



# EPOS ERIC

## GENDER EQUALITY PLAN



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EPOS ERIC GEP  
Working Group



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## 1. Introduction

EPOS, European Plate Observing System ([www.epos-eu.org](http://www.epos-eu.org)) is a distributed research infrastructure committed to enabling excellent science through the integration, accessibility, use and re-use of solid Earth science data, research products and services, as well as by promoting physical access to research facilities. EPOS brings together solid Earth scientists, national research infrastructures, ICT experts and decision makers to establish and underpin sustainable and long-term access to solid Earth science data and services, integrating diverse European Research Infrastructures under a common federated framework. EPOS relies on e-science innovation to foster progress in science with the final goal of developing new concepts and tools to provide accurate, durable, and sustainable answers to societal questions concerning geo-hazards and those geodynamic phenomena (including geo-resources) relevant to the environment and human welfare.

The EPOS vision is to ensure sustainable and universal use and re-use of multidisciplinary solid Earth science data and products fostering state-of-the-art research and innovation.

The EPOS mission is to establish and underpin sustainable and long-term access to solid Earth science data and services integrating diverse European Research Infrastructures under a common federated framework.

On October 30<sup>th</sup>, 2018, the European Commission granted EPOS the legal status of the European Research Infrastructure Consortium (ERIC). The ERIC legal framework provides EPOS with legal status recognised in all EU Member States and with the flexibility to adapt to the specific requirements of each infrastructure. Under this European framework, the EPOS ERIC Gender Equality Plan (GEP) commits to the European Strategy for Gender Equality 2020-2025 and the introduction of the GEP eligibility criterion for Horizon Europe participating organisations and considers goals, actions and resources dedicated to improving gender equality within the organisation and to promote gender equality within the whole EPOS Community.

The EPOS ERIC GEP has been tailored having regard to the EPOS mission and vision, history, and wider context, taking into consideration the results of an internal survey aimed at measuring experiences and perceptions of gender equality in EPOS ERIC (Annex 1). The EPOS ERIC GEP is seen to be a dynamic document that will be monitored and updated if needed, on annual basis.

The EPOS ERIC GEP complies with the requirements set by the European Commission inasmuch as it:

- 1) is a public document signed-off by the top management;
- 2) foresees dedicated resources for its monitoring and implementation;
- 3) includes data collection and monitoring processes;
- 4) involves training.

## 2. Action Plan

### Overview of the goals and action plan

The EPOS ERIC GEP relies on the following goals as recommended in the Horizon Europe guidance on gender equality plans:

- Goal 1: Work-life balance and organisational culture
- Goal 2: Gender balance in leadership and decision-making (Committees and Boards)
- Goal 3: Gender equality in recruitment and career progression
- Goal 4: Integrating the gender dimension into research content
- Goal 5: Measures against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment

For each goal, the following aspects are detailed in a dedicated table:

- Objectives (Objective)
- Concrete measures that will be implemented to reach the goal (Measure)
- Target groups (Target)
- Indicator to be used to monitor and assess the progress of the action (Indicator)
- Dependencies subordinated to external factors that may interfere with the desired outcome (Dependencies)
- Staff members responsible for the action (Responsibility)
- Starting and ending time for the action (Timeline)

Human resources from the Executive Coordination Office (ECO) are assigned annually for the data collection, monitoring, and implementation of the EPOS ERIC Gender Equality Plan.



### Goal 1: Work-life balance and organisational culture at EPOS ERIC

**Main objective:** Develop specific measures for work-life balance and promote an organisational culture based on gender equality.

No.	Objective	Measure	Target	Indicator	Responsibility	Timeline
1.1	Inclusive work-life balance policies and practices	1.1.1 Maintain existing measures for work-life balance including remote working agreements and flexible working time arrangements (e.g., measures like a "hours bank")	EPOS ERIC Employees	Number of employees benefiting of work-life balance Internal measures	Administration Unit	2023 2024
		1.1.2 Explore additional measures to facilitate the integration of staff after a break (e.g., parental leave, sick leave, sabbatical leave, etc.)		Policy supporting the integration of staff returning after a break		
1.2	Promote an organisational culture based on gender equality	1.2.1 Inform the EPOS stakeholders that the EPOS ERIC GEP is in place. Produce and disseminate a public statement supporting gender equality	EPOS Stakeholders	Dissemination of Public statement supporting gender equality	Communication Unit	2023 2024
		1.2.2 Produce and internally disseminate guidelines for equality-oriented language and communication	EPOS Stakeholders	Guidelines for equality-oriented language and communication (also referring to available EU material)		2024

