



Meaningful Integration of Data, Analytics and Services

Grant Agreement No. 727721

Contract Duration: 40 months (1<sup>st</sup> November 2016 – 29th February 2020)



This project is funded by  
The European Union

H2020-SC1-2016-CNECT  
SC1-PM-18-2016 - Big Data Supporting Public Health Policies

### **Deliverable 7.4**

## ***MIDAS Website***

<b>Circulation:</b>	PU
<b>Nature:</b>	DEC
<b>Version #:</b>	1.0
<b>Issue Date:</b>	20/02/2017
<b>Responsible Partner(s):</b>	Ulster University
<b>Author(s):</b>	Ulster University
<b>Status:</b>	Final
<b>Reviewed on:</b>	dd/mm/yyyy
<b>Reviewed by:</b>	
<b>Contractual Date of Delivery:</b>	31/01/2017 (M3)

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## Executive Board Document Sign Off

Role	Partner	Signature	Date
Project Coordinator	Ulster	Michaela Black	20-02-2017
WP1 Lead	Ulster	Michaela Black	20-02-2017
WP2 Lead	SET		
WP3 Lead	VICOM	Gorka Epelde Unanue	2017-02-13
WP4 Lead	KU Leuven	Marc Claesen	2017-02-17
WP5 Lead	VTT	Juha Pajula	2017-02-17
WP6 Lead	DCU		
WP7 Lead	Ulster	Jonathan Wallace	20-02-2017
WP8 Lead	Ulster	Michaela Black	20-02-2017

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## Abstract

This deliverable involves the development and launch of the MIDAS website. The project website will function as the primary source of information available at all times to all stakeholders. The website makes use of an open source mobile responsive framework thus delivering high quality device agnostic, responsive design, and user experience. The website makes use of digital analytics to measure and report on digital interaction and allow iterative design based on functional test results. Website content will evolve and update over time. The work package lead will maintain and update the digital material with all partners providing content for inclusion.

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The MIDAS project is funded under the EC Horizon 2020 SC1- PMF-18 Big Data Supporting Public Health Policies

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## Document History

Version	Issue Date	Stage	Content and Changes
V0.1	20/01/2017	Draft	Initial draft version
V0.2	30/01/2017	Draft	Complete draft
V0.3	13/02/2017	Draft	Changes addressing comments from consortium reviewers
V1.0	20/02/2017	Final	Finalised document

### Statement of Originality:

This deliverable contains original unpublished work except where clearly indicated otherwise. Acknowledgement of previously published material and of the work of others has been made through appropriate citation, quotation or both.

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## Executive Summary

<b>Work Package:</b>	WP7
<b>Work Package leader:</b>	Ulster University
<b>Task:</b>	T 7.4 – MIDAS Website
<b>Task leader:</b>	Ulster University

This deliverable involves the development and launch of the MIDAS website. The project website will function as the primary source of information available at all times to all stakeholders. The website makes use of an open source mobile responsive framework thus delivering high quality device agnostic, responsive design, and user experience. The website makes use of digital analytics to measure and report on digital interaction and allow iterative design based on functional test results. Website content will evolve and update over time. The work package lead will maintain and update the digital material with all partners providing content for inclusion.

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## 1 Aims and Objectives

The aim of the MIDAS website is to enable all stakeholders - including project partners, funders, service providers and users and industry participants - to keep in touch with the project as it progresses. The project website will function as the primary source of information available at all times to all stakeholders. It is also designed to raise awareness and facilitate dissemination of MIDAS activities on an ongoing basis. The website makes use of an open source mobile responsive framework thus delivering high quality device agnostic, responsive design, and user experience. It is built using responsive technologies so that it can be accessed on any internet-connected device - desktop, laptop, tablet or smartphone. In order to maximise impact, the site will be updated on a regular basis with news of the latest project activities, news and events. Website content will evolve and update over time. The work package lead will maintain and update the digital material with all partners providing content for inclusion.

