

EURALO Board report for the period June 2011 to May 2012

1. Regular activities

Since our last General Assembly (GA) end of May 2011 in Belgrade/Serbia the records of our regular activities on the basis of our monthly calls can be seen on EURALO's Workspace and in our monthly reports (partly in Russian – thanks to Oksana Prykhodko, assuming the Secretariat) <https://community.icann.org/display/EURALO/EURALO+Secretariat+Monthly+Reports>

Therefore and like in previous years, we would like to concentrate this Board report on some highlights, special achievements and obvious weaknesses during the reporting period.

2. ALAC representation

With our current members at ALAC and ICANN (Olivier Crepin-Leblond, Sandra Hoferichter, Medienstadt Leipzig, and Jean-Jacques Subrenat) besides our current NomCom representative Yrjö Länsipuro, ISOC Finland, EURALO is still well represented at this level and gained broad recognition via its representatives. With Rudi Vansnick (ISOC Belgium), Adela Danciu (APTI Romania) and Alexander Kondaurov (Media Platform Ukraine) we have more representatives in At-Large Working groups.

In the reporting period, EURALO contributed substantially to the new concept and project to create an ICANN Academy to prepare and train incoming ICANN community leaders (elected or NomCom selected) for their new functions and challenges. Sandra became the Chair of this special WG and brought the concept to recognition by ICANN and a success, supported by Avri Doria for the curriculum part. The first pilot of this project is foreseen for the ICANN 45 meeting in Toronto in October this year. For further infos see <https://community.icann.org/display/Improve/ICANN+Academy+Proposal>

Recently (March 2012) three EURALO members were selected for the new composition of the Multi-Stakeholder Advisory Group (MAG) at the IGF (Veronica Cretu, Bill Drake and Yuliya Morenets).

3. EURALO at EuroDIG

EURALO members were among the founding members of the European Dialogue on Internet Governance (EuroDIG) and contributed considerably to the continuous events (Strasbourg 2008, Geneva 2009, Madrid 2010, Belgrade 2011 and Stockholm 2012) and to a remarkable success of this project. Sandra Hoferichter and Wolf Ludwig are assuming the Secretariat function at EuroDIG. And it is justified to note that EURALO members are still among the driving forces of this project what became a synonym for the regional European IGF and a model case for other comparable initiatives. EURALO is recognized as one of the "carrier organisations" of EuroDIG, representing European civil society besides the other stakeholders. The concept of this enhanced EURALO involvement at EuroDIG was repeatedly discussed at our monthly calls and other meetings. And without doubt, this became a key platform for EURALO's improved and increasing outreach.

4. Out-reach and In-reach

Our activities around the EuroDIG were among the best opportunities to constantly improve our outreach in the European region. And several EURALO members were involved or present at national IGFs (Finland, Germany, Ukraine), the ICANN Studienkreis meetings (the next one in August in Oslo), CoE conferences, the IGF 2011 in Nairobi and other relevant or related events.

During the report period, we could broaden our basis by four new member ALSes (2 in Ukraine, France and Austria = 31 total). But we are still far away from achieving our ambitious goal to have "one ALS / member organisation per European country" and it's still difficult to attract and encourage civil society organisations to become members. The regular regional outreach is still a mayor challenge – with very limited means and institutional support – even counting on the broader EuroDIG network and various contacts.

What proved to be equally difficult and challenging over the last years is to keep our existing members involved at EURALO (in-reach). Our regular monthly calls and other Online meetings are usually attended by a few members only (or "the usual suspects"). And it became evident that this working method and current exchanges by our existing communication channels do not offer sufficient incentives for broader community participation. And the highly specialized subjects and discourse at ICANN and ALAC seem to attract specialists and insiders only but are too abstract for the wider scope of our member's engagements in the daily policy issues in their countries. Another aspect which was – and still is – permanently underestimated is a common precondition for any progressive and successful community building: regular opportunities for people or members to meet face-to-face (F2F) what obviously works well at the ICANN and ALAC level via three meetings a year. A regional At-Large organization (RALO) what offers such opportunities once in a 3 to 4 years interval will face some considerable deficits in this respect and has to deal with increasing disintegration effects among its members. And the consequences for any RALO and its leadership are obvious: Instead of concentrating our scarce (volunteers) capacities on outreach initiatives and strategic projects, we need more time, energy and resources for in-reach, or keeping our members involved.

One but obvious symptom at EURALO for this worrying development or dilemma is the fact that it is getting more and more difficult to find and motivate members for ALAC and its subject-related Working groups while not always counting on the same few regional representatives. And it needs to be noted here that the EURALO Board in its broader composition doesn't offer much support in this respect. As a consequence, the multiple tasks of the RALO leadership need to be handled by a rather small group of people (what may lead to certain burnout effects sooner or later and endanger our limited personal substance). As a matter of fact, a RALO cannot solidly grow while its organizational basis is fragile. This structural weakness of EURALO needs to be taken into consideration more seriously by the Board.

5. Individual membership

Since our last GA when we adopted the Bylaw modifications to allow and include individual members at EURALO (incl. voting rights) no progress was made in this respect. The Working group assigned in Belgrade to work out practical modalities for this did not follow up their mandate. This shortcoming has to be noted under pending issues or our 2012-13 action items.

6. EURALO Officers and Board

The EURALO leadership and Board was re-/elected in Belgrade for a two-years term; therefore no elections are foreseen for the Stockholm 2012 GA. The list of current leadership and Board members you can see on our Workspace:

<https://community.icann.org/display/EURALO/EURALO+Regional+Officers>

and

<https://community.icann.org/display/EURALO/The+current+EURALO+Board>

7. Approved funding for GA 2013

Most probably, the following EURALO GA 2013 will be convened in line with EuroDIG 2013 again and presumably in Lisbon. After repeated attempts, our last funding request was approved by ICANN recently and (for the first time after Mexico-City in 2009), we can count on ICANN's support for next year. We are pleased to organize our subsequent EURALO GA in a more inclusive way as a all community F2F meeting and to discuss our regional issues and challenges with all of you.

Neuchâtel, May 2012.

Wolf Ludwig for the EURALO Board