

The sharing network

FOT-NET Data is boosting data sharing and re-use in FOTs, say **Helena Gellerman, Satu Innamaa and Silvia Curbelo**

The evaluation of ITS impacts on the transport network in terms of sustainability, safety and efficiency is a must before large-scale deployment. Field studies, i.e. Field Operational Tests (FOTs) and Naturalistic Driving Studies (NDS) can provide the hard evidence needed to reassure industry and public authorities before they give the green light to initiate the roll-out process.

Unfortunately, FOT evaluation methods are costly and time-consuming. Letting the data collected go to waste implies a major drain of resources but, what if the data collected in previous FOTs could be re-used in order to answer new research questions?

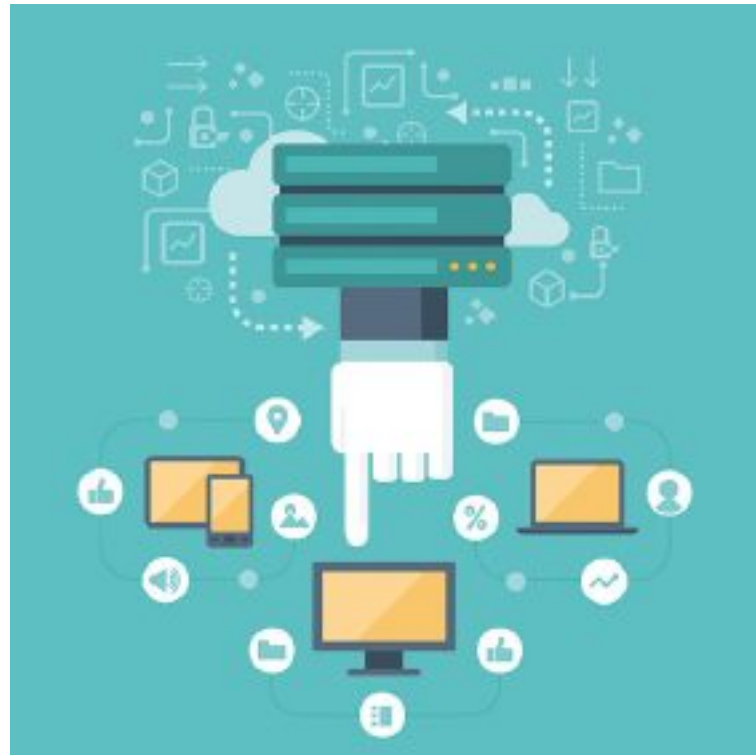
Recently launched EC-funded projects and the challenges tackled by the H2020 calls for proposals show once again the importance of open data and data re-use. The European Commission's position is that the information public bodies produce, collect or pay for should be made available to others, generating value through re-use of available data sets.

In this context, the FOT-Net Data project (Field Operational Test Networking and Data Sharing Support) aims to support the efficient sharing and re-use of available FOT datasets. The ultimate goal is to achieve efficiency in data usage, promoting a sort of circular economy of information about the efficiency, quality, robustness and acceptance of ITS solutions (eg navigation and traffic information, advanced driver assistance – ADAS).

The joint efforts of project partners, driven by VTT Technical Research Centre of Finland, are beginning to bear fruit. A Data Sharing framework, the purpose of which is to provide guidance and recommendations on data re-use, is about to be made available for open feedback. In addition, partners have finalised the integration of new Data and Tool Catalogues within the FOT-Net Wiki.

NEW DATA SHARING PLATFORM AWAITING FEEDBACK

The purpose of the Data Sharing Framework is to support data sharing globally. It provides guidance and recommendations on how FOT and NDS data could be shared and re-used to answer new research questions. It is based on the practices and knowledge gained from data sharing cases within the FOT-Net community.



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A complete package of the different elements of the Data Sharing Platform is currently under development and will soon be available on the FOT-Net Data website. It includes input received from international stakeholders such as the US Department of Transport.

