

# A-TANGO

Novel treatment of acute on chronic liver failure using synergistic action of G-CSF and TAK-242 H2020 – 945096

# D7.6 First patient and layman event

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	(11 – concentris, 01 – EF CLIF, 07 – ELPA)
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# **Abbreviations**

ACLF	Acute-on-chronic liver failure
АРНР	Assistance Publique-Hôpitaux de Paris
CEST	Central European Summer Time
Charité	Charité – Universitätsmedizin Berlin
concentris	concentris research management gmbh
D	Deliverable
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
EF CLIF	European Foundation for the Study of Chronic Liver Failure
ELPA	European Liver Patients Association
G-TAK	combinatorial therapy using G-CSF (granulocyte-colony stimulating factor) and TAK-242 (an antagonist of toll-like receptor 4)
GUF	Goethe-Universität Frankfurt am Main
INSERM	Institute National de la Santé et de la Recherche Médicale
ppt	PowerPoint
PU	Public
IB	Impact Board
ILC	International Liver Congress
Q&A	Questions and Answers
SOP	Standard Operating Protocol
TIPS	Transjugular Intrahepatic Portosystemic Shunt
UCL	University College London
WP	Work Package



# Contributors

Contributor	Contribution	Estimate of person-months
concentris, WP7 lead	Co-organisation of the first patient and layman event, participation, social media announcements and coverage, cut and production of the corresponding videos for YouTube, writing and submission of the report (Deliverable Report D7.6)	Ameli Schwalber (0.1 PM) Nina Donner (0.3 PM)
Charité, WP7 member	Preparing PowerPoint presentation and speaker at the event	Cornelius Engelmann (0.05 PM)
EF CLIF, project coordinator and WP7 member	Organisation of the first patient and layman event, hosting the online event together with ELPA and introduction of the topic, preparing PowerPoint introduction and speaker at the event, revision of the Deliverable report	Anna Bosch Comas (0.05 PM) Rajiv Jalan (0.05 PM) Lidia Garcia-Campmany (0.01 PM)
ELPA, WP7 member	Organisation of the first patient and layman event, hosting the online event together with EF CLIF, introduction of the speakers, providing the raw cuts of the video recordings, input for the Deliverable report	Marko Korenjak (0.05 PM) Veronika Všetičkova (0.1 PM) Beatrice Credi (0.1 PM)



# **Executive Summary**

One of the key objectives of the A-TANGO project is to destigmatise cirrhosis as a disease, including late-stage cirrhosis, decompensated cirrhosis, and acute-on-chronic liver failure (ACLF) and to disseminate the project's goals and results in a comprehensible way to the liver patient community. To meet this objective, interactive events that include the opportunity for patients, relatives, and patient representatives to learn about the ongoing research, ask questions, talk about their experiences, and voice their wishes and concerns are an important element.

To fulfil "D7.6 - First patient and layman event" and in agreement with A-TANGO's Impact Board (IB), an online event with the title 'Therapies for acute decompensation of cirrhosis and ACLF, research needs and outlook' was organised on Wednesday, 9 June 2021, by the European Liver Patients' Association (ELPA), the European Foundation for the Study of Chronic Liver Failure (EF CLIF), Charité – Universitätsmedizin Berlin (Charité) and concentris research management gmbh (concentris). It was intentionally planned as a synergistic effort between three topically related EU-funded liver research projects that are all coordinated by EF CLIF and managed by concentris, and was conducted in virtual format because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Marko Korenjak, ELPA president, moderated the event, Prof. Dr. Rajiv Jalan, Scientific Director of EF CLIF, introduced the pressing issue of decompensated cirrhosis and its complications as well as the common goal to treat and manage ACLF, and the project coordinators Prof. Dr. Pierre-Emmanuel Rautou (Professor of Hepatology at Assistance Publique-Hôpitaux de Paris, APHP), Prof. Dr. Jonel Trebicka (at the time Head of Translational Hepatology at Goethe-Universität Frankfurt am Main, GUF), followed by the clinical study supervisor Dr. med. Cornelius Engelmann (Research Group Leader at Charité) presented the Horizon 2020-funded projects DECISION, MICROB-PREDICT, and A-TANGO to representatives of the European liver patients' community. The event was recorded and subsequently resulted in three professionally cut and produced YouTube videos.

