".eu", waiting for the sunrise

Signed in Brussels the agreement to operate the new EU Internet domain: "Registrations for businesses, organisations and citizens open by next year"

by Daniela Medda

Eurid is a non-profit association established in April 2003. Its founding partners are the Informatics and Telematics Institute at CNR (National Research Council) in Pisa, the Swedish NIC.se (Network Information Centre) and the Belgian Dns.be (Domain Name Registration Services Belgium).

In May 2003, the European Union appointed the association to manage the ".eu" continental domain: it was the very first time a public service was granted in the history of the EU.

Eurid will only work through a network of "registrars", in order to boost competition. The prospects of the ".eu" domain are huge: the association expects a number of one million registration in the first year alone.

"Pierre Verbaeten (left) shaking hands with Fabio Colasanti: Eurid finally becomes operational." (Photo: courtesy of European Commission Press and Communication Unit)

"Pierre Verbaeten (a sinistra) e Fabio Colasanti si stringono la mano: Eurid entra finalmente nella fase operativa." (Foto: Uff. stampa e comunicazione della Commissione Europea)

By 2005, Europe will have its own EU number-plate. The signing of the service agreement between EURid and the European Union which took place in Brussels on October 12th between the general manager of the EU Information Society, Fabio Colasanti, and delegates from the three souls of the association (Franco Denoth for the Informatics and Telematics Institute at the National Research Council in Pisa, Italy, Pierre Verbaeten for the Belgian Registry, Dns.be, and Ander Janson for the Swedish registry, Nic.se) - closes this long wait and gives the association its long-awaited full operation.

Colasanti did not fail to recall the importance of the event, one of the last critical steps towards the implementation of the much yearned-for EC top-level domain. "This

The long race to the European domination

Step after step, the (estimated, not official yet) dates along the path to the registration of the new European domains.

December 2004 - Closing of negotiations with Icann to include the new ".eu" domain in the root nameserver to ensure it will be fully accessible.

February / March 2005 - Launch of regulations on alternative dispute resolution (Adr). Translation of the agreement with registrars and registration procedures into all official EU languages. Accreditation of first operators whose names will be published in the web site of Eurid.
contracts – he added – is an important step towards the availability of .eu. This will permit the Registry to become fully operational so as to ensure that businesses, organisations and citizens in the European Union are able to register their domain names within the .eu TLD by next year.

EURid (which stands for European Registry of Internet Domain Names), a non-profit organisation appointed by the EU on May 21st 2003 as manager of the European domains, can now do all it takes to develop a quick, efficient and accurate registration service. In the tight schedule of initiatives in the run-up to the establishment of the European domain, one of the most important is the signing of the agreement with Icann, the world’s web manager that will have to ensure that the future “.eu” web sites will be perfectly accessible: a key step that could become a reality even during the next Icann meeting due in Cape Town, South-Africa, on December 1st.

The association also undertook to accredit the providers through which the businesses and citizens will be able to register their “.eu” domains: as soon as it is available, the agreement will be published on the website. And technical matters are not to be underestimated, first and foremost the translation of key information on the new domain into all the official EU languages (which, as everybody knows, after the accession have risen from 9 to 20).

Then, the sunrise, at last: and the beginning of the longed-for Sunrise period. The pre-registration period will consist of two phases, lasting two months each, open to those who have pre-emptive rights: the first registrations will be open to full names and acronyms of public administrations, nation-wide or EC-wide registered trademarks and geographical names, followed by companies, literary and artistic works, unregistered marks.

After the Sunrise period, the European domain will open its doors wide to organisations and citizens from the 25 EU member countries. Registrations will be on a “first come, first served” basis, strictly following the chronological order in which applications are received.

Two letters, one symbol

by Franco Denoth
Director of the Informatics and Telematics Institute at CNR (National Research Council) in Pisa

An Internet numberplate for Europe: successfully bringing together, under one flag, the technology, the know-how, the added value that has always been the trademark of the intellectual and material production of the Old Continent. Now that the “.eu” domain is at its dawn, at last Eurid is getting ready to reap the fruits of two long years of work. A complex operation that has deep roots: those specific experiences in domain name registration that the three souls of Eurid – the Informatics and Telematics Institute at CNR (National research Council) in Pisa (which also manages the Italian Registry of ccTLD “.it” domain names), the Belgians with Dns.be and the Swedish with Nic.se – have successfully combined and enhanced by submitting to the European Commission a far-reaching, bright solution.

Since the distant 25th October 2002, when Eurid officially sent in its nomination, the road has not always been downhill. Long months have passed from the granting of the service (the first public one in the history of the EU) in May 2003 to the signature of the executive agreement (October 2004), which were necessary, however, to reconcile the different views of the management of the “.eu” suffix of each member country of the broader Europe.

Eurid on its part has wasted no time and has showed up on the set date, ready with a signed package of public policy rules agreed with the EU. The stability and the efficiency of the made in Europe Internet system will be based on them.

The Informatics and Telematics Institute, a dynamic actor of the information technology market, is ready to rise to the new challenge, relying on the enthusiasm with which the Italian and the European Community have welcomed the birth of its new trademark: two letters, a numberplate that will travel with it forever through the network of networks.

April 2005 - Development of the web site of Eurid (www.eurid.org) containing all key information for “.eu” domain registration.

May 2005 - Official announcement of the starting date of the Sunrise period and attendant registration rules.

July / August 2005 - Start of “phase two” of the Sunrise period (due to last two months): registration priority to public organisations and trademark holders.

October / November 2005 - Two months after the launch of the Sunrise period, start of “Phase two”, as well as public organisations and trademark holders, also holders of other rights protected by the national regulations of the member states can register under “.eu”.