

IDNG Working Group Charter

1. Purpose

To meet community demand and user expectations for IDN TLDs, as well as to address the potentially significant time difference between the introduction of new IDN ccTLDs and new IDN gTLDs, methods to coordinate the timing of the implementation of new IDN TLDs are being considered. While the timing of the introduction of IDN TLDs into the root is of concern, neither the full New gTLD process nor the IDN ccTLD Fast Track implementation, evaluation and associated schedules should be delayed.

The purpose of the IDN gTLD Fast Track Working Group (IDNG WG) is to develop and report on feasible methods, if any, to coordinate and minimize the time difference of the introduction of new IDN ccTLDs and new IDN gTLDs to the root, to within a reasonable time frame. One of the possibilities being the introduction of an IDN gTLD Fast Track.

2. Scope

The New gTLD process, when implemented, will cover both IDN and non-IDN gTLDs. The IDNG WG should refer to policy recommendations already produced by the GNSO.

In considering feasible methods the IDNG WG should take into account and be guided by:

- The overarching requirement to preserve the security and stability of the DNS;
- Compliance with the IDNA protocols and ICANN IDN Guidelines;
- Input and advice from the technical community in respect to the implementation of IDNs;
- GNSO Policy Recommendations on New gTLDs (<http://gnso.icann.org/issues/new-gtlds/pdp-dec05-fr-parta-08aug07.htm>)
- Draft New gTLD Applicant Guidebook (<http://www.icann.org/en/topics/new-gtlds/comments-2-en.htm#expmem>) and subsequent versions as they become available, along with corresponding comments received
- Draft IDN ccTLD Fast Track Implementation Plan (<http://icann.org/en/topics/idn/fast-track/draft-implementation-plan-cctld-clean-29may09-en.pdf>) and subsequent versions as they become available, along with corresponding comments received

The IDNG WG should consider and pursue different alternatives to address the issue of parity in timing between the introduction of new IDN ccTLDs and new IDN gTLDs. These should include:

- Feasible mechanisms to coordinate the timing for the implementation of new IDN ccTLDs and new IDN gTLDs into the root by ICANN
- IDN gTLD Fast Track mechanism in case the New gTLD implementation process is further delayed

If the IDNG WG considers an IDN gTLD Fast Track, the group should at a minimum address the following issues in its report:

- Definition of a limited scope for applicable IDN gTLDs for the Fast Track
- Types of IDN gTLDs acceptable for the IDN gTLD Fast Track
- Requirements for and evaluation of applicants for the Fast Track
- Consideration for requirements of rights protection mechanisms
- Where contention arises, how such contention could be addressed

- Conditions under which an application may be deferred to the full New gTLD process
- What is a minimal time before the full New gTLD process is implemented that would warrant initiating an IDN gTLD Fast Track?
- Outreach efforts to make the community aware of the IDN gTLD Fast Track

3. Process

Two (2) reports will be produced by the IDNG

- IDNG Initial Report
- IDNG Final Report

IDNG Initial Report

The IDNG WG shall produce and publish an Initial Report on the ICANN website for public consultation. The Initial Report should identify issues that should be taken into consideration for a set of guiding principles for potential methodologies (to be included in the Final Report). The Initial Report may also identify possible options and methods for such methodology.

IDNG Final Report

The Final Report should review and analyze the comments received for the Initial Report, and develop a set of principles and procedural framework for implementing a feasible mechanism. The Final Report should also take into consideration the then current drafts for IDN ccTLD Fast Track Implementation Draft and the New gTLD Applicant Guidebook to provide specific directives implementable by staff. The Final Report shall be published after adoption of the Report by the IDNG WG and conveyed to the GNSO council.

4. Membership

The IDNG WG will include members of the GNSO and the GNSO Council. The IDNG WG may select its own chair from the members of the WG. ICANN should provide adequate staff support to the IDNG WG.

The IDNG WG is encouraged to seek participation from the technical community as well as from other areas within the ICANN community, including the GAC, ALAC, SSAC and the ccNSO.

In the development of its reports, the IDNG WG may consider to recommend to the GNSO Council to make a request to the ICANN board to create a special implementation recommendations team to engage a community-wide discussion for the implementation of any recommendations. Should such team be assembled, the IDNG WG could consider to be merged into the membership of such team.

