

DIGI-net

Science Communication Plan

of the COST Action CA 21107

Work inequalities in later life redefined by digitalization

(DIGI-net)

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COST (European Cooperation in Science and Technology) is a funding agency for research and innovation networks. Our Actions help connect research initiatives across Europe and enable scientists to grow their ideas by sharing them with their peers. This boosts their research, career and innovation.

List of Abbreviations

CG	Core Group
DB	Dissemination Board
MC	Management Committee
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OWRG	Older Workers Reference Group
SCC	Science Communication Coordinator
SCP	Science Communication Plan
SMEs	Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises
STSMs	Short Term Scientific Missions
TSs	Training Schools
VM	Virtual Mobility
WG	Working Group
WPE	Workshop Policy Event
YRIs	Young Researchers and Innovators

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1. Introduction

Science Communication Plan (the Plan) addresses the key aspects of the communication, dissemination & valorization strategies for the COST Action CA 21107 ‘Work inequalities in later life redefined by digitalization’ (DIGI-net). This document was drafted in coherence with regulatory framework COST Actions:

- Annotated Rules for COST Actions, Brussels, 27 July 2021, COST 094/21
- Toolbox for the Science Communication Coordinator: A leadership role in all COST Actions, September 2022
- Memorandum of Understanding for the implementation of the COST Action ‘Work inequalities in later life redefined by digitalization’ (DIGI-net) CA21107

The relevance and social importance of studying the influence of digitalization on work inequalities in later life imply developing collaborations with public policy officials, international policy bodies, non-academic professionals, civil society NGOs, trade unions, management of organizations, and older workers themselves. The ambitious goals of DIGI-net require a detailed structuring of stakeholder groups and, following this, the right choice of channels and tools that will be used for communication, dissemination & valorization of research results.

The Plan represents approaches to evaluating and monitoring the efficacy of implementing the communication, dissemination, and valorization strategies in terms of achieving DIGI-net's goals. The proposed group of metrics will be an essential basis for reviewing and revising the Plan. Based on analyzing these metrics, the Action Core Group (CG) and Management Committee (MC) members will discuss changes to the Plan yearly.

Essential components of the Plan are recommendations on using DIGI-net and COST brand books, communication outlets (booklets, leaflets, etc.), and guidance on Acknowledging COST.

We define the concepts of communication, dissemination, and valorization to more accurately structure the main groups of stakeholders, channels, and tools within the framework of DIGI-net¹.

Communication should be divided into two groups:

Internal communication (coordination of activities among DIGI-net members).
Audience: CG, MC and WG members;

¹Toolbox for the Science Communication Coordinator: A leadership role in all COST Actions, September 2022

External communication (engages with a wider audience via mainstream channels). Audience: general public, civil society, citizens. For external communication non specialist language should be used.

Dissemination targets specific audiences to bring knowledge and expertise on a topic. Audience: peers, industry, policymakers. For dissemination scientific and specialist language should be used.

Valorization makes concrete use of results for researchers or commercial valorization and knowledge transfer. Audience: industry including SMEs.

2. Project Description

The aim of DIGI-net is to overcome critical gaps in conceptual innovation on the influence of digitalisation on work inequalities in later life, in order to address the research-policy disconnect and tackle work inequalities in later life redefined by digitalisation.

DIGI-net will enhance scientific knowledge by integrating the different disciplines and schools of thought, by developing collaborations with wide range of stakeholders (Fig. 1).

