ICANN | GNSO
Generic Names Supporting Organization

Preliminary Issue Report on a Policy Development Process for Latin Script Diacritics

Status of This Document

This Preliminary Issue Report has been drafted by ICANN Policy Support Staff and shall be published for Public Comment. Staff will review all comments and, based on the feedback, make any necessary amendments in order to forward the Final Issue Report to the GNSO Council for its consideration.

Preamble

On 16 May 2024, the GNSO Council passed a motion, requesting ICANN's Policy Support Staff to draft a Preliminary Issue Report on Latin Script Diacritics. The objective of this Preliminary Issue Report is for Staff to assess all relevant issues related to the GNSO Council request and, following Community Input during the Public Comment phase, to recommend a course of action to the GNSO Council. It remains the GNSO Council's prerogative to either follow Staff recommendations or to pursue alternative action.

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1 Executive Summary

1.1 Discussion of the issue

This Preliminary Issue Report is focused on the circumstance when an ASCII gTLD and the Latin script diacritic version of the gTLD are not variants of each other AND may be found to be visually similar to each other. The issue is theoretically possible for any existing ASCII or Latin script IDN gTLD pairs, and is essentially infinite for future applied-for ASCII or Latin script IDN gTLDs, where diacritics are involved. On 16 May 2024, the GNSO Council requested an Issue Report on this topic which once received, will aid in determining next steps (e.g., initiating a PDP).

Preceding the GNSO Council's request for an Issue Report, the Council was briefed on the topic of Latin script diacritics. The Council welcomed analysis from ICANN org and the identification of potential mechanisms, that may be more efficient than requesting an Issue Report and completing a PDP, in order to allow for the potential simultaneous allocation of both the ASCII and Latin script diacritic versions of gTLDs. ICANN org proposed a solution that would leverage non-adopted recommendations related to string similarity since in essence, a solution for this issue is likely an exception process for visually similar strings. However, the Council was not comfortable with this solution and instead requested an Issue Report, which must include details on why code points with and without diacritics are distinct letters, and therefore not the "same" letter (i.e., are not variants); the Council was particularly interested in the outcome regarding variants, as the variant management rules coming from Phase 1 of the Expedited Policy Development Process on Internationalized Domain Names provide an avenue for "similar" strings to be simultaneously delegated to the same Registry Operator.

1.2 Staff recommendation

ICANN staff has confirmed that the proposed issue is within the scope of the GNSO's Policy Development Process (see Annex G-2 of the ICANN Bylaws).

In addition, the issue is broadly applicable to multiple organizations and will have lasting value of applicability.

1.3 Next steps

In accordance with the GNSO PDP rules, the Staff Manager will publish the Preliminary Issue Report for public comment in order to allow for Community input on additional

information, or the correction or updating of any information provided so far. Following review of the public comments, the Staff Manager will update the Preliminary Issue Report and submit a summary of the comments received together with the Final Issue Report to the GNSO Council for its consideration and potential action.

2 Procedural Foundation

2.1 Grounds for submission

This Preliminary Issue Report is submitted in accordance with Step 2 of the Policy Development Process described in Annex A of the ICANN Bylaws.[1]

2.2 The identity of the party submitting the request

The GNSO Council

2.3 Support for the issue to initiate a PDP

On 16 May 2024, the GNSO Council passed a resolution: "The GNSO Council adopts the request for an Issue Report and directs staff to create the Report."[2]

2.4 How that party is affected by the issue

The issue of diacritics in the Latin script has direct impact on the business operations of Registries and Registrars and provides added value to Registrants because they may be interested in pursuing a second-level domain in both the ASCII and Latin diacritic version of the gTLD. Therefore, Latin script diacritics affects most of the GNSO's Stakeholder Groups (SGs) and Constituencies (Cs). Recommendations that may be developed as a result of a GNSO PDP on Latin script diacritics may also be of interest to other ICANN Supporting Organizations (SOs) and Advisory Committees (ACs) because some ASCII and Latin diacritic gTLD pairs may be geographically relevant and important to end-users.

2.5 Issue under consideration

If a registry operator wishes to operate both the ASCII gTLD and the Latin diacritic version of the gTLD ASCII, but the strings are found to be visually confusingly similar, there is currently no mechanism to allow them to proceed forward. In respect of an existing gTLD, the applied-for label would be ineligible to proceed. For two new applied-for labels, they would be placed in a string contention set.

Another potential path that may have allowed for the ASCII gTLD and Latin diacritic version to coexist was via the two labels being considered as variant labels of each

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[1] See: http://www.icann.org/general/bylaws.htm#AnnexA.

[2] See resolution here: https://gnso.icann.org/en/council/resolutions/2020-current#202405

other. However, in the vast majority of cases, the Latin script rules incorporated into the Root Zone LGR (RZ-LGR) have determined that the ASCII and Latin diacritic versions of a label will not be calculated as variant labels of each other.

Therefore the issue, or circumstance under consideration in this Preliminary Issue Report is when an ASCII gTLD and the Latin diacritic version are not variants of each other AND may be found to be visually similar to each other. The issue is theoretically possible for any existing ASCII or Latin IDN gTLD (where diacritics apply) and is essentially infinite for future applied-for ASCII or Latin IDN gTLDs (where diacritics apply).

2.6 Legal scope to launch Policy Development Process

Based on the documentation above, the launch of a dedicated policy development process (PDP) to consider, at a minimum, the issues identified in this Preliminary Issue Report has been confirmed by ICANN's General Counsel to be properly within the scope of the GNSO as well as the ICANN Policy Development Process.

3 Discussion of Issues

3.1 Overview of Issues

This Section provides an overview of all relevant issues related to the GNSO Council request for this Preliminary Issue Report. In addition, it provides references to relevant documentation, ongoing and completed work efforts, and other applicable information.

3.1.1 Basic Explanation of Diacritics in the Latin Script

An important starting point is understanding what a Latin script diacritic means, or represents. Diacritics are modifiers surrounding basic letter shapes, generally recognized as distinct graphic elements to form new letters. The main use of diacritics in the Latin script is to change the sound-values of the letters to which they are added. Some examples of diacritics in the Latin script can be seen below:

Danish	æ	å	ø											
French	à	â	æ	ç	é	è	ê	ë	î	ï	ô	ù	û	ü	ÿ
German	ä	ö	ü											
Latvian	ā	č	ē	ģ	ī	ķ	ļ	ņ	š	ū	ž			
Spanish	á	é	í	ñ	ó	ú	ü							
Swedish	å	ä	ö											
Turkish	ç	ğ	ı	ö	ş	ü̠								
Vietnamese	ă	â	đ	ê	ô	ơ	ư	à	á	å	ã	ạ		

In certain contexts, it can be a common practice to omit diacritics by making the skeleton form of a word understandable or workable. This practice is particularly common in the context of the Domain Name System (DNS), which is limited to the use of ASCII characters. While the DNS does support Internationalized Domain Names (IDNs), including the usage of Latin alphabet-based characters with diacritics, IDNs are stored in the Domain Name System (DNS) as ASCII strings, relying upon Punycode transcription. As such, some users may instead elect to omit the diacritic marks instead of relying on an IDN domain name. Some examples of this practice are shared below.

Language	With Diacritics	With Diacritics Omitted
French	.déjà	.deja
Spanish	.mañana	.manana
Portuguese	.violão	.violao

However, diacritic omission does not necessarily mean the ASCII base is equivalent to the original version of the word in its respective language. Native speakers would not write the word without diacritics and the ASCII base is not considered as correct in a given language. The ASCII base, not being equivalent, should perhaps be considered as a workaround, especially in the context of the DNS.

3.1.2 Background on the Work of the Latin Generation Panel

Another foundational part of this Preliminary Issue Report is the work of the Latin Generation Panel. Their work is important to consider because variants represent a path for a single registry operator to manage two or more "similar" gTLDs.