A total of 27 participants from 10 European countries attended the online talks and took part in the interactive questions and answers (Q&A) session at the end, while the videos have by now been watched 1700 times, including 485 views of the corresponding A-TANGO video (on two separate YouTube channels) - compared to 908 views of the MICROB-PREDICT video and 307 views of the DECISION video (by 25 October 2022). In return, the feedback and patients' perspective from ELPA members and patient representatives allowed valuable, yet confidential (and thus not published), insights for the A-TANGO consortium and its sister projects.



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# **1** Introduction

The event was suggested and spearheaded by ELPA, entitled "*Therapies for acute decompensation of cirrhosis and ACLF, research needs and outlook* — *an A-TANGO, DECISION and MICROB-PREDICT online educational event for patients*", and took place via the online platform Zoom on 9 June 2021 from 3:30 – 5:00 pm Central European Summer Time (CEST).

The three EU-funded research projects, <u>DECISION</u>, <u>MICROB-PREDICT</u>, and <u>A-TANGO</u> all have the common goal to improve the prevention of cirrhosis and the treatment of late-stage cirrhosis. All three consortia aim to understand the disease better, identify biomarkers and mechanisms that predict when the body can no longer compensate for the dysfunctional liver (decompensated cirrhosis), when decompensated cirrhosis progresses to ACLF, and what a patient's individual treatment response will be. They strive to develop novel diagnostic tools based on the newly identified biomarkers for earlier and better patient stratification and establish personalised and effective treatment strategies. As such, DECISION aims to identify novel combinatorial therapies, MICROB-PREDICT focuses on microbiome-based treatment strategies, while A-TANGO investigates one specific, promising combinatorial therapy in a Europe-wide clinical trial.

During the patient and layman event, the scope of the projects, first results, and their implications for the future management of patients with cirrhosis and ACLF were discussed and all attendees were given the opportunity for questions and feedback.



# 'Therapies for acute decompensation of cirrhosis and ACLF, research needs and outlook'

# ELPA presents: DECISION, MICROB-PREDICT and A-TANGO online educational event for patients

on 9<sup>th</sup> June 2021, 3.30 - 5.00 p.m. CEST

Organizing committee:

Marko Korenjak, ELPA President

Prof. Dr. Pierre-Emmanuel Rautou, professor of Hepatology Hôpital Beaujon, Inserm UMR, France, principal investigator DECISION, EF Clif, Barcelona, Spain

Prof. Dr. Jonel Trebicka, professor of Hepatology Goethe University Frankfurt, Germany, principal investigator MICROB-PREDICT, EF Clif, Barcelona, Spain

Prof. Dr. Rajiv Jalan, professor of Hepatology University College London, UK, principal investigator A-TANGO, EF Clif, Barcelona, Spain

Dr. Ameli Schwalber, concentris research management, Germany, project management office

Figure 1. Heading of the event announcement and event programme.



#### 1.1 Preparation

Several phone conferences and Zoom calls were held between members of concentris, ELPA and EF CLIF to discuss the specifics and prepare the event. Via Keyways (project management and meeting registration software), concentris set up an online registration page (see Fig 2) for the event. Also, project-specific Zoom background images and display of the ELPA and EF CLIF logos were decided, the speakers were reminded to introduce themselves in the beginning of their presentation and to present complex scientific results in an easy-to-understand patient-friendly manner, and were given a standard operating protocol (SOP) by concentris to ensure proper camera location, audio, other technical settings, and overall appearance during an online presentation or interview. See Fig. 3 for a screenshot of how the speakers were prepared for the Zoom-based video recording.



Figure 2. Social media announcement of the event based on a screenshot of the registration page.



NO

#### Preparation for a successful online interview / meeting

#### Appearance

- Be cleaned up and dressed up
- (to install trust in your message / project / product)
- Sit up straight, don't slump in your chair
- Be calm and professional when speaking (avoid hectic gestures, filler words, stutters etc.)

#### Audio

- Don't use headphones (unless the sound is bad otherwise)
- Select "Join with Computer Audio"
- Test Speaker and Microphone
- Turn off sound-notifications on computer & cell phone! (avoid sounds of incoming messages / emails / stock market updates etc.)

