EURIG Statement to the 3R Project – October 2017

After the submission of the first drafts for the restructured RDA the EURIG community would like to give an initial assessment of the ongoing tasks in the next months.

The EURIG members would like to thank the RSC core team and the RSC+ members for their work and for the opportunity to comment on the drafts. EURIG members have reviewed the drafts; below is a summary of their comments in advance of the RSC+ meeting in Madrid in October.

The EURIG members are very pleased that the IFLA LRM will be incorporated into RDA and that this is accompanied by a new approach to cataloguing, the 4-fold-path.

The situation in EURIG member institutions is very heterogeneous. Some countries or institutions have already implemented RDA, some are planning an implementation for the near future and yet others are currently monitoring the situation. The impact of the 3R project differs greatly amongst community members. For institutions still in the monitoring and planning stages it means an extension of their preparation phase. For those who have implemented RDA or those who are close to an implementation the effects of the 3R project will be more serious and broader. All working papers, policy statements and training materials must be reviewed and adapted. Additionally, nearly all institutions in Europe have to translate the revised RDA, even if only partially. Furthermore we assume that cataloguers will have to be trained or retrained after the 3R project.

We have received several comments from our members concerning implementation of the 3R project changes when the revised RDA Toolkit is released in 2018.

- At the moment we are not able to give a real assessment of the restructured RDA because we have seen only parts of it. An observation period after the presentation of an overall draft will be very helpful, especially for the planning of implementation tasks.
- All the "translating communities" need time for translation on top of the time for the implementation itself. We are very concerned that a transition period of one year after the release of the English version will not be sufficient for most of our institutions.
- We have to prepare and to provide training for our cataloguers and have to maintain the production of data at the same time.
- We have to evaluate, over the variety of formats with which we work, whether the new guidelines will require adaption of our previous work. We will have to create those adaptations in a timely manner before we can implement the changes of the 3R project. We will also need time to re-map RDA to the MARC fields and, if needed, in the internal formats used in day-to-day cataloguing work.
- Though we appreciate that the 3R project makes the standard more flexible and more general, we are concerned that a too-generalized RDA will not be suitable for practical work. The entity chapters must be usable for practical cataloguing work independent of the more theoretical general chapters.
- We are also concerned that a too-generalized RDA will not be usable on its own but will require local application profiles which could contradict the original sense of RDA. The original idea of RDA as an international shared standard has been a key argument for RDA implementation in many European countries. Replacing RDA instructions with more detailed and localized application profiles hollows out the argument in favor of leaving national codes behind. In addition, not all users of RDA have the capacity to make detailed profiles and policy statements – for such users RDA must stand as a reasonable and complete standard with a minimum of local application instructions needed. We understand and support strongly the approach of creating application profiles for special and rare materials, but for cataloguing in general and for basic cataloguing there must be a single standard. Without a clear standard the necessity of standard RDA itself could be in doubt in certain quarters.
- Some of the anticipated changes may make early RDA records incompatible with post-3R RDA records. Cataloguers will be asked by their institutions to justify conversion of those

early records to the new standard. Institutions which do not do retro-conversion will face having another layer of records turn into legacy data.

Therefore the Executive Committee of EURIG would like to make these recommendations to the RSC:

- Ensure sure that RDA in itself can be used as a basic cataloguing code with minor local application profiling.
- Encourage a dialogue about realistic and flexible plans for the implementation of such big changes after reasonable time for evaluation of the impact of the revised version has been allowed.
- Extend access to the (old) Toolkit for a reasonable period so that all institutions have enough time to adapt to the change (translations, mappings, practical implementation, training, etc.).

To get input from our community concerning their implementation plans after the revised RDA Toolkit release in 2018, EURIG will conduct a simple survey in the next month.

The Executive Committee of EURIG

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