As of today, users will be able to find the drafts of the Data protection recommendations and the Data and metadata descriptions chapters. These are essential areas to encourage researchers to share data and to rely on available data to answer their research questions.

The last chapter contains recommendations for content in project agreements regarding data sharing, training, support and research services, business models, and application procedures. Checklists with specific questions on funding agreements, consortium agreements, participant agreements and agreements with external data providers are also included.

The chapter on support and research services discusses

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different levels of assistance to the researchers. The support spans from providing information regarding the data and data analysis practices to giving detailed training in data handling and providing tools. With research services the data provider takes a more active part in the actual research, from extracting specific data to performing the whole research for a customer.

Training discusses issues related to personal privacy and immaterial property rights, as well as the set-up of analysis workplaces and procedures for data assessment.

Financial models focuses on how to finance datasets after data collection. An overview of different options and their pros and cons is provided together with a list of items to be financed.

Finally, the application procedure lists the suggested items to be included, together with recommendations on what information should be provided by the applicants.

The complete Data Sharing Framework consists of seven chapters, each addressing an essential part of a successful data sharing activity. By providing a draft for comments, the FOT-Net Data consortium aims to collect feedback and adjust the final Data Sharing Framework to the needs of researchers.

FOT RESEARCHERS, WELCOME TO YOUR WIKI

The FOT-Wiki is a free, living encyclopaedia of FOTs made for and by the FOT community. It includes a catalogue with data from FOTs carried out in Europe and around the world and is, thereby, a source of invaluable scientific data.

FOT-Net Data has launched an optimised version of the FOT-Net Wiki (wiki.fot-net.eu) by making it easier for researchers to nurture the wiki or extract data from it. By clicking in the new “Tool Catalogue”, users will be able to browse or contribute to the FOT or the Data Catalogues, with no risk of getting lost in the maze. From now on, wiki users will be able to create and update entries by filling out/in simple forms.

The new FOT and Tool Catalogues already include most of the information that was poured into the old wiki. The content harmonisation is in progress and will be completed this autumn. Previous contributors will be now invited to update their content.

All experts and stakeholders are invited to share their FOT knowledge by contributing to the Wiki. The next challenge will be to populate the newly created Data Catalogue. FOT-Net will work together with data owners to bring make more data available.

The wiki includes only those datasets whose data owner is either willing to share (e.g. openly, under NDA or with contract) or with which the data owner is willing to provide

analysis support services (i.e. does not share data but provides tailored analysis in line with customer’s research needs).

GEARING UP FOR ITS WORLD CONGRESS

FOT-Net Data partners are organising an “International Workshop on ITS and Connected Vehicle Data” as an associated event of the ITS World Congress 2015, which will be hosted this year by the beautiful city of Bordeaux, in France.

The FOT-Net Data workshop will start on Monday 5 October at 9am and will conclude at 3:30 pm, right before the opening ceremony of the biggest ITS event of the year. As an appetizer of the intense week lying ahead, the workshop will discuss challenges and opportunities of C-ITS data collection, sharing, and management in a context where research on connected vehicles matures and opens up the way towards international deployment.

Among the questions to be discussed during this workshop are:

- How can lessons learned from FOTs concerning data ownership, personal data and anonymisation be used in the deployment phase?
- How to deal with research versus operational data?
- How can stakeholders profit from international sharing of data and experiences from FOTs and pilots?
- Which research areas or specific questions need to be answered to enable and facilitate deployment, and can analysis of existing FOT datasets provide some of the answers?

The axis of the event will be the presentations from FOTs and pilots representatives from Europe, Asia and the Americas. There will be discussions in small groups to explore potential solutions.

Finally, FOT-Net Data partners will be present during the Congress with a Special Interest Session on “Field operational tests for automated driving” and partners’ contribution to the Technical Session “Are Big Data and Open Data Transport’s ‘Silver Bullets?’”.



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