among consortium partners to share insights and strategies effectively.

By acknowledging and preparing for these risks, DE-CONSPIRATOR aims to safeguard its dissemination and communication efforts, ensuring that its critical work in countering FIMI is communicated clearly, accurately, and securely to all relevant stakeholders.

### **#1 Harassment in social media community**

**Potential risk:** The risk of "bad actors" flooding the project's social media channels with negative comments or misleading information could undermine engagement with the project.

**Mitigation strategy:** DE-CONSPIRATOR will employ advanced monitoring tools to oversee social media activity and identify any coordinated inauthentic behaviour. WR will manage these platforms, equipped to engage with genuine inquiries and concerns while swiftly addressing any manipulative content. Establishing clear community guidelines and employing automated moderation tools will also help maintain constructive discourse.

### **#2 Fake dissemination campaigns**

**Potential risk:** The risk of "bad actors" disseminating misleading or malevolent information while pretending that they act on behalf of DE-CONSPIRATOR (e.g., fake/ "troll" accounts) that could undermine public trust in the project and damage credibility.

**Mitigation strategy:** DE-CONSPIRATOR will consistently employ protection mechanisms to distinguish itself from potential fake or "troll" accounts, therefore ensuring that any information disseminated or spread by the latter is recognised as inauthentic and thus invalid. Such protection mechanisms include the consistent use of the project's brand identity, relevant disclaimers and EU funding acknowledgement, as well as authentication channels (e.g., original mail accounts in social media profiles).

As the project operationalises the overall dissemination and communication strategy, new risks might emerge, which have not been anticipated. Such risks will be promptly captured, evaluated and mitigated, and as such be reported in the updated version of DCP (M12).

## Methodology

In order to develop an effective strategy, the Dissemination and Communication Plan (DCP) suggests the use of a practical action plan that combines various methods and insights. Specifically, the approach involves five important steps:

- Analysing comprehensive materials from the European Commission (EC) to grasp the essential elements of the Horizon Europe (HEU) framework. This analysis includes key documents<sup>1,2</sup> and a variety of resources, including informative videos<sup>3</sup> and dedicated websites<sup>4</sup> that summarise HEU guiding notions and objectives.
- Conducting an extensive search of communication and marketing literature to gain insights into current communication strategies, marketing theories, stakeholder management, and the use of communication tools in research projects.
- Incorporating proven strategies from past EU-funded projects, particularly in communication, dissemination, and exploitation. This step focuses on meeting EC's standards, understanding the target audiences, employing various communication channels, and implementing an evaluation process for continuous improvement based on extensive experience in implementing dissemination and communication management.
- Engaging with the project's consortium to ensure all essential points and ideas are considered in the DCP. Through consultation, a thorough analysis of the project's target audiences, key stakeholders, and effective national and international dissemination channels was conducted.
- Establishing a dynamic monitoring process to evaluate the overall effectiveness of the communication and dissemination strategy and its ability to achieve the tailored to the project objectives.

To manage dissemination and communication in a Horizon research project effectively, the approach should be flexible and open to ongoing feedback. This means setting up a system where feedback from each communication effort is used to make improvements. Regular meetings with consortium partners will help keep the communication strategies in line with the project's goals and stakeholder interests. Using digital tools to track how well different communication methods are working will provide clear information for making these adjustments. This way, the project's communication efforts will be both well-planned and able to adapt to new information and audience responses, ensuring better reach and impact.

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<sup>1</sup> Scherer, J. et al., (2022) Successful valorisation of knowledge and research results in Horizon Europe. *Boosting the impact of your project through effective communication, dissemination and exploitation*, European IP Helpdesk. Available [here](#) (Accessed: 27 February 2024).

<sup>2</sup> Joint Research Centre. (2020). *Science for policy handbook*. European Commission. Retrieved March 13, 2024, available [here](#).

<sup>3</sup> EU Science & Innovation, (2021, June 9). Dissemination & Exploitation in Horizon Europe [Video]. [YouTube](#).

<sup>4</sup> European Research Executive Agency. (n.d.). Dissemination and exploitation. European Commission. Retrieved March 13, 2024, available [here](#).

# Dissemination and Communication Strategy

## Overview

The DE-CONSPIRATOR dissemination and communication plan is based on a clear strategy for effectively disseminating and communicating the project’s activities and milestones. This strategy is translated into an actionable plan by considering multiple key elements, as illustrated in Figure 1 and described in more detail in the following chapters.<sup>5</sup>



Figure 1 - Overview of the DE-COSNPIRATOR dissemination and communication strategy

Overall, DE-CONSPIRATOR will employ a **hybrid dissemination and communication strategy** that integrates both digital and traditional activities, through which tailored promotional material will be disseminated to achieve optimal results. Specifically, the strategy outlines the project’s **dissemination and communication objectives, target audiences, key messages, and tools** and further elaborates on each partner’s **roles and responsibilities**. Furthermore, it demonstrates the project’s unique **visual identity**, including a logo, templates, and colour schemes. This visual identity will serve as a paradigm for all printed and digital **promotional materials**, ensuring a clear and cohesive message. The **promotional package** will include leaflets, posters, bi-annual newsletters, news items, and a video communicating the project’s results through digital and traditional channels. **Digital channels**, such as social media platforms like LinkedIn, X, and YouTube, will be used to reach different segments of the audience effectively, while the creation of a dynamic and informative **website** will act as the focal point of the project’s dissemination and communication activities. Lastly, regarding **traditional channels**, consortium partners will participate in various external events and conferences to stay updated on the latest research and innovation activities, communicate the project’s updates and outcomes, and establish valuable synergies with other similar projects that might result in the creation of a **Network of Interest (NoI)**. All the above-mentioned are elaborated and presented respectively in more detail over the next pages.

<sup>5</sup> Inspired by Figure 1 of M. Gaillard & N. Germain (2018), ‘Deliverable 9.2 – Dissemination and communication plan’, DTOceanPlus, France Energies Marines, p. 10.

## Objectives

*What do we aim to achieve?*

### Horizon Research Objectives

The first step in developing a successful dissemination and communication strategy for a Horizon research project is to understand the key concepts behind dissemination and communication as defined by the European Commission guidelines<sup>6</sup>. Specifically, it is important to explain and outline the rationale between those interconnected concepts as they usually tend to overlap each other. By doing this, the objectives related to the dissemination and communication activities are clear to everyone.

**Communication** in a Horizon project is a continuous process aimed at engaging the broader community by emphasizing the project's significance and advantages and the role of EU funding in addressing societal issues.

**Dissemination**, on the other hand, involves sharing project outcomes and technical findings via appropriate channels, such as scientific publications or similar mediums. More specifically, dissemination aims to transfer and circulate knowledge to potential stakeholders and enhance the impact of the research<sup>7</sup>.

As such, effective dissemination and communication of research findings are crucial for reaching out to diverse groups, such as the scientific community, policymakers, media representatives, and the general public. Integrating these activities throughout the project's implementation phase and beyond can help to amplify the impact of the project's outcomes. Furthermore, communication and dissemination activities take place at different stages of a project's lifespan, as communication starts early while dissemination kicks off when the first scientific results are available. For better clarity, Table 1 provides an overview of the communication and dissemination objectives.

**Table 1 - Horizon Europe Communication and Dissemination activities<sup>8</sup>**

	Communication	Dissemination
<b>Objectives</b>	Reach out to society and show the importance and impact of the project	Transfer knowledge and results with the aim to enable others to use or reuse and take up the results, thus maximising the impact of the research
<b>Focus</b>	Informing and promoting the project's results/successes in a non-technical manner through strategically planned actions	Describe and ensure results are available for others to use or reuse
<b>Target Audience</b>	Multiple audiences	Audiences that may take an interest in the potential use or reuse of the results

<sup>6</sup> Scherer, J. et al., (2022) Successful valorisation of knowledge and research results in Horizon Europe. *Boosting the impact of your project through effective communication, dissemination and exploitation*, European IP Helpdesk. Available [here](#) (Accessed: 27 February 2024).

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Adapted from Scherer, J. et al., (2022) Successful valorisation of knowledge and research results in Horizon Europe. *Boosting the impact of your project through effective communication, dissemination and exploitation*, European IP Helpdesk, p.21. Available [here](#) (Accessed: 27 February 2024).

## DE-CONSPIRATOR D&C objectives

Based on the aforementioned, the DE-CONSPIRATOR strategy is carefully designed and tailored to the project’s approach, aiming to maximise its impact and transfer knowledge and results to the targeted stakeholders while communicating its concept to wider audiences.

