ICANN | GNSO

Generic Names Supporting Organization

Initial Report on the Latin Script Diacritics Policy Development Process

12 January 2026

Status of This Document

This is the Initial Report of the GNSO Latin Script Diacritics Policy Development Process Working Group that has been posted for Public Comment.

Preamble

The objective of this Initial Report is to document the Latin Script Diacritics Policy Development Process (PDP) (hereafter referred to as "LD PDP") Working Group's (WG) deliberations on its fifty-four (54) preliminary recommendations and implementation guidance. After reviewing the Public Comment submissions received in response to this report, the LD PDP WG will conduct a formal Consensus Call on all the proposed recommendations before their inclusion in the Final Report to be submitted to the GNSO Council for its consideration.

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1 Executive Summary

1.1 Introduction

During 2021–2024, the GNSO Council developed policy recommendations to define variant domain names at the top and second-level and to establish rules for variant management. However, there remained a gap for cases where a base American Standard Code for Information Interchange (ASCII) generic top-level domain (gTLD) and its corresponding Latin diacritic[1] gTLD(s) are not variants of each other. Accordingly, the objective of the Latin Script Diacritics Policy Development Process (PDP) (hereafter referred to as "LD PDP") was to examine the circumstance in which a base ASCII gTLD and the Latin script diacritic version of the gTLD are not variants of each other, yet may be found visually confusingly similar, seeking to establish an appropriate mechanism – currently absent – that would allow a single gTLD registry operator to simultaneously operate both gTLDs.

On 13 November 2024, the GNSO Council initiated the LD PDP and chartered the LD PDP Working Group (WG; hereafter referred to as the "LD PDP WG" or "WG") on 19 December 2024.[2] A Call for Volunteers was issued on 3 January 2025, with the LD PDP WG holding its Kick-off Meeting on 8 March 2025 during ICANN82 in Seattle. Subsequently, the Project Plan[3] was approved by the GNSO Council on 10 April 2025, with the WG remaining focused on maintaining a narrow scope centered on 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?

For additional background on this PDP, please refer to "Annex C" of this report.

1.2 Preliminary Recommendations

Per the WG Charter, the WG agreed that it was important to reference previous bodies of work related to Internationalized Domain Names (IDNs) policy and review all elements of the policy in relation to LD – including the country code top-level domain (ccTLD) Fast Track Process, Subsequent Procedures (SubPro) Policy Development Process (PDP) Final Report, and the Expedited Policy Development Process on IDNs (EPDP-IDNs) Phase 1 and Phase 2 – to determine whether any aspects were relevant or warranted further discussion.

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[1] Diacritics are glyphs that are used to modify sounds, or signify stressed syllables in many languages globally that utilize the Latin alphabet. The Domain Name System (DNS) was limited to the use of the American Standard Code for Information Interchange (ASCII) characters. With the implementation of Internationalized Domain Names (IDNs), it now supports multiple scripts, as well as Latin alphabet-based characters with diacritics.

[2] See LD PDP WG Charter here: https://gnso.icann.org/sites/default/files/policy/2025/draft/latin-script-diacritics-pdp-charter-final-28feb25-en.pdf

[3] See LD PDP project plan here: https://icann-community.atlassian.net/wiki/x/MQTVBg

Charter Question 1 essentially falls into two (2) themes: what and how. These form the basis of the WG's preliminary recommendations. The WG's responses to Charter Questions 2, 3, and 4 are indirectly reflected in these recommendations. In particular, the preliminary recommendations and implementation guidance that address Charter question 3 are mostly derived from EPDP-IDNs Phases 1 and 2.[4] Accordingly, the WG's responses and corresponding preliminary recommendations are organized into the following topics as prescribed in both Phases 1 and 2 of the EPDP-IDNs:

- Topic 1: Requirements for the Set at the Top-level
- Topic 2: "Same Entity" Principle at the Top-level
- Topic 3: Application Submission, Administrative Check, Initial Evaluation
- Topic 4: Contractual Requirements
- Topic 5: Delegation and Removal
- Topic 6: Requirements for the Set at the Second-level
- Topic 7: "Same Entity" Principle at the Second-level and IDN Table Harmonization
- Topic 8: Adjustments in Registration Processes Pertinent to the Domain Name Lifecycle

As of 12 January 2026, the LD PDP WG has developed fifty-four (54) preliminary recommendations and implementation guidance.

1.3 Conclusions and Next Steps

This Initial Report will be posted for Public Comment for forty (40) days. The LD PDP WG will review the public comments received on this Initial Report and consider whether any changes need to be made to its preliminary recommendations. The WG will finalize all recommendations in a Final Report to be sent to the GNSO Council.

1.4 Other Relevant Sections of this Report

The following sections are included within this Initial Report:
- Explanation of the WG's methods and process for reaching preliminary recommendations;
- Glossary that provides definitions of the terms and phrases frequently used throughout this report;
- Responses to the charter questions, including a compilation of all preliminary recommendations, some of which include corresponding implementation guidance, and their rationale;
- WG's Analysis on the impact of its recommendations on the Global Public Interest (GPI) and Human Rights (HR);
- LD PDP WG Charter;
- Documentation of the LD PDP WG's Stress Testing Exercise of Edge Cases to assess the soundness of its preliminary recommendations;
- Background of the PDP and issues under consideration;

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[4] Further details on the WG's approach related to the ccTLD Fast Track Process and the SubPro Final Report are provided in the WG's responses to Charter questions 2 and 3 in "Section 4."

■   Documentation of who participated in the WG's deliberations, including attendance
      records, and links to Statements of Interest (SOIs);

■   Documentation on the solicitation of community input through formal Supporting
      Organization (SO) / Advisory Committee (AC), and Stakeholder Group/Constituency
      (SG/C) channels and responses.

2 LD PDP Working Group Approach

This section provides an overview of the working methodology and approach of the Working Group (WG). The points outlined below are meant to provide the reader with relevant background information on the WG's deliberations and processes. Note that this does not represent the entirety of the efforts and deliberations of the WG.

2.1 Project Plan

The Latin Script Diacritics Policy Development Process (PDP) (hereafter referred to as "LD PDP") Working Group's (WG; hereafter referred to as the "LD PDP WG" or "WG") first deliverable was to provide the GNSO Council with a Project Plan, setting out the anticipated time frame for deliberations on the WG's Charter topics and the target dates for key milestones. The Project Plan was provided to the GNSO Council for its consideration during the 10 April 2025 GNSO Council Meeting.

Per the WG Charter, the WG agreed that it was important to reference previous work related to Internationalized Domain Names (IDNs) policy and review all elements of the policy in relation to Latin script diacritics – including the country code top-level domain (ccTLD) Fast Track Process, Subsequent Procedures (SubPro) Policy Development Process (PDP) Final Report, and the Expedited Policy Development Process on IDNs (EPDP-IDNs) Phase 1 and Phase 2 – to determine whether any aspects were relevant or warranted further discussion. This approach would help streamline the process and ensure the work filled the gaps while remaining on track.

The WG also emphasized the importance of maintaining a limited scope, noting that addressing the single and core issue – examining a possibility for simultaneous delegation of American Standard Code for Information Interchange (ASCII) generic top-level domains (gTLDs) and Latin script diacritics gTLDs – within a defined scope was both necessary and appropriate. Any issues not covered during this PDP could be addressed through future work.

2.2 Early Community Input

In accordance with the GNSO PDP requirements, the WG sought written input on the Charter topics from each Supporting Organization (SO), Advisory Committee (AC), and GNSO Stakeholder Group and Constituency (SG/C). The input received was incorporated into the WG's deliberations as each topic was discussed. All groups that provided written input had representative members or appointed subject matter experts in the WG, positioning them well to respond to clarifying questions from others as the written input was reviewed and considered.

2.3 Methodology for Deliberations

The WG began its deliberations on 08 March 2025 during ICANN82 in Seattle. The WG agreed to continue its work primarily through conference calls scheduled weekly, in addition to email exchanges on its mailing list. The WG held sessions during ICANN83 and ICANN84. These public sessions provided an opportunity for the broader community to contribute to the WG's deliberations and provide input on the Charter topics being discussed.

During the initial stage of deliberations, the WG also emphasized the importance of maintaining a limited scope, devoting significant time to deliberating and refining the scope to solve the single issue of a possible simultaneous delegation of ASCII gTLDs and Latin script diacritics gTLDs. Here, the WG limited the scope by focusing on a list of characters drawn from the Unicode Table.[5] This helped the WG to set an objective standard of scope while ensuring that any issues not covered during this PDP could be addressed in future work.

All of the WG's work is documented on its wiki workspace, including its meetings, mailing list, meeting notes, deliberation summaries, draft working documents, background materials, Early Input received from the ICANN community, including the SOs and ACs as well as GNSO's SG/Cs.

To develop the content included in the Initial Report, the WG employed both a methodical and an iterative approach. Methodically, the WG progressed through the Charter questions by topic, following the sequence established in the Project Plan. As the topics were closely interrelated and largely centered on reviewing previously established work and policies – ccTLD Fast Track Process, SubPro Final Report, and EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 and Phase 2 – the leadership team, GNSO Support Staff, and ICANN org liaisons first provided a high-level overview, including background and context, to help frame the questions, examine prior work, and facilitate deliberations.

Iteratively, the WG reviewed the established materials and framework, deliberated on the issues, and worked with the leadership team and Staff to draft responses to the Charter questions. These drafts were brought back to the WG for further discussion, refinement, and the development of preliminary recommendations. Review of text, making any necessary readjustments, and development/confirmation of text repeatedly occurred. Once these steps were completed, a section was considered stable and ready for inclusion in the Initial Report and next steps. Where needed, members consulted with their respective groups and provided additional feedback. This process ensured that the final set of outputs was coherent and comprehensive.

When discussions stalled or failed to reach agreement, the leadership team, at times, deployed informal polls during the meeting to gauge the "temperature of the room" and proceed, while encouraging the sharing of perspectives that might not surface through less structured interaction. For those WG members who were less comfortable speaking on calls, the leadership team encouraged additional feedback via the mailing list and through written contributions to WG documents.

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[5] This is not intended to serve as an authoritative source or an exhaustive list of characters, but rather as a basis for defining the scope for this PDP. More details on this determination can be found in "Section 4. Preliminary Recommendations."

2.4 Use of Working Documents

The WG used a series of working documents, organized per Charter topic, to support its deliberations. Archives of the working documents are maintained on the WG wiki.[6]

While the background documents provided the basis for discussion of each Charter question, the working documents organized the necessary elements per Charter question and the pertaining prior work, capturing WG deliberations per topic. These documents were updated on an ongoing basis, moving the discussions along per topic. The discussion summaries ultimately captured draft responses to Charter questions, the WG agreements, and draft recommendations, which developed into preliminary recommendations and their rationales.

2.5 Data and Metrics

The [Root Zone Label Generation Rules (RZ-LGR) for Latin Script](#), Unicode Charts,[7] previously established work and policies on IDNs – [ccTLD Fast Track Process](#), [SubPro Final Report](#), and EPDP-IDNs [Phase 1](#) and [Phase 2](#) – served as the WG's primary resource for data and metrics. In the course of its deliberations, the WG identified additional data that would be valuable to support its work, such as helpful materials to understand the New gTLD Program: Next Round,[8] including the [String Similarity Review](#), the [Applicant Journey](#), and the [Applicant Guidebook (AGB)](#).[9] Where ICANN org was in a position to collect and analyze relevant data, subject matter experts from ICANN org assisted the LD PDP WG with these tasks.

Any additional data provided by the WG members or ICANN org in response to these requests is all available on the WG's [wiki](#).

2.6 ICANN Org and Board Interaction

To help support a smooth transition from policy development to eventual implementation of GNSO Council-adopted and ICANN Board-approved recommendations, the WG has been supported by early and ongoing engagement with ICANN org subject matter experts. Liaisons from ICANN org's Global Domains and Strategy (GDS), IDN and Universal Acceptance (UA) Program, and GDS Technical Services (GTS) regularly attended WG calls, providing input and

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[6] Background documents listed in the order of Charter questions can be found here: https://icann-community.atlassian.net/wiki/x/2wPVBg. Meanwhile, working documents produced intentionally for the analysis and inclusion of the Initial Report, in response to the Charter questions can be found here: https://icann-community.atlassian.net/wiki/x/BIDqJw.

[7] Various Unicode Charts that the WG referred to during the course of deliberations are archived here on wiki: https://icann-community.atlassian.net/wiki/x/2wPVBg

[8] Refer to the New gTLD Program: Next Round page for relevant information and various resources: https://newgtldprogram.icann.org/en

[9] This represents the latest and final version at this time. The AGB for the New gTLD Program: 2026 Round was published on 16 December 2025.

responding to questions where it was possible to do so in real time. The liaisons acted as a conduit for WG questions to ICANN org that required additional research or input.

In addition, the ICANN Board appointed a liaison to the WG who also regularly attended the WG calls to act as a conduit between the Board and the LD PDP WG.

2.7 Accountability to the GNSO Council

The WG reported its progress to the GNSO Council through a monthly update to the "Project List" – a compilation of GNSO's active projects, standing committees, and other work organized by the flow of the PDP – in which the LD PDP WG's updates were included and refreshed each month. An archive of these lists is available on the wiki. The GNSO Council liaison to the WG served as an additional point of connection between the Council and the WG.

Moreover, the leadership team of the LD PDP has been invited to speak to the GNSO Council through GNSO Council Webinars prior to ICANN Public Meetings and/or when it was timely to share important information or key milestones.

3 Glossary

The table below lists the key terms and phrases that are used throughout this Initial Report, covering topics related to the LD PDP. The explanations of their meanings are developed based on the LD PDP WG's understanding of the existing bodies of work[10] and the WG's use of the terms in the context of the LD PDP WG's Charter question deliberations. Additional notes are included to explain the common usage of certain terms and phrases in this Initial Report.

The WG appreciates that some readers may consider the meaning of the terms as reflected in this glossary to be imprecise from a technical perspective. The WG understands that this is the case and it is for this reason the WG has not provided a definition, but rather the 'meaning' of the term as used and commonly understood by the WG.

The terms in this glossary are organized in alphabetical order. Some terms are cross-referenced in multiple places within this glossary and they are *italicized* to facilitate reference.

Term	Meaning	Additional Notes on Usage
Applicant Guidebook (AGB)	In the New Generic Top-Level Domain Program (New gTLD Program), the Applicant Guidebook (AGB) is the document that describes the requirements of the new gTLD application and evaluation processes. The current version is the one adopted by the ICANN Board on 30 October 2025 during its Board Meeting in ICANN84 in Dublin, which was published on 16 December 2025 for the New gTLD Program: 2026 Round.[11] The previous one was published on 4 June 2012 for the 2012 New gTLD Program. It is	This term appears throughout the report, as the rules set forth in this Initial Report are intended to guide applicants seeking to apply for an *ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set* in future rounds; the AGB is a key vehicle for operationalizing those recommendations. Though these recommendations will not be included in the current version of the AGB for the immediate Next Round in 2026, they will be incorporated into future versions of the AGB for future rounds.

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[10] As introduced in Sections 1 and 2, the existing bodies of work includes the ccNSO Fast Track Process, SubPro Final Report, and EPDP-IDNs P1 & P2 Final Reports, as well as ICANN's existing Consensus Policies – all of which the WG reviewed and deliberated on through Charter questions 2-4.

[11] See the current AGB for the 2026 Round here: https://newgtldprogram.icann.org/sites/default/files/documents/new-gtld-program-2026-round-applicant-guidebook-current-en.pdf

Term	Meaning	Additional Notes on Usage
	often referred to as the "2012 Applicant Guidebook."[12]	
ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set	An ASCII gTLD and its corresponding Latin diacritic gTLD(s) that constitute an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set. In the *LD PDP*, this term is introduced to define all the strings that qualify as a set and are, therefore, granted an exception, allowing them to be submitted, delegated, and operated together by the same *gTLD registry operator* simultaneously. The gTLDs within the set are sometimes referred to as "gTLDs that constitute an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set," "labels within the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set," etc.	This term is first introduced and set out in Preliminary Recommendation 1. The WG considered it essential to establish this term at the outset, as it serves as the foundation for understanding the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD sets and their management throughout the report. (The *EPDP-IDNs'* counterpart is the *Variant* gTLD set). This term only applies to top-level labels. This is in contrast to the *ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set*, which encompasses and addresses second-level management.
ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set	An *ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set* is defined to contain; 1) a label and all its *variants* within a single TLD, as determined by the second-level *LGRs* for that given TLD; and 2) the same labels and all their *variants* across all other TLDs within the *ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set*. The term "label" here refers specifically to second-level labels. This definition builds on an *ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set* and the *domain names* within the ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set are often referred to as "*allocatable*	This term is first introduced and established through Preliminary Recommendation 39. Similar to Preliminary Recommendation 1, the WG considered it essential to establish this term to understand the second-level labels and the *allocatable domain names* of an *ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set* throughout the report. (The *EPDP-IDNs'* counterpart is the *Variant Domain Set*).

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[12] Download the 2012 AGB here: https://newgtlds.icann.org/en/applicants/agb

Term	Meaning	Additional Notes on Usage
	domain names of an ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set."	
Activate / Activation / Activated	Activate refers to the activation or enablement of a *domain name*. After activation, a *domain name* is visible in the DNS and activated for use (e.g., its associated website and/or email services are active).[13] Activation of a *domain name* does not necessarily require *registration*.	The meaning remains consistent with the *EPDP-IDNs*. Note the distinction between "activate" and "*register.*" Depending on the registry model, a *gTLD registry operator* may use "*EPP* Create" (i.e., register) to activate an *ASCII/Latin diacritic domain name* as an independent registration, but may also use other methods (e.g., "*EPP* Update" to create a "child domain name" as an attribute to the *source domain name*) for activating a *variant domain name*.

Its associated adjective "*activated*" is sometimes used interchangeably with "active." |
| Allocatable | This is a valid *domain name* derived from a *source domain name* that is eligible for allocation as part of an *ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set*. An *allocatable variant domain name* should be reserved for use by the same registrant of the *source domain name* but not automatically allocated for use.[14] At the second-level, the allocatable status is determined by the *IDN Table* managed by the *gTLD registry operator* of the given gTLD. | The meaning remains consistent with the *EPDP-IDNs*. It usually appears in the phrase, "*allocatable domain name(s)* of an *ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set.*" The other possible disposition value is "blocked." |
| Allocation | Allocation typically indicates the | The meaning remains consistent |

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[13] The original definition of "activated" can be found in RFC 7940: https://datatracker.ietf.org/doc/html/rfc7940#section-7.3
[14] This explanation referenced the definition of "allocatable" in the RFC 7940: https://www.rfc-editor.org/rfc/rfc7940.html#section-7.2.1

Term	Meaning	Additional Notes on Usage
	start of the d*omain name lifecycle* and refers to the administrative association or assignment of a *domain name* to the entity who has requested it.[15] When a domain enters the "Redemption" or "Pending Deletion" stage of the *domain name lifecycle,* it is regarded as "deactivated" but still allocated as long as it is not deleted from the Domain Name System.	with the *EPDP-IDNs*. This term is frequently mentioned throughout the Initial Report, as it is associated with the *"same entity"* principle; Once a *domain name* has been *allocated*, it must remain linked to the same *registrant* of the *source domain name* and at the same sponsoring *registrar*. This should be considered a persistent requirement in all stages of its *domain name lifecycle*. It does not matter whether the *domain name* is *activated*. As long as it is still allocated, the *"same entity"* principle must be upheld.
American Standard Code for Information Interchange (ASCII)	A common character-encoding standard that computers use to store, transmit, and print English (or "Latin") text. After many decades of use, the acronym ASCII (pronounced AS-KEE) is more well-known and more frequently used than its full name (American Standard Code for Information Interchange).[16]	The meaning remains consistent with the *EPDP-IDNs*. As the central question of this *PDP* is whether an ASCII gTLD and its corresponding Latin diacritic gTLD can be simultaneously delegated, this term forms the core focus of this report and appears extensively throughout.
Blocked	This is a valid *variant domain name* derived from a *source domain name* that is ineligible for *allocation* under a given gTLD. A blocked variant domain name should be blocked from *allocation*. At the second-level, the blocked status is determined by the *IDN Table* managed by the *gTLD registry operator* of the given	The meaning remains consistent with the *EPDP-IDNs*. The other possible *disposition value* is *"allocatable."* This term is discussed through Preliminary Recommendations 32-33.

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[15] This explanation is derived from the definition of "allocation" and "allocated" in the IDN Implementation Guidelines version 4.0. See Annex B here: https://www.icann.org/en/system/files/files/idn-guidelines-22sep22-en.pdf#page=7

[16] This explanation is reproduced verbatim from the ICANN Acronyms and Terms webpage: https://www.icann.org/en/icann-acronyms-and-terms/ascii-en

Term	Meaning	Additional Notes on Usage
	gTLD.	
Category 1 Safeguard	Specific safeguards that would apply to a broad category of strings related to "consumer protection, sensitive strings, and regulated markets." Initially, the Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC) advised the ICANN Board that "strings that are linked to regulated or professional sectors should operate in a way that is consistent with applicable laws." Accordingly, each Category 1 string requires one of the following three (3) levels of safeguards: 1) Regulated Sectors/Open Entry Requirements in Multiple Jurisdictions; 2) Highly Regulated Sectors/Closed Entry Requirements in Multiple Jurisdictions; and Special Safeguards Required.	This term is guided through the current *AGB* and is discussed in Preliminary Recommendation 28 of this report. The gTLDs within the *ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set* must be bound by the same restrictions subject to Category 1 Safeguards.
ccPDP4	The abbreviation of the Country Code Names Supporting Organization (ccNSO) Policy Development Process 4 on the (de-)Selection of *IDN* ccTLD Strings.	The meaning remains consistent with the *EPDP-IDNs*. The *LD PDP WG* referenced *ccPDP4* when addressing Charter Question 2 of this *PDP* and assessing if elements from this work were transferable to *LD PDP*. See "Section 4.2.1. Charter Question 2" of this Initial Report.
Conservatism	Adopting a more conservative approach in the gTLD policy development as a way to limit any potential security and stability risks associated with *variant* label delegation.	Though referenced in the rationales for Preliminary Recommendations 29 and 41, it is used to describe the underlying principles for *variant* label delegation agreed upon by *EPDP-IDNs*.

