ERA4Health Partnership

D0.4.1 Dissemination, Exploitation and Communication (DEC) Plan and Strategy

WP4

Technical References

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##	Author 4	Partner short name	DD Month 20YY

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1 *PU = Public*
 SEN = Sensitive

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Introduction

To maximize the impact of any endeavour, effective communication and dissemination are needed. Efficient communication is critical for informing the media and the general public about projects, results and activities using accessible language. As a result, public awareness is created and visibility is enhanced. Valuable dissemination is intended to make sure results and information are accurately available to the scientific community, funding agencies, policy makers and industry. Exploitation of research project results is necessary to ensure impact at scientific, societal and economic level, as required under Horizon Europe.

To ensure immediate success and lasting impact beyond the end of the project, ERA4Health requires a clear dissemination, exploitation, and communication strategy. The impact strategy will be detailed in this Dissemination, Exploitation and Communication Plan (DEC) (D0.4.1). The Plan will identify the key target groups (See Section 2.1.1 of GA).

The DEC will also elaborate the key objectives of the impact strategy:

Goal 1: raising awareness, interest and informing the various stakeholders and the general public on the ERA4Health results, calls published, calls and funded project results, data and metadata.

Goal 2: engaging in a dialogue with policy makers and other R&I funders to foster ERA4Health both for a better alignment of national/regional and EC research priorities and new collaborative research networks.

Goal 3: financially support a joint transnational research project portfolio.

Goal 4: foster the engagement of citizens in the research and ensure the utility of project results.

Goal 5: achieve the political commitment at national/regional level for participation in the long term, assuring partnership sustainability.

To pave the way for achieving effectual communication and dissemination during ERA4Health partnership's time frame, the following will be established:

1. **A communication team**, which will be consulted for content, prioritization and actions that need to be carried out;

2. **A detailed, yet flexible, communication and dissemination strategy plan**. Such a plan, hereby presented, includes clear objectives, detailed analysis of the relevant target audience and the relevant content for each of them, the tools and platforms that will be used for communication and dissemination, and a general workflow and timeline of actions;

3. **Key performance indicators (KPIs)** to enable the measurement of successful implementation of the strategy plan. This deliverable will elaborate on ERA4Health's DEC Plan and Strategy and the related KPIs.

Work Package 4 (WP4) on "Communication, Dissemination and Exploitation" seeks to facilitate effective communication and dissemination of ERA4Health Partnership information to relevant stakeholders and to ensure the visibility of ERA4Health, its funded research projects and constituent networks. It is led by partner EV-ILVO, with contributions mainly from task leaders CSO-MOH and FICYT.

Table 1: Overview of communication, dissemination and exploitation activities in ERA4Health

	Communication	Dissemination	Exploitation
Core objective	Inform, promote and communicate ERA4Health's activities and results, as well as those of ERA4Health's funded projects, to multiple audiences	Make ERA4Health's knowledge and results public and available to others who can make best use of them, with the aim of maximising the impact of research project results	Make concrete use of ERA4Health's results for commercial, societal or political purposes, e.g. within R&I, industry, policy, health care sectors or civil society
Timing	From the start of ERA4Health until the end	At any time, and as soon as ERA4Health has results	As soon as ERA4Health has exploitable results

Objectives

A successful communication, dissemination and exploitation strategy will enable exposure to ERA4Health's activities and outcomes, enhance visibility, encourage engagement and increase the impact and sustainability of the network in the long run. More specifically, the following specific objectives are defined:

- Communication and dissemination of results and outcomes from Joint Transnational Calls' (JTCs) projects to various stakeholders
- Creating public awareness and enhancing visibility and transparency of ERA4Health's activities and outcomes
- Assuring availability of information from ERA4Health to the scientific community, funding agencies and policymakers
- Increasing the sustainability of the Partnership
- Increasing the overall impact of the Partnership
- Helping explain the societal relevance of the scientific research areas of ERA4Health.

