



EOSCpilot WP2 Governance Questionnaire – Ways to engage stakeholders in the development of the EOSC governance framework

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Abstract:

This document is a report on the EOSCpilot WP2 Governance Questionnaire that focused on the ways in which to engage stakeholders in the development of the EOSC governance framework. The EOSCpilot will establish a Governance Development Forum to enable all different stakeholders to contribute to the development of the EOSC governance framework. The Governance Development Forum is mandated to function and support the establishment of the EOSC. This report will serve as the basis for creating and specifying the work approach of the Governance Development Forum as well as assist the drafting of the governance framework proposal.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The EOSCpilot will establish a Governance Development Forum to enable all different stakeholders to contribute to the development of the EOSC governance framework. The Governance Development Forum is mandated to function and support the establishment of the EOSC. The key objective for the Governance Work Package is to design and trial a stakeholder driven governance framework with the involvement of research communities, research institutions, research infrastructures including e-infrastructures, and research funding bodies, to shape and oversee future development of the European Open Science Cloud.

The main governance challenge of establishing the EOSC is how to construct a framework allowing strong and disparate stakeholders to work together. This framework also needs to address cultural challenges, encouraging the adoption of new ways of working and scientific practices. EOSC pilot will design and trial a stakeholder-driven governance framework with the involvement of all stakeholders. This will then shape and oversee future development of the European Open Science Cloud.

This means building on existing structures and involving all key stakeholders. It requires linking to relevant national, European and global initiatives such as the OSPP, RDA, and the e-IRG. Aside from building on existing structures, the framework should build on existing knowledge and expertise on how to handle governance challenges, particularly in federated or interlinking initiatives. A minimal governance framework requires the maximum level of trust, which calls for stakeholders to be actively involved in driving the process forward. A common reason for strategic decisions to fail is failing to attend to interests and information held by key stakeholders. One objective for this WP is to scope the field of potential stakeholders and map them to roles, level of influence and participation as well as to concepts and categories with identified relations and dependencies. The stakeholder analysis will be used for different purposes by all WPs in the project.

This document is a report on the EOSCpilot WP2 Governance Questionnaire. This report will serve as the basis for creating and specifying the work approach of the Governance Development Forum as well as assist the drafting of the governance framework proposal.

2. RESULTS

The questionnaire was sent to a total of 68 respondents via email and received a total of 21 responses. The respondents were identified based on their participation in three different workshops:

- 30 November 2015, Brussels: organized by HLEG EOsc to discuss the challenges and possible solutions for EOsc
- 5 February 2016, Rome: organized by EUDAT, EGI, OpenAIRE, GÉANT, and LIBER to understand the roles of e-infrastructures and research infrastructures in EOsc
- 29 June 2016, Brussels: organized by European Commission for Member State representatives to discuss preparation of a roadmap outlining the governance and funding of EOsc

The questionnaire was open for a period of three weeks between 13.3. - 31.3.2017 and distributed via Webropol 3.0. The design included both open- and closed-ended questions (see Annex A). Altogether there were three closed-ended questions; two provided respondents with a yes or no option and one that contained a list of nine stakeholder groups from which the respondents were able to choose multiple answers. The questionnaire contained five open-ended questions.

The main objective of the questionnaire was to get a start to the Governance Development Forum by building on thoughts and views from people already involved in the planning and development of EOsc. Additionally, the questionnaire was used to find out efficient ways to involve stakeholders in the EOsc governance framework development as well as to learn about the participants' thoughts on the workshop topics. Answers to the questionnaire provided a rich dataset and pinpointed specific issues to take into consideration regarding the development of the EOsc governance framework.

