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.eu Illustrated

POWERED BY EURid

Fall Edition







Connected by purpose: partnerships supporting Europe’s digital community



The digital world never stands still. New technologies, changing habits and emerging ideas constantly reshape how we connect, communicate and find our way online. Making sense of this evolving landscape takes more than keeping up – it takes collaboration, fresh perspectives and a shared commitment to building a better internet.

In this edition of .eu Illustrated, we look at the many ways EURid connects with organisations and communities across Europe. From working with fellow domain name registries through CENTR and joining forces with EUIPO and Europol, to contributing to discussions on internet governance, our activities show how sharing expertise and different perspectives can help address common challenges.

We also celebrate the people and ideas making a difference in the .eu world, with the announcement of the 2026 .eu Web Awards winners and the young creative talents recognised through EURid's SAFEonLINE competition. Looking ahead, we explore how artificial intelligence is changing the way people discover information online and what this means for domain names and businesses.

And, if you are considering registering a .eu domain name, we have gathered a few practical tips to help you get started.

Happy reading!

Reelika Kirna
Communications Manager

How EURid’s partnerships took shape in 2026

A strong and trusted digital environment is built through dialogue, shared expertise and cooperation between organisations with different responsibilities and perspectives. There is a reason why the saying *“It takes a village”* has stood the test of time. Addressing common challenges, learning from one another and making meaningful progress all depend on collective effort.

As the registry manager of .eu, .ею and .ευ, appointed by the European Commission, EURid is actively involved in this collaboration at both European and international levels. Some partnerships contribute to wider discussions on internet governance, while others translate shared expertise into practical action, helping investigators, businesses and domain name registries address everyday challenges.

As the .eu 20th anniversary year draws to a close, this article explores four key partnerships that demonstrate the value of working together and how each contributes to a more connected and trusted digital environment.

Bringing European voices into internet governance

The internet is a shared resource, and its future cannot be shaped by any one organisation or community alone. Governments, technical experts, businesses, civil society and younger generations all have a role to play in keeping it open, secure and accessible.

This commitment to discussions was particularly visible in Brussels on 26 and 27 May 2026, when EURid hosted the European Dialogue on Internet Governance (EuroDIG) at the Charlemagne Building of the European Commission. Held under the theme **European Voices for the Future of the Internet**, the event also marked the 20th anniversary of .eu.

The dialogues addressed some of the most pressing questions facing Europe's digital community, from artificial intelligence and deepfakes to online abuse mitigation, digital sovereignty, platform accountability and age restrictions on social media. True to EuroDIG's multistakeholder approach, the event gave participants in the audience the same speaking rights as panellists, ensuring that a wide range of perspectives could contribute to the conversation.

For EURid, hosting EuroDIG was both an opportunity to contribute to these discussions and a way to give back to a community it has been part of for many years. It reinforced the importance of creating spaces where different voices can meet, exchange ideas and help shape the online future together.

Sandra Hoferichter, Secretary General of EuroDIG, reflects on the value of this collaboration:

'There is a consensus within the European Union on the importance of working across national borders. This is a crucial value that we bring to global debates on our digital future. The collaboration between EURid and EuroDIG in organising the Multi-Stakeholder Forum in the heart of Europe demonstrated how this value can translate into concrete action and shared responsibility for internet governance.

The bottom-up approach to setting the agenda, combined with the equal participation of all stakeholders, helped build consensus on several issues. Where agreement was not possible, it brought clarity about the obstacles and a commitment to overcoming them.

In doing so, we demonstrated an alternative to growing national isolationism and contributed to bridging the gap between legislation and citizens' needs.'

EuroDIG
European Dialogue on Internet Governance



Sandra Hoferichter
Secretary General of EuroDIG

Helping businesses protect their brands

For many organisations, a domain name is an important part of their brand, providing their online address and a way for customers to find and recognise their business. Protecting a brand in the digital environment therefore means considering **both domain names and intellectual property rights**. The questions that arise are best addressed through the combined expertise of specialists in both fields.

