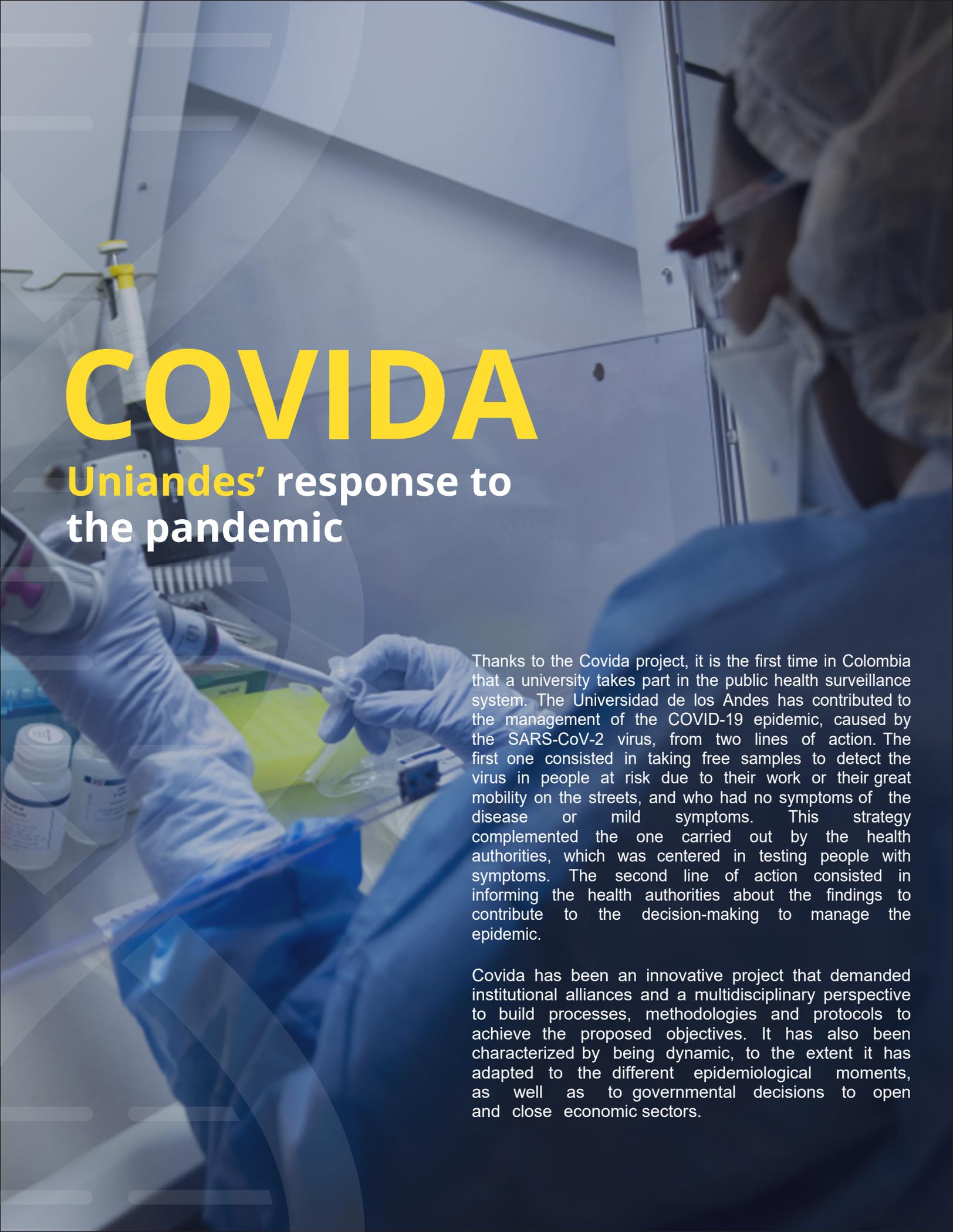


REPORT  
COVIDA

April 2021



# COVIDA

## Uniandes' response to the pandemic

Thanks to the Covida project, it is the first time in Colombia that a university takes part in the public health surveillance system. The Universidad de los Andes has contributed to the management of the COVID-19 epidemic, caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus, from two lines of action. The first one consisted in taking free samples to detect the virus in people at risk due to their work or their great mobility on the streets, and who had no symptoms of the disease or mild symptoms. This strategy complemented the one carried out by the health authorities, which was centered in testing people with symptoms. The second line of action consisted in informing the health authorities about the findings to contribute to the decision-making to manage the epidemic.