Term	Meaning	Additional Notes on Usage
Corresponding	This term clarifies how an ASCII gTLD and Latin diacritic gTLDs within an *ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set* are linked. Every Latin diacritic gTLD has exactly one corresponding ASCII gTLD. The ASCII gTLD can have one or more corresponding Latin diacritic gTLDs.	This term is extensively used throughout the report to describe an ASCII gTLD and its matching Latin diacritic gTLD that constitute the *ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set*.
Domain Name	A unique string of letters – including base letters and/or accented characters – consisting of two or more levels (for example, john.smith.name) maintained in a registry database.	The meaning is derived from the current *AGB* and has been adapted to enhance clarity.
Domain Name Lifecycle	The domain name lifecycle is generally summarized into five (5) main stages, which are: 1) available, 2) active, 3) expiration, 4) redemption, and 5) pending deletion. A *domain name* does not necessarily go through all five main stages of the domain name lifecycle.	The meaning remains consistent with the *EPDP-IDNs*. Here in *LD PDP*, this term is discussed in Preliminary Recommendation 46.
EBERO	Emergency Back-End Registry Operator	Refer to Preliminary Recommendation 24
EPDP	The acronym of Expedited Policy Development Process. It differs from the *Policy Development Process (PDP),* mainly in that an Issue Report and the associated Public Comment process steps are not needed in the process. The Expedited Policy Development Process itself is described in Annex 4 of the GNSO Operating Procedures.[17]	This term usually appears in the phrases "EPDP-IDNs."
Exempted	A provision in which an immediate	This term was mostly considered

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[17] See Annex 4 of the GNSO Operating Procedure here:
https://gnso.icann.org/sites/default/files/file/field-file-attach/annex-4-epdp-manual-15mar23-en.pdf

Term	Meaning	Additional Notes on Usage
	previous rule continues to apply to some existing situations while a new rule will apply to all future cases. This is a condition that should be resolved in time.	by the *LD PDP* WG in Topics 6-8 during the second-level discussions.
		"Exempted" is a replacement for the term "grandfathered" and its variations that had been used in the *EPDP-IDNs* Phase 2 Initial Report. This term was changed by the E*PDP-IDNs* Team during Phase 2 Final Report in response to concerns raised by ICANN org during the Public Comment period.[18]
		In the context of *LD PDP*, "exempted" means that there will be no change to the contractual and *allocation* status of existing *variant domain names* that do not conform to the "*same entity*" principle, as recommended by the *LD PDP* WG. The requirement of having the same *registrant* and the same sponsoring *registrar* will not be applied retroactively. Appropriately, the exempted *variant domain names* are also excluded from the additional requirements relating to the *"same entity"* principle. This also implies that the "exemption period" will end when one *registrant* and one sponsoring *registrar* remain for the *ASCII/Latin script diacritics domain set*, which would effectively allow for further *allocation*.
Extensible	The EPP domain status code, also	This term is first introduced in

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[18] See the Phase 2 Initial Report Public Comment submissions and Review Tool on wiki here: https://community.icann.org/display/epdpidn/Phase+2+Initial+Report+-+Public+Comment

Term	Meaning	Additional Notes on Usage
Provisioning Protocol (EPP) Domain Status Code	called domain name status code, indicates the status of a *domain name*. Every domain has at least one status code, but it can also have more than one. There are 17 standardized EPP domain status codes, plus the Registry Grace period status code. See the EPP Status Codes webpage on icann.org for more information.[19]	the report through Preliminary Recommendation 20.
Full Backward Compatibility	A state where new rules and policy do not break or alter the previously established versions or rules. All prior functionalities continue to work seamlessly under the "full backward compatibility" principle. In the context of *LD PDP*, future GPs will need to be mindful of this issue where existing cases may conflict with the newly updated rules, and resolving such cases may require new solutions to maintain full backward compatibility.	This term is used throughout Preliminary Recommendations 32-33 and Implementation Guidance 34 in the Initial Report. The *LGR* Procedure requires GPs and IP to adhere to the stability principle and to make best efforts to retain full backward compatibility with delegated gTLDs. In this case, the issue extends to all gTLDs and is not unique to *LD PDP*. In essence, future updates to the *RZ-LGR* should aim to maintain full backward compatibility with existing delegated gTLDs and their *variant* labels as well as *allocated* and delegated *ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set* label(s) in order to preserve the root zone stability.
gTLD Registry Operator	The organization that maintains the master database (registry) of all *domain names* registered in a particular top-level domain (TLD). gTLD registry operators receive requests from *registrars* to add, delete, or modify *domain names*, and they make the requested	The meaning remains consistent with the *EPDP-IDNs*. *gTLD registry operator* is a relatively new concept, introduced via *EPDP-IDNs* Phase 2 to avoid any confusion regarding which party is impacted by the policy.

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[19] Learn more: https://www.icann.org/resources/pages/epp-status-codes-2014-06-16-en

Term	Meaning	Additional Notes on Usage
	changes in the registry.	
Harmonization	The process of making different situations compatible and consistent with one another.	The meaning remains consistent with the *EPDP-IDNs*. This topic is introduced in Topic 7 of this report and in the context of *LD PDP*, harmonization is also critical to ensure that all *IDN Tables* associated with a given gTLD generate the same *variant domain set* consistently for any *source domain name*. This activity is intended to prevent inconsistencies.
Internationalized Domain Name (IDN)	A *domain name* in which one or more of its labels contain characters other than *ASCII* letters, digits, or hyphens. Because IDNs support the use of Unicode characters, they can include characters from local languages and scripts. For example, 실례.테스트, is a *domain name* composed entirely of Hangul characters. Another example is 你好.com, which is *domain name* composed of strings from two (2) different scripts – Chinese characters with a Latin .com extension.	The meaning is derived from the current *AGB* and has been adapted to enhance understanding.
IDN Table	A specification that defines the permitted characters and rules for combining characters to form *labels* in the languages and scripts applicable to the second-level under a gTLD. The terms *IDN table* and Label Generation Rules are synonymous.[20] *IDN Tables* represent a *gTLD registry operator's* second-level rules for	The meaning remains consistent with the *EPDP-IDNs*. Preliminary Recommendation 44 of this Initial Report deals with this concept. Regarding *IDN Table harmonization, gTLD registry operators* develop their own *IDN Tables* and submit them to ICANN org for review for the consideration of any significant

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[20] This explanation is reproduced verbatim from the ICANN Acronyms and Terms webpage: https://www.icann.org/en/icann-acronyms-and-terms/internationalized-domain-name-table-en

Term	Meaning	Additional Notes on Usage
	its respective gTLD(s) regarding IDN second-level labels.	security, stability, and competition issues.
Label	The segments that are separated by dot characters in a *domain name*. For example, the *domain name,* gnso.icann.org consists of three labels: gnso, icann, and org.[21]	The meaning remains consistent with the *EPDP-IDNs*. This term usually appears when referring to ASCII gTLD and/or Latin diacritic gTLD label(s). This term is also interchangeable with "string," particularly in the top-level context.
LD PDP	The abbreviated form used consistently throughout the process and in this Initial Report for "Latin Script Diacritics Policy Development Process." This acronym was determined by the LD PDP WG during its Kick-off Meeting at ICANN82.	The Working Group that is involved in this process and develops the preliminary recommendations is referred to as the LD PDP WG.
PDP	The abbreviation of Policy Development Process. The Policy Development Process itself is described in Annex A of the ICANN Bylaws.[22]	N/A
Register / Registration / Registered	*Domain name* registration is the process of creating a *domain name*, typically via the "*EPP* Create" command, and acquiring it for a certain period of time. The registration of a *domain name* indicates a billable transaction. A registered *domain name* exists in the Shared Registry System (SRS) and is visible in the WHOIS[23]. However, it does not necessarily mean a registered *domain name*	The meaning remains consistent with the *EPDP-IDNs*. Note the distinction between "*activate*" and "*register.*"

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[21] This explanation is reproduced verbatim from the ICANN Acronyms and Terms webpage: https://www.icann.org/en/icann-acronyms-and-terms/label-en

[22] See Annex A of ICANN Bylaws here: https://www.icann.org/resources/pages/governance/bylaws-en/#annexA

[23] The Registration Data Access Protocol (RDAP) is intended to replace the WHOIS protocol for all gTLDs in 2025, at which point support for Whois will be dropped.

Term	Meaning	Additional Notes on Usage
	must be *activated* for use. For example, defensive registration is a widely accepted practice.	
Registrant	An individual or entity who registers a *domain name*.	The meaning remains consistent with the *EPDP-IDNs*. Registrant is one of the key parties for fulfilling the "*same entity*" principle and related requirements for second-level variant management. This term frequently appears throughout the report.
Registrar	An organization through which individuals and entities (*registrants*) register *domain names*.	The meaning remains consistent with the *EPDP-IDNs*. Registrar is another key party for fulfilling the "*same entity*" principle and related requirements for the second-level management. The term "sponsoring registrar" also frequently appears, which refers to the registrar authorized by the *registrant* to register and manage its *domain name*. A registrar that has entered into a Registrar Accreditation Agreement with ICANN is referred to as an ICANN-accredited registrar.[24]
Rights Protection Mechanism (RPM)	A mechanism that helps safeguard intellectual property rights in the Domain Name System. RPMs include the *Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (UDRP)*, *Uniform Rapid Suspension (URS)*, and *Trademark Post-Delegation Dispute Resolution Procedure (Trademark PDDRP)*.	The meaning remains consistent with the *EPDP-IDNs*. This topic was extensively considered by the *LD PDP* WG in the context of Topic 8.
Root Zone Label Generation Rules (RZ-	A set of rules that determine valid top-level domain labels, their	The meaning remains consistent with the *EPDP-IDNs*. This topic is

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[24] This explanation is reproduced verbatim from the ICANN Acronyms and Terms webpage: https://www.icann.org/en/icann-acronyms-and-terms/registrar-en

Term	Meaning	Additional Notes on Usage
LGR)	*variant* labels, and disposition values of the *variant* labels. The RZ-LGR includes a list of permissible code points and variant code point mappings (if any) along with a set of rules that act on these code points and mappings.[25] For the latest version of the RZ-LGR, visit the Root Zone Label Generation Rules webpage.[26]	more relevant for *EPDP-IDNs*, especially with regard to Phase 1 deliberations, focusing on the top-level *variant* management. However, it is also extensively discussed within *LD PDP*; this term was considered from the outset when determining the scope, given that the work is limited to the examination of non-*variant* ASCII and Latin diacritic cases per the WG Charter.
Same Entity Principle	A principle where the same *gTLD registry operator* manages and operates both the ASCII gTLD and its corresponding Latin diacritic gTLD(s). At the *domain name* level, all *allocatable domain names* of an *ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set* must be *allocated* or withheld for possible allocation only to the same *registrant*. The goal of this principle is to minimize user confusion and security risks associated with the *domain names*.	The meaning remains consistent with the *EPDP-IDNs*. The *"same entity"* principle is a cornerstone requirement for the *LD PDP* policy too. The goal of the *"same entity"* principle is to minimize user confusion and security risks associated with *the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD sets and the ASCII/Latin diacritic domain sets.* This would help mitigate potential user confusion in the event of simultaneous delegation.
Source Domain Name	A source domain name is a registered *domain name* under a given gTLD that determines the composition of the *variant domain set* under that gTLD and its delegated gTLD *variant* label(s), if any. The source domain name also determines the *disposition values* of *variant domain names* under a	The meaning remains consistent with the *EPDP-IDNs*. The source domain name must be identified between the *registrant* and the sponsoring *registrar* as a joint responsibility pursuant to Preliminary Recommendation 45. Here, the source domain name can be different per TLD,

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[25] This explanation is reproduced verbatim from the ICANN Acronyms and Terms webpage: https://www.icann.org/en/icann-acronyms-and-terms/root-zone-label-generation-rules-en
[26] Learn more: https://www.icann.org/resources/pages/root-zone-lgr-2015-06-21-en

Term	Meaning	Additional Notes on Usage
	given gTLD from the *variant domain set*.	in accordance with the *ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set* as defined in <u>Preliminary Recommendation 39</u>. This solution – allowing different source domain names per TLD – is consistent with EPDP-IDNs and the *source domain name* must originate from the *ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set*.
Subsequent Procedures (SubPro)	An abbreviation of the New gTLD Subsequent Procedures *PDP.* The SubPro *PDP* WG was tasked to consider when and how to expand the number of generic top-level domains. The WG evaluated the 2012 application round to identify areas where additional policy development might be needed before launching another application round. It completed its deliberations and submitted its Final Report to the GNSO Council on 18 February 2021.[27] The Final Report includes hundreds of Outputs on 42 topics related to the future of the New gTLD Program. Topic 25 of the Final Report focuses on *IDNs*. Most of the Topic 25 Outputs are pertaining to the definition and *variant* management mechanism of future gTLDs.	The meaning remains consistent with the *EPDP-IDNs*. The *LD PDP WG* referenced SubPro when addressing Charter Question 3 of this *PDP* and assessing if elements from this work were transferable to *LD PDP*. See "<u>Section 4.1.2: Charter Question 3</u>" of this Initial Report.
TM-PDDRP	Trademark Post-Delegation Dispute Resolution Procedure (TM-PDDRP). A formal procedure in the New gTLD Program that generally addresses a *gTLD registry*	This term is referenced in <u>Preliminary Recommendation 25</u> of this Initial Report.

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[27] SubPro PDP Final Report can be found here: <u>https://gnso.icann.org/sites/default/files/file/field-file-attach/final-report-newgtld-subsequent-procedures-pdp-02feb21-en.pdf</u>

Term	Meaning	Additional Notes on Usage
	operator's complicity in an alleged trademark infringement of a new gTLD. Disputes resolved by a *TM-PDDRP* are administered by Dispute Resolution Service Providers approved by ICANN. Complainants are required to take specific steps to address their issues before filing a formal complaint. An expert panel determines whether a *gTLD registry operator* is liable and recommends remedies to ICANN.[28]	
Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy UDRP (UDRP)	A policy for resolving disputes arising from alleged abusive registrations of *domain names* (for example, cybersquatting), allowing expedited administrative proceedings that a trademark rights holder initiates by filing a complaint with an approved dispute resolution service provider.	The meaning is taken from the current *AGB*. This is listed as one of ICANN's existing Consensus Policies.[29] Here in *LD PDP* Initial Report, this term is referenced in Preliminary Recommendation 48, whereby the WG examined further through Charter Question 4.
Uniform Rapid Suspension (URS)	An expedited administrative procedure that rights holders can initiate for certain types of domain name disputes. The URS procedure is a tool for quickly addressing clear-cut cases of trademark infringement.	The meaning is taken from the current *AGB*. Here in *LD PDP* Initial Report, this term is referenced in Implementation Guidance 49.
Variant	*Variants* are strings which are considered "same" by the community as defined in the *RZ-*	The meaning is taken from the current *AGB*. This term was considered from the outset when determining the scope, given that the work is limited to the examination of non-*variant*

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[28] This explanation is reproduced verbatim from the ICANN Acronyms and Terms webpage: https://www.icann.org/en/icann-acronyms-and-terms/trademark-post-delegation-dispute-resolution-procedure-en

[29] See the list of ICANN's existing Consensus Policies here: https://www.icann.org/en/contracted-parties/consensus-policies

Term	Meaning	Additional Notes on Usage
	LGR.[30] Here in *LD PDP* and throughout the Initial Report, the "variants" refer to "IDN variants."	*ASCII* and Latin diacritic cases per the WG Charter. This was further examined in greater detail by the LD PDP WG in the context of the requirements for the set at the second-level and *variant* management through Topics 6-8.
Variant Domain Name	A variant domain name is a *domain name* derived from the *source domain name*. It represents the combination of *variant* labels of the *source domain name* at both the second- and top-levels. Its second-level label is calculated as a *variant* of the *source domain name*'s second-level label based on a given *IDN Table* of a given gTLD. Its top-level label can be the *source domain name's* gTLD or its delegated gTLD *variant* label(s), if any. A variant domain name under a given gTLD may have the *disposition value* of either *allocatable* or *blocked*, as calculated by a given *IDN Table* of that gTLD.	The meaning remains consistent with the *EPDP-IDNs*. The *LD PDP* WG considered this term extensively through Topics 6-8 on second-level management rules.
Variant Domain Set	The set of *variant domain names* that is derived from and also includes the *source domain name*. The *variant domain set* consists of variant label sets at both the second- and top-levels. The "set" at the second-level is enumerated from the second-level label of the *source domain name*, using the	The meaning remains consistent with the *EPDP-IDNs*. Establishing rules and guidance on this set was key for *EPDP-IDNs* as it relates to the *IDN Table harmonization* requirement, *"same entity"* principle, and the lifecycle management of *variant domain names*.

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[30] See the glossary entry of "Variant String" in the AGB for the full definition and further details: https://newgtldprogram.icann.org/sites/default/files/documents/new-gtld-program-2026-round-applicant-guidebook-current-en.pdf#page=434

Term	Meaning	Additional Notes on Usage
	IDN Tables of the given gTLD. The "set" at the top-level is limited to a given gTLD and its delegated gTLD *variant* label(s), if any. To confirm, the composition of the second-level variant label set is the same under the given gTLD and its delegated gTLD *variant* label(s). In short, the variant domain set consists of: *source domain name* + variant domain(s) across a given gTLD and all of its delegated *variant* gTLDs.	The *LD PDP* WG considered this term extensively in Topics 6-8, which address second-level management rules. In particular, the *ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set* and the *Variant Domain Set* were analyzed and compared in depth during stress testing of edge cases involving scenarios in which both sets might potentially be activated simultaneously.[31]

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[31] See details in the rationale for Preliminary Recommendation 1 and "Annex B – Stress Test: Edge Case Studies" of this Initial Report.

4 Working Group Preliminary Recommendations

The WG was chartered to provide the GNSO Council with policy recommendations regarding the issues identified in the [Final Issue Report on a Policy Development Process for Latin Script Diacritics](#).

The WG focused on adhering to its [Charter](#) and maintaining a narrow scope by examining a single issue—a non-variant ASCII and Latin diacritic case that may have a non-negligible chance of being determined as confusingly similar. Moreover, the WG acknowledged the unique nature of this PDP; they note that it operates as an exception to the current procedures guided in the New gTLD Program, as well as future rounds, which currently relies on the RZ-LGR rules for variant management.

Hence, following its analysis of each of the questions outlined in its Charter related to this task, the WG has arrived at a set of preliminary recommendations and conclusions. The structure of the subsections that organize the Initial Report is as follows:
- Section 4.1: Charter Questions with Preliminary Outputs[32]
- Section 4.2: Charter Questions with No Preliminary Outputs

Charter Question 1 essentially falls into two (2) themes: what and how. These form the basis of the WG's preliminary recommendations. The WG's responses to Charter Questions 2, 3, and 4 are indirectly reflected in these recommendations, as the WG thoughtfully leveraged existing work to identify solutions or assess potential impact. In particular, the preliminary recommendations and implementation guidance that address Charter question 3 are mostly derived from EPDP-IDNs Phases 1 and 2.[33] Accordingly, the WG's responses and corresponding preliminary recommendations are organized into the following topics as prescribed in both Phases 1 and 2 of the EPDP-IDNs:
- Topic 1: Requirements for the Set at the Top-level
- Topic 2: "Same Entity" Principle at the Top-level
- Topic 3: Application Submission, Administrative Check, Initial Evaluation
- Topic 4: Contractual Requirements
- Topic 5: Delegation and Removal
- Topic 6: Requirements for the Set at the Second-level
- Topic 7: "Same Entity" Principle at the Second-level and IDN Table Harmonization
- Topic 8: Adjustments in Registration Processes Pertinent to the Domain Name Lifecycle

The WG will not finalize its responses to the charter questions or its recommendations to the GNSO Council until it has thoroughly reviewed the comments received during the Public Comment period on this Initial Report. At this time, no formal Consensus Call has been conducted on these preliminary recommendations; however, the WG did support the publication of this Initial Report for Public Comment.

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[32] Outputs refer to both the preliminary recommendations and implementation guidance produced by the LD PDP WG.

[33] Further details on the WG's approach related to the ccTLD Fast Track Process and the SubPro Final Report are provided in the WG's responses to Charter questions 2 and 3 below within this section.

Within the text of this document, the key words "MUST", "MUST NOT", "REQUIRED", "SHALL", "SHALL NOT", "SHOULD", "SHOULD NOT", "RECOMMENDED", "NOT RECOMMENDED", "MAY", and "OPTIONAL" are to be interpreted as described in RFC 2119.

4.1 Charter Questions with Preliminary Outputs

4.1.1 Charter Question 1

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?

1) Topic 1: Requirements for the Set at the Top-level

Preliminary Output:

> **Preliminary Recommendation 1**: In order for any gTLDs to be considered an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set, they must meet the following requirements:
>
> 1.1 The only distinction between an ASCII gTLD string and its corresponding Latin diacritic gTLD string(s) must be the presence of diacritical marks. Each diacritic character in the string must be decomposable into an ASCII character and one or more combining diacritical mark(s) as per the Unicode Table.[34]
>
> 1.2 Per the Unicode Table, only characters that can be decomposed in this manner and appear within the table are eligible for the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set.
>
> 1.3 As determined via Recommendation 25.2 of the SubPro Final Report and Final Recommendation 1.1 of the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report, the use of diacritic character(s) must conform to the eligibility criteria defined in the RZ-LGR.
>
> 1.4 A base ASCII gTLD is required in order to constitute an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set, and the set will cease to exist if the ASCII gTLD is removed from the root zone. In such a case, the gTLD registry operator may retain a single IDN gTLD, which will no longer be considered part of an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set.[35]
>
> 1.5 None of the gTLD strings that constitute an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set may be part of a Variant TLD set.

Rationale:

Rationale for Preliminary Recommendation 1:

In addressing Charter Question 1 – "what" should be the circumstance under which a base ASCII gTLD and the Latin script diacritic version of the gTLD that are confusingly similar but not variants of each other may be simultaneously delegated, and if so, "how" – the LD PDP WG

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[34] Unicode Table, with the list of characters determined within and out of scope (Appendix), is presented here by the LD PDP WG: https://icann-community.atlassian.net/wiki/spaces/gnsolsdpdp/pages/114623451/3.+Background+Documents
(Note: This is not an exhaustive list and is subject to change with future versions of the RZ-LGR.)
[35] Provisions for the removal of ASCII gTLDs are outlined in Preliminary Recommendation 35, while those for Latin diacritic gTLDs are outlined in Preliminary Recommendation 36.

engaged in an extensive discussion. These discussions helped establish the scope and define the boundaries for considering an exception process.

The simple outcome was a decision to keep the scope of this PDP tightly focused and limited, with any broader issues to be addressed in future PDPs, allowing the process to be narrower, more agile, and speedier in execution.

Accordingly, Preliminary Recommendation 1 outlines the defined scope determined by the LD PDP WG. It also sets out the requirements that must be met for any gTLDs to qualify as an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set – thereby responding to the "what" aspect of the Charter question (Charter Question 1) regarding when such confusingly similar, non-variant gTLDs may be simultaneously delegated.

First, the LD PDP WG determined a Latin diacritic gTLD string to depend on the presence of diacritical marks (e.g., ˛ ˆ ´), and a diacritic character (e.g., ç, î, ý) in the string must be decomposable into an ASCII character and one or more combining diacritic mark(s). *(see [Figure 1] below)*

[Figure 1] Understanding Diacritics via Unicode

Source: https://www.unicode.org/charts/PDF/U0080.pdf

As can be seen from [Figure 1], the decomposition should follow the Unicode Table. The WG determined that its scope of work would not include letters like æ, ŋ, þ, and ø that cannot be decomposed into an ASCII character and one or more combining diacritic mark(s). The Unicode Table provides a clear delineation of scope for this aspect of the PDP. Fundamentally, the distinction between two gTLDs in such a set—e.g., between ASCII gTLD and its corresponding Latin diacritic gTLD string – must be solely the presence of one or more diacritical mark(s).

Another important point is that as determined via Recommendation 25.2 of the SubPro Final Report and Final Recommendation 1.1 of the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report, the use of diacritic character(s) must conform to the eligibility criteria defined in the RZ-LGR. Only characters that appear in the Unicode Table and that can be decomposed in this manner are eligible for the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set. However, the list is non-exhaustive and may be subject to change with future versions of the RZ-LGR.