## Goal 2: Gender balance in leadership and decision-making (Committees, Boards, Working Groups)

**Main objective:** Promote and maintain gender balance in EPOS ERIC committees, boards and working groups (e.g., Executive Committee; Service Coordination Committee; Ethics Board; Scientific Board, IT Board, Policies Working Group, GEP Working Group). As the personnel composing boards, committees and working groups are not legally and hierarchically bound to the EPOS ERIC, it is essential to emphasise that EPOS ERIC is only committed to the provisions of the GEP (see Goal 1, action 1.2) and to foster gender balance.

No.	Objective	Measure	Target	Indicator	Dependency	Responsibility	Timeline
2.1	Reach gender equality in decision-making	2.1.1 Promote gender balance in the decision-making bodies	EPOS ERIC Committees, Boards, Working Groups, Decision-Making bodies	Number of genders in committee, boards, working groups	Available expertise	Executive Director, Chair of the Body	2023 2024
2.2	Promote gender equality at decision-making level	2.2.1 Inform the boards, committees, working groups members that the EPOS ERIC GEP is in place and provide them with the GEP		Information is sent to all members	---	Communication Unit	2023 2024
		2.2.2 Include in the Rules of Procedures of boards, committees, working groups a clause on respecting GEP and take the GEP into consideration in all the actions and decisions		Amendment to the Rule of Procedure		Executive Director, Chair of the body	2023 2024

### Goal 3: Gender equality in recruitment and career progression

**Main objective:** Ensure gender equality in the EPOS ERIC recruitment, selection, employment procedures, and career progression.

No.	Objective	Measure	Target	Indicator	Responsibility	Timeline
3.1	Ensure gender equality in recruitment and selection procedures	3.1.1 Draft and disseminate calls for vacancy positions including a statement supporting equal opportunities, gender equality, diversity, and inclusiveness	Executive Director, Recruitment Committees	Advertisements for job vacancies include and respect gender equality policy	Executive Director Administration Unit	Continuous
		3.1.2 Usage of non-binary pronouns in vacancy advertisements	Potential Applicants	Advertisements for job vacancies use non-binary pronouns and gender-neutral language	Communication Unit	
		3.1.3 Vacancy positions disseminated on different platforms and websites		Number of platforms and websites used	Communication Unit	
		3.1.4 Gender balance in Recruitment Committee	Executive Director, Recruitment Committee	Number of genders composing the Recruitment Committee	Executive Director Administration Unit	
3.2	Ensure gender equality in employment procedures	3.2.1 Employment agreement for EPOS ERIC staff includes a statement supporting equal opportunities, gender equality, diversity, and inclusiveness	Employees	Number of agreements containing the statement	Executive Director Administration Unit	Continuous
3.3	Ensure gender equality in remuneration and career progression	3.3.1 Provide equal salary conditions	Employees	Equal salary conditions	Executive Director	Continuous
		3.3.2 Provide equal opportunity, including training for personnel development	Employees	Equal assignment of responsibility and training course per employee	Executive Director Communication Unit	Continuous

#### Goal 4: Integrating the gender dimension into research content

**Main objective:** Integrate gender equality into cultural principles, policies and across projects. In this framework linked to external activities EPOS ERIC will strongly emphasise its commitment to the provisions of the GEP.

No.	Objective	Measure	Target	Indicator	Dependency	Responsibility	Timeline
4.1	Integrate the gender dimension into EU-funded projects in which EPOS ERIC participates	4.1.1. Gender balance within research teams	EPOS Project team	Number of different genders in research team	Available expertise	Management and Operation Unit	From 2023
4.2	Promotion of gender equality in workshops and events	4.2.1 Gender balance among speakers and attendees invited	EPOS Stakeholders	Number of different genders participating in workshop and event	Available expertise	Communication Unit	From 2023

#### Goal 5: Measures against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment

**Objective:** Integrate effective measures for securing zero tolerance for gender-based violence in EPOS ERIC; Establish a culture of zero tolerance towards sexual harassment and violence.