2.1 Representation of respondents

Question one identified the motivation of the respondents for participating in the EOsc workshops in regards to the stakeholder groups that they represent. The stakeholder groups used were based on a preliminary set of stakeholder groups/categories identified by the WP2 leaders:

1. A research community
2. A research institution
3. A research infrastructure
4. An e-infrastructure
5. A commercial or non-commercial service provider
6. A research funding body
7. A government body
8. The European Commission
9. Other

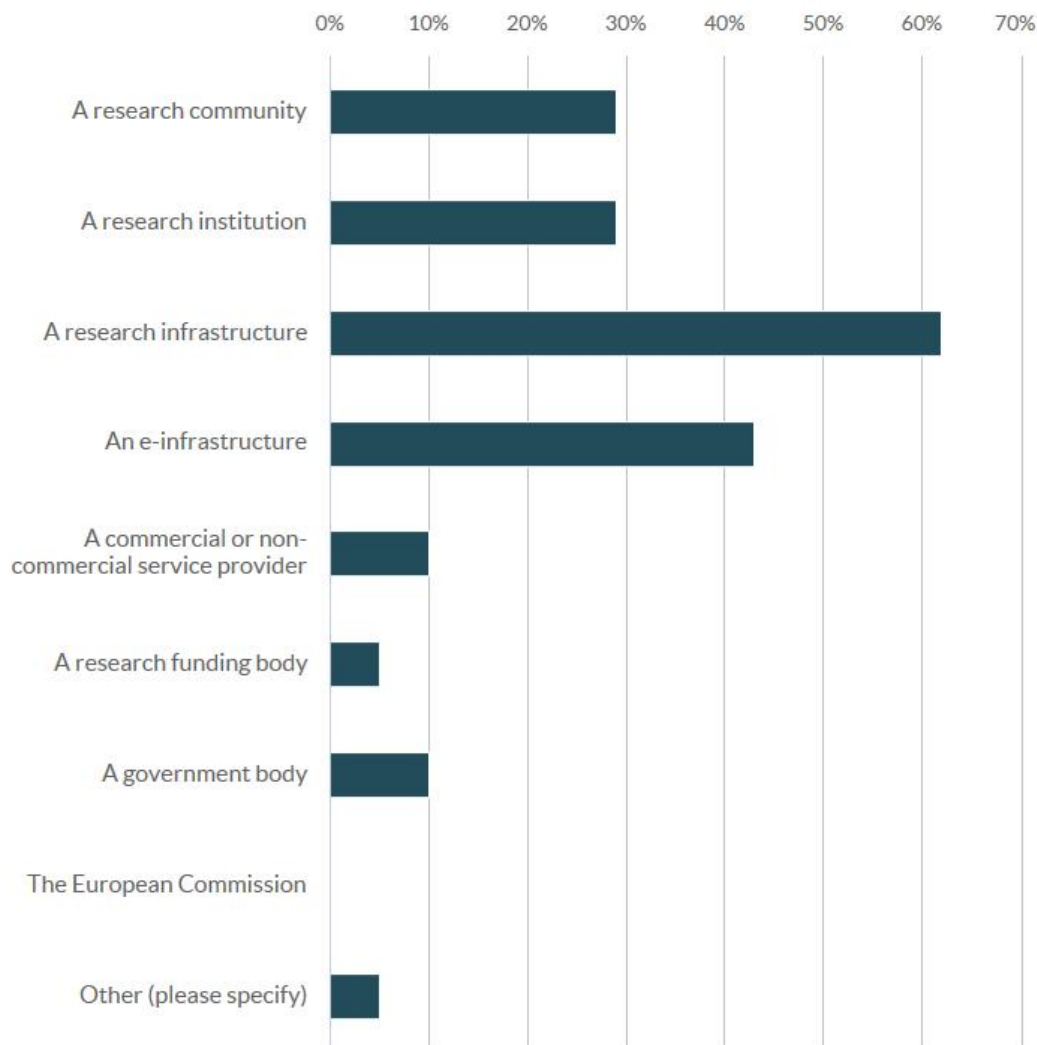


Figure 1 – Results of question 1, “what was your motivation to participate in the EOsc workshops? I represent (you may choose multiple answers)”.

All respondents provided an answer to question one. The two largest representation of respondents were research infrastructures (62%) and an e-infrastructure (43%). Based on the results, 28% of the representation of respondents were research institutions and 28% research communities.

Contrarily, the lowest representation of respondents were research funding bodies and other, specified as a consultancy in e-infrastructures, with only one respondent each. Two respondents were commercial or non-commercial service providers and two government bodies. None of the respondents represented the European Commission.

