

## **The EPOS Legal and Governance Framework : tailoring the infrastructure to fit the needs of the EPOS services**

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One of the most important issues regarding a pan-European distributed large scale research infrastructure is the setting up of its legal and governance structure as this will shape the very operation of the undertaking, i.e. the decision-making process, the allocation of tasks and resources as well as the relationship between the different bodies. Ensuring long-term operational services requires a robust, coherent and transparent legal and governance framework across all of the EPOS TCS (Thematic Core Services) and ICS (Integrated Core Services) that is well aligned to the EPOS global architecture.

The chosen model for the EPOS legal entity is the ERIC (European Research Infrastructure Consortium). While the statutory seat of EPOS-ERIC will be in Rome, Italy, most of the services will be hosted in other countries. Specific agreements between EPOS-ERIC and the legal bodies hosting EPOS services will be implemented to allow proper coordination of activities. The objective is to avoid multiple agreements and, where possible, to standardize them in order to reach a harmonized situation across all services.

For the governance careful attention will be paid to the decision-making process, the type of decisions and the voting rights, the definition of responsibilities, rights and duties, the reporting mechanisms, as well as other issues like who within a TCS represents the service to the 'outside' world or who advises the TCS on which subjects.

Data policy is another crucial issue as EPOS aims to provide interdisciplinary services to researchers interested in geoscience, including access to data, metadata, data products, software and IT tools. EPOS also provides access to computational resources for visualization and processing. Beyond the general principles of Open Access and Open Source the following questions have to be addressed: scope and nature of data that will be accepted; intellectual property rights in data and terms under which data will be shared; openness and availability of data; data privacy and security; publication and attribution; liability and violations or misuse of data.

To support the challenges of the EPOS legal, governance, and also financial framework, EPOS will implement a sophisticated metadata catalog and associated integrated services in its ICT architecture.