ICANN | GNSO

Generic Names Supporting Organization

Policy Briefing

ICANN81 Edition

The GNSO Background Briefings are produced by ICANN's Policy staff supporting the GNSO. These are drafted specifically in preparation for ICANN meetings to provide the community with concise background information on all relevant GNSO policy efforts.

For more information on the GNSO @ ICANN81:

🌐 gnso.ICANN.org/ICANNmeeting   🐦 @ICANN_GNSO

Welcome to ICANN81 from the GNSO Chair

The Generic Names Supporting Organization (GNSO) Council and the GNSO community welcome your participation in the ICANN81 Annual General Meeting in Istanbul, Türkiye. As with previous hybrid meetings, at ICANN81, the GNSO will seek to equally leverage contributions of in-person and remote participants to advance important policy development efforts and the work of the GNSO Council. As ICANN81 approaches, I would like to highlight a few GNSO initiatives that will be on the agenda for the meeting, as well as recent and ongoing work that may interest you. Additional information about GNSO projects can be found in the following sections of this document.

During ICANN81, the GNSO will hold multiple sessions for key policy development initiatives and other GNSO projects. The Transfer Policy Review Policy Development Process (PDP) Working Group was initiated by the GNSO Council in March 2021 to determine if changes to the policy are needed to improve the ease, security, and efficacy of inter-registrar and inter-registrant transfers. During ICANN81, the working group will hold one session to continue the process of reviewing public comments received on its second Initial Report as it prepares its Final Report.

The GNSO Internationalized Domain Names (IDN) Expedited Policy Development Process (EPDP) reached an important milestone and delivered its Phase 2 Final Report to the GNSO Council. The Team's Phase 2 work covers issues pertaining to second-level variant management. During ICANN81, the GNSO Council plans to vote on the EPDP Team's Phase 2 policy recommendations during its public meeting on Wednesday, 13 November.

The GNSO Council's Standing Committing on the Registration Data Request System (RDRS) will also meet at ICANN81. It plans to discuss the trends it has identified and system improvements that have been implemented over the last 11 months. This will be an open session, and the Standing Committee welcomes interested parties who would like to learn more about the RDRS.

During ICANN81, the GNSO Council will hold two working sessions on Sunday, 10 November, an informal and a public meeting on Wednesday, 13 November, and a wrap-up session on Thursday, 14 November. The GNSO Council will also hold bilateral meetings with the Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC) on Sunday, 10 November, and with the ICANN Board on Monday, 11 November.

ICANN81 will be a full meeting with ample opportunities to participate and learn about GNSO policy development. Whether you are attending in person in Istanbul, Türkiye, or via Zoom, I look forward to seeing you soon. I wish you all a productive meeting.

Greg DiBiase
GNSO Chair

ICANN81 at a Glance

The GNSO Policy Support Team has developed this briefing document to help community members prepare for ICANN81. It provides an overview of the status of the GNSO PDP working groups and teams, as well as information about other GNSO policy-related activities, including PDP Implementation Review Teams (IRTs). This document includes links for additional background reading to help you prepare for ICANN81. We hope it fosters active participation from all attendees.

Newcomers to ICANN and to the GNSO may be interested in additional online learning opportunities that will help them make the most of the upcoming meeting. We highly recommend taking the "Get to Know the GNSO" course on **ICANN Learn**. It will make it easier to navigate the structure and content of this Policy Briefing and provide you with a better understanding of PDPs. All are encouraged to enroll.

Please note that any reference to meeting times in this document is provisional. Please consult the ICANN meeting schedule for the latest information.