It should be stated, however, that the question included the option for the respondents to choose multiple answers. This ultimately affects the results so that, for example, respondents who represent research infrastructures also identified themselves as representing a research community, a research institution, an e-infrastructure, a commercial or non-commercial service provider, a research funding body, and a government body. This has important implications to the development of EOsc as it highlights the diversity of the stakeholder groups as well as highlighting the need to examine whether these groups should rather be identified as stakeholder layers, as one respondent commented: “*Too many different types of stakeholders*”.

– *what is needed is to enable a working relation and communication channel between different stakeholder layers*".

2.1.1 Further specification of motivation

All together 13 respondents provided further specification regarding their motivation to participate in the EOsc workshops. The responses indicate a variety of drivers and motivations for different stakeholders.

Support for the objectives of EOsc was visible from the responses and specifically in regards to EOsc being beneficial for researchers on a national level. Motivations for participation were to understand how other infrastructures, such as e-IRG and RDA, fit in the operation of EOsc in general as well as the data interoperability of EOsc in particular. Participation as well as contribution in the development of the EOsc governance model and funding model was also specified. Ensuring alignment and beneficiary components of EOsc with other initiatives was mentioned. These included the High Energy Physics community, HL-LHC research infrastructure, and the African Research Cloud. Additionally, the possibility of co-development of certain components was specified in relation to the requirements of EMBRC RI ¹ matching with what will be provided through EOsc. On the other hand, concerns regarding the visibility of cloud services for user communities was raised.

2.2 EOsc impact

A total of 20 respondents provided an answer to the question regarding how they foresee EOsc being related to their work. Answers can be divided into three groups: opportunities brought by EOsc, influence of EOsc on other initiatives, and gaps in the development of EOsc.

2.2.1 Opportunities brought by EOsc

Respondents identified that EOsc brings with it opportunities for their community, their service users, and for researchers. For example, the decisions made by EOsc governance can have a big impact on the ability to deliver high-quality cloud-based services to the community. In addition to this, EOsc was identified as having the potential to become an important instrument to defragmented data stewardship initiatives in Europe. In regards to the governance framework, EOsc was seen to most likely to be a strong policy body.

The responses also highlighted EOsc bringing opportunities for specific stakeholder groups. It was identified that EOsc could help shape the way that services are delivered to users of already existing infrastructures. The opportunity for researchers to use cloud resources across Europe where data is located and provisioning data resources on the EOsc to enable other analysis activities was highlighted. EOsc was also viewed as providing a framework for developing strategies and implementing tools for scalable sensitive data management and processing.

2.2.2 Influence of EOsc on other initiatives

Respondents also identified opportunities for other initiatives, national service development, and for developing strategies as well as data tools. EOsc was foreseen as becoming an important instrument to

¹ EMBRC (the European Marine Biological Resource Centre) is a distributed European RI which is set up to become the major RI for marine biological research. The main purpose of EMBRC is to promote marine biological science and the application of marine experimental models in mainstream research by providing the facilities (lab space), equipment, expertise and biological resources that are necessary for carrying out biological research. In what concerns data, the role of EMBRC is to generate and make it available.

defragmented data stewardship initiatives in Europe in relation to implementing the FAIR principles. In this regards, EOsc can set an example that other initiatives can follow on a national basis. Through EOsc, the right people and existing initiatives will be brought together in order to avoid overlapping, for example, in regards to the SKA project ²and its regional centers around Europe. In addition, EOsc was seen as providing a core infrastructure to support ESFRI activities and a larger governance context for the (GO)FAIR initiative ³ as well as influencing the implementation of WLCG⁴.

2.2.3 Gaps in the development of EOsc

In addition to the opportunities brought by EOsc and its influence on other initiatives, the respondents identified some gaps in regards to EOsc and its development. Respondents viewed that there are still a lot of room for improvement in communication towards user base and clarity needed regarding the services to be offered by EOsc. One respondent also highlighted that they have the impression that the analysis and processing functions together with long-term data management are being underestimated and yet a decade of experience with the LHC show that these aspects are crucial. It was also identified that a sustainable and economic federation of e-infrastructures organized among a few thematic “virtual data hubs” in support of the implementation of the data management plans of all major ESFRI projects should come first. This would imply that scientific projects/communities and the concerned national research agencies should lead the implementation of the EOsc and approve the EOsc governance implementation.