Variant code points are defined as those which are considered the "same" by the relevant script community. These determinations can be motivated for multiple reasons, including semantics in some scripts as well as cases where the the codes are very obviously visually the same, as per details in the RZ-LGR Procedure document (see page 8). In specifically examining the work of the Latin Generation Panel, the panel identified multiple kinds of variant code points for the Latin script, explained in their supporting document (Section 6; pg. 37), including visually motivated variant code points and non-visual variant code points.

Code points with and without diacritics were determined to be visually distinct by the Latin Generation Panel. In Section 6.1.6 (see page 41) the Latin GP notes that "Diacritics are modifiers surrounding basic letter shapes. In some cases, diacritics are considered part and parcel of a letter shape, such as the dot on top of i. However, they are generally recognized as distinct graphic elements of the script employed to form new letters, such as é based on e featuring an acute accent on top. The majority of derived letters of Latin script were developed using this strategy."

The Latin Generation Panel determined that code points with and without diacritics are distinct letters, and therefore not the "same" letter. By way of example, the base letter (e.g., e) is not considered a variant code point of the letters with diacritic (e.g., é). While this is the overriding outcome from the Latin Generation Panel, there are a few exceptions to this rule, where some base letters are identified as variant code points of letters with diacritics due to transitivity with cross-script variants (e.g. from Greek script). In addition, the Latin Generation Panel did determine that some letters with diacritics are variants of other letters with diacritics, based on either non-visual reasons or because they are found indistinguishable by some panel members.

For example, Latin Small Letter G with Breve (011F) and Latin Small Letter G with Caron (01E7): ǧ and ğ.

The Latin Generation Panel's work has determined that there are very few allocatable variants in the Latin script.

3.1.3 Consideration of gTLD String Similarity Review Related Policy Recommendations

Recommendation 2 from the Final Report Introduction of New Generic Top-Level Domains states that "Strings must not be confusingly similar to an existing top-level domain or a Reserved Name." The New gTLD Subsequent Procedures (SubPro) Final Report affirmed this recommendation via Affirmation 24.1. In addition, the working group put forward Affirmation 24.2, which affirmed the visual standard for determining when two or more strings are, "so similar that they create a probability of user confusion if more than one of the strings is delegated into the root zone."

The SubPro affirmations of the standard for visual similarity does not definitively determine whether gTLDs applied for as an ASCII string and also as a Latin script diacritic would be found to be visually similar, but there is a non-negligible likelihood of this outcome. If the ASCII/diacritic strings are found to be visually similar:

- If one of the strings is an existing gTLD, the applied-for string would not be able to proceed.
- If both of the strings are applied-for strings, they would be placed into a string contention set with each other.

In either case, the ASCII/diacritic strings would not be able to both be contracted and delegated. The SubPro Final Report did not foresee any exceptions to this outcome.

3.1.4 Problem Statement and Potential Scope

As described in Section 3.1.2, with some exceptions, the Latin generation panel generally determined that ASCII letters and diacritics are not variants of each other. And as described in Section 3.1.3, there is a non-negligible chance that gTLDs submitted in ASCII and as a Latin script diacritic will be found to be visually confusingly similar, with no existing mechanism to allow for both to be contracted and delegated.

Applicants in the past have understood this dynamic, at least in respect of the possible outcomes of the string similarity evaluation, and have had to make a decision on whether the gTLD in ASCII or as the Latin script diacritic is preferable. In both cases, the applicant may need to make concessions. As noted in Section 3.1.1, the ASCII version of a diacritic-based string is a workaround, since the strings are not considered equivalent by the DNS, nor by native speakers. By instead electing to pursue the diacritic-based string, the potential registry operator will need to manage known universal acceptance challenges. The registry operator may prefer to manage both the gTLD in ASCII and as a Latin script diacritic, but there is currently no exception procedure that will allow this outcome when 1) the two strings are NOT variants, which is

overwhelmingly the case in the Latin script and 2) the two strings are found to be visually confusing similar.

The underlying rationale for the string similarity evaluation is to minimize the opportunity for user confusion that may arise from delegating two visually confusing gTLDs. Accordingly, care should be taken to balance potential solutions to the problem against the possibility of undermining the goal of minimizing user confusion.

Potential scope of issue

The Latin script is a major writing system in the world and the most widely used in terms of the number of languages and speakers. About 70% of the world's literate population use the Latin script and 1,189 languages use the Latin script. 212 languages are considered in the Latin Script Proposal integrated in the Root-Zone Label Generation Rules (RZ-LGR). Latin script is related to Armenian, Cyrillic, and Greek scripts (all derived from Greek). The potential for ASCII/diacritic pairs is therefore massive and it might be important to consider limitations to the scope of any potential exception procedure; to not do so may undermine the goal of minimizing user confusion mentioned above.

Considerations to manage scope

There is an example of an existing gTLD where the Registry Operator currently manages the ASCII string (QUEBEC), and has made clear their interest in also managing the Latin script diacritic version (.QUÉBEC). In this instance, .QUEBEC was applied for in 2012 and is operated as a Community and Geographic name gTLD. This is not to presume that these are the proper limiters (e.g., application types), but because of the magnitude of the Latin script, there may be a need to limit the instances where the ASCII and diacritic version can both be delegated.

Some potential considerations to limit the instances of ASCII/diacritic versions:

- Limit to same entity operating the ASCII/diacritic versions?
- Limit to applied-for IDN strings of existing ASCII gTLDs, where the existing ASCII gTLD is a "workaround" for the proper IDN string? And/or vice versa, limit to applied-for ASCII strings that act as a "workaround" for the existing IDN gTLDs?
  - If so, "workaround" would need to be defined: for instance, other than for the absence or inclusion of diacritic marks, the strings are otherwise identical (e.g., déjà and deja).
    - This may mean that only fully-decorated and fully-ASCII versions are in scope and that the solution would be limited to a maximum of two strings.
  - This would exclude linguistic characteristics like singular/plurals (e.g., resume/resumes & résumé/résumés) and alternative spellings (e.g., colour & color).
- Include new gTLD applications in the future (e.g., a single applicant seeking to operate both the ASCII/diacritic versions), but consider whether additional limitations are needed. For instance, perhaps only certain application types (e.g., Community, Geographic Names, .BRAND, etc.) could be allowed.

3.1.5 Consideration of applicability of EPDP-IDNs (both Phases 1 & 2) policy recommendations

The ASCII/Latin diacritics pairs discussed in this issue report are by definition, not variants; if they were variants, an avenue will exist for a single registry operator to apply for and manage both gTLDs via the consensus recommendations coming from the Expedited Policy Development Process (EPDP) on Internationalized Domain Names (IDNs) Phase 1 Final Report (i.e., recommendations in respect of the top-level). Variants, as determined by the RZ-LGR, are considered to be the "same". In contrast, some consider ASCII/Latin pairs to be equivalents to some degree, but the ASCII string is a workaround, while the Latin diacritic is the string that a native speaker would recognize as accurate. In other words, because ASCII/Latin diacritic pairs are by definition not variants, the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 recommendations may not be applicable at all. In the middle of the spectrum is the scenario where the EPDP-IDNs Phase recommendations may serve as inspiration for ASCII/Latin diacritic pairs. If a PDP is initiated, the working group would be responsible for making this determination.

The remit of Phase 2 of the EPDP-IDNs Phase 2 is in respect of second-level variants, and the Final Report is anticipated to be delivered to the GNSO Council in October 2024. Assuming GNSO Council and ICANN Board adoption of any consensus recommendations, the implementation method of these recommendations may impact consideration of the applicability to ASCII/Latin diacritic pairs. For instance, if the recommendations are implemented as Consensus Policies, they must apply equally to all registry operators, including those for ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLDs. Here again, if a PDP is initiated, the working group would be responsible for making this determination.

