



Women in EPOS: the role of women in a large pan-European Research Infrastructure for Solid Earth sciences

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Women are outnumbered by men in geosciences senior research positions, but what is the situation if we consider large pan-European Research Infrastructures?

With this contribution we want to show an analysis of the role of women in the implementation of the European Plate Observing System (EPOS): a planned research infrastructure for European Solid Earth sciences, integrating national and transnational research infrastructures to enable innovative multidisciplinary research.

EPOS involves 256 national research infrastructures, 47 partners (universities and research institutes) from 25 European countries and 4 international organizations. The EPOS integrated platform demands significant coordination between diverse solid Earth disciplinary communities, national research infrastructures and the policies and initiatives they drive, geoscientists and information technologists. The EPOS architecture takes into account governance, legal, financial and technical issues and is designed so that the enterprise works as a single, but distributed, sustainable research infrastructure.

A solid management structure is vital for the successful implementation and sustainability of EPOS. The internal organization relies on community-specific Working Packages (WPs), Transversal WPs in charge of the overall EPOS integration and implementation, several governing, executive and advisory bodies, a Project Management Office (PMO) and the Project Coordinator.

Driven by the timely debate on gender balance and commitment of the European Commission to promote gender equality in research and innovation, we decided to conduct a mapping exercise on a project that crosses European national borders and that brings together diverse geoscience disciplines under one management structure.

We present an analysis of women representation in decision-making positions in each EPOS Working Package (WP Leader, proxy, legal, financial and IT contact persons), in the Boards and Councils and in the PMO, together with statistics on women participation based on the project intranet, which counts more than 500 users.

The analysis allows us not only to assess the gender balance in decision-making positions in a pan-European research infrastructure, but also to investigate how women's participation varies with different aspects of the project implementation (management, coordination, legal, financial or technical).

Most of the women in EPOS are active geoscientists (academic or in national research institutes), or have a scientific background. By interviewing some of them we report also on how being involved in the project affects their careers.

We believe this kind of analysis is an important starting point to promote awareness and achieve gender equality in research and innovation.