7 Year Work Plan

Target Audience

Key Messages
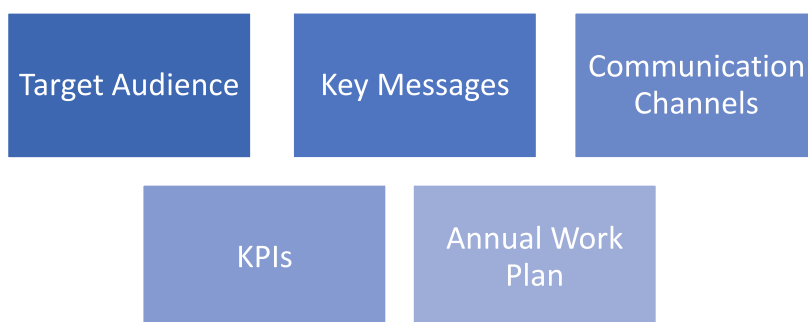
Communication Channels

KPIs

Annual Work Plan

Figure 1: The components of the 7-year ERA4Heealth partnership's communication and dissemination strategic plan described in this document:
- Target audience
- Key messages
- Communication channels
- KPIs
- Annual work plan

Target audiences

The first step for successful outreach and interaction is to identify and characterize the various target audiences that need to be addressed. Various stakeholders have diverse interests, needs for different types of content, access or preference for different communication and dissemination platforms and require different sorts of activities and engagement.

 The main target audiences of ERA4Health's communication and dissemination actions are summarised in the table below:

Table 2: Target stakeholder groups

TP1	Research and innovation ecosystem including academia (universities, research organisations, public and private research institutions).
TP2	Industry (pharma, biotech, ICT), including spin-offs, start-ups, SMEs and large industries.
TP3	Clinicians and clinical settings
TP4	Public health organisations
TP5	Civil society and end users (patient/citizen advocacy groups, formal and informal care organisations, health professionals' entities, international organizations, NGOs)
TP6	Research funding organisations (national and regional)
TP7	Other sectorial Ministries, in particular Ministries of Health and Ministries of Education
TP8	Other European partnerships and European/international initiatives
TP9	European Commission: DG RTD, DG SANTE, DG CONNECT, DG REGIO, the Joint Research Centre (JRC), DG DEVCO, DG TAXUD and DG ECFIN.

Communication and dissemination tools and platforms

Communication

Communication activities aim to promote the ERA4Health Partnership towards a wide audience. Therefore, these activities will focus on the scope and impacts of the Partnership on society, transforming the complex jargon into contents addressing audiences in less technical terms with the objective to guarantee outreach and enhance its visibility. On site and face to face communication actions will be combined with digital actions. This DEC comprises activities for a proactive communication effort, which include maintaining a strategic and dynamic calendar to prepare for key events, working with a network of communication contacts and reinforcing the messages both in terms of content and in the mode of communicating. Active promotion and communication activities will include online and non-electronic communication methods and tools as appropriate. Special events as well as publications are core activities.

The main communication tools and channels to be used to disseminate the Partnership results are presented below (all KPIs mentioned are for a period of 7 years):

1. **Brochure and general poster**- will serve the purpose of reflecting the status of the project and to support the presentations at events and the individual meetings carried out. _KPIa: 1 Brochure and 1 generic poster._

2. **Website**- will be designed to support and reinforce the rest of the above-mentioned dissemination activities. The website will initially contain general information such as description, objectives, participants, activities, contact links, calls documents, funded projects, etc. In addition, as the project evolves, the website will be updated with project news, and downloadable versions of all public documents generated by the project will be made available. The website will contain the information on calls, funded projects, trainings, etc. _KPIb: 45,000 visits_.

3. **Social media**: The developed contents (on the website, press releases, poster, etc.) will be shared on social networks such as Twitter, LinkedIn or Research Gate. Promotional videos, recorded webinars, info days and lectures will be shared on a designated YouTube channel for ERA4Health. This will be done through the institutions, researchers and companies' accounts. _KPIc: LinkedIn: +1000 followers, Twitter: +2000 followers, >4000 interactions and shared in social media; KPI YouTube: +1000 subscribers_.

4. **Webinar strategy**: Webinars are one of the best ways for knowledge sharing. A clear strategy for a webinar series will: determine the purpose of the webinar; focus on the value of the webinar; and will create excellent content. One of the main advantages of the webinar is that it is interactive, so the lectures and content can be tailored to the specific audience. The webinars will be organized per call at European level. One webinar should be addressed to the calls and topics and how to prepare a proposal. Additional webinars could be organised at national, regional level, focusing on different stakeholders. The webinar strategy will involve WP11 (Launch of a JTC). _KPId of 100-300 attendees in average. 1 webinar per call at European level_.

5. **Newsletters**- around 2 newsletters per year will be generated and digital submitted to a large number of subscribers in compliance with GDPR. _KPIe- 1000 subscribers_.