ICANN81 Meeting Information

Meeting Page, including registration and schedule

General Remote Participation Information

GNSO Session Remote Participation Details

Expected Standards of Behavior

ICANN Community Anti-Harassment Policy

GNSO-Related Information

Pre-ICANN81 GNSO Council Webinar

GNSO One-Stop Shop for ICANN Meetings
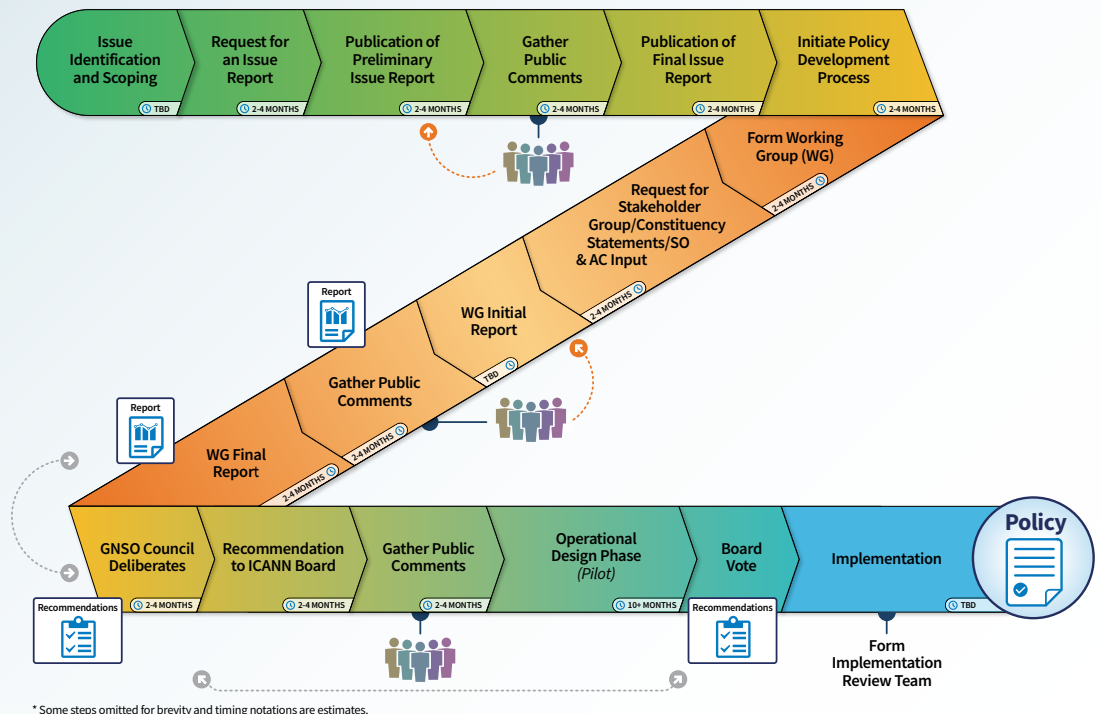
Project List

If you have any questions about, or suggestions for, this Policy Briefing or GNSO policy activities, please contact us at **policy-staff@ICANN.org**. We look forward to a productive meeting.

Policy Research and Stakeholder Programs Briefing
The ICANN organization's Policy Research and Stakeholder Programs (PRSP) team has a similar, publicly available, briefing. Its goal is to provide status updates and progress reports on the various community-facing projects that the PRSP team supports, all in preparation for ICANN81 meeting discussions. The pre-ICANN meeting briefings are a valuable resource for the community and help increase visibility and accountability for the multiple projects the PRSP team supports and leads. You can read the PRSP Pre-ICANN81 Briefing **here**.

GNSO Policy Development Process Infographic

The GNSO Policy Development Process (PDP) governs how the GNSO develops consensus policies related to generic top-level domains (gTLDs). As shown in the summarized graph below, a GNSO PDP lifecycle consists of different steps. They include issue identification and scoping, PDP initiation, working group, GNSO Council deliberation, ICANN Board vote, and policy implementation. Note: The Operational Design Phase (ODP) shown in the graphic does not apply to all PDPs. Some steps are omitted for brevity. Timing notations are estimates.

