

# Information services and COVID-19 pandemics : 20 months later...

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## Introduction

- ❖ In March 2020, Belgium was subject to a containment measure in order to stop the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic in its territory. Permanent teleworking for all staff was imposed, at the risk of impacting the continuity of services, including the library and information retrieval services.
- ❖ While the limitations on access to scientific research results have generally been exacerbated by this confinement, in the case of the KCE, the usual library services were ultimately only marginally affected. However, new services were requested to help researchers identify resources needed for their work<sup>1</sup>.

## Aim

- ❖ To describe the situation 20 months after the containment measures.
- ❖ To evaluate changes in library services, specific COVID-19 services that were implemented on an emergency basis, and the impact on information retrieval procedures.

## Methods

- ❖ The experiences of librarian and information specialists were summarized.
- ❖ The Long COVID example is used to illustrate the changes in procedures.

## Results

- ❖ Twenty months after the onset of the pandemic, working from home is still the rule for all KCE employees; therefore, the “temporary” adaptations to library services are still in place.
- ❖ COVID-19 specific services have been discontinued; international resources, such as the COVID-19 L.OVE<sup>2</sup> and the WHO COVID-19 Database<sup>3</sup>, have been prioritized.
- ❖ Preprints are now a “standard” source of information for emerging or rapidly changing topics such as COVID-19, tools and procedures have been updated accordingly.

## Conclusion

- ❖ Since the beginning of the pandemic, KCE librarian and information specialists succeeded into delivering the usual services to their users: researchers could access all sources of information (bibliographical databases, journal articles and books) and conduct their research “as usual”.
- ❖ The lessons learned were integrated into the standard working method, to the benefit of the delivered advices and recommendations to decision makers.
- ❖ Adversity does not kill librarians, it makes them stronger!



1. <https://www.slideshare.net/pchalon/information-services-continuity-during-the-covid19-pandemics-lessons-learned-from-kce>
2. <https://app.iloveevidence.com/topics>
3. <https://search.bvsalud.org/global-literature-on-novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov/>



World Health Organization