6. **Individual presentations and meetings with key stakeholders**: To achieve the ERA4Health objectives, it will be essential to bring new partners into the partnership and to find synergies with other organisations and initiatives. To this end, specific meetings and/or workshops with future partners and other initiatives will be arranged. _KPIf: 100 stakeholders_

7. **Additional documents**: An innovative and visionary SRIA for ERA4Health has been generated before the start of the Partnership and will be updated during the lifetime of the Partnership. The SRIA will be available on the website and will be communicated to all potential stakeholders, to inform them of the future strategy that the EU is developing in collaboration with international entities to improve the health research in Europe. _KPIg1: SRIA publication, KPIg2: SRIA updated_

8. **MS Teams**: The internal communication of the Partnership will be done through MS Teams, a proprietary business communication platform which offers workspace chat and video conferencing, file storage, and application integration.

Dissemination

The dissemination activities will aim to reach out the Partnership key results to the right target audience. The most important dissemination activities in ERA4Health are:

- **JTC Webinars – info days**- to disseminate the open calls at European level. _KPId: 1 webinar per call_.
- **Workshops-** with stakeholders, for different topics relates to update the SRIA as well as the Annual Work Plan. _KPIh: 6 workshops; attendees per workshop >20_.
- **Online and physical training courses**: in cooperation with WP20, several trainings will be carried out to early career scientists, patients and investigators in clinical studies, in different topics such as: RRI, IICS, thematic research topics, data standardisation, open data, patient engagement, regulatory affairs, etc. _KPIi: 14; attendees per training >100_
- **Events:** participation in events, Partnership Stakeholder Forum among others. Each year the CT will map and decide on the 3 most important events to attend. _KPIj: 3 events per year_.
- **Summer schools, hosting and supporting ECSs by interested research institutes. Breakfast club (regular online target seminars).** This activity will also involve WP20.
- **ERA4Health Early Career Network**: to foster the interaction, capacity and growth of Early Career Scientists (ECS) involved in ERA4Health funded projects. _KPIk: 200+ ECSs_.

The following table includes the target audiences, the corresponding project key results and the dissemination channels to be used:

Table 3: Target groups for dissemination actions

Target audience	Dissemination channel	ERA4Health key result
Research and innovation ecosystem including academia (universities, research organisations, public and private)	Web site, Webinars - Info days, Newsletter, Social-media, Events, Online Trainings – capacity Building Workshops, ER4Health ECN, Summer schools, hosting and support ECs, breakfast club	KR1, KR2, KR3, KR4, KR7, KR8
Industry (pharma, biotech, ICT), including spin-offs, start-ups, SMEs and large industries	Web site, Webinars - Info days, Newsletter, Social media, Events, Online Trainings – capacity Building Workshops	KR1, KR2, KR4, KR8
Clinicians and clinical settings	Web site, Webinars - Info days, Newsletter, Social media, Events, Online Trainings – capacity Building, Workshops	KR1, KR2, KR3, KR6, KR8
Public health organisations	Web site, Webinars - Info days, Newsletter, Social media, Events, Online Trainings – capacity Building, Workshops	KR1, KR2, KR3, KR4, KR5, KR8

Civil society and end users (patient/citizen advocacy groups, formal and informal care organisations, health professionals' entities, international organizations, NGOs)	Web site, Newsletter, Social media, Events, Online Trainings – capacity Building, Workshops	KR6, KR8
Research funding organisations (National and Regional)	Web site, Webinars - Info days, Newsletter Social media, Events, Online Trainings – capacity Building, Workshops	KR1, KR2, KR3, KR5, KR8
Policy-makers Other sectorial Ministries, in particular Ministries of Health and Education, European Commission	Web site, Webinars - Info days, Newsletter, Social media, Events, Online Trainings – capacity Building Workshops	KR1, KR5, KR3, KR8
Other Partnerships	Web site, Newsletter, Social media, Events, Online Trainings – capacity Building Workshops	KR1, KR2, KR3, KR8

Table 4: Key Project Results

Nº	Key Project Result
KPR1	Adopted SRIA to guide Annual Work Plan and set priorities for call topics
KPR2	Joint Transnational research portfolio
KPR3	Adequate framework and capacities for funding and performing multicountry IICS
KPR4	Support of new collaborative research projects
KPR5	Alignment with national/regional and EC research priorities
KPR6	Research produced is enhanced through involvement of citizens
KPR7	Early Career Scientists (ECSs) involvement in transnational projects
KPR8	A new approach to RRI is developed and lessons shared

Exploitation and sustainability

Exploitation activities aim to promote the use of the key project results, in this case they will aim to engage new stakeholders to the Partnership, increase political commitment at national level, and gather the necessary research infrastructure required for the long-term sustainability of ERA4Health. With this aim, WP 3.3 and WP 3.6 (T3.6.3 General Workshop on Sustainability) under Pillar III will be carried out to guarantee the continuity of the programme. Furthermore, the launch of the first pilot call on IICS in Phase 1 will path the way for launching larger IICSs calls in the following years.