Issue Identification and Scoping	Request for an Issue Report	Publication of Preliminary Issue Report	Gather Public Comments	Publication of Final Issue Report	Initiate Policy Development Process
TBD	2-4 MONTHS	2-4 MONTHS	2-4 MONTHS	2-4 MONTHS	2-4 MONTHS

Form Working Group (WG) — 2-4 MONTHS

Request for Stakeholder Group/Constituency Statements/SO & AC Input — 2-4 MONTHS

WG Initial Report — TBD

Report

Gather Public Comments — 2-4 MONTHS

Report

WG Final Report — 2-4 MONTHS

GNSO Council Deliberates	Recommendation to ICANN Board	Gather Public Comments	Operational Design Phase (Pilot)	Board Vote	Implementation
2-4 MONTHS	2-4 MONTHS	2-4 MONTHS	10+ MONTHS	Recommendations	TBD

Recommendations

Policy

Form Implementation Review Team

* Some steps omitted for brevity and timing notations are estimates.

The respective steps reached by the PDP working groups are detailed in the following sections.

For more details about the steps in the PDPs, consult the information below:

- **ICANN Bylaws, Annex A**
- **Detailed Infographic of the GNSO PDP**
- **PDP Manual**

Policy Development Process: Transfer Policy Review

WHAT CAN I EXPECT AT ICANN81 RELATED TO THIS TOPIC?

The working group will conduct one working session at ICANN81. Please check the **ICANN81 meeting schedule** for the confirmed time. During the session, the working group will continue finalizing its preliminary recommendations for its Initial Report.
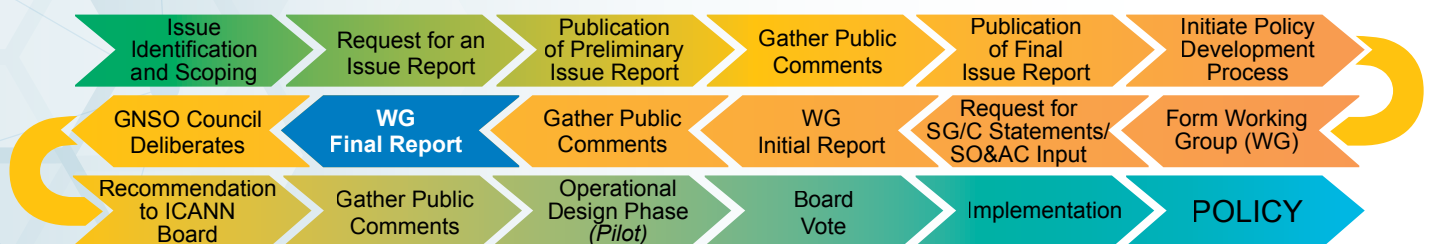
WHAT IS THIS ABOUT?

On 18 February 2021, the GNSO Council **initiated** a PDP to review the Transfer Policy. This PDP is tasked to determine if changes to the policy are needed to improve the ease, security, and efficacy of inter-registrar and inter-registrant transfers.

The working group began meeting in May 2021, and while it initially divided its work into three distinct groups/phases, the working group ultimately agreed that the topics within its charter needed to be considered together due to overlapping dependencies. Accordingly, the working group worked toward a comprehensive **Initial Report**, which it published on 21 June 2022. The Initial Report covers all topics in the working group's charter, including inter-registrar transfers, change of registrant, the Transfer Dispute Resolution Policy, ICANN-approved transfers, and others.

WHAT IS THE CURRENT STATUS OF THIS PROJECT?

The working group published an updated **Initial Report** on 1 August 2024, and the public comment forum closed on 30 September 2024. The working group is now reviewing the public comments received and working toward its Final Report.

Issue Identification and Scoping	Request for an Issue Report	Publication of Preliminary Issue Report	Gather Public Comments	Publication of Final Issue Report	Initiate Policy Development Process
GNSO Council Deliberates	**WG Final Report**	Gather Public Comments	WG Initial Report	Request for SG/C Statements/ SO&AC Input	Form Working Group (WG)
Recommendation to ICANN Board	Gather Public Comments	Operational Design Phase *(Pilot)*	Board Vote	Implementation	POLICY

WHAT ARE THE EXPECTED NEXT STEPS?
The working group is expected to review the public comments received on its second Initial Report and prepare its Final Report.

HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED?
Parties interested in the Transfer Policy Review PDP should coordinate with the members assigned by the respective Stakeholder Group, Constituency, Supporting Organization, or Advisory Committee and communicate any input they believe may be useful to the Transfer Policy Review PDP's deliberations. Interested parties can also follow the working group's progress by signing up as an observer.

MORE INFORMATION

- **PDP webpage**

- **PDP workspace**

RESPONSIBLE STAFF: Caitlin Tubergen, Julie Hedlund, Christian Wheeler, Feodora Hamza

Expedited Policy Development Process: Internationalized Domain Names

WHAT CAN I EXPECT AT ICANN81 RELATED TO THIS TOPIC?

The Expedited Policy Development Process (EPDP) on Internationalized Domain Names (IDNs) Team (hereafter "the EPDP Team") will not hold a working session at ICANN81 as it has completed its work. However, the GNSO Council will be considering the motion to adopt the Phase 2 Final Report during its November Council Meeting at ICANN81. Moreover, the Implementation Review Team (IRT) as a sub-track of the existing SubPro IRT, which is established to support the implementation of Phase 1 policy recommendations, will be holding a working session at ICANN81. Please check the **ICANN81 meeting schedule** for the confirmed time.

WHAT IS THIS ABOUT?

On 20 May 2021, the GNSO Council approved the **initiation request** for the launch of the EPDP on IDNs and adopted its **charter**. In November 2022, the GNSO Council approved the **project change request** from the EPDP Team to divide its work into two phases to best prepare for the Next Round of the new gTLDs and avoid any potential delays that may affect the implementation work; Phase 1 was to focus on topics related to top-level gTLD definition and variant management while Phase 2 on topics related to second-level variant management.

For Phase 1, the EPDP Team finalized sixty-nine (69) outputs [fifty-eight (58) final recommendations and eleven (11) implementation guidance] pertaining to gTLD definition and variant management. The GNSO Council approved the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report on 21 December 2023, including all sixty-nine (69) outputs, followed by the ICANN Board adopting fifty-six (56) of the fifty-eight (58) final recommendations by 7 September 2024.[1]

Phase 2 initial deliberations, including the identification of all charter questions that would impact the next Applicant Guidebook (AGB), were completed in December 2023 as a result of the dedicated face-to-face workshop in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The **Phase 2 Initial report** was published on 11 April 2024, shortening the Phase 2 timeline by 13 months. Following an extensive review of the eight (8) submissions from the Public Comment period, the EPDP Team put forward twenty (20) outputs, including fourteen (14) recommendations and six (6) implementation guidance.

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[1] On 8 June 2024, the ICANN Board took action to adopt 52 recommendations from the Phase 1 Final Report and identified 6 recommendations as pending. Four (4) of the pending recommendations were adopted on 7 September 2024, leaving two (2) pending recommendations as of the drafting of this Report. See the Board's approved resolutions here: https://www.icann.org/en/board-activities-and-meetings/materials/approved-resolutions-regular-meeting-of-the-icann-board-07-09-2024-en

WHAT IS THE CURRENT STATUS OF THIS PROJECT?

The EPDP-IDNs Team is in the Final Report phase of the EPDP. After completing the final outputs for Phase 2, the Team will submit the Final Report to the GNSO Council for its consideration.

WHAT ARE THE EXPECTED NEXT STEPS?

The Phase 2 Final Report will be submitted to the GNSO Council for its consideration of the final outputs. If the Final Report is approved by the GNSO Council, it will be forwarded to the ICANN Board of Directors for its consideration and potential action in accordance with the ICANN Bylaws.

HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED?

Since the EPDP Team has now completed its work, those interested in this topic are welcome to contribute input through the final Public Comment for Phase 2 organized by the ICANN Board. Other opportunities to participate in this topic will be through other Public Comment opportunities led by the IRT.

