



A project of the European Anti-Cybercrime Technology Development Association
(EACTDA)



D7.2 Evaluation report of the online evaluation platform's implementation



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1. Introduction

1.1. Overview of the Tools4LEAs project

EACTDA is the acronym of the European Anti-Cybercrime Technology Development Association, which is a private non-profit association, established in San Sebastian, Spain. The members of the Association include European Union (EU) public entities fighting cybercrime, universities and research technology organisations, for-profit private companies, and other relevant actors in the field of the EU security research and innovation.

The Tools4LEAs projects are a series of projects that receive a Direct Award under the ISFP programme, and which main goal is to facilitate and promote the uptake of innovative technologies by EU public entities fighting cybercrime. EACTDA, via the Tools4LEAs projects, aims at further developing pre-existing assets, mainly from EU-funded security research and development projects, so that they are offered with no license cost and with access to the source code to EU public entities fighting cybercrime.

In the first Tools4LEAs project (v1; Jul'21 to Jun'23), the focus was on designing and setting up the infrastructures, processes, and governance / decision-making mechanisms, whilst delivering the first set of "fully-tested and operational-ready" tools via Europol's Tool Repository. Though 11 tools were further developed in the v1 project, it is expected that 3 of them will not be released to their targeted audience as they do not pass the pre-established quality threshold of "operational-ready". Also, an End-User Advisory Board (EUAB) composed as of Sep'24 by 23 members from 14 EU member states and co-chaired by two Europol units (EC3 and Innovation Lab) was established and it is the body responsible for identifying and prioritising end-user needs and which has veto right over the decisions done by EACTDA/Tools4LEAs with regard to the tool development roadmap.

In the second Tools4LEAs project (v2; Jul'23 to Jun'25), it is proposed to double the number of tools delivered. Also, the repository of tools implemented in v1, and currently used to host the results of the Tools4LEAs projects, will be enhanced and reused to host the results of EU-funded security research projects (when relevant in the field of cybercrime). EACTDA will play the role of custodian of these results, and the technical, IPR, and administrative aspects needed to create this new repository of security research results will be put in place. In addition, the v2 project will include a pilot to proof the concept of initial and limited support&maintenance periods for a selection of tools. Besides, a pilot of the concept of EACTDA national nodes will be included, with nodes planned in LT, FR, ES, and maybe one or two more. Also, an online platform for end-users to evaluate Tools4LEAs tools will be implemented. Finally, the v2 project will include activities to further build the community of Tools4LEAs stakeholders and to promote the creation and/or adoption of technical blueprints, and in general, of commonly accepted best practices.

1.2. Main objective of this document

As commented in the previous section, the Tools4LEAs-v2 project's scope includes an online platform for end-users to allow them evaluate Tools4LEAs tools. This document presents the status of the implementation of the platform, an evaluation of it, and the work plan for the next 6 months so that it can be ready before the March 2025 demonstration and evaluation event and for the tools that will be released during that event.

1.3. Relation to other deliverables

This deliverable is closely related to the following deliverables:

- **D7.1. Evaluation report of the online evaluation platform's implementation:** Deliverable D7.2 reports on the implementation of the online evaluation platform, and therefore it provides an update of the initial design presented in D7.1.
- **D7.3. Online evaluation platform pilot phase report:** Deliverable D7.3 will report on the results of the pilot phase that will happen since the platform is fully implemented and until it is launched to the wider community.
- **D7.4. Online evaluation platform launch and operation report:** Similarly to deliverable D7.3, deliverable D7.4 will report on the results of the initial period of operational use of the platform.

1.4. Structure of the deliverable

Section 2 of this document introduces the concept of the online evaluation platform, its intended purpose, targeted users, and the planned work plan to implement it.

Section 3 presents the status of the implementation of the online evaluation platform as of September 2024.

Section 4 presents the work plan of the remaining work that is needed to fully implement the platform before it is launched in a pilot phase.

Finally, section 5 summarises which is the goal and key aspects of this document, it acknowledges that there is still work to be done to improve the document, and it presents some of the areas of future work that have already been identified.