A long-term sustainable Partnership cannot rely on research funds alone, but requires a wider political endorsement and investments. Therefore, it is important to ensure a highly efficient communication and dissemination strategy following relevant policy processes to ensure timely input to discussions. During the 7 years ERA4Health proposed programme, the long-term sustainability will be developed by taking advantage of political opportunities. The current political context opens up for new possibilities to discuss the expectations for Europe in terms of a joint funding programme as a one-stop-shop for researchers. It is important to ensure a highly efficient communication and dissemination strategy following relevant policy processes to ensure timely input into discussions.

Work plan

This section will concentrate on the 7-year communication and dissemination strategic plan meaning for the whole duration of ERA4Health. This strategic plan has been discussed and decided upon by the newly formed *Communication Team (CT)* of ERA4Health. The CT is headed by the WP4 communication and dissemination leader (EV-ILVO) and includes, amongst others, representatives from WP4 task leaders (FICYT and CSO-MOH) and WP4 task contributors. The work plan includes the activities that will be carried out, as well as the workflow for these activities.

The following actions and activities will take place in the duration of ERA4Health: a brochure and a general poster will be issued, 14 or more e-newsletters will be issued (2-3 per year), 21 events will be organized (3 per year), routine presence on social media (LinkedIn, Twitter), routine updates of the Partnership's website, webinars will be held (1 per call), active representation of the Partnership in various events and meeting.

Table 5: ERA4Health Communication and Dissemination General Annual Work Plan

Newsletters, Brochure & Poster	Webite	Social Media	Public and ECRs Engagement	Events & Meetings

• **Jan** - Last year's JTC results, abstracts of funded projects, announcement of open calls
• **May** - Midterm seminars, announcement of foresight symposium
• **Sep** - Foresight seminar, announcement of upcoming call
• Each newsletter may include additional material depending on activities that take place
	• Possible topics: Monthly updates on the partnership's activities
	• Publication of success stories, call results, newsltters, upcoming calls, foresight seminars and symposia, capacity building activities, ECR activities, and any other news of ERA4Health that could be of interest to the website visitors.
		• **Twitter** - routine presence including both ERA4Health-generated tweets and re-tweets of related initiatives or infomation that may be of interest to ERA4Health stakeholders.
		• At least 1 ERA4Health generated tweet per week.
		• Twitter is mainly useful for announcements and visibility, but also for staying in touch and disseminating outcomes from funded projects.
		• **LinkedIn -** routine presence and encouragment for networking.
		• At least 1 post per week.
		• **YouTube-** Uploading new content whenever it's availabe. Sharing the video to all of the registered guest (in case of webinr/ conference), website, and social media.
			• **Public** - Aiming for one of the following events to take place each year:
			  • Webinars - on topics funded by ERA4Health.
			  • Lectures - take advantage of high profile experts in the foresight symposia to give lecture to local lay audience (face-to-face meeting dependent).
			• **ECRs** - Designated activities for ECRs during physical meetings, symposia, conferences, and online networking events.
			• Best poster contest, best short video, etc.
				• 6 success stories will be published annually (2 of each research field of ERA4Health)
				• Success stories will cover excellent outcomes of ERA4Health-funded projects, technical developments, new initiatives resulting from ERA4Health and more.
				• Once a year, mapping of all upcoming scientific and professional conferences and events, and deciding on ERA4Health's representative for each of them.

In order to increase the efficiency and productivity of any process, it is important to define a clear workflow. In the case of the communication and dissemination agenda, a clear workflow needs to be outlined for each of the activities described above. The workflow depicts the sources for content for the various means of communication, as well as the distribution methods, where relevant. An efficient workflow requires effective communication between the different work packages of ERA4Health. The most important links to other WPs will also be highlighted in a common platform (ERA4Health Intranet), visible to other WPs thus, reinforcing and fostering internal communication flow. A common ERA4Health calendar will enable other WPs members to be informed about ERA4Health's communication activities, and to add their contributions for dissemination.