MORE INFORMATION

- **EPDP webpage**

- **EPDP workspace**

- **EPDP Phase 2 Initial Report Public Comment**

RESPONSIBLE STAFF: Steve Chan, Daniel Gluck, Saewon Lee
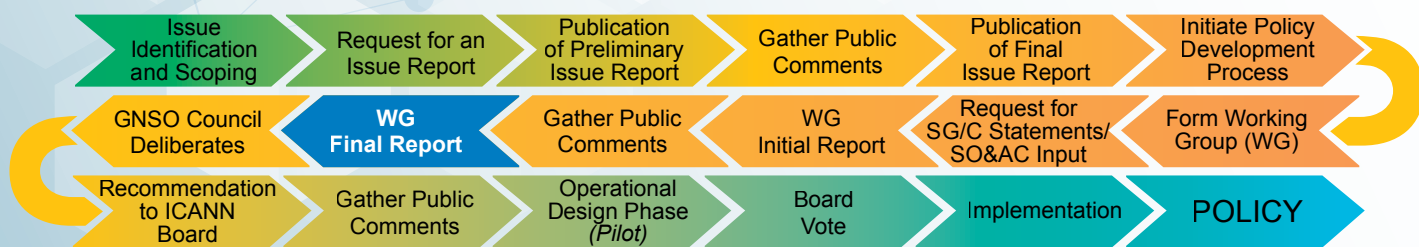
Expedited Policy Development Process: Temporary Specification for gTLD Registration Data - Phase 2 (SSAD)
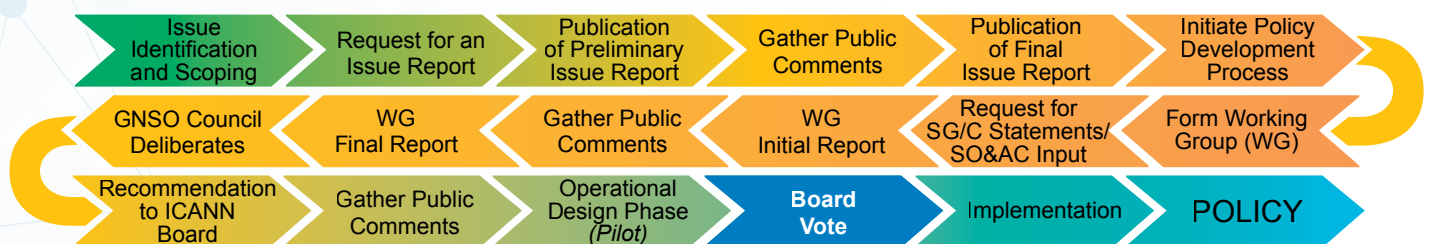
WHAT IS THIS ABOUT?

One of the main purposes of the RDRS is to collect data about system usage, which will inform future discussions between the GNSO Council and the ICANN Board on the pending Recommendations 1–18 of the **Final Report** of the GNSO **Expedited Policy Development Process on the Temporary Specification for gTLD Registration Data Phase 2**.

The RDRS was developed to provide insight into the estimated volume of requests a possible System for Standardized Access/Disclosure (SSAD) may receive. In addition, the RDRS may provide other information that helps determine the costs or benefits of the SSAD recommendations and whether the community may consider updates to the existing policy recommendations.

WHAT IS THE CURRENT STATUS OF THIS PROJECT?

The ICANN Board **directed** ICANN org in February 2023 to develop and launch the WHOIS Disclosure System (System), now called RDRS, as requested by the GNSO Council. In November 2023, the RDRS launched, and ICANN org began collecting and publishing the metrics associated with the System. In January 2024, ICANN released the **first RDRS metrics report** and in September 2024 presented the **latest RDRS metrics report**. The RDRS Standing Committee is responsible for reviewing the monthly metrics reports and has suggested RDRS system improvements, which ICANN org has implemented, where relevant and agreed upon.