## 2 Technical Development

The MIDAS website is built on the WordPress platform<sup>1</sup>. WordPress is a free and open-source content management system (CMS) based on PHP and MySQL. WordPress is currently used by more than 26.4% of the top 10 million websites. WordPress is the most popular blogging system in use on the Web, at more than 60 million websites<sup>2</sup>. Although the platform started as just a blogging system, it has evolved to be used as a full content management system through the thousands of plugins, widgets and themes.

WordPress was selected for a number of different reasons:

1. As the most popular CMS on the web, it has a well-supported ecosystem of plugins and extensions that make it extremely flexible and powerful. It can therefore be easily adapted to meet the needs of the MIDAS project as they evolve over time.
2. It has a rich mix of online tutorials, forums and communities to support users and developers.

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<sup>1</sup> Wordpress: <https://wordpress.org/>

<sup>2</sup> Coala, J.J, "With 60 Million Websites, WordPress Rules The Web. So Where's The Money?", <http://www.forbes.com/sites/jjcolao/2012/09/05/the-internets-mother-tongue/#63e131c55fe6> (accessed 1 January, 2017)

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3. It has no associated licensing costs, and therefore represents a cost-effective solution for the MIDAS project.
4. As the most widely-used blogging framework, it is relatively easy for new users to familiarise themselves with updating the site and managing content and layout.
5. By using a well-established, mature and robust framework the risk of technical issues is minimised. WordPress was seen as presenting the most reliable solution to the needs of the MIDAS project.

The MIDAS site was developed with a standard WordPress installation, using the open source Tora theme<sup>3</sup>. This theme has a responsive layout, enabling the site to fit mobile devices of any size or shape, and comes with a theme options panel which can be used to make changes without touching any code.

Google Analytics has been implemented on the website for digital analytics to measure and report on digital interaction.

A Twitter widget has also been incorporated into the site to display the most recent tweets from the MIDAS Twitter account. This aims to continue conversations about the project with visitors beyond the website.

The website was developed and tailored by the Ulster University MIDAS team. Most development work took place during November 2016, and it went live at the end of November.

### **3 Hosting Arrangements**

The MIDAS website is hosted on Dreamhost, which was the chosen hosting service as this company has been used by the Ulster team in the past and they have a longstanding international reputation. The site deployment was carried out by Ulster University, and the live site was made available at <http://www.midasproject.eu/>.

### **4 Website Structure**

The website contains several key sections: About, Partners, Deliverables, Publications and Blog.