Newsletters

The ERA4Health newsletters, which are published at least two times a year, have fairly clear content outline (as shown in Table 5). A general scheme of the sources of content for the newsletters is presented in Figure 2A. More specifically, the following are the sources for the detailed content: the information for presenting the results of the JTCs in the January issue will be provided by the Joint Call Secretariats (JCSs) and WP12 subtask 2A.3.3.1 leader (including the titles, abstracts, graphical abstracts, composition of the

consortia and possibly pictures of the coordinators); various announcement on calls and other activities will be corresponded with the coordination unit; abstracts of the foresight symposia talks, which will be published in the September issue will be provided by the organizers; additional content will be provided by the other WP leaders, the coordination unit, the teams monitoring the funded projects, and any other partners that may have relevant content to share. The newsletters of ERA4Health may target different audiences, hence some will be disseminated internally within the partnership, and some will be disseminated externally to other target groups.

While Figure 2A describes the sources for the content of the newsletters, it is also important to take into account the means of disseminations of the newsletters themselves. Figure 2B depicts the various means used to distribute the newsletters: personal subscription, the ERA4Health website, an email to the ERA4Health partners asking them to disseminate the newsletter to the relevant national and regional stakeholders and, finally, through ERA4Health's social media platforms.
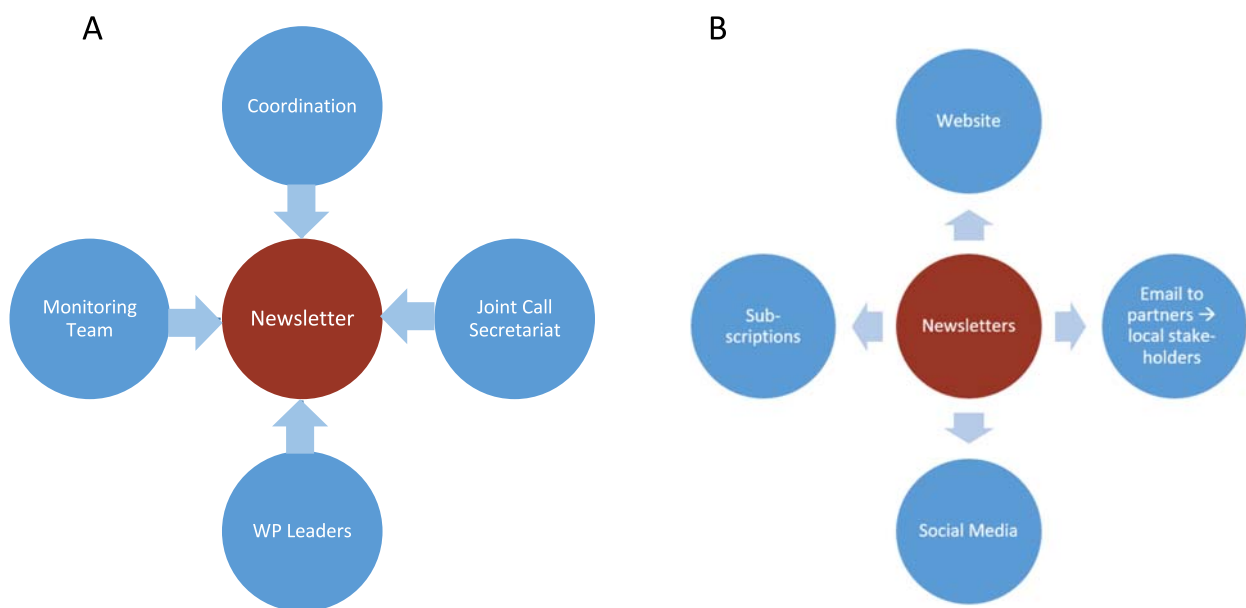

Figure 2: Communication and dissemination workflow of ERA4Health Newsletters.

A. Sources of content for the newsletters.

B. Means of distribution of the newsletters.

Social Media

Social media has become a major means for increasing an organization's online visibility, interacting with stakeholders, posting announcements and news, and for disseminating results and outcomes. ERA4Health will use three main social media platforms: LinkedIn, Twitter and YouTube. **Twitter**, is a dynamic platform used for short announcements. The two main types of tweets (Twitter messages) are original tweets from ERA4Health, announcing and disseminating various activities and events, and re-tweets of relevant information from related initiatives or researchers. The original tweets are based on information from the coordination unit, information of events and activities organized by ERA4Health and any related actions from ERA4Health partners. The re-tweets are mainly of messages from ERA4Health-related initiatives, which are relevant to various stakeholders following ERA4Health's twitter account, and ERA4Health-funded researchers that tweet about their progress, meetings, outcomes and publications – these are all followed and decided on by the Twitter account manager.