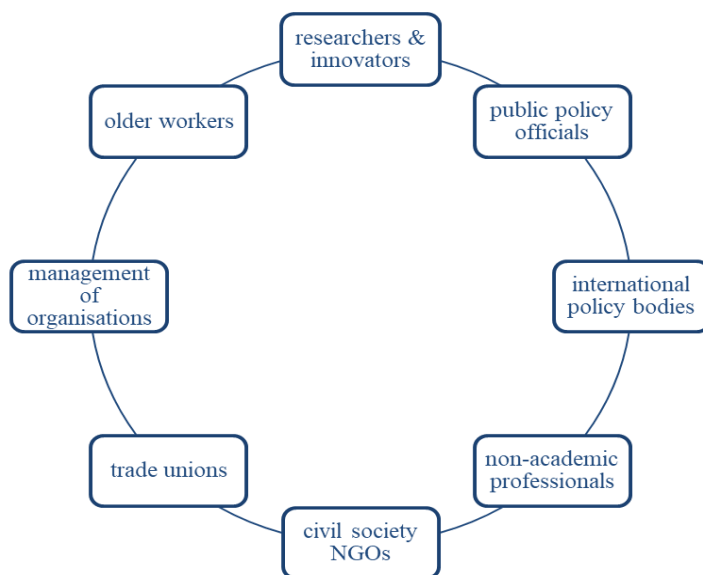


Fig. 1. Key stakeholders of DIGI-net

Expected deliverables include:

- the creation of a **web-site**. It will act as a platform for the Action and become an international ‘hub’ for the study of ageing at work in the era of digitalization, by sharing and publishing knowledge, connecting researchers, stakeholders and activists in the field;

- the creation of a **depository database** of scientific measures and tools for the assessment of inequalities and challenges of aging and digitalization, as well as for good practices. Policy reports will be posted in order to make links outside the research community to address policy makers and stakeholders;
- the facilitation of **research and dissemination events**, including Short Term Scientific Missions (STSMs) and scientific Training Schools (TS) for Young Researchers and Innovators (YRIs) and established researchers, public conferences and policy workshops hosting experts and relevant stakeholders; and
- a series of **publications**, including scientific reports, conference proceedings, academic publications, collaborative recommendation papers derived from Action Working Groups, and an edited book.

The network of DIGI-net includes more than representatives from 35 countries.

3. Project Visual Identity

Creating a visual identity is essential to recognizing and promoting COST Action CA21107 DIGI-net. In this regard, before the first meeting of MC members in Brussels, on October 20, 2022, four variants of the logos of this Action were created. During the meeting, all MC members had the opportunity to vote. As result, a logo of DIGI-net was chosen:



This color palette will become the basis for creating information materials about COST Action CA 21107 ‘Work inequalities in later life redefined by digitalization’. For recognition, the templates of following documents will be developed: letters, agenda, minutes, PP presentations, leaflets/posters, conference proceedings, briefing papers, newsletters, and other materials.

4. Scope of Work and Objectives

The Plan will structure the communication, dissemination & valorization strategies for the COST Action CA 21107 ‘Work inequalities in later life redefined by digitalization’ (DIGI-net).

An Action Dissemination Board (DB) develops and executes the Science Communication Plan. The members of DB are:

- Science Communication coordinator (responsible for leading the DB)

- Research dissemination member (responsible for disseminating peer-review publications)
- Policy dissemination member (most likely a policy stakeholder, responsible for coordinating the production and dissemination of policy analysis)
- Public dissemination member (responsible for media liaison)
- Website dissemination member (responsible for website maintenance)
- Representative from each working group (WG) (responsible for discussing Communication plan; encouraging researchers from your working group to create content for social media; discussing and taking decisions on communication and dissemination activities).

The contacts of DB members are at the end of the Plan.

The **main objectives** of the Plan are:

- raising awareness and promoting the Action ‘Work inequalities in later life redefined by digitalization’ and Action’s results;
- involvement of new participants to expand the network for shaping a multidisciplinary approach to find valuable solutions to this issue;
- ensuring the broadening of research results among the main stakeholders, using the most appropriate channels and tools of communication, dissemination & valorization.

The **main channels** of communication, dissemination & valorization of DIGI-net results are:

Online dissemination channels: An Action website will act as the principal online communication and dissemination tool, publicising the Action’s activities and its outputs, including conference proceedings, briefing papers, knowledge syntheses, Training Schools (TS) and YRI forum materials. A repository of innovative practice and policy for tackling inequalities among older workers in the era of digitalisation will be accessible from the website. The website’s password-protected space will give Action members access to working documents and other work-in-progress activities. Electronic mailing-lists, podcasts and other online tools will publicise and present Action seminars, events and outputs. Electronic press releases will generate media attention. The outputs of the project will be published across numerous channels, including social media (Facebook, LinkedIn, X, YouTube) and via creation of videos, podcasts, training schools and infographics.

