

LACNIC Policy Development Process

version 8



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Policy Development Process

1. Rationale

The Policy Development Process is an essential part of the services provided by the Regional Internet Registry. It is through this process that the creation and modification of the policies that the RIR will apply within its region are validated. This document describes the two options considered by the LACNIC policy development process (normal and expedited), the mechanisms that allow its operation, and the appeal system.



2. Definition of 'Consensus'

Achieving 'consensus' does not mean that proposals are voted for and against, nor that the number of 'yes's', 'no's' and 'abstentions' – or even participants – are counted, but that the proposal has been discussed not only by its author(s) but also by other members of the community, regardless of their number, and that, after a period of discussion, all critical technical objections have been resolved.

In general, this might coincide with a majority of members of the community in favor of the proposal, and with those who are against the proposal basing their objections on technical reasons as opposed to 'subjective' reasons. In other words, low participation or participants who disagree for reasons that are not openly explained should not be considered a lack of consensus. Objections should not be measured by their number, but instead by their nature and quality within the context of a given proposal. For example, a member of the community whose opinion is against a proposal might receive many 'emails' (virtual or real) in their support, yet the chairs might consider that the opinion has already been addressed and technically refuted during the debate; in this case, the chairs would ignore those expressions of support against the proposal.

For information purposes, the definition of 'consensus' used by the RIRs and the IETF is actually that of 'rough consensus', which allows better clarifying the goal in this context, given that 'consensus' (Latin for agreement) might be interpreted as 'agreed by all' (unanimity). More specifically, RFC7282, explains that "Rough consensus is achieved when all issues are addressed, but not necessarily accommodated."

Consequently, in this document 'consensus' should be interpreted as 'rough consensus'.

As an 'abridged' definition for the remainder of the document, a proposal is considered to have reached consensus when it is supported by meaningful opinions, after broad discussion, and when there are no irrefutable technical objections.

3. LACNIC's Policy Development Process

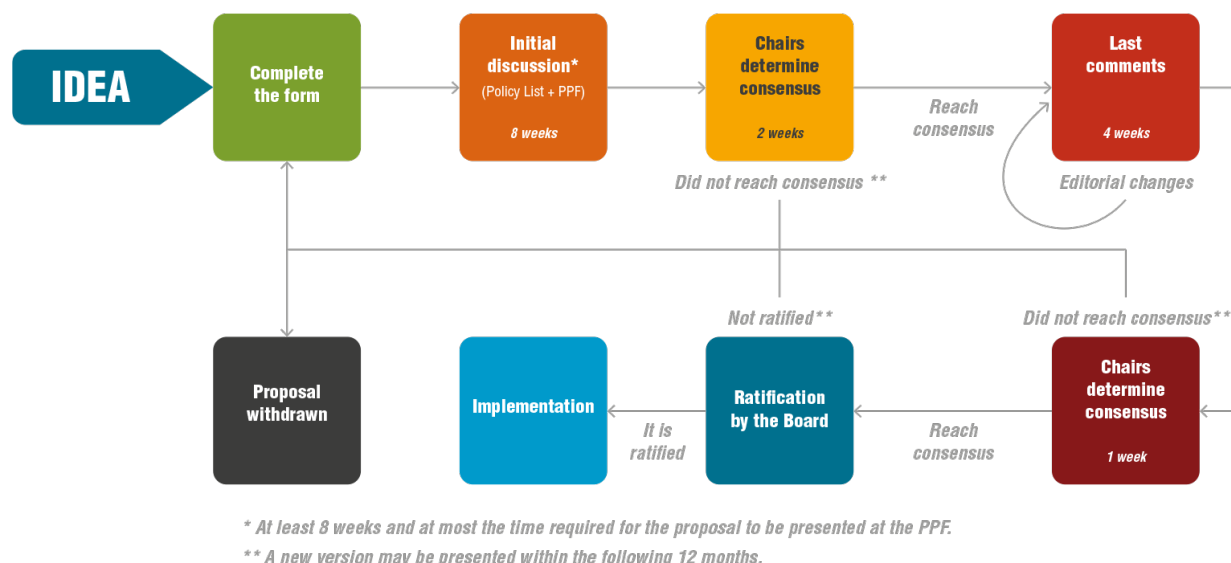


Figure 1: Policy Development Process

The Policy Development Process may involve the following instances:

- Public Policy List
- PDP Chairs
- Working Groups
- Public Policy Forum
- LACNIC Board of Directors

3.1. Public Policy List

- Only those subscribed to the Policy mailing list may submit a proposal.
- Open mailing list.
- Formal starting point and end point for policy discussions.
- Policy proposals may be received at any time.
- Proposals must be submitted using the online form available at <https://politiclas.lacnic.net/politiclas/>. Once a policy proposal has been reviewed, it will be assigned an identification code and sent to the discussion list. The maximum time allowed for reviewing and publishing the proposal on the Public Policy List must not exceed two weeks. This review will only address the text itself, not the merit of the proposal.
- Working Groups may only be summoned through this list.
- Every call for the creation of a working group must be supported by at least five (5) members of the Public Policy List.
- The call for the nomination of candidates to serve as PDP Chairs must be summoned through this list, with the process staggered every two years.
- Only new proposals published on this list at least two weeks prior to the Public Policy Forum will be presented and discussed at the Forum.