In 2026, EURid and the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO) joined a round-table discussion at the Valencia Digital Summit on protecting brands and ideas in the digital age. The conversation explored challenges such as online impersonation and the misuse of intellectual property, as well as the importance of taking a proactive approach to brand protection rather than waiting for problems to occur.

The message to businesses was clear: stay informed about the ways you can protect your brand, both through the domain names you register and the intellectual property rights relevant to your products and services. As businesses expand online, their digital presence can also help them reach customers beyond their local markets and explore new opportunities across Europe and beyond.

The collaboration continued through the 2026 .eu Web Awards competition, where we welcomed an EUIPO expert to the jury to assess this year's finalists in the European Excellence category, giving yet another opportunity for the two organisations to share their competence.

The partnership with EUIPO allows EURid to gain valuable insights into the challenges businesses face when protecting their online presence and to incorporate these perspectives into our work with the wider domain name community.

Alexandra Apostolakis, Head of IP for Competitiveness Service within the Business Development Department at EUIPO, emphasises the benefits of combining expertise:

'We highly value our long-standing relationship with EURid. By bringing together our knowledge of intellectual property and domain names, we can offer businesses a more complete perspective on protecting their brands online. It has been a pleasure to further strengthen our partnership in 2026, and we look forward to continuing our work together to support businesses in safeguarding their ideas and growing their presence online.'

EUIPO
EUROPEAN UNION
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY OFFICE



Alexandra Apostolakis
Head of IP for Competitiveness Service within the Business Development Department at EUIPO

Making cooperation against online abuse practical

Tackling malicious domains requires close cooperation between domain name registries, law enforcement and other organisations working to address online threats. Clear procedures, accessible information and trusted channels of communication help ensure that concerns can be reported and acted upon effectively.

On 10 June 2026, EURid presented its **streamlined framework** at Europol's Advisory Group on Service Providers at Europol headquarters in The Hague. Following a review of its existing procedures, EURid brought the available reporting channels and workflows together in a practical guide. It explains how authorised partners can report malicious domains, request relevant registration data and seek the immediate suspension of domains involved in malicious activity.

The framework received positive feedback from Europol and the Belgian Federal Police. Representatives from other sectors within the advisory group also expressed interest in using the material, highlighting its potential relevance beyond the domain name industry.

Cooperation also extends to broader discussions on the challenges shaping online security. At EDEN2026, EURid's Data Protection Officer joined experts from Europol, the European Data Protection Supervisor (EDPS), law enforcement, academia and the private sector to explore the relationship between innovation, security and fundamental rights. Discussions covered artificial intelligence, deepfakes, digital evidence, resilience and the evolving role of Data Protection Officers. A recurring message was that effective security measures must go hand in hand with the protection of fundamental rights.

EURid's collaboration with Europol creates a valuable link between the domain name industry and the law enforcement community. It helps both sides better understand each other's responsibilities, operational needs and opportunities for cooperation. This exchange provides important insight into emerging online threats and helps keep its procedures relevant and effective, while contributing to a more coordinated response to online abuse.

Alvaro Azofra, Head of Expertise and Stakeholder Management at the European Cybercrime Centre (EC3), established by Europol, explains how the collaboration supports law enforcement:

‘Working with EURid, we have made it easier for law enforcement authorities to access the information and support they need to tackle cybercrime. The framework gives investigators clear guidance on who to contact, what information to provide and how to make requests efficiently. It is a practical example of how strong cooperation can help us respond more quickly and effectively to cyber threats. We thank EURid for its commitment to combating online crime, enabling timely interventions against threats like cybercrime, Child sexual abuses materials, terrorism, and public safety risks.’

Alvaro Azofra
Head of Expertise and Stakeholder Management at the European Cybercrime Centre (EC3)



Learning from other registries and registrars

European domain name registries face many of the same challenges, from changing legislation and cybersecurity requirements to technical developments, business processes and evolving user expectations. Through CENTR, the Council of European National Top-Level Domain Registries, EURid takes part in a broad exchange of knowledge and experience with its peers across Europe and beyond.

As in previous years, **2026 offered valuable opportunities to share expertise**, learn from others and contribute to discussions across the industry.

At CENTR’s 73rd Legal & Regulatory Workshop in Stockholm, our Legal & Compliance Manager joined discussions on emerging European legislation and its implications for registries.