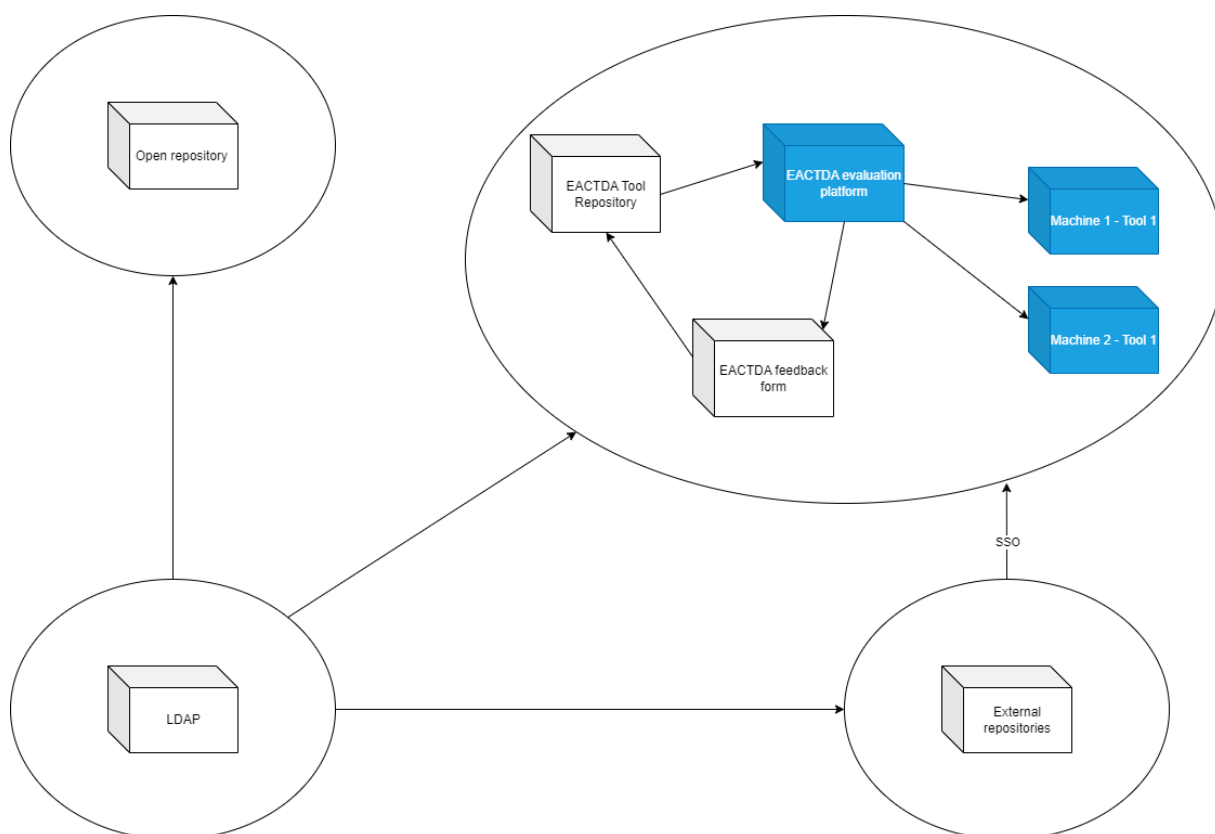
2. Introduction to the Online Evaluation Platform

2.1. Purpose of the Online Evaluation Platform

Facilitating the uptake of innovative solutions by European Union public entities fighting cybercrime is at the core of EACTDA and the series of Tools4LEAs projects.

During the Tools4LEAs v1 project (Jul'21 to Jun'23) the End-User Advisory Board of the project proposed to facilitate an evaluation platform at which authorised users could evaluate the Tools4LEAs tools that have been considered fully-tested and operational-ready and which, therefore, are released via the different distribution channels (i.e., EACTDA's repository of tools, Europol's ETR) and available to our targeted end-users to adopt and use.

This platform is encompassed inside a bigger ecosystem, which is designed with the aim to facilitate the uptake and evaluation of the projects developed within the Tools4LEAs project framework. So, before describing the functionalities of the Online Evaluation Platform, the full ecosystem will be briefly described.



EACTDA's Online Evaluation Platform is a platform that will allow the users try different type of tools, all of them developed within the Tools4LEAs project. As of now, three tool categories have been identified: web service tools, API tools and standalone tools. The main functionalities of this platform will be described in the Functional requirements section. Once the evaluation session for a specific tool has finished, the user will be redirected to EACTDA's feedback form. This form will include different categories that the user will have to fulfill to provide valuable feedback from the tool.

In order to access the platform, the user must be logged in. Depending on the user privileges that the user possesses (previously defined by the administrator), the user will be able to login to the Online Evaluation Platform or will only be able to access EACTDA's Tool Repository. This repository will allow

the user to view metadata from each tool (name, version, author), as well as a description, videos describing the functionalities of the tool, etc. As it has already been explained, depending on the user permissions, he/she will be able to request access to an instance of the tool, in order to try it and evaluate it. To establish the connection between the Tool Repository and the Online Evaluation Platform Single Sign-On will be implemented.

Besides, Single Sign-On will also be implemented to allow users with permissions granted to access any of these previous services from an external trusted environment/repository, such as Europol's ETR, the Freetool Hub, or ECTEG's catalogue of training courses.

Apart from these services, an Open Repository will be designed. This will act as a catalogue of tools from external projects (relevant project related to cybersecurity) that will be hosted in this repository for the user to download them. This repository will be opened to everyone. However, in order for the users to download the tools, they will have to register to it.

To manage the user accounts to every service described above, an LDAP server has been implemented, which will allow the users access all the available service by just logging in once to the LDAP server. In this server the users will have to register and create an EACTDA account, which will serve them to access the different services within the ecosystem. The type of access to each service will depend on the permissions level provided by the administrator.

2.2. Targeted users of the Online Evaluation Platform

All EACTDA targeted end-users, this is, European Union public entities fighting cybercrime¹, are the targeted users of the online evaluation platform. In addition, EACTDA Secretariat IT staff will also be the administrator of the platform.

¹ In Autumn 2023 the Board of the Association agreed to extend the targeted audience not only to EU public entities fighting cybercrime but also to public entities fighting cybercrime from Schengen area countries, included those that are not from the EU.

3. Status of the online evaluation platform's implementation

As of September 2024, the implementation of the online evaluation platform is not completed as originally planned. Below we report the status of the different parts of the platform.

The user management back-end and front-end modules of the platform have been completed, including the integration with the LDAP service. Below we present a summary of the completion level for the different functional use cases of the online evaluation platform:

