
Cross-Community Working Group: Use of Country and Territory Names as Top-Level Domains

WHAT CAN I EXPECT AT ICANN58 IN RELATION TO THIS TOPIC?

The Cross-Community Working Group (CWG) has produced an Interim Report containing a summary of its work as well as a series of recommendations. It is anticipated that the Public Comment period on this report will be open during ICANN58. Therefore, the group does not plan to hold a face-to-face session in Copenhagen.

WHAT IS THIS ABOUT?

Following in the footsteps of the Study Group on the Use of Names for Countries and Territories as top-level domains (TLDs), the purpose of this CWG is to further review the issues pertaining to the use of country and territory names as TLDs and develop a policy framework.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

The treatment of country and territory names as TLDs is a topic that has been discussed by the At-Large Advisory Committee (ALAC), Country Code Names Supporting Organization (ccNSO), Generic Names Supporting Organization (GNSO), Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC), and the ICANN Board for a number of years. So far, issues regarding the treatment of representations of country and territory names have arisen in a wide range of ICANN policy processes, including the Internationalized Domain Name (IDN) fast track, ccNSO IDN Policy Development Process (PDP), and the development of the new gTLD Applicant Guidebook (AGB). The CWG on Use of Country and Territory Names as TLDs (UCTN) was chartered to investigate the feasibility of a uniform policy framework on this important issue that could be applied across all TLDs. The creation of such a framework could be a helpful step forward in the continuous development of the domain name system (DNS).

WHAT IS THE CURRENT STATUS OF THIS PROJECT?

The CWG has produced an Interim Report that includes extensive background information on the issue area, a full summary of the group's activities and accomplishments, and a series of recommendations. As outlined in the Report, the CWG-UCTN divided its work into three sections: 2-character TLDs; 3-character TLDs; and full name country and territory name TLDs. The CWG reached preliminary consensus in support of maintaining the status quo of 2-character codes as exclusively reserved for country code TLDs (ccTLDs). The community expressed a diverse set of views on 3-character codes, and no consensus was reached on this topic. The CWG did not progress to considering full name country and territory name TLDs. The group deemed that it is not feasible within its limited mandate to develop a consistent and uniform definitional framework that could be applicable across the respective Supporting Organizations (SOs) and Advisory Committees (ACs) defining rules guiding the use of country and territory names as top-level domains.

WHAT ARE THE EXPECTED NEXT STEPS?

It is anticipated that the CWG will begin accepting comments from the public on its Interim Report prior to ICANN58. After the closure of the Public Comment period, the CWG will consider the comments received and revise its conclusions and recommendations, if deemed appropriate to be included in the Final Paper. This paper will be submitted to the ccNSO Council and the GNSO Council for discussion, adoption, and next steps.

HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED?

To review the Interim Report and submit input during the Public Comment period, please visit icann.org/public-comments.

MORE INFORMATION

— CWG Workspace: community.icann.org/x/X7XhAg

STAFF RESPONSIBLE: Emily Barabas (GNSO), Steve Chan (GNSO), Bart Boswinkel (ccNSO), and Joke Braeken (ccNSO)