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National Initiatives for Open Science in Europe

Deliverable D4.5

Delivery of legal, technical and procedural tools

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References

- [1] Project NI4OS-Europe-857645 – Annex I – Description of the Action
- [2] D4.1 Incentives for Supporting ORDM and FAIR
(<https://zenodo.org/record/3736148#.Xqq7ZagzY2w>)
- [3] D4.2 Data repository integration and ORDM/FAIR compliance guidelines
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- [4] D4.3 Mapping of legal, technical and procedural tools
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- [5] Collected tools catalogue:
<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1Sk8YmcUbxoMDelcyEKyXGPxDG61zEmDc/edit#gid=739815483>
- [6] OpenMinTeD License Compatibility Matrix
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Executive summary

What is the focus of this Deliverable?

The deliverable D4.5 is a product of T4.3 “Open and FAIR data in practice” work on the creation of tools for RDM following the data lifecycle. It develops and deploys the NI4OS-Europe tools related to technical solutions to address the researchers’ needs when publishing in FAIR and open modes.

What is next in the process to deliver the NI4OS-Europe results?

The demonstrator of D4.5 is part of the NI4OS-Europe tools and activities supporting FAIR and ORDM. The current initial release of the tools will be followed in the upcoming months by several intermediate versions, leading to the stable production-level versions, which will be delivered in D4.7. This will conclude the related NI4OS-Europe activities.

What are the deliverable contents?

This is only an accompanying document. The actual deliverable consists of two demonstrators accessible through weblinks. The document offers brief information about each of the tools, outlines their relation, provides the access links to the wiki pages with the documentation, workflow, architecture etc. and outlines possible next steps in this work.

Conclusions and recommendations

The WP4 deliverables contribute to ORDM and FAIR. The first set of deliverables submitted in the first year of the project offers analysis and categorization of the existing guidelines, policies, technical solutions, tools and models addressing FAIR and open science issues. This work has contributed to the identification of gaps in the current scenery and steered the development of the NI4OS-Europe tools.

1. Overview

This deliverable is part of Work Package 4 (WP4) of the NI4OS-Europe project and the work related to the support of Open and FAIR data in practice: tools for RDM following the data lifecycle. This task focuses on the aggregation, improvement and development of tools covering the increased demand for providing technical solutions to address the researchers' needs when publishing in FAIR and open modes.

The decision about the tool to be developed rests on previous findings and related work in this work package (T4.1 and T4.2), but also on the insights gained through our participation in the related EOSC Working Group. It was decided to deliver a tool that assesses compliance to the EOSC Rules of Participation providing an aggregated procedure for legal and ethics compliance through the integration of a set of model procedures.

In the conceptualization of the tool, it became clear that model procedures related to repository policies required additional attention. It was thus decided to develop the Repository Policy Generator as a second and additional tool that would facilitate the making of key choices and drafting of policy documents.

The intent is to have the tools developed in parallel and at a later stage consider their tighter integration, and to possibly also include the License Clearance tool (LCT) that was described in D4.4., as all WP4 tools address different needs of the data or resource lifecycle. This will certainly increase the value and branding synergy of the offered solutions, but has to take into account their complexity, maintainability, clarity of purpose and user-friendliness. The aim should not be to create a tool that would be complicated and would require a significant amount of time for its use. The plan is rather to adopt an agile and modular approach that considers the WP4 tools as building blocks that can be either used in combination or separately the one from the other.

1.1. Rules of Participation Compliance

EOSC RoP Legal & Ethics Compliance tool is the first of the two NI4OS-Europe tools that are developed as part of the D4.5. It can be used for performing a self-assessment of EOSC compliance with the legal and ethical aspects of the Rules of Participation. This tool is the output for Task T4.3 that focuses on the aggregation, improvement and development of tools covering the increased demand for providing technical solutions to address the needs for researchers to publish in FAIR/open modes. The tool targets the ecosystems of tools for open and FAIR assessors, contributing to them from a legal point of view. These are tools that allow for IPR, ethics and data protection compliance both at the policy and legal level, aligned with the EOSC governance.