Face-to-face dissemination channels: two academic conferences will be organised. Five one-day workshop policy events (WPE) to raise scientific, public and political awareness of inequalities among older workers in the era of digitalisation, and to

disseminate the Action's activities and outputs will be organised in different geographical areas; Action members will participate in other research and academic conferences and seminars, and policy events, raising awareness of the Action and publicising its findings and outputs.

Publication dissemination channels include: two-sets of conference proceedings for the two conferences; five briefing papers; knowledge synthesis position papers on five topics; jointly authored peer-review articles in Open Access journals. Other publications will include training materials, and, where appropriate, conference presentations.

5. Communication Strategy

5.1. Internal communication

Internal communication (between CG members, MC members, WG members) is carried out within the community to address organizational and coordination issues. It is necessary to highlight the following channels and communication tools:

- *face-to-face* communication: meetings
- *online communication*: E-mails, MS Teams, Zoom, Google Meet, website, social media
- *hybrid communication*: face-to-face & online.

Frequency of communication will be for CG and WG members – at least 4 times per year; for MC members – at least 1 time per year.

Communication via e-mails is possible in two main ways: *personal e-mails*, presented on the COST website, or *corporate e-mails*. The latter option is more preferable for WG leaders and general communications, as it will clearly distinguish between COST activities and other activities of members.

5.2. External communication

External communication is crucial in raising awareness and promoting the Action 'Work inequalities in later life redefined by digitalization'. External communication will be carried out using various tools both online (all stakeholders) and face-to-face channels (policy makers, management of organization etc.). The main communication tools and online communication channels will be discussed below.

5.2.1. Communication tools

Within DIGI-net, communication tools can be different in content (expanded/annotated) and form (printed/online). We are planning to choose the tools depending on the communication channel (Table 1).

Table 1. Communication tools of DIGI-net

<i>Tools</i>	<i>Activities</i>	<i>Possible Forms</i>	<i>Channels</i>
Press Release	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ project description (welcome note); ▪ results description after conferences, training schools etc. 	Printed/ online	COST news page, newspapers, DIGI-net website, appropriate social media
Leaflets/ Posters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ visualisation of main events (training schools, grants providing etc); ▪ presentation of researchers groups 	Printed/ online	COST news page, DIGI-net website, appropriate social media
Roll Up Banners			
Newsletters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ reported planned and past activities; ▪ list of relevant calls; ▪ DIGI-net results description; ▪ storytelling from DIGI-net members 	Online	DIGI-net website, appropriate social media
Video, podcasts etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ DIGI-net results description; ▪ storytelling from DIGI-net members 	Online	DIGI-net website, appropriate social media

Press Release

Press releases will be issued concerning the activities such as training schools, conferences etc. According to the COST Toolbox for the Science Communication Coordinator Press Release have to answer such questions, as What? Novelty? Timeless? Human interest? Impact? Wow effect? Controversy and arguments? 350-800 words.

Leaflets/Posters

These tools help in the information visualization about events within DIGI-net. The poster is the most minimalistic tool with answers to the questions: What? When? Where? Accordingly, a leaflet provides more detailed information about an event when questions are added: Who? Why? etc. It is planned to develop these tools for such events: Training school, Short Term Scientific Mission (STSM), Virtual Mobility (VM).

Roll Up Banners

Roll Up Banners are necessary for holding such events as conferences, workshops, training schools, etc. They will help to increase the project awareness. As part of DIGI-net, it is planned to create two banners: a visualization of the project logo, two main messages, and contacts.

Newsletters

Newsletters can contain reported planned and past activities; list of relevant calls; DIGI-net results description; storytelling from DIGI-net members. According to the COST

Toolbox for the Science Communication Coordinator some messages can be created within the framework of the UN Days.

Video, podcasts etc.