#### Background

- Natural light in the room is best
- A white or light-colour background is best
- <u>Alternative:</u> use a project-coloured background image => upload to Zoom/GoToMeeting & activate (disadvantage of virtual background: "smearing effect" when moving)

#### Camera & Lense

- If possible, use a high-quality webcam rather than a built-in laptop camera
- Clean the lens of your computer-camera or webcam

#### **Camera Position**

 Position your camera at eye-level or slightly higher, e.g. place a book underneath your laptop to elevate it (avoids the double-chin effect and "deep nostril views")

#### Frame Composition

- The best composition is "upper chest level"
- Avoid moving around or leaning forward into the camera (avoids a distorted "big nose look")

#### Lighting

- Avoid wearing glasses (if needed, avoid reflections)
- Front-facing natural light is best
- Activate the "adjust to low light" option in Zoom
- Ensure that your face is well-lit (but not shiny or reflective like a Christmas bauble)

#### No distraction & Eye contact

- Be fully present and undistracted
- Look straight into the camera (not just at the screen) as often as possible (to establish a connection with the audience)







# concentris

Figure 3. SOP sent to the speakers for a successful online meeting, interview, or video recording.



#### 1.2 **Programme & Agenda**

The agenda was decided to contain the following topics (see Fig. 4 for a screenshot of the detailed programme and agenda:

- Welcome and Introduction •
- DECISION Overview of existing therapies, drugs and research needs •
- MICROB-PREDICT - Candidates, pathways, and targets that will be important in future, including the gut-liver axis and microbiota
- A-TANGO G-TAK as a promising drug candidate •
- Questions and answers



#### Programme:

Chairs: M. Korenjak, R. Jalan

15:30-15:35	Welcome and Introduction (Rajiv Jalan & Marko Korenjak)
15:35-15:55	Overview of existing therapies, drugs and research needs (DECISION, Pierre-Emmanuel Rautou)
15:55-16:15	Candidates/pathways/targets that will be important in future, e.g gut-liver axis, microbiota (MICROB-PREDICT, Jonel Trebicka)
16:15-16:35	G-TAK as a promising drug candidate (A-TANGO, Cornelius Engelmann)
16:35-17:00	Questions and answers (moderated by Marko Korenjak)

## www.decision-for-liver.eu

#### www.microb-predict.eu

#### www.a-tango.eu

#### Contact

ELPA Office Organizer

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Prof. Dr. Rajiv Jalan rajiv.jalan@efclif.com +44 20 7433 2795

Project & Dissemination management pierre-emmanuel.rautou@inserm.fr contact@concentris.de +49 (0) 8141 6252 8571

#### Funding

DECISION, MICROB-PREDICT and A-TANGO receive funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreements No. 847949, 825694 and 945996. This reflects only the view of the authors, and the Europe Commission is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information it contains. Reproduction is authorised provided the source is acknowledged.



Figure 4. Programme and agenda of the joint patient and layman event.

A-TANGO

#### **1.3 Social Media Announcements**

Several social media posts were published on Twitter, LinkedIn, and ResearchGate by ELPA, concentris, and EF CLIF in preparation for the event and in order to attract participants. See Fig. 5 below for an example of the event's postings on social media.

patients on partners 👇	ation of #cirrhosis and #ACLF, research needs and outlook' fo June 9th from 3.30–5.00 PM (CEST) presented by @ELPA & o intranet.concentris.de/event/3b04edab #fattylivermonth .FLD #ILC2021
European 15 Potwier Acc	
Programm Chairs: M. Kor	
Chairs: M. Kor	enjak, R. Jalan Overview of existing therapies, drugs and research needs
Chairs: M. Kor 15:30-15:50	enjak, R. Jalan Overview of existing therapies, drugs and research needs (DECISION, Pierre-Emmanuel Rautou) Candidates/pathways/targets that will be important in future, e.g gut-liver axis, microbiota

Figure 5. Final social media post on Twitter by ELPA to announce the event.

#### **2** Description of the event

#### 2.1 Prof. Dr. Rajiv Jalan - Introduction of topic and projects

After a brief introduction of the speakers by ELPA president Marko Korenjak, Prof. Dr. Rajiv Jalan (Professor of Hepatology at the University College London (UCL), Scientific Director of EF CLIF, and coordinator of A-TANGO) provided a comprehensive scientific overview of key facts and current issues within cirrhosis and ACLF research, including a clear explanation of why treating cirrhosis is an urgent and unmet need. He presented recent data, state of the art research, and stressed the fact that very few treatment options are currently available to patients suffering from late-stage cirrhosis and ACLF. Then, he briefly introduced his colleagues (Prof. Dr. Pierre-Emmanuel Rautou, Prof. Dr. Jonel Trebicka, and Dr. med. Cornelius Engelmann), underlining how the three topically related projects represent three different approaches of one and the same goal, namely helping patients that suffer from chronic liver failure, and effectively preventing and treating late-stage cirrhosis and ACLF.

Horizon 2020



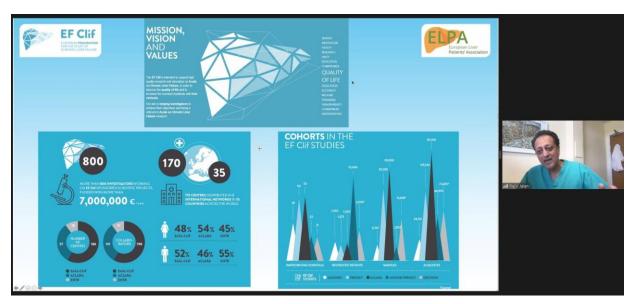


Figure 6. Screenshot of Prof. Dr. Rajiv Jalan providing a general introduction to the topic.

#### 2.2 Prof. Dr. Pierre-Emmanuel Rautou – Presentation about the DECISION project

The first presentation was delivered by Prof. Dr. Pierre-Emmanuel Rautou (Professor of Hepatology at APHP, at the French Institute National de la Santé et de la Recherche Médicale (INSERM), EF CLIF member, and coordinator of the DECISION project). He gave an overview of existing therapies, drugs, and research needs. He also talked about the DECISION project and its goal. It aims to identify a specific group of patients with cirrhosis, providing them with personalised disease management. Also, DECISION builds its research on a better understanding of the pathophysiology of acutely decompensated cirrhosis and ACLF. To do that, the project is analysing a lot of data and samples. With this newly created knowledge, the project aims to enhance early disease detection, optimise proper patient stratification (grouping them), and improve how cirrhosis patients are managed and treated.

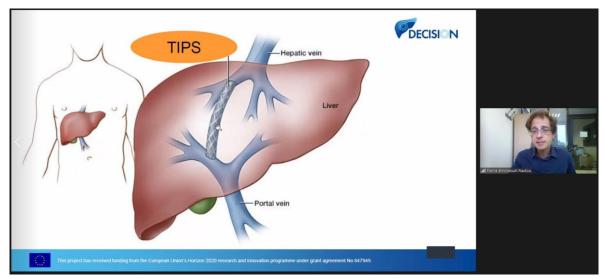


Figure 7. Screenshot of Prof. Dr. Pierre-Emmanuel Rautou explaining cirrhosis treatment options.



#### 2.3 Prof. Dr. Jonel Trebicka – Presentation about the MICROB-PREDICT project

Next, Prof. Dr. Jonel Trebicka (Professor of Hepatology at GUF at the time, EF CLIF member, and coordinator or MICROB-PREDICT) started his presentation with sharing the vision of the project also in the context of the other two projects. He focused on the complications of cirrhosis that, in the end, lead to systemic inflammation, the key to acute decompensation, and also to the failure of one or multiple organs during episodes of ACLF. He explained the hypothesis that the gut microbiome is connected to acute decompensation in patients with cirrhosis. This is the reason why the project is investigating the human microbiome. It is studied to identify predictors and mechanisms associated with the development of decompensated cirrhosis and progression to ACLF, and—in the worst case—death. MICROB-PREDICT, too, is hoped to result in better stratification of cirrhotic patients allowing for personalised treatments.

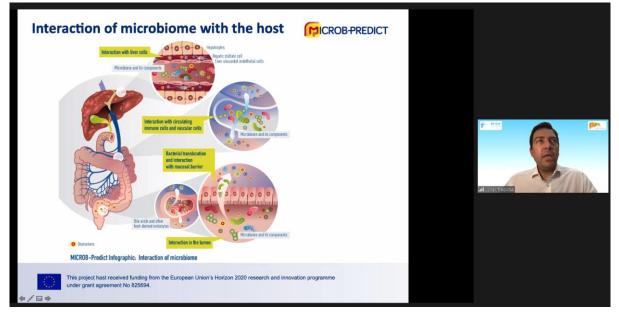


Figure 8. Screenshot of Prof. Dr. Jonel Trebicka explaining the role of microbiome in cirrhosis.

#### 2.4 Dr. med. Cornelius Engelmann – Presentation about the A-TANGO project

The presentation of Dr. med. Cornelius Engelmann (Research Group Leader at Charité and A-TANGO's supervisor of the so-called "G-TAK study") followed next. He introduced the general scope and aim of A-TANGO and provided detailed information to the attendees regarding the G-TAK study in the framework of the A-TANGO project, using patient-oriented language and imagery. At the centre of this Europe-wide clinical study that will involve up to 25 liver centres is a promising new combinatorial therapy, consisting of two separate components, namely granulocyte-colony stimulating factor (G-CSF) and TAK-242, an antagonist of toll-like receptor 4. He started his talk underlining that the three projects have all the same goal: improving liver patients' lives. After an overview on ACLF, its complexity, diagnostic criteria, grades, and high mortality rate, he entered into the details of the project, presenting the substance that is at the basis of the new treatment and the clinical trial. In conclusion, he made it very clear that not only is it essential to identify who has to be treated and how soon, but also with what type of therapy a patient suffering from late-stage cirrhosis or ACLF should be treated.

Horizon 2020



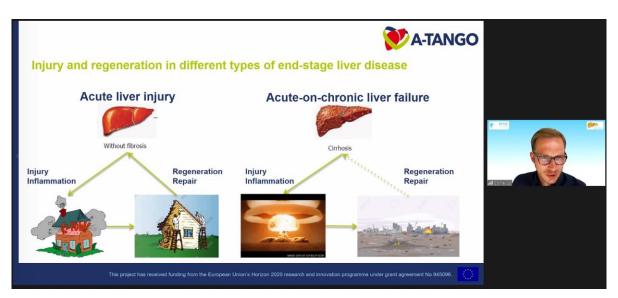


Figure 9. Screenshot of Dr. med. Cornelius Engelmann explaining the difference between acute liver injury compared to the devastating and lasting damage of ACLF.

#### 2.5 Q&A Session with Patient Representatives

A questions and answers (Q&A) session at the end of the event, moderated by Marko Korenjak, ELPA President, allowed all participants - especially the patient representatives - to ask questions, go deeper into projects' details, and also provide feedback from their personal patients' perspective.

A central topic of this session was to discuss how patients' associations can work better together with the researchers in order to convey research goals, convey complex scientific facts, and destigmatise cirrhosis and liver failure. One consensus was that the perception of this disease in the general public and also amongst funding agencies has to change because it is still carrying a lot of stigma and other misconceptions (e.g., "always self-inflicted", "only caused by excessive alcohol use", "typical patients are amongst the homeless population" – not true). Also, future public activities, such as patient-initiated video interviews of coordinators and / or work package leaders and early-career scientists were suggested, some of which have already been translated into reality (see <u>patient-researcher video interviews</u> at ILC 2022 in London).

Participant identities, shared experiences, detailed questions, and feedback voiced in this discussion are considered confidential, but very useful with regard to improving content and targeting of the dissemination and communication activities of A-TANGO and the other two cirrhosis projects.



**Figure 10.** Screenshots of ELPA president Marko Korenjak, coordinators (Profs. Rajiv Jalan, Pierre-Emmanuel Rautou, and Jonel Trebicka), and the clinical study supervisor of A-TANGO (Dr. med. Cornelius Engelmann) answering questions by patient representatives during the Q&A session.



#### 2.6 Video Production and Publication on YouTube

#### Video link:

#### https://youtu.be/5aVZe\_CJpps & https://youtu.be/nIRdb72EiOY

#### Video title:

A-TANGO: Introducing G-TAK, a novel combinatorial therapy for cirrhosis & ACLF, Cornelius Engelmann

#### Video description:

#### https://a-tango.eu

Effective treatment of acute-on-chronic liver failure (ACLF) is an urgent and unmet need. The A-TANGO consortium tests and evaluates an innovative new treatment that aims to reduce inflammation and improve hepatocyte proliferation by repurposing TAK-242, an antagonist of toll-like receptor 4, in combination with G-CSF (granulocyte colony-stimulating factor). We call this novel combinatorial therapy G-TAK. In addition, A-TANGO strives to identify reliable biomarkers for better patient stratification and an increased survival rate.

Here, the clinical trial supervisor, Dr. med. Cornelius Engelmann, explains the different stages of liver cirrhosis and how this novel combinatorial treatment, G-TAK, may increase the survival rate of patients suffering from decompensated cirrhosis or ACLF. The video is a recording of the 3rd presentation given at an online patient event that was jointly organised by ELPA (https://elpa.eu) and EFCLIF (https://efclif.com) and took place on 09 June 2021.

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 945096. This video reflects only the presenter's view and the European Commission is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information it contains.

Production: Beatrice Credi (ELPA) and Dr. Nina Donner (concentris) Subtitles: Nicolas Lupke https://concentris.de © 2021 A-TANGO

Related video about the MICROB-PREDICT project: https://youtu.be/bVjol1wDUCw Related video about the DECISION project: https://youtu.be/dScCOqphu9k



Figure 11. Screenshot of the corresponding video on YouTube (left) and the A-TANGO website (right).



#### 2.7 Feedback & Impact

The event was organised, and promoted in advance by ELPA members, EF CLIF, and concentris. During and after the event, the verbal feedback from both the speakers as well as attending patient representatives was unanimously positive. In addition, the 1<sup>st</sup> A-TANGO patient and layman event had a clear and measurable impact on the project's website visits and social media impressions and engagement during and following the event. It was also a great way to make A-TANGO known before the start of the International Liver Congress (ILC) in June 2021 and one year before ILC 2022. Both years, A-TANGO was active at ILC. See below for A-TANGO's Twitter metrics in June 2021.

Tweet		Impressions	Engagements	Rate
۲	A-TANGO @ATANGO_H2020 · 9 Jun 2021 Don't forget to join the educational event this afternoon if you want to learn more about 3 different European #LiverResearch projects and how they will improve the life of #cirrhosis and #ACLF patients! Hope to see you there: us02web.zoom.us/j/7869786357 pic.twitter.com/d01uoKfflb	2,074	64	3.1%
۲	A-TANGO @ATANGO_H2020 · 11 Jun 2021 Prof. @RajivJalan1 introducing the talks of this week's liver patient event (organised by ELPA @EuropeLiver). 27 representatives of patient organisations from 10 European countries listened & asked questions about therapies for #cirrhosis and #ACLF. Thanks for attending! @ef_clif pic.twitter.com/CaGXHB3VaM	1,524	80	5.2%
۷	A-TANGO @ATANGO_H2020 · 11 Jun 2021 Currently, only 2 drugs are available to treat patients with late stage #LiverDisease such as decompensated #cirrhosis or #ACLF while more than 2 million people die of chronic liver disease every year. It's time, we do something about it! @RajivJalan1 @EuropeLiver @ef_clif pic.twitter.com/o3MdIBUKfV	1,054	85	8.1%
۲	A-TANGO @ATANGO_H2020 · 11 Jun 2021 #Cirrhosis is a serious disease that can happen to almost anybody for various reasons or causes (e.g. viral infections, obesity, alcohol consumption). Once a patient is diagnosed with cirrhosis, 50% decompensate within 5 years, and 50% die in the following 5 years. #ACLF @ef_clif pic.twitter.com/PrrK5gEhDo	395	20	5.1%
۲	A-TANGO @ATANGO_H2020 · 11 Jun 2021 During his talk at this week's patient event (organised by @EuropeLiver), Dr. med. Cornelius Engelmann (@CorneliusEngel7) described the early (reversible) and the late (irreversible) stages of alcoholic #LiverDisease, leading to #steatosis, #fibrosis, and eventually #cirrhosis. pic.twitter.com/rA9BSsoZkV	1,426	69	4.8%
<b>&gt;&gt;</b>	A-TANGO @ATANGO_H2020 · 22 Jun 2021 #ILC2021 starts tomorrow - You can learn more about the A-TANGO project at the booth of EU-funded projects (easl.eu/ilc-2021/eu-pr) and on SATURDAY at 14:04 CET in @RajivJalan1's presentation during the interactive session "#Cirrhosis and complications". See you there! @FASI news nic twitter com//yai8azSyz	6,505	73	1.1%

@EASLnews pic.twitter.com/Vvaj8azSxz

**Table 1.** Impressions, engagements, and engagement rate of individual tweets before, during andafter the 1<sup>st</sup> patient and layman event in June 2021.



# 3 Conclusion

A-TANGO's 1<sup>st</sup> patient and layman event in form of a synergistic online educational session for patient representatives, organised jointly with its sister projects, was very well received. A total of 27 participants, including patient representatives from 10 countries (Europe and beyond), attended the online talks and participated in the interactive Q&A session. While participant names are, of course, confidential, we can confirm that speakers, participants, and patient representatives from the following countries were present at the event: Belgium, France, Germany, India, Italy, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Slovenia, Spain, United Kingdom, and United States of America. The related videos have by now been watched 1700 times. Specifically, the A-TANGO video has reached 406 views on YouTube by 25 October 2022. In return, the (confidential) feedback and patients' perspective from ELPA members and patient representatives allowed valuable insights for the A-TANGO consortium and its sister projects.

## 4 Acknowledgement and Disclaimer

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 945096. This report reflects only the authors' view and the European Commission (EC) is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information it contains.