3.1.6 Consideration of applicability of ccTLD solution in the gTLD space

A potentially similar situation has already been considered in the context of IDN ccTLDs. EURid, the registry manager of the already delegated ccTLD .eu, requested to manage ".ευ", the Greek variation of .eu. Similar to the circumstances being considered in this issue report, "ευ" and "eu" were not considered as allocatable variant labels for each other and may be determined to be confusingly similar. If ".ευ" is unable to pass the DNS Stability Evaluation in the IDN ccTLD Fast Track Process, there would have been no path to delegate the ccTLD.

To enable the eventual delegation of ".ευ", an exception procedure was developed to handle the potential consequence of string similarity review. Excerpts of this procedure are included below:

- *In the event that the DNS Stability Panel or the EPSRP determines a requested IDN ccTLD string is confusingly similar to an existing two-letter ASCII ccTLD corresponding to the same country or territory as the requesting country or territory entity, the DNS Stability Panel or the EPSRP shall document this in its report to ICANN.*
- *If, at the time of the request or within two months after receiving the notification of the findings of the DNS Stability Panel, the requester, and, if considered necessary by ICANN,*

the relevant public authority, provide(s) a clarification that documents and demonstrates to ICANN that:

- o *The intended manager for the requested IDN ccTLD and the manager for the existing two-letter ASCII ccTLD are one and the same entity; and*
- o *The intended manager shall request the delegation for the IDN ccTLD string if validated; and*
- o *The IDN ccTLD and ccTLD shall remain to be managed by one and the same entity, and*
- o *The intended manager shall agree to specific and pre-arranged conditions with the goal to mitigate the risk of user confusion as of the moment the IDN ccTLD becomes operational, then the requested string is deemed to have passed the DNS Stability Panel evaluation.*

To summarize, a requested IDN ccTLD string that is confusingly similar to an existing ASCII ccTLD can be delegated if:

- it corresponds to the same country or territory of the ASCII ccTLD; and
- the same registry operator of the ASCII ccTLD applies for such a string and will manage it; and
- there is plan put in place to mitigate the risk of user confusion

With the help of this exception procedure, .ευ completed the Fast Track Process and EURid launched this IDN ccTLD in November 2019. Registrants under .ευ are required to create a domain name in full Greek script at the top- and second-levels. Additional rules, such as homoglyph bundling rules, are put in place to mitigate potential security / stability risks due to confusing similarity with domain names under the .eu in Latin script.

Furthermore, ccPDP4, the ccNSO's policy development process focusing on IDNs, has developed policy recommendations that will replace the Fast Track Process. In its [Final Report](#), the ccPDP4 working group affirmed the continuation of the exception procedure with modifications / enhancement in order to allow for the eventual delegation of a requested IDN ccTLD string that is confusingly similar to another ccTLD string (ASCII or IDN; existing or requested) but is not deemed as its variant label according to the RZ-LGR. The ccNSO Council adopted the recommended policies in March 2024.

If a PDP is initiated, the working group may determine that features of the ccTLD solution can serve as input to a solution for gTLDs. The ccTLD solution includes some elements that are seemingly specific to ccTLDs, which may not be applicable to gTLDs. In addition, as referenced in section 3.1.5, some of the findings from the EPDP-IDNs may make sense for ASCII/Latin diacritic pairs. For instance, the variant management recommendations from the Phase 1 Final Report may serve as a better model than the case by case model contained in the ccTLD solution.

3.1.7 Relevant Documentation and Reports

- ■ [Discussion Paper About ".québec" Challenges](#)

- ■ [Presentation](#) on Diacritics Issues in Latin Script

- ■ [Proposal for Latin Script Root Zone Label Generation Rules](#)

- [IDN ccTLD Fast Track Process](#)
- [Final Report](#) ccNSO PDP4 (de-)selection of IDNccTLDs

3.2 Potential issues to be considered in a PDP on Latin Script Diacritics

3.2.1 Issues to be considered

A potential PDP would only consider a single issue: In circumstances where a base ASCII gTLD and the Latin script diacritic version of the gTLD are NOT variants of each other, what mechanism is needed in order to allow a single registry operator to simultaneously operate both gTLDs? A presumption for this issue is that the ASCII and Latin script diacritic have a non-negligible chance to be determined to be visually confusingly similar.

3.2.2 Possible Impact on Human Rights

Consideration of this issue may impact human rights (e.g., enhance freedom of expression). For further information about ICANN and the ICANN Community's work on human rights, please see https://community.icann.org/x/RAPCCw. The groups that may be impacted are the relevant applicant/registry operator and the targeted registrant base, with a low expected severity of impact.

3.2.3 Objectives of a possible PDP

A potential Latin Script Diacritics Policy Development Process would, at a minimum, deal with identifying the solution to allow a base ASCII gTLD and the Latin script diacritic version of the gTLD to be simultaneously delegated.

The outcomes of a potential Diacritics in the Latin Script PDP Working Group may include:

- The limited circumstances in which a base ASCII gTLD and the Latin script diacritic version of the gTLD can be simultaneously delegated.
- The rules governing instances where the ASCII/Latin script diacritic are simultaneously delegated.

3.2.4 Questions and issues to be analyzed in a possible PDP

- Under what circumstances should a base ASCII gTLD and the Latin script diacritic version of the gTLD be simultaneously delegated, if any?
  - ☐ If such circumstances exist, what measures should be put into place in order to mitigate the potential for end-user confusion?

- ■ If a solution is needed to this issue, are any of the elements of the ccTLD solution transferable?

- ■ If a solution is needed to this issue, are any of the elements from either Phase 1 or Phase 2 of the EPDP on IDNs relevant, or warrant discussion specific to Latin script diacritics?

3.2.5 Other factors relevant to the decision whether to initiate a PDP

None identified.

4 Staff Recommendation

General Council recommendation

4.1 Scope considerations

ICANN's General Counsel's office determined that the issue of Latin script diacritics is within the scope of the ICANN policy process and the scope of the GNSO. In reaching that determination, the General Counsel's office and ICANN Policy Support Staff have considered the factors in the following sections:

4.1.1 Whether the issue is within the scope of ICANN's mission statement

ICANN's mission is to ensure the stable and secure operation of the Internet's unique identifier systems, and this includes "facilitat[ing] the coordination of the operation and evolution of the DNS root name server system" and "coordinat[ing] the development and implementation of policies for which uniform or coordinated resolution is reasonably necessary to facilitate the openness, interoperability, resilience, security and/or stability of the DNS." The review of Latin script diacritics falls within the coordination function stated in ICANN's mission statement because it would potentially develop a mechanism to allow a single registry operator to simultaneously operate a base ASCII gTLD and the Latin script diacritic version of the gTLD, in the context of the New gTLD Program.

4.1.2 Whether the issue is broadly applicable to multiple situations or organizations

Latin script diacritics affect Registries, as well as other stakeholders such as registrants, businesses, and end-users. Allowing for the operation of both the ASCII and Latin script diacritic versions of a gTLD helps mitigate the limitations that may exist from operating just one or the other version of the gTLD. The registry operator as well as potential registrants and end-users that may wish to register in the gTLDs, especially in their native language, provides more digital inclusion and access for communities.

Other ICANN Supporting Organizations and Advisory Committees will also likely be interested in the issue and the outcomes of a PDP, given the potential impact of these policies and processes on Internet users and the general public.

4.1.3 Whether the issue is likely to have lasting value of applicability

With the current status of the Latin RZ-LGR, there are minimal variants identified. Unless that changes, the opportunity for future ASCII and Latin script diacritic pairs that are NOT variants will persist. Allowing for this issue to be resolved may better allow future registry operators, registrants, and end-users to utilize the internet in their native language.

