

NEWS

PROJECT

RUDI - Rennes Urban  
Data Interface

📍 Rennes Metropole,  
France

TOPIC

Digital transition

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## RUDI's ethical approach recognised by an independent label

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How can we guarantee the ethical and responsible use of data? How can we be sure that the public interest is being taken into account and that the rights of the individual are being respected? This is the aim of the label that the Ekitia Association has awarded to the RUDI project for the years 2023 to 2026. Here's a look at the labeling process and what it means for RUDI and its partners.

The potential for using data in the public interest is huge: ecological transition, mobility, health, education. The multiplication of crises (health, energy, environmental) has acted as a driving force for sharing data, especially between public and private actors. This is one of the main challenges of the RUDI project. But **without the trust** of the actors involved, especially the public, **nothing is possible**. The general context is not always positive: public opinion is marked by scandals related to data leaks, malicious and manipulative use (like the Cambridge Analytica scandal) and, more generally, the extractive practices of major Internet platforms. The risks posed by the use of data or artificial intelligence are also of concern to a large number of Europeans. According to a [recent Eurobarometer survey](#) by the European Commission (June 2023), four out of five Europeans believe that digital technologies will play an important role in their daily lives by 2030. However, only half of them believe that their digital rights are sufficiently protected. Awareness is widespread, both at European level (with the Trustworthy AI approach, for example) and at local level (with the adoption of ethical charters).

### Charters as a commitment to the ethical use of data and the use of digital technologies

Local authorities are **at the forefront** of using data to improve public services or drive the energy transition, for example, as the RUDI project clearly shows. They also manage large amounts of personal data, not only about their own employees, but also about residents, including those receiving social benefits. As the saying goes, "*with great power comes great responsibility*": local public actors need to be extremely careful about how they use this data, otherwise they run the risk of creating mistrust.

With this in mind, a large number of metropolises in Europe and elsewhere have made commitments in the form of **territorial charters on data and digital**. Montreal, London and Nantes are among the pioneers in this field. These commitments cover the entire data lifecycle (from creation to archiving and destruction) and a wide range of issues (privacy, sovereignty, reducing the ecological footprint, etc.).

## RUDI's Charter for Data Producers

In 2023, Rudi's partners initiated a project for a charter for the federation of data producers. This document is currently being finalized. It aims to detail the mutual commitments and obligations of all actors who produce and make data available on the RUDI platform. For example, the charter states that data producers can withdraw a dataset (after giving the RUDI team at least 48 hours notice). It also stipulates that RUDI reserves the right to delete a dataset if the anonymization rules are not respected. The publication of high-quality, well-documented data should also be encouraged by the charter.

Ultimately, the Charter should be seen as a governance tool, laying down the rules for the platform to operate in a harmonious way.

## A label to guarantee the right application of the principles of the Ethical Charter

Since 2019, The **Ekitia association** has also been at work on the drafting of its own [ethical charter](#). Bringing together public, academic and private stakeholders, Ekitia aims to promote an ethical approach to data and artificial intelligence. The charter, the result of an extensive consultation and co-creation process, sets out **8 principles** to ensure the ethical use of data. How can we ensure that these principles are implemented? The Ekitia association has created its own **label**. It allows anyone to ensure that a project (digital service, platform, application) complies with the principles of the Charter.

### How does one obtain the label?

The labeling process is at the initiative of the owner of the project or service. This is the first key element of the process: the label is awarded to each project, so it's not an organization (a company, a local authority) that gets the label, but a specific project. Another is **independence**: Ekitia has entrusted a third party with the task of verifying that the projects meet the criteria, in complete independence. If the third party declares that the project does not meet the criteria, it is not eligible for the label. There is a fee for this process, but paying it does not entitle the project to a label. It depends on the evaluator's opinion and the answers provided.

The procedure itself is based on a declarative **questionnaire**. It contains about one hundred questions related to each of the topics of the Code of Ethics. The evaluator will then ask to examine supporting documents to ensure the sincerity of the answers. Depending on the results obtained, the label may or may not be awarded for a period of 3 years.

The RUDI project is **Ekitia's 5th accredited project**. As such, it is entitled to use the logo. The logo indicates to the users of the solution that the ethical principles have been respected.

### Other certified projects

In addition to Rudi, **4 other projects** are currently certified by Ekitia:

- The Occitanie region's [Mon Parcours Formation Métiers](#) project, which allows each citizen to create a personal profile and discover jobs matching their skills or, if necessary, training courses in the region,
- The [Data et Quartiers](#) program of the Résovilles association, which aims to use data from public and private actors to address neighborhood issues such as access to employment and mobility,
- The [Colibris solution](#), an economic and environmental performance measurement tool that aggregates and analyzes multiple sources of internal and external data,
- Upciti's "privacy by design" solution for [multi-use sensors](#) (vehicle counting, parking, road congestion detection).

## RUDI's ethical strengths

The certification process also aims to highlight the RUDI solution's strengths in terms of ethics and responsible use of data. From the beginning of the project, the **public interest** has been at the heart of RUDI. The projects supported and tested meet this public interest objective, whether it is supporting the energy transition, recycling construction waste or reducing environmental pollution. In this way, RUDI consciously and voluntarily goes **against the grain of the monetization and intensive exploitation of data** by the major digital platforms.

Another strong point is the respect for individual rights in the use of personal data. Of course, the projects developed with RUDI respect the legal framework and first and foremost the GDPR. But this goes further, with an emphasis on obtaining consent for the sharing and reuse of data. Finally, RUDI has taken measures with regard to cybersecurity, including audits on this subject.

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