A worry regarding the governance and model of EOsc was also raised. One respondent discussed how bringing the existing European e-infrastructures at the center of the evolution of the ecosystem and of the future governance of EOsc, will not correspond to expectations. This was seen risking reiterating an e-infrastructures’ model based on the distinction on the two categories of “service providers and users” which is not the one expected by the largest scientific communities for the future. Additionally, and as highlighted earlier in this report, there remains a gap within the stakeholder group identification as the stakeholders may rather be seen as layers. Thus, the question arises whether the EOsc governance should be developed in a layered fashion.

2.3 EOsc and organisational or national Open Science strategy/policy

All respondents answered the question regarding their organisation or country having an Open Science strategy or policy. A large fraction (76%) of respondents identified that their organisation or country have an Open Science strategy or policy and, subsequently, 24% identified that there is no such strategy or policy in place within their organisation or country.

² The Square Kilometre Array (SKA) project is an international effort to build the world’s largest radio telescope, with eventually over a square kilometre (one million square metres) of collecting area.

³ The (GO)FAIR initiative is an implementation initiative towards the Internet of FAIR data and services. <https://www.dtls.nl/go-fair/>

⁴ The Worldwide LHC Computing Grid (WLCG) project is a global collaboration of more than 170 computing centers in 42 countries, linking up national and international grid infrastructures. The mission of the WLCG project is to provide global computing resources to store, distribute and analyse the ~50 Petabytes of data expected in 2017, generated by the Large Hadron Collider (LHC) at CERN on the Franco-Swiss border.

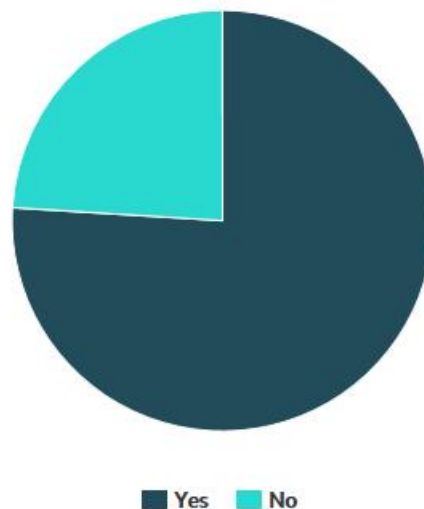


Figure 2 – Results of question 4, “does your organization or country have an Open Science strategy or policy”.

All together 10 respondents out of the 16 who answered, provided a link to their organisational or national Open Science strategy or policy. One respondent identified that their whole organisation is based on Open Science and data.

2.3.1 Strategies on how EOSC will be related to national or organisational Open Science strategy/policy

The question concerning specific strategies on how EOSC will be related to the respondent’s national or organisational strategy or policy, received a total of 19 responses. From these, eight respondents stated that there currently is no strategy in place on how EOSC will be related to their national or organisational Open Science strategy or policy.

A total of five respondents identified specific strategies how EOSC is or will be related to their national Open Science strategy/policy. Specifically, the National Open Science Plan of Netherlands was mentioned along with the development of an Open Science strategy for Africa. EOSC was also viewed as an exemplar that needs to be followed nationally. One respondent also identified the (GO)FAIR initiative as being the closest to their national Open Science strategy in relation to EOSC.

Specific strategies on how EOSC will be related to organisational Open Science strategies or policies were identified by three respondents. For example, GEANT was mentioned as planning to make its cloud services portfolio and identity federated services available to the EOSC. In addition, the interaction between EMBRC and EOSC was stated to be clarified through the e-infrastructure specification for EMBRC (which is currently under development), the Data Policy and the Management Plan.