Issue Identification and Scoping	Request for an Issue Report	Publication of Preliminary Issue Report	Gather Public Comments	Publication of Final Issue Report	Initiate Policy Development Process
GNSO Council Deliberates	WG Final Report	Gather Public Comments	WG Initial Report	Request for SG/C Statements/ SO&AC Input	Form Working Group (WG)
Recommendation to ICANN Board	Gather Public Comments	Operational Design Phase *(Pilot)*	Board Vote	Implementation	POLICY

WHAT ARE THE EXPECTED NEXT STEPS?

Further engagement and consultation are expected to continue between the Board, ICANN org, the GNSO Council, and the RDRS Standing Committee to collaborate on the review of the System. The GNSO Council has recommended that the RDRS run for a period of up to two (2) years, at which point, if not earlier, sufficient information should be available to determine on how to proceed with the SSAD recommendations. The ICANN81 meeting will mark 11 months since the launch of the RDRS pilot program. During the meeting, the Standing Committee plans to review the latest metrics and continue the strategic discussions on the observed trends.

HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED?

For more information on the SSAD ODP, please visit this **page**. For more information about the RDRS Standing Committee, please see its **workspace**.

MORE INFORMATION

- **EPDP Phase 2 webpage**
- **EPDP workspace**
- **EPDP Phase 2 small team workspace**
- **RDRS Standing Committee workspace**
- **SSAD ODP webpage**
- **RDRS Usage metrics reports**

RESPONSIBLE STAFF: Feodora Hamza, Caitlin Tubergen

Policy Development Process: New Generic Top-Level Domain Subsequent Procedures

WHAT IS THIS ABOUT?

This PDP working group sought to determine if any changes needed to be made to the existing policy recommendations from the 2007 **Final Report on the Introduction of New Generic Top-Level Domains**. (**Learn More**)

WHAT IS THE CURRENT STATUS OF THIS PROJECT?

On 16 March 2023, the ICANN Board passed a resolution on a set of recommendations calling for, among other things, "a working methodology and Implementation Review Team (IRT) work plan and timeline as agreed upon by ICANN org and the GNSO Council." See: **https://www.icann.org/en/board-activities-and-meetings/materials/approved-resolutions-regular-meeting-of-the-icann-board-16-03-2023-en**. In addition to the approved recommendations, the Board designated 38 outputs as "pending". The GNSO Council convened a small team which worked with the ICANN Board to resolve all pending recommendations. The small team focused on determining what modifications are needed, if any, for the recommendations that the Board did not **adopt**.

Issue Identification and Scoping → Request for an Issue Report → Publication of Preliminary Issue Report → Gather Public Comments → Publication of Final Issue Report → Initiate Policy Development Process

GNSO Council Deliberates → WG Final Report → Gather Public Comments → WG Initial Report → Request for SG/C Statements/SO&AC Input → Form Working Group (WG)

Recommendation to ICANN Board → Gather Public Comments → Operational Design Phase *(Pilot)* → Board Vote → Implementation → POLICY

For several of the non-adopted recommendations, the small team submitted proposed Supplemental Recommendations to the GNSO Council for consideration, whereby the Council **adopted** the recommendations, though it subsequently remanded Topic 24 to the small team for possible revision. On 19 September 2024, the GNSO Council **approved** the **Supplemental Recommendation for the non-adopted SubPro recommendations related to Topic 24**: String Similarity Evaluations set forth on Annex 1, for subsequent consideration by the ICANN Board.

ICANN org has established the IRT to support the implementation of all policy recommendations adopted by the ICANN Board for future rounds of new gTLD applications. See: **https://community.icann.org/x/pQM5Dg**. The IRT is meeting regularly and will hold sessions at ICANN81.

WHAT ARE THE EXPECTED NEXT STEPS?
The IRT began meeting regularly in May 2023 and strives to complete its implementation work to launch the program.

HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED?
The New gTLD Program Next Round IRT is open to all those interested, particularly current or former SubPro WG team members who participated in the team's deliberations and who keenly understand the Final Report's policy recommendations and accompanying rationale. To join the IRT as a participant or observer, please complete this **form**. If you are unable to access it, please send an email to **nextround_policyimplementation@icann.org**.