No.	Objective	Measure	Target	Indicator	Responsibility	Timeline
5.1	Establish a culture of zero tolerance towards sexual harassment and violence	5.1.1. Drafting and enforcing a Code of Conduct addressing discrimination, sexual harassment, violence and mobbing, which includes behaviour, reporting, investigation, support for victims, disciplinary measures and sanctions.	Employees and all staff	Approval of the Code of Conduct	Executive Director Administration Unit Communication Unit	2023 2024

### 3. Monitoring and Evaluation

With the EPOS ERIC Gender Equality Plan, EPOS ERIC is creating the structure and process to monitor progress towards gender equality in connection with all the above-mentioned goals focusing particularly on the changes required to promote future developments involving equality, diversity, inclusiveness and non-discrimination principles.

To identify new challenges related to gender equality, a survey will be conducted annually. The statistics of personnel of different genders, the number and gender of people applying for different positions, as well as the composition of boards, committees and working groups in terms of gender balance and inclusiveness will be collected, as applicable. Furthermore, where feasible, all the events organised by EPOS ERIC will aim to achieve gender equality and inclusiveness. The statistics will be collected and managed by the Management and Operational Unit with the support of the Communication Unit at EPOS ERIC.

The current document represents a baseline for further developments. Additional objectives and measures for gender equality and/or other types of inclusiveness will be proposed annually based on available data.

### 4. Diversity, Inclusiveness and Gender Equality Commitment

EPOS ERIC is committed to fostering a diverse, non-discriminatory, and inclusive workplace, and it seeks to recruit and retain people from diverse cultures and backgrounds. The EPOS staff must treat colleagues and external parties with equal respect, regardless of their gender, nationality, culture, any disability, religion or sexual orientation. Any discrimination against employees and external parties based on one of those factors, or any comparable circumstance, will not be tolerated.

EPOS ERIC is committed to ensuring a safe, healthy, and accessible workplace, thus guaranteeing that everyone has an equal opportunity to participate in the community. The accessibility of its facilities and the opportunity to participate in decision-making are safeguarded by EPOS ERIC.

EPOS ERIC is fully committed to the implementation of the Gender Equality Plan in all aspects of the organisation to promote gender equality and diversity, enhance work-life balances and foster a respectful, open, and welcoming workplace culture. Furthermore, EPOS ERIC is committed to promoting gender equality and diversity in its activities to the EPOS Stakeholders.

### 5. Acknowledgement

We express our gratitude to the members of the EPOS ERIC Ethics Board for their support in the preparation of this document.

We wish to thank Barbara Angioni for her support in graphic design.

## 6. References

[European Strategy for Gender Equality 2020-2025](#)

[Conclusions on the New European Research Area \(ERA\)](#)

[Horizon Europe guidance on gender equality plans](#)

### Annex 1 – ECO Survey

An internal survey was conducted in September 2022, aimed at measuring experiences and perceptions of gender equality in EPOS ERIC. The survey addressed the five goal areas identified within the GEP.

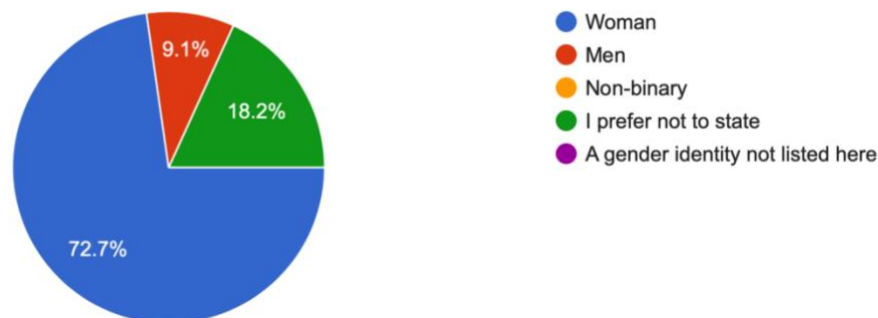
The survey was sent to the EPOS ERIC Executive Coordination Office (ECO) staff. The ECO is organized into different units (or areas of activities) with specific commitments and personnel, some of whom are INGV personnel working as in-kind resources in EPOS ERIC. The ECO currently counts sixteen people including nine INGV employees. The ECO became operational in February 2019.

