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ICANN Report

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ICANN Report to 2nd UNGEGN Sessions

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ICANN Report to 2nd UNGEGN Sessions

The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) is a global organization formed in 1998 whose mission is to ensure the secure and stable operation of the Internet's unique identifier system. ICANN also facilitates policy development by stakeholders from around the globe reasonably related to those technical functions. The ICANN multistakeholder model brings together thousands of representatives from large and small businesses, technical experts, civil society, researchers, academics and end users from all over the world.

ICANN is responsible for managing and coordinating the Domain Name System (DNS) to ensure every address is unique and that all users of the Internet can find all valid addresses. ICANN does this by overseeing the distribution of unique Internet Protocol addresses and domain names. ICANN also ensures that each domain name maps to the correct IP address. Please see www.icann.org for more information.

Part of the hierarchy of the DNS includes the identification of top-level domains, the last label that comes after the dot in a domain name. These include generic top-level domains (gTLDs) such as .com and country-code top-level domains (ccTLDs), such as .ca and .th. The ccTLDs in the DNS include Internationalized top-level domains (TLDs) as well, such as .한국 (Republic of Korea in Hangul) and .рф (RF, for Russian Federation in Cyrillic).

IDN Program Update

The IDN ccTLD Fast Track Process enables countries and territories that use languages based on scripts other than Latin to offer domain names to users in non-Latin characters. ICANN enabled this process for countries to request top-level domains that reflect their country name in local scripts.

The IDN ccTLD Fast Track Process was launched on 16 November 2009, and all activities related to the development and implementation of the Fast Track process can be found at http://www.icann.org/en/topics/idn/fast-track. A complete list of countries and territories that have completed string evaluation is available at http://www.icann.org/en/topics/idn/fast-track/string-evaluation-completion-en.htm.
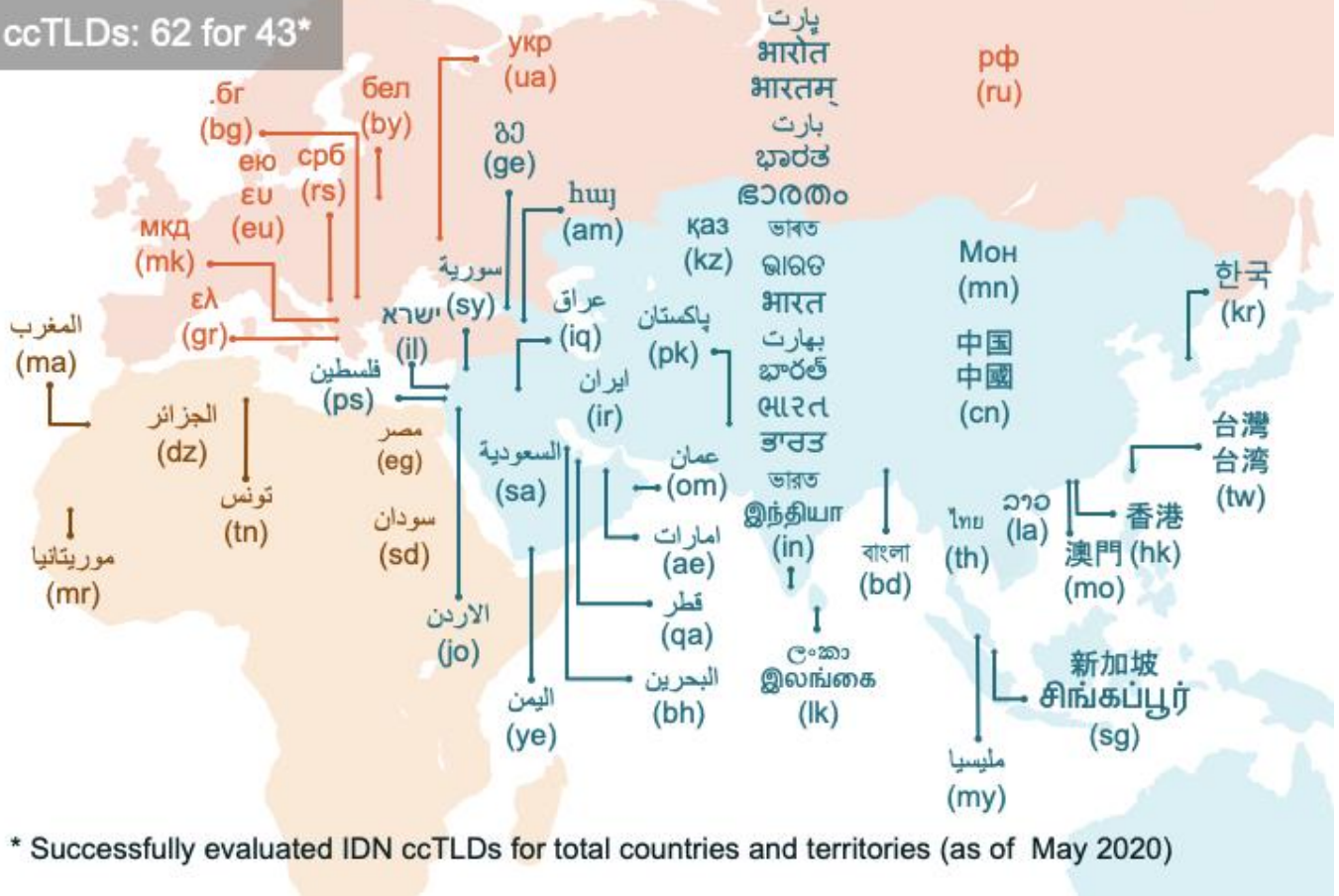
As of 10 February 2021, a total of 62 labels from 43 countries and territories have been successfully evaluated for delegation through the IDN ccTLD Fast Track Process. This is an increase of 3 labels from the report to the 30th UNGEGN sessions. Of these, 60 labels from 41 countries and territories have been delegated in the root zone. The most recent evaluation includes the IDN ccTLD in Hebrew language and script for Israel.

Countries and territories requesting IDN ccTLDs from ICANN are only granted IDN ccTLDs matching their country or territory name in an official language and script (non-Latin) for the country and territory as listed in the *Technical Reference Manual for the standardization of geographical names (part III) 2007, and subsequent updates* (UNGEGN), or which is documented as a meaningful representation of their country name by an internationally recognized linguistic expert.

Within the Fast Track Process, ICANN has historically utilized assistance from UNGEGN to identify internationally recognized experts for those countries and territories which may need such expertise in their requests. Additionally, ICANN sought assistance from UNGEGN experts in creating examples of documentation that would demonstrate that a requested TLD is a meaningful representation of a country name. ICANN has been using the national institutions recognized by UNGEGN for recent cases.

IDN Country Code Top-Level Domains

ccTLDs: 62 for 43*

.бг (bg)
бел (by)
ею (eu)
срб (rs)
мкд (mk)
ελ (gr)
укр (ua)
გე (ge)
հայ (am)
سورية (sy)
ישרא (il)
فلسطين (ps)
عراق (iq)
ایران (ir)
المغرب (ma)
الجزائر (dz)
تونس (tn)
موريتانيا (mr)
مصر (eg)
سودان (sd)
السعودية (sa)
الأردن (jo)
اليمن (ye)
عمان (om)
امارات (ae)
قطر (qa)
البحرين (bh)
پاکستان (pk)
بارت भारत भारतम् بارت ಭಾರತ ভাৰত భారత్ ইন্ডিয়া ভারত இந்தியா بھارت భారత్ ভারত ভারত (in)
বাংলা (bd)
قاز қаз (kz)
ලංකා இலங்கை (lk)
Мон (mn)
中国 中國 (cn)
ไทย (th)
ລາວ (la)
ملیسیا (my)
한국 (kr)
台灣 台湾 (tw)
香港 澳門 (hk) (mo)
新加坡 சிங்கப்பூர் (sg)
پارت भारत (ru) рф

* Successfully evaluated IDN ccTLDs for total countries and territories (as of May 2020)

Another aspect of the IDN program includes work on the treatment of variants for TLDs. An IDN variant TLD can be defined as one that may look or is considered "same" or interchangeable with another TLD by a user of the relevant writing system. For example, a string in traditional Chinese commonly has an equivalent in simplified Chinese. An example from Arabic script is: السعوديةand السعودية.

The Country Code Names Supporting Organization (ccNSO) within ICANN is now reviewing its experience with the IDN ccTLD Fast Track process, which has been an experimental program, to develop a more comprehensive policy for processing IDN ccTLD applications. The policy will consider inclusion of Latin script based IDN ccTLDs (which were not covered by the IDN ccTLD Fast Track process) as well as defining and

delegating IDN variant TLDs. The variant TLDs are needed to make the DNS secure as well as promote usability of certain TLDs across different geographical regions.