To that end, DECONSPIRATOR’s **communication objective** is to raise awareness among society about the impact and benefits of its transnational research, which can improve the understanding of how to safeguard fundamental rights against FIMI strategies and incidents and encourage engagement in project’s activities. To achieve this goal, the project will launch a pan-European campaign that will span throughout the duration of the project, focusing on communicating its objectives, activities, and events to multiple audiences and translating the scientific and technical results into easy-to-understand messages for public outreach to raise **awareness**, spark **measurable actions** and pave the way for the **sustainability** of the project’s outcomes.

Specifically:

### Communication overarching objective:

Proactively demonstrate the value and benefits and communicate the project’s aim, vision, activities, and events to a wider audience.

- #1 Generate wide awareness and understanding of the project research agenda.
- #2 Demonstrate the added value of the project’s research findings and tools in a non-technical way.
- #3 Increase visibility and generate interest towards the project’s topic.
- #4 Facilitate engagement with stakeholders by ensuring clear, timely, and transparent communication through digital and traditional activities.
- #5 Follow, inform, and influence the debate around the EU legislative and decision-making process.

Building upon this, DECONSPIRATOR’s **dissemination objective** is to ensure interested stakeholders are informed about the project’s activities and the value propositions , and adopt the adoption and reuse of the project’s results and tools. By guaranteeing that insights, lessons learned, and meaningful data are accessible to those interested, it will aim to facilitate the replication and reuse of DE-CONSPIRATOR’s exemplary elements. To do so, the project will engage stakeholders in a meaningful and mutually fruitful way via a series of dissemination activities, such as scientific publications and participation in scientific events and conferences.

Specifically:

### Dissemination overarching objective:

Share and transfer knowledge and results and promote the project’s actions and value propositions.

- #1 Ensure those interested in the project’s research agenda have clear and up-to-date information.
- #2 Demonstrate the added value of the project’s research findings.
- #3 Establish synergies and ensure collaboration with similar research initiatives.
- #4 Facilitate the uptake of results by targeted stakeholders.

## Roles and responsibilities

### *Who?*

All partners are expected to actively participate and contribute to the implementation of the dissemination and communication activities according to the dissemination and communication strategy. White Research (WR), leading the communication and dissemination work package as a dissemination and communication manager, will closely monitor the dissemination and communications actions described in this document and provide all the necessary support to the consortium partners. Nonetheless, the partners' involvement in both online and traditional activities is crucial for raising awareness and promoting the project.

Partners' contribution will be a natural by-product of the project's development as most activities, results, milestones, and progress will either involve engaging with stakeholders or producing content that needs to be shared and promoted widely. In addition, partners must consistently report their dissemination and communication activities to the dissemination manager, WR, prior to any kind of activity.

Over the next pages, the partner's contribution is further elaborated and analysed in each section and dedicated topic. In a nutshell, the consortium partner's contribution can be described in two activities:

### **Digital/Online activities:**

- Provide content for online dissemination and communication efforts, such as opinion articles, remarks, and other news items, to ensure a constant flow of content and a strong online presence.
- Promote the online dissemination and communication efforts of the project.
- Flag and report any relevant and interesting events or news to the dissemination manager.

### **Traditional/Offline activities:**

- Organise events to raise awareness regarding the project.
- Participate in external events, conferences and outreach activities to promote the project.
- Distribute the project's promotional materials (e.g., printed version of leaflet).
- Contribute to the publication of the project's research findings.
- Support the dissemination and communication activities via various activities, such as surveys and interviews.
- Support the development of a Network of Interest and engage with relevant stakeholders.

### **Approval process**

An approval process is necessary to ensure that the information regarding the dissemination of public materials is correct and can be made publicly available. Although different partners will be involved in the approval process depending on their input and feedback, the following should always be included:

- Project Coordinator: Akin Unver (OzU).
- Dissemination and Communication Managers: Thomas Bakratsas and Nikolaos Sotiriou (WR).

## Target Audiences and Key Messages

### Target Audience Analysis

*Whom are we addressing?*

Mapping out and understanding who the target audiences are in a project is crucial in developing an effective dissemination and communication strategy. The benefits of analysing the target audiences are straightforward as it ensures that DE-CONSPIRATOR messages are relevant and engaging, leading to better dissemination and communication results. In this section, DE-CONSPIRATOR will map out and analyse its target audiences to convey its messages and results throughout its engagement implementation.

The initial analysis identified **five (5) key target audience groups** based on their field of expertise and relationship with the DE-CONSPIRATOR theme and topic.

1. Civil society and the public
2. Business industry
3. Public authorities
4. Academia
5. Relative initiatives (e.g., relevant EU-funded projects)

In order to analyse the target audience effectively, the project has divided its target audiences into smaller segments. Classifying target audiences is important as it helps prioritise and fine-tune the project's engagement efforts. Specifically, Table 2 provides a detailed breakdown and overview of the key target audiences.

Furthermore, based on the Stakeholders Classification Model<sup>9</sup>, every target audience and stakeholder group is determined according to the following parameters:

- The extent of a stakeholder's **power**/authority.
- The stakeholder's **interest** regarding the outcomes of the project.
- The extent of the stakeholder's active **involvement** in the project.
- The level of stakeholder's **influence** over the project planning and/or outcomes.

The classification of the targeted stakeholders' groups will be used to tailor the communicated messages and adopt the optimum tools and channels for each one of these categorised groups, as the level of engagement should align with the stakeholder's influence, interest, and the impact of the project or decision on them. The level of engagement is based on the following four activities:

- **Inform:** Keeping stakeholders informed about decisions, progress, and outcomes. This is the minimum level of engagement.
- **Consult:** Seeking stakeholder feedback on analysis, alternatives, and decisions. This acknowledges their input as valuable but doesn't guarantee that their views will decide the outcome.
- **Involve:** Working directly with stakeholders throughout the process to ensure their concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.

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<sup>9</sup> Emerson Wagner Mainardes, Helena Alves, Mário Raposo, (2012). "A model for stakeholder classification and stakeholder relationships", Management Decision, Vol. 50 Issue: 10, pp. 1861-1879.

- **Collaborate:** Partnering with stakeholders in each aspect of the decision, including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.

Based on the abovementioned method, Figure 2 showcases the methodological framework of an interest/influence matrix. As actual stakeholder engagement activities will commence during the early months of the project, the DE-CONSPIRATOR partners will use this methodological framework to define every core target audience into four different quadrants. An evaluation process will be organised by the consortium partners, during which partners will unanimously agree (e.g., through voting) on the interest/influence scale per stakeholder category, thus positioning each target audience into the quadrants. The results will be presented in the updated version of the DCP (M12).