At the 61st Business Operations & Processes Workshop in Ljubljana, our Service Assurance Manager facilitated a Product Ownership Simulation Game, giving participants a practical way to explore product ownership principles and share experiences. EURid colleagues also contributed to technical discussions at the CENTR Jamboree in Berlin and the 30th CENTR R&D Workshop in Riga, covering topics such as DNS quality, registry infrastructure and operational resilience.

Taking part in these activities gives EURid access to a trusted network of industry professionals, practical knowledge from other registries and early insight into developments affecting the domain name sector. It also allows us to share our own expertise, exchange ideas and identify opportunities for improvement. These connections help us make better-informed decisions and strengthen cooperation across the domain name community.

Peter Van Roste, General Manager of CENTR, shares his perspective on EURid's longstanding contribution to the community:

'For more than two decades, EURid has been a pillar of the CENTR community: regularly hosting our working groups, taking on leadership roles and generously sharing its know-how, particularly in research and development. One contribution that stands out is EURid's role in helping our security working group evolve into a fully fledged Information Sharing and Analysis Centre (ISAC), strengthening the wider European DNS ecosystem.'



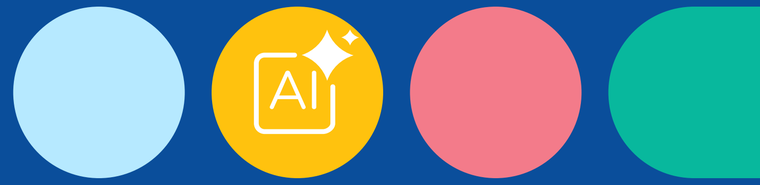
Peter Van Roste
General Manager of CENTR

Looking ahead

These are just a few examples of the networks and exchanges EURid is involved in. Over the past 20 years, EURid has built relationships and established channels for cooperation that provide a solid foundation for addressing shared challenges. Hosting a European forum, sharing practical guidance with investigators and exchanging expertise with intellectual property specialists and industry peers may take different forms, but they all reflect the same principle: progress comes from working together and learning from one another. These connections and established ways of working are particularly important as digital threats evolve, increase and become more complex.

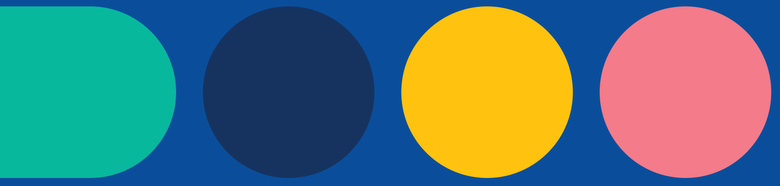
EURid will continue to strengthen these relationships, share knowledge and adapt to new developments, helping the European domain name community navigate an ever-changing digital environment.

Shaping the future of domain names in an AI-driven world



Artificial intelligence is changing the way people find information, discover businesses and navigate the internet. Instead of browsing through search results, more users are turning to AI-powered assistants to ask questions, compare services and receive recommendations. These changes bring new questions for businesses, but also for the organisations and professionals responsible for the internet's underlying infrastructure.

Understanding what this means for domain names requires looking beyond individual organisations. Registries, registrars, technical experts, businesses and researchers all have a role in sharing knowledge and helping the wider internet community adapt.



A reliable online presence still matters

AI may change the way people arrive at a website, but the website itself remains an important point of reference. It is where organisations explain what they do, share their knowledge, communicate with customers and provide access to their services.

A domain name gives that website a recognisable online address. It helps people identify an organisation, find its official website and return to it when needed. As AI-generated answers increasingly summarise information from different sources, being able to trace that information back to an identifiable website remains valuable.

Having a domain name does not, on its own, guarantee visibility in AI-generated answers or search results. The quality, relevance, accessibility and clarity of the website's content also matter.