Respondents who identified that there is no national or organisational Open Science strategy also identified uncertainties in regards to EOSC. For example, a respondent representing a research community responded that they are “*trying to understand what EOSC means for them*”. Other responses from research communities identified that a strategy on how EOSC will be related to national or organisational Open Science strategy/policy is either under development or that they are hoping to address this in the near future.

2.4 Issues discussed in workshops that could have or have enhanced the planning and development of EOSC

A total of 15 respondents identified specific issues or ideas that were discussed in the workshops that could have or have enhanced the planning and development of EOSC.

Table 1 – Main issues discussed in workshops.

Issue	Further Explanation
Scope of EOSC and communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Should EOSC become a physical cloud infrastructure or a set of principles guiding a federated implementation (rules of engagement) ▪ a clear definition of what EOSC is ▪ importance and role of the research infrastructures ▪ use cases
Governance and funding of EOSC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ These should be based on strong national coordinating building blocks ▪ embed the practical advice of repository managers, IT service operators and researchers in the governance and operation of EOSC ▪ governance model must take into account the incentives of researchers to share their data ▪ synergies between research infrastructures and e-infrastructures ▪ governance structure that involves stakeholders ▪ compliance to GDPR and its national implementations ▪ to gather funders from member states together for a discussion
Acceptance of FAIR principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ HLEG report, doubts around if the full research community or the research infrastructures will be standing behind the report ▪ sensitive data management and sharing (informed consent management, dynamic consent) ▪ sensitive data processing ▪ interfacing and interoperability ▪ data quality

Overall, the responses indicate specific workshop topics in relation to the development of EOSC. These include the following:

- The importance and role of the research infrastructures
- Sensitive data management and sharing – stakeholder engagement when dealing with sensitive data
- Procurement – synergies between research infrastructures and e-infrastructures

The responses also demonstrate that the workshops highlighted a diversity in perception on the actual scope of EOsc, in particular, between e-infrastructures and other research infrastructures. Thus, in order to turn the EOsc vision into a working implementation, the practical advice of repository managers, IT service operators and researchers needs to be embedded in the governance and operation of EOsc.

2.5 Involving stakeholders in the development of the EOsc governance

A total of 17 respondents identified ways in which the different stakeholders could be involved in the development of the EOsc governance. Table 2 shows specific stakeholder groups that the respondents identified regarding their involvement in the development of the EOsc governance.

Table 2 – Stakeholder involvement.

Stakeholder	Ways of involvement
Users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ attracting users to drive the development of EOsc ▪ being better informed and becoming users
Research infrastructures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ESFRI infrastructures could play an important role disseminating the EOsc into specific communities ▪ intensive interaction is needed between research infrastructures and EOsc (also on a practical level)
Interest and advocacy groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ these groups should be welcome and involved in the governance structures of EOsc
e-Infrastructures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ draw on the experiences of e-infrastructures in regards to funding and governance ▪ workshops to capture the opportunities and potential pitfalls of different models ▪ intensive interaction between research infrastructures and EOsc, also on a practical level

The responses also highlight ways in which stakeholders can be involved in the development of EOsc governance. Specifically, three steps can be identified in regards to stakeholder involvement:

- a) The need to identify key stakeholder groups
 - *“The different stakeholder groups need to be clearly identified and engaged with agreed commitments and incentives for participation. Regular EOsc focused meetings between stakeholders and DGs RTD, CNECT and GROW should be organised.”*
- b) The need to engage in targeted dialogue
 - *“It will never be possible to get all different kind of stakeholders under the same “umbrella”. Enable a working relation and communication channel between the different stakeholder layers, as it will never be possible to have one governance body consisting of researchers and funders!”*
- c) The need to give clear and specific roles to each stakeholder on issues that concern them

- *“The interested stakeholders should have an active role in the development of the EOsc governance. A working group, with representative of each area, should be created to define the EOsc governance.”*
- *“Clearly separate the roles of funders, research infrastructures, users and e-infrastructure service providers.”*

2.6 Future contact

Question 8 asked the respondents whether they wish to be contacted in the future in relation to EOsc and its development. Below, figure 3 demonstrates the responses.

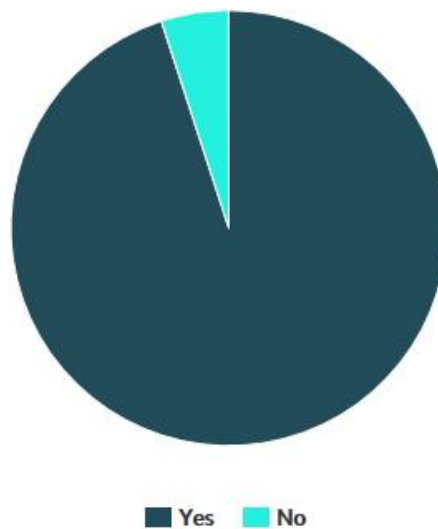


Figure 3 – Results of question 8, “can we contact you in the future in relation to EOsc and its development”.

Only one respondent specified that they do not wish to be contacted in the future in relation to EOsc and its development. This respondent was a representative of an e-infrastructure. All 21 respondents answered this question.

3. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS

The main objective of this questionnaire was to get a head start on the EOScPilot Governance Development Forum by building on thoughts and views from individuals already involved in the planning and development of EOSc. Furthermore, the aim was to find out efficient ways to involve stakeholders in the EOSc governance framework development. Some conclusions and recommendations on steps forward can be drawn from the questionnaire, since it was targeted to a specified group of individuals already involved in the area of EOSc as well as the number and quality of responses being high with a response rate of 31 percent.

Although the questionnaire responses generally speaking support the objectives of EOSc, there is still diversity in perception on the definition and actual scope of EOSc between different stakeholders. Stakeholder groups are trying to understand what EOSc means for them and what would be their role in it. Furthermore, some of the stakeholders consulted identified themselves as representing several stakeholder groups. This has important implications to the development of EOSc as it highlights the diversity of the stakeholder groups as well as the need to examine whether these groups should rather be identified as stakeholder layers. Thus, the question also arises whether the EOSc governance should be developed in a layered fashion.

Communications concerning EOSc should be improved and unified especially towards the user base along with a clarification of the definition of EOSc. This would result in a common perception on the scope of EOSc and help in understanding what type of services will be offered by EOSc in the future.

The results of this questionnaire suggest that research communities and the concerned national research agencies should lead the implementation of EOSc and approve the EOSc governance implementation. The approach that the EOScPilot project has taken in the design and trial of the governance framework is in line with these findings, i.e. that *the governance framework itself and its development should be stakeholder driven*. However, we should be careful in defining who would best fit to represent the research communities, since there seems to be many candidates to this position. Answers to the survey also reflect to this dilemma.

Concerns raised among respondents should be taken into account in regards to bringing the existing European e-infrastructures at the core of the evolution of the ecosystem and of the future governance of EOSc, since this might not correspond to expectations of some of the stakeholders. It seems that there are no simple categories of "service providers and users" for EOSc from the perspective of research community representatives to this questionnaire and this advice should be followed to ensure that different communities will commit to and take ownership of the principles of EOSc

With regard to the efficient ways to involve stakeholders, three main steps could be identified from responses as recommendations: 1) Identify key stakeholder groups; 2) Engage in targeted dialogue; and 3) Give clear and specific roles to each stakeholder on issues that concern them. Furthermore, regular EOSc focused meetings between the stakeholders and European Commission representatives should be organized.

The questionnaire results also show the variety of expectations that different stakeholders have on EOSc and the kind of services it should deliver as well as the kind of role it should have in the delivery of services for EU researchers. Before going into details in defining the services and their providers, EOSc and the framework governing it should be defined. As discussed earlier in the report, the questionnaire results give some implications on the next steps. Both the EOSc governance and the stakeholders involved should be seen as layers: Different stakeholders could be placed in different layers of the governance framework depending on the role they have. Furthermore, and in the light of the questionnaire results, EOSc to its nature can be seen as a federation of interoperable entities and its governance framework should be designed in a layered fashion. This approach should be studied further in the design of EOSc governance framework and when involving stakeholders to this work through EOScPilot Governance Development Forum.