This document provides only accompanying information, as the actual deliverable is a demonstrator. The current version aims at providing a proof of concept and describes the basic functionalities and architecture of the tool, while its flow is presented through several mock-up screens.

The related documentation of the tool is accessible through the NI4OS-Europe project public wiki at the following location:

https://wiki.ni4os.eu/index.php/EOSC_RoP_Legal_%26_Ethics_Compliance_-_Description_and_Documentation#Tool_Use_Case_Scenario

1.2. Repository Policy Generator

An important aspect of the NI4OS-Europe work is the definition and sharing of information that is required for the onboarding of scientific repositories and data into NI4OS-Europe, OpenAIRE and EOSC. As this is directly linked to the policies governing repositories, it was decided to provide a tool that would facilitate the making of key choices and drafting of policy documents. This would help repository owners in the creation of policies for the publishing of their work and align it with requirements for participation and onboarding in the mentioned infrastructures.

The baseline implementation of RePol has been deployed to the production environment, is fully operational and is available at <https://repol.ni4os.eu>. It is available for evaluation, use and comments by users, and has been offered to the repositories that are being onboarded within WP5 by sharing the information about it over the NI4OS-Europe onboarding mailing list.

More detailed description and documentation are available in the NI4OS-Europe wiki at <https://wiki.ni4os.eu/index.php/RePol>.

2. Next steps

The final NI4OS-Europe supported version of the RoP Legal & Ethics Compliance tool will be released in M29 of the project; the current version will be, however, enriched progressively throughout the project lifetime and advanced functionalities will be added well before the release of the definitive version and the submission of the related deliverable. Important for the directions the further development of the tool will take, will be the final decisions regarding EOSC Rules of Participation. The NI4OS-Europe team will continue following the discussion closely and make any necessary updates and adaptations.

The RoP Legal & Ethics Compliance tool has been developed as a self-assessment tool. In the future it could become part of "official" EOSC certification mechanisms and schemes. This is something that requires the development of a related business model but also depends on the decisions and directions the EOSC Association will take.

Similarly, updates may be also performed to the Repository Policy Generator depending on feedback and evaluation during current use. Immediately useful would be the extension of the tool to the generation of other policy and repository configuration-related and potentially machine-readable artifacts, including those associated with various registries and validators. RePol will be aligned as needed with requirements and emergent demands to create artifacts for EOSC services in development, such as EOSC OS Monitor and OS Policy Registry. The policy template will also need to be readjusted to evolving norms in expectations for repository and service policies and the service certification context. The data used to create repository policies could be extended and exchanged with the Agora-SP service portfolio management tool used by NI4OS-Europe and EOSC platform. Similar policy templates and data entry forms, based on the same approach, rationale and modular structure, could be developed for generic services. Furthermore, the developed software platform could be applied to other similar applications, such as the creation of Privacy Notice, Terms of Use or Intellectual Property Policy documents, but special care should be taken to avoid duplication of already existing tools, such as those at <https://consent.dariah.eu> and <https://termify.io/>.

After a brief period of addressing user comments and suggestions, the source code of both tools will be made available at a public source code repository under appropriate free/open-source licenses. This is in line with the European Commission's open-source software orientation and supports the long-term sustainability of the produced tools.

The technical implementation of both tools is general and quite independent from their current domain-related application. This allows for their reproducibility and adoption by other groups in need of similar specific or generic functionality, which would facilitate their further development. In this case, the core code and functionality would need to be separated from the application-specific configuration, templates and branding.

Finally, an English-language promotional package for the produced NI4OS-Europe tools will be prepared with WP7. The D4.5 tools could be also integrated into WP3 and WP5 procedures and manuals. Moreover, the developed tools should be promoted and integrated into the wider EOSC and OS space. At this stage, it is not foreseen that the WP4 tools will be localised to any of NI4OS-Europe languages, but the NI4OS-Europe team will evaluate the feasibility of this endeavour, especially as part of the National Open

Science Cloud priorities and the activities performed by the networks of EOSC Promoters and NI4OS-Europe Translation Officers.