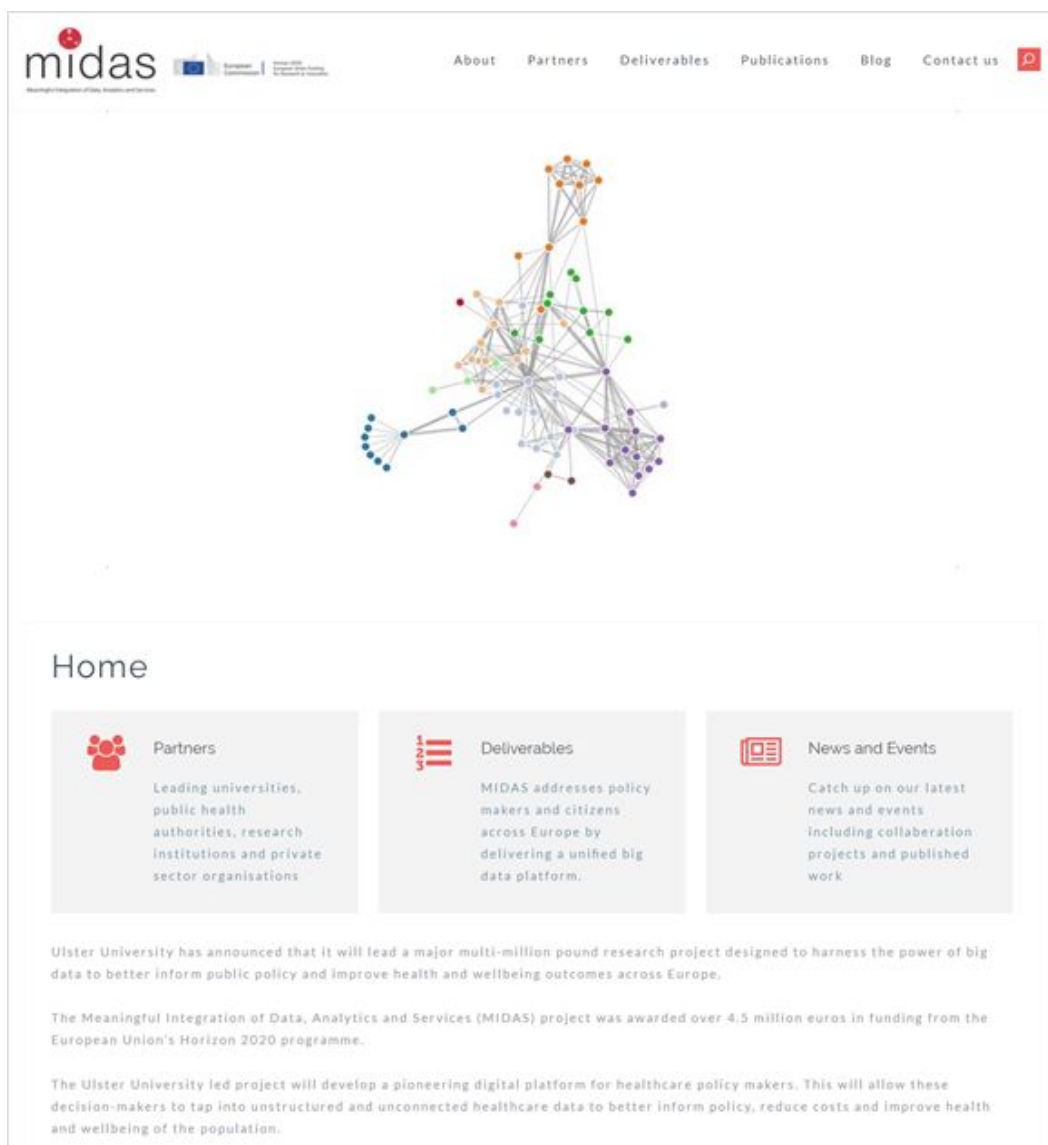
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<sup>3</sup> Wordpress Tora Theme: <https://srd.wordpress.org/themes/tora/>



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- The About section provides detailed information about the MIDAS project.
- The Partners section provides information on the Project Consortium.
- The Deliverables section provides a summary of project activities and outcomes.
- The Publications section will act as a repository for external facing project information, reports, and publications as the MIDAS project progresses.
- The Blog section features news, events and updates from the project on an ongoing basis, as well as interesting project related topics, e.g. Big Data Challenges.
- The front page is used to promote key information to stakeholders (Figure 1).



*Figure 1 MIDAS Website Front Page*

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## 5 Content Management

One of the advantages of using the WordPress blogging platform is that it facilitates easy content management by non-technical team members. This is important, as it allows the layout and content of the site to be managed by different partners when required. The Content Management System (CMS) features of the platform include:

- **Simplicity** - It is possible to get online and publish useful content very quickly.
- **Flexibility** - The platform can be used to create any type of website.
- **Easy Publication** - Posts and pages can be easily created and formatted.
- **User Management** - Different contributors can be given different levels of access to the website.
- **Media Management** - Images, videos and audio can be easily added to the website.
- **Full Standards Compliance** - The platform code is in full compliance W3C standards, meaning the website will work in any current browser, while maintaining forward compatibility.
- **Built-in Comments** - Built-in comment tools create the potential for online discussion and engagement.
- **Search Engine Optimisation** - WordPress is optimized for search engines out of the box.

## 6 Conclusion

Using the WordPress CMS framework allowed the MIDAS website to be developed and deployed in a short period of time, and at minimum cost. Eventually access will be given to a number of project partners to update and modify content as required. In this way, responsibility for keeping the website up-to-date can be shared among the relevant contributors. The design of the system, using flexible open source components, should mean that it can easily be adapted to meet the needs of the project as it evolves going forward.