Podcasts, webinars, infographics, short video clips: In year 2 a dissemination podcast focused on the outcomes of WG 1, WG 2 and WG 3 will be produced, in year 4 a dissemination podcast focused on the outcomes of WG 4 and WG 5 will be produced. Webinars (4) will be part of each Training school following the particular topics of each TS. Infographics will be part of two short video clips which will map the outcomes of five working groups, one will be produced in year 3, the second in year 4.

5.2.2. Online communication channels

This communication will be built according to the main communication channels, target audiences, and tools (Table 2).

Table 2. Target audiences, channels & tools in external communication

<i>Channels</i>	<i>Link</i>	<i>Target audiences</i>	<i>Starting/Updation frequency</i>
<i>Website</i>	https://digineteu.eu	DIGI-net members, researchers and innovators, public policy officials, international policy bodies, non-academic professionals, civil society NGOs, trade unions, management of organisations	January 2023 / On the need
<i>Facebook</i>	https://cutt.ly/a0dPn8X	Public policy officials, international policy bodies, non-academic professionals, civil society NGOs, trade unions, management of organisations, older workers, DIGI-net members, researchers and innovators	January 2023 / On the need
<i>LinkedIn</i>	https://cutt.ly/Y2YcJuh		
<i>X</i>	@DigiNetEu		
<i>YouTube</i>	https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCF0dNkFNXT45fUwO81bWqYA		January 2024

Website

The website is the main channel of communication with all stakeholders within DIGI-net. The structure of the website will be as follows:

- About us (background; aim, mission, impact; leadership; useful links);
- Network;

- Events (STSMs, TSs, conferences, MC meetings etc);
- Publications (journal articles, book chapters, briefing papers etc);
- Working groups;
- Contact us;
- Members Login.

The website's content at the beginning of its creation will be focused on the Memorandum of Understanding of COST Action CA21107 DIGI-net. In the future, at least once a month, new information will be filled in, which will be provided by DIGI-net members through the CG members and WG leaders and co-leaders to the Science Communication Coordinator.

Facebook

Facebook (<https://cutt.ly/a0dPn8X>) is a social network that allows you to transfer information about the project's results to the main stakeholders in a non-fiction form. The transfer of information should occur on an ongoing basis. Starting Facebook page – January 2023 with Intro of DIGI-net. Information that is transmitted through this channel can be of three main types:

- notifications about DIGI-net, upcoming and past events within DIGI-net (conferences, training schools, etc.) with answers to the questions: 'what', 'who', 'when', 'where', 'why';
- short messages (up to 200 words) about the results of the study within DIGI-net using non-specialist language with the answer to the questions: 'who', 'findings', 'impact';
- socially powerful messages.

Promotion of materials in social networks, as well as in publications, is best done using hashtags, namely:

#laterlife	#gender	#extendingworkinglife	#ageing
#digitalization	#olderworkers	#agediscrimination	#ageism
#inequalities	#labourmarket	#digitalinequalities	#agenormality

X

X (@DigiNetEu) is a social network primarily targeted at public policy officials, international policy bodies, non-academic professionals, etc. Its distinctive feature is conciseness and speed of ideas dissemination. Starting – January 2023.

That is why X will be used in two ways:

- duplication of information from Facebook with the text reduction up to 30 words;
- dissemination of information during the semiannual conferences within the framework of the Action. It is effective due to the placement of highlights and promotion of the research results among the main stakeholders.

LinkedIn

LinkedIn (<https://cutt.ly/Y2YcJuh>) is a social network for professionals, especially popular among management of organisations. On LinkedIn will be provided information from the Facebook page in the adapted version. Starting – January 2023.

YouTube

This channel will be used to distribute the video that will be created from the results of the working groups' research. Link to youtube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCF0dNkFNXT45fUwO81bWqYA>

6. Dissemination Strategy

The Action employs a range of dissemination mechanisms including web-based intranetwork dissemination, conferences, workshop-policy events (WPEs), working groups (WGs) meetings, short-term scientific missions (STSMs), a YRI forum, Training Schools (TSs), and an Older Workers Reference Group. Networking is the best approach to tackle the challenge of reducing inequalities of older workers in the era of digitalisation for five reasons.

