ICANN | GNSO
Generic Names Supporting Organization

Policy Briefing

Translation and Transliteration of Contact Information
Policy Development Process

What is this about?
Following the recommendations listed in the Internationalized Registration Data Working Group (IRD-WG)'s Final Report, the GNSO Council requested an Issue Report on the translation and transliteration of contact information in October 2012 – posing the question whether it is desirable to translate or transliterate[2] contact information[3] into one common language or script. In December 2013 this GNSO PDP Working Group was inaugurated to provide an answer to this question as well as to who would carry the financial burden if mandatory translation or transliteration of contact information were recommended.

Why is this important?
The continued internationalization of the domain name system in general and specifically of registration data means that there is an urgent need to allow for standardized query of non-Latin script registration data and to assure its global functionality. The ongoing expansion of the gTLD space and the creation of a large number of internationalized domain names, combined with on going reforms of gTLD Directory Services, such as the Expert Working Group on New gTLD Directory Services, makes the need to establish GNSO policy for the potential translation or transliteration of contact information even more pressing.

What is the current status of this project?
On 15 December 2014 the Working Group published its Initial Report and after the public comment period closed on 1 February 2015 staff prepared a Report of Public Comments, summarizing the contributions that mostly – but not unanimously – supported the Initial Report's draft recommendations. The WG has reviewed all comments received and is close to concluding its Final Report.

Expected next steps
Once the Final Report is completed it will be passed to the GNSO Council for its review. If the Council adopts the Working Group's recommendations, the Report will go out for public comment once more before the ICANN Board's will consider it.

Background
At its meeting on 13 June 2013, the GNSO Council initiated a PDP on the translation and transliteration of contact information. The GNSO Council approved the Charter on 20 November 2013. The two main questions covered by the Charter are:
1. Whether it is desirable to translate contact information to a single common language or transliterate contact information to a single common script.

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[2] 'Translation' is defined as the translation of a text into another language whereas 'transliteration' is the writing of a word using the closest corresponding letters of a different alphabet.
[3] Contact information' is a subset of Domain Name Registration Data and thus the information that enables someone using a Domain Name Registration Data Directory Service (such as WHOIS) to contact the domain name registration holder.

2. Who should decide who should bear the burden translating contact information to a single common language or transliterating contact information to a single common script.

The PDP WG has asked the Supporting Organizations and Advisory Committees to provide input on the following questions relating to the two issues identified in the PDP:

- Whether it is desirable to translate contact information to a single common language or transliterate contact information to a single common script.
- What exactly the benefits to the community are of translating or transliterating contact information, especially in light of the costs that may be connected to translation or transliteration?
- Should translation or transliteration of contact information be mandatory for all gTLDs?
- Should translation or transliteration of contact information be mandatory for all registrants or   only those based in certain countries and/or using specific non-ASCII scripts?
- What impact will translation or transliteration of contact information have on the WHOIS validation as   set out under the 2013 Registrar Accreditation Agreement?
- When should any new policy relating to translation and transliteration of contact information come into effect?
- Who should decide who should bear the burden translating contact information to a single common language or transliterating contact information to a single common script?
- Who does your SG/C believe should bear the cost, bearing in mind, however, the limits in scope set in the Initial Report on this issue?

How can I get involved?
If you would like to join the WG as a member, please contact the GNSO Secretariat (gnso-secs@icann.org).

Where can I find more information?
- Initial Report - http://gnso.icann.org/en/issues/gtlds/transliteration-contact-initial-15dec14-en.pdf
- Public Comment Forum - https://www.icann.org/public-comments/transliteration-contact-initial-2014-12-16-en
- Issue Report - Final Issue Report on Translation and Transliteration of Contact Information
- PDP Workspace - https://community.icann.org/x/FTR-Ag

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