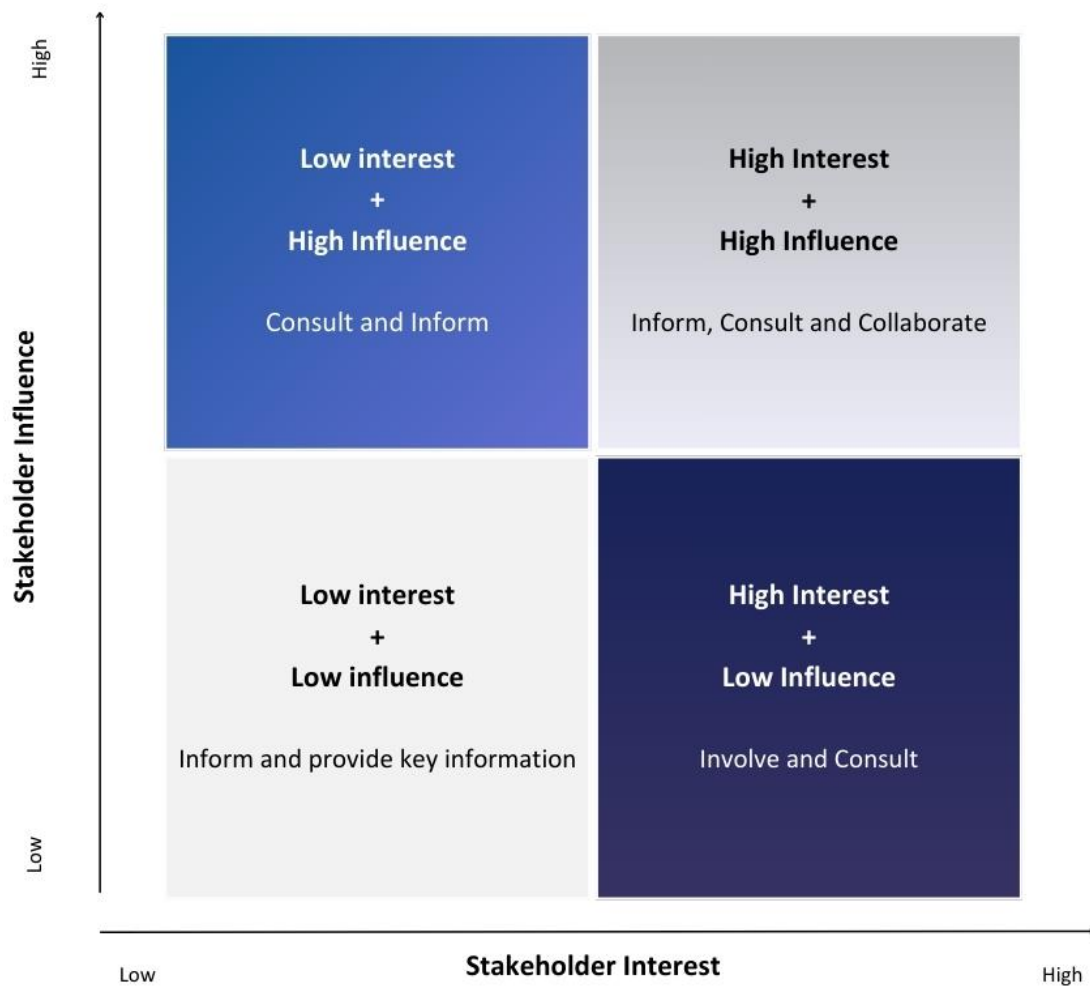


Figure 2 - Target Audience and Stakeholder Engagement Matrix

Table 2 - DE-CONSPIRATOR Target Audiences Analysis

Cluster	Target Audience	Segmentation (prominent examples)	Assumed Needs / Interest
Civil Society and the Public		Brussels operating media outlets and journalists	Better understanding of the impact of FIMI on social perceptions and movements, as well as copying mechanisms
	International and national media outlets, journalists	National operating media outlets and journalists	
	NGO's and CSO's	NGOs/CSOs working on Russian and Chinese fake news and propaganda	Better understanding of the impact of FIMI on the credibility and integrity of media outlets
	Citizens	NGOs/CSOs working on hate speech and anti-liberal discourse (e.g., far-right extremism)	Better understanding of the impact of FIMI on the election processes and cycles
Business and Industry		Social Media officials	Better protection mechanisms against fake news on social media without restricting free expression and public speech
	Social Media Platforms	Social Media engineers	
	Big Data Companies	Brussels operating media outlets and journalists	
	International and national media outlets	National operating media outlets and journalists	

Cluster	Target Audience	Segmentation (prominent examples)	Assumed Needs / Interest
Public Authorities	EU Policymakers	NATO officials EEAS officials Directorate Generals of the European Commission	Better and in-depth analysis of how Russian and Chinese FIMI are linked to strategic goals of subverting EU democratic institutions and values  Robust policy recommendations and copying mechanisms that respect the EU values of free expression
	National Policymakers	Relevant National Ministres (e.g., Culture, Education, Information) National think tanks and research centres Relevant units of regional and/or local authorities	
Academia	Universities	FIMI scholars and research centres	Fresh and detailed data on FIMI incidents and strategic frameworks
	PhD and post-doc researchers	Scholars and researchers on international relations	Interdisciplinary approach (e.g., connections between information technologies, sociology, political sciences, communication sciences) toward FIMI
	Research centres	Scholars and researchers on cybersecurity Data collection centres	
Relevant Initiatives	Sister projects	ATHENA project	Fruitful exchange of relevant outputs to avoid duplication of efforts and capitalise on existing resources
	Think tanks focusing on cybersecurity and political communication	ARM project RESONANT project	
	Relevant transnational programmes	ADAC.io project	Creation of a critical mass of relevant initiatives to maximise impact

## DE-CONSPIRATOR key messages

### *Why is it important?*

Another important step in establishing a successful D&C strategy is determining what key messages to share with each target audience via the communication channels. As a research project dealing with highly technical notions and ideas, such as computational methods and FIMI, DE-CONSPIRATOR needs to ensure that its communication messages are carefully tailored to fit the targeted stakeholders' needs and expectations. Different stakeholders have a range of concerns, knowledge, or interests related to the project's topic, so it is important to craft messages that speak directly and resonate with each group.

To that end, the main purpose of drafting tailored key messages is to showcase the added value of DE-CONSPIRATOR's research initiatives to its different target audiences. Put simply, it demonstrates why it is important and what is in for them, resulting in a more engaging and impactful outreach.

These key messages will be refined over the project's mandate, and based on the initial feedback, more detailed messages will be added to the next editions of the DCP.

### Core message

The overall and core message of DE-CONSPIRATOR can be formulated as follows:

*"The DE-CONSPIRATOR project is an innovative research initiative that aims to improve our understanding of how to safeguard democratic institutions and fundamental rights against information suppression (FIMI) by foreign actors, especially in the critical context of numerous global elections in 2024".*

All key messages should and will align with the core concept but also be adapted to fit the needs of each specified target group.

### Audience-Specific Messages

While Table 3 provides an indicative overview of DE-CONSPIRATOR's key messages with a call to action for each target group, the objectives of the audience-specific messages are the following:

**The General Public:** The project needs to articulate its objectives and outcomes in a manner that is accessible and captivating for the lay audience, ensuring broad appeal and comprehension.

**Academia:** This group needs detailed and robust information on the project's methodologies and findings. Engagement here revolves around sharing in-depth research results and fostering scholarly discourse.

**Policymakers:** As policymakers and regulators, these authorities can leverage the project's insights for societal benefit. Messages aimed at this group should be concise and focused, emphasizing actionable insights and policy relevance.

**Business and Industry:** Potential corporate partners or beneficiaries of the project's outcomes must see the practical value and potential business advantages in the findings. Communication should highlight mutual benefits and collaborative opportunities.

**Table 3 - DE-CONSPIRATOR's Indicative Key Messages**

Target Group	Key Messages	Call to Action (CTA)
<b>General Public</b>	In an era of unprecedented information manipulation, DE-CONSPIRATOR equips the public with the awareness and tools needed to critically assess information, making informed decisions that protect democracy.	Stay informed about the tactics of FIMI, engage with DE-CONSPIRATOR's educational materials, and contribute to a culture of vigilance and critical thinking.
<b>Civil Society</b>	DE-CONSPIRATOR empowers civil society with knowledge and tools to recognize and resist FIMI, fostering resilient communities that can uphold the principles of democracy and free information.	Participate in DE-CONSPIRATOR's activities and use its resources to educate and mobilize your networks against the threats of information manipulation.
<b>Academia</b>	DE-CONSPIRATOR offers academia a rich database of FIMI incidents and a comprehensive analysis of suppression tactics, contributing to scholarly research and understanding of information manipulation's impact on democracies.	Collaborate with DE-CONSPIRATOR, contribute to interdisciplinary research efforts, and integrate findings into academic curricula to educate future leaders on the complexities of FIMI.
<b>Policymakers</b>	DE-CONSPIRATOR provides policymakers with evidence-based insights and policy guidelines to enhance the EU's legal and regulatory frameworks against FIMI, ensuring the integrity of democratic processes in the face of foreign information threats.	Engage with DE-CONSPIRATOR findings to inform and update policy and regulatory measures, ensuring they are robust and effective against FIMI challenges.
<b>Business and Industry</b>	DE-CONSPIRATOR's multilingual database and research outcomes are invaluable resources for technology firms specializing in FIMI detection and prevention, offering insights into the latest tactics and strategies used by malicious actors.	Leverage DE-CONSPIRATOR's research to enhance your technologies and services, collaborating on innovative solutions to detect and mitigate FIMI effectively.

## DE-CONSPIRATOR Toolbox

*What to disseminate?*

### Project logo and Visual identity

Creating visual uniformity across all dissemination and communication channels helps promote a consistent and positive image of the project. To that end, DE-CONSPIRATOR's project logo and visual identity were developed at the beginning of the project, showcasing the project's thematic scope while ensuring a coherent message. As a result, the logo will make the project recognizable and be the point of reference for all promotional materials, such as leaflets, posters, and templates.

At the kick-off meeting, White Research (WR) presented various logo options to the consortium partners, who then provided their feedback and preferences. Based on the feedback, WR finalised and improved the logo, resulting in the outcome that can be found in the Media Press Kit located in the Annexes of this document.

### Promotional material

During the initial stages of the DE-CONSPIRATOR project, WR is responsible for creating the project's promotional materials that will be used to capture the attention of key stakeholders, with consortium partners providing ongoing feedback during the development phase. The **promotional package** includes the project's leaflet, poster, PowerPoint and Word templates, news items, and a video communicating the project's results through digital channels. Specifically, the promotional materials aim to promote the project's mission and objectives via digital and traditional activities designed to align with the project's unique visual identity, which is defined in the following paragraph. On a last note, these materials will be accessible to the public for download on the project's website and could also be printed by partners when needed.

For more information and guidelines, please refer to the Annexes, where the DE-CONSPIRATOR Media Press Kit is available.

### Leaflet and Poster

Leaflets and posters play an important role in promoting and communicating a project's concept, approach, objectives, and expected results to its target audiences. The development of the leaflet is a continuous process that will conclude in M4 and introduce the DE-CONSPIRATOR concept, approach, expected results, and contact details. Similarly, the poster will be developed by M4 and will highlight the project's vision and approach, including visual elements, to capture the attention of the audience and attract potential stakeholders.

Both promotional materials will contain partner information, including contact details, website, social media accounts, and funding acknowledgement through the Horizon Europe programme. Additionally, both items will be uploaded to the project's website and available for download, while physical copies will be provided to all partners for distribution at various events. A draft version of the items is available in the media press kit provided in the Annex. The final versions might undergo further modifications based on the consortium partner's feedback and will be reported in the DE-CONSPIRATOR's DCP – interim version (M12).

## Templates

In addition to the poster and leaflet, the project will prepare templates that follow its visual identity for dissemination activities. These include a presentation template for consortium partners to use in events and meetings and a template for reports on the project's deliverables and publications.

It is essential for all partners to always use these official project templates when preparing any presentations or reports within the project's scope.

## Promotional video

Recognising the fast-paced communication environment, videos have become an indispensable tool in social media and digital marketing strategies. As such, a promotional video will be produced in M12 to reach a wide audience. The video will be published on the project's YouTube channel, website, and other social media platforms. Its primary objective is to provide a clear and engaging introduction to the scope and theme of the project while conveying them in a simple and straightforward manner, ultimately compelling the viewers to engage with the project. To ensure that the video will reach out to a large audience, subtitles in the consortium partners' languages will be added (e.g., Turkish, Georgian, Latvian, Bulgarian, etc.)

Partners are responsible for providing the subtitles and translations in their respective language.

## Press and Media

Press and media work remains a central pillar in a project's external communications, as journalists play a highly influential role in disseminating views and narratives, both within the "European Bubble" as well as in a national and local context. As such, ensuring the project's messages are heard and understood is as crucial as ever. To that end, WR will produce timely, high-quality press materials, such as press releases and articles, while providing timely and complete responses to any possible press requests that might arrive. Furthermore, to further amplify the project's messages and increase its impact, WR will translate highly technical concepts and terminology (e.g., "FIMI") into language that the outside world can more easily understand and explore ways to include more visual materials in the press and media efforts, so to explain information more didactically.

## Dissemination and Communication Channels

*How do we plan to reach out?*

DE-CONSPIRATOR’s hybrid strategy will use a range of ways to amplify its dissemination and communications efforts via both digital and traditional channels. The selection of those channels is based on the selected target audiences, key messages, and campaign objectives illustrated in the previous chapters. Over the next period, WR will continue to rely on a broad range of channels adapted to each communication opportunity.

### Digital channels

More and more people are choosing digital channels for information. To effectively share its messages, DE-CONSPIRATOR will work on establishing a robust online presence across various digital platforms to engage a wide and diverse audience. This will involve setting up a website, creating social media profiles on different platforms, launching a YouTube channel, and distributing bi-annual newsletters.

#### Website

The objective of the project’s website is to serve as a content hub for all news and information related to the project’s results and objectives. The development of the website will be concluded in M4 and will be the primary digital platform for sharing the project’s progress with a broad audience, as well as making the core results of the project (e.g., Repository of FIMI events, Disinfor-meter, Multi-dimensional Policy Toolkit, etc.) available and accessible to targeted stakeholders. Specifically, the website will be designed to be user-friendly, ensuring that stakeholders can easily access and engage with the content. The content will feature essential details about the DE-CONSPIRATOR’s concept, strategy, and team members. Furthermore, it will provide free access to all project outputs, including public reports, publications in science and industry, dissemination materials, and newsletters.

WR, as the dissemination and communication manager, will be overall responsible for website management and content uploading. The website will remain active throughout the duration of the project and one year after its completion and will include regular updates on the project’s progress, internal and external events, relevant projects and initiatives, reports, and project results, as well as news from the sector.

The consortium partners should:

- Provide their respective logos in the highest possible format and quality.
- Authorise with written consent WR to use their respective logos and visual identity.
- Provide fresh content to WR whenever possible for website content uploading by actively contributing to the news section of the website by sending noteworthy news items to WR. Ideally, one news item per partner.
- Notify WR regarding any events they organise or participate in, so that it can be posted online in the dedicated section of the website.

#### Newsletter

A newsletter will be produced every six months to keep both potential and current followers and stakeholders informed about the project’s key ideas and progress. This newsletter will be shared with the project’s intended audience and also made available on the project’s website.

The newsletter aims to provide an overview of the latest developments and activities within the project. Recognising the diverse preferences of its audience, it also aims to reach those less engaged with social media and individuals who may not have shown a strong initial interest in the project. By maintaining this connection, the goal is to draw them in more closely as the project evolves, building up the momentum.

WR will lead the newsletters' preparation, incorporating all partners' input for specific pieces of content as needed. The tool of choice for crafting and sending out these newsletters will be Mailchimp. While the partners will collectively decide the content, the newsletters will typically feature several consistent segments:

- A brief introduction to the DE-CONSPIRATOR project to set the stage for new readers or provide a refresher for existing followers.
- Updates on the progress made since the last issue, highlighting significant achievements and milestones.
- A news section detailing the main activities and events that took place in the preceding six months, offering insights into the project's day-to-day operations.
- Information on what's on the horizon for DE-CONSPIRATOR, including any scheduled events, anticipated publications, or other notable developments worth watching.
- A compilation of other significant events in the related field, helping readers stay informed about the broader context in which the project operates.
- Various other articles that may cover topics like in-depth analyses feature stories on project members, success stories, or interviews with key stakeholders, providing a richer and more engaging narrative about the project's impact and aspirations.

Lastly, to enhance reader engagement, the newsletter might include interactive elements such as surveys, quizzes, or calls to action, encouraging direct participation and feedback from the community. This interactive approach not only enriches the reader's experience but also provides valuable insights for the project team, fostering a two-way communication channel that can inform future project directions and dissemination strategies.

The consortium partners should:

- Support the efforts of increasing the newsletter's subscribers.
- Provide input and content for each issue as requested by the dissemination manager.

## YouTube

A YouTube channel has been set up in M2 as an additional communication channel for the project. Its purpose is to increase the project's visibility by complementing and enhancing the project's written communication – guided by the spirit of “a picture paints a thousand words”. Furthermore, it will contain every video made during the project in one accessible location, acting as a repository. Notably, a promotional video that will be produced by M12 will be prominently featured on the channel to raise awareness about the project.

Project partners are encouraged to help create videos by providing script ideas and footage. These videos will be added to playlists on the DE-CONSPIRATOR channel and shared with the Network of Interest, sister projects, and members of Advisory Board, to broaden the project's reach.

## Social media platforms

Social media are recognised as one of the most cost-effective and efficient channels for reaching out to external audiences. It enables a project to connect with a wide range of audiences and stakeholders while offering a variety of different content and messages that can be tailored to suit different interests and needs.

As a result, a significant number of interested stakeholders will be consistently engaged through the project’s social media platforms. By the second month of the project, DE-CONSPIRATOR has set up accounts on LinkedIn, X, and YouTube. These three (3) distinct social media platforms were chosen to maximise the dissemination of results to various stakeholders across different media types.

WR will be responsible for the overall social media activities and the community management of the project’s social media accounts.

The consortium partners should:

- Follow and support the social media efforts of the project.
- Promote and spread the word within their own networks by reposting.
- Recommend other relevant projects or initiatives for DE-CONSPIRATOR to connect with
- Share articles and news items that are of interest.
- Collect photos and videos for all project activities and share them with WR.

## LinkedIn

The LinkedIn platform was chosen to elevate the project’s visibility within a professional context, creating a space for FIMI experts and professionals to share experiences and insights. Established in M2, the LinkedIn account serves not only to highlight the project’s goals but also to unify all DE-CONSPIRATOR partners under one professional umbrella. This setup facilitates in-depth discussions and regular updates, with the purpose of the DE-CONSPIRATOR account acting as a news information hub regarding FIMI-related policy updates. As such, the goal is not only to showcase the project but also to spark meaningful professional exchanges that can contribute to the project’s objectives and broader industry insights.

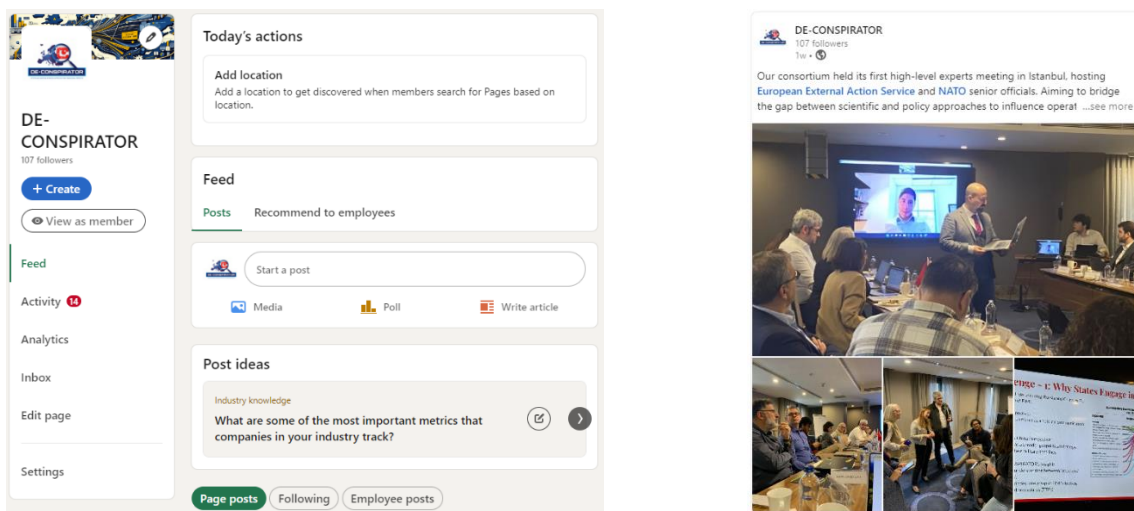


Figure 3 - DE-CONSPIRATOR LinkedIn account

To further enhance the LinkedIn strategy, the project could include spotlight features on key team members or partners, showcasing their expertise and contributions to the project. Additionally, a suggestion would be to host LinkedIn Live sessions, which could provide a dynamic way to present project milestones, host expert panels, or conduct Q&A sessions, engaging the professional community in real-time discussions about the project’s progress and its implications in the field.

The consortium partners should:

- Actively promote the LinkedIn page.
- Encourage followers to engage.
- Kick-start discussions relevant to the project’s issues.
- Supply WR with relevant material to be shared on the LinkedIn page.

## X

Similarly, the DE-CONSPIRATOR X (former Twitter) account was launched in M2. X is a popular platform among various stakeholder groups relevant to the DE-CONSPIRATOR project, making it an excellent avenue for drawing attention to the project. The X profile will also facilitate the formation of partnerships with similar initiatives and allow for the tracking of progress and developments in related projects and organisations. Engaging with trending hashtags related to the project’s field can also increase visibility and foster community interaction.



Figure 4 - DE-CONSPIRATOR X (former Twitter) account

The project's account performance will be evaluated using the analytics and insights provided by its in-house analytics tool, allowing for strategic adjustments to enhance engagement and reach.

The consortium partners should:

- Actively contribute content to the X account, ensuring a steady stream of engaging and relevant information.
- Actively promote the X profile.
- Encourage followers to engage.

### **Other Social Media Platforms**

In addition, the project will explore and test other social media platforms, such as Instagram and the newly available Threads, as part of the ongoing dissemination and communication efforts to enhance engagement and reachability. Until the next edition of the DCP, which is planned for M12, WR will experiment with these different platforms to identify those that best connect with the project's audience and amplify its message.

## Traditional channels

### DE-CONSPIRATOR events and conferences

Several events are planned within the framework of DE-CONSPIRATOR to further the goals of the project and raise awareness of its results. The project's timetable includes the following types of events in more detail:

#### Workshops and info-days

Table 4 - DE-CONSPIRATOR's Events

Name	Task	Task Leader	Description
Concept Note Workshop	Task 2.1	EDAM	This workshop brings together information warfare specialists and policymakers from the US and the EU to examine how global information manipulation strategies are changing. The objective is to promote a thorough, mutual understanding of these strategies' conceptualisation and comprehension of their operational logic.
Research Methods Experts Workshop	Task 6.1	CSD	Organise an expert's workshops to conduct a systematic literature review on the social and collective drivers of FIMI and their impact on collective action and society.
Policy info-days	Task 8.3	OzU	Organise at least two (2) online or physical info-days to disseminate the project's targeted policy briefs and increase the project's outreach to policy stakeholders.

#### Final Conference

Near the end of the project (M36), WR will organise the DE-CONSPIRATOR Final Conference (most probably in Brussels or in any other place that may better serve the strategic goal of disseminating the project's results). The purpose of this event is to present the project's final achievements to policymakers and other interested parties while also sharing the knowledge that has been gathered. The event will function as a comprehensive forum for exchanging thoughts and outcomes with the combined support of all partners. In order to increase the Conference's impact and reach, plans are being made to schedule it as a satellite event in conjunction with another relevant initiative. This will allow the Conference to draw in a larger audience and encourage increased participation. This strategic approach promotes networking and collaborative opportunities among participants from many industries and disciplines while simultaneously increasing the visibility of the project's outcomes.

It is imperative to emphasise that the seminars, webinars, and conferences listed above are an essential part of the Dissemination and Communication Plan framework.

All consortium partners responsible for organising the aforementioned events are responsible for completing the Event Reporting Template, which will outline the primary communication and/or dissemination action(s) that occurred.

### External events and conferences

Besides organising events in the framework of the project, consortium partners should participate in external events, conferences, and outreach activities to network with a broader range of audiences within the project's thematic scope. Such participation will allow the partners to:

- Introduce the project, including its concepts and methodologies.
- Highlight and share the project's outcomes.
- Publicise upcoming actions and events.
- Establish synergies and contacts with other relevant projects and initiatives.
- Engage relevant stakeholders in the project's activities.
- Promote the project's dissemination and communication channels, such as the website and social media accounts.
- Stay up to date on the latest technological and research findings.

When partners attend external events, they should follow the project's visual identity guidelines as demonstrated in the media press kit and utilise the official promotional materials such as leaflets, posters, and PowerPoint templates.

If a partner plans to present the DE-CONSPIRATOR project at an external event, they must submit their final presentation to WR at least five working days before the event.

Additionally, partners are required to notify WR in advance about their participation in any external event, allowing for the event to be properly promoted through the project's dissemination and communication channels.

Following the event, partners are expected to complete the reporting template that can be found in Annex III and return it to WR, ensuring that all participation is documented and evaluated effectively (e.g., number of stakeholders reached, items used).

In compliance with GDPR requirements, always gather stakeholders' consent when collecting, using, and storing personal data during events/conferences. Please consider that pictures that make individuals identifiable are also considered personal data. Partners are responsible for gathering participants' consent for the activities they undertake.

**Table 5 - DE-CONSPIRATOR's indicative external events and conferences**

Conference Name	Description	Date	Location
IPSA World Congress	A flagship event hosted by the International Association for Political Science Students (IAPSS), the IPSA World Congress is a prominent platform where students and junior scholars can present and discuss political science research.	<a href="#">May 21-24, 2024</a>	Athens, Greece
International Studies Association Annual Convention	The ISA is recognized for being one of the oldest interdisciplinary associations dedicated to understanding international, transnational, and global affairs. It boasts over 6,500 members across 100 countries, making it a widely respected and known scholarly association in the field of international studies.	<a href="#">April 3-6, 2024</a>	San Fransisco, USA
American Political Science Association Annual Convention	The American Political Science Association (APSA) Annual Meeting & Exhibition is a prominent event in the field of political science, bringing together attendees from across the globe to discuss various themes related to democracy, institutions, and cultures.	<a href="#">September 5-8,2024</a>	Philadelphia, USA
European Political Science Association Annual Conference	The conference is known for featuring a wide array of political science research, along with professional events, roundtables, and networking opportunities.	<a href="#">July 4-6, 2024</a>	Cologne, Germany
International Communication Association Annual Conference	ICA aims to advance the scholarly study of communication by encouraging and facilitating excellence in academic research worldwide.	<a href="#">June 20-24, 2024</a>	Gold Coast, Australia

## Dedicated dissemination channels

### Scientific publications

Scientific publications are vital for sharing the DE-CONSPIRATOR project's findings with the academic and scientific community. The publications are expected to have a significant impact on knowledge and allow others to apply the results in their own research and initiatives. The project aims to produce at least six (6) scientific publications and has compiled a preliminary list of target journals to guide publication efforts and align with the project's strategic goals. Such publications will be useful in order to generate an increased level of awareness and constructive feedback from the scientific community and other relevant project stakeholders. To this end, the first submissions to conferences and papers will take place when substantial scientific results emerge from the project.

To enhance the dissemination of scientific outcomes, the project may consider open-access publications to ensure wider accessibility and engagement with the research findings. Presenting preliminary results at conferences and symposiums can also stimulate peer feedback and foster collaborative opportunities, while engaging with academic social networks like ResearchGate or Academia.edu can extend the reach of publications and facilitate discussions with fellow researchers globally. Additionally, summarising key findings in layman's terms through the project's website, blog posts, dedicated visuals (e.g., short infographic, paper poster), and newsletters can amplify the project's impact beyond the scientific community.

WR will be responsible for coordinating the project's academic efforts from a managerial perspective. A dedicated **academic publications matrix** will be created and shared with all partners, who should keep it updated. This will allow WR to monitor the publication efforts and avoid duplication of academic efforts (or conflict between partners).

- Academic partners are expected to take the leading role in drafting scientific articles, assisted by all relevant consortium members.
- Task leaders and people in charge of deliverables should make sure their work is ready for public release by the planned publication dates.
- All partners should keep updated the academic publications matrix and inform White Research when there is a major update (e.g., a submitted paper is accepted).

An indicative list of journals for the dissemination of scientific outputs is given in Table 6:

**Table 6 - Indicative journals for DE-CONSPIRATOR**

	Journal Title	Impact factor
1	Big Data and Society	5.29
2	EPJ Data Science	5.08
3	Technology in Society	4.75
4	Ethics and Information Technology	4.45
5	Journal of Democracy	4.42
6	New Media and Society	4.18
7	Frontiers in Psychology	3.80
8	European Journal of International Relations	3.56
9	American Journal of Political Science	3.45
10	Democratization	3.39
11	Plos One	3.24
12	Public Opinion Quarterly	2.49
13	International Journal of Public Opinion Research	1.44
14	Journal of Information Technology and Politics	0.88

Furthermore, the DE-CONSPIRATOR consortium supports open access to scientific publications. In this respect, DE-CONSPIRATOR will take all necessary actions to ensure free access to peer-reviewed articles resulting from the project. Such actions will include the following routes as these are described in the “Guidelines on Open Access to Scientific Publications and Research Data in Horizon 2020”<sup>10</sup>:

1. **Green open access:** deposit an electronic copy of the published version or the final manuscript accepted for publication in a scientific publication relating to the project’s foreground in an institutional or subject-based repository at the moment of publication. The beneficiaries will make their best efforts to ensure that this electronic copy becomes freely and electronically available to anyone through this repository within 6 months of publication. The exact selection of the repository, the terms under which access will be granted, and all other relevant details will be decided when the publication is available.
2. **Gold open access:** immediately provide the article in open access mode, with the payment of publication costs being shifted away from readers. The costs (Author Processing Charges) will be paid by the partners supporting the research. The partners’ budget may be used for open access costs regarding two high-impact papers that the consortium will decide should be freely available immediately after publication. Whether or not a part of the budget will be eventually allocated to

<sup>10</sup> Open Research Europe (2020). How it works. Available at: <https://open-research-europe.ec.europa.eu/about>

secure open access in two high-impact papers, will be decided in agreement with the Project Officer of DE-CONSPIRATOR, if needed.

In line with the DE-CONSPIRATOR approach that promotes open access to scientific publications, the **Open Research Europe** platform is considered quite relevant for the project. Open Research Europe is an open-access publishing platform that enables the free publication of research results that stem from Horizon Europe funding. The platform has a cross-disciplinary character and thus does not focus only on one field. Heurope beneficiaries can use the platform to easily publish their scientific work and thus remain compliant with the general open access terms of their EU funding. At the same time, the platform provides researchers with a space to promote and share their results, thus creating avenues of constructive scientific discussion. The DE-CONSPIRATOR consortium is expected to take advantage of the Open Research platform to satisfy the open access status of the project's scientific results.

### **Non-scientific publications**

Throughout the project, all partners are encouraged to create and disseminate non-scientific publications such as press releases, media articles, and appearances on TV or radio to enhance the project's visibility and reach stakeholders beyond the immediate circle of concern. Press releases will be crafted as needed, particularly to highlight significant milestones, progress, and upcoming events, ensuring timely and proactive communication with the broader public. These will not only target local media to draw attention to project meetings and events but also aim at informing EU-level stakeholders about the project's overall actions and outcomes, with room to spotlight stories from specific pilot cases.

Additionally, to aid communication efforts, the creation of factsheets and infographics is proposed. Initially, these will provide an overview of the project and its core methodologies. As the project advances, they will evolve to succinctly present results from the pilot areas, enriched with visual elements to facilitate understanding and engagement.

All partners are responsible for seeking out and exploiting publishing opportunities to promote the project's findings and impacts. Given the dynamic nature of such opportunities, no fixed quota for non-scientific publications is set; however, a record of all published materials will be maintained via a **Dissemination Reporting Template** on an ad-hoc basis: once a relevant material is published, the responsible partner should report it in the individual dissemination activities reporting. This ongoing, collective effort is crucial for ensuring the project's achievements and insights are widely recognized and utilized, amplifying its impact across various audiences.

### **Network of Interest**

The development and operation of the DE-CONSPIRATOR Network of Interest (NoI) is expected to contribute largely to the dissemination of the project's results. The NoI will be formed by M12 of the project, and will effectively be a multi-actor consulting body that gathers relevant experts from fields that are related to the project's objectives: political communication, international relations, social psychology, area studies (EU, China and Russia), security studies and computational social science.

Since biannual online meetings will be organised with NoI members, during which the DE-CONSPIRATOR partners (WP and task leaders) will present their work and receive feedback, partners will be able to take advantage of the professional networks of NoI members in order to ensure that certain results are further circulated to the respective communities of interested stakeholders. If necessary, the partners will engage

certain NoI members to present them with the core results of the project (e.g., Policy Toolkit, Disinform-meter) and plan with them pathways for further dissemination of these results. Given that NoI members will participate in the project pro bono, their support in the dissemination pathways will be voluntary and, therefore, will regard results that are considered milestones.

## Horizon Channels

To maximise impact, the DE-CONSPIRATOR partners will consider using a set of Horizon channels (according to the project's needs) to boost the visibility of certain results. Below is the list of available channels that the partners can use.

**Horizon Results Platform:** This is a platform for showcasing your research results, finding collaboration opportunities, and being inspired by others' results. The Horizon Results Platform TV provides additional support, including testimonials and interviews from project participants who have succeeded as entrepreneurs.

**Horizon Results Booster:** The Horizon Results Booster addresses projects eager to go beyond their Dissemination and Exploitation obligations towards strong societal impact and concretising the value of R&I activity for societal challenges. It offers guidance for creating a results portfolio with other projects, improving an existing exploitation plan, and developing a business plan.

**Horizon IP Scan:** Horizon IP Scan is a tailored, free-of-charge, first-line IP support service provided by the European Commission specifically designed to help European start-ups and other SMEs involved in EU-funded collaborative research projects to efficiently manage and valorise IP in collaborative R&I efforts.

**Horizon Dashboards:** The Horizon Dashboards is an intuitive and interactive knowledge platform offering user-friendly public access to statistics and data on EU research and innovation.

## Networks, synergies and multipliers

It is important for a Horizon research project like DE-CONSPIRATOR to leverage networks and collaborate with other initiatives and scientific communities to enhance its dissemination efforts. The Dissemination and Communication Plan (DCP) of the project aims to establish connections and build mutually beneficial relationships with high-impact initiatives and scientific communities relevant to its goals from the beginning. This approach is intended to amplify the impact of the project’s communication activities.

As the project progresses, new opportunities for joint efforts may emerge, and an updated version of this document will be provided at the 12-month mark (M12). Table 7 provides an initial list of key European initiatives and networks that align with DE-CONSPIRATOR’s objectives.

