

European Strategy Consultation

ICANN 47 Durban, Thursday 18/07/13

Participants: Nuno Gracia (NCUC), Lesley Cowley and Martin Boyle (Nominet), Pierre Bonis (AFNIC), Annebeth Lange and Ann-Cathrin Marcussen (NORID), Wim Degezelle (CENTR), Philip du Bois (DNS Belgium), Katrina Sasaki (NIC.LV), Heiki Sibul (EIF .ee), Giovanni Seppia(EURid .eu), Roberto Gaetano (ALAC), Tony Holmes (BT), Sandra Hoferichter (ALAC – EuroDIG), Klaus Stoll (NPOC), Desiree Miloshevic (AFILLAS – EURALO), Marie-Laure Lemineur (NPOC – NCSG – GNSO), Rudi Vansnick (NPOC – ISOC), Bertrand de La Chapelle and Erika Mann (ICANN Board).

ICANN: Nigel Hickson – VP Europe, Andrea Beccalli – Manager, Global Stakeholder Engagement Europe.

Objective: Informal meeting to discuss with the Community the possibility of formulating a Strategy for Europe

The informal discussion on an ICANN strategy for Europe was held around 3 key questions:

- **Should we have a Strategy for Europe?**

There was a general agreement on the need for an ICANN strategy for the European region (as articulated in the Background Document), participants suggested to focus on the identification of cross-European issues and the existing structures that are involved. It was recognized that ICANN is just one player in a very large field and needs to coordinate and dialogue with these other players. On this basis ICANN should assess on which issues it should have a leading role.

Members of the ICANNBoard participating at the meeting strongly supported the creation of a strategy for Europe, to foster understanding among European stakeholders and close the gap between IG policy makers and the general public. Although the Internet has experienced incredible user democratization in Europe still too few are aware of how it works and how to participate in policy making. The region is in a privileged position to do some creative shifting in Internet policy making. Increasing the representation of each country in the region in the ICANN process and ensuring that it is based on a multistakeholder model are two immediate reasons for a regional structured strategy.

Stakeholders also stressed how despite the general agreement over the initiative, is paramount to identify the specific problems in Europe and the link with the other regional Strategies and the overall ICANN Strategic Plan. Regional strategies should

avoid becoming watertight compartments and should set priorities along with metric for constant impact evaluation in ICANN. Communication among the strategies will ensure that stakeholders are aware of what is happening in other regions, as there is no direct official channel now.

- **What is Europe?**

The proposed geographical definition of the wider “European” region (47 countries) attracted consensus; especially considering the broad scope of the regional ccTLD and RIR organizations. While some participants considered reaching a common definition of the region as a goal in itself, other expressed the view of purposely not defining the geographical scope.

It was also noted that while many in the EU region are critical of the existence of a true political and economical union, they recognize that Europe is a particular kind of community that shares similar levels of development, education and political systems. Even in the narrower EU environment, the strategy could focus in strengthening the engagement of Internet users and other unrepresented communities.

A representative from the EuroDIG, welcomed the strategy, as it would foster the collaboration with the regional and national IGFs, an example of different voices engaged in connecting into a Europe-wide Forum.

The existence of sub-regions is firmly recognized in the LAC regional strategy where (for example) a different approach is implemented for the Caribbean sub region.

- **How are we going to work on the strategy?**

Some participants called for a deeper linking with other regional organizations and a structured exercise to understand the region, in particular to understand what countries are looking from ICANN. This would entails a mapping exercise to identify the actors in the region, and the main issues of concern from each country.

Some participants called for a clear division between ICANN engagement activities and capacity building, and to use the strategy to influence the IG debate vs the ITU model. The strategy could also be used to present and advocate the ICANN model, although it was remarked that is sometime unclear what ICANN defines as its own model.

- **Issues**

The meeting also touched upon some potential issues that might benefit from the engagement that a Strategy should foster; such as the EU data privacy regulation a

burning issue for parts of the Community and the national and regional policy makers.

This view was balanced by the observation of whether the strategy becomes a tool for ICANN to relate and lobby with the EU Commission on specific issues as the Digital Agenda, therefore calling for a careful selection of which issues should be part of the strategy. In this case is important to establish clear borders between the ICANN engagement team activities and the strategy.

The strategy could also be part of the already ongoing review of the ICANN meeting model, which includes the consideration of regional meetings. At this regard one participant mentioned the case of Sweden where a national multistakeholder meeting is held prior to the ICANN meetings.

Participants finally stressed the need for clear metrics and a timeline to move the strategy forward.