Future review of potential policy recommendations may be necessary as the allowance for delegation of both the ASCII and Latin script diacritic gTLDs can be seen as an exception to variant TLD policies and string similarity evaluation, both of which exist in part to minimize end-user confusion.

4.1.4 Whether the issue implicates or affects ICANN Consensus Policy

The review of Latin script diacritics does not appear to create new or impact existing ICANN Consensus Policy, though any policy recommendations will impact the New gTLD Program.

4.2 Policy Support Staff recommendations

ICANN Staff confirms that the issue of Latin script diacritics is within the scope of the GNSO's Policy Development Process as outlined in the ICANN Bylaws. The issue is one in which, "uniform or coordinated resolution is reasonably necessary to facilitate interoperability, security and/or stability of the Internet or DNS."

5 Next Steps

In accordance with the GNSO PDP rules, Staff will publish the Preliminary Issue Report for public comment in order to allow for Community input on additional information, or the correction or updating of any information provided so far. Following review of the public comments, Staff will update the Preliminary Issue Report and submit a summary of the comments received together with the Final Issue Report to be forwarded to the GNSO Council for its consideration. The GNSO Council will then vote on the staff recommendations, as to whether or not to go ahead and initiate a PDP on Latin script diacritics and, if so, whether or not to adopt or amend (e.g. by forming a Drafting Team to review) the Charter appended to the Final Issue Report – a draft version of which can be found in Annex A of this Preliminary Issue Report. It should be noted that the GNSO Council is not bound by Staff recommendations, and, if it chooses to do so, may pursue alternative actions to those proposed in this Preliminary or indeed the Final Issue Report.

6 Annex A Preliminary Charter

ICANN|GNSO
Generic Names Supporting Organization

WG Name:	TBD	
Section I: Working Group Identification		
Chartering Organization(s):	Generic Names Supporting Organization (GNSO) Council	
Charter Approval Date:	<Enter Approval Date>	
Name of WG Leadership:	<Enter Elected WG Leadership)>	
Name(s) of Appointed Liaison(s):	<Enter Liaison>	
WG Workspace URL:	<Enter Active Project URL from GNSO Site>	
WG Mailing List:	<Enter Mailman archive link>	
GNSO Council Resolution:	**Title:**	<Enter Resolution Title>
	Ref # & Link:	<Enter Resolution link>
Important Document Links:	**Procedural Documents:** • Annex A-1: GNSO Expedited Policy Development Process • Expedited GNSO Policy Development Process Manual • GNSO Working Group Guidelines **Non Exhaustive List of Substantive Documents:** • Discussion Paper About ".québec" Challenges • Presentation on Diacritics Issues in Latin Script • Proposal for Latin Script Root Zone Label Generation Rules • Final Issue Report on Latin Script Diacritics • IDN ccTLD Fast Track Process Final Report ccNSO PDP4 (de-)selection of IDNccTLDs	
Section II: Mission, Purpose, and Deliverables		
Mission & Scope:		

Background

The Preliminary Issue Report was focused on the circumstance when an ASCII gTLD and the Latin script diacritic version of the gTLD are not variants of each other AND may be found to be visually similar to each other. The issue is theoretically possible for any existing ASCII or Latin script IDN gTLD and is essentially infinite for future applied-for ASCII or Latin script IDN gTLDs, where diacritics are involved. On 16 May 2024, the GNSO Council requested an Issue Report on this topic which once received, aided in determining next steps (e.g., initiating a PDP).

Preceding the GNSO Council's request for an Issue Report, the Council was briefed on the topic of Latin script diacritics. The Council welcomed analysis from ICANN org and the identification of potential mechanisms, that may be more efficient than requesting an Issue Report and completing a PDP, in order to allow for the potential simultaneous allocation of both the ASCII and Latin script diacritic versions of gTLDs. ICANN org proposed a solution that would leverage non-adopted recommendations related to string similarity since in essence, a solution for this issue is likely an exception process for visually similar strings. However, the Council was not comfortable with this solution and instead requested an Issue Report, which must include details on why code points with and without diacritics are distinct letters, and therefore not the "same" letter (i.e., are not variants); the Council was particularly interested in the outcome regarding variants, as the variant management rules coming from Phase 1 of the Expedited Policy Development Process on Internationalized Domain Names provide an avenue for "similar" strings to be simultaneously delegated.

This objective of this PDP Working Group is to determine: The limited circumstances in which a base ASCII gTLD and the Latin script diacritic version of the gTLD can be simultaneously delegated.

Scope & Charter Questions

This PDP is limited to examining a single issue. In circumstances where a base ASCII gTLD and the Latin script diacritic version of the gTLD are NOT variants of each other, what mechanism is needed in order to allow a single registry operator to simultaneously operate both gTLDs? A presumption for this issue is that the ASCII and Latin script diacritic have a non-negligible chance to be determined to be visually confusingly similar.

Charter Questions:

- Under what circumstances should a base ASCII gTLD and the Latin script diacritic version of the gTLD be simultaneously delegated, if any?
    - If such circumstances exist, what measures should be put into place in order to mitigate the potential for end-user confusion?
- If a solution is needed to this issue, are any of the elements of the ccTLD solution transferable?
- If a solution is needed to this issue, are any of the elements from either Phase 1 or Phase 2 of the EPDP on IDNs relevant, or warrant discussion specific to Latin script diacritics?
- If a solution is needed to this issue, will it have any impact on existing Consensus Policies?

Impact on Human Rights

The WG is expected to consider the potential impact of any recommendations on human rights. Based on the information included in the request for an Issue Report and the Issue Report, the WG is expected to further consider whether there is a likely human rights impact, and if so, who are the groups expected to be impacted and the expected severity of the impact (high / medium / low). If an impact is anticipated, the WG is expected

to address the following questions: 1) is the proposed action necessary to achieve the desired outcome, 2) is the proposed action proportionate, 3) is the proposed action legitimate.

Deliverables:

To develop, at a minimum, an Initial Report and a Final Report regarding the WG's recommendations on issues relating to the Latin script diacritics, following the processes described in Annex A of the ICANN Bylaws and the GNSO PDP Manual.

If the WG concludes with any recommendations, the WG shall (or recommend the subsequent policy Implementation Review Team to) conduct a policy impact analysis and identify a set of metrics to measure the effectiveness of the policy change, including source(s) of baseline data for that purpose:
- Identification of policy goals
- Identification of metrics used to measure whether policy goals are achieved
- Identification of potential problems in attaining the data or developing the metrics
- A suggested timeframe in which the measures should be performed
- Define current state baselines of the policy and define initial benchmarks that define success or failure
- Metrics may include but not limited to (Refer to the Hints & Tips Page):
    - ICANN Compliance data
    - Industry metric sources
    - Community input via public comment
    - Surveys or studies

Data and Metric Requirements:

The WG should as soon as practicable:
1. Determine a set of questions which, when answered, provide the insight necessary to achieve the policy goals.
2. Determine whether certain data is required to help understand a specific issue or answer a charter question.
3. Determine a set of data and metrics which can be collected and analyzed to help answer the specific question.
4. Submit a Working Group Metrics Request Form (see GNSO Working Group Guidelines Section 4.5), if data gathering at the charter drafting phase or during the working phase is deemed necessary.

WG leaders shall review the Guidance document below to understand the need for performing due diligence before submitting a data gathering request to the GNSO Council.

Section III: Project Management
Work Product Requirement:

The WG leadership, in collaboration with the WG support staff and GNSO Council liaison, shall use a standard set of project management work products that help plan, guide, track, and report the progress of the WG from

start to finish, and include the necessary data and information to assess the progress of the WG. These work products include but not limited to:

- Work Plan
- Summary Timeline
- Project Situation Report
- Project Plan
- Action Items

See the full suite of work products in the GNSO Project Work Product Catalog.