Moreover, the LD PDP WG also discussed at length the conditions and requirements to qualify as part of the set, including whether the presence of a base ASCII gTLD is required for the set to exist, particularly in scenarios where multiple diacritic versions of TLDs are permitted simultaneously and the set is not just limited to two (2) gTLDs.

Although the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set does not function in such a way where the Latin diacritic gTLD is subject to its corresponding ASCII gTLD, the WG determined that the presence of a base ASCII gTLD is essential for the set to exist, per the WG Charter. If the ASCII gTLD is removed from the root zone, the set ceases to exist. However, the gTLD registry operator may retain a single IDN gTLD which will no longer be considered part of an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set. Importantly, two (2) Latin diacritic gTLDs without a common base ASCII gTLD cannot coexist due to the risk of user confusion stemming from their visual similarity.

During the LD PDP WG's Stress Testing of potential edge cases to assess the soundness of the WG's preliminary recommendations, scenarios involving the co-existence of both the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD sets and the Variant domain sets were examined, leading to an extensive discussion among the WG. One hypothesis considered whether an applicant having an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set might wish to activate a variant of one of their TLDs; while another considered whether an applicant having a Variant domain set might wish to activate a Latin diacritic gTLD for one of their TLDs. The key questions were whether both situations should be allowed, and if so, what policies may apply – i.e., LD PDP, EPDP-IDNs, or both?

The LD PDP WG considered two (2) options as follows: 1) Option 1 – Restrict the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set activation to a free-standing ASCII gTLD (not part of a Variant domain set), and vice versa, prohibit variant activation for gTLDs part of an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set; and 2) Option 2 – Allow activation of both the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD sets and Variant domain sets, whereby both sets could be activated simultaneously, permitting an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set activation for TLDs within a Variant domain set, while also allowing Variant set activation for TLDs within an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set. For Option 2, this means that .strässe could be added to the Variant domain set – .straße and .strasse – while the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set – .strasse and .strässe – could activate one of their variants – though under the current Latin LGR, this is not valid and no real examples exist.

In short, it was challenging for the WG members to reach an agreement. Ideally, allowing both sets to co-exist without restrictions would have been the most philosophically sound approach. However, the WG members recognized that given the current limited scope of work and the fact that neither of the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set or the Variant domain set has been put into practice, let alone operated concurrently, such an approach could introduce safety and security risks for the DNS. Moreover, accommodating scenarios that may never arise in real-world operations could significantly complicate and delay the work; this includes, many preliminary recommendations aligned with EPDP-IDNs may need to be revisited, reconsidered, and revised,

most likely affecting the EPDP-IDNs rules already adopted by the ICANN Board and under implementation for the Next Round.

The WG therefore concluded that the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set and the Variant domain set must be restricted, meaning that the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set activation is restricted to single ASCII TLDs and the variant activation is prohibited in ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD sets. Practically, this means that a variant contract cannot have any ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLDs added to it, and an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD contract cannot have variants added to it. This restriction is explicitly incorporated into the final clause of Preliminary Recommendation 1, resulting in the following language: *"1.5 None of the gTLD strings that constitute an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set may be part of a Variant TLD set."*

Further details on this Stress Test, including the pros and cons of each option as well as the differing views of members can be found in "Annex B – Stress Test: Edge Case Studies" of this report.

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2) Topic 2: "Same Entity" Principle at the Top-level

Preliminary Output:

> **Preliminary Recommendation 2**: Consistent with Final Recommendation 2.1 of the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report,[36] all gTLDs that constitute an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set can only be allocated to the same gTLD registry operator.

Rationale:

Rationale for Preliminary Recommendation 2:
The LD PDP WG reviewed both the SubPro PDP Recommendation 25.5[37] and the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Recommendation 2.1 per WG's Charter question 3[38] and agreed to extend the recommendations to the LD PDP when addressing the fundamental questions posed in Charter Question 1. In line with the requirements outlined in Preliminary Recommendation 1, the WG

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[36] EPDP-IDNs P1 Final Recommendation 2.1: Any allocatable variant label of an existing gTLD, as calculated by the RZ-LGR, can only be allocated to the same registry operator or withheld for possible allocation only to that registry operator.

[37] SubPro PDP Final Report Recommendation 25.5: IDN gTLDs identified as variant TLDs of already existing or applied for gTLDs will be allowed only if labels are allocated to the same entity and, when delegated, only if they have the same back-end registry service provider. This policy must be captured in relevant Registry Agreements.

[38] LD PDP WG Charter Question 3: 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, or Topic 25 on IDNs from the SubPro Final Report, relevant, or warrant discussion specific to Latin script diacritics?

found that adhering to the "same entity" principle and ensuring the same gTLD registry operator manage and operate both the ASCII gTLD and its corresponding Latin diacritic gTLD(s) would help mitigate potential user confusion in the event of simultaneous delegation. This addresses the "how" aspect of Charter Question 1, specifically regarding the measures that should be put in place for the mitigation of potential end-user confusion.

Moreover, the WG had previously determined during the scope establishment phase to include all ASCII gTLDs and their corresponding Latin diacritic gTLD(s) under the LD PDP policy – whether they already exist or will be new applications for future rounds – thus setting no limitations based on application timing for their delegation or allocation. Naturally, all existing or future ASCII gTLD or Latin diacritic gTLD(s) can only be allocated to the same gTLD registry operator.

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3) Topic 3: Application Submission, Administrative Check, Initial Evaluation

Preliminary Outputs:

> **Preliminary Recommendation 3**: Consistent with Final Recommendation 3.2 of the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report,[39] a future gTLD registry operator wishing to apply for a corresponding ASCII gTLD or Latin diacritic gTLD(s) of their existing gTLD must submit an application during an application round.

> **Preliminary Recommendation 4**: Consistent with Final Recommendation 3.3 of the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report,[40] applications for a corresponding ASCII gTLD or Latin diacritic gTLD(s) of their existing gTLDs can be submitted during the immediate next application round of the New gTLD Program[41] or in any subsequent rounds.

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[39] EPDP-IDNs P1 Final Recommendation 3.2: A future registry operator who wishes to apply for an allocatable variant label of its existing gTLD must submit an application during an application round.
[40] EPDP-IDNs P1 Final Recommendation 3.3: Applications for allocatable variant labels of existing gTLDs can be submitted during the immediate next application round of the New gTLD Program and any subsequent rounds.
[41] Per Recommendation 3.7 of the SubPro Final Report, new policy development during an ongoing round must only apply to the opening of the application procedure subsequent to the adoption of the relevant recommendations by the ICANN Board. Specifically, Recommendation 3.7 of the SubPro Final Report stipulates, "If the outputs of any reviews and/or policy development processes has, or could reasonably have, a material impact on the manner in which application procedures are conducted,

Preliminary Recommendation 5: Consistent with Final Recommendation 3.4 of the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report,[42] a future applicant applying for an ASCII gTLD string together with its Latin diacritic gTLD label(s) that constitute a set in the same round is required to submit a single application for the set.

Preliminary Recommendation 6: After submission of an application,[43] the applicant is allowed to withdraw an applied-for gTLD label from that application, but is not allowed to add any other gTLD labels that were not originally applied-for in that application, in accordance with Final Recommendation 3.25 of the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report.[44] A base ASCII gTLD must exist and comply with the rules set under Preliminary Recommendation 1. Only an applicant for a .Brand TLD string whose applied-for ASCII gTLD string and/or Latin diacritic gTLD string is placed in a contention set is allowed to change its applied-for ASCII gTLD string and its Latin diacritic label(s) under the condition set out in SubPro PDP Recommendation 20.8.

Preliminary Recommendation 7: In addition to explaining the mission and purpose of the applied-for ASCII gTLD string or existing gTLD, the applicant seeking one or more Latin diacritic gTLD label(s) will describe the justification of such need, in line with Final Recommendation 3.5 of the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report.[45] The justification given by the applicant shall at minimum provide the following information:

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such changes must only apply to the opening of the application procedure subsequent to the adoption of the relevant recommendations by the ICANN Board."

[42] EPDP-IDNs P1 Final Recommendation 3.4: A future applicant applying for a primary gTLD string together with its allocatable variant label(s) in the same round is required to submit one application for the primary gTLD string and the variant label(s).

[43] For avoidance of doubt, "application" here refers to the application of an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set.

[44] EPDP-IDNs P1 Final Recommendation 3.25: After submission of an application, the applicant is allowed to withdraw an applied-for variant label from that application, but is not allowed to add any other variant label that was not originally applied-for in that application. Only an applicant for a .Brand TLD string whose applied-for primary gTLD string is placed in a contention set is allowed to change its applied-for primary string and allocatable variant label(s) under the condition set out in SubPro PDP Recommendation 20.8.

[45] EPDP-IDNs P1 Final Recommendation 3.5: In addition to explaining the mission and purpose of the applied for primary gTLD string or existing gTLD, the applicant seeking one or more gTLD variant labels will describe the justification of such need. The justification given by the applicant shall at minimum provide the following information: 3.5.1 The meaning or intended meaning (for non-dictionary words) of each of the applied-for variant label(s), including sources; 3.5.2 Explanation of how the primary and variant labels are considered the same; 3.5.3 Explain the benefits and the user communities who will benefit from the introduction of the applied-for variant label(s); and 3.5.4 A description of the steps that the applicant will take to minimize the operational and management complexities of variant gTLDs and variant domain names that impact registrars, resellers and/or registrants.

7.1 The meaning or intended meaning (for non-dictionary words) of each of the applied-for ASCII gTLD string and/or Latin diacritic gTLD label(s), including sources;
7.2 The benefits and the user communities who will benefit from the introduction of the applied-for ASCII gTLD string and/or Latin diacritic gTLD label(s); and
7.3 A description of the steps that the applicant will take to minimize the operational and management complexities of the corresponding ASCII gTLD and its Latin diacritic gTLD label(s) that impact registrars, resellers and/or registrants.

Implementation Guidance 8: With respect to the evaluation of the information submitted per Preliminary Recommendation 7 in accordance with Implementation Guidance 3.6 from EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report:[46]
8.1 The evaluation panel must include evaluators with the Latin script expertise;
8.2 The evaluation panel should apply criteria based on a general standard of reasonableness and the criteria must be established during implementation;
8.3 Consistent with Recommendation 27.2 of the SubPro PDP Final Report, evaluation scores on the questions should be limited to a pass/fail scale (0-1 points only);
8.4 The applicant must pass each element to enable the applied-for ASCII gTLD string and/or the Latin diacritic gTLD label(s) to proceed to the next stage of the application process[47]; and
8.5 The evaluation outcome of any one applied-for Latin diacritic gTLD label should not impact the evaluation outcome of any other Latin diacritic gTLD label(s) in the application (including the ASCII gTLD string).

Preliminary Recommendation 9: Consistent with Final Recommendation 3.7 of the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report,[48] a future applicant must be required to

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[46] EPDP-IDNs P1 Implementation Guidance 3.6: With respect to the evaluation of the information submitted per Final Recommendation 3.5:
3.6.1 The evaluation panel must include evaluators with relevant script expertise; 3.6.2 The evaluation panel should apply criteria based on a general standard of reasonableness and the criteria must be established during implementation; 3.6.3 Consistent with Recommendation 27.2 of the SubPro PDP Final Report, evaluation scores on the questions should be limited to a pass/fail scale (0-1 points only); 3.6.4 The applicant must pass each element to enable the applied-for variant label to proceed to the next stage of the application process; and 3.6.5 The evaluation outcome of any one applied-for variant label should not impact the evaluation outcome of any other applied-for variant label in the application (including the primary gTLD string).

[47] Refer to the "extended evaluation" process for variant string evaluation which may be applicable for the evaluation of the ASCII gTLD string and/or the Latin diacritic gTLD label(s): https://itp.cdn.icann.org/en/files/policy-development/new-gtld-program-next-round-draft-applicant-guidebook-for-public-comment-30-05-2025-en.pdf#page=40

[48] EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Recommendation 3.7: A future applicant must be required to demonstrate its ability to manage the applied-for primary gTLD string and applied-for allocatable variant label(s)

demonstrate its ability to manage the applied-for ASCII gTLD string and applied-for Latin diacritic gTLD label(s) from both technical and operational perspectives. The same requirement applies to existing gTLD registry operators who wish to apply for either the corresponding ASCII gTLD string or Latin diacritic gTLD label(s) of their existing gTLD.

Implementation Guidance 10: Consistent with Implementation Guidance 3.8 of the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report,[49] the evaluation of capability to manage the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set should be closely tied to the overall technical capability evaluation. The evaluation should be based on measurable criteria including, but not limited to, the performance of Critical Functions with respect to second-level registrations under the ASCII gTLD string and the applied-for Latin diacritic gTLD label(s).

Implementation Guidance 11: Consistent with Implementation Guidance 3.9 of the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report,[50] within fifteen (15) months of the delegation of the first ASCII gTLD string or the Latin diacritic gTLD label(s) that constitute the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set, and every twenty-four (24) months thereafter, ICANN org should conduct research in order to identify whether any additional criteria or tests should be used, as part of the application process, to evaluate the technical and operational capability of an applicant to manage the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set at the registry level. This should not be treated as a separate research effort, but rather, if necessary, conducted together with the EPDP-IDNs research on variants per Implementation Guidance 3.9. Similar to EPDP-IDNs, ICANN org must offer the community an opportunity to provide input on the scope of the research to be undertaken, as well as any proposed outputs on additional criteria or tests, and such outputs should not be applied retroactively.

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from both a technical and operational perspective. The same requirement applies to registry operators who wish to apply for allocatable variant label(s) of their existing gTLDs.

[49] EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Implementation Guidance 3.8: The evaluation of capability to manage the variant label set should be closely tied to the overall technical capability evaluation. The evaluation should be based on measurable criteria including, but not limited to, the performance of Critical Functions with respect to second-level registrations under the primary gTLD string and the applied-for allocatable variant label(s).

[50] EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Implementation Guidance 3.9: Within 15 months of the delegation of the first gTLD variant label and every 24 months thereafter, ICANN org should conduct research in order to identify whether any additional criteria or tests should be used, as part of the application process, to evaluate the technical and operational capability of an applicant to manage a variant label set at the registry level. ICANN org must offer the community an opportunity to provide input on the scope of the research to be undertaken, as well as any proposed outputs on additional criteria or tests, and such outputs should not be applied retroactively.

Preliminary Recommendation 12: Consistent with Final Recommendation 3.10 of the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report,[51] the fee structure associated with future applications that include the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD label(s) set, and ASCII gTLD and/or Latin diacritic gTLD label(s) applications from gTLD registry operators of existing gTLDs, must be consistent with the principle of cost recovery reflected in the 2026 Round AGB and affirmed by the New gTLD Subsequent Procedures PDP.

Preliminary Recommendation 13: Consistent with Final Recommendation 3.13 of the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report[52] and Preliminary Recommendation 12, a future gTLD registry operator applying only for the corresponding ASCII gTLD or Latin diacritic gTLD(s) of their existing gTLD must incur an application fee consistent with the principle of cost recovery reflected in the AGB. ICANN org will decide the discount based on what it considers to be proportionate to any costs associated with evaluating the application and consistent with the cost recovery principle.

Preliminary Recommendation 14: Consistent with Final Recommendation 3.16 of the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report,[53] all gTLDs that constitute an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set must be subject to the same application requirements and evaluation criteria. With respect to the three non-standard application types of gTLDs as identified by the SubPro PDP, this means that:

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[51] EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Recommendation 3.10: The fee structure associated with future applications that include variant label(s), and variant label applications from registry operators of existing gTLDs, must be consistent with the principle of cost recovery reflected in the 2012 Applicant Guidebook and affirmed by the New gTLD Subsequent Procedures PDP.

[52] EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Recommendation 3.13: A future registry operator applying only for allocatable variant label(s) of its delegated primary gTLD must incur a discounted base application fee. ICANN org will decide on the discount based on what it considers to be proportionate to any costs associated with evaluating the application and consistent with the cost recovery principle.

[53] EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Recommendation 3.16: An applied-for allocatable variant label must be subject to the same application requirements and evaluation criteria as the associated primary gTLD string. Specifically, the same documentation requirements apply to both the primary gTLD string and its applied-for allocatable variant label(s). With respect to the three non-standard application types of gTLDs as identified by the SubPro PDP, this means that:

3.16.1 An applicant for a Community-based TLD string and its allocatable variant label(s) is required to submit a written endorsement of its applied-for primary gTLD string and applied-for allocatable variant label(s) from established institution(s) representing the community that the applicant has named.

3.16.2 An applicant for a Geographic Name TLD string and its allocatable variant label(s) is required to submit documentation of support or non-objection to its applied-for primary gTLD string and applied-for allocatable variant label(s) from relevant governments or public authorities.

3.16.3 An applicant for a .Brand TLD string and its allocatable variant label(s) is required to submit proof that its applied-for primary gTLD string and applied-for allocatable variant label(s) are identical to registered trademarks owned and used by the registry operator or its affiliate.

14.1 An applicant for a Community gTLD string(s) that constitute(s) an ASCII/Latin diacritic set is required to submit a written endorsement for each label that constitutes the set from established institution(s).[54]

14.2 An applicant for a Geographic Name TLD string(s) that constitute(s) an ASCII/Latin diacritic set is required to submit documentation of support or non-objection for each label that constitutes the set from relevant governments or public authorities.

14.3 An applicant for a .Brand TLD string(s) that constitute(s) an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set is required to submit proof that each label that constitutes the set is identical to registered trademarks owned and used by the gTLD registry operator or its affiliate.

Rationales:

Rationale for Preliminary Recommendation 3:

The LD PDP WG affirms the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 <u>Final Recommendation 3.2</u>[55] and extends the same principle to the LD PDP. The WG recognizes that some gTLD registry operators may already hold an ASCII gTLD or Latin diacritic gTLD(s) and may wish to apply for a corresponding gTLD. This recommendation addresses such potential applications where an ASCII or Latin diacritic gTLD(s) corresponds to their existing gTLD, with the only distinction being the presence of diacritic marks, as outlined in <u>Preliminary Recommendation 1</u>.

Similarly to EPDP-IDNs, the WG agrees that the most expedient and cost-effective path for future gTLD registry operators to apply for ASCII gTLD and Latin diacritic gTLD(s) is through application rounds. The LD PDP WG did consider the possibility of a "no rounds" model in the future and how circumstances may evolve under an ongoing application process in place. However, this is still a subject of debate and is not currently in effect; any such changes would also need to be applied to EPDP-IDNs recommendations. Therefore, the WG decided to remain consistent with the EPDP-IDNs at this time.

Hence, the gTLD registry operators are expected to rely on application rounds to apply for an ASCII gTLD and/or Latin diacritic gTLD(s) when applying for them as part of their existing gTLDs. In other words, no separate process will be made available or developed for existing gTLD registry operators to apply for an ASCII or Latin diacritic gTLD(s) of their existing gTLDs. Accordingly, the LD PDP WG believes that new applications are required even for those associated with existing gTLDs.

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[54] According to the 2026 Round AGB, several factors may be considered in whether an entity qualifies as an "established institution." These factors include, but are not limited to: the level of global recognition of the institution; the length of time the institution has been in existence; and public historical evidence of its existence, such as the presence of a formal charter or national or international registration, or validation by a government, inter-governmental organization, or treaty. Importantly, the institution must not have been established solely in conjunction with the gTLD application process. Refer to the determination of an "established institution" in the AGB: https://newgtldprogram.icann.org/sites/default/files/documents/new-gtld-program-2026-round-applicant-guidebook-current-en.pdf#page=104

[55] EPDP-IDNs P1 <u>Final Recommendation 3.2</u>: A future registry operator who wishes to apply for an allocatable variant label of its existing gTLD must submit an application during an application round.

Rationale for Preliminary Recommendation 4:

This recommendation extends from Preliminary Recommendation 3. Similarly to Preliminary Recommendation 3, the WG agrees that, at this time, the most expedient and cost-effective path forward for gTLD registry operators to apply for ASCII gTLD and/or Latin diacritic gTLD(s) of the existing gTLDs is through application rounds. This means that no separate process is required or should be developed for this purpose. Accordingly, applications for corresponding ASCII gTLD or Latin diacritic gTLD(s) of existing gTLDs can be submitted during the immediate next application round of the New gTLD Program or in any subsequent rounds. However, of particular note here is, per Recommendation 3.7 of the SubPro Final Report, new policy development during an ongoing round must only apply to the opening of the application procedure subsequent to the adoption of the relevant recommendations by the ICANN Board. In addition, the debate on application rounds (possibility of "no rounds") aligns with the rationale provided in Preliminary Recommendation 3.

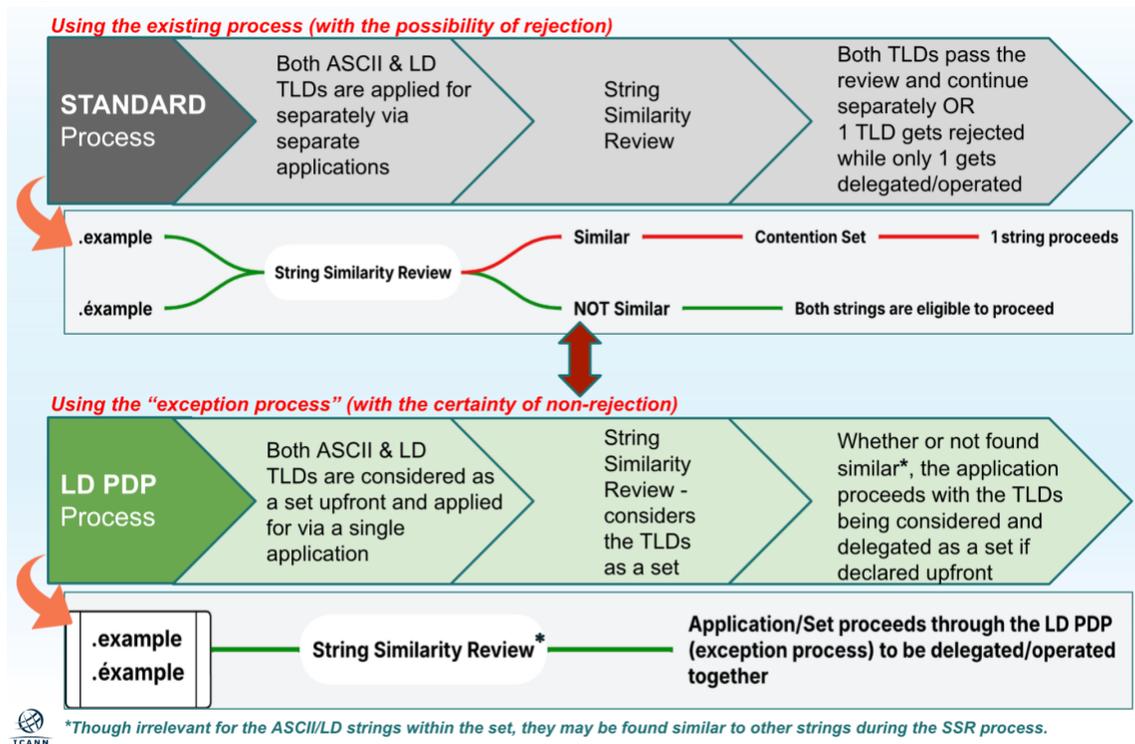**Rationale for Preliminary Recommendation 5:**

The LD PDP WG considered the implications of EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Recommendation 3.4[56] and discussed at length whether it was applicable for the LD PDP when viewed as an "exception process" as opposed to the standard process for the New gTLD Program: Next Round and subsequent rounds. The WG examined various issues, including the categorization of labels (i.e., primary and secondary labels), administrative and legal matters within the application process itself, and cost-related factors.