MORE INFORMATION
- **PDP webpage**
- **PDP workspace**
- **ODP webpage**

RESPONSIBLE STAFF: Steve Chan, Julie Hedlund
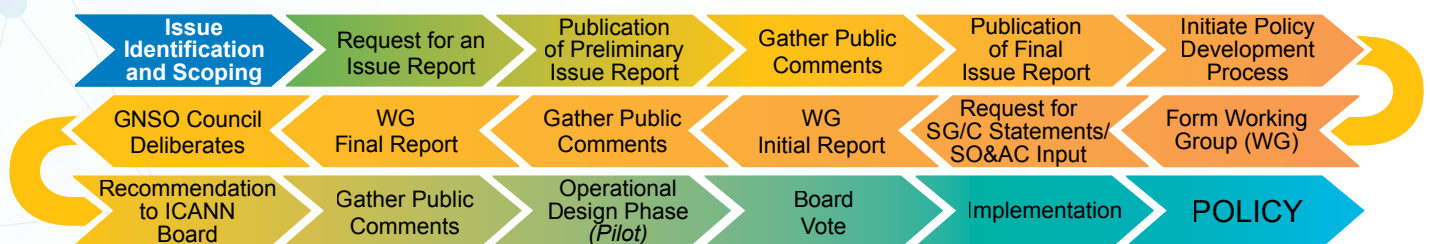
Registration Data Accuracy Scoping Team

WHAT IS THIS ABOUT?

The GNSO Council adopted the **formation of and instructions** to the Accuracy Scoping Team during its 22 July 2021 meeting. The scoping team was tasked to consider the current enforcement and reporting of registration data accuracy. In addition, the scoping team was asked to consider how to measure accuracy. These considerations are expected to help inform its deliberations and the development of recommendations to the GNSO Council on whether changes are recommended to improve accuracy levels, and if so, how and by whom these changes would need to be developed.

WHAT IS THE CURRENT STATUS OF THIS PROJECT?

The scoping team's activities are currently paused. However, the GNSO Council is currently discussing the topic of accuracy and the best way forward, including the questions of when the scoping team should be reconvened, if at all. The scoping team started deliberations in October 2021. Following a review of proposals that may assist in the measurement of accuracy, the team submitted a **write-up** regarding enforcement and reporting and measurement of accuracy to the GNSO Council in September 2022. During its November 2022 meeting, the GNSO Council decided to adopt recommendation Number 3 of the write-up. It suggested, among other points, pausing the scoping team's proposals which require access to gTLD registration data.

The GNSO Council encouraged ICANN org to proceed with outreach to the European Data Protection Board (EDPB) and to proceed with a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA), which is described in detail below. In an attempt to advance the community's efforts, the ICANN Board requested ICANN org to prepare specific scenarios for which it would consult with the EDPB concerning the legality of the proposed data processing under the General Data Protection Regulation.

Issue Identification and Scoping	Request for an Issue Report	Publication of Preliminary Issue Report	Gather Public Comments	Publication of Final Issue Report	Initiate Policy Development Process
GNSO Council Deliberates	WG Final Report	Gather Public Comments	WG Initial Report	Request for SG/C Statements/ SO&AC Input	Form Working Group (WG)
Recommendation to ICANN Board	Gather Public Comments	Operational Design Phase *(Pilot)*	Board Vote	Implementation	POLICY

ICANN initially proposed four scenarios to determine whether it could produce useful material for the Accuracy Scoping Team, taking into account current contractual requirements and applicable laws.

ICANN conducted a comprehensive assessment of the four scenarios, as well as DPIAs on scenarios two and four, and identified several deficiencies and challenges in pursuing them, which the GNSO Council discussed during its November 2023 meeting.