As a starting point for the design of the governance framework for EOSC, the recently released new version of European Interoperability Framework⁵ could be used. It is intended to be used in promoting seamless services and data flows for European public administrations, but it could be adapted to the EOSC context as well. The interoperability model suggested by the European Interoperability Framework is applicable to all digital public services and includes four layers of interoperability: policy (legal), organisational, semantic and technical, a cross cutting component of the four layers, 'integrated public service governance'; and a background layer, 'interoperability governance' (presented in figure 4). In regards to EOSC, different stakeholders could be positioned in different layers in the interoperability governance depending on which kind of role they have in the EOSC governance framework: which kind of duties they have and which policies they should follow.

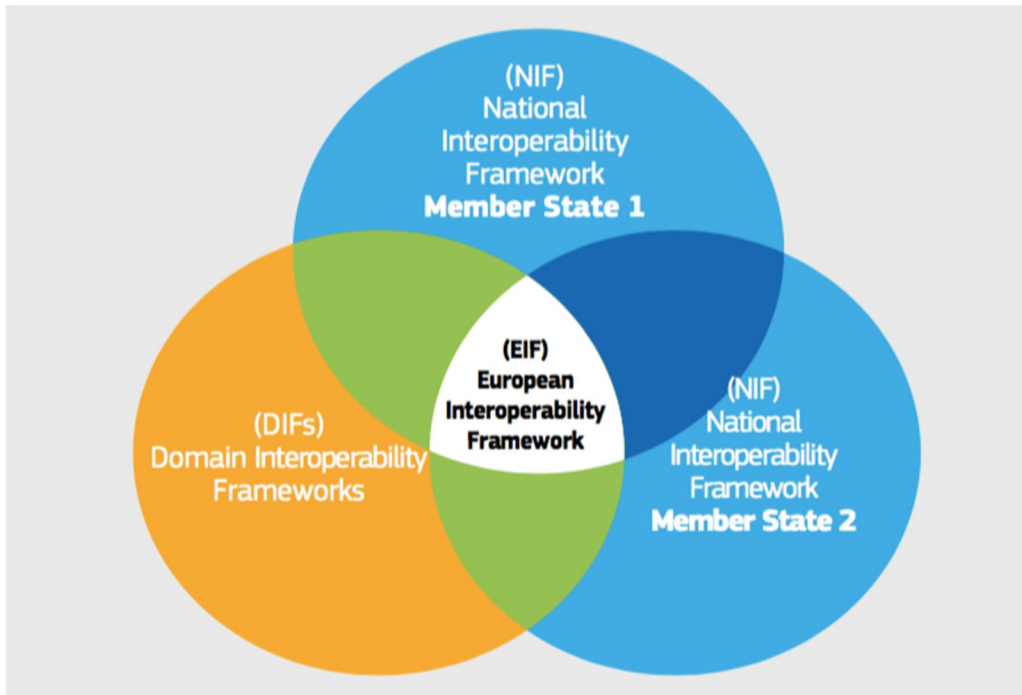


Figure 4 – Interoperability governance. Source: <https://ec.europa.eu/isa2/eif>

In figure 5 below, the four layers adapted to EOSC are demonstrated with some layer specific recommendations.

⁵ <https://ec.europa.eu/isa2/eif>

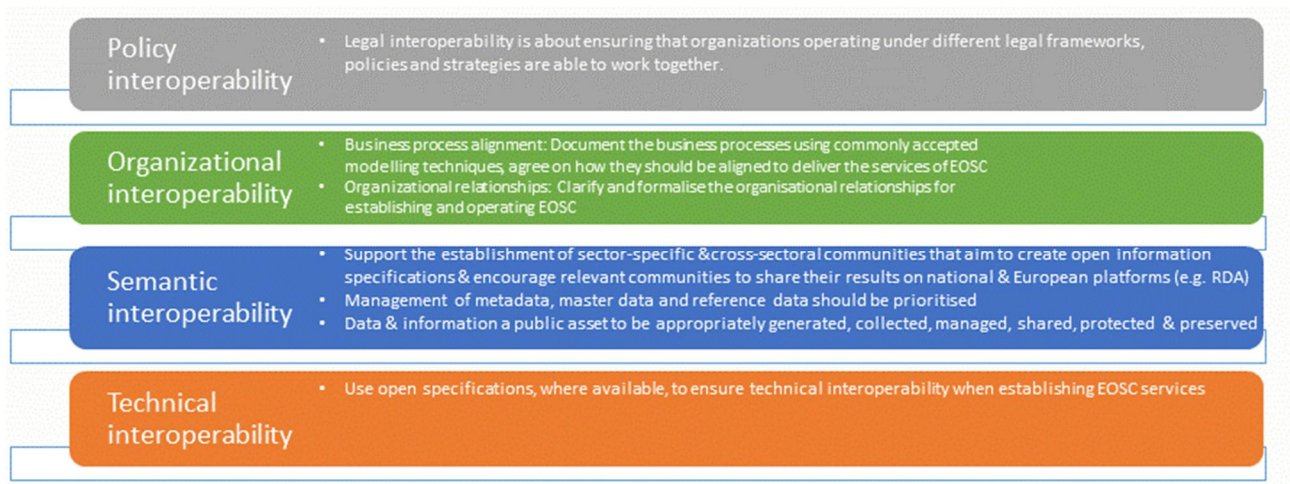


Figure 5 – The interoperability model modified to the context of EOSC and some layer specific recommendations

The findings of this questionnaire provide many aspects to be considered in the design and trial of the EOSC governance framework and in the work of the EOSCpilot Governance Development Forum. The usefulness of the suggested European Interoperability Framework in the design of EOSC governance framework remains to be seen and will be evaluated in the discussions between stakeholders representing different layers in the EOSC interoperability framework.

ANNEX A. EOSCPILOT WP2 GOVERNANCE QUESTIONNAIRE

EOSCpilot WP2 Governance

EOSCpilot - European Open Science Cloud for Research Pilot project supports the first phase in the development of the European Open Science Cloud (EOSC) that will offer researchers and science and technology professionals a virtual environment to store, share and re-use their data across disciplines and borders.

The main governance challenge of establishing the EOSC is how to construct a framework allowing strong and disparate stakeholders to work together. This framework also needs to address cultural challenges, encouraging the adoption of new ways of working and scientific practices. EOSC pilot will design and trial a stakeholder-driven governance framework with the involvement of all stakeholders. This will then shape and oversee future development of the European Open Science Cloud.

The EOSCpilot will establish a Governance Development Forum to enable all different stakeholders to contribute to the development of the EOSC governance framework. The Governance Development Forum is mandated to function and support the establishment of the EOSC.

We are contacting you based on your participation in the [workshops](#) (Workshop on EOSC 30.11.2015 and Workshop on the European Open Science Cloud: governance and funding 29.6.2016, and [European Open Science Cloud for Research \(EOSC\) Workshop](#) 05.02.2016) organized to support the work of the formed high level expert group of the European Open Science Cloud. This questionnaire will be used to create and specify the work approach of the Governance Development Forum as well as to assist the drafting of the governance framework proposal.

1. What was your motivation to participate in the EOSC workshops? I represent (you may choose multiple answers):

- A research community
- A research institution
- A research infrastructure
- An e-infrastructure
- A commercial or non-commercial service provider
- A research funding body
- A government body
- The European Commission
- Other (please specify)

2. You may further specify your motivation to participate in the **EOSC** workshops in the comment box below.

3. How do you foresee **EOSC** being related to your work?

4. Does your organisation or country have an **Open Science** strategy or policy?

Yes (please provide us with a link, if possible, to your organisational or national Open Science strategy or policy)

No

5. Are there any specific strategies in place on how **EOSC** will be related to your national or organisational strategy or policy?

6. In your point of view, what issues or ideas discussed in the workshops you participated in could have had or have enhanced the planning and development of **EOSC**?

7. In your point of view, how could the different stakeholders be best involved in the development of the EOSC governance?

8. Can we contact you in the future in relation to EOSC and its development?

Yes

No