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State of the DDI Cloud

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An investigation was conducted to examine the extent to which metadata in different Data Documentation Initiative (DDI) standards is openly available and which elements of these standards are used. DDI is a set of international standards for describing and documenting data used in social, behavioural, economic, and health sciences research.

To identify the online repositories, where DDI metadata is available, re3data.org (a global registry of research data repositories that covers research repositories from different academic disciplines) and an enquiry on the DDI-users mailing list were used. We compare this with findings from 2017 and could add new repositories after a first presentation of this project in July 2023.

Then we tried to access and analyse the metadata, e.g. by using a standardised protocol like the Open Archive Initiative-Protocol for Metadata Harvesting (OAI-PMH). This makes it possible to show which elements are more commonly used than others.

The findings have implications for deploying DDI metadata and the further development of the standards. They could also inform users like researchers and data stewards, how the standards are used by the community. Overall, the investigation highlights the value of openly available metadata in supporting research to achieve the goals of the FAIR data movement.

Primary authors: WENZIG, Knut (DIW Berlin); Mrs HAN, Xiaoyao (DIW Berlin / SOEP)

Presenters: WENZIG, Knut (DIW Berlin); Mrs HAN, Xiaoyao (DIW Berlin / SOEP)

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