- The Chairs will decide on the need to present each proposal at the Forum in the case of new versions of proposals already under discussion and which have already been presented at a prior Forum. This decision will consider the existence of significant modifications to the text and the discussions that have taken place on the list since the new version was presented.

3.2 PDP Chairs

LACNIC's PDP will have two chairs, both of whom will perform the same functions.

3.2.1. Functions of the PDP Chairs

- To lead and prepare Public Policy Forum discussions. Discussions will be moderated by one of the two Chairs, who may alternate in this function during the course of the event.
- To moderate the Public Policy List and the Policy Development Process in general.
- To evaluate and suggest minor changes to proposed texts before the corresponding call for consensus.
- To evaluate and suggest consensus in policy discussions.
- To suggest the finalization of the discussions on a specific issue on the Public Policy List.
- To summon the creation of Working Groups on the Public Policy List.
- To receive comments from LACNIC's Staff in relation to different aspects of a policy proposal. These comments may include, among others, comments on the wording of a proposal, cost of implementing a proposal, legal aspects, and where to include a proposal within the LACNIC Policy Manual.

3.2.2 About the PDP Chairs

- Individuals who hold a position at LACNIC (Board of Directors, Electoral Commission or staff) may not stand as candidates to be elected PDP chair. Other potential incompatibilities must be decided by the Electoral Commission.
- PDP chairs serve in a voluntary and unpaid capacity.
- Any one of the contacts of a LACNIC member organization or person nominated by such contacts may stand as a candidate to be elected PDP chair.
- Candidates must have been subscribed to the public Policy List for at least twelve (12) months prior to the announcement of the election.
- PDP chairs will each serve a two-year term, with one position up for renewal each year. Unlimited reelection is allowed.

3.2.3. About the election of the PDP Chairs

- The Board of Directors may delegate its functions related to the election process to an Electoral Commission.
- Calls for nominations will be announced through the public Policy List.
- Nominations will include the candidate's biographical information, as well as any other information that may be relevant to the role. The Electoral Commission may request additional information when necessary.
- Voting will be conducted electronically, using mechanisms to ensure, to the extent possible, that each voter can cast only one vote.
- Anyone who has been subscribed to the public Policy list for at least six (6) months prior to the announcement of the election may vote.
- Use of the public Policy list for electoral campaigning is forbidden. Breaches will be dealt with by the Electoral Commission.



- The election process must be completed before the first Public Policy Forum of the year.
- The elected chair will be announced during the first Public Policy Forum held after the election and will begin their term immediately after the closing of said Forum.
- If a candidate is not elected, the LACNIC Board will appoint, as soon as possible, a chair to fill the vacant position until the following Public Policy Forum. The person thus appointed will only serve in their position until the next time an election can be held.
- This same mechanism will apply if any of the chairs resigns before the end of their term.

3.2.4. Responsibilities and obligations of the Chairs

- To publish the agenda of the upcoming Public Policy Forum on the Public Policy List at least 1 week before the start of the Forum, specifying, among other information, which policy proposals will be presented and discussed.
- To prepare a report on the Public Policy Forum and submit it to the Policy list not more than one week after the end of the Forum.
- To submit a call for the discussion of any proposal presented by the community on the Public Policy List, including a reminder of the duration of the discussion period, which will be at least 8 weeks and at most the time required for its presentation at the Public Policy Forum. Consensus may not be called for any proposal that has not been presented and debated at least at one Public Policy Forum.
- At any time during the discussion period, to decide together with the author(s) whether it is advisable to review a proposal and, if so, whether it is necessary to restart the discussion period or whether the changes are minor and/or consensus is expected and therefore allow the same discussion period to continue.
- To announce whether consensus has been reached within a maximum of 2 weeks after the discussion period has ended.
- If consensus is not reached, to decide together with the author(s) whether they would like to publish a new version or withdraw the proposal. If the decision is to continue to discuss the proposal, the eight-week discussion period must be restarted.
- To publish a four-week last call for comments period for any proposal that reaches consensus. In the case of editorial changes, a new version of the proposal must be published and the last call for comments period must be restarted.
- Within one week of the end of the last call for comments period, to confirm whether consensus is maintained (in which case the proposal will be sent to the Board for ratification) or to decide together with the author(s) whether they wish to submit an updated version of the proposal to the Policy List and restart the discussion period.
- To notify the results of the ratification by the LACNIC Board to the community through the Policy List, not more than one week after the minutes of the Board meeting during which the ratification was decided are published.

3.3. Appeals Regarding the Election Process

- Appeals regarding the election process must be addressed to the LACNIC Board, who must resolve them within a - maximum of four (4) weeks.
- The Board may extend this four-week period, provided that they adequately justify their decision on the Policy mailing list.
- The Board may convene a specific committee to advise them on these appeals.



3.4. Working Groups

- Working Groups will be optional. Their goal will be to facilitate the discussion of a specific topic.
- Unlimited number of participants.
- Created at the summons of the PDP Chairs, the LACNIC Board, or the LACNIC Member Assembly.
- Working Group results must be published on the Public Policy List four weeks before the Public Policy Forum. These results will be considered recommendations for the Public Policy List.

3.5. Public Policy Forum

- Open to anyone who is interested in participating.
- Analysis of the discussions held on the Public Policy List.
- Presentation and discussion of policies currently undergoing the PDP.
- Opportunities will be offered to present topics that are of interest to the Public Policy Forum

3.6. LACNIC Board of Directors

During its first meeting after the 4-week last call for comments, the LACNIC Board may:

- Ratify the proposal. Analyze its implementation in communication with the staff and make the corresponding announcement.
- Reject the proposal and, through the PDP Chairs, request that the Public Policy List continue their analysis and submit a new proposal.
- Decide the removal of one or both PDP Chairs if failure to comply with their responsibilities were to affect the policy development process. The Board will be responsible for presenting the interim chair(s) within a maximum two weeks, and these interim chairs will serve until the next election.

In addition:

- The Board may summon the creation of Working Groups on the Public Policy List.
- They will be responsible for the election process to appoint the PDP Chairs.
- If a decision of the chairs is appealed, the Board must decide the appeal within a maximum of 4 weeks.



4. Responsibilities and obligations of LACNIC

- To act as the secretariat for the Policy Development Process and provide support to the Public Policy List and the Public Policy Forum by maintaining the mailing list and its archives; providing a space for the Public Policy Forum to meet during LACNIC events; providing assistance to Forum chairs during the Public Policy Forum; updating its website with information on the policy development process, proposals that are under discussion, and those previously submitted, along with their current status; maintaining and updating the Policy Manual and changelog; and providing assistance for conducting the election of the chairs.
- To notify the implementation of proposals ratified by the Board on the Policy List as soon as this occurs.
- After a proposal remains 12 months either in “Did not reach consensus” or “Not ratified” status, the last version of the proposal will automatically be moved to “Abandoned” status.



5. Appeals process

In case of disagreement during the process, any member of the community must initially bring the matter to the Public Policy List for consideration by the Chairs. Alternately, if any member considers that the Chairs have violated the process or erred in their judgement, they may appeal their decision through the Board, which must decide the matter within a period of four weeks.



6. Last call

The purpose of the last call for comments is to provide the community with a brief and final opportunity to comment on the proposal, especially to those who did not do so earlier in the process.

This allows introducing editorial changes (spelling, grammar, style, or similar modifications), provided that the text that has reached consensus does not lose any of its details, not even those that are included merely for information purposes. The idea is that “new readers” who have not participated in the discussion will have the same information that reached consensus.

Exceptionally, objections may be raised if an aspect is discovered that was not considered in the discussion prior to determining consensus. Any new objections must also be substantiated and must therefore not be based on opinions lacking technical justification.



7. Expedited Policy Approval Process

In exceptional cases, a policy proposal may follow an Expedited Process according to which it is not necessary to present the policy proposal before LACNIC's Public Policy Forum.

In order for a policy proposal to qualify for this Expedited Process it must be analyzed by both Public Policy Forum Chairs, who must agree that said proposal justifies the Expedited Process.

After completing this instance, the policy will be presented in the Public Policy List.

At least 60 days after being presented on the list, the Public Policy Forum Chairs will evaluate whether the discussion that was generated merits a call for consensus or to abandon the Expedited Process.

If both Chairs agree that the policy proposal warrants a call for consensus on the Public Policy List, the call will give at least 14 days in order to receive comments.

Once the period to receive comments is closed, the Public Policy Forum Chairs shall communicate whether or not consensus was attained. If it was, they shall submit the proposal to LACNIC's Board of Directors. If it was not, they may choose between abandoning the Expedited Process and continuing the discussion on the Public Policy List or abandon the proposal completely.

After attaining consensus on the Public Policy List, LACNIC's Board of Directors may:

- Accept the proposal. Analyze its implementation jointly with the staff and make the corresponding announcement.
- Reject the consensus and, through the Public Policy Forum Chairs, request that the Public Policy List continue their analysis and present a new proposal at the following Public Policy Forum.
- All policy proposals approved through the Expedited Process must be presented at the following Public Policy Forum in order to inform the community of its implementation.

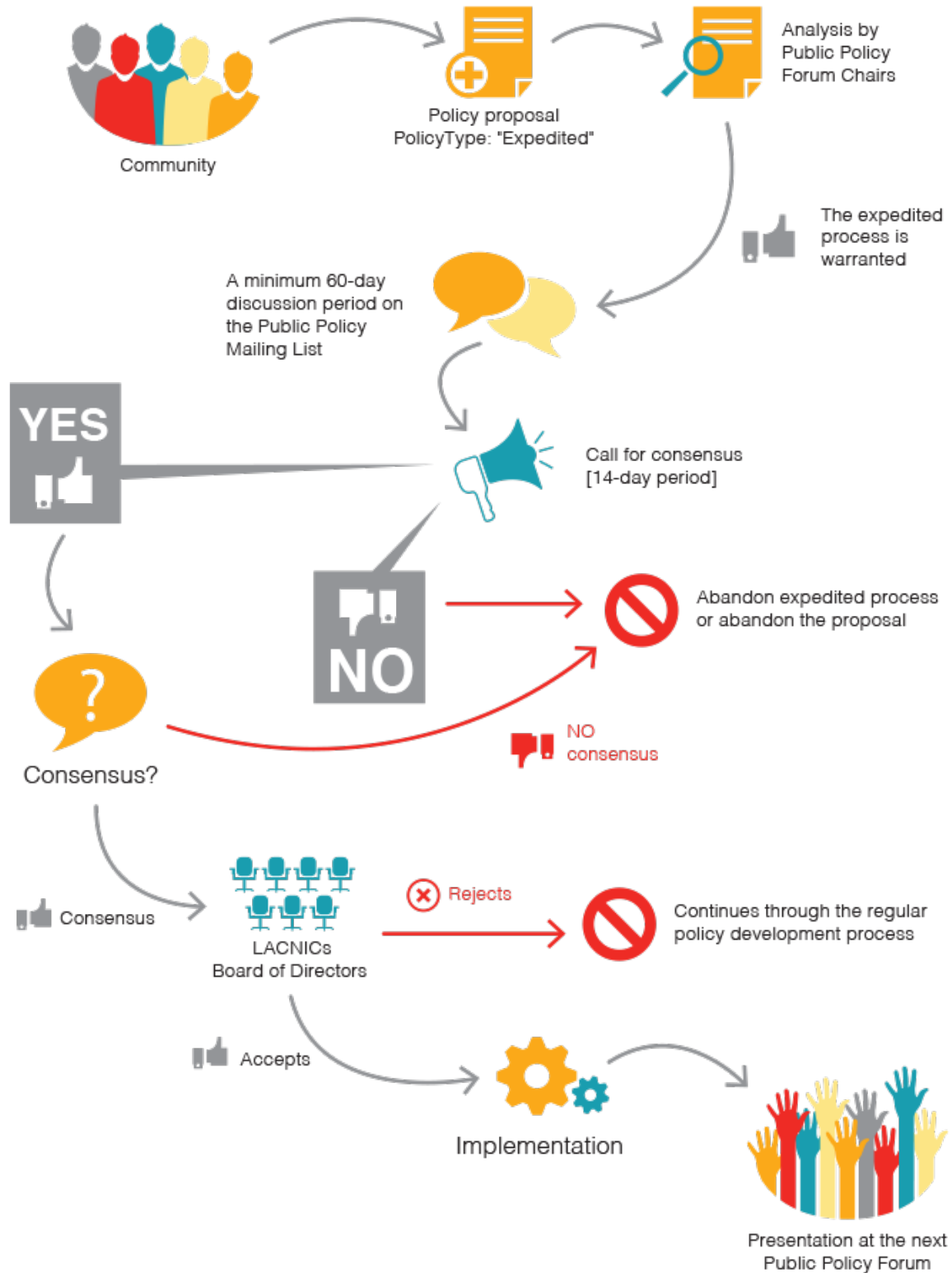


Figure 2: Expedited Process
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