New developments, familiar principles

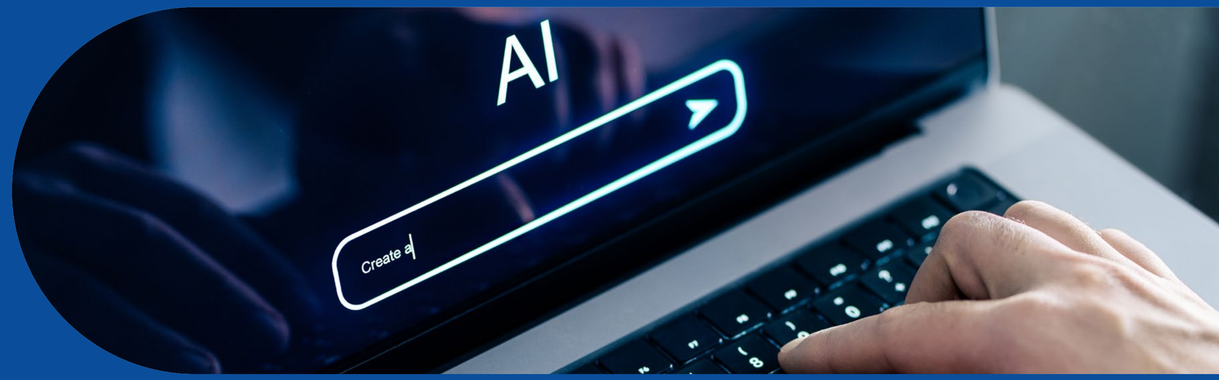
For businesses, this means paying attention to how their online presence is structured and maintained. Descriptive page titles, meaningful headings, well-organised content and consistent organisational information help visitors understand what a website offers. These practices can also help automated systems interpret its content.

Keeping information accurate and up to date, and ensuring that important pages are technically accessible, remain essential. AI is adding a new dimension to online discovery, but it does not make clear communication, useful content and good website maintenance any less important.

Why cooperation matters

The changes brought by AI also raise wider questions for the domain name community. How will people find reliable information? How can businesses maintain a recognisable online presence? What developments should registries and registrars anticipate, and how can the domain name infrastructure continue to meet changing expectations?

These questions benefit from different perspectives. Registries and registrars have practical insight into how the domain name system operates, technical experts can help assess emerging developments, while businesses and researchers bring experience of changing user behaviour and expectations.



Through industry forums, working groups and exchanges between organisations, the community can share findings, identify common challenges and explore possible responses. This cooperation is particularly valuable in a period when technology is developing quickly and its longer-term implications are still taking shape.

For businesses operating across European markets, domain names also play a role in establishing a recognisable online presence. The .eu domain offers a European online address, while .ею and .ευ allow organisations to use Cyrillic and Greek scripts.

AI will continue to influence how people interact with the internet, and the tools used to discover information will keep changing. By combining technical knowledge, practical experience and cooperation across the domain name community, we can better understand these developments and help shape a reliable and accessible internet for the future.

Celebrating the people and companies behind .eu



Partnerships and collaboration play an important role in the development of .eu, but so do the people and organisations who choose it for their online presence. Across Europe, businesses, public institutions, cultural initiatives and community projects use .eu to share their work, connect with audiences and bring ideas to life.

The .eu Web Awards is a competition held over a decade and celebrate these contributions by recognising websites using the .eu extension that demonstrate creativity, innovation and positive impact. The 2026 edition attracted 193 nominations from 22 countries, with 25 finalists selected across five categories.

Meet this year’s five winners and discover the stories behind their award-winning websites.

European Excellence

AI4Debunk.eu

AI4Debunk is a pioneering European project that aims to equip citizens with the AI tools they need to navigate the digital media landscape safely and make informed decisions. In the face of a growing threat to democratic values posed by disinformation, AI4Debunk is committed to promoting transparency, accuracy, and responsible engagement with online platforms. Through its digital hub, the project provides users with the resources, knowledge, and skills required to detect disinformation across an evolving digital landscape. The initiative prioritises user-friendly, inclusive tools designed to reach people of all ages, genders, and interests across diverse online environments.

AI4Debunk

Sustainability Champion

Soiltribes.eu

SoilTribes is a three-year Horizon Europe project under the EU Mission “A Soil Deal for Europe”, bringing together 25 partners from 11 European countries. The project fosters a deeper connection between society and soil by combining science, technology, arts, and community-driven action. Through its “Back to Earth” approach, SoilTribes promotes soil literacy, strengthens collaboration among researchers, policymakers, businesses, and citizens, and empowers local communities to take action for healthier soils. Through knowledge-sharing, creative initiatives, community engagement, and financial support for innovative projects, SoilTribes advances soil stewardship and promotes soil as a vital resource for culture, the economy, and human well-being.

SoilTribes

SME Star

ITLight.eu

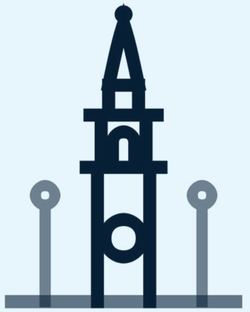
ITLight is an independent software engineering studio based in Poland, delivering product discovery, UX, and cross-platform mobile and web application development. Founded by architect and software engineer Maciej Wawryszuk, the studio helps transform ideas into scalable, high-performance and secure digital products. ITLight is built on architectural experience, reliability and efficient code, with an approach centred on direct collaboration between clients and the system creator and lead architect. The studio's work covers the full development process - from early product discovery, UI/UX and MVP development, through to production mobile apps (Flutter), modern web platforms, ongoing maintenance and seamless AI integrations.

ITLIGHT

Cultural Ambassador

vicenza.eu

Vicenza.eu is an independent guide showcasing the history, culture, cuisine and lifestyle of Vicenza, Italy. Focused on the city of Palladio, the website provides practical information to help visitors plan their stay, from what to see and where to eat and sleep to how to get around. The guide covers opening hours, ticket fees, walking times, annual events, local dishes, activities with children and other practical details. Its content is written and checked by people, with readers also encouraged to contribute, offering useful information for exploring and experiencing Vicenza.



People’s Choice

Visuality.eu

Visuality is a Brussels-based cooperative that combines visual communication, facilitation and training to make the invisible visible. It helps people and organisations pause, gain fresh perspectives and turn insights into positive, lasting change.

Through visual harvesting, visual storytelling, participatory workshops, team coaching and development training, Visuality makes complex ideas easier to understand and creates space for dialogue, learning and collaboration. Whether capturing a discussion visually or guiding a team through change, its approach helps people see connections, build shared understanding and move towards action.

A special thank you to everyone who nominated a website and voted for the finalists, as well as to our five jury members: Alexandra Apostolakis, Thomas Ohr, Arend Bolle, Nicholas Jarrett and Charalampos Kyritsis, for sharing their expertise.

Young voices, safer internet

Our collaborations also extend to the next generation of internet users. Young people experience the online world in ways that are constantly evolving, and their perspectives can bring fresh ideas to discussions about online safety. Giving them a creative way to explore cybersecurity and raise awareness of online threats is the aim of the SAFEonLINE art competition.

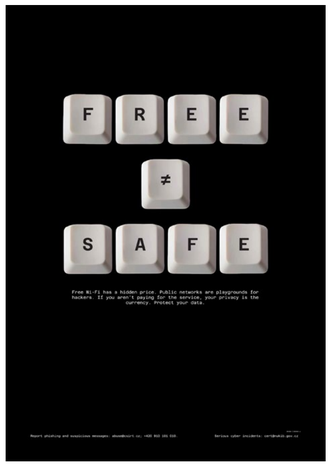
In its fourth edition, the competition invited high school students aged 14 and over to rethink how cybersecurity is represented through their own creativity and imagination. Participants were encouraged to move beyond familiar images of hooded figures and green computer code and explore the subject through original and thought-provoking visuals.

Entries could address a wide range of topics, including cybercrime, online privacy, cyberbullying, phishing, identity theft, information verification, digital trust and the future of cybersecurity. The top ten artworks have also been exhibited in Prague and other cities, bringing young people's perspectives to wider audiences.

.eu SAFE onLINE



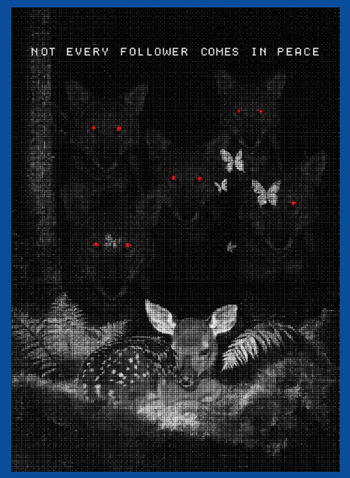
Here are the 10 winning entries from the latest SAFEonLINE edition.



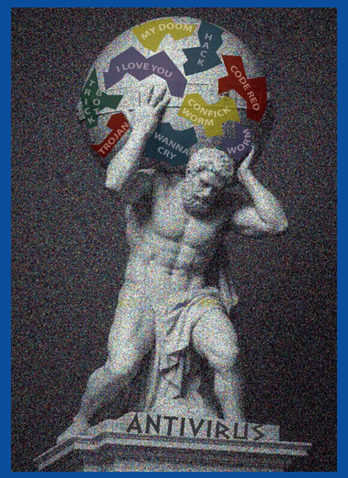
1 Tamara Sirash • Hellichovka • Prague, Czechia



2 Karolína Laginová • Škola umeleckého priemyslu • Košice, Slovakia



3 Laura Röszlerová • Škola Michael • Prague, Czechia



4 Gabriela Yordanova Todorova • National High School of Arts “Tsanko Lavrenov” • Plovdiv, Bulgaria



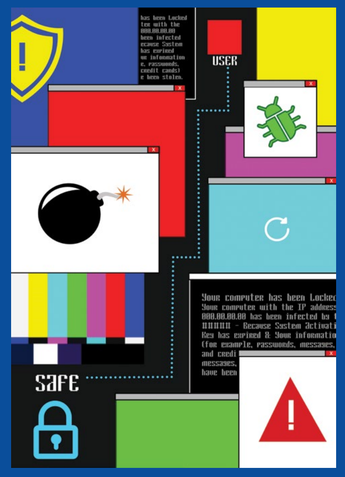
5 Georgi Dimitrov Ivanov • National High School of Arts “Tsanko Lavrenov” • Plovdiv, Bulgaria



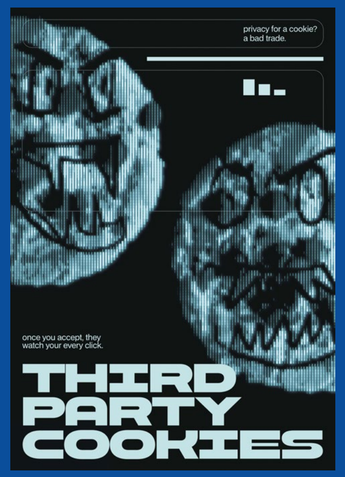
6 Silvia Sokolíková • Škola umeleckého priemyslu Josefa Vydru • Bratislava, Slovakia



7 Vu Hong Yen • Hellichovka • Prague, Czechia



8 Simona Georgieva Barakova • National High School of Arts “Tsanko Lavrenov” • Plovdiv, Bulgaria



9 Nikola Vaňkátová • Hellichovka • Prague, Czechia



10 David Ábel • Hellichovka • Prague, Czechia

.eu SAFE onLINE

Just getting started with your .eu?

Here are five things to know

A strong online presence starts with a domain name that works for you. Whether you are registering your first .eu domain name or adding one to your existing online presence, a little preparation can make the process easier. Here are five things to keep in mind before you get started.

Find out more

Read our full guide, **What to know before registering a .eu domain name**, for more details on eligibility, availability and registration requirements.

1 Check your eligibility.

You can register a .eu domain name if you are an EU, Icelandic, Liechtenstein or Norwegian citizen, a resident of one of these countries, or an organisation established there.

2 Check availability early.

Use EURid's **WHOIS search** to see whether your preferred name is available. It is worth having a few alternatives ready.

3 Choose your characters carefully.

Standard .eu names use Latin characters, numbers and hyphens. You can also register names using Cyrillic (.ею) or Greek (.ευ) characters. Characters from different scripts cannot be mixed in one domain name.

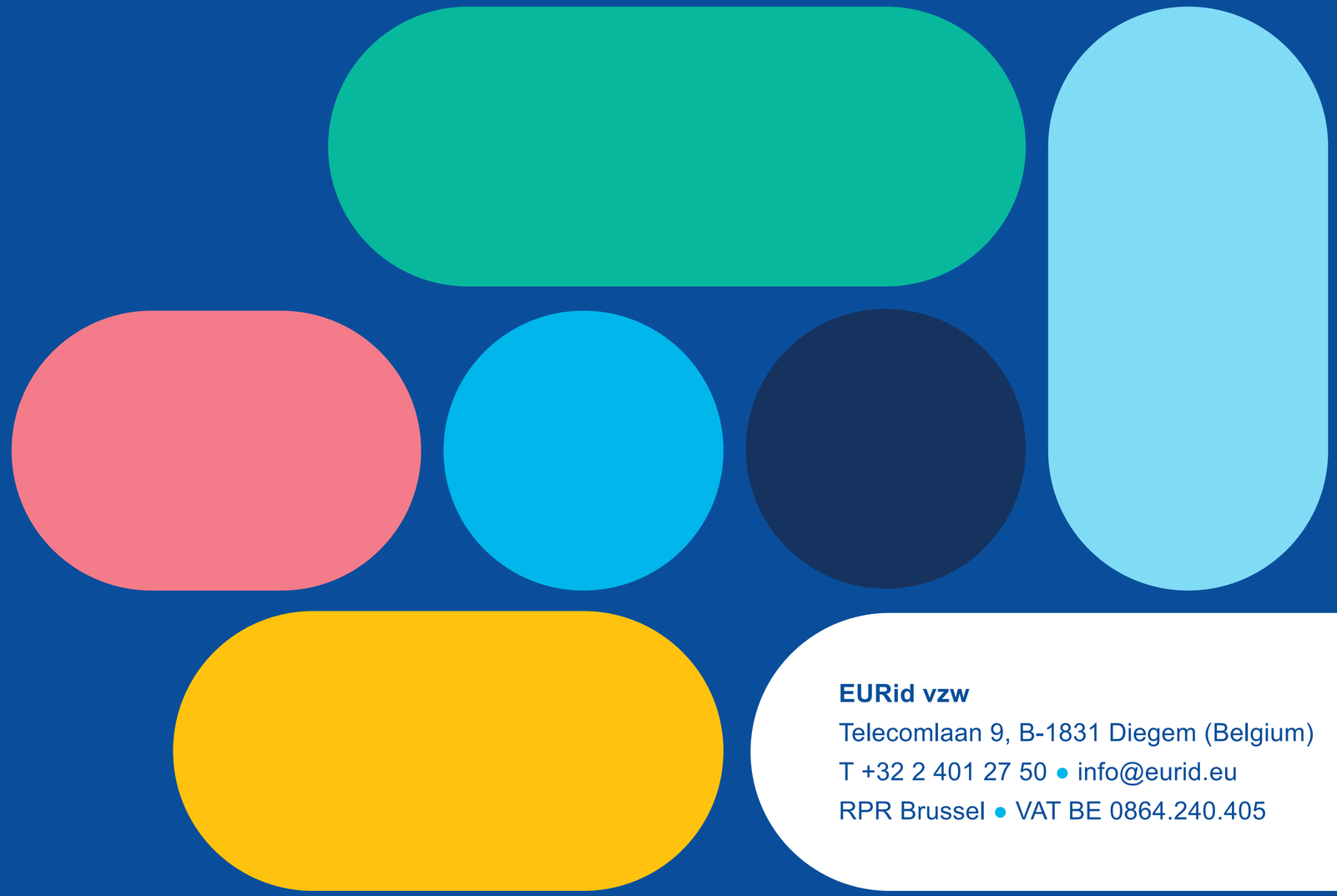
4 Provide accurate registration details.

Make sure your name, address, email address and other contact information are complete and up to date. EURid may ask you to verify your registration data.

5 Keep an eye on your domain name.

A .eu domain name can be registered for one to ten years and is automatically renewed for successive one-year periods, subject to the registration terms.

That's a wrap for this edition, thank you for reading!



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