Covida has been an innovative project that demanded institutional alliances and a multidisciplinary perspective to build processes, methodologies and protocols to achieve the proposed objectives. It has also been characterized by being dynamic, to the extent it has adapted to the different epidemiological moments, as well as to governmental decisions to open and close economic sectors.



# STRATEGIC ALLIES

To execute the project, there were three fundamental allies that guaranteed the adequate logistics of the sample collection: Enemédica and Unicentro and Centro Mayor shopping centers, where the sample collection points for drivers and pedestrians were set up. In order to get participants from the target populations, we established alliances with other 71 entities from the public and private sectors. The healthcare sector had the collaboration of the 4 integrated healthcare service subnetworks of Bogotá, the 6 municipal Secretariat of Health, the 14 public hospitals, the 7 private hospitals, and 2 hospitals from the hospital network outside Bogotá. Regarding the transportation sector, there were 7 alliances that included the District

Secretariat of Mobility of Bogota, the Intermunicipal Transportation Association, as well as the public service companies and digital platforms operating in Bogota. Moreover, 5 delivery services companies from the city cooperated. 4 alliances were made to address the construction sector. 3 agreements were made to collect samples from the National Police and the Military Forces. What is more, alliances were made with 5 major entities that eased the access to population conglomerates. Finally, agreements were also made with 11 institutions from the judicial, education, attention to vulnerable population and media sectors.

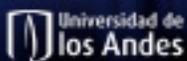
# CAMPAIGN

## #LAPRUEBAESDETODOS

*Let us join forces  
for Colombia!*

With your donation, we will perform **more than 100,000** diagnostic tests for COVID-19. We can all help!

**#LaPruebaEsDeTodos**



SECRETARÍA DE  
SALUD



To guarantee the financial sustainability of the Covida project, which had a cost of approximately COP 18,900,000,000 or USD 5,400,000.00, the donation campaign “La Prueba Es De Todos” (the test is for everyone) was launched in April 2020. Thanks to generous donations and contributions from companies from the private sector, alumni, the University's High Council, the University of the Andes Foundation and international organizations, it was possible to raise COP\$ 12,314,600,019 or USD 3,518,000.00 from 2,298 donors.

# WORK TEAM

Understanding the complexity of the project, as well as the unprecedented nature of the situation, a multidisciplinary team was put together to combine scientific, technical and logistical knowledge. The Uniandes team, made up of 171 people, is headed by the Steering Committee of the project, which members include the President of Universidad de los Andes, Alejandro Gaviria; the Vice-President Silvia Restrepo, Raquel Bernal and Eduardo Behrentz; the doctors Luis Jorge Hernández, Andrea Ramírez and Giancarlo Buitrago (National University) and the

economist Rachid Laajaj. Furthermore, the committee is also made up of the epidemiologist Fernando de la Hoz (National University), and Gabriela Delgado, Director of the Public Health Laboratory of Bogotá. Martha Vives, at the time Vice-Dean of Research of the Faculty of Sciences, assembled a team of six volunteers (students and alumni) to take samples and train others to do so. On the other hand, 100 people from the logistical partners contributed to the development of the project.



**Alejandro Gaviria**  
Project  
Management



**Silvia Restrepo**  
GenCore Laboratory  
Direction



**Luis Jorge Hernández**  
Epidemiologic Direction



**Germán Otálora**  
Technical Advisor



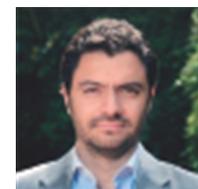
**Rachid Laajaj**  
Scientific Co-direction  
(Uniandes)



**Giancarlo Buitrago**  
Scientific Co-direction  
(National Univ.)



**Raquel Bernal**  
Data Analysis  
Direction



**Eduardo Behrentz**  
General Coordination



**Martha Vives**  
Team Direction



**Process Quality  
Control Committee**

# Impact

Here it follows are some Covida's figures, between April 18, 2020 and April 2021:



**143.000**

samples processed by Gencore Laboratory

Maximum capacity achieved daily:

**1.700**

samples



**53.954**

Covida participants

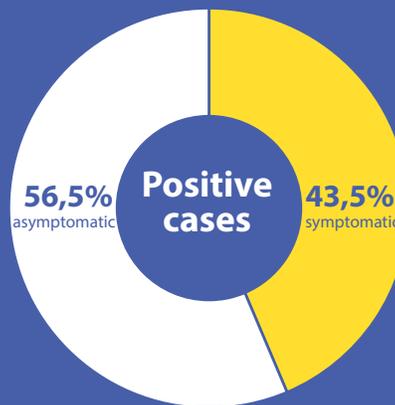


**5,5%**

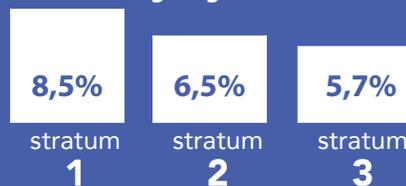
cumulative positivity

## Most affected populations by sector

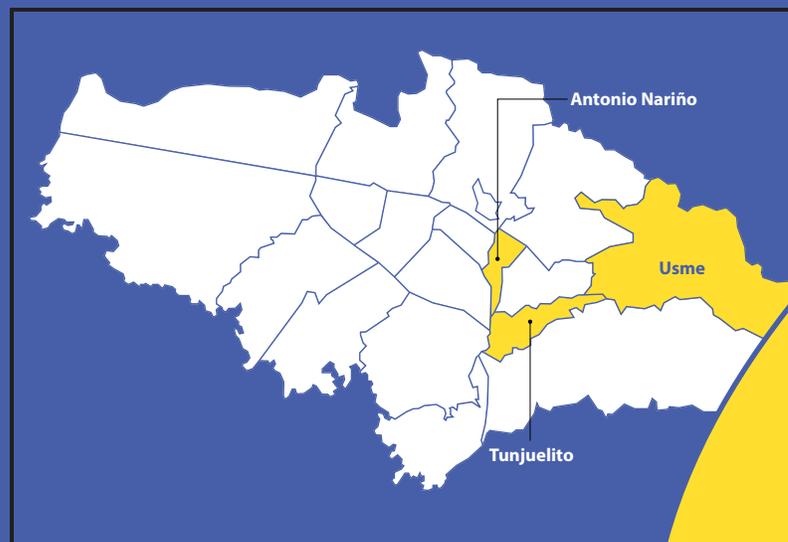
1. Security personnel
2. Taxi drivers and public transport
3. Construction workers
4. Homemakers
5. Unemployed population



## Positivity by stratum



## Places with the most cases



## Contact tracing



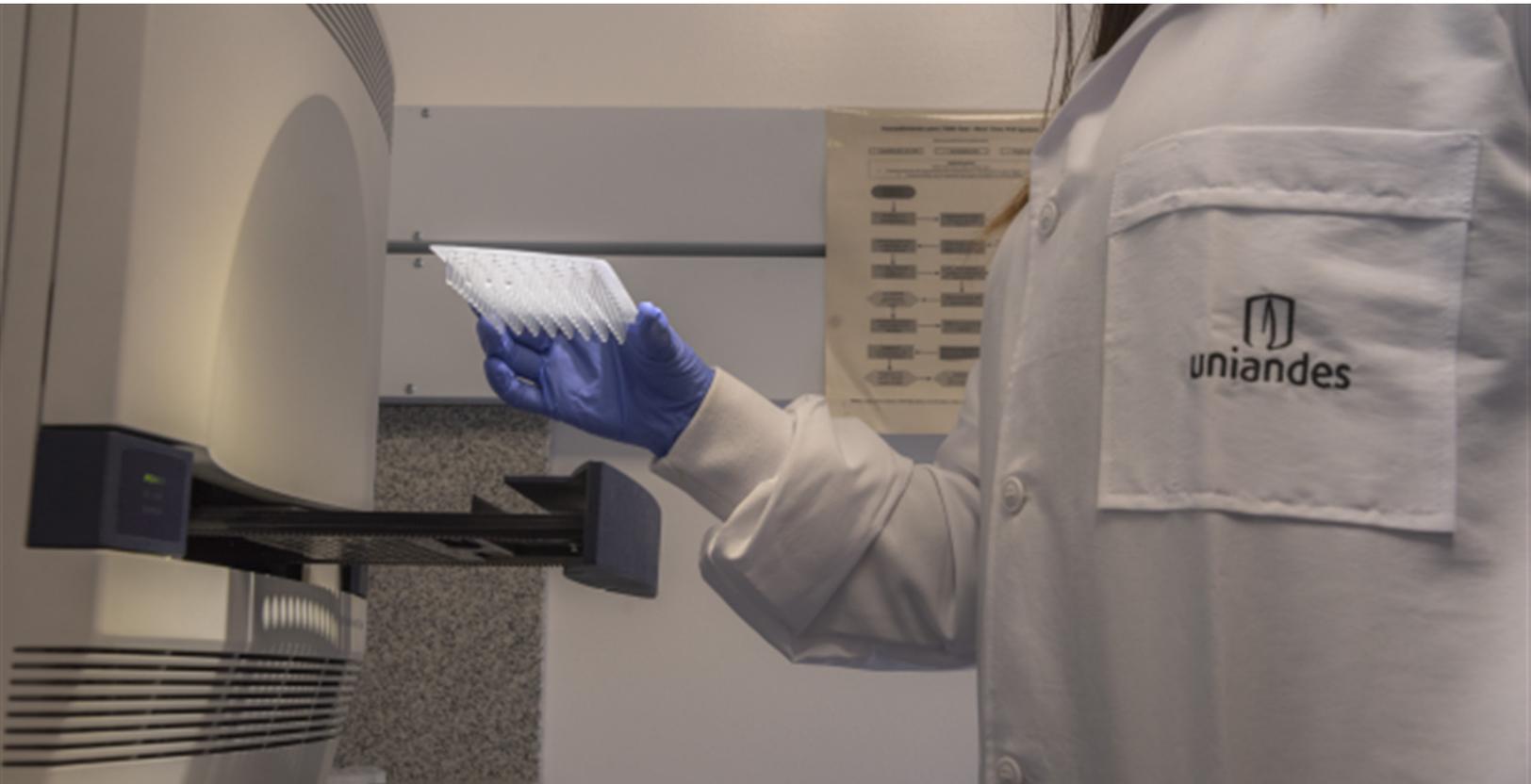
# PUBLICATIONS

---

· Under the direction of Rachid Laajaj, Scientific Co-director of Covida project, together with more than 20 collaborators, including the President Alejandro Gaviria, Vice-Presidents, Academics and Administrative staff, the article [SARS-CoV-2 spread, detection, and dynamics in a megacity in Latin America](#) was published, which contains the most relevant findings of the research.

· The Covida's data have been disclosed in [epidemiological journals](#) issued by the District Secretariat of Health in the [Health Observatory of Bogotá-SaluData](#)

· All project's documents are publicly available at: <https://cienciaabierta.uniandes.edu.co>



# ACHIEVEMENTS

- The implementation of the Covida project allowed the GenCore Laboratory to be strengthened and improved, thus leaving an installed capacity to face future epidemiological risks in the country.
- The acquisition of two PCR machines and an automated Hamilton RNA extraction equipment.
- It is the first time in Colombia that a university takes part in the public health surveillance system.
- Gencore is the fastest laboratory in processing and delivering PCR test results.
- Covida provides response indicators, as well as information on the number of positive cases.
- Contact tracing of positive cases was started even before the decree issued by the national government as a strategy to reduce the spread of the virus. This contributed to breaking the virus transmission chain.

# TESTIMONY



---

Misinformation has arisen around the COVID-19 pandemic, which at some points hindered the involvement of some population groups. José Sánchez, a 28-year-old mail delivery worker, talks about those imaginary scenarios and how he experienced COVID.

*Click here to  
play video*



[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LFDzYdDlz\\_U](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LFDzYdDlz_U)

# COVIDA

## in 2021

---

The first stage of the Covida finished on March 30, the analyses of this stage are descriptive. In the following months of 2021, researchers will be working on topics such as insights from contact tracing for public policy, epidemiological surveillance and economic models on inequity in access to testing, among others. In addition, we expect to publish the findings of a project carried out through a partnership with the UNDP on the adherence and effectiveness of the use of face masks compared to the use of face masks and face shields. We invite you to read the publication [SARS-CoV-2 spread, detection, And dynamics in a megacity in Latin America](#), one of the most complete publications on the research findings of the Covida project.