- (1) Gathering European and international experts as members of the Action, and providing the opportunity for information sharing, debate and the presentation of new findings, is required to synthesise existing state of the- art knowledge.
- (2) Bringing together experts from different nationalities (COST countries, NNCs, and IPCs), with different policy, economic, and socio-cultural contexts, and a range of different disciplines, is required to disentangle the construction of work inequalities in later life redefined by digitalisation, and to assess implications, across older workers and inequalities areas. The Action will have the capacity to bridge separate fields of study and distinct or disparate geographical perspectives to form a coherent scientific discourse on work inequalities in later life redefined by digitalisation.
- (3) Facilitating a network of active and committed researchers, who are guided by an underlying conceptual framework, will provide the academic space and intellectual resources to develop new and innovative conceptual but applicable frameworks on work inequalities in later life redefined by digitalisation. The Action will not only accumulate

new knowledge, but through facilitating interdisciplinary analysis of existing work also produce new perspectives on work inequalities in later life redefined by digitalisation.

(4) Networking facilitates the establishment of an innovative, interdisciplinary and participatory European collaboration, to address the disconnect between research and policy on multi-dimensional work inequalities in later life redefined by digitalisation. Researchers and policy stakeholders will come together as equal members of the Action, raising European and international awareness of inequalities of older workers in the era of digitalisation. This unique collaboration will forge new connections between research and policy in order to identify from a bottom-up perspective innovative and implementable policy and practice for reducing work inequalities in later life redefined by digitalisation.

(5) The Action's networking will provide a mechanism for capacity building, generating an environment for learning and mentorship between young researchers and research leaders. It will also serve as a means of embedding a gender balance within the study of work inequalities by later life redefined by digitalisation, and the various levels of the Action's structures

Results dissemination will primarily be carried out on the principles of Open Science and Open Access.

6.1. Dissemination Tools

Within DIGI-net, main dissemination tools are represented in Table 3.

Table 3. Dissemination tools of DIGI-net

<i>Tools</i>	<i>Number during project lifecycle</i>	<i>Channels</i>
Conference Proceedings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ two-sets of conference proceedings for the two conferences 	Academic Conferences, DIGI-net website, Books of proceedings
Briefing Papers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 5 papers 	DIGI-net website, STSMs
Policy briefing papers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 5 workshop-policy papers 	Workshop-Policy Events, DIGI-net website, STSMs
Peer-review articles in Open Access journals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 10 articles 	Scientific Journals, ResearchGate
Scientific book	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 1 book and 4 chapters in other books 	DIGI-net website, ResearchGate, Printed Book
Training Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Four training materials 	DIGI-net website, Training Schools

6.2. Dissemination channels

Academic Conferences

Two academic Action conferences (in total rather than per WG) for both Action members and external researchers to identify external scholars that may be recruited into the network. This also serves as a platform for peer discussion of the research deliverables of WG Pillar 1 (Memorandum of Understanding). A medium-sized opening conference will launch the Action, promoting its activities and recruiting new members. A large closing conference will disseminate findings, highlight best practice in relation to evidence-based intervention, and chart a roadmap for future research policy collaboration. Conference delegates will include other researchers, European policy makers, and key advisory agencies. Both conferences will aim to secure public and political commitment to tackle inequalities of older workers in the era of digitalisation.

Workshop-Policy Events (WPE)

Discuss Action results with policymakers, stakeholders and fellow scholars at workshop-policy events. These also contribute to network building of WG Pillar 2 (Memorandum of Understanding). Five of these one-day events will be held in six different host countries. These events will focus on different older workers' inequality areas. The workshop element, involving Action researchers, policy stakeholders and external expert speakers, addresses research questions, innovative policy and practice, knowledge synthesis, and future directions, and will function as a means of cross-fertilisation across the five WGs. Particular consideration will be given to the Action objectives in relation to the host nation region (e.g. Eastern Europe). The policy element, aimed at generating policy impact for the Action, involves a seminar for external researchers, policymakers, and practitioners from the host region and focuses on dissemination and innovative responses from the bottom-up perspective.