**Table 7 - DE-CONSPIRATOR’s indicative Networks**

DE-CONSPIRATOR consortium partners access to networks	
<b>Industry</b>	SoBigData Research Infrastructure; Carnegie Endowment for International Peace; AI for Good; Federation for Innovation in Democracy; Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism; European Network of Human Centered AI; Global Digital Human Rights Network; FARI Brussels; European Network of Digital Innovation Hubs; CitizenLab; Bellingcat
<b>Policymakers</b>	OECD AI Policy Observatory; JRC Big Data Analytics Platform; EU Disinfo Lab; European Digital Rights; European Foundation for Democracy

Additionally, specific ongoing or completed EU-funded projects have been identified for potential collaboration, and partners in the DE-CONSPIRATOR project are encouraged to establish and maintain communication channels with these projects. They can exchange valuable information and collectively advocate for shared goals and can take various forms such as cross-promotion of projects on each other’s websites, supportive interactions through social media channels, sharing of news, event invitations, press releases, and other relevant content across social media platforms, mutual participation in each other’s events, and hosting joint events like webinars, discussions, and conferences to pool resources and audiences. Table 8 provides an indicative list of these projects as a starting point for establishing meaningful interactions with DE-CONSPIRATOR.

**Table 8 - DE-COSNPIRATOR’s relevant EU-funded projects**

Acronym Name	Title	Short Description
1 <a href="#">ATHENA</a>	An exposition on THE forEign informatioN mAnipulation and interference	ATHENA will contribute to Europe’s defence against foreign information manipulation and interference (FIMI). It will examine at least 30 manifestations of FIMI in case studies, including the tactics, techniques and procedures (TTP) used by attackers.

2	<a href="#">ARM</a>	The Long Arms of Authoritarian States	By analysing the ways in which Russia, China, Ethiopia and Rwanda suppress information, the ARM project will conceptualise, identify and help address information suppression as foreign information manipulation and intervention (FIMI) by authoritarian states domestically, within Europe, and among diaspora communities residing in Europe.
3	<a href="#">RESONANT</a>	Multidisciplinary research cooperation on information suppression and diaspora communities as a target of Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference	The RESONANT project aims to create a better picture and understanding of State and non-State actors applying information suppression and to recommend strategies, tools and methodologies to reduce the impact and the vulnerability of the target groups, as the Diaspora Communities.
4	<a href="#">ADAC.io</a>	ATTRIBUTION – DATA- ANALYSIS – COUNTERMEASURES – INTEROPERABILITY: ADAC.IO	The purpose of this project is to protect democracy in the EU by strengthening the ability to deny the intended effects of FIMI on society. This will be achieved with focused research that brings together some of the principal actors behind the intellectual and technical components of FIMI as it has been developed by the EEAS and other EU Institutions.
5	<a href="#">RESPOND</a>	Rescuing Democracy from Political Corruption in Digital Societies	RESPOND proposes a novel interdisciplinary assessment of political corruption, seen here as conducts and acts, often proliferating in grey zones regarding legality, that results in decision-making bias and exclusion in the policy cycle.

## Monitoring, evaluation and reporting framework

### Monitoring and evaluation

An ongoing monitoring process is crucial for the successful implementation of the project's Dissemination and Communication Plan (DCP). This process is important for evaluating the overall effectiveness of the communication and dissemination strategy and its ability to achieve the set objectives. It involves assessing the necessity of certain activities and identifying areas that may need adjustments, such as enhancing engagement on more effective social media platforms or reducing focus on less popular dissemination channels.

This section provides a concise overview of the project's monitoring process and outlines the key KPIs that will be used to assess the progress and performance of the project. A series of key performance indicators (KPIs) have been selected to measure the impact of the dissemination and communication activities. These KPIs, detailed in the accompanying table, will serve as benchmarks for success. All metrics listed, whether from digital or traditional activities, will be taken into account and compared in the analysis via the utilisation of distinct methods and tools. Specifically, in the context of DE-CONSPIRATOR, data collection methods such as web and social media analytics tools will be employed to produce an impact-driven assessment.

However, at this point, it should be noted that these targets might need refinement as the project progresses and new insights are gained. All the metrics will be reviewed and, if necessary, will be updated in a revised version of the DCP by M12.

As the dissemination and communication manager, WR will oversee the monitoring and evaluation framework for DE-CONSPIRATOR, but all consortium partners are expected to actively participate in assessing the activities under the DCP. This collaborative approach will ensure that diverse perspectives contribute to a comprehensive evaluation.

**Table 9 - DCP Activities and KPIs**

Activity	KPI	Target M12	Target M36	Method	Timing
Website	Number of visitors	3.000	10.000	Website Metrics	Monthly basis
				Social Media Management Tool	
Social Media Profiles	Number of impressions	20.000	100.000	Social Media Metrics	Monthly basis
				Social Media Management Tool	
Promotional Video	Number of views	n/a	500	Social Media Metrics	Bi-monthly basis
Newsletters	Number of items published	2	6	Newsletter Tool	Bi-monthly basis
	Number of subscribers	150	500		
Press Releases	Number of news items published	n/a	n/a	News entries	Semester basis
Promotional Material	Number of distributions	30	100	Ad-hoc evaluation	Post-event evaluation
Publications in Scientific Journals	Number of publications	n/a	6	Academic publications matrix	Semester basis
Event Participation	Number of events	5	20	Individual Dissemination reporting template	Post-event evaluation
Network and synergies	Number of joint actions	5	20	Individual Dissemination reporting template	Semester basis
Network of Interest	Number of stakeholders	15	50	Individual Dissemination reporting template	Semester basis
Final Conference	Number of participants	n/a	50	Various Methods	Post-event evaluation

## Reporting

Reporting and documentation are important parts of the DE-CONSPIRATOR DCP. The aim is to ensure that we keep track of all the dissemination, communication, and stakeholder engagement activities that have been carried out. All partners are expected to report all their respective actions continuously by filling in the relevant reporting templates, which will be developed and distributed by WR.

Three documents have been designed and shared to keep track of the activities performed by the consortium partners.

**Table 10 - List with Annexes for Reporting**

Annex	Dissemination tool	Coverage	When
<b>Annex II</b>	Individual dissemination reporting template	All individual dissemination and communication activities carried out by the partners throughout the project	Continuous
<b>Annex III</b>	Event's reporting template	Milestone event organised by the partners (e.g., Concept Note Workshop, Policy info-days)	Within fifteen (15) days after the implementation of the event
<b>Annex IV</b>	Academic publications matrix	Any scientific or academic publication (e.g., academic paper in peer-reviewed journal) that is planned or achieved in the context of the project	Continuous

**Dissemination reporting template:** This template will record all the project's dissemination and communication activities. All partners should update the document continuously, at least monthly. Tracking the activities will ensure that any problems or gaps are observed early and mitigation measures are put in place to solve them.

**Event reporting template:** This template should be filled out for the DE-CONSPIRATOR events and conferences mentioned in the relevant section. The template should be sent to WR no later than 15 days after the event's implementation. Moreover, the events should always be communicated to WR in advance for promotional purposes.

**Academic publications matrix:** This template facilitates monitoring any academic publication that is planned, in progress, or published. The relevant academic partner should keep the matrix updated and inform WR if there is a major update.

Each project partner should immediately contact White Research should any risks be identified concerning communication and dissemination activities or in case problems arise during the implementation of publicity actions.

## Timeline and implementation plan

Communication activities will start at the beginning of the project and will be continuous during its implementation. On the other hand, dissemination activities will kick in when the first research findings and results occur and continue until the end of the project's mandate. For that reason, the project timeline is divided into **four (4) phases**, which are illustrated below, while Table 11 provides an overview of all dissemination and communication activities that will unfold during the project's implementation process.

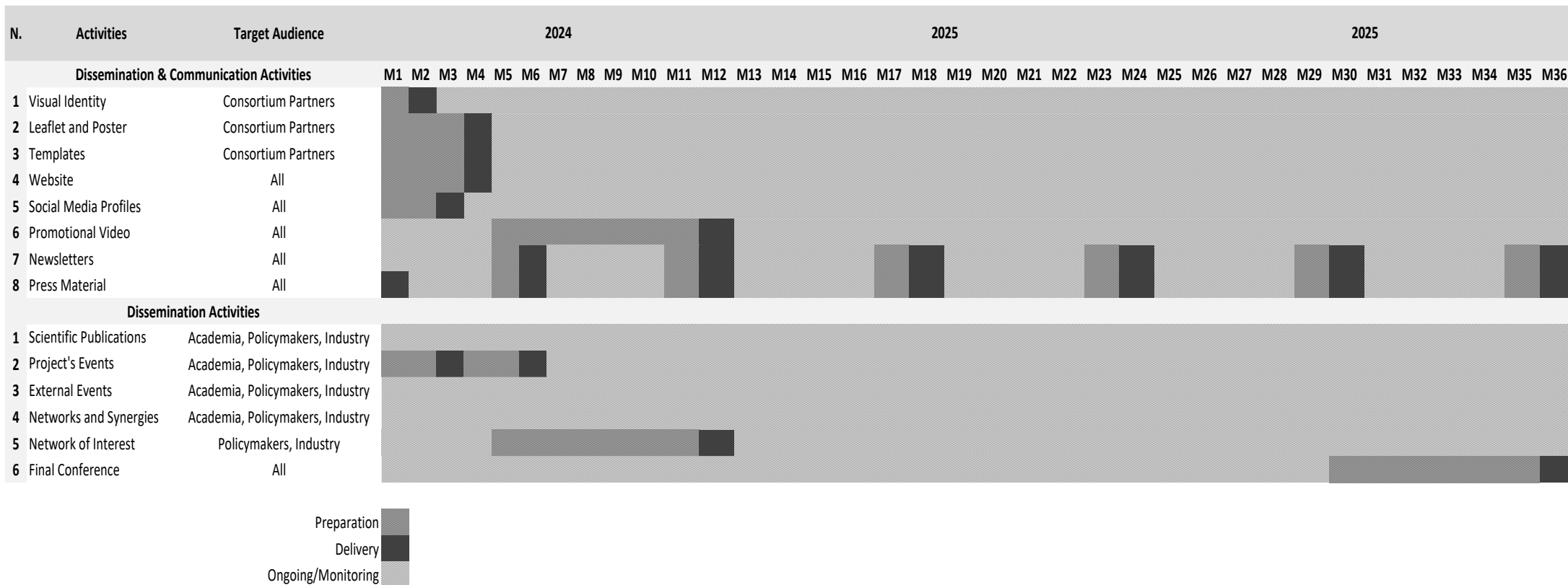
**First phase (M1-M12) - Early in the project:** this phase is focused on the general promotion of the project, putting emphasis on awareness raising, ensuring that the project is appropriately recognised on a wide scale and securing the interest and engagement of key stakeholders. The project's visibility will be achieved by designing the project logo and defining the visual identity, designing and developing the project website, launching the social media profiles of the project, and designing and creating the first communication materials. By month M6, all project tools and channels are expected to be in place. Locally, stakeholders will be informed about the project by using the tools mentioned above.

**Second phase (M12-M30) - During the project:** in this phase of the project, a series of activities and events will help continue to raise awareness, establish contacts and relations with new stakeholders as well as facilitate knowledge sharing with other similar projects. At the same time, the website and social media accounts will boost the online presence of the project, while DE-CONSPIRATOR will also leverage other projects and initiatives to create synergies, link with regional and EU-wide stakeholder networks, and enhance its visibility. In M12, an updated version of this strategy will be presented based on the experience gathered by then, which will help devise new actions, if necessary, or adapt planned ones.

**Third phase (M30-M36) - By the end of the project:** this phase involves wide and effective dissemination according to the updated DCP, building on the project's favourable reputation and establishing relationships with the target groups. The DE-CONSPIRATOR outcomes will be promoted constantly via online and offline activities. Further engagement with wider audiences will be pursued through publishing and presenting the project's results in external events, conferences and leading scientific journals. In line with previous efforts towards sustainability and exploitation, the DE-CONSPIRATOR's consortium will further raise awareness and promote the exchange of experiences and knowledge sharing with related initiatives, fostering the uptake of the project results. All findings of the project, the evidence and outputs, and their tools and services will be disseminated at national and European levels to gain more visibility, trust, and acceptance for future take-up.

**Fourth phase - Beyond the end of the project:** the continuous promotion of DE-CONSPIRATOR and its outcomes, even beyond the project completion, is a key aspiration of the consortium. All partners are expected to continue promoting the project outcomes through their everyday activities, networks and other means. Key stakeholders who participated in project activities are expected to act as multipliers in the adoption of the project's results. Finally, publications in popular media, together with the scientific papers and the project's reports, will further exploit the DE-CONSPIRATOR development framework. This part of communication and dissemination will be closely intertwined with the activities foreseen under Task 8.2 named "Exploitation and sustainability of results".

**Table 11 - Dissemination and Communication Activities Overview**



## References

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## Annexes

### Annex I – Media Press Kit

Annex presents the draft version of the DE-CONSPIRATOR's Media Press Kit. By the time of writing this document, the complete and consolidated version of Press Kit was under preparation (to be delivered on M4). The complete version of the Kit, which includes all promotional items (e.g., Poster, Leaflet, Templates), will be presented in detail in the updated version of the project's DCP on M12 (D8.2).

#### The DE-CONSPIRATOR Logo

##### Primary Logo



##### Secondary Logo



## FAVICON



## Logo with Background Colour



## Colour Identity



RGB: 22 / 34 / 89  
 HEX: # 162259  
 CMYK: 100 / 85 / 10 / 45



RGB: 0 / 159 / 227  
 HEX: # 009FE3  
 CMYK: 75 / 25 / 0 / 0



RGB: 255 / 0 / 0  
 HEX: # FF0000  
 CMYK: 0 / 95 / 100 / 0



RGB: 242 / 242 / 242  
 HEX: # F2F2F2  
 CMYK: 6 / 4 / 5 / 0

## The use of EU – Logo/Emblem

The European Union (EU) has numerous funding programmes which support projects and initiatives in various domains across the EU and beyond.

All beneficiaries, managing authorities and implementing partners of EU funding must use the EU emblem in their communication to acknowledge the support received under EU programmes and contribute to the visibility of the EU on the ground.

Recipients of EU funding have a general obligation to communicate and raise EU visibility. An important obligation in this context is the **correct and prominent display of the EU emblem**, in combination with a **simple funding statement**, mentioning the EU support<sup>11</sup>.

The EU emblem is the single most important visual brand used to acknowledge the origin and ensure the visibility of EU funding. Apart from the emblem, no other visual identity or logo may be used to highlight EU support.

- Recipients of EU funding have the obligation to ensure that the EU emblem can easily be seen in a given context. This context might vary and depends on many factors. Due attention needs to be given, for example, to the emblem's size, positioning, colour and quality relative to its context.

<sup>11</sup> European Commission. (2021). *The use of the EU emblem in the context of EU programmes 2021-2027*. Available [here](#).

- Recipients of EU funding must be able to demonstrate and explain how they ensure prominence for the EU emblem and the accompanying funding statement at all stages of a programme, project or partnership.

The European Union emblem must not be modified or merged with any other graphic element or text. If other logos are displayed in addition to the EU emblem, the latter must be at least the same size as the biggest of the other logos. Apart from the EU emblem, no other visual identity or logo can be used to highlight the EU support.

### Vertical Logo



**Funded by  
the European Union**

### Horizontal Logo



**Funded by  
the European Union**

### Funding acknowledgement

The following text must always accompany all written dissemination and communication efforts of the project:

*“This project has received funding from the European Union’s Horizon Research and Innovative Programme under Grant Agreement № 101132671.”*

## Annex II – Individual dissemination activities template

The individual dissemination activities template is provided in .xls format (live document) and **can be accessed by all partners [here](#)** (shared folder of the DE-COSNPIRATOR project in Google docs).

## Annex III – Events’ reporting template

### Event’s Aggregate Data

Title	
Date	
Venue	
Organisers	
Audience (number and type)	
Duration	

### Stakeholders reached

What type of stakeholders were engaged?

- Define the type(s) of stakeholders reached (policy, SMEs, general public etc.)
- How many people attended?
- How many women attended?

### Event’s goals, objectives and relevance with DE-CONSPIRATOR

- What were the key objectives of this event/activity? (e.g., to gather ideas, gather data, find new stakeholders, etc).
- Was the event relevant to DE-CONSPIRATOR?
- To what extent?

### Organisation of the event

In the case of organizing a project’s event. For participation in external events, do not complete this section.

How was the event/activity organized?

- What steps were taken to set up the activity/event?
- What was the location of the event and why was this area selected?

### Dissemination activities

- How was the event/activity promoted?
- Was project material used for promotion?
- Was the DE-CONSPIRATOR project promoted during the event?

### Structure of the event (short minutes)

Description of the event’s sessions.

- What did the event/activity consist of?

- What tools were used? Why were these selected?

For participation in external events, please report what you did at the event.

### **Outcomes of the event**

- What information or data was gathered as part of this activity? (a brief summary of the information/data gathered is sufficient)
- What ideas were generated? (brief explanations are sufficient)

### **Evaluation of the event**

What are the main impressions and observations that you made?

- Were there any challenges with this event/activity?
- What were the key successes of this activity?
- If re-deploying this event/activity, how will/would you do it differently?

### **ANNEX: Attachments**

- The list of participants (if consent to store and share data was given)
- A scanned copy of the list of participants signed by each participant (if possible)
- The agenda of the event
- Photos (please make sure to have the consent of participants to use them)
- Presentations (if applicable)
- Copies of materials used to promote the event (e.g., links to press releases, videos, posts, leaflets etc.