First, while EPDP-IDNs dealt with primary gTLD strings and their allocatable variant label(s), the LD PDP WG determined that primary strings do not exist in the context of LD PDP. However, considering that the WG had established during its early deliberation phase that a base ASCII gTLD label is a requirement for the delegation and operation of the set (ASCII and Latin diacritic gTLD[s]), as also outlined in Preliminary Recommendation 1, it appeared reasonable to consider ASCII gTLD akin to the base label.

As for the administrative and legal matters to ensure a smooth application process, the WG compared the standard process with an exception process to determine how applications would function under each approach *(See [Figure 2] below)*: Specifically, the standard process refers to the existing framework in which applicants submit separate applications for ASCII and Latin diacritic gTLD(s). These applications are evaluated individually and there is a possibility that one (1) of the TLDs may be rejected if it is deemed confusingly similar to the other through the String Similarity Review Process. In contrast, the exception process – LD PDP Process and the main path in this context – allows applicants to apply for all ASCII and Latin diacritic gTLDs together as a set in a single application. This provides certainty that none of the labels will be rejected for being confusingly similar to one another, unless an objection is raised from a third party. Regardless of their similarity, the labels would be considered, delegated, and operated as a set, provided this is declared upfront.

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[56] EPDP-IDNs P1 Final Recommendation 3.4: A future applicant applying for a primary gTLD string together with its allocatable variant label(s) in the same round is required to submit one application for the primary gTLD string and the variant label(s).

[Figure 2] Standard Process vs. LD PDP Process

Applicants may choose which process to use, but the WG determined that switching between the standard and exception processes will not be permitted. In particular, applications submitted under the exception process as a single set cannot later be unbundled.[57]

Nevertheless, this recommendation does not preclude the circumstance where an applicant only applies for an ASCII gTLD or a Latin diacritic gTLD during an application round and does not wish to apply for its corresponding label(s), if any. Similarly, as stipulated in Preliminary Recommendation 3, those existing gTLD registry operators wishing to apply for an ASCII and/or Latin diacritic gTLD(s) are required to submit new applications, even if the applied-for gTLD corresponds to or is associated with an existing gTLD. These applications must provide details and justifications as outlined in Preliminary Recommendation 7.

In short, the WG agreed that if during the next application round and each subsequent round, an ASCII gTLD string is sought with one or more of its corresponding Latin diacritic gTLD label(s) at the same time, the applicant can choose which process to follow – Standard Process or the LD PDP Process. If the applicant decides to go with the LD PDP process, they are required to submit one application covering these labels. Consequently, the applicant should not submit multiple applications for new ASCII and/or its corresponding Latin diacritic gTLD string(s) in the same round if applied through the LD PDP process and declared as a set up front. The WG agreed that

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[57] Note that "(un)bundling" applies solely to the application process. Once the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set is allocated to a gTLD registry operator, the voluntary dissolution of the set is at the gTLD registry operator's discretion. Compare this recommendation to Preliminary Recommendations 35-36, 38, and Implementation Guidance 37.

this approach would be the most efficient and streamlined process, leading to the most cost-effective and certain path for future gTLD registry operators.

As for the debate on application rounds (possibility of "no rounds"), this remains aligned with the rationale provided in Preliminary Recommendation 3.

Rationale for Preliminary Recommendation 6:

In accordance with EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Recommendation 3.25,[58] the LD PDP WG agreed that withdrawal of an applied-for Latin diacritic gTLD label should be allowed after the application has been submitted, but adding a new Latin diacritic gTLD label to that submitted application is prohibited. As mentioned in the rationale for Preliminary Recommendation 5, primary and variant strings do not exist in the context of LD PDP. However, the base ASCII gTLD label will be treated like a base label and it must exist for the delegation and operation of the set (ASCII and Latin diacritic gTLDs), as outlined in Preliminary Recommendation 1. Clearly, the withdrawal of an applied-for ASCII gTLD label that results in a single IDN gTLD will no longer be considered part of an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set. To ensure clarity, "application" here refers to the application of an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set.

As for the .Brand TLD string conditions, the LD PDP WG agrees with the rules set out in SubPro PDP Recommendation 20.8,[59] agreeing to permit string changes for an applied-for .Brand TLD string that is placed in a contention set under specific circumstances and conditions. Therefore, such modification is allowed for an applied-for ASCII gTLD string and its Latin diacritic label(s) in a .Brand TLD application.

Rationales for Preliminary Recommendation 7 and Implementation Guidance 8:

The simultaneous delegation of gTLDs that constitute an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set (i.e., an ASCII gTLD and its corresponding Latin diacritic gTLD[s]) is also unprecedented and may only

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[58] EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Recommendation 3.25: After submission of an application, the applicant is allowed to withdraw an applied-for variant label from that application, but is not allowed to add any other variant label that was not originally applied-for in that application. Only an applicant for a .Brand TLD string whose applied-for primary gTLD string is placed in a contention set is allowed to change its applied-for primary string and allocatable variant label(s) under the condition set out in SubPro PDP Recommendation 20.8.

[59] SubPro Recommendation 20.8: The Working Group recommends allowing .Brand TLDs to change the applied-for string as a result of a contention set where (a) the change adds descriptive word to the string, (b) the descriptive word is in the description of goods and services of the Trademark Registration, (c) such a change does not create a new contention set or expand an existing contention set, (d) the change triggers a new operational comment period and opportunity for objection and, (e) the new string complies with all New gTLD Program requirements. When the .Brand applicant changes the applied-for string, the new string will also be considered a .Brand. The Working Group recognizes that an exception or a modification to Specification 13 will be needed to implement this recommendation. The Working Group further recognizes that in order to implement this recommendation, applications seeking to change their applied-for string will need to be evaluated for eligibility as a .Brand before the string change request can be accepted. This may occur either by ICANN specifically evaluating those individual applications during Initial Evaluation or by evaluating all applicants that elect to be .Brands during Initial Evaluation.

become possible through this exception process as an outcome of the LD PDP. This is a similar situation to the possible delegation of gTLD variant labels at the root zone, which resulted from the outcome of the EPDP-IDNs. Accordingly, justifications for the simultaneous delegation of the set will be crucial when applicants submit their applications.

Therefore, applicants must not only explain the mission and purpose of the applied-for ASCII gTLD string or existing gTLD but also provide, at a minimum, all three (3) pieces of information outlined in Preliminary Recommendation 7.1-7.3. It is important to note that the applicant is expected to answer these questions for each and every applied-for ASCII gTLD string and/or Latin diacritic gTLD label(s). In this instance, the mission and purpose of the applied-for gTLD string as well as the existing gTLDs are also critical, as it is possible that the mission has evolved for an existing gTLD, as well as for the overall set, not solely for the new TLDs. In any case, these questions are intended to demonstrate that the applicant has carefully considered whether the applied-for label(s) are needed to achieve their stated objectives and to ensure that the steps are well thought out regarding the management and operational complexities that may arise upon delegation of the set. In particular, the applicant must realize the operational and management complexities that may impact registrars, resellers, and/or registrants. Preliminary Recommendation 7.3 seeks to understand the applicant's proposed approach to minimize such complexities from operational and management standpoints. By way of explanation, management is responsible for overall strategic decision-making and resource allocation, while operation executes the plans and processes necessary for day-to-day functioning.

Moreover, the LD PDP WG deemed Implementation Guidance 3.6 from EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report applicable, ensuring clarity on how the applicant's responses to the elements established in Preliminary Recommendation 7 should be evaluated and applied consistently for each applied-for ASCII gTLD string and Latin diacritic gTLD label(s). The WG required that the evaluation panel for the LD PDP exception process strictly include evaluators with Latin script expertise. Other application criteria should follow the guidance provided in Implementation Guidance 8.2–8.5, consistent with Implementation Guidance 3.6 from EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report.

Here, it is worth noting that those ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set applicants that may wish to appeal during the evaluation process should refer to the "Extended Evaluation" mechanism outlined in the AGB. Per AGB 1.2.14.1,[60] initial evaluation can sometimes lead to extended evaluation when the applicants are unable to resolve issues through clarifying questions. Accordingly, variant string evaluation is subject to this extended evaluation. Given that the LD PDP evaluation process is maintaining alignment with EPDP-IDNs, the "Extended Evaluation"

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[60] AGB 1.2.14.1 Extended Evaluation:
https://newgtldprogram.icann.org/sites/default/files/documents/new-gtld-program-2026-round-applicant-guidebook-current-en.pdf#page=36

might be the recommended course of action if such cases occur for the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set applicants.

To summarize, the WG affirms the assessment from the EPDP-IDNs that the same requirements, as set out in Preliminary Recommendation 7 and Implementation Guidance 8, will also apply to existing gTLD registry operators wishing to apply for corresponding ASCII gTLD and/or Latin diacritic gTLD(s) of their existing gTLDs.

Rationales for Preliminary Recommendation 9 and Implementation Guidance 10-11:

The LD PDP WG affirms that it is important for future applicants to demonstrate their technical capability to operate and manage the applied-for ASCII gTLD string as well as the applied-for Latin diacritic gTLD string(s) that constitute the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set. The same requirement applies to existing gTLD registry operators who wish to apply for the corresponding gTLDs – either the ASCII gTLD or the Latin diacritic gTLD – of their existing gTLDs.

To this end, the evaluation of an applicant's capability to manage the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set should be closely tied to the overall evaluation of the applicant's technical capability. Accordingly, the evaluation of technical and operational capability should be based on measurable criteria, which is to be determined during implementation. Such criteria may include, but not be limited to, the performance of the Critical Functions[61] with respect to second-level registrations under the ASCII gTLD string and the applied-for Latin diacritic gTLD label(s).

Consistent with EPDP-IDNs, as the simultaneous delegation of gTLDs that constitute an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set is unprecedented, there is uncertainty about how an ASCII gTLD string and its corresponding Latin diacritic gTLD label(s) will be managed and operated concurrently by the same gTLD registry operator. Therefore, the LD PDP WG adheres to the rules outlined in Implementation Guidance 11 from the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report; that within fifteen (15) months of the delegation of the first ASCII gTLD label or the Latin diacritic gTLD label(s) that constitute the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set, and every twenty-four (24) months thereafter, ICANN org should conduct research in order to identify whether any additional criteria or tests should be used, as part of the application process, to evaluate the technical and operational capability of an applicant to manage the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set at the registry level. A key point to highlight here is that this should not be treated as a separate research; rather, conducted together, if necessary, with the EPDP-IDNs research on variants, per Implementation Guidance 3.9. In other words, a second, independent research that results in a

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[61] The Critical Functions are: DNS Service, DNSSEC proper resolution, EPP, RDDS, and Data Escrow. See details in Section 6 of Specification 10 in the Base Registry Agreement: https://newgtlds.icann.org/sites/default/files/agreements/agreement-approved-31jul17-en.html#specification10

separate report is likely unnecessary, since the technical handling of variants and the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set is expected to be the same.

Similar to EPDP-IDNs, ICANN org must provide public consultation opportunities on the scope and any proposed outputs of the research. For avoidance of doubt, any such additional criteria or test should not be used to evaluate the technical and operational capability of a gTLD registry operator that has already been managing an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set before such additional criteria or tests are published.

Rationales for Preliminary Recommendations 12-13:

The LD PDP and EPDP-IDNs maintain an important divergence when it comes to application fees. For EPDP-IDNs, a future applicant applying for a primary gTLD string and up to four (4) of that string's allocatable variant labels during an application round could incur the same base application fee as any other gTLD applicant not applying for variant labels in that round. In contrast, the LD PDP WG recognizes that the base ASCII gTLD and its corresponding Latin diacritic gTLD(s) are independent – they are not dependent on one another for their existence, nor are they contingent upon each other, except for the purpose of application, delegation, and operational coherence. The purpose is to create an exception process that allows strings to co-exist, which would otherwise likely be rejected for being too similar to one another, rather than to secure financial benefits. Therefore, any fee discount applicable in this context should not be considered equivalent to discounts in the EPDP-IDNs.

Building on this understanding, the LD PDP WG engaged in extensive discussions on this issue, aiming to fully understand the cost recovery principle and its implications, while also establishing clear boundaries to ensure that the process functions effectively. In essence, the WG agrees with and affirms the cost recovery principle as applied to the overall Program; that is, agreeing to SubPro PDP's Affirmation with Modification 15.4[62] that the New gTLD Program should be self-sustaining without the need for funding from other sources and that the program should operate on a cost recovery basis with the goal of being revenue neutral. This would mean that the total cost of running the Program should be collectively borne by all applicants. As such, new applicants are expected to subsidize not only the cost of their own applications but also the portion of costs associated with the Applicant Support Program (ASP) as well as the variant labels. This shared contribution is what allows for the so-called "discount."

From this standpoint, the WG considered three (3) potential options for LD PDP on application fees: 1) charging a standard fee for all TLDs within the set. This means full price per gTLD even

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[62] SubPro Final Report Affirmation with Modification 15.4:
The gTLD evaluation fee is set to recover costs associated with the new gTLD program. The fee is set to ensure that the program is fully funded and revenue neutral and is not subsidized by existing contributions from ICANN funding sources, including generic TLD registries and registrars, ccTLD contributions and RIR contributions.

when applied as a set. The advantage of this approach is that it is the fastest and simplest to implement. However, this could potentially discourage applicants and limit the use of Latin script IDNs due to the high costs; 2) charging the full application fee for the main TLD while offering one or more additional string(s) in the set free of charge. This approach would significantly reduce the financial burden for applicants seeking to apply for and operate the set. However, it could complicate cost recovery, particularly in relation to evaluation fees, which may have a program-wide impact, making it more difficult to accommodate. Moreover, the goal of EPDP-IDNs was to incentivize IDNs, while LD PDP has no such objective, and this option would ultimately mean that the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD sets get subsidized by all other applicants; 3) providing no specific guideline on fees, and instead adhering to the cost recovery principle, whereby pricing would be determined during implementation. While this approach would be consistent with the overall Program, the WG would have no input or influence over how the fees are ultimately set.

In conclusion, the LD PDP WG decided that the third option was the most appropriate, opting not to provide any specific recommendation on fees, but instead adhering to the cost recovery principle.

In a similar manner, the LD PDP WG recommends that an application only for the corresponding ASCII gTLD or Latin diacritic gTLD(s) of the existing gTLD must incur a discounted base application fee as determined by ICANN org and considered to be proportionate to any costs associated with evaluating the application and consistent with the cost recovery principle. Since the existing gTLD is already delegated to the applicant, there is a presumption that some evaluation elements for its corresponding gTLD(s) may not necessarily apply. Under this situation, such an application should not incur the same base application fee, nor should it be cost free. As such, a discount on the base application fee for such an application seems appropriate. Ultimately, ICANN org has the discretion to establish what constitutes a discount for cost recovery of Latin diacritics gTLD applications.

Rationale for Preliminary Recommendation 14:
The LD PDP WG agrees that the same application requirements and evaluation criteria apply to all gTLDs that constitute an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set. In particular, the three (3) categories of gTLDs that have non-standard application types as identified by SubPro PDP—1) Community gTLD, 2) Geographic Name TLD, and 3) .Brand TLD—are bound by particular requirements detailed in Preliminary Recommendation 14.1-14.3, consistent with Final Recommendation 3.16 of the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report.

With respect to applications for .Brand TLD strings that constitute an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set, each of the applied-for label(s) must be an exact match to and supported by a registered trademark of the gTLD registry operator or its affiliate. Trademark law focuses on protecting consumers from being potentially confused about the source of goods and services. Thus, under trademark law, the rights are attached to one, distinct mark limited to an exact match; the visual

similarity between an ASCII trademark and a Latin diacritical domain name can create legal challenges.

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4) Topic 4: Contractual Requirements

Preliminary Outputs:

Preliminary Recommendation 15: Consistent with Final Recommendation 7.1 of the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report,[63] any future ASCII gTLD along with its Latin diacritic gTLD label(s) (if any) that constitute a set must be subject to one Registry Agreement with all gTLD labels in the set having the same service level agreements (SLAs) and other operational requirements.

Implementation Guidance 16: Consistent with Implementation Guidance 7.2 of the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report,[64] a new specification or an amendment to the Base Registry Agreement for any future ASCII gTLD along with its Latin diacritic label(s) may need to be developed to incorporate ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD label management provisions.

Preliminary Recommendation 17: Consistent with Final Recommendation 7.3 of the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report,[65] any existing registry operator that is successful in its future application for its ASCII or Latin diacritic label(s) must be required to adopt contractual terms to accommodate the newly approved label(s) by way of a new Specification to its existing Registry Agreement.

Preliminary Recommendations 18: Consistent with Final Recommendation 7.4 of the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report,[66] the registry fixed fee for a gTLD registry

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[63] EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Recommendation 7.1: Any future gTLD along with its variant labels (if any) must be subject to one Registry Agreement with each variant label having the same service level agreements (SLAs) and other operational requirements.

[64] EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Implementation Guidance 7.2: A new specification or an amendment to the Base Registry Agreement for any future gTLD along with its variant label(s) may need to be developed to incorporate variant management provisions.

[65] EPDP-IDNs P1 Final Recommendation 7.3: Any existing registry operator that is successful in its future application for its variant label(s) must be required to adopt contractual terms to accommodate the newly approved variant label(s) by way of a new Specification to its existing Registry Agreement.

[66] EPDP-IDNs P1 Final Recommendation 7.4: The registry fixed fee for a gTLD registry operator that operates the delegated gTLD label(s) from a variant label set must be the same as a gTLD registry operator of a single gTLD.

operator that operates the delegated gTLD label(s) that constitute the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set must be the same as a gTLD registry operator of a single gTLD.[67]

Preliminary Recommendations 19: Consistent with <u>Final Recommendations 7.5</u> of the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report,[68] the calculation of the registry-level transaction fee must be based on the cumulative number of domain name registrations of the combined delegated gTLD label(s) from an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set.[69]

Preliminary Recommendation 20: Consistent with <u>Final Recommendation 7.6</u> of the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report,[70] the registry service provider for each one of the Critical Functions as defined in the Base Registry Agreement must be the same for all ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD labels that constitute a set. The Critical Functions are: DNS Service, DNSSEC proper resolution, EPP, RDDS, and Data Escrow.

Preliminary Recommendation 21: Consistent with <u>Final Recommendation 7.7</u> of the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report,[71] if the registry operator changes its gTLD's registry service provider for any one of the Critical Functions, the corresponding ASCII/Latin diacritic label(s) of that gTLD must simultaneously transition to the same registry service provider for that Critical Function.

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[67] ICANN Board adopted EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 <u>Final Recommendation 7.4</u> at its 30 October 2025 Board Meeting during ICANN84 in Dublin. See Board resolution here: https://www.icann.org/en/board-activities-and-meetings/materials/approved-resolutions-regular-meeting-of-the-icann-board-30-10-2025-en#section2.c

[68] EPDP-IDNs P1 <u>Final Recommendation 7.5</u>: The calculation of the registry-level transaction fee must be based on the cumulative number of domain name registrations of the combined delegated gTLD label(s) from a variant label set.

[69] ICANN Board adopted EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 <u>Final Recommendation 7.5</u> at its 30 October 2025 Board Meeting during ICANN84 in Dublin. See Board resolution here: https://www.icann.org/en/board-activities-and-meetings/materials/approved-resolutions-regular-meeting-of-the-icann-board-30-10-2025-en#section2.c

[70] EPDP-IDNs P1 <u>Final Recommendation 7.6</u>: The registry service provider for each one of the Critical Functions as defined in the Base Registry Agreement for an existing gTLD must be the same as for its delegated variant labels. The Critical Functions are: DNS Service, DNSSEC proper resolution, EPP, RDDS, and Data Escrow.

[71] EPDP-IDNs P1 <u>Final Recommendation 7.7</u>: If the registry operator changes its gTLD's registry service provider for any one of the Critical Functions, the variant label(s) of that gTLD must simultaneously transition to the same registry service provider for that Critical Function.

Preliminary Recommendation 22: Consistent with <u>Final Recommendation 7.8</u> of the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report,[72] in the event that a Registry Transition or Change of Control process is initiated for a gTLD, the process must encompass the gTLD and all its corresponding ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD label(s), if any, at the same time.

Preliminary Recommendation 23 : Consistent with <u>Final Recommendation 7.9</u> of the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report,[73] after the Registry Transition Process or Change of Control process is completed for a gTLD and its corresponding ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD label(s), the successor gTLD registry operator can apply for the other non-delegated Latin diacritic gTLD label(s) of the ASCII gTLD in accordance with the "same entity" principle pursuant to <u>Preliminary Recommendation 2</u>.

Preliminary Recommendation 24: Consistent with <u>Final Recommendation 7.10</u> of the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report,[74] emergency transition of a gTLD to an EBERO provider must include all the corresponding ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD labels that constitute the set, if any. All of the labels that constitute the set must be transitioned to the same EBERO provider at the same time.

Preliminary Recommendation 25: Consistent with <u>Final Recommendation 7.11</u> of the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report,[75] in the event a gTLD is reassigned as a result of a TM-PDDRP determination, that reassignment must include all the corresponding ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD label(s) that constitute the set, if any, at the same time.

Preliminary Recommendation 26: Consistent with <u>Final Recommendation 7.12</u> of the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report,[76] the same data escrow provider must be contracted for all the gTLDs that constitute an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set.

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[72] EPDP-IDNs P1 <u>Final Recommendation 7.8</u>: In the event a Registry Transition or Change of Control process is initiated for a gTLD, the process must encompass the gTLD and all its allocated and delegated variant label(s), if any, at the same time.

[73] EPDP-IDNs P1 <u>Final Recommendation 7.9</u>: After the Registry Transition Process or Change of Control process is completed for a gTLD and its allocated and delegated variant label(s), the successor registry operator can apply for the other non-delegated, allocatable variant label(s) of that gTLD in accordance with the "same entity" principle pursuant to Final Recommendation 2.1.

[74] EPDP-IDNs P1 <u>Final Recommendation 7.10</u>: Emergency transition of a gTLD to an EBERO provider must include the allocated and delegated variant label(s) of that gTLD, if any. All these labels must be transitioned to the same EBERO provider at the same time.

[75] EPDP-IDNs P1 <u>Final Recommendation 7.11</u>: In the event a gTLD is reassigned as a result of a TM-PDDRP determination, that reassignment must include all allocated and delegated variant label(s) of the gTLD, if any, at the same time.

[76] EPDP-IDNs P1 <u>Final Recommendation 7.12</u>: The same data escrow provider must be contracted for the gTLD and its allocated and delegated variant label(s).

Implementation Guidance 27: Consistent with Implementation Guidance 7.13 of the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report,[77] the escrow data associated with each ASCII gTLD and each Latin diacritic gTLD label that constitute a set should be stored in separate files.

Preliminary Recommendation 28: Consistent with Final Recommendation 7.14 of the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report,[78] all the gTLDs that constitute an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set through a single application must be bound by the same restrictions, which will become contractual requirements upon execution of the Registry Agreement. Similarly, any corresponding ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD label sought by an existing registry operator will be bound by the same restrictions as the existing gTLD upon execution of the new Specification to its existing Registry Agreement for the newly approved ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD version of the label(s). The restrictions in this recommendation refer to the differential treatment and requirements applied to the TLDs subject to Category 1 Safeguards as well as to the non-standard types of gTLDs, which are Community gTLDs, Brand TLDs, Geographic Name TLDs.

Rationales:

Rationales for Preliminary Recommendation 15, Implementation Guidance 16, and Preliminary Recommendation 17:

The LD PDP WG upheld Final Recommendation 7.1 of the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report to remain aligned with the "same entity" principle and to maintain the single application process for the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set, as outlined in Preliminary Recommendation 5. In accordance with this PDP, any future ASCII gTLD and the corresponding Latin diacritic gTLD label(s) are expected to function as a set throughout their lifecycle. A single Registry Agreement serves as an important vehicle to keep the set together. Therefore, the LD PDP WG considers it both efficient and logical for all future gTLDs within the set to be governed by one (1) Registry Agreement with one (1) gTLD registry operator, as outlined in Preliminary Recommendation 15. This also means that they must adhere to the same base terms and conditions within the single

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[77] EPDP-IDNs P1 Implementation Guidance 7.13: The escrow data associated with each gTLD variant label should be stored in separate files.

[78] EPDP-IDNs P1 Final Recommendation 7.14: The applied-for primary gTLD string and any allocatable variant label sought by the applicant must be bound by the same restrictions, which will become contractual requirements upon execution of the Registry Agreement. Similarly, any allocatable variant label sought by an existing registry operator will be bound by the same restrictions as the existing gTLD upon execution of the new Specification to its existing Registry Agreement for the newly approved variant label(s). The restrictions in this recommendation refer to the differential treatment and requirements applied to non-standard types of gTLDs, which are Community-based TLDs, Brand TLDs, Geographic Name TLDs, as well as TLDs subject to Category 1 Safeguards.

Registry Agreement, as authorized by ICANN, with each label having the same service level agreements (SLAs) and other operational requirements.

To expand on this, when formulating the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 final recommendations, the EPDP-IDNs Team recognized that an updated Base Registry Agreement for future rounds would be developed during implementation of the SubPro PDP Outputs. Accordingly, the EPDP-IDNs Team had proposed addressing the future gTLD and its variant label(s) relationships through a special provision of the updated Registry Agreement, potentially via a new specification or amendment. Currently, the variant labels are included in a new specification (New Specification 14) under development, which can specifically incorporate variant management provisions and contractual requirements in accordance with Final Recommendations 7.6-7.7 from the EPDP-IDNs Final Report.

Concerning how the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD sets should be contractually linked, it was determined to be a single Registry Agreement by adding a new specification, remaining consistent with EPDP-IDNs, since the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set will be unified for the purpose of application, delegation, and operation, similar to the variant labels. Affirming this approach, the LD PDP WG envisions a new specification will be added in the future to explicitly incorporate ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD label management provisions, taking into account Preliminary Recommendations 20-21.

In this context, those existing gTLD registry operators that are successful in their future applications for the corresponding ASCII or Latin diacritic gTLD label(s) must also adopt contractual terms to accommodate the newly approved labels by way of a new specification in their existing Registry Agreements, as outlined in Preliminary Recommendation 17. This requirement is especially important given that the Base Registry Agreement may be inadequate in form and substance to address any ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD management requirements, like they were for variant management. This approach aligns with Preliminary Recommendation 15 and Implementation Guidance 16, which emphasizes the need for uniformity in the use of Registry Agreements by all gTLD registry operators – across both the existing and future – that manage the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD sets. Consistent with EPDP-IDNs, the rules set out here also adhere to SubPro PDP Affirmation 36.2[79] which supports the "current practice of maintaining a single base Registry Agreement with 'Specifications'."

Rationale for Preliminary Recommendation 18:
The LD PDP WG acknowledges that a registry-level fixed fee (per calendar quarter) is stipulated in the Base Registry Agreement (Article 6, Section 6.1). While aligning with Final Recommendation 7.4 from the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report – covering both the delegated

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[79] See Affirmation 36.2 in the SubPro PDP Final Report, p.183: https://gnso.icann.org/sites/default/files/file/field-file-attach/final-report-newgtld-subsequent-procedures-pdp-02feb21-en.pdf#page=183

primary gTLD and its variant label(s) under the registry fixed fee per one Registry Agreement – the LD PDP WG also recognizes that the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD labels are independent of one another. Additionally, Final Recommendation 7.4 from the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 was recently adopted on 30 October 2025.[80]

With this in mind, the LD PDP WG discussed the fixed fee and its implications, exploring various options for the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD sets. The WG considered four (4) potential options: 1) proceed in accordance with the outcome of the ICANN Board's decision (unknown at the time of deliberation); 2) charge a registry fixed fee equivalent to a single TLD, consistent with EPDP-IDNs; 3) treat each gTLD within the set as independent and apply a full registry fixed fee to each delegated gTLD label within the set; and 4) apply a reduced fee, ensuring that the total amount does not exceed the combined fees for two (2) separate TLDs.

Due to uncertainty at the time of deliberation concerning the outcome of the Board vote on EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Recommendation 7.4, the LD PDP WG decided to proceed with the first option: i.e.) to proceed in accordance with the outcome of the ICANN Board's decision and maintain consistency with the EPDP-IDNs.

Rationale for Preliminary Recommendation 19:
The LD PDP WG also acknowledges that a registry-level transaction fee (per calendar quarter for each domain name registration) is stipulated in the Base Registry Agreement (Article 6, Section 6.1). The Registry Agreement also stipulates that the registry-level transaction fee shall not apply until and unless more than 50,000 registrations have occurred in the gTLD during any calendar quarter or any consecutive four (4) calendar quarter periods in the aggregate – this being the transaction threshold.

According to the EPDP-IDNs Team, under the "same entity" principle – where all delegated gTLD variant label(s) from a variant label set are managed by the same gTLD registry operator – registry-level transaction fees should be calculated based on the cumulative number of domain name registrations of the combined delegated gTLD label(s) in a variant label set, rather than individually per each delegated gTLD from the variant label set. Similarly, the LD PDP WG agreed to align with the EPDP-IDNs Team's approach taken via Final Recommendation 7.5 from the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report; the registry-level transaction fee must be based on the cumulative number of domain name registrations of the combined delegated gTLD label(s) from an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set.

For illustration, if during a calendar quarter there are 25,000 domain name registrations of ASCII gTLD (.atld), 25,000 registrations of the corresponding Latin diacritic gTLD label (.ldtld), and

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[80] See Approved Resolutions by the ICANN Board through its Regular Meeting on 30 October 2025: https://www.icann.org/en/board-activities-and-meetings/materials/approved-resolutions-regular-meeting-of-the-icann-board-30-10-2025-en#section2.c

another 10 registrations of another corresponding Latin diacritic gTLD label (.ld2tld) within the set, the combined number of domain name registrations of all three gTLDs within the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set reaches 50,010, and this total exceeds the threshold at which the registry-level transaction fee becomes applicable.

Finally, and similar to Preliminary Recommendation 18, Final Recommendation 7.5 of the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report remained pending ICANN Board's adoption and under financial analysis at this time of drafting this report, together with Final Recommendation 7.4. Thus, the registry-level transaction fee will be applied to the set based on the cumulative number of domain name registrations of the combined delegated gTLD label(s) from an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set.

Rationales for Preliminary Recommendations 20-21:
As outlined in Preliminary Recommendation 2, the LD PDP WG affirmed the "same entity" principle early on in the process establishing rules for the "how"– specifically, the measures required when delegating a base ASCII gTLD and the Latin script diacritic version of the gTLD that are confusingly similar but not variants of each other. This rule is intended to mitigate potential end-user confusion when such labels are delegated simultaneously.

Consistent with EPDP-IDNs, the LD PDP WG emphasized the "same entity" principle throughout the deliberations and it was noted during the review of EPDP-IDNs policy recommendations that adherence to this principle is essential not only for the registries, registrars, and registrants – the external-facing entities, but also requires that the Critical Functions and Data Escrow providers be identical. This is particularly important to ensure feasible and consistent implementation of the "same entity" requirement at the top-level. Naturally, the LD PDP WG agrees with the EPDP-IDNs Team's proposal to extend the SubPro PDP Recommendation 25.5[81] to existing gTLDs.

Thus, in the event that an existing gTLD registry operator applies for corresponding gTLD labels that constitute an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set in the future, it will be required to use the same registry service provider for the provision of its respective Critical Functions. As stated in Preliminary Recommendation 20, the Critical Functions are: DNS Service, DNSSEC proper resolution, EPP, RDDS, and Data Escrow. For example, its Data Escrow provider must be the same for the existing gTLD and the corresponding labels that constitute the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set; its DNS service provider must also be the same for its existing gTLD and the corresponding labels within the set.

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[81] See Recommendation 25.5 in the SubPro PDP Final Report, p.115: https://gnso.icann.org/sites/default/files/file/field-file-attach/final-report-newgtld-subsequent-procedures-pdp-02feb21-en.pdf#page=115; Recommendation 7 in the Staff Paper, p.4: https://www.icann.org/en/system/files/files/idn-variant-tld-recommendations-analysis-25jan19-en.pdf#page=4

Pursuant to this rule, the LD PDP WG upholds the position that the same registry service provider must operate all delegated ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD label(s) that constitute a set at any given time. To that end, the transition to a new registry service provider must apply to the gTLD and all of its corresponding gTLDs that constitute a ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set at the same time.

Rationales for Preliminary Recommendations 22-25:

Preliminary Recommendations 22-25 remain aligned with EPDP-IDNs by adhering to the "same entity" principle, under which a gTLD and all its corresponding ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD label(s) that constitute a set must be treated and move as a set, consistent with the rationale for SubPro PDP Recommendation 25.5 that established, "to the extent that the TLD were to change hands at any point after delegation, the variant TLDs must remain linked contractually, which should be considered a persistent requirement (e.g., this would impact gTLD registry transition procedures, including EBERO)."[82] In support of this goal, the LD PDP WG recommends that any future ASCII gTLD along with its Latin diacritic gTLD label(s), if any, that constitute a set must be subject to one (1) Registry Agreement with all gTLD labels in the set having the same SLAs and other operational requirements, as per Preliminary Recommendation 15.

Consequently, in the event of a registry transition – including emergency back-end registry operator temporary transition process and the reassignment of a gTLD as an outcome of a Trademark Post-Delegation Dispute Resolution Procedure (TM-PDDRP) determination – the LD PDP WG aligns with previous work such as SubPro and EPDP-IDNs that a gTLD and all of its corresponding ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD label(s) that constitute a set, if any, must be included in the same process and transition to the same entity at the same time.

In the same vein, the rights held by the former gTLD registry operator are also transferred to the successor. In addition, the new gTLD registry operator may apply for any new labels that the former gTLD registry operator did not apply for but could have, in accordance with Preliminary Recommendation 1 – strings distinguished only by diacritics.

Rationales for Preliminary Recommendation 26 and Implementation Guidance 27:

Data escrow requirements and procedures have been and continue to be defined in the Registry Agreement. The LD PDP WG aligns with the EPDP-IDNs Team in affirming that the current practices with regard to data escrow must be maintained for all the gTLDs that constitute an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set in order to ensure the stability of the associated domain name registrations.

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[82] See Rationale for Recommendation 25.5 in the SubPro PDP Final Report, p.115: https://gnso.icann.org/sites/default/files/file/field-file-attach/final-report-newgtld-subsequent-procedures-pdp-02feb21-en.pdf#page=115

To facilitate the implementation of data escrow requirements in a consistent manner, the same data escrow provider must be contracted for the gTLD and its corresponding ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD label(s) that constitute a set, which are governed under a single Registry Agreement.

However, the escrow data associated with each ASCII gTLD and each Latin diacritic gTLD label that constitute a set should be stored in separate files, as each label from the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD label set represents an individual registration, particularly from a technical standpoint but also as each label within the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set should be treated as a distinct gTLD in business-to-business interactions related to the Registry Agreement. The LD PDP WG also recognizes each gTLD label within the set as a distinct identifier for data escrow purposes.

Rationale for Preliminary Recommendation 28:
The LD PDP WG considered Final Recommendation 7.14 from the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report to be applicable to the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD applications, including both new gTLD applications and any applications corresponding to an existing gTLD sought by an existing gTLD registry operator. The primary issue addressed in this recommendation concerns the restrictions related to the differential treatment and requirements applied to the non-standard types of gTLDs. Per SubPro PDP Recommendation 4.1,[83] differential treatment may apply for certain applications based on either the application type, the string type, or the applicant type. These may be subject to different application questions, evaluation processes, contractual requirements, and post-delegation activities. Here, the different application types include Community TLDs, Brand TLDs, Geographic Name TLDs, while different string types include variant TLDs and strings subject to Category 1 Safeguards.

However, during a WG meeting,[84] the GDS liaison to the LD PDP WG pointed out that Category 1 Safeguard should not be categorized under "non-standard types of gTLDs." As per the updated AGB for the New gTLD Program: Next Round (2026), a specialized application – which is what is referred to as "non-standard types of gTLD" in Preliminary Recommendation 28 to stay consistent with EPDP-IDNs – depends on: 1) the type of applied-for string; 2) the type of applicant; and 3) the intended use of the applied-for string.[85] Here, various specialized applications include Geographic Name applications, Community applications, Brand TLD applications, IDN applications, Variant string applications, to name a few. Category 1 Safeguard is not what is listed under this category. Rather, any applied-for string that falls into one of the

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[83] See Recommendation 4.1 in the SubPro PDP Final Report, p.24: https://gnso.icann.org/sites/default/files/file/field-file-attach/final-report-newgtld-subsequent-procedures-pdp-02feb21-en.pdf#page=24

[84] Meeting #20: https://icann-community.atlassian.net/wiki/x/HADgGg

[85] For more details on the types of applications, see FAQ here: https://newgtldprogram.icann.org/en/resources/faqs/application-types#general-information1

four risk-based groups as a result of the Safeguard Assessment[86] will require inclusion of specific Safeguard Public Interest Commitments (Safeguard PICs) in the applicable Registry Agreement. Pursuant to this guidance, Variant TLDs and Latin diacritic TLDs fall under the Category 1 Safeguard.

Accordingly, the LD PDP WG ensured that Preliminary Recommendation 28 accurately reflected this revision made in the AGB, deviating from the original language in Final Recommendation 7.14 of the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report. This is to clarify that while the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set is subject to the Category 1 Safeguards, this restriction is not classified under "non-standard types of gTLDs." For clarity, the restriction, subject to Category 1 Safeguards, remains in effect; in line with EPDP-IDNs – where restrictions applied to the primary gTLD would also extend to any applied-for allocatable Variant TLDs upon execution of the binding Registry Agreement – all ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD labels within the entire set would likewise be subject to uniform restrictions for LD PDP.

Meanwhile, for the non-standard types of gTLDs – meaning the specialized application types such as Community TLDs, .Brand TLDs, Geographic Name TLDs – the same restrictions will apply. Thus, if an applied-for ASCII gTLD string is a .Brand TLD, any corresponding Latin diacritic gTLD string sought by the applicant will be bound by the same restrictions; if these strings pass evaluations and proceed to delegation, the same restrictions become contractual obligations upon execution of the applicable Registry Agreement. As mentioned above, naturally, the same recommendation extends to any corresponding ASCII or Latin diacritic gTLDs sought by an existing registry operator.

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5) Topic 5: Delegation and Removal

Preliminary Outputs:

> **Preliminary Recommendation 29**: Consistent with Final Recommendation 8.1 from the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report,[87] no ceiling value for the number of Latin diacritic gTLD labels that constitute an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set is necessary as

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[86] See Section 1.2.4.3 Safeguard Assessment, New gTLD Program: 2026 Round AGB, p.30: https://newgtldprogram.icann.org/sites/default/files/documents/new-gtld-program-2026-round-applicant-guidebook-current-en.pdf#page=30

[87] EPDP-IDNs P1 Final Recommendation 8.1: No ceiling value for delegated top-level variant labels from a variant label set is necessary as existing measures in the RZ-LGR to reduce the number of allocatable top-level variant labels, as well as economic, operational, and other factors that may impact the decision to apply for variant labels, will keep the number of delegated top-level variant labels conservative.

economic, operational, and other factors that may impact the decision to apply for multiple Latin diacritic gTLD labels will keep the number of delegated top-level Latin diacritic labels conservative. In addition, there will be no restrictions on the number of diacritical marks applied to a single character nor the type of TLDs (e.g., real words identified in dictionaries, geographic names, brands).

Preliminary Recommendation 30: Consistent with Final Recommendation 8.4 from the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report,[88] applicants for all gTLDs that constitute an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set that pass evaluation must be subject to the same terms and conditions, as recommended by the SubPro PDP, in respect of the timeframe for delegation, including the ability to apply for an extension of time for delegation.

Preliminary Recommendation 31: Consistent with Final Recommendation 8.5 from the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report,[89] the sequence for delegating the gTLDs that constitute the ASCII/Latin diacritic set that pass evaluation should be determined by the registry operator.

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[88] EPDP-IDNs P1 Final Recommendation 8.4: Applicants for a primary gTLD string and its applied-for allocatable variant label(s) that pass evaluation must be subject to the terms and conditions, as recommended by the SubPro PDP, in respect of the timeframe for delegation, including the ability to apply for an extension of time for delegation.

[89] EPDP-IDNs P1 Final Recommendation 8.5: The sequence for delegating the applied-for primary gTLD string and the applied-for allocatable variant label(s) that pass evaluation should be determined by the registry operator.

Preliminary Recommendation 32: Consistent with Final Recommendation 8.7 from the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report,[90] for all future versions of the RZ-LGR, Generation Panels[91] (GPs) and the Integration Panel (IP) should follow the stability principle in the LGR Procedure and make best efforts to retain full backward compatibility with delegated gTLDs, their delegated and allocated variant labels (if any), and their delegated and allocated ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set labels (if any). The LGR Procedure must be updated to specify the exceptional circumstances, to the extent known to the GPs and IP, that could result in a proposed update to the RZ-LGR not being able to retain full backward compatibility.

Preliminary Recommendation 33: Consistent with Final Recommendation 8.8 from the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report,[92] in the unexpected event where a proposed update to the RZ-LGR is unable to retain full backward compatibility for validating any delegated gTLDs and their corresponding ASCII or Latin diacritic gTLD label(s) (if any), the relevant GP must call out the exception during a Public Comment period and explain the reasons for such exception. The Public Comment period should also include the elements in the following Implementation Guidance.

Implementation Guidance 34: Consistent with Implementation Guidance 8.9 of the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report,[93] the GP explanation should identify security and stability risks (if any), as well as possible actions to mitigate the risks associated with allowing a delegated gTLD and its corresponding ASCII or Latin diacritic gTLD label(s) (if any) to be exempted. There should also be an assessment, conducted by ICANN org, of the potential impact of exemptions on registries, registrars, registrants, and end-users, as well as proposed measures to reduce the negative impact. As part of the assessment, ICANN org should facilitate a timely dialogue between the registry operator of the exempted gTLD, relevant function(s) in ICANN org, the GP, other experts and affected parties. Notwithstanding the recommendation to exempt affected gTLDs, in the event security and stability risks are identified, ICANN org and the affected registry operator should discuss possible measures to minimize the risks that would result in minimal disruption to registries, registrars, registrants, and end-users.

Preliminary Recommendation 35[94]: An ASCII gTLD that is removed from the root zone, either voluntarily or involuntarily, will result in the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set no longer meeting requirements as described in Preliminary Recommendation 1. The removed gTLD(s) shall not be available for re-assignment or selection by an entity other than the one holding the remaining IDN gTLD in the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set for at least 10 years following the removal. The gTLD registry operator may retain a single IDN gTLD and shall no longer be considered an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set.

> **Preliminary Recommendation 36**[95]: A delegated Latin diacritic label that is voluntarily removed from the root zone will not require the removal of the associated ASCII gTLD or its other delegated Latin diacritic label(s). The removed Latin diacritic gTLD shall not be available for re-assignment or selection by an entity other than the one holding the remaining gTLD(s) in the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set for at least 10 years following the removal. The gTLD registry operator may retain a single ASCII gTLD and shall no longer be considered an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set.

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[90] EPDP-IDNs P1 Final Recommendation 8.7: For all future versions of the RZ-LGR, Generation Panels (GPs) and the Integration Panel (IP) should follow the stability principle in the LGR Procedure and make best efforts to retain full backward compatibility with delegated gTLDs and their delegated and allocated variant labels (if any). The LGR Procedure must be updated to specify the exceptional circumstances, to the extent known to the GPs and IP, that could result in a proposed update to the RZ-LGR not being able to retain full backward compatibility.

[91] See details for "Generation Panel" and how they are maintained in the "Procedure to Develop and Maintain the Label Generation Rules for the Root Zone in Respect of IDNA Labels," p.20: https://www.icann.org/en/system/files/files/draft-lgr-procedure-20mar13-en.pdf

[92] EPDP-IDNs P1 Final Recommendation 8.8: In the unexpected event where a proposed update to the RZ-LGR is unable to retain full backward compatibility for validating any delegated gTLDs as well as their delegated and allocated variant labels (if any), the relevant GP must call out the exception during a Public Comment period and explain the reasons for such exception. The Public Comment period should also include the elements in the following Implementation Guidance.

[93] EPDP-IDNs P1 Implementation Guidance 8.9: The GP explanation should identify security and stability risks (if any), as well as possible actions to mitigate the risks associated with allowing a delegated gTLD and its delegated and allocated variant labels (if any) to be grandfathered. There should also be an assessment, conducted by ICANN org, of the potential impact of grandfathering on registries, registrars, registrants, and end-users, as well as proposed measures to reduce the negative impact. As part of the assessment, ICANN org should facilitate a timely dialogue between the registry operator of the grandfathered gTLD, relevant function(s) in ICANN org, the GP, other experts and affected parties. Notwithstanding the recommendation to grandfather affected gTLDs, in the event security and stability risks are identified, ICANN org and the affected registry operator should discuss possible measures to minimize the risks that would result in minimal disruption to registries, registrars, registrants, and end-users.

[94] The LD PDP WG referenced EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Recommendation 8.10 but adapted the requirement to better suit the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set. The original EPDP-IDNs P1 Final Recommendation 8.10 language is as follows: A primary gTLD that is removed from the root zone, either voluntarily or involuntarily, must also require the removal of its delegated variant label(s) from the root zone.

[95] The LD PDP WG referenced EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Recommendation 8.11 but adapted the requirement to better suit the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set. The original EPDP-IDNs P1 Final Recommendation 8.11 language is as follows: A delegated variant label that is voluntarily removed from the root zone will not require the removal of the associated primary gTLD or its other delegated variant label(s).

Implementation Guidance 37: Consistent with Implementation Guidance 8.12 of the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report,[96] in the event that domain name registrations exist at the second-level under a delegated ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD label, its registry operator's request for its removal from the root zone should include a transition plan, to be submitted to ICANN org for review, for the existing registrations under that ASCII/Latin diacritic label.

Preliminary Recommendation 38: Consistent with Final Recommendation 8.13 from the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report,[97] in the event that a gTLD is removed from the root zone as a consequence of its registry operator's breach of the Registry Agreement, the rest of its ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set, if any, must also be removed from the root zone.

Rationales:

Rationale for Preliminary Recommendation 29:

During the scope establishment phase, while addressing Charter Question 1 on the "what" and the "how"– circumstances under which a base ASCII gTLD and the Latin script diacritic version of the gTLD that are confusingly similar but not variants of each other may be simultaneously delegated – the LD PDP WG determined early on that no arbitrary limits would be set regarding the application types (for existing or new), the TLD types (real words, geographic names, etc.), the number of strings within a set (how many strings to constitute a set), or the number of diacritical marks within a letter (e.g., if more than one diacritical mark per character like ũ', ẵ, ć). In essence, the conclusion was not to impose any ceiling value or restrictions.

This recommendation pertains to cases where setting a ceiling value for the number of labels that constitute an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set is not necessary. Variant labels defined via EPDP-IDNs also had no arbitrary ceiling or threshold set. However, evaluations are in place and fees set—allowing up to four (4) allocatable variant labels together with the primary gTLD to incur the same base application fee as any other applicant that does not apply for variant labels in that round—to ensure alignment with the conservatism principle. Allocatable variants are also limited in scripts which naturally place a cap. As such, EPDP-IDNs Team acknowledged that various factors such as cost, operational competence, and potential challenges would naturally lead applicants to taking a conservative approach when applying for variant labels.

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[96] EPDP-IDNs P1 Implementation Guidance 8.12: In the event that domain name registrations exist at the second-level under a delegated variant label, its registry operator's request for its removal from the root zone should include a transition plan, to be submitted to ICANN org for review, for the existing registrations under that variant label.

[97] EPDP-IDNs P1 Final Recommendation 8.13: In the event that a gTLD is removed from the root zone as a consequence of its registry operator's breach of the Registry Agreement, the rest of its variant label set, if any, must also be removed from the root zone.

For LD PDP and the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD sets, while it introduces an exception process to allow for the ASCII and its corresponding Latin diacritic gTLD(s) to function as a set and be simultaneously delegated, they are still considered independent – they are not dependent on one another for their existence, nor are they contingent upon each other, except for the purpose of application, delegation, and operational coherence as a set. Although this WG has opted not to determine the application fee structure, it acknowledges that economic, operational, and other factors that burden a single gTLD registry operator may impact the decision to apply for multiple Latin diacritic gTLD labels. This, in turn, is expected to result in a naturally conservative number of Latin diacritic gTLD label applications whereby the WG deems it unnecessary to impose any limits.

Moreover, the LD PDP WG finds no conscious reason to limit the types of applications, the types of TLDs, or the number of diacritical marks within a letter. In particular, the TLDs do not have to be limited to real words identified in dictionaries and can be geographic names or brands, as introduced above. Accordingly, the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD sets allow TLDs to use words that are invented, especially for purposes such as brand naming.

Rationales for Preliminary Recommendations 30-31:

Affirmation 40.2 in the SubPro Final Report[98] supports maintaining the timeframe outlined in the Base Registry Agreement; specifically that gTLD registry operators must complete all the required testing procedures for delegating the gTLD into the root zone within twelve (12) months of the Effective Date of the Registry Agreement. In addition, SubPro PDP affirmed that the gTLD registry operators may request an extension of up to twelve (12) additional months for delegation. This is, evidently, also reflected in the Base Registry Agreement under 'Delegation Testing' (Article 2, Section 2.20).

The LD PDP WG remains aligned with the EPDP Team and the SubPro PDP recommendations, which require that each applied-for gTLD string and its corresponding ASCII and/or Latin diacritic gTLD label(s) that constitute a set – and pass evaluation – be delegated within the said twelve (12) month timeframe, with the possibility of an extension of up to twelve (12) additional months. This is based upon the understanding that all applied-for gTLDs that constitute an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set should be delegated at or about the same time to ensure an optimal user experience. Per Preliminary Recommendation 15 – where all gTLD labels within the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set that pass evaluation are governed by one (1) Registry Agreement – it seems reasonable for these labels to abide by the same delegation timeframe. Deviating from this approach could contradict the SubPro PDP recommendations and create unnecessary complexity.

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[98] See Affirmation 40.2 in the SubPro PDP Final Report, page 191:
https://gnso.icann.org/sites/default/files/file/field-file-attach/final-report-newgtld-subsequent-procedures-pdp-02feb21-en.pdf#page=191

With regard to the sequence in which the ASCII gTLD and Latin diacritic gTLD label(s) that pass evaluation should be delegated, the LD PDP WG determined that this is not a matter for ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD sets nor of any policy concern. In the absence of security or stability risks – and considering that all these labels are regarded as individual gTLD entries into the root zone – the LD PDP WG agreed that the delegation order does not matter for LD PDP nor require policy enforcement. Instead, this should be left to the discretion of gTLD registry operators, based on their business priorities and the details provided in their applications. That said, all labels must be delegated within the required timeframe or within any extended timeframe granted by ICANN org as stipulated in the Registry Agreement.

Rationales for Preliminary Recommendations 32-33 and Implementation Guidance 34:

The LD PDP WG had an in-depth discussion on how to proceed with Final Recommendation 8.7 from the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report, and apply to LD PDP, related to retaining full backward compatibility. The main questions raised were: 1) what does full backward compatibility mean in the context of the allocated and delegated ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set labels; and 2) does the LD PDP need to provide an additional recommendation beyond what was already established and will be determined through EPDP-IDNs?

First, to better understand the meaning of "full backward compatibility" in the context of this LD PDP and ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set, if the Generation Panel (GP) decides to update the LGR Procedure[99] along with an update to the RZ-LGR, such updates may prevent certain characters and gTLDs from co-existing. As a result, the gTLDs that constitute an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set may no longer be able to co-exist, let alone constitute a valid set.

Currently, the LGR defines which characters are permitted and which variant relationships may be added. As for LD PDP, variants are out of scope. For instance, a and á per RZ-LGR for Latin scripts are blocked variants; these blocked variants are not eligible for allocation and therefore cannot exist within the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set. However, e and é are currently not defined as variants under the current version of the RZ-LGR,[100] and gTLDs with these characters can apply under this LD PDP process. Yet if, in the future, the Latin GP revises these characters to become variants – specifically blocked variants and not allocatable ones, which is likely given that most variants in the Latin script are not made allocatable – then the corresponding labels will likely no longer be allowed to co-exist or constitute an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set. In this sense, under the "full backward compatibility" principle, future GPs will need to be mindful of this issue where existing cases may conflict with the newly updated rules, and resolving such cases may require new solutions to maintain full backward compatibility.

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[99] See LGR Procedure on wiki here: https://icann-community.atlassian.net/wiki/x/CICxBQ
[100] Current version of the RZ-LGR for the Latin Script – Version 5: https://www.icann.org/sites/default/files/lgr/rz-lgr-5-latin-script-26may22-en.html

Second, in the context of providing additional guidance through LD PDP on this matter, it was noted that the current language in Final Recommendation 8.7 from EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report may already address the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set labels. The LGR Procedure requires GPs and the Integration Panel (IP) to adhere to the stability principle and to make best efforts to retain full backward compatibility with delegated gTLDs. In this case, the issue extends to all gTLDs and is not unique to LD PDP.

Even if those labels in question were to exist as stand-alone domains, the same problem would arise under the new RZ-LGR and they would not be permitted to co-exist. Thus, there is nothing new or specific that needs to be redefined or added through LD PDP, as the necessary provisions have already been put into place via EPDP-IDNs. Regardless of whether the labels exist individually or as part of a set – in this case, an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set – any future changes must ensure that they remain viable through the exemption process.

To unpack this issue, the LD PDP WG affirmed the intent established through Final Recommendations 8.7-8.8 and Implementation Guidance 8.9 in the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report. In essence, future updates to the RZ-LGR should aim to maintain full backward compatibility with existing delegated gTLDs and their variant labels as well as allocated and delegated ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set label(s) in order to preserve root zone stability. While the likelihood of incompatibility is considered low due to built-in safeguards, the WG emphasized that the GPs and IPs should make best efforts to uphold this standard.

The LD PDP WG also encourages ICANN org to share these recommendations with the GPs and IPs. In cases where backward compatibility cannot be maintained – particularly due to non-variant labels that have already been delegated and operate as an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set – those affected gTLDs and their corresponding ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD labels that constitute the sets should be exempted. This would allow for a continued operation of the delegated gTLDs upon the identification of potential security and stability risks. To that end, the LD PDP WG also agrees with the EPDP-IDNs Team that the LGR Procedure be updated to explicitly enumerate such exceptional circumstances to the extent known to the GPs and IPs, while acknowledging that it may not be possible to identify all potential circumstances that could render full backward compatibility unretainable. While recognizing that GPs and IPs are not bound by policy obligations, they are encouraged to take these recommendations into serious consideration.

A point worth noting is that exemptions should apply to the delegated gTLD and the corresponding ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD label(s) that constitute the set, while any new Latin diacritic gTLD label(s) must comply with the updated RZ-LGR. This is foreseen in the LGR Procedure, which states that "While existing labels will almost certainly have to be

grandfathered[101] if they are in conflict with the label generation rules established by this procedure, that precedent and conflict is not a reason to invalidate any aspect of the new rules or this procedure."[102] Grandfathered – exempted – in this instance means that the proposed RZ-LGR update will apply to future new gTLDs and will not be retroactive. The gTLD registry operator will be able to continue to operate the affected gTLD and its allocated and delegated gTLD labels (if any). However, the gTLD registry operator will not be allowed to apply for any additional labels unless they are deemed valid and allocatable according to the updated version of the RZ-LGR.

The LD PDP WG further agrees with the EPDP-IDNs Team that any such exemptions be transparently documented during the Public Comment period. Here, an analysis of associated risks and proposed mitigation strategies should be accompanied. ICANN org should facilitate impact assessments on gTLD registry operators and end-users to ensure transparency and community input.

In conclusion, the LD PDP WG has decided to maintain and extend Final Recommendation 8.7 from EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report to apply to Preliminary Recommendation 32, rather than simply determining that it is already covered via EPDP-IDNs. To ensure clarity and eliminate ambiguity, a clause has been added to this recommendation: "and their delegated and allocated ASCII Latin diacritic gTLD set labels (if any)," clearly specifying what needs to be retained in full backward compatibility.

In addition, to address some WG members' requests for clarification regarding GPs and how they are maintained, a footnote has been added to the recommendation, outlining how GPs are maintained in accordance with the "Procedure to Develop and Maintain the Label General Rules for the Root Zone in Respect of IDNA Labels."

Rationales for Preliminary Recommendations 35-36, 38 and Implementation Guidance 37:
Consistent with Final Recommendations 8.10-8.11, 8.13 and Implementation Guidance 8.12 of the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report, the LD PDP WG recognized that under various circumstances, a delegated ASCII gTLD and/or its corresponding Latin diacritic gTLD label(s) may be removed from the root zone. Therefore, Preliminary Recommendations 35-36, 38 and Implementation Guidance 37 were developed to include robust safeguards to help ensure a secure and stable DNS. The language used in these Outputs referenced EPDP-IDNs; however, it required adaptation to reflect the current agreements and the envisioned status of the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set.

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[101] This term has and will continue to be referred as "exempted" per EPDP-IDNs Phase 2 Final Report. See definition and details under the "exempted" entry in "Section 3. Glossary."
[102] See Section A.3.5 of the Root Zone IDNA Label LGR Development and Maintenance, p.10: https://www.icann.org/en/system/files/files/draft-lgr-procedure-20mar13-en.pdf#page=10

It is important to emphasize here that the delegation and removal rules were not designed to actively enable the removal of TLDs from the root zone or to ensure that only a single TLD remains. Rather, they were developed in recognition of the fact that, under certain scenarios, a delegated TLD may be removed from the root zone, as previously mentioned. In such cases, it was prudent for the WG to define the conditions under which this could occur, following the scenarios mentioned in the EPDP-IDNs. In any case, formulating these recommendations involved extensive discussion among the WG to ensure all the proper rules were set in place.

To stabilize the language and resolve all the outstanding issues, the LD PDP WG had to revisit all the established principles. While it agreed with EPDP-IDNs and remained committed to the established rules for the variant set, it also explored hypothetical scenarios for the LD PDP itself – like the removal of a TLD from the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set – and considered how these might impact any security issues and/or policy coherence.

Two (2) key questions guided the discussion: 1) Are Latin diacritic applicants able to voluntarily remove TLDs and if so, under which conditions?; 2) If possible, what provisions are necessary for the removal of TLDs within the set? Some issues to consider were whether a gTLD registry operator could remove a TLD within the set, without going to EBERO; what kind of processes would be required to remove an ASCII gTLD or Latin diacritic gTLD(s) from both the set as well as the root zone; and how would the LD PDP policy align with the EPDP-IDNs policy? When answering the two (2) key questions, the LD PDP WG had to further consider whether it would be acceptable for an ASCII gTLD or a Latin diacritic gTLD to remain under the current LD PDP, if the corresponding gTLD(s) were removed.

In addressing the first question, the LD PDP WG was reminded that under the relevant preliminary LD PDP policy recommendations, all gTLDs within the set, though treated as a unified ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set, remain individually delegated and are independent of one another. This principle is reiterated throughout the report, especially outlined in the rationales of Preliminary Recommendations 1, 12-13, and 18 when dealing with applications, fees, and their management. Also, per Preliminary Recommendation 1, the LD PDP WG had previously determined that the presence of a base ASCII gTLD is essential for the existence of the set. This is particularly important in scenarios where multiple diacritic versions of gTLDs are permitted simultaneously and the set is not just limited to two (2) gTLDs. Nevertheless, if the base ASCII gTLD is removed from the root zone, the set ceases to exist.

For the second question – what provisions are necessary for the removal of TLDs within the set – the WG noted that EPDP-IDNs did not require such recommendations, as the LGR ensures that all the variant TLDs are inherently tied to the primary TLDs and are managed by a single entity. In EPDP-IDNs, the LGR defines variant label sets independently whether the corresponding TLDs exist in the root zone. However, in LD PDP, as mentioned above, the TLDs within the set are not inherently related; they are arbitrarily grouped through this process and formalized through the ICANN Registry Agreement. Once a TLD is removed from both the set and the associated

Registry Agreement, it becomes independent and no binding relationship remains. Thus, in evaluating whether TLDs can be removed from the set – thereby dissolving the set and potentially removing the TLD from the root zone – the LD PDP WG found no compelling reason to prohibit such removals.

That said, to further develop the response to the second question regarding necessary provisions, the LD PDP WG had to consider an additional issue: what should happen with TLDs that have at some point been a part of the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set but are no longer part of the set? To address this, the LD PDP WG revisited previous work and examined existing contracts for guidance.

In the Final Report ccNSO PDP4 (de-)selection of IDNccTLDs, there is a section on 'Specific requirement following the retirement of the selected IDNccTLD string' which stipulates that *"Following the conclusion of its retirement process a selected IDNccTLD string is removed from the DNS, the selected IDNccTLD string shall not be available for re-assignment or selection for at least 10 years following the removal."*[103] Meanwhile, in ICANN's Registry Agreement – Specification 13 – on .Brand TLD Provisions, it stipulates that *"ICANN may not delegate the TLD to a successor registry operator for a period of two (2) years following the expiration date without registry operator's consent…"*[104] Subsequently, the WG determined that a similar condition should apply to the LD PDP – specifically for the TLDs that are removed from the root zone.

When considering the appropriate duration for re-assignment or selection, the WG evaluated options ranging from two (2) to ten (10) years, ultimately selecting the longer period of ten (10) years to ensure greater stability and safeguard against potential security issues.

This approach, then, also resolves the case of retaining a single gTLD – whether an ASCII gTLD or a Latin diacritic gTLD – though the set has dissolved under the current LD PDP, particularly when the corresponding gTLD(s) have been removed from the root zone. It is important to note that from a purely technical standpoint, each gTLD is an independent top-level label and there may be no inherent issue with removing one while retaining another, as introduced above. However, not only would the confusingly similarity get in the way but also from a policy consideration, these strings can only coexist as a set under the same entity principle; with the ASCII gTLD serving as the base requirement of the set. All in all, establishing an appropriate duration for re-assignment or selection for those entities other than the ones in charge of the set resolves the concerns. The WG affirmed that as long as it is done with due diligence and all stakeholders

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[103] See Section 2.2.2 of the Final Report ccNSO PDP4 (de-)selection of IDNccTLDs here: https://ccnso.icann.org/sites/default/files/field-attached/ccpdp4-final-report-23feb24-en.pdf#page=20
[104] See p.122 of ICANN's Registry Agreement (Draft): https://itp.cdn.icann.org/en/files/policy-development/redline-draft-next-round-ra-for-public-comment-04-06-2025-en.pdf#page=122. This version is in the process of getting finalized for the AGB publication (December 2025) and the launch of the immediate Next Round in 2026 (April 2026).

– registries, registrars, registrants – are taken into consideration, retaining a single TLD should not be a problem.

In short, all the relevant factors considered above were identified through three (3) potential options when formulating the language related to the delegation and removal of TLDs within the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set: 1) allowing a single ASCII/IDN TLD to remain independently without qualifying as a set, with no additional provisions beyond the original EPDP-IDNs language; 2) adopting the same approach as Option 1, but including additional provisions that address re-assignment rules; and 3) treating the set in a manner consistent with variant sets, thereby aligning with EPDP-IDNs. Options 1 and 2 represent adaptations of EPDP-IDNs to better suit the LD PDP cases, while Option 3 maintains consistency with EPDP-IDNs, by applying the same framework to the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLDs that is used for variant sets.

Naturally, the WG selected Option 2 – allowing a single ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD to remain independently without qualifying as a set, while incorporating a re-assignment provision. Under this approach, both ASCII gTLD and Latin diacritic gTLD(s) could be removed from the root zone; and if no corresponding gTLD remains in the set, the set ceases to exist. The removed gTLD(s) shall not be available for re-assignment or selection by any entity other than the one holding the remaining gTLD(s) in the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set for at least 10 years following the removal. Finally, the gTLD registry operator may retain a single ASCII gTLD or a Latin diacritic gTLD, even though the set is no longer viable. All relevant footnotes to explain these requirements and provisions were inserted and incorporated into Preliminary Recommendations 1, 35 and 36.

Moving on, at the second-level, a voluntary removal of a variant label from the root zone is allowed, consistent with Implementation Guidance 8.12 from the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report. This is provided that the registry operator justifies the decision and submits a transition plan, for ICANN org's review, for existing registrations under the variant label that it intends to remove. Considering the potential complexities introduced by removing a gTLD variant label that has third-party registrations as well as other delegated gTLDs from the same variant label set, requiring ICANN org's review of the transition plan should ensure that robust safeguards are in place for registrants, thereby maintaining consumer trust in the DNS. In the event that the registry operator wishes to re-delegate a previously removed gTLD variant label, a new application for that variant label will be required.

Meanwhile, consistent with EPDP-IDNs, in the event a label – whether an ASCII gTLD or a Latin diacritic gTLD label from a set – is removed from the root zone as a consequence of its registry operator's breach of the Registry Agreement, the rest of the gTLD(s) that constitute the set must also be removed from the root zone. The LD PDP WG debated whether retaining a single gTLD should be permitted in such cases, acknowledging that a breach of the Registry Agreement does not always result in the removal of a delegated gTLD from the root zone. However, the WG concluded that in the event of a breach, ICANN org would need to evaluate the consequences as

well as the impact of a potential removal and obviously, take appropriate action. For example, this could include triggering the emergency transition of the gTLD to an EBERO, which requires the inclusion of all the corresponding ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD labels that constitute the set, per Preliminary Recommendation 24. In conclusion, Preliminary Recommendation 38 aligned with Final Recommendation 8.13 from the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report.

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6) Topic 6: Requirements for the Set at the Second-level

Preliminary Output:

> **Preliminary Recommendation 39**: Building on an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set as defined in Preliminary Recommendation 1, an ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set is defined to include:
>
> 39.1 a label[105] and all its variants within a given TLD, as determined by the second-level LGRs for that given TLD; and
>
> 39.2 the same labels[106] and all their variants across all other TLDs within the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set.

Rationale:
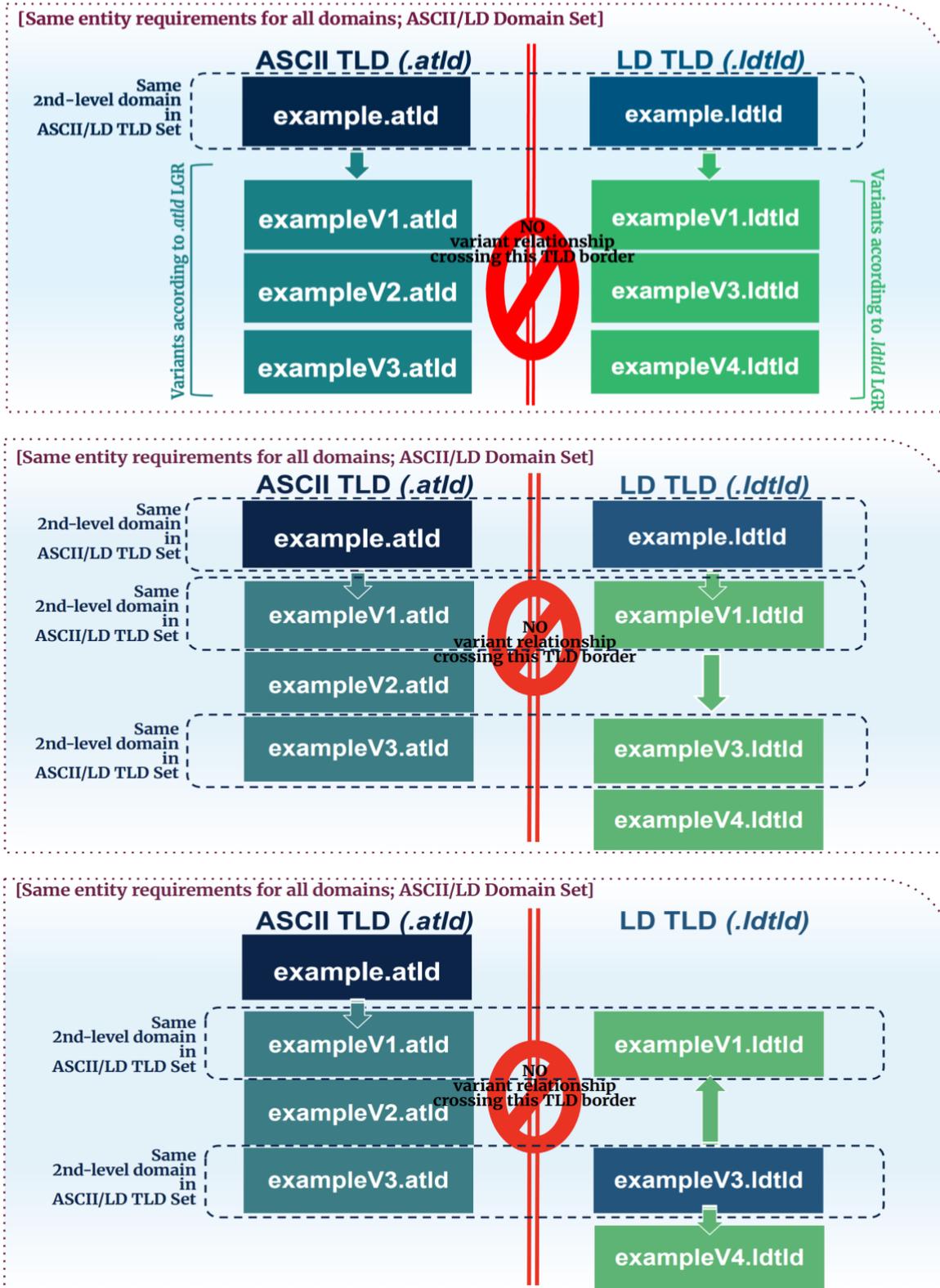
Rationale for Preliminary Recommendation 39:

From this Topic (Topic 6), the LD PDP WG established rules for the second-level, following the sequence as outlined in EPDP-IDNs Phase 2. The first task was for the WG to define the same entity requirements at the second-level, per Final Recommendation 1 of the EPDP-IDNs Phase 2 Final Report. These rules are formalized in Preliminary Recommendation 40, with the rationale outlining the approach taken by the WG. During the process, the WG recognized that the ASCII/Latin diacritic set at the second-level also needed to be clearly defined, similar to the approach taken in Preliminary Recommendation 1. This process also contributed to the WG addressing Charter Question 1— responding to the "what" aspect of Charter Question 1 regarding when such confusingly similar, non-variant gTLDs may be simultaneously delegated.

Per EPDP-IDNs Phase 2, the second-level had to account for variants at the second-level, in accordance with the LGR and the principles of variant set determination. However, while attempting to define the ASCII/Latin diacritic set at both the top- and second-levels – as well as the variant relationships – the WG recognized the potential for confusion if not well-defined.

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[105] For avoidance of doubt, the term "label" here refers specifically to second-level labels.
[106] For avoidance of doubt, the term "the same labels" here refers specifically to second-level labels that were outlined in Preliminary Recommendation 39.1.

[Figure 3] Understanding the ASCII/Latin Diacritic Set for the Top- and Second-level

[Figure 3] illustrates these set relationships at both levels, outlining their respective requirements and the role of variants in this context. As found in [Figure 3], there is essentially no variant relationship between TLDs. It demonstrates that at the TLD level, boundaries are not crossed – variant relationships at the second-level are confined within a single TLD. This marks a key difference from EPDP-IDNs, where variant sets could span across TLDs.

The term "variants" and its usage were also the subject of extensive discussion within the WG, especially in the context of the "same entity" principle. The term needed to take on a broader meaning when considering the same entity requirements across TLDs. For example, when dealing with variant second-level labels – v1, v2, v3 – and TLDs that constitute the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set as defined by the LD PDP – ATLD, LDTLD1, LDTLD2, all of the following domains are reserved for the same entity: v1.ATLD, v2.ATLD, v3.ATLD and v1.LDTLD1, v2.LDTLD1, v3.LDTLD1 and v1LDTLD2, v2.LDTLD2, v3.LDTLD3. However, v1.ATLD has no variant relationship with v1.LDTLD1. This is different to the EPDP-IDNS where the TLDs themselves are variants of one another and consequently, v1.TLDv1 is a variant of v1.TLDv2.

As such, a broader and more inclusive definition for variants and the set was necessary. This led to the introduction of the "ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set." This concept still builds upon the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set as defined in Preliminary Recommendation 1. Under this framework, the same entity principle must apply to all domains within an ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set *(See details in the rationale for Preliminary Recommendation 40)*. Moreover, as [Figure 3] suggests, the WG found that there may also be situations in which a source domain that is valid in one (1) TLD is not valid in another. Accordingly, the source domain name itself may differ per TLD in accordance with the ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set. Further details and specific examples are provided in the rationale for Preliminary Recommendation 45 where the concept of the "source domain name" is dealt with specifically.

Considering all this, the ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set is defined to contain; 1) a label and all its variants within a single TLD, as determined by the second-level LGRs for that given TLD; and 2) the same labels and all their variants across all other TLDs within the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set. To ensure clarity, the term "label" here refers specifically to second-level labels, as Topics 6-8 pertain to ASCII/Latin diacritic sets at the second-level.

For greater clarity, the definition of an ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set – and how it differs from the EPDP-IDNs variant set – is compared in more detail below in [Figure 4]. Further agreements regarding the second-level and its same entity requirements will be addressed in Preliminary Recommendation 40, as previously mentioned.

[Figure 4] LD PDP vs. EPDP-IDNs at the Second-level

7) Topic 7: "Same Entity" Principle at the Second-level and IDN Table Harmonization

Preliminary Outputs:

Preliminary Recommendation 40: Consistent with <u>Final Recommendation 1</u> from the EPDP-IDNs Phase 2 Final Report,[107] the "same entity" principle applies to the ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set per <u>Preliminary Recommendation 39</u>. This means that all allocatable domain names of an ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set must be allocated or withheld for possible allocation only to the same registrant. Additionally, all allocated domain names must be at the same sponsoring registrar.

Implementation Guidance 41: Consistent with <u>Implementation Guidance 2</u> from the EPDP-IDNs Phase 2 Final Report,[108] gTLD registry operators should

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[107] EPDP-IDNs P2 <u>Final Recommendation 1</u>: The "same entity" principle applies to the allocation of future variant domain names at the second-level of gTLDs. This means that all allocatable variant domain names from a variant domain set must be allocated or withheld for possible allocation only to the same registrant. Additionally, all allocated domain names must be at the same sponsoring registrar.
[108] EPDP-IDNs P2 <u>Implementation Guidance 2</u>: gTLD registry operators should take into account Recommendation 14 in SAC060, as well as language or script communities' widely acceptable practices among Internet users and established conventions, and consider: 2.1 setting a maximum number of

> take into account <u>Recommendation 14 in SAC060</u>, as well as language or script communities' widely acceptable practices among Internet users and established conventions, and consider setting a maximum number of allocatable domain names that can be allocated to the same registrant within the ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set.

Preliminary Recommendation 42: Consistent with <u>Final Recommendation 3</u> from the EPDP-IDNs Phase 2 Final Report,[109] immediately prior to the policy effective date of the "same entity" principle as set out in <u>Preliminary Recommendation 40</u>, the existing variant domain names that do not conform to the "same entity" principle must be exempted. This means that there will be no change to the contractual or allocation status of such existing variant domain names. The requirement of having the same registrant and the same sponsoring registrar will not be applied retroactively. The gTLD registries operating an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set must determine ASCII/Latin diacritic domain sets for each exempted label and protect from registration all labels in all such ASCII/Latin diacritic domain sets, as appropriate.

Preliminary Recommendation 43: Consistent with <u>Final Recommendation 4</u> from the EPDP-IDNs Phase 2 Final Report,[110] any allocatable domain name of an ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set containing exempted domain names pursuant to <u>Preliminary Recommendation 42</u> cannot be allocated unless and until only one registrant and one sponsoring registrar remain for the exempted domain name(s) in the ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set.

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allocatable variant domain names that can be allocated to the same registrant of the source domain name; and 2.2 limiting automatic activation of variant domain names to the extent possible, including in instances where the language-script community believes automatic allocation and activation is needed.

[109] EPDP-IDNs P2 <u>Final Recommendation 3</u>: Immediately prior to the policy effective date of the "same entity" principle as set out in Final Recommendation 1, the existing variant domain names that do not conform to the "same entity" principle must be exempted. This means that there will be no change to the contractual or allocation status of such existing variant domain names. The requirement of having the same registrant and the same sponsoring registrar will not be applied retroactively. gTLD registries must determine variant sets for each exempted label as if it is a source domain name and protect from registration all variant labels in all such variant sets in all variant gTLDs, as appropriate.

[110] EPDP-IDNs P2 <u>Final Recommendation 4</u>: Any allocatable variant domain names of exempted domain names pursuant to <u>Final Recommendation 3</u> cannot be allocated unless and until only one registrant and one sponsoring registrar remain for the exempted domain name(s) from the relevant variant domain set.
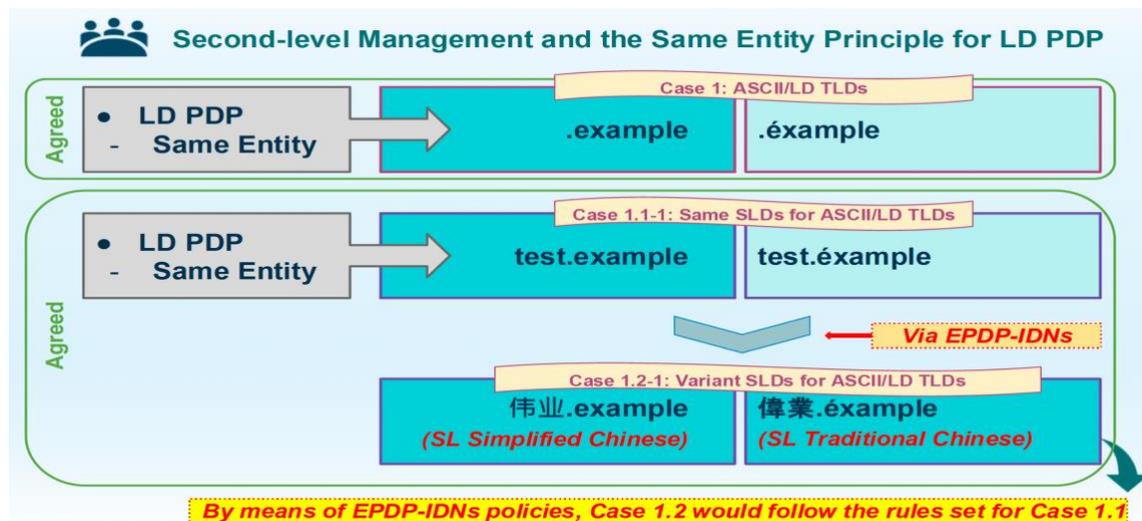
Preliminary Recommendation 44: Consistent with Final Recommendation 5 from the EPDP-IDNs Phase 2 Final Report,[111] all of the existing and future IDN Tables for a given ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set, if any, must be harmonized. This means that all of the IDN Tables for an ASCII gTLD and its corresponding Latin diacritic gTLD(s) must produce a consistent variant domain set for a given second-level label registered under that ASCII gTLD or its corresponding Latin diacritic gTLD label(s).
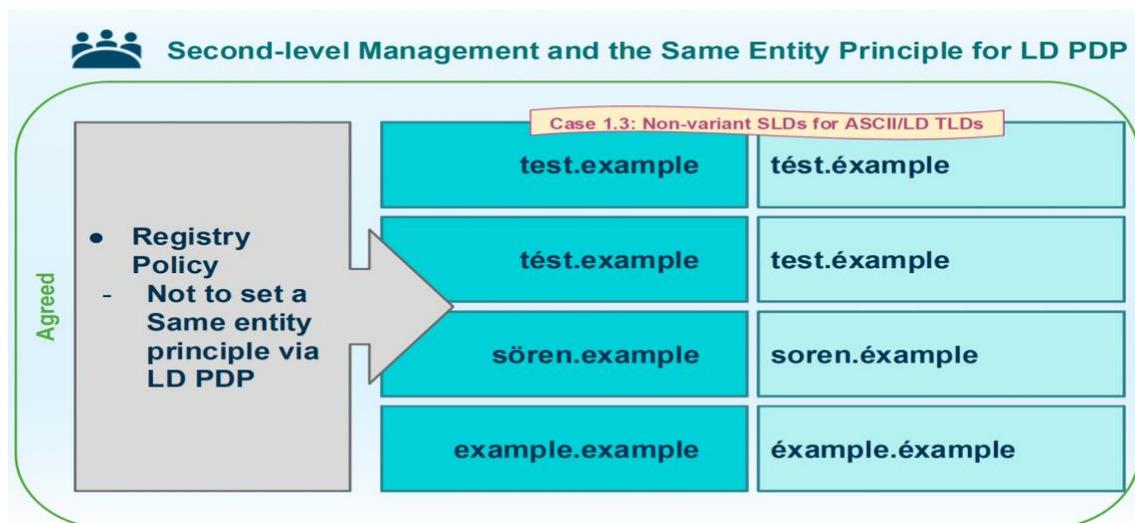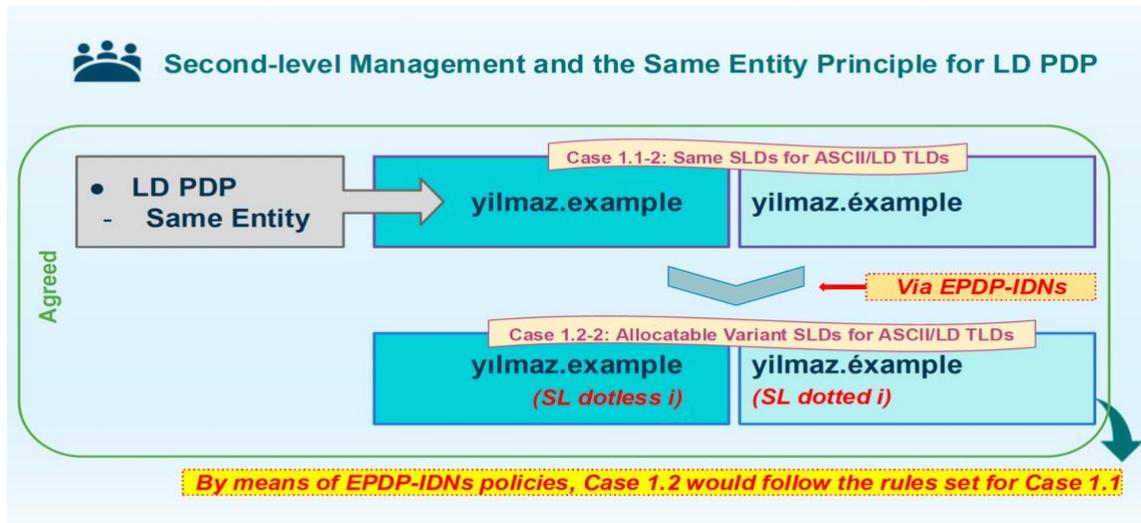
Rationales:

Rationale for Preliminary Recommendation 40:

The LD PDP WG deliberated extensively on the "same entity" principle at the second-level and how it applies to the ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set. While the WG generally agreed with EPDP-IDNs and with the broader application of the "same entity" principle, a more detailed examination was necessary for second-level management of the ASCII/Latin diacritic domain sets. [Figure 5] below summarizes the WG's consensus on each case as it pertains to the application of the same entity for the second-level.

[Figure 5] LD PDP's Consensus on the Same Entity Principle at the Second-level

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[111] EPDP-IDNs P2 Final Recommendation 5: All of the existing and future IDN Tables for a given gTLD and its delegated gTLD variant label(s), if any, must be harmonized. This means that all of the IDN Tables for a gTLD and its delegated gTLD variant label(s) must produce a consistent variant domain set for a given second-level label registered under that gTLD or its delegated gTLD variant label(s).

Second-level Management and the Same Entity Principle for LD PDP

Second-level Management and the Same Entity Principle for LD PDP

Case 1 in the above Figure reflects the LD PDP WG's agreement that all gTLDs that constitute an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set must be allocated only to the same registry operator in accordance with Preliminary Recommendation 2. This means that the same gTLD registry operator manages and operates both the ASCII gTLD and its corresponding Latin diacritic gTLD(s) where all existing, applied-for, or future gTLD(s) that constitute an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set can only be allocated or withheld for possible allocation to the same gTLD registry operator. This also goes for the same sponsoring registrar and the same registrant.

Cases 1.1 and 1.2 illustrate the LD PDP WG's agreement for the same second-level label cases for ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD sets as well as the variant second-level label cases for the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD sets. As the examples for Cases 1.1-1 and 1.1-2 suggest (test.example and test.éxample / yilmaz.example and yilmaz.éxample), identical second-level labels render these domains equivalent to Case 1, which, therefore, means that the set must likewise adhere

to the "same entity" principle. As for Cases 1.2-1 and 1.2-2 (variants of the same second-level labels for both ASCII gTLD and the Latin diacritic gTLD), they strictly adhere to the "same entity" principle by means of the EPDP-IDNs policy.[112] According to EPDP-IDNs, this implies that all of the allocatable variant domain names that arise from an existing domain name based on a harmonized IDN Table, must be allocated or withheld for possible allocation only to the same registrant of the existing domain name. EPDP-IDNs also requires that all of the allocatable variant domain names from a variant domain set may only be allocated by the same sponsoring registrar, ultimately helping ensure that the same registrant can be verified. The LD PDP WG upholds this policy.

Case 1.3 concerned those second-level labels that were non-variants of each other within an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set, which proved more complex. Examples include test.example and tést.éxample, tést.example and test.éxample, and sören.example and soren.éxample. In short, the LD PDP WG agreed not to establish rules for non-variant second-level labels within the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD sets and to leave such decisions to the discretion of the gTLD registry operators. The scope of this PDP was strictly limited to addressing those non-variant ASCII gTLD and Latin diacritic gTLD that may be confusingly similar and seeing what measures may need to be taken for them to co-exist, if at all, and the WG chose to adhere to that scope. One further rationale is that such cases (e.g., test.example vs. tést.example) already exist in TLDs, and no binding ruling has been issued. Consequently, the determination of whether the two (2) domains should be managed by the same entity rests solely with the gTLD registry operators.

Rationale for Implementation Guidance 41:
The LD PDP WG understood from EPDP-IDNs that automatic activation of variant domain names is an acceptable practice for certain gTLD registry operators that support domain names, especially in scripts such as Chinese.[113] For example, when a registrant registers a simplified Chinese domain name under a given gTLD, the corresponding traditional variant label may be automatically activated by the gTLD registry operator for the same registrant. However, Guideline 12 of the ICANN Board deferred guidelines from IDN Implementation Guidelines Version 4.0 and Recommendation 14 in SAC060[114] also made clear that caution is necessary. A conservative approach in allowing automatic activation of variant domain names was

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[112] EPDP-IDNs P2 <u>Final Recommendation 1</u>: The "same entity" principle applies to the allocation of future variant domain names at the second-level of gTLDs. This means that all allocatable variant domain names from a variant domain set must be allocated or withheld for possible allocation only to the same registrant. Additionally, all allocated domain names must be at the same sponsoring registrar.

[113] Guideline 12 of the ICANN Board deferred guidelines from IDN Implementation Guidelines version 4.0 states, *"...In exceptional cases, i) to support a widely acceptable practice within Internet users of a language or script community, or ii) to abide by language or script established conventions, a TLD Registry may opt to activate a limited number of IDN Variant Labels at its discretion, according to its policies. In such cases, the TLD Registry must have a mechanism to limit automatic activation of IDN Variant Labels to a minimum."*

[114] See Recommendation 14, SAC060, p.20: https://www.icann.org/en/system/files/files/sac-060-en.pdf#page=20

recommended in order to avoid any confusion during the management of variant labels both at the top- and second-levels. This understanding led to the development of Implementation Guidance 2 in the EPDP-IDNs Phase 2 Final Report.

Accordingly, the LD PDP WG maintained the stance that while gTLD registry operators should take into account language and script communities' widely acceptable practices among Internet users and established conventions, it is also necessary to set an upper limit of allocatable domain names that can be allocated to the same registrant within the ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set. This means that since the number of allocatable domain names within an ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set can be large, setting a maximum number that may be allocated to the same registrant should be considered to avoid any confusion arising from permutation-related issues.

This concept appears different from earlier decisions noted in Preliminary Recommendation 29[115] and though technically slightly different, essentially the caution is the same. In earlier discussions, LD PDP WG determined not to impose any ceiling value or restrictions regarding the application types (for existing or new), the TLD types (real words, geographic names, etc.), the number of strings within a set (how many strings to constitute a set), or the number of diacritical marks within a letter (e.g., if more than one diacritical mark per character like ũ', ẵ, ć). EPDP-IDNs also set no arbitrary ceiling or threshold on variant labels. However in both cases, evaluations and fee structures are in place to ensure alignment with the conservatism principle. Allocatable variants are also limited in scripts which naturally place a cap. Thus, various factors such as cost, operational competence, and potential challenges would naturally lead applicants to taking a conservative approach when applying for and delegating such labels. This guidance simply asks that gTLD registry operators align with the conservatism principle, particularly when allocating domain names within an ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set to the same registrant. Without careful consideration, the permutation process could generate numerous domain names, potentially leading to user confusion. Nevertheless, like the EPDP-IDNs Team, the LD PDP WG fully understood that determining the upper limit of domain names that can be allocated is ultimately at the gTLD registry operator's discretion and must align with its policy.

Meanwhile, automatic activation of allocatable domain names within the ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set is not an issue that needs to be considered for the Latin script, unlike Chinese script within the IDNs.

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[115] Preliminary Recommendation 29: Consistent with Final Recommendation 8.1 from the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report,# no ceiling value for the number of Latin diacritic gTLD labels that constitute an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set is necessary as economic, operational, and other factors that may impact the decision to apply for multiple Latin diacritic gTLD labels will keep the number of delegated top-level Latin diacritic labels conservative. In addition, there will be no restrictions on the number of diacritical marks applied to a single character nor the type of TLDs (e.g., real words identified in dictionaries, geographic names, brands).

Rationale for Preliminary Recommendation 42:

The LD PDP WG's agreement on the "same entity" principle has been established for the second-level through Preliminary Recommendations 39 and 40 where under this framework, the same entity rules must apply to all domains within an ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set. Moreover, EPDP-IDNs has established that all allocatable variant domain names derived from an existing domain name – under a harmonized IDN Table – must be allocated, or withheld for possible allocation, solely to the same registrant of the existing domain name.

Before the "same entity" principle takes effect, some existing variant domain names within the same ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set may already have been allocated to different registrants and/or managed by different sponsoring registrars. Similarly, prior to the IDN Table harmonization requirement coming into effect, certain existing variant domain names – identified as variants under one IDN Table for a given gTLD – may be treated as non-variant domain names under another IDN Table for the same gTLD. This inconsistency can similarly result in domain names from the same ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set being allocated to different registrants and/or at different sponsoring registrars. To ensure stability and provide necessary safeguards for relevant Internet stakeholders, such as registrants, registrars, resellers, registry operators, and end-users, the LD PDP WG affirmed that all such existing variant domain names that do not conform to the "same entity" principle and that predate these requirements must be exempted. In this context, "exempted" means that there will be no change to the contractual and allocation status of such existing variant domain names. The requirement for having the same registrant and the same sponsoring registrar will not be applied retroactively.[116]

In addition, enforcing the "same entity" principle by removing a variant domain from one existing registrant in favor of another would infringe upon the existing rights of the affected registrants, potentially leading to legal challenges, operational complexities, and other complications. Therefore, such existing domains are exempted from this policy and will be referred to as "exempted" in the course of this document, as previously mentioned, also consistent with Final Recommendation 3 from the EPDP-IDNs Phase 2 Final Report.

The distinction is that while EPDP-IDNs also requires that all allocatable variant domain names from a variant domain set be allocated by the same sponsoring registrar – thereby helping ensure verification of the same registrant, a requirement that this WG also supports – this condition does not apply for ASCII/Latin diacritic domain names that constitute the set, as these ASCII/Latin diacritic domain names are only introduced once an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set is created. Consequently, there is no need to exempt the existing ASCII/Latin diacritic domain names themselves; only the variant domain names require exemption.

Further, the last sentence: *"The gTLD registries operating an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD*

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[116] See "exempted" entry in "Section 3. Glossary" for definition and more details.

set must determine ASCII/Latin diacritic domain sets for each exempted label and protect from registration all labels in all such ASCII/Latin diacritic domain sets, as appropriate" is to provide additional clarity on how to address existing variant domain names that were registered prior to the future policy effective date of the "same entity" principle. While only variant relationships can directly cause domains to be exempted, the protection of the same entity must be extended to the whole ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set, as all such domains in related gTLDs also need to be protected.

Rationale for Preliminary Recommendation 43:

The LD PDP WG affirmed the EPDP-IDNs Team's decision that the exemption approach outlined in Preliminary Recommendation 42 should be resolved as quickly as possible. Recognizing that it is an exception intended to preserve stability and provide necessary safeguards for affected Internet stakeholders, such as existing registrants who already hold those exempted variant domain names. To minimize the duration and scope of this exception, the LD PDP WG upheld the rule that no further allocation of any allocatable domain name within an ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set containing exempted domain names is permitted. Additional allocations may occur only when there is a single registrant and a single sponsoring registrar for all exempted domain names in the ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set, which effectively signals the end of the exemption period. In other words, as long as an ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set has more than one registrant and/or sponsoring registrar, permitting further allocation would prolong the exemption and create continued violations of the "same entity" principle. It would also raise the issue of who should arbitrate competing claims if multiple registrants within the same ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set seek an additional allocatable domain name.

By way of example, consider an ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set that includes four (4) allocatable domain names: s1.ATLD1, s1v1.ATLD1, s1.LDTLD1, and s1v2.LDTLD1. Suppose s1.ATLD1 is registered to Registrant A at Registrar X, while s1v1.ATLD1 is registered to Registrant B through Registrar Y. Under this recommendation, s1.LDTLD1 and s1v2.LDTLD1 must remain ineligible for allocation until there is a single registrant (i.e., either Registrant A or Registrant B, in this instance) and a single corresponding sponsoring registrar for the entire ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set. One possible scenario that could satisfy this requirement is if Registrant B voluntarily transfers s1v1.ATLD1 to Registrant A at Registrar X. In that case, the "same entity" principle is achieved and the exemption situation would be resolved. Another possible scenario is that the exemption ends through the deletion of either of the existing domains. Consequently, only one registrant and one sponsoring registrar remain, allowing for the registrant of the surviving domain name to request allocation of s1.LDTLD1 and s1v2.LDTLD1 through the corresponding registrar.

Aside from restricting any further allocation of additional allocatable domain name(s) within an ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set containing exempted domain name(s), and preventing the expansion of the total pool of domain names requiring exemption, the LD PDP WG, in alignment with the EPDP-IDNs Team, agreed not to introduce additional constraints that could affect the

existing rights of the registrants holding exempted domain names. Therefore, the exempted variant domain names are excluded from requirements set forth in <u>Preliminary Recommendations 45-46</u> below. Since the instances that would require exemption are expected to be minimal, it is preferable to leave the specific measures regarding the lifecycle management of exempted domain names to the discretion of the registrars and gTLD registry operators.

Rationale for Preliminary Recommendation 44:

Only variants defined by IDN Tables are recognized, and the purpose of harmonization is to ensure that all IDN Tables associated with a given gTLD generate a consistent variant domain set for any source domain name.[117] In other words, the harmonization requirement is intended to prevent inconsistencies; for example, inconsistencies may occur where two (2) domain names that are calculated as variants under a certain IDN Table rule (e.g., IDN Table A) may not be considered variants under another (e.g., IDN Table B) for the same gTLD or its delegated variant label. It is, however, acceptable, if one of those domains is not valid under IDN Table B. The consistency requirement only says that if both domains are valid under another IDN Table, then they must also be variants under that IDN table. Thus, regardless of which IDN Table is applied for which language or script, the resulting variant domain set for a source domain name must be consistent across all IDN Tables used for that gTLD, as well as for any delegated gTLD variant label(s), if any.

Currently, gTLD registry operators develop their own IDN Tables and may use multiple IDN Tables covering a variety of languages and scripts for the gTLD it operates. Accordingly, they submit them to ICANN org for review, focusing primarily on significant security, stability, and competition issues.

To address the security concerns and remain aligned with EPDP-IDNs, the LD PDP WG agreed that all IDN Tables associated with a given ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set, if any, must be harmonized. For consistency purposes, this requirement applies to both existing IDN Tables already implemented and to any future IDN Tables to be submitted to ICANN org for review. As a result, ICANN org will review all of the existing and future IDN Tables for a gTLD and its delegated gTLD variant label(s) holistically, ensuring that a consistent variant domain set is produced for any given second-level label registered under the ASCII gTLD or its corresponding Latin diacritic gTLD label(s). The LD PDP WG did not discuss the specific harmonization mechanism in detail; the process will follow the rules set forth in EPDP-IDNs Phase 2 and ultimately remain the responsibility of the gTLD registry operators.

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[117] See "<u>Section 3. Glossary</u>" of this Initial Report for more details about the "source domain name."

8) Topic 8: Adjustments in Registration Processes Pertinent to the Domain Name Lifecycle

Preliminary Outputs:

Preliminary Recommendation 45: Consistent with Final Recommendation 8 from the EPDP-IDNs Phase 2 Final Report,[118] a registrant and its sponsoring registrar must jointly determine the source domain name,[119] which must be registered, for calculating the variant domain set under a given ASCII gTLD or its delegated Latin diacritic gTLD(s), if any. The registrants and sponsoring registrars of the exempted domain names pursuant to Preliminary Recommendation 42 are excluded from this requirement.

Preliminary Recommendation 46: Consistent with Final Recommendation 9 from the EPDP-IDNs Phase 2 Final Report,[120] the "same entity" principle, as set out in Preliminary Recommendation 40, must be adhered to in all stages of the domain name lifecycle of all domains within an ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set. The exempted domain names pursuant to Preliminary Recommendation 42 are excluded from this requirement.

Preliminary Recommendation 47: In the event an inter-registrar transfer process is initiated for a domain name, which is a member of an ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set, the process must encompass all of its allocated domain names within the ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set, if any, together, in accordance with Final Recommendation 10 from the EPDP-IDNs Phase 2 Final Report.[121] The exempted domain names pursuant to Preliminary Recommendation 42 are excluded from this requirement.

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[118] EPDP-IDNs P2 Final Recommendation 8: A registrant and its sponsoring registrar must jointly determine the source domain name, which must be registered, for calculating the variant domain set under a given gTLD and its delegated gTLD variant label(s), if any. The registrants and sponsoring registrars of the exempted variant domain names pursuant to Final Recommendation 3 are excluded from this requirement.

[119] The source domain name here can be different per TLD, in accordance with the ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set defined in Preliminary Recommendation 39. This solution – allowing different source domain names per TLD – is consistent with EPDP-IDNs. To be precise, the source domain name must originate from the ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set.

[120] EPDP-IDNs P2 Final Recommendation 9: The "same entity" principle, as set out in Final Recommendation 1, must be adhered to in all stages of the domain name lifecycle of the allocated variant domain names in the same variant domain set. The exempted variant domain names pursuant to Final Recommendation 3 are excluded from this requirement.

[121] EPDP-IDNs P2 Final Recommendation 10: In the event an inter-registrar transfer process is initiated for a domain name, which is a member of a variant domain set, the process must encompass all of its

Preliminary Recommendation 48: In the event a domain name is ordered to be transferred as a result of a Uniform Domain Name Dispute resolution Policy (UDRP) administrative proceeding, the transfer process must include all of the domain names that constitute the ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set, if any, together, in accordance with Final Recommendation 11 from the EPDP-IDNs Phase 2 Final Report.[122] The exempted domain names pursuant to Preliminary Recommendation 42 are excluded from this requirement.

Implementation Guidance 49: Consistent with Implementation Guidance 12 from the EPDP-IDNs Phase 2 Final Report,[123] a Uniform Rapid Suspension System (URS) complainant is responsible for deciding whether to include allocated domain names of an ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set, if any, of a disputed domain name as part of their URS complaint.[124]

Preliminary Recommendation 50: Consistent with Final Recommendation 13 from EPDP-IDNs Phase 2 Final Report,[125] ICANN org must provide necessary information to dispute resolution providers, registries, registrars, registrants, and mark owners to enhance their understanding of ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set and domain names of an ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set, in particular, their potential impact on dispute resolution proceedings.

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allocated variant domain names, if any, together. The exempted variant domain names pursuant to Final Recommendation 3 are excluded from this requirement.

[122] EPDP-IDNs P2 Final Recommendation 11: In the event a domain name is ordered to be transferred as a result of a Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (UDRP) administrative proceeding, the transfer process must include the domain name and all of its allocated variant domain names, if any, together. The exempted variant domain names pursuant to Final Recommendation 3 are excluded from this requirement.

[123] EPDP-IDNs P2 Implementation Guidance 12: A Uniform Rapid Suspension System (URS) complainant is responsible for deciding whether to include allocated variant domain names, if any, of a disputed domain name as part of their URS complaint.

[124] See Preliminary Recommendations 50, 51, and Implementation Guidance 52 for details on how domain names of an ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set and any other pertinent information could be made available to a complainant. Also refer to IANA for domain variant relations under the value, "registered": https://www.iana.org/assignments/rdap-json-values/rdap-json-values.xhtml

[125] EPDP-IDNs P2 Final Recommendation 13: ICANN org must conduct outreach to dispute resolution providers, registries, registrars, registrants, and mark owners to enhance their understanding of gTLD variant labels and variant domain names, in particular, their potential impact on dispute resolution proceedings.

Preliminary Recommendation 51: Consistent with Final Recommendation 14 from the EPDP-IDNs Phase 2 Final Report,[126] to account for the "same entity" principle and its implications for domain names of an ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set, gTLD registry operators should work with ICANN-accredited registrars to determine a mechanism to communicate between each other to facilitate the registration and management of the domain names across the ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set.

Implementation Guidance 52: In order to allow a requestor to discover the allocated domain names of an ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set, corresponding sponsoring registrars should accept requests for disclosure of this information and unless there are data privacy concerns, the information should be granted in accordance with Implementation Guidance 15 from the EPDP-IDNs Phase 2 Final Report.[127] In considering whether to disclose the information, the corresponding sponsoring registrars should balance the interest of the requestor with those of the data subject, where such balancing is required by applicable law.

Preliminary Recommendation 53: Consistent with Final Recommendation 16 from EPDP-IDNs Phase 2 Final Report,[128] if two (2) or more gTLDs are delegated in order to constitute an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set belonging to the same registry operator, the Root Zone Database on iana.org must denote, in a transparent manner, their relationship.

Implementation Guidance 54: Consistent with Implementation Guidance 17

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[126] EPDP-IDNs P2 Final Recommendation 14: To account for the "same entity" principle and its implications for variant domain names, gTLD registry operators should work with ICANN-accredited registrars to determine a mechanism to communicate between each other to facilitate the registration and management of variant domain names, including an indication of the source domain name(s) and initial source domain name of the variant domain set.

[127] EPDP-IDNs P2 Implementation Guidance 15: In order to allow a requestor to discover the allocated variant domain names for a given domain name, corresponding sponsoring registrars should accept requests for disclosure of this information and unless there are data privacy concerns, the information should be granted. In considering whether to disclose the information, the corresponding sponsoring registrars should balance the interest of the requestor with those of the data subject, where such balancing is required by applicable law.

[128] EPDP-IDNs P2 Final Recommendation 16: If two or more delegated gTLDs belong to the same variant label set in accordance with RZ-LGR calculation, the Root Zone Database on iana.org must denote, in a transparent manner, their variant relationship and indicate which one serves as the primary gTLD for calculating the variant label set.

> from EPDP-IDNs Phase 2 Final Report,[129] gTLD registry operators should publish policies, in a transparent manner, that reflect their implementation of the LD PDP recommendations at the second-level. In particular, such policies should reflect the implementation of <u>Preliminary Recommendations 39, 40, 42-44, 51 and Implementation Guidance 41</u>.

Rationales:

<u>Rationale for Preliminary Recommendation 45:</u>

As noted earlier in the rationale for <u>Preliminary Recommendation 44</u>, a source domain name is a registered domain name under a given gTLD that serves as the essential input for generating the variant domain set under that gTLD and any of its delegated gTLD variant label(s), if any. Accordingly, a domain name's status as a "variant" is determined by the source domain name. And while the variant domain set consists of variant label sets at both the second- and top-levels, the variant label set considered in this LD PDP applies only at the second-level. In this context, the second-level label set is derived from the second-level label of the source domain name using IDN Tables of the given gTLD.

Moreover, as established in <u>Preliminary Recommendation 39</u> and illustrated in [Figure 3] above, the WG found that within the ASCII/Latin diacritic domain sets, a source domain name that is valid in one (1) TLD may not be valid in another. Consequently, the source domain name itself may differ across TLDs within the ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set. Regardless, the "same entity" principle must apply to all domains within the ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set, as described in <u>Preliminary Recommendation 40</u>.

To emphasize, the requirement for allowing different source domains per TLD is due to the potentially different – but still harmonized – LGRs per TLDs. For example, consider the TLDs, .example and .éxample, which constitute an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set. Suppose the gTLD registry operator allows only ASCII second-level labels for .example and the Latin reference LGR for .éxample. In this scenario, a registrant could register straße.éxample as the source domain, thereby also allowing them to activate strasse.éxample, if desired, as it is an allocatable variant under that LGR. However, the corresponding domain, straße.example, would not be valid under the ASCII-only LGR for .example, and therefore, could neither be activated nor serve as a source domain name for that TLD. Even so, strasse.example must still be reserved for the same entity and is a valid candidate to serve as the source domain name within the .example TLD.

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[129] EPDP-IDNs P2 <u>Implementation Guidance 17</u>: gTLD registry operators should publish policies, in a transparent manner, that reflect their implementation of the EPDP-IDNs Phase 2 recommendations. In particular, such policies should reflect the implementation of <u>Final Recommendations 1, 3-6, 14 and Implementation Guidance 2</u>.

Meanwhile, the LD PDP WG aligned with the EPDP-IDNs Team that the source domain name itself must be identified between the registrant and the sponsoring registrar as a joint responsibility. Obviously, the source domain name must be registered, as without the registration of the source domain name, it would be impossible to know which allocatable variant domain names, if any, can potentially be allocated. In addition, the sponsoring registrars have discretion to decide on their specific implementation of this joint responsibility with registrants.

In practice, the source domain name may often be the first domain name registered by a registrant under a given gTLD and is, therefore, presumed to be the default source domain name. However, registrants may also intentionally select a different domain name as the source domain name based on their intended use. In short, the LD PDP WG recognized that ICANN org may need to undertake education and outreach to help registrars, registrants, and gTLD registry operators to understand the concept of source domain name and its implications, particularly pertaining to compliance with the "same entity" requirement. These outreach efforts are further discussed and emphasized in Preliminary Recommendation 50.

With respect to the exempted variant domain names pursuant to Preliminary Recommendation 42, it is not required for the registrants and sponsoring registrars to identify the source domain names. A purpose for identifying the source domain name is to calculate which domain names are allocatable for future allocation. Since no further allocation of variant domain names of an exempted domain name is allowed until the exemption is resolved, as set out in Preliminary Recommendation 43, the identification of the source domain name would be unnecessary. This would again raise the issue of who would determine the source domain name when multiple registrants hold the domain names within the same ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set. However, once the exemption is resolved and the set returns to a single registrant and sponsoring registrar, the requirement to identify a source domain name must again apply.

Finally, the LD PDP WG did not address scenarios in which a source domain name might be changed or deactivated, beyond Preliminary Recommendations 35-36 related to the removal of ASCII gTLDs or Latin diacritic gTLDs. However, the LD PDP WG builds on EPDP-IDNs not to prescribe any policy recommendation pertaining to this matter, since the specific details in the domain name lifecycle management are discretionary on the part of gTLD registry operators and registrars, in accordance with their policies and practices.

Rationale for Preliminary Recommendation 46:
The domain name lifecycle is generally summarized into five main stages, which are: 1) available, 2) active, 3) expiration, 4) redemption, and 5) pending deletion. During its "active" stage, a domain may experience various actions, including but not limited to renewal, update,

transfer, lock, and suspension. Details on these stages can be found in the EPDP-IDNs Phase 2 Final Report under the rationale for Final Recommendation 9.[130]

Consistent with EPDP-IDNs, each domain within an ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set should be allowed to maintain its own domain name lifecycle, separate from that of other allocated domains from the same ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set. The only overarching requirement is that the "same entity" principle, as set out in Preliminary Recommendation 40, is adhered to at all times across the ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set. Aside from this principle, no additional rules or constraints are imposed on domain name lifecycle management, except where the Transfer Policy *(see Preliminary Recommendation 47)* or the transfer remedy under the Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (UDRP) *(see Preliminary Recommendation 48)* may apply. The LD PDP WG also recognizes that the specific details of lifecycle management fall within the discretion of gTLD registry operators and registrars, in accordance with their policies and practices. The details of various stages remain consistent with EPDP-IDNs.[131]

With respect to the exempted variant domain names pursuant to Preliminary Recommendation 42, the "same entity" requirement does not apply to their lifecycle management, as these domain names have already been treated as independent registrations. The LD PDP WG agreed to and will continue to not restrict the rights of affected registrants in managing their exempted variant domain names. The goal of not worsening the exemption situation is addressed by prohibiting further allocation of allocatable domain names within the affected ASCII/Latin diacritic set containing exempted domain names until the exemptions are resolved, as set out in Preliminary Recommendation 43.

Rationale for Preliminary Recommendation 47:
"Transfer" – traditionally known as an "inter-registrar transfer" – refers to the change of a sponsoring registrar for a domain name. During this process, the registrant may or may not be changed. By contrast, an inter-registrant transfer is considered an "update" of the domain name registration data. In this sense, transfer requires particular attention not only for domain name lifecycle management but also for ensuring proper sponsorship of the ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set.

For this topic, the LD PDP WG reaffirmed the EPDP-IDNs Team's decision that if a domain name within an ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set changes hands at any point after allocation, all other allocated domain names within the same ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set must remain contractually linked and change hands to the same registrant and the same sponsoring registrar

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[130] See rationale for Final Recommendation 9 from EPDP-IDNs Phase 2 Final Report in pp.31-34 here: https://gnso.icann.org/sites/default/files/policy/2024/draft/gnso-idn-epdp-phase2-final-report-07oct24-en.pdf#page=31
[131] See rationale for Final Recommendation 9 from EPDP-IDNs Phase 2 Final Report in p.33 here: https://gnso.icann.org/sites/default/files/policy/2024/draft/gnso-idn-epdp-phase2-final-report-07oct24-en.pdf#page=33

at the same time; This is a persistent requirement. Accordingly, the LD PDP WG recommends that in the event an inter-registrar transfer process is initiated for any domain name that is part of an ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set, all other allocated domain names within that ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set must be included in the same transfer process. They must transition together to the same gaining registrar, and if applicable, to the same gaining registrant. In other words, the entire ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set must stay together in the event of the transfer. This requirement is fully consistent with EPDP-IDNs. For clarity, it applies to both voluntary transfers initiated by a registrant and involuntary transfers resulting from circumstances such as UDRP determinations *(see Preliminary Recommendation 48)* or loss of registrar accreditation, etc.

As with the approach described in Preliminary Recommendation 46, exempted variant domain names are treated as independent registrations and are therefore, excluded from this requirement.

Meanwhile, the LD PDP WG conducted an impact analysis on ICANN's "Existing Consensus Policies," including the Transfer Policy and the Transfer Dispute Resolution Policy (TDRP), to assess whether its recommendations would affect any existing consensus policies. Since this recommendation remains consistent with the EPDP-IDNs – where its Final Recommendation 10 was reviewed and discussed with the Transfer Policy Review WG (TPR WG) at the time – it does not raise concerns for the Transfer Policy, nor were any notable impacts identified. At present, the LD PDP WG's analysis indicates that this recommendation aligns with the Transfer Policy and avoids any conflict once implemented. Accordingly, its impact is minimal, if any. A detailed analysis of the impact on ICANN's "Existing Consensus Policies," including the Transfer Policy and the Transfer Dispute Resolution Policy (TDRP), is provided in "Section 4.2.2 Charter Question 4" of this report.

Rationale for Preliminary Recommendation 48:

The substantive ground for filing a UDRP administrative proceeding must satisfy the following criteria: (i) the disputed domain name registered by a domain name registrant is identical or confusingly similar to a trademark or service mark in which the complainant (the entity bringing the complaint) has rights; (ii) the domain name registrant has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the disputed domain name; and (iii) the domain name has been registered and is being used in bad faith. If the complainant prevails, the UDRP administrative proceeding will result in one (1) of the two (2) possible outcomes: 1) the domain name be transferred to the prevailing complainant; or 2) the domain name be canceled.

The LD PDP WG reaffirmed the EPDP-IDNs decision that the "same entity" requirement must also apply to the transfer remedy under the UDRP, consistent with Preliminary Recommendation 47. In other words, when a disputed domain name is ordered to be transferred, all other allocated domain names within the ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set must

also be transferred to the same prevailing complainant and placed under the same sponsoring registrar selected by the complainant.

Consistent with previous recommendations, the exempted variant domain names are treated as independent registrations and, therefore, remain excluded from this requirement.

Similarly with the Transfer Policy, the LD PDP WG conducted an impact analysis on the UDRP as well to assess whether its recommendations would have any negative impact. Again, since this recommendation remains consistent with the EPDP-IDNs – where its Final Recommendation 11 was also reviewed and discussed with the TPR WG at the time – it does not raise concerns for UDRP, nor were any notable impacts identified. At present, the LD PDP WG's analysis indicates that this recommendation will only come into operation as a result of the UDRP, having no impact on altering or impacting its substance. There may be more concerns in the future that confusingly similar ASCII gTLD and Latin diacritic gTLD strings could create legal challenges or strengthen UDRP complaints, potentially prompting the UDRP to evolve and adapt to such scenarios; however, these concerns are addressed through the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set and the ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set requirements, the associated application processes, contractual requirements, delegation and removal obligations, as well as through this recommendation itself. Taken together, these measures help minimize any negative impact on the UDRP. A detailed analysis of the impact on ICANN's existing Consensus Policies, including the UDRP, is provided in "Section 4.2.2 Charter Question 4" of this report.

It is important to note that the current UDRP Policy and Rules do not account for variant domain names or domain names that constitute an ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set. Additional adjustments may be necessary to affect the "same entity" requirement in the transfer remedy, as set out in Preliminary Recommendation 48. Given these potential complications, the LD PDP WG aligns with the EPDP-IDNs Team that UDRP experts should be involved in the future IRT for implementing such recommendations so as to review these issues and discuss whether, and how, the UDRP Policy should be adapted to address such domain names.

In addition, the LD PDP WG has repeatedly emphasized the need for ICANN org's outreach to help educate registrars, registrants, and gTLD registry operators understand the concept of domain names that constitute an ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set and their implications, especially pertaining to the compliance with "same entity" requirement, Transