

# Han Script Single Character gTLDs

GNSO Council Meeting

10 April 2025



# Han Script Single Character gTLDs - Background

SubPro Rec 25.4 (single character gTLDs in ideographic scripts) adopted by Board.

IDNs EPDP Rec 3.17 refined that rec to limit to only Han script, and tasked CJK Gen Panels (GPs) to develop guidelines.

Initial determination that existing RZ-LGR work is sufficient, but a majority of public comments opposed moving forward.

Co-Chair of Chinese GP noted that GPs were not and should not be involved with “risk of confusion.” In other words, not the party to perform analysis.

# Background, cont.



## ❖ Escalation to the Council

- The SubPro IRT was asked whether the rec should be determined to be non-implementable, or whether the issue should be reviewed by the GNSO Council.
- The IRT agreed to submit the issue for Council consideration and the IRT liaisons (Anne Aikman-Scalese & Susan Payne) raised the issue.
- After discussion on the Dec 2024 Council meeting, the Council agreed to have staff provide background, as well as advantages/disadvantages for the GNSO Guidance Process (GGP) and Expert Working Group (EWG)

# GNSO Guidance Process (GGP)

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- **Applicability:** Used for gTLDs issues where GNSO guidance is needed, and it expected outcome of GGP is not expected to create new “Consensus Policy” recommendations or any new contractual obligations for contracted parties (in which case a PDP would need to be initiated).
- **Governance:** The GGP is managed by the GNSO Council and governed by the ICANN Bylaws and GNSO Operating Procedures.
- **Inclusion of Experts:** If deemed appropriate or helpful by the GGP Team, the GGP Team may solicit the opinions of outside advisors or experts.

# GNSO Guidance Process (GGP)

Advantages	Disadvantages
Limited in scope and appears to fit the intended purpose of a GGP	Can be difficult to manage scope
Can incorporate experts, in addition to GGP members	Procedural rigor of the GGP will result in a lengthy process (e.g., likely over a year since Initial Report, public comment, and Council/Board consideration are all needed).
Shorter in duration than a PDP	Unwieldy process for what may be a relatively simple charter question
	Given the specialized nature of the subject matter, a community supported group may not have requisite expertise

# Expert Working Group (EWG)

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- **Applicability:** There are no guidelines as to what constitutes an EWG. Has been used in relation to gTLD Directory Services (registration data), where it was convened by ICANN's then CEO.
- **Governance:** Unclear, but may be dependent upon what party convenes the group.
- **Inclusion of Experts:** As the name suggests, the EWG is designed expressly for gathering experts to perform research or address an issue.

# Expert Working Group (EWG)

Advantages	Disadvantages
Expressly designed for providing expert advice	<b>However, not a formal mechanism, so no guidance on structure or governance mechanisms, which means that remit, rules of engagement, accountability, and how to handle any outputs or recommendations are all unspecified</b>
Can presumably be narrowly scoped	Can presumably only be convened by the ICANN Board and/or ICANN CEO
As such, can likely be nimble and short in duration	May require the expenditure of funds to support the group

# Conclusions

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There are obviously advantages and disadvantages for both the GGP and EWG, but **one disadvantage for the EWG** stands out to staff the most - it is not an official mechanism and therefore has no formalized expectations on scope, nor operating procedures. Therefore, if the goal is to develop “*guidance necessary to allow Han single characters to proceed,*” if limited to these two options, a **GGP seems to be more appropriate** from staff perspective.

However, it might be helpful to consider the issue identified in the IRT.



There is no qualified party identified to perform the work as envisioned in IDNs EPDP Recommendation 3.17

Which could mean that the task at hand **may not need to be a new mechanism (i.e., GGP or EWG) completing all of the work in Rec 3.17 but rather, identify an alternative party to perform the work** that was expected to be performed by the CJK GPs.