Translation and Transliteration of Contact Information
Policy Development Process

What is this about?

Following the recommendations 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. In this context '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. It usually includes the name, organization, and postal address of the registered name holder, technical contact, as well as administrative contact. '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.

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 international registration data and to assure its internationalization functionality. The ongoing expansion of the gTLD space and the creation of a large number of internationalized domain names, combined with the reforms attempts of gTLD Directory Services – especially the Expert Working Group on New gTLD Directory Services – makes the need to establish GNSO policy for the translation and transliteration of contact information even more pressing. The PDP WG is in fact expected to tie in with some of the work that is currently under way.

What is the current status of this project?

The GNSO Council initiated a Policy Development Process (PDP) on this topic and the WG was formed in December 2013. Since then the WG sent a request to the Supporting Organizations and Advisory Committees as well as to the GNSO's Stakeholder Groups and Constituencies to provide input on questions relating to the translation and transliteration of contact. The WG analyzed the input it received and is producing a draft initial report on which it will seek comments during and following the ICANN 51 meeting in Los Angeles. The Working Group is also considering the outcomes from the ICANN-commissioned study on the commercial feasibility of translation and transliteration of contact information and the Expert Working Group on gTLD Directory Services.

Expected next steps

The PDP WG aims to publish a draft Initial Report in time for ICANN51 and submit it to public comment shortly after the Meeting.

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.

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 and/or transliterating contact information, especially in light of the costs that may be connected to translation and/or transliteration?
- Should translation and/or transliteration of contact information be mandatory for all gTLDs?
- Should translation and/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/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?
- Issue Report - Final Issue Report on Translation and Transliteration of Contact Information
- PDP Workspace - https://community.icann.org/x/FTR-Ag
- Open F2F WG meeting during ICANN meeting in Los Angeles: http://la51.icann.org/en/schedule/mon-transliteration-contact

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