

# Accelerating the implementation of FAIR assessment in practice



FAIRsFAIR Adopts the RDA FAIR Data Maturity Model Specification and Guidelines



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## The challenge

The overall goal of the FAIRsFAIR project is to develop practical solutions to facilitate the application of the FAIR principles throughout the research data life cycle. One of the objectives of FAIRsFAIR is to pilot the assessment of digital objects (e.g., research data) in FAIR-enabling Trustworthy Digital Repositories (TDRs). To reach this goal the project developed a set of systematic metrics that let us assess FAIR digital objects. A number of groups and communities that are interested in evaluating FAIRness have proposed their own criteria/measures. This leads to a range of sometimes ambivalent or incomplete interpretations, thereby raising the need to define systematic measurements of data FAIRness through an assessment framework that provides consensus based on existing approaches.

## The RDA outputs adopted

FAIRsFAIR used the RDA FAIR Data Maturity Model Specification and Guidelines Recommendation (assessment indicators version 3) of the FAIR Data Maturity Model Working Group as a basis to develop a set of minimum metrics for assessing the FAIRness of research data objects and tools implementing those metrics to address two main use cases (researchers and data repositories). To support assessments based on the metrics, FAIRsFAIR is currently implementing a tool set (Fair-Aware - a manual self-assessment tool to be used by researchers, and F-UJI - an automated assessment service for implementation by repositories). The metrics and tools will be iteratively improved through pilot testing with researchers and selected data repositories.

## The impact of the adoption

The Recommendation 'FAIR Data Maturity Model (Specification and Guidelines)' includes the definition of the indicators and their assessment details which are important for implementing FAIR data assessment. FAIRsFAIR has participated and provided feedback on the indicators during two of the online workshops organised by the WG, and will disseminate and share the results of pilot testing through project reports. More generally, FAIRsFAIR aims to increase the production and use of FAIR data and will draw upon emerging specifications and guidelines as recommendations, guidance and training for various stakeholders (research communities, data stewards, policymakers) are being developed.

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## The adoption process

FAIRsFAIR partners working on FAIR Certification have actively participated in online and RDA Plenary face to face meetings organised by the WG. The consortium has extensively contributed throughout the various feedback stages of the WG. The project and the WG have jointly organised a session on FAIR Metrics at EOSC symposium 2019 to raise awareness about FAIR assessment, and to discuss ongoing and planned FAIR assessment implementations by different communities, including

opportunities and challenges they face. In addition, the project partners have provided feedback on each of the releases of the indicators. Estimating the total time/effort is difficult as the adoption was carried out in stages, and through different activities within the project. The Task 4.5 (FAIR Data Assessment: Pilots) partners of the project who primarily applied the WG recommendation took approximately 6 months to apply the indicators.

## Lessons learned

The FAIR principles are high-level guidelines, which may lead to a range of sometimes ambivalent or contradictory interpretations. The project highly appreciates the efforts of the WG in consolidating feedback and clarifying the principles into a set of indicators. This is a great step forward towards implementing FAIR. However, since FAIR assessment depends on a variety of communities' data practices, the indicators should be adapted accordingly, specifically the priorities and evaluation methods specified in the Recommendation. Since the main focus of the WG is on 'what' should be evaluated, i.e., assessment indicators with their priorities, FAIRsFAIR adapted them to suit the data and repositories requirements of the project's use cases.

Overall, our experience with the indicators are good, but their applicability requires further elaboration and exploration which should be the focus of the adopters of the recommendation.

FAIRsFAIR feels there is a mutual benefit in making contributions to the RDA WG activities.



# FAIR

## Data Object Assessment Metrics

## About FAIRsFAIR

FAIRsFAIR - Fostering Fair Data Practices in Europe - aims to supply practical solutions for the use of the FAIR data principles throughout the research data life cycle. Emphasis is on fostering FAIR data culture and the uptake of good practices in making data FAIR. FAIRsFAIR will play a key role in the development of global standards for FAIR certification of repositories and the data within them contributing to those policies and practices that will turn the EOSC programme into a functioning infrastructure.

In the end, FAIRsFAIR will provide a platform for using and implementing the FAIR principles in the day to day work of European research data providers and repositories. FAIRsFAIR will also deliver essential FAIR dimensions of the Rules of Participation (RoP) and regulatory compliance for participation in the EOSC. The EOSC governance structure will use these FAIR aligned RoPs to establish whether components of the infrastructure function in a FAIR manner.



**FAIRsFAIR**  
Fostering Fair Data Practices in Europe

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