The anonymously collected data highlight the need to have the Gender Equality Plan in place, identifying goals and direct measures to promote and support gender equality. Furthermore, some comments and suggestions have been freely provided by the EPOS ERIC Executive Coordination Office (ECO) staff.

Considering the survey result, responses, and suggestions, as reported in the graphics below, the EPOS ERIC GEP is adapted to the current circumstances of EPOS ERIC and will be monitored and updated on annual basis.

#### 1. What is your gender identity?

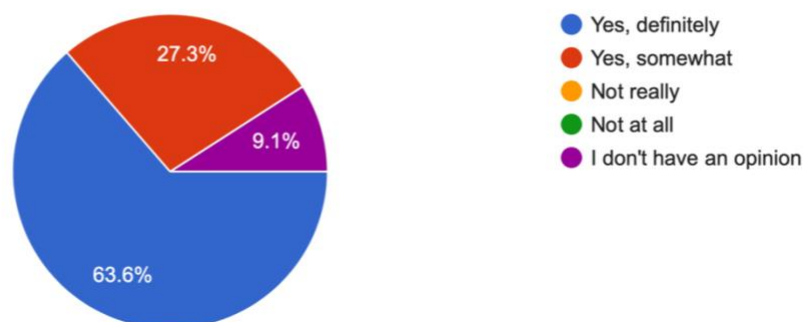
11 responses



## Gender Equality

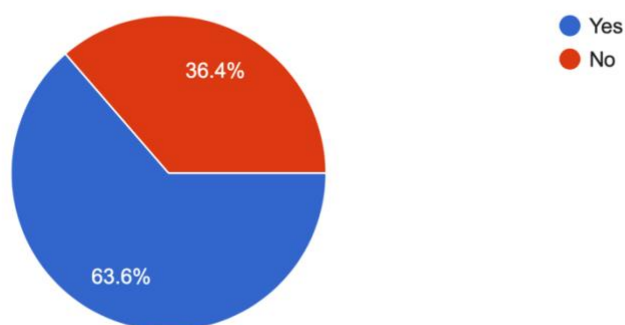
2. In your opinion, is EPOS ERIC committed to gender equality?

11 responses



3. Are you aware of any actions, documents or policies supporting gender equality at EPOS ERIC?

11 responses



General comments:

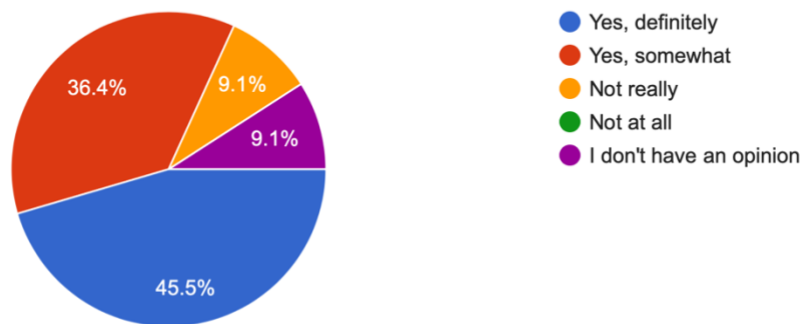
EPOS ERIC actions, documents, or policies to support gender equality that have been identified by the respondents are as follows: EPOS ERIC Statutes, Implementing Rules, RRI policy Gender Equality Plan under discussion and preparation, EPOS ERIC privacy policy, EPOS ERIC call for vacancies, bargaining contracts and internal policies.



### Promotion of gender equality

4. In your opinion, should EPOS ERIC further promote gender equality in its organizational culture?  
(i.e., employment contract, call for vacancies, policies)

11 responses



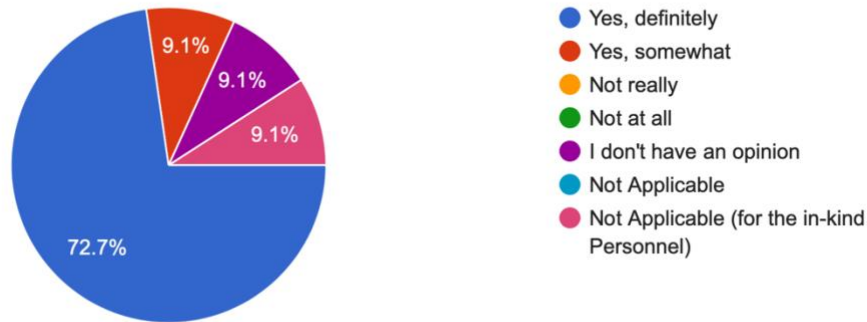
General comments:

The respondents suggested the improvement of gender equality in recruitment and career progression, avoiding stereotypes and strongly supporting the drafting and implementing of a Gender equality plan with effective actions in this regard.

## Work-life balance and organizational culture

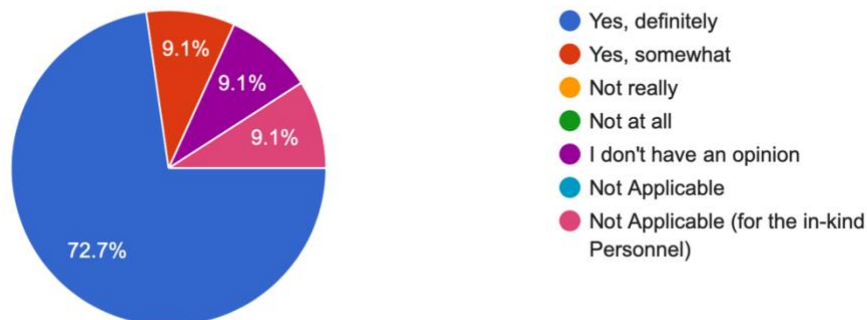
5. Are you satisfied with the current work-life balance arrangements EPOS ERIC offers?

11 responses



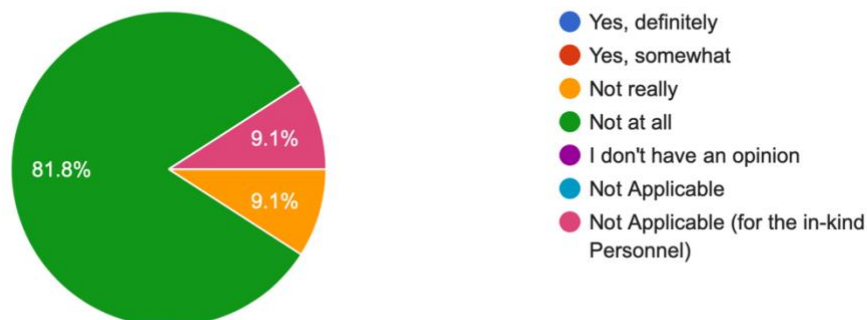
6. In your opinion, does EPOS ERIC offer enough flexibility in the way your work can be arranged?

11 responses



7. Have you ever experienced that EPOS ERIC discriminates on work-life balance based on gender?

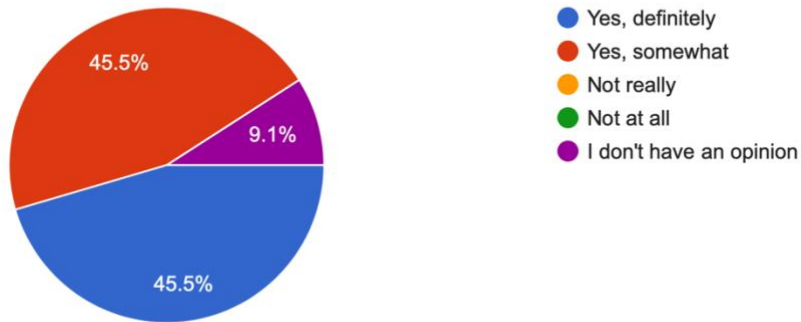
11 responses



### Gender balance in leadership and decision-making

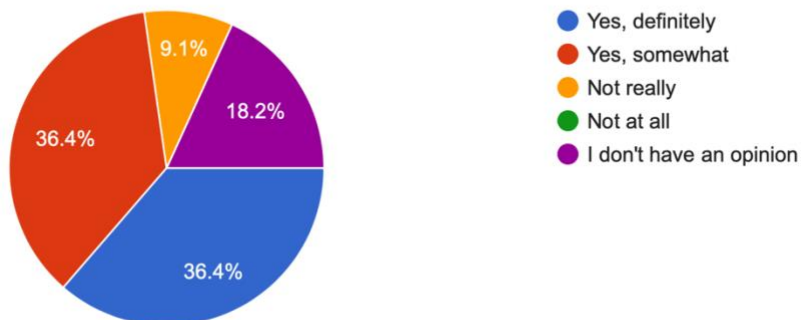
8. Do you perceive that there is gender balance in EPOS ERIC senior leadership?

11 responses



9. Do you perceive that there is gender balance in the EPOS ERIC decision-making process?

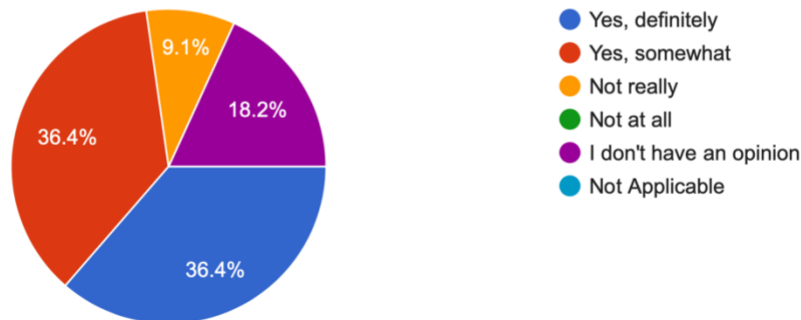
11 responses



## Gender equality in recruitment and career progression

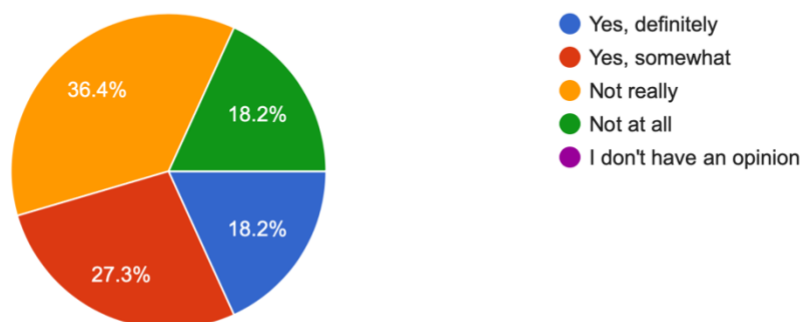
10. In your opinion, are there gender-equal opportunities for career advancement inside EPOS ERIC?

11 responses



11. In your opinion, does EPOS ERIC provide sufficient training/mentoring opportunities to support career progression (e.g. courses, workshops, etc)?

11 responses



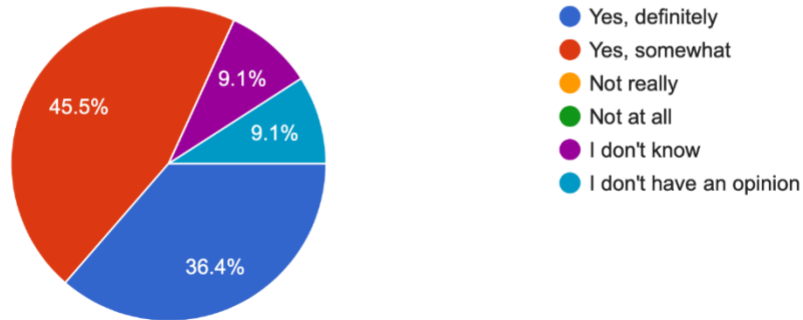
General comments:

Training and other career advancement opportunities should be promoted and offered to all members of the staff, according to their role in EPOS ERIC. More training for the ECO would strengthen the competencies and expertise of the staff and the matter should be addressed now as a part of the training plan which will be drafted to be implemented in 2023.

### Integration of gender dimension into research content

12. In your opinion, does EPOS ERIC integrate the gender dimension into EU-funded projects in which it participates (e.g. foster and ensure gender equality in projects teams and decision-making processes)?

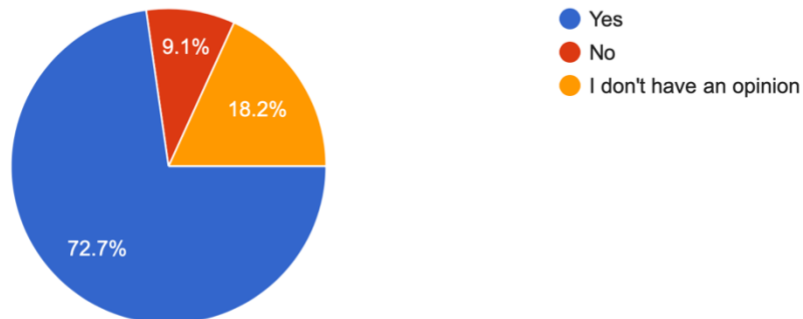
11 responses



### Measures against gender-based violence

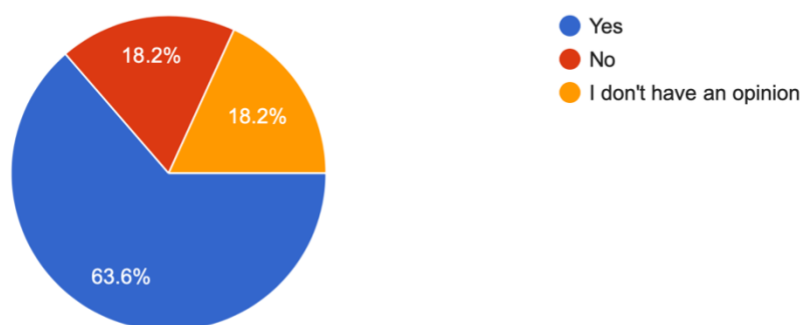
14. Do you think that EPOS ERIC should have a Code of Conduct in place, codifying the expected behavior of employees and in-kind contributors?

11 responses



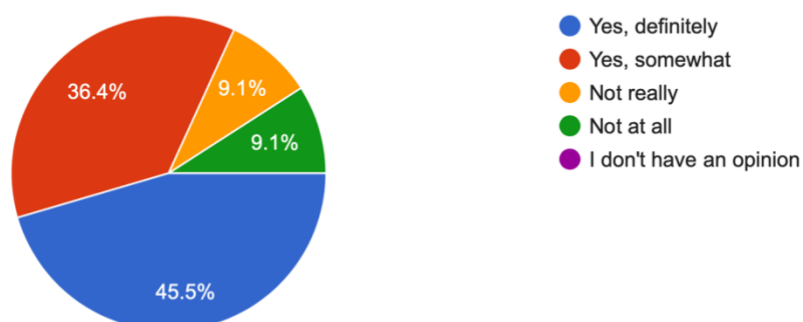
15. Do you think that EPOS ERIC should have an Employee Harassment Complaint Procedure in place?

11 responses



16. Would you feel comfortable reporting any gender-based violence including sexual harassment at EPOS ERIC?

11 responses

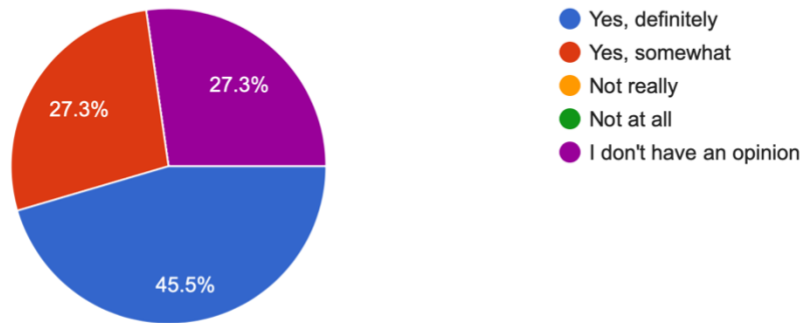


#### General comments:

There is no reporting procedure to follow and there are no clear indications of how the process will be conducted or judged. This makes it more difficult for a complainant to be sure that actions will be taken and that there will be no consequences to their career. The suggestion is to implement confidential counsellor services.

17. In your opinion, is EPOS ERIC creating a suitable environment to prevent gender-based violence?

11 responses



**Would you like to share anything else relevant to the subject of gender equality?**

General comments:

A common understanding of "gender" is according to the European organizations and projects working in this area would be beneficial for the staff of EPOS.