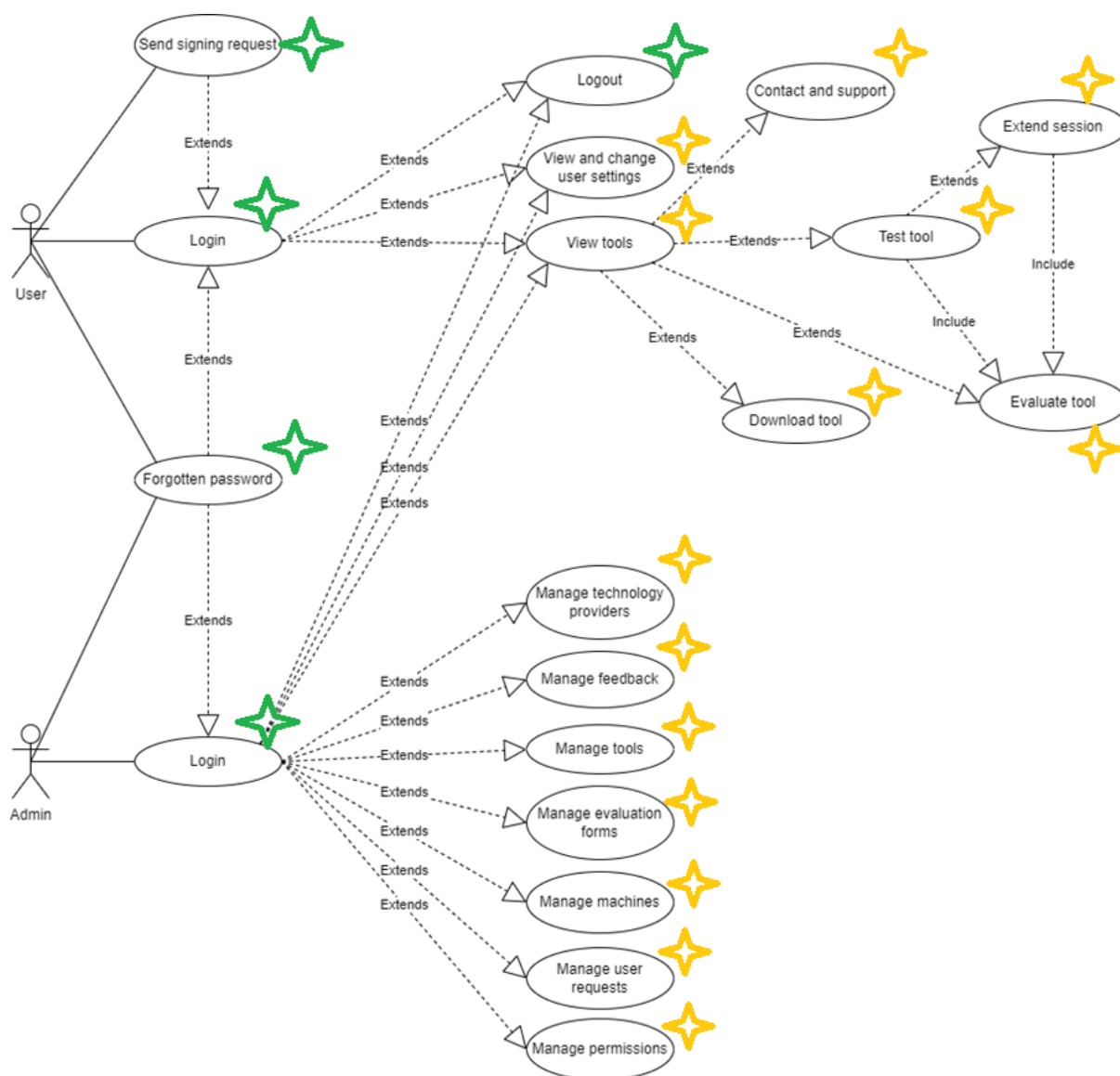


Figure 1 - Use cases completed (green star) VS use cases under development (orange star)

It is worth noting that the development team has already identified several modules and components from other EACTDA services that can (and will) be leveraged to complete the development of the remaining use cases.



4. Online Evaluation Platform's work plan

Due to conflicts with other critical tasks and “last-mile” development projects’ related work, the EACTDA staff assigned to the development of the online evaluation platform has not have as much availability as originally planned. Therefore, there has been a delay in the implementation plan of the online evaluation platform of around 4 months.

The mitigation measures adopted allow us to estimate, as of September 2024, that the online evaluation platform development can be completed by January 2025, pre-launched and piloted during the months of February to March, fine-tuned in April 2025, so that the final launch and entering into operation of the platform can happen during the months of May and June 2025.

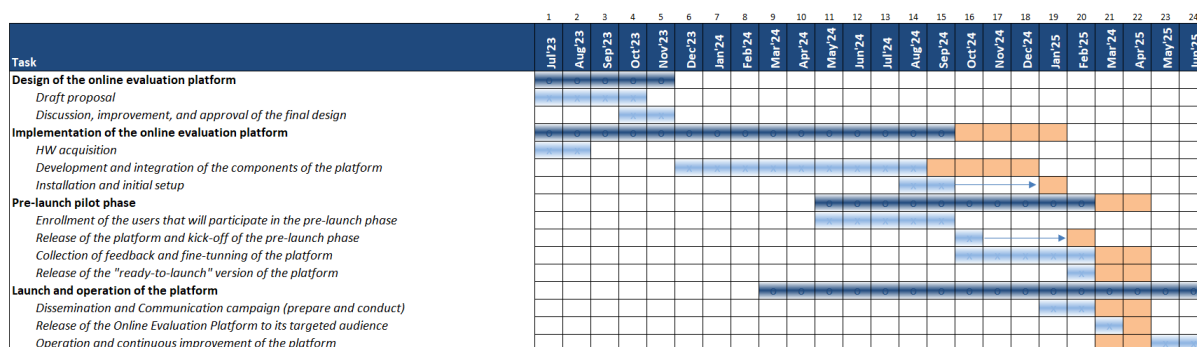


Figure 2 - Online Evaluation Platform's implementation work plan (updated)



5. Summary

5.1. Conclusion

This document describes what the online evaluation platform is, its intended purpose and users, the status of its implementation, and an update on the remaining implementation work plan.

5.2. Evaluation

The original aim of this deliverable was to report on the implementation of the online evaluation platform, as it was planned that this implementation was going to be completed this month of September 2024. However, due to a reprioritisation and re-assignment of development resources (EACTDA staff personnel), a delay of around 4 months is foreseen. Therefore, it is expected that it will be as part of deliverable D7.3 when and where it will be reported the completion of the online evaluation platform's implementation.

5.3. Future work

This deliverable will not be updated.