Training Schools

Organise a Training School (TS) per year to boost researchers and innovators experience in this field and to attract potentially interested new researchers. One TS will be held per year, targeting both young and experienced researchers. TSs will focus on methodological aspects related to the Action's 16 research tasks. TS1 considers methods of knowledge synthesis and systematic literature reviews. TS2 focuses on methods for conducting media and policy analyses. TS3 provides training on the challenges in the study of older workers from an inside-perspective. TS4 explores ways of ensuring research impact on policy and practice in the area of older workers' inequalities.

Working groups (WGs) meetings

Through regular meetings researchers, especially those in the early stages of their careers, will acquire knowledge and develop skills and networking capabilities by interacting with academics from different countries and fields of knowledge. The scope of research for WG 1 is ‘Digitalisation and social inequalities’, WG 2 ‘Digitalisation and age culture in organisations’, WG3 ‘Digitalisation and health of older workers’, WG 4 ‘Digitalisation and policies’, WG 5 ‘Digitalisation and media’.

Short-Term Scientific Missions (STSMs)

Short-term scientific missions are exchange visits between researchers involved in a COST Action, allowing scientists to visit an institution or laboratory in another COST Member/Cooperating Member or Near-Neighbour Country joining the Action. These scientific missions are done by researchers or innovators for specific work to be carried out and for a determined period of time: it may last from 5 days to 180 days. Their aim is to foster collaboration in excellent research infrastructures and share new techniques that may not be available in a participant’s home institution or laboratory.

All stakeholders will be engaged in hosting researchers, as well as in sending some of their own representatives for STSMs in European academic institutions. Industrial partners, government organisations, as well as NGOs will be motivated to share good practice, knowledge, and expertise during Action activities, especially work-shop policy events and conferences by collaborating on policy briefs, policy presentations, short videos, podcasts, webinars etc.

Virtual Mobility

Virtual Mobilities (VMs) are very flexible and inclusive networking activities crucial to establish new collaborations or reinforce existing collaborations across disciplines and different sectors with possible impact on career development. Virtual Mobility consists of a collaboration in a virtual setting among researchers or innovators within the COST Action, to exchange knowledge and to learn new techniques. These virtual mobilities are done by researchers or innovators for specific work aiming the capacity building and transfer of knowledge through bilateral/multilateral collaborations, and the specific / general topic that can help achieve the Action MoU objectives and deliverables (research coordination).

YRI Forum

YRI forum will be created, both online and at Action events, to increase YRI network building. Also, mentorship will be developed between YRI and senior researchers. YRI will start its functioning on meeting in Bratislava, 2024.

7. Valorisation Strategy

Under COST Action CA 21107, attention will be paid to social innovation, namely the development of proposals that will help businesses adapt HR policies to trends of worker aging and digitalization processes, which will ultimately improve the well-being of both entrepreneurs and their employees. In addition, considerable attention will be paid to developing solutions for policymakers since, with their support, these initiatives can be effectively implemented.

8. Evaluation & Monitoring

The Plan represents approaches to evaluation and monitoring the efficacy implementation of the communication, dissemination & valorization strategies in terms of achieving the goals of DIGI-net. The proposed group of metrics will be an essential basis for reviewing and revising the Plan. Based on an analysis of these metrics, the Action Core Group (CG) and Management Committee (MC) members will discuss changes to the Plan yearly.

Monitoring will include, but will not be limited to, the following indicators:

- 1) number of unique visitors on DIGI-net website;
- 2) number of events attended by network members relevant to the COST Action;
- 3) number of subscribers of the Action's social media;
- 4) number of conferences and workshops organised;
- 5) number of applications on Training Schools, STSM, VM;
- 6) number of attendees to conferences.

9. Acknowledging COST

“This publication is based upon work from COST Action CA21107 “Work inequalities in later life redefined by digitalization” (DIGI-net), supported by COST (European Cooperation in Science and Technology).”

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