Project Status & Condition Assessment:

The WG leadership, in collaboration with the WG support staff and the GNSO Council liaison, shall assess the Status and Condition of the project at least once a month. Such frequency is required in preparation for the GNSO Council monthly meeting, where At-Risk or In-Trouble projects are subject to review by GNSO Council leadership, and in some instances may be deliberated by the full GNSO Council.

The WG leadership, in collaboration with the WG support staff and the GNSO Council Liaison, shall use an escalation procedure, which defines specific conditions that trigger the execution of a repeatable mitigation plan. The objective of this exercise is to return the project to an acceptable state ultimately achieving its planned outcomes.

Project Change Request:

The WG shall submit a Project Change Request (PCR) Form to the GNSO Council when its deliverable and baseline delivery date are revised. The PCR shall include a rationale for why these changes were made, their impacts on the overall timeframe of the PDP or any other interdependencies, and a proposed remediation plan.

The use of the PCR mostly occurs when primary deliverable dates are changed due to unforeseen or extreme circumstances. However, it can also be used to document changes in the deliverable requirements that may not have been identified in the chartering process.

When the PCR is required, it should be completed by the WG Chair and it will likely be presented to the GNSO Council for approval.

Resources Tracking:

The purpose for resource tracking is to deliver its work according to the work plan and be responsible for managing these resources.

For projects where dedicated funds are provided outside of budgeted policy activities, the WG shall provide regular budget versus actual expense reporting updates using a GNSO approved tool to allow for a better tracking of the use of resources and budget.

Section IV: Formation, Staffing, and Organization

Working Group Model:

Working Group Model: Representative + Open Model (Members + Participants + Observers)

Rationale: The "Representative + Open Model" is chosen to enable the WG to conduct and conclude its work in an efficient/effective manner while satisfying the outreach purpose to have an inclusive community participation.

A limited number of ICANN community members have prerequisite knowledge, background, or expertise in the subject matter. As a result, a limited number of Members appointed by specified community groups, who must possess a level of expertise as detailed in the "Membership Criteria" section in this charter, should drive the deliberations of the WG and participate in the consensus designation process for final recommendations.

However, as the topic may be of interest to the broader ICANN community as it may impact various stakeholders, the WG welcomes anyone to join as a Participant, who can attend and actively participate in all WG meetings, with the exception of the consensus designation process. Participants are encouraged to possess similar levels of expertise as Members and continuously engage in the WG deliberation throughout its lifecycle in order to effectively participate and contribute input.

Membership Structure:

Role Descriptions: All persons actively participating in the Working Group (i.e., Members and Participants) are expected to abide by the Statement of Participation, which is enforceable by the WG Chair and GNSO Council Leadership Team. See Section V. for details.

- **Members:** Members are expected to participate during the course of deliberations and in any WG consensus calls. Members are expected to represent the view of their appointing organization, and may be called on to provide the official position of their appointing organization. Members are required to have a level of expertise in the relevant issues and ICANN policies and procedures as that may be impacted.

   In the event a GNSO SG/C or SO/AC is unable to nominate a member, at least one Participant should be responsible for keeping their respective group informed of milestones and potential recommendations that may affect the group.

- **Participants:** Participants may be from a GNSO SG/C or SO/AC, or may be self-appointed and originate from within the ICANN or broader community. Participants will be able to actively participate in and attend all WG meetings. Participants are encouraged to participate in the WG deliberation throughout its lifecycle and are expected to keep up with all relevant WG deliberations to ensure they remain informed and can contribute when needed. However, Participants do not participate in the consensus designation process. Participants are encouraged to possess similar levels of expertise as Members.

   No upper limit of participants are expected to be set at the chartering phase. However, the WG leadership may decide, in consultation with the WG, whether new Participants can be accepted after

the start of the WG effort. See details in the "B. Joining of New Members After Project Launch" in this charter.

- **Observers:** Anyone interested in this PDP may join as an observer. Observers are provided with read-only access to the mailing list and are not invited to attend meetings.

- **GNSO Council Liaison:** The GNSO Council shall appoint one (1) Liaison who is accountable to the GNSO. The GNSO Council Liaison must be a member of the Council, and the Council recommends that the Liaison should be a Council member and be able to serve during the life of this WG. See detailed description in the "GNSO Council Liaison" section below.

- **ICANN Org Liaison(s):** The ICANN Org Global Domains & Strategy (GDS) department shall appoint at least one (1) Liaison, who is expected to provide timely input on issues that may require ICANN Org input such as implementation-related queries and issues that might benefit from their subject matter expertise. The ICANN Staff Liaison(s) is not expected to advocate for any position and will not participate in any PDP Team consensus calls.

Membership Structure:

Some groups may choose not to appoint any Members to the WG. The table below indicates the maximum number of Members that groups may appoint.

Group	Member (up to)	Liaison
RySG	3	
RrSG	3	
IPC	3	
BC	3	
ISPCP	3	
NCSG	3	
ccNSO	3	
ALAC	3	
GAC	3	
SSAC	3	
RSSAC	3	
GNSO Council		1
ICANN Org GDS		At least 1

The GNSO Secretariat is expected to circulate a "Call For Volunteers" in accordance with the group structure determined by the GNSO Council:

- Publication of announcement on relevant ICANN web sites including but not limited to the GNSO and other Supporting Organizations and Advisory Committee web pages; and
- Distribution of the announcement to GNSO Stakeholder Groups, Constituencies and other ICANN Supporting Organizations and Advisory Committees

Membership Criteria:

A. Expected Skills for Working Group Members

WG members shall review the full text of the [Working Group Member Skills Guide](#) to understand the responsibilities and skills that they are expected to have in order to fully participate in the WG activities.

Collectively as a group, the WG Members MUST possess:

- Understanding of the Latin RZ-LGR, the new gTLD string similarity process, and Latin script diacritics.
- If possible, a practical understanding of what may be involved in a single registry operator running and ASCII and Latin script diacritic simultaneously.
- Familiarity with GNSO policy development processes; direct experience is strongly preferred;
- Commitment to participating in Working Group meetings on a regular and ongoing basis;
- Highly effective oral, written, and interpersonal communication skills (in simple, comprehensible English);
- Ability to create factual, relevant and easily understandable messages, and able to succinctly deliver them to the Working Group;
- Research skills with the ability to discern factual, factually relevant, and persuasive details and sources;
- Commitment to manage a diverse workload, while collaborating with a Working Group of individuals with different backgrounds and interests in driving objectives;
- Knowledge of Working Group discussions, actions taken at meetings, and deliverables;
- Understanding of the perspectives and interests of the members' own stakeholder group or constituency;
- Understanding of what consensus means and how consensus-building process works;
- Commitment to facilitate consensus by listening, explaining, mediating, proposing clear actions, and helping other members;
- Commitment to avoid blocking consensus by looking beyond the stakeholder group or constituency affiliation of other Working Group members and judging proposals/positions on their merits;
- Commitment to avoid re-litigating closed issues or deliberate obfuscation;
- Commitment to review the [Consensus Playbook](#) and attend potential training related to the Playbook, facilitate consensus building by employing the tools and techniques as detailed in the playbook;
- Maintain high personal levels of ethical conduct and integrity, including transparency of affiliation in the SOI, in treatment of others and respecting the professional reputation of all in the ICANN community.

Participants are encouraged to possess the aforementioned qualifications.

B. Joining of New Members After Project Launch

New Members will only join after the launch of the PDP if a current Member is no longer able to continue in its membership. New WG Members should be mindful that, once input/comment periods have been closed,

discussions or decisions should not be resurrected unless there is group consensus that the issue should be revisited in light of new information that has been introduced. If the reopening is perceived as abusive or dilatory, a WG member may appeal to the WG leadership.

Anyone can join a WG as a Participant at any point as long as they get up to speed and do not reopen previously closed topics, unless they provide new information. Nonetheless, the WG leadership may decide, in consultation with the WG and in reference of [Criteria for Joining of New Members](#) guidance, whether new Participants can be accepted after the start of the WG effort.

The WG could decide to suspend new Participants for several reasons, including but not limited to:
- The Working Group has produced its Initial Report, analyzed public comments, and is in the midst of a consensus process for its Final Report;
- The Working Group is nearing the end of a complex and lengthy policy development process and although it has not produced a Final Report, the status of the work is that the Working Group is too close to finalizing its work such that new members would not be able to meaningfully contribute;
- Someone wishes to join as a participant in a sub-team of the Working Group, but that sub-team has completed its work and passed its recommendations to the full Working Group.

C. Expert Contributors
The WG has flexibility/discretion to invite participation of the expert contributors in specific fields as it deems necessary.

Expert contributors are not expected to participate in any consensus designation process, but provide perspective/expertise/knowledge to the PDP WG.

Based on the WG's determination, the Council may be able to use an independent evaluation process (e.g., GNSO Council Standing Selection Committee) to confirm whether those individuals have demonstrated the expertise/knowledge/perspective.

Leadership Structure:

One (1) Chair + One (1) Vice Chair

The GNSO Council will appoint one (1) qualified, independent Chair (neutral, not counted as from the WG membership/participants) for the WG.

The WG, once formed, may select one (1) Vice Chair to assist the Chair. The Vice Chair can be selected among the WG's Members and Participants. However, if a Member is selected as the Vice Chair, this person shall change his/her Member status to Participant, and his/her appointing organization may appoint a new Member as a replacement.

Should at any point a Vice Chair need to step into the role of Chair, the same expectations with regards to fulfilling the role of Chair as outlined in this charter will apply.

Leadership Criteria:

Expectations for the WG Leadership (Chair + Vice Chair):
The WG leadership is expected to carry out the role and responsibilities and meet the qualification as detailed in the Expectations for Working Group Leaders & Skills Checklist.

In short, the WG leadership is expected to:
- Lead with neutrality and impartiality;
- Encourage representational balance;
- Ensure WG documents represent the diversity of views;
- Balance working group openness with effectiveness;
- Make time commitment;
- Contribute ideas and knowledge to working group discussions;
- Oversee project management of the WG deliberations;
- Build consensus;
- Make consensus designation on working group recommendations;
- Enforce compliance with Statement of Participation;
- Enforce compliance with ICANN's Expected Standards of Behavior;
- Ensure compliance with Community Anti-Harassment Policy;
- Be versed in GNSO Operating Procedures; and
- Handle working group complaint process.

Expectation for the WG Chair:
As outlined in the GNSO Working Group Guidelines, the purpose of a Chair is to call meetings, preside over working group deliberations, manage the process so that all participants have the opportunity to contribute, and report the results of the Working Group to the Chartering Organization. These tasks require a dedicated time commitment as each week calls have to be prepared, the agenda concretized, and relevant material reviewed. The Chair shall be neutral. While the Chair may be a member of any group which also has representation on the Working Group, the Chair shall not act in a manner which favors such group. The Chair shall not be a member of the Working Group for purposes of consensus calls.

In addition, it is expected – that interested candidates shall have considerable experience in chairing working groups, and direct experience with at least one GNSO Policy Development Process throughout its lifecycle. Familiarity with the functioning of a Working Group is important to understand the various leadership skills that are necessary to employ during a WG's lifecycle. For example, a Chair has to ensure that debates are conducted in an open and transparent manner and that all interests are equally and adequately represented within the Group's discussions. During the later stages of a WG when recommendations are drafted, a Chair will benefit from understanding the viewpoints of various participants to ensure that an acceptable and effective outcome – ideally in the form of consensus – can be achieved.

The WG Chair is specifically expected to carry out the following responsibilities, including but not limited to:
- Attend all PDP Working Group meetings to assure continuity and familiarity with the subject matter and the ongoing discussions;
- Prepare meetings by reading all circulated materials;
- Be familiar with the subject matter and actively encourage participation during the calls;
- Be active on the PDP mailing list and invite PDP WG members and liaisons to share their viewpoints;
- Drive the progress forward and assure that discussions remain on point;
- Work actively towards achieving policy recommendations that ideally receive full consensus;

- Ensure that particular outreach efforts are made when community reviews are done of the group's output;
- Underscore the importance of achieving overall representational balance on any sub-teams that are formed;
- Enforce Statement of Participation, ICANN's Standards of Behavior, and Community Anti-Harassment Policy;
- Coordinate with staff and ensure that the WG is supported as effectively as possible; and
- Conduct consistent, adequate, and timely reporting to the GNSO Council on the progress of the PDP.

The WG Chair is expected to meet most of the following qualifications:
- Direct experience in consensus building processes and preferably direct experience in GNSO PDPs;
- Knowledge of and preferably direct experience in IDN related work at ICANN;
- Knowledge of ICANN policies and procedures as they relate to the relevant issue;
- Project management skills: including facilitating goal-oriented Working Group meetings, agenda setting and adherence, time management, encouraging collaboration, driving the completion of action items and achieving milestones in accordance with the WG timeline and work plan, keeping the Working Group's actions, discussions and meetings focused on serving its ultimate goals and deliverables;
- Ability to enforce compliance with the Statement of Participation, ICANN's Expected Standards of Behavior, and Community Anti-harassment Policy;
- Ability to determine when outreach is necessary and to undertake it;
- Ability to identify the diversity of views within the Working Group, if applicable;
- Knowledge of and ability to designate consensus on Working Group recommendations based on the level of agreement;
- Ability to help Working Group members understand that a consensus is a decision that is collaboratively reached and that the Working Group members can "live with"; accordingly, it may not be a perfect or unanimous decision;
- Commitment to review the Consensus Playbook and attend potential training related to the Playbook, facilitate consensus building by employing the tools and techniques as detailed in the playbook;
- Ability to refrain from promoting a specific agenda and ensuring fair, objective treatment of all opinions within the Working Group;
- Ability to distinguish between Working Group participants offering genuine dissent and those raising irrelevant or already closed issues merely to block the Working Group's progress toward its goal;
- Ability to halt disruption and, in extreme cases, exclude a Working Group member from a discussion per Section 3.5 of the GNSO Working Group Guidelines on Rules of Engagement;
- Ability to ensure that closed Working Group decisions are not revisited, unless there is a consensus to do so (usually in light of new information brought to the Working Group's attention);
- Ability to commit the time required to perform the WG Chair's responsibilities;
- Knowledge of topics in other policy efforts that have relations to or dependencies with the PDP working group topics;
- Ability to create factual, relevant and easily understandable messages, and able to clearly deliver them to the Working Group
- Ability to deliver a point clearly, concisely, and in a friendly way
- Exhibit agility and confidence in evolving situations and is able to swiftly transition from topic to topic
- Highly effective oral, written, and interpersonal communication skills (in simple, comprehensible English);
- Excellent research skills with the ability to discern factual, factually relevant, and persuasive details and sources;

- Commitment to manage a diverse workload, while collaborating with a Working Group of individuals with different background and interests in driving objectives; and
- Able to effectively build a course of action, analyze trade-offs, and make recommendations even in ambiguous situations; and
- Knowledge of and ability to participate in the Working Group complaint process, commitment to review the Clarification to Complaint Process in GNSO Working Group Guidelines Section 3.7.

Expressions of Interest for the WG Chair:
Staff is expected to publish a request for Expressions of Interest for the role of Chair. The GNSO Council leadership and Standing Selection Committee leadership will jointly review the responses and will propose a Chair to the GNSO Council which will then either affirm the selection or reject the selection and send the process back to the GNSO Council leadership and Standing Selection Committee leadership.

The Expression of Interest should address the following issues, including but not limited to:
- What is the applicant's interest in this position?
- What particular skills and attributes does the applicant have that will assist him/her in chairing the WG and facilitating consensus building?
- What is the applicant's knowledge of and/or experience in Latin script diacritics related work at ICANN, if any?
- What is the applicant's knowledge of ICANN policies and procedures?
- What is the applicant's experience with the GNSO Policy Development Process?
- What is the applicant's experience with consensus building involving various stakeholders, as well as familiarity with the Consensus Playbook?
- Is the applicant able to commit the time required and necessary work needed to chair the PDP?
- Does the applicant have any affiliation with or involvement in any organization or entity with any financial or non-financial interest in the subject matter of this PDP?
- Also expected to be included:
  - A link to an up-to-date Statement of Interest (SOI) - https://community.icann.org/x/c4Lg
  - A statement confirming commitment and ability to act neutrally.

Expectations for the Vice Chair:
Finally, as also pointed out in the GNSO Working Group Guidelines, the Vice Chair may facilitate the work of the Chair by ensuring continuity in case of absence, sharing of workload, and allowing the Chair to become engaged in a particular debate. As a result, similar responsibilities and qualifications are expected from the Vice Chair, although the overall workload may be reduced as a result of being able to share this with the Chair.

Leadership Review:

The review of WG leadership provides a regular opportunity for the GNSO Council to check in with WG leadership and Council Liaison to identify resources or input that Council may need to provide, as well as opportunities for the leadership team to improve. The review also enables the GNSO Council to work with the WG leadership and Council Liaison to develop and execute a plan to address possible issues/opportunities identified.

The GNSO Council leadership and/or the Council Liaison may initiate the WG leadership review in response to circumstances indicating that a review is necessary.

The WG leadership shall review the full text of Regular Review of Working Group Leadership document to understand the regular review of WG leadership performance by the GNSO Council, as well as the member survey that feeds into the review. This leadership review may be conducted alongside the WG self-assessment, or be integrated as part of the WG self-assessment based on the GNSO Council's further improvement of the review mechanism.

GNSO Council Liaison

The GNSO Council shall appoint one (1) Liaison who is accountable to the GNSO. The Liaison must be a member of the Council, and the Council recommends that the Liaison should be a Council member and be able to serve during the life of this WG.

The complete description of role & responsibilities for GNSO Council Liaison is described in the GNSO Council Liaison Supplemental Guidance. In short, the GNSO Council Liaison is expected to:
- Fulfill liaison role in a neutral manner
  - Importantly, the liaison is expected to fulfil his/her role in a neutral manner. This means that everything the liaison does during his/her tenure, including but not limited to participating in WG calls, reporting status, conveying information, and escalating issues, should be done in that neutral manner.
- Serve as an interim WG Chair until a Chair is named
- Be a regular participant of WG meetings
- Participate in regular meetings with WG Chair
- Report to Council on the WG progress
- Convey to Council on WG communications, questions, concerns
- Inform WG Chair about Council activities impacting the WG
- Refer to Council questions related to WG Charter
- Assist or engage when WG faces challenges
- Assist in case of abuse of ICANN's Expected Standards of Behavior and Community Anti-Harassment Policy
- Assist with knowledge of WG processes and practices
- Facilitate when there is disagreement regarding consensus designation
- Facilitate when a Section 3.7 Complaint Process is invoked
- Initiate the WG leadership review in response to circumstances indicating that a review is necessary

The liaison shall complete the following actions for onboarding purposes:
- Review the GNSO Council liaison to the WGs - Role Description;
- Review the New Liaison Briefing and Liaison Handover document to understand the actions the liaison needs to take for onboarding purposes.
- Consult the supplemental guidance developed to provide more precision in their responsibilities and the frequency in which they must be carried out;
- Familiarize with the provisions of the GNSO Operating Procedures relevant to liaisons;
- Subscribe to the PDP mailing lists and relevant sub teams;
- Subscribe to the PDP Leadership mailing list(s), if applicable. In addition, add o the PDP Leadership Skype chat (or other communication channel) if applicable;
- Consider requesting a catch up call with the relevant GNSO policy support staff. This call should clarify the role of the liaison in terms of PDP conference call attendance, expected responsibilities and an update as to the current status of the PDP if already in operation (milestones and anticipated hurdles);

- Review links to the wiki workspaces and mailing list archives via email;
- (If the PDP is already in operation) Consider requesting that PDP Leadership and the outgoing liaison(s) share relevant briefing documents specific to the PDP, to highlight the scope of the PDP charter, current status, timeline, milestones, problem areas/challenges, anticipated hurdles, etc;
- (If the PDP is already operational) Participate in an onboarding conference call with the incoming and outgoing liaisons as well as PDP Leadership; GNSO policy support staff will also be present on the call.

Support Staff:

The ICANN Staff assigned to the WG will fully support the work of the Working Group as requested by the Chair including meeting support, document drafting, editing and distribution and other substantive contributions when deemed appropriate.

Staff assignments to the Working Group:
- ICANN policy staff members
- GNSO Secretariat

In addition, regular participation of and consultation with other ICANN Org departments such as the GDS is anticipated to ensure timely input on issues that may require ICANN org input such as implementation-related queries. As such, the ICANN Org GDS is expected to appoint at least one (1) Liaison to the WG, as specified in the "Membership Structure" section above.

Furthermore, additional policy staff resources are available to assist the WG leadership for consensus building purposes.

Section V: Rules of Engagement

Statements of Interest (SOI) Guidelines:

Each member of the WG is required to submit an SOI in accordance with Section 5 of the GNSO Operating Procedures.

Statement of Participation:

Each Member and Participant of the WG must acknowledge and accept the Statement of Participation (as provided below), including ICANN's Expected Standards of Behavior, before he/she can participate in the WG.

> **Statement of Participation**
>
> As a Member or Participant of the Policy Development Process on Latin Script Diacritics Working Group:
>
> - I agree to genuinely cooperate with fellow Members and Participants of the Working Group to deliberate the issues outlined in the Charter. Where there are areas of disagreement, I will commit to work with others to reach a compromise position to the extent that I am able to do so;

- I acknowledge the remit of the GNSO to develop consensus policies for generic top level domains. As such, I will abide by the recommended working methods and rules of engagement as outlined in the Charter, particularly as it relates to rules in GNSO Working Group Guidelines;
- I will treat all Members/Participants of the Working Group with civility both face-to-face and online, and I will be respectful of their time and commitment to this effort. I will act in a reasonable, objective, and informed manner during my participation in this Working Group and will not disrupt the work of the Working Group in bad faith;
- I will make best efforts to regularly attend all scheduled meetings and send apologies in advance when I am unable to attend. I will take assignments allocated to me during the course of the Working Group seriously and complete these within the requested timeframe.
- I agree to act in accordance with ICANN Expected Standards of Behavior, particularly as they relate to:
  - Acting in accordance with, and in the spirit of, ICANN's mission and core values as provided in ICANN's Bylaws;
  - Listening to the views of all stakeholders and working to build consensus; and
  - Promoting ethical and responsible behavior;
- I agree to adhere to any applicable conflict of interest policies and the Statement of Interest (SOI) Policy within the GNSO Operating Procedures, especially as it relates to the completeness, accuracy, and timeliness of the initial completion and maintenance of my SOI; and
- I agree to adhere to the ICANN Community Anti-Harassment Policy and Terms of Participation and Complaint Procedures.

As a Member of the PDP on Latin Script Diacritics Working Group:
- I understand reaching consensus does not mean that I am unable to fully represent the views of myself or the organization I represent. I will abide by the recommended working methods and rules of engagement as outlined in the Charter, particularly as it relates to designating consensus in GNSO Working Group Guidelines.

I acknowledge and accept that this Statement of Participation, including ICANN's Expected Standards of Behavior, is enforceable and any individual serving in a Chair role (such as Chair, Co-Chair, or Acting Chair or Acting Co-Chair) of the Working Group and GNSO Council Leadership Team have the authority to restrict my participation in the Working Group in the event of non-compliance with any of the above.