In recognition of the current challenges in pursuing the scenarios, councilors noted that: barring (i) completion of the Data Processing Agreement, (ii) implementation of the Network and Information Security 2 directive, or (iii) publication of the Inferential Analysis of Maliciously Registered Domains Study, the GNSO Council decided to defer consideration for another six months during its February 2024 meeting.

WHAT ARE THE EXPECTED NEXT STEPS?
Following further feedback from ICANN org and contracted parties, or after six months (by February 2025), the GNSO Council will discuss how to proceed. This will include a review of the scoping team's formation and instructions, based on the feedback gathered by GNSO Council leadership. The GNSO Council agreed to further discuss the topic of accuracy during ICANN81.

MORE INFORMATION
- **Scoping Team instructions**
- **Scoping Team workspace**
- **Assessment of Registration Data Accuracy Scenarios**

RESPONSIBLE STAFF: Caitlin Tubergen, Feodora Hamza

GNSO Schedule for ICANN81

Please confirm against the **final schedule** as changes may occur. For remote participation details, please consult this **wiki page**, created by the GNSO Support Team. Live audio streaming, recording, and transcripts will become available after the meetings. Unless specified with the symbol [C], sessions published in this table are open to all. At the time of publishing, virtual meeting rooms have not yet been finalized. Please see the final schedule for further information.

DATE	MEETING
Saturday, 09 November 2024	Non-Commercial Stakeholder Group (NCSG) Policy Committee Work Session
	Contracted Party House (CPH) CP Summit Planning Team Work Session [C]
	Intellectual Property Constituency (IPC) Membership Work Session [C]
	CPH Board Seat 13 Candidate Forum [C]
	Transfer Policy Review (TPR) Policy Development Process (PDP) Working Group
	CPH ExComs Work Session [C]
	Not-for-Profit Operational Concerns Constituency (NPOC) Membership Work Session
Sunday, 10 November 2024	GNSO Council Working Session (2 Sessions)
	CPH TechOps Working Session (2 Sessions, one is closed)
	DNS Abuse Mitigation and Human Rights Impact Assessment
	Commercial Stakeholder Group (CSG) Membership Work Session
	CPH Registration Data Policy Implementation Discussion [C]
	Joint Session: GAC and GNSO Council
	NCSG Membership Work Session
	Joint Session: GNSO CPH and CSG Work Session

DATE	MEETING
Monday, 11 November 2024	Registries Stakeholder Group (RySG) Business Landscape for TLDs in the Next Round Work Session
	SubPro IRT IDN Sub-Track Work Session
	Joint Session GNSO: RrSG & ICANN Compliance Meeting [C]
	Joint Session: ICANN Board and CSG
	Joint ICANN Board and GNSO Council
	RySG GeoTLD Group Membership Working Session
	Joint Session: GNSO Registrars & ICANN: Perspectives on Registration Data Accuracy
	RySG BRG Membership Working Session
Tuesday, 12 November 2024	CPH Membership Work Session
	Joint Session: ICANN Board and NCSG
	Non-Commercial Users Constituency (NCUC) Issue Forum Work Session
	Business Constituency (BC) Membership Work Session
	Internet Service Providers and Connectivity Providers (ISPCP) Membership Work Session
	IPC Membership Work Session
	Joint Session: ICANN Board and CPH
	Non-Contracted Party House (NCPH) Work Session
	Registrars Stakeholder Group (RrSG) Work Session (3 Sessions)
	RySG Work Session (3 Sessions)
	NCUC Membership Work Session

DATE	MEETING
Wednesday, 13 November 2024	GNSO Council Informal Session [C]
	CPH ExComs Luncheon with Select Board Members [C]
	GNSO Council Public Meeting (Part 1 of 2)
	RySG Public Comments workshop [C]
	GNSO Council Public Meeting (Part 2 of 2 - Admin Meeting)
	Registration Data Request Service (RDRS) Standing Committee Work Session
Thursday, 14 November 2024	RySG Wrap-Up Work Session
	GNSO Council Wrap-Up Work Session
	CPH Domain Name System (DNS) Abuse Community Update

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