

Report on EuroDoc AGM 2023

General Assembly Report

Dates: 9 and 10 June 2023

Location: University of Uppsala, Sweden

Introduction:

The General Assembly began with the appointment of Mathias Schroijen as the Chairman. The voting process for various agenda items was facilitated using Election Buddy, ensuring anonymous votes. The meeting met the requirement for forming a quorum. However, Azerbaijan waved the right for anonymity and opted to vote in person by speaking up in person during the AGM, for their two votes.

Agenda Items Discussed

Appointment of Voting Committee

- The Voting Committee consisted of Nicola Dengo, Agnieszka Lyra, and Constance Boissin. They were present in the room, while Zoom was used to enable remote participants to observe the committee members.

Timing of the Official AGM Invitation

- The AGM invitation was sent 12 days late, causing some confusion among the delegates. The contents of the invitation were provided at different times.

Presentation of the Annual Report

- Oleksandr presented the Annual Report, emphasising EuroDoc's plans to employ people for projects. Questions were raised regarding the funding for these projects and whether they were self-funded. Additionally, changes to the statutes required a two-thirds majority of the members present and four-fifths of the vote, rather than a simple majority.

Validation of the Meeting

- The meeting was validated through a vote.

Treasury Report and Budget Discussion

- The treasury report was delayed due to technical issues and was discussed after the lunch break. It was noted that EuroDoc participated in two Horizon Europe projects, which provided a significant amount of funding. Concerns were raised about the presentation of costs and liabilities in the budget, as well as the need for a plan for asset use. Delegates raised issues with the quality of the treasury report. Therefore the new Board will follow up

with it and hold a separate special meeting for delegates to approve the report. Existing items in the budget will continue as planned, but new items to the budget will not be approved until after the special vote which will take place at a later date.

Vote on Temporary Fee Reduction and Exemptions

- A vote approved the temporary reduction of fees for Latvia and exemptions for Ukraine and Slovakia.

Gender Equality Plan

- Sara Pilia presented the Gender Equality Plan (GEP) for EuroDoc, highlighting the need to address work-life balance and support vulnerable groups within the organisation.

Election of Board Members

- The election of Board members took place, with the following individuals elected: Sebastian Dahle as President, Pil Maria Saugmann as Vice President, Devriş İşler as Treasurer, Hannah Schoch as Secretary, and Sara Pilia, Alina Chaikina, and Aleksandra Lewandowska as General Administrative Board Members. The Secretariat Coordinator and External Communication Coordinator positions were also filled.

Statutes and Internal Regulations

- The statutes were discussed, with suggestions raised about the inclusion of an external auditor for overall governance and the requirement that auditors should not be part of the Board. The voting on the financial plan was postponed for consultation. Internal regulations were approved.

Annual Goals

- Sebastian presented the revised structure of the annual goals. Discussion focused on prioritisation, assessment, and action planning to ensure goals are achieved within the year.

Advisory Board

- The proposed members for the Advisory Board included Miia Ijäs, Beata Zwierzynska, Giulia Malaguarnera, Oleksandr Berezko, Mathias Schroijsen, and Iryna Degtyarova. The Advisory Board size was reduced to six members for the current mandate.

Note: a vote for the next location of EuroDoc was originally on the agenda. However, we did not have any candidates available for the location of the EuroDoc conference for 2024. However, the new EuroDoc President, Sebastian Dahle has contacts in Ljubljana, Slovenia, who may be in favour of hosting the conference next year. Updates will follow as they become available.

Post-AGM notes:

Treasury, Budget, EuroDoc Employees, Auditing

Sebastian Dahle also emailed me on 26 June regarding the concerns I raised about employees at EuroDoc and also about the need for a professional auditor. See the text of his email below:

Thank you for this input during the AGM. For the foreseeable future, no administrative employee is foreseen, and of course any employment or contract-based work must be covered by suitable third-party funding. So there is no administrative employee on the budget, because we don't plan to have one for the time being, and we also do not have the funding at the moment. This may change in the future and we are working towards outside sources of sustainable funding, but it is not foreseeable, if and when this may happen.

As such, article 30 of the internal regulations in the current version as adopted by this year's AGM clearly state that employment is possible from project funds, in line with the funding requirements and Eurodoc's basic values and principles. You can find the document on the AGM drive:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1N69GolAjNI7Yo5LHUTTED22EExlIoKdk/view?usp=drive_link

Having a recurring audition by a professional auditor may be a good option for the future indeed. Also with this, however, we would first start with the revision of the bookkeeping practices and the financial report, using the support of a professional consultant. Based on their input, we can then decide together with the NAs, how to go about audits in the future (ie, keep the internal auditors as included now, or look into professional outside audits).

Dimitris looked at the document and wrote back to Sebastian that articles 28, 29, and 30 still do not appear to be so explicit as to make it clear that the employment should not exceed project costs and that it should only be tied to a project.

Nordic Collaboration for EuroDoc

Dimitris created a WhatsApp group with the members from Finland and Sweden who attended either the EuroDoc conference and/or AGM. Denmark was not present in person, online. Finland and Sweden are interested in a pan-Nordic activity with SiN. Dimitris needs an introduction to EuroDoc member contacts in Denmark and plans to follow up after the summer.

Conclusion:

The General Assembly addressed important agenda items, including the appointment of the Chairman, validation of the meeting, treasury report, election of Board members, discussion on statutes and internal regulations, and setting annual goals. The meeting facilitated open discussions and decisions on various matters concerning EuroDoc's governance, projects, and future plans. Key areas that need follow up are: EuroDoc's plans to employ people that are funded by projects, EuroDoc's revisiting of the financial documents and proper auditing of the accounts, and pan-Nordic collaboration.