Working with community volunteers, ICANN and Internet community participants realized the need to identify a system to handle variant labels. This led to the creation of the [Procedure to Develop and Maintain the Label Generation Rules for the Root Zone in Respect of IDNA Labels](#) (LGR Procedure). Since 2013, the community-based panels supported by ICANN org have developed proposals for twenty scripts including Arabic, Armenian, Bangla, Chinese, Cyrillic, Devanagari, Ethiopic, Georgian, Gujarati, Gurmukhi, Hebrew, Kannada, Khmer, Lao, Malayalam, Oriya, Sinhala, Tamil, Telugu, and Thai scripts. These are being integrated into the [Root Zone Label Generation Rules](#). Greek, Japanese, Korean, Latin and Myanmar panels are currently finalizing their work.

Generic Top-Level Domain Program Update

Since the last report to the 30th UNGEGN sessions in July 2017, ICANN has continued to process applications received in the 2012 round for new generic TLDs. As of 10 February 2021, there are 1504 TLDs in the root zone. Several of these are community and geographic labels, representing cities or regions, such as Abu Dhabi, Alsace, Amsterdam, Barcelona, Bayern, Berlin, Brussels, Budapest, BZH (for the Breton region in France), Capetown, Cologne, Corsica, Cymru, Dubai, Durban, EUS (for the Basque cultural and linguistic community), GAL (for the Galician cultural and linguistic community), Gent, Hamburg, Helsinki, Istanbul, Joburg, Koeln, KRD (for the Kurdistan region), Kyoto, London, Melbourne, Miami, Moscow, Nagoya, NYC, Okinawa, Osaka, Paris, Quebec, Rio, Ruhr, Ryukyu, Saarland, Scot, Stockholm, Sydney, Taipei, Tokyo, Vegas, Vlaanderen, Wales, and Wien.

Many city and regional TLDs are promoting the adoption of these domains for local services. There are now over 370 million domain names registered worldwide, 30.2 million of these registrations are in new gTLD extensions launched since 2014.

As of 10 February 2021, a total of 93 IDN gTLDs have been delegated in the root zone (a total of 153 IDNs delegated if IDN ccTLDs are included). A number of these delegations include IDNs representing cities or geographic names, such as ابوظبي. (City of Abu Dhabi in Arabic) and .佛山 (city of Foshan in Chinese).

Universal Acceptance of Domain Names and Email Addresses

Universal Acceptance (UA) means that all domain names and email addresses work in all software applications. This means that applications should be able to support domain names using the newer and longer top-level domains (TLDs) as well as Internationalized Domain Names (IDNs). Due to the significance of UA, these have been included as a key part of the ICANN Strategic Plan for 2021-2025. In promoting the Unique Identifier System, ICANN aims to "Foster competition, consumer choice, and innovation in the Internet space by increasing awareness and encouraging readiness for Universal Acceptance …".

Increasing UA readiness requires a considered global effort. ICANN has set up a UA Program to plan and undertake this work. The program works closely with the community to mobilize, support and coordinate the community efforts for UA. The community at ICANN has organized and formed the Universal Acceptance Steering Group (UASG) and is supported by the UA Program. UASG continues to analyze UA related gaps in currently technology deployed globally, develops training materials to address the gaps, and actively conducts outreach and training activities to promote UA readiness. Further details of the work are available at https://uasg.tech/. The work on UA is specifically allowing for broader access for domain names and email addresses in local languages and scripts.

Cross-Community Working Group on Country/Territory Names

The Cross-Community Working Group on the Use of Country and Territory Names as TLDs (http://ccnso.icann.org/workinggroups/ccwg-unct.htm) was active between March 2014 and November 2017 to document the representations of country and territory names at the top-level of the DNS. The Working Group considered the historical treatment of two and three-character codes as TLDs. The recommendations

were adopted into Work Track 5 of the Generic Names Supporting Organization (GNSO) Subsequent Procedures Policy Development Process for the introduction of new generic TLDs. The Work Track 5 Final Report was incorporated (see Annex J) into the GNSO Final Report on the Subsequent Procedures Process published on 21 January 2021 (https://gnso.icann.org/sites/default/files/file/field-file-attach/final-report-newgtld-subsequent-procedures-pdp-20jan21-en.pdf). The report preserves the existing reservation of all two-character letter-letter combinations at the top-level for existing and future country codes. The provisions in the 2012 Applicant Guidebook for new gTLDs were maintained with clarifications on long-form and short-form names listed in the ISO 3166-1 standard. Additional detail can be found in Annex J of the Final Report.

The next ICANN international public meeting will be a virtual conference from 22-25 March 2021 (https://70.schedule.icann.org/), followed by ICANN 71, which is scheduled from 14-17 June 2021.

One World, One Internet