5. IDNG WG Target Schedule

- July 2009 – Formation of IDNG WG
- August 2009 – Publishing of Initial Report
- October 2009 – Publishing of Final Report

6. Background and References

IDN and IDN TLDs have been an issue discussed at every ICANN meeting formally and informally since 2000. IDN was a subject culminating in a resolution by the ICANN board as early as September 25, 2000. The resolution was especially significant in recognizing "that it is important that the Internet evolve to be more accessible to those who do not use the ASCII character set," and that "the internationalization of the Internet's domain name system must be ... fully compatible with the Internet's existing end-to-end model and that preserve globally unique naming in a universally resolvable public name space" which includes the importance of the introduction of IDN TLDs to preserve a unique global domain name space.

Thereupon, a Topic Paper and a Survey was produced in 2001, followed by two Discussion Papers in 2002 and the first version of the ICANN IDN Implementation Guidelines in 2003. Multiple workshops and discussion sessions were held at different ICANN meetings as well. Besides dedicated sessions, the issue of IDN and IDN TLDs is an issue that has consistently been brought up during public forums and open sessions at ICANN. There can be observed an urgency for IDN TLDs within language communities around the world that do not use English or a Latin based script as a primary language, especially the CJK (Chinese Japanese Korean) communities and the right-to-left directional language communities (e.g. Arabic, Hebrew, Persian, etc.).

The results and learning from these activities fed into the New gTLD process, especially through the GNSO IDN WG. During the deliberations of the New gTLD PDP, a GNSO IDN WG was formed in November 2006 (http://gns0.icann.org/issues/idn-tlds/idn_working_group-18nov06.htm) to address policy issues that may arise from the impending introduction of Internationalized Domain Names at the top level (IDN TLDs). The IDN WG produced a final Outcomes Report (<http://gns0.icann.org/drafts/idn-wg-fr-22mar07.htm>) in March 2007. Recommendations from the Outcomes Report were eventually incorporated into the GNSO Final Report on the Introduction of New gTLDs. Besides the IDN WG, the Reserved Names working group (formed as part of the New gTLD PDP) also deliberated on issues relevant to the introduction of IDN gTLDs. The Reserved Names WG Final Report was also incorporated into the GNSO Final Report on the Introduction of New gTLDs. The findings and recommendations of both working groups should inform the IDNG WG.

In September 2007 the ccNSO council resolved to recommend to the ICANN Board that an IDNC WG (IDN ccTLD Fast Track Working Group) be formed to discuss the possibility of using an interim approach to IDN ccTLDs associated with the ISO 3166-1 two-letter codes. In November 2007 the ICANN Board resolved to establish the IDNC WG to develop and report on feasible methods, if any, that would enable the introduction, in a timely manner and in a manner that ensures the continued security and stability of the Internet, of a limited number of IDN ccTLDs while the overall IDN ccPDP is being developed. In June 2008, the IDNC WG submitted its final report to the ICANN board, and the Board directed ICANN staff to commence work on implementation issues. Subsequently 2 draft Implementation Plans for IDN ccTLD Fast Track Process were published in November 2008 and March 2009 (<http://www.icann.org/en/topics/idn/fast-track/draft-implementation-plan-ccTld-clean-19feb09-en.pdf>) respectively.

The GNSO Council, in its comments in Response to the ccNSO-GAC Issues Report on IDN Issues (<http://gns0.icann.org/drafts/ccns0-gac-issues-report-idn-ccTlds-gns0-response-20feb08.pdf>), as well as in its comments on the IDNC WG Final Report (<http://gns0.icann.org/issues/idn-tlds/gns0-council-comments-idnc-final-report-14aug08.pdf>)

expressed that “the introduction of IDN gTLDs or IDN ccTLDs should not be delayed because of lack of readiness of one category, but if they are not introduced at the same time, steps should be taken so that neither category is advantaged or disadvantaged, and procedures should be developed to avoid possible conflicts.”

Further, the GNSO Council made a resolution in January 2009 to assert that “the GNSO Council strongly believes that neither the New gTLD or ccTLD fast track process should result in IDN TLDs in the root before the other unless both the GNSO and ccNSO so agree.”