Figure 3: Workflow describing the sources of information for twitter tweets.

Another social media platform that will be used by ERA4Health is **LinkedIn**. LinkedIn is a platform mainly used for professional networking and engagement, therefore the target audience of this platform is the scientific community. An ERA4Health LinkedIn Community will be established for the scientific community (including ECRs and related European projects and organisations), and its content will be provided by the scientific community itself, as well as by the administrators of the LinkedIn Group (WP4 members and others).

A **YouTube** channel for ERA4Health will be created and will host webinars, recorded lectures, info-days and promotional videos.

The social media account managers will be nominated by WP4 members.

Success stories

In order to shed light on ERA4Health's achievements and impact, it is crucial to follow-up on the funded research projects and disseminate their outcomes and results. Furthermore, to emphasize ERA4Health's impact and sustainability, we will also present newly formed collaborations and initiatives arising from ERA4Health-initiated activities. To do so, we have decided to annually publish 6 short articles illuminating excellent outcomes from ERA4Health-funded projects, which may include interesting scientific results or publications, new methods or techniques or any other results of relevance and interest to our various stakeholders, such as patients, industry and the public. The sources for these so called 'success stories', will mainly be the monitoring of the funded projects, the JCS, and the researchers themselves in collaboration with WP4 for the communication and dissemination of these success stories.
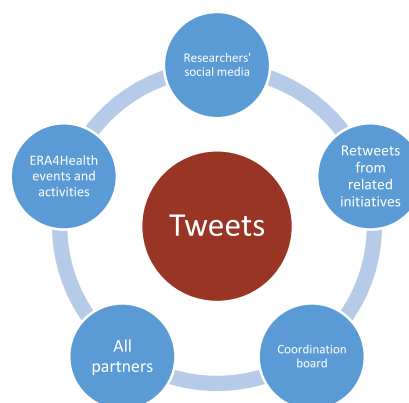
These 'success stories' will be disseminated through various platforms to increase visibility and impact, such as ERA4Health's website (a dedicated section), the newsletters, social media and special webinars or lectures that may be organized to present the story in a more personal way. *KPII: 20 articles for 7 years.*

Capacity building

The capacity building activities of ERA4Health (WP20) will also use the different communication platforms of ERA4Health on the one hand, and will raise awareness and visibility to ERA4Health on the training platforms on the other.

ECR and public engagement

Various activities are planned to take place in order to increase visibility and engagement with the general public and Early Career Researchers (ECR). The ideas for these activities will be discussed in the ERA4Health CT. The engagement activities and events will be disseminated through the various platforms relevant to the target audience. The planned poster contests and short video competitions for the ECRs will be disseminated through the website, the LinkedIn Group, as well as through dedicated emails to the ERA4Health-funded researchers. The public events, on the other hand, will be disseminated through the website, Twitter, relevant lay organizations and ERA4Health partners.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Monitoring performance is important for measuring the progress and success of the DEC Plan and Strategy. For monitoring this pre-defined KPIs will be used. KPIs are a set of quantifiable measurements that allow simple follow-up and measurement of achievement of the outlined goals. The following KPIs form will be used in order to follow-up on the execution of the plan both annually and at the end of the Partnership.

Conclusion

This deliverable 0.4.1 document presents the communication and dissemination plan and strategy for ERA4Health Partnership. The five main pillars of this plan are the target audience of the communication and dissemination activities, the content to be disseminated, the means by which the content will be distributed to the target audience, the workflow that depicts the sources of the content and the means by which some of the communication tools will be distributed and the KPIs, that provide an instrument to measure the progress and success of the DEC Plan and Strategy.

Communication is a versatile and dynamic process and therefore, it should be emphasized that this DEC plan and strategy is a flexible living document, which may be adapted and modified in response to changes that may occur in several aspects related to the plan, such as the involved target audience, technology and means of dissemination, etc. Regular meetings of the CT, together with systematic monitoring using the described KPIs will ensure the communication, dissemination and exploitation of ERA4Health are carried out diligently and that the plan is appropriately adjusted if needed.