

Cross Community Working Groups on the Use of Country and Territory Names as TLDs

What is this about?

The purpose of this CWG is to further review the issues pertaining to the use of country and territory names under different policies (new gTLD, IDN ccTLD, RFC 1591), and, if feasible, develop a definitional framework that could be used across these. With adoption of the charter, one of the two recommendations of the ccNSO Study Group on use of names of country and territories has been implemented.

Why is this important?

The treatment of country and territory names as Top Level Domains is a topic that has been discussed by the ccNSO, GAC, GNSO, ALAC and the ICANN Board for a number of years. Issues regarding the treatment of representations of country and territory names have arisen in a wide range of ICANN policy processes, including the IDN fast track, IDN ccPDP, and the development of the new gTLD Applicant guidebook. References to country and territory names and their use are also present in guidelines such as the GAC's "Principles and Guidelines for the Delegation and Administration of Country Code Top Level Domains" and "Principles regarding new gTLDs". Similarly, references are made in foundation documents, such as RFC1591 and administrative procedures such as those followed by IANA in the delegation and redelegation of ccTLDs (in accordance with ISO3166--1).

The CWG will 1) Further review the current status of representations of country and territory names, as they exist under current ICANN policies, guidelines and procedures; 2) Provide advice regarding the feasibility of developing a consistent and uniform definitional framework that could be applicable across the respective SOs and ACs; and 3) Should such a framework be deemed feasible, provide detailed advice as to its content.

What is the current status of this project?

The CWG held its first meeting on 10 June and subsequently met face to face during ICANN 50 in London. It has developed an initial work plan, decided on typology and developed a draft progress report (see <https://community.icann.org/x/4xXxAg>).

Expected next steps

The CWG will meet F2F in Los Angeles to meet with members from the GAC, to discuss issues identified by the Study Group and revisit the Group's work plan (see <http://la51.icann.org/en/schedule/thu-ccwg-ctn>).

Background

The ccNSO Council established a Study Group on the use of Country and Territory Names on 8 December 2010. The Study Group was tasked with developing an overview of:

- How names of countries and territories are currently used within ICANN, be it in the form of policies, guidelines and/or procedures.

- The types of strings, relating to the names of countries and territories that currently used, or proposed to be used, as TLDs.
- The issues that arise (or may arise) when current policies, guidelines and procedures are applied to these representations of country and territory names.

The Study Group was comprised of representatives from across the ICANN stakeholder community and conducted its work between May 2011 and June 2013. The Study Group advised the ccNSO Council to set up a cross community working group, with participants from ALAC, ccNSO, GAC and GNSO to further review the current status of representations of country and territory names, and provide detailed advice on the feasibility and content of a consistent and uniform definitional framework that could be applied across the respective SO's and AC's. The ccNSO Council was also advised to request the ICANN Board to extend the current rule in the new gTLD Applicant Guidebook regarding the exclusion of all country and territory names in all languages, for consecutive rounds of new gTLD applications, until such a time that the ccWG developed the framework.

How can I get involved?

If you are interested in joining the WG as a GNSO participant, please email the GNSO Secretariat at gns.secretariat@icann.org to be added to the mailing list.

Where can I find more information?

- More information on the ccWG, including its charter can be found at: <http://ccnso.icann.org/workinggroups/ccwg-unct.htm> and <https://community.icann.org/x/X7XhAg>
- The Working Group builds on the work of its predecessor, the Study Group on the Use of Names for Countries and Territories as TLDs; its Final Report is available at <http://ccnso.icann.org/workinggroups/unct-final-08sep12-en.pdf> [PDF, 717 KB]

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