

Our Future Dialogues

Listening to the past & talking about the future

A EUROPARC Consultation for a new Strategy

Introduction

The current strategy of the EUROPARC Federation 2008-2012 is due for renewal. This was delayed due to the ongoing discussion with Eurosite however following the General Assembly decision of October 2013, we are ready now to proceed to develop a new strategy. A review of the current strategy will take place.

The future direction, priorities and governance of EUROPARC is to be considered by its members, in a comprehensive and participatory consultation. In order to ensure the opportunity to participate is widely afforded then cognisance must be paid to language first and foremost and to differing methods of engagement.

With the requirement of the draft strategy in August, this leaves 8 months to use as effectively as possible.

In order to set context a current infographic on about EUROPARC will be prepared which members will be invited to read prior to considering their responses. Further, they will also be directed to the existing strategy to look for any continuity.

The EUROPARC Council has set up a task force to oversee this process which will be managed by the Directorate with the support from sections, council members and the members!

Process

The consultation process will be conducted in 2 stages:

1. Online survey
2. Focus Groups; Smaller meetings on section or national levels

The questions asked and topics covered will be the same in both of the stages, the process and method of collecting will however differ. Topics to be addressed will be agreed with the EUROPARC council task force.

1. Online Survey:

In order to offer opportunities to participate and to ensure a wide range of views sight amongst the membership a short online questionnaire will be prepared in five languages. This will compose of open-end and closed questions (i.e. multiple choice and rating scales).

The questionnaire will be open to access for almost 3 months from January to April. Once the responses have been collected, the different languages will be translated back into English, in order to have the common picture of the whole survey.

If response are very low from certain areas of the membership (a measure of this will be taken mid March) then Directorate staff will commence calling members directly to go through the questionnaire with them if necessary.

2. Focus Groups:

There will be a further series of open meetings, planned in a participatory workshop style through which both the questionnaire question and other aspects will be addressed. This offer further members a chance to explore some areas of concern on more detail and offer more elaborated responses than an online questionnaire will permit. They will be in first language or agreed language were more than one country is attending (e.g. NB). Directorate will prepare the questions and brief on how should these meetings be held, and in what format the feedback should be delivered.

These should be no more than partial day (for example 10am -3pm to enable members in the vicinity the chance to attend). These events will be promoted by Directorate and sections and offer a good networking opportunity as well as consultation. These meetings should be hosted by council members, and with directorate staff support where applicable. Sections will also be invited to host and participate actively in these sessions. They will take place at the same time as the online questionnaire between January and April.

Response from both of the stages of collecting, will then be collated and reported to Council in May, when it will be the time to select and make choices about the proposals presented by members.

At the May Council meeting, a small drafting group will be set up, preferably from selected sections, members and directorate working together to create the 1st draft of the strategy at the week in Siggen (June). The Council task force will act as the advisory body in the creation of this draft. A further consultation will take place during July for any comments with a redraft in August ready for the GA in September.

Communications

Directorate will create a special “branding campaign” for the whole consultation exercise including, a certain colour-scheme, eye appealing and catchy name to be easily spotted and recognizable.

We expect that to be upbeat, positive and encouraging to gain as much input from members as possible.

Communications will compose of direct emails to members, introducing them to the topic and afterwards inviting and reminding to participate, a direct letter to members (included in PA-in sight IF POSSIBLE) regular update in eNews and Social Media will be put (Facebook and twitter regularly). This will be followed by eMails via council members to set up meetings, through section promotion and direct calling. On EUROPARC website, a special subpage will be devoted for this exercise, providing further explanation and direct links to it. This page will also provide members with additional information on the current EUROPARC Strategy along with a fact sheet on EUROPARC.

Schedule

In order to meet the pressing deadlines the following schedule is proposed:

Direct appeal to ATS to have our week in Siggen in June is necessary to draft the strategy. If this is not available, an alternative location will need to be found.

Month	November			December			January			February			March			April			May			June			July			August
	early(01.-10.)	mid(11.-20.)	late(21-30/31.)	early	mid	late	early	mid	late	early	mid	late	early	mid	late	early	mid	late	early	mid	late	early	mid	late	early	mid	late	
			Prepare questions and validate them with Task Force	Translate Questions				Launch		Reminder					eMail reminder													
			Advise sections and council re consultation meetings		Test Questionnaire online			Brief Council members for meetings		eNews, Social Media		eMail Reminder	Meetings				Consultation ends	Translation of answers	Prepare summary report	Feedback from council			1st Strategy Draft			Consultation on Strategy		Final draft prepared for the GA
			Announce the Consultation in the eNews		Send meeting dates			Direct mail to members	Review current strategy and consult staff and council during Council meeting						SM reminder		SM reminder						Meeting at Siggen or other location					
				Prepare Brief for meetings	Legal Check			Web site-subpage set up																				

Budget

This is important we get this exercise right, to not just quell any residual dissatisfaction arising from the merger debate, but to really offer opportunity and gain adequate input from members to move the Federation forward. As such, money will have to be invested in this.

Some costs have been accounted for within the NGO grant application, however the result of that application will not be known until March. We therefore have to spend in advance taking the risk if these costs will be covered or not.

Total estimate of current cost	30 300 Eur
Translation of questionnaire*	5 000 Eur
Monkey Survey: hosting online surveys in 5 languages	600 Eur
Attendance at meetings by council/staff, approx 10 meetings (includes extra people at council meeting)	10 000 Eur
costs for meetings, beverages, lunch (hope that some of these can be met by hosts)	1 700 Eur
Translations of answers	3 000 Eur
Cost of Siggen Meeting	2 000 Eur
Translation of the Strategy final document for the GA	8 000 Eur

Depending on the complexity of the question, some MAY be undertaken by Directorate staff, allowing for some saving

Carol Ritchie

Director

Nov 2013