Problem/Issue Escalation & Resolution Process:

The problem/issue escalation & resolution process within the WG is provided in Sections 3.4 and 3.5 of the Working Group Guidelines. WG members should also reference the Guidelines Concerning ICANN Org Resources for Conflict Resolution and Mediation.

Formal Complaint Process:

The formal complaint process within the WG is provided in Section 3.7 of the Working Group Guidelines. Further details regarding the formal complaint process are included in the Clarification to Complaint Process in GNSO Working Group Guidelines document.

The formal complaint process may be modified by the GNSO Council at its discretion.

Section VI: Decision Making Methodologies

Consensus Designation Process:

Section 3.6 of the GNSO Working Group Guidelines, as included below, provides the standard consensus-based methodology for decision making in GNSO WGs.

Section 3.6 notably refers to the 'Chair' (singular) of a WG, which does not conform to the reality of current PDP WG leadership structures. References to 'Chair' shall include PDP WG Co-Chairs and/or Vice Chair(s) that form the WG leadership, if applicable.

WG leaders, members and liaison shall review the Capture vs. Consensus Playbook (Guidance document below) which provides a structured approach for consensus building and providing behavior insights, tools, and techniques to bridge differences, break deadlocks, and find common ground.

Guidance: Consensus Playbook

3.6 Standard Methodology for Making Decisions

The Chair will be responsible for designating each position as having one of the following designations:

- **Full consensus** - when no one in the group speaks against the recommendation in its last readings. This is also sometimes referred to as **Unanimous Consensus.**
- **Consensus** - a position where only a small minority disagrees, but most agree. *[Note: For those that are unfamiliar with ICANN usage, you may associate the definition of 'Consensus' with other definitions and terms of art such as rough consensus or near consensus. It should be noted, however, that in the case of a GNSO PDP originated Working Group, all reports, especially Final Reports, must restrict themselves to the term 'Consensus' as this may have legal implications.]*
- **Strong support but significant opposition** - a position where, while most of the group supports a recommendation, there are a significant number of those who do not support it.
- **Divergence** (also referred to as **No Consensus**) - a position where there isn't strong support for any particular position, but many different points of view. Sometimes this is due to irreconcilable differences of opinion and sometimes it is due to the fact that no one has a particularly strong or convincing viewpoint, but the members of the group agree that it is worth listing the issue in the report nonetheless.
- **Minority View** - refers to a proposal where a small number of people support the recommendation. This can happen in response to a **Consensus**, **Strong support but**

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significant opposition, and **No Consensus;** or, it can happen in cases where there is neither support nor opposition to a suggestion made by a small number of individuals.

In cases of **Consensus**, **Strong support but significant opposition**, and **No Consensus**, an effort should be made to document that variance in viewpoint and to present any **Minority View** recommendations that may have been made. Documentation of **Minority View** recommendations normally depends on text offered by the proponent(s). In all cases of **Divergence,** the WG Chair should encourage the submission of minority viewpoint(s).

The recommended method for discovering the consensus level designation on recommendations should work as follows:

  i. After the group has discussed an issue long enough for all issues to have been raised, understood and discussed, the Chair, or Co-Chairs, make an evaluation of the designation and publish it for the group to review.
 ii. After the group has discussed the Chair's estimation of designation, the Chair, or Co-Chairs, should reevaluate and publish an updated evaluation.
iii. Steps (i) and (ii) should continue until the Chair/Co-Chairs make an evaluation that is accepted by the group.
 iv. In rare case, a Chair may decide that the use of polls is reasonable. Some of the reasons for this might be:
   o A decision needs to be made within a time frame that does not allow for the natural process of iteration and settling on a designation to occur.
   o It becomes obvious after several iterations that it is impossible to arrive at a designation. This will happen most often when trying to discriminate between **Consensus** and **Strong support but Significant Opposition** or between **Strong support but Significant Opposition** and **Divergence.**

Care should be taken in using polls that they do not become votes. A liability with the use of polls is that, in situations where there is **Divergence** or **Strong Opposition**, there are often disagreements about the meanings of the poll questions or of the poll results.

Based upon the WG's needs, the Chair may direct that WG participants do not have to have their name explicitly associated with any Full Consensus or Consensus view/position. However, in all other cases and in those cases where a group member represents the minority viewpoint, their name must be explicitly linked, especially in those cases where polls where taken.

Consensus calls should always involve the entire Working Group and, for this reason, should take place on the designated mailing list to ensure that all Working Group members have the opportunity to fully participate in the consensus process. It is the role of the Chair to designate which level of consensus is reached and announce this designation to the Working Group. Member(s) of the Working Group should be able to challenge the designation of the Chair as part of the Working Group discussion. However, if disagreement persists, members of the WG may use the process set forth below to challenge the designation.

If several participants[3] in a WG disagree with the designation given to a position by the Chair or any other consensus call, they may follow these steps sequentially:

1. Send email to the Chair, copying the WG explaining why the decision is believed to be in error.
2. If the Chair still disagrees with the complainants, the Chair will forward the appeal to the CO liaison(s). The Chair must explain his or her reasoning in the response to the complainants and in the submission to the liaison. If the liaison(s) supports the Chair's position, the liaison(s) will provide their response to the complainants. The liaison(s) must explain their reasoning in the response. If the CO liaison disagrees with the Chair, the liaison will forward the appeal to the CO. Should the complainants disagree with the liaison support of the Chair's determination, the complainants may appeal to the Chair of the CO or their designated representative. If the CO agrees with the complainants' position, the CO should recommend remedial action to the Chair.
3. In the event of any appeal, the CO will attach a statement of the appeal to the WG and/or Board report. This statement should include all of the documentation from all steps in the appeals process and should include a statement from the CO[4].

Who Can Participate in Consensus Designation:

Consensus calls or decisions are limited to Members who may consult as appropriate with their respective appointing organizations. However, for the purpose of assessing consensus, groups that do not fulfil their maximum membership allowance should not be disadvantaged.

The WG Chair shall ensure that all perspectives are appropriately taken into account in assessing Consensus designations on the final recommendations.

Unless otherwise specified in this Charter, the GNSO Working Group Guidelines apply in full and Consensus designations are therefore the responsibility of the Work Group Chair and are to be made in accordance with the consensus levels described in Section 3.6 of the Working Group Guidelines.

Working Group Self-Assessment & Termination or Closure of Working Group:

At the latest following the publication of the Initial Report, a periodic self-assessment will be conducted amongst the WG. The results of this self-assessment will be presented to the GNSO

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[3] Any Working Group member may raise an issue for reconsideration; however, a formal appeal will require that that a single member demonstrates a sufficient amount of support before a formal appeal process can be invoked. In those cases where a single Working Group member is seeking reconsideration, the member will advise the Chair and/or liaison of their issue and the Chair and/or liaison will work with the dissenting member to investigate the issue and to determine if there is sufficient support for the reconsideration to initial a formal appeal process.

[4] It should be noted that ICANN also has other conflict resolution mechanisms available that could be considered in case any of the parties are dissatisfied with the outcome of this process.

Council.

Typically, the WG will close upon the delivery of its last Final Report, unless assigned additional tasks or follow-up by the GNSO Council.

The GNSO Council may terminate or suspend the WG prior to the publication of its last Final Report for significant cause such as changing or lack of community volunteers, the planned outcome for the project can no longer be realized, or when it is clear that no consensus can be achieved.

The WG Chair, in collaboration with the WG support staff and the GNSO Council Liaison, shall use an escalation procedure, which helps define the health of the WG and informs the GNSO Council's decision on whether the WG should be terminated or suspended.

Section VII: Change History

Section VIII: Charter Document History

Version	Date	Description
1.0	TBD	

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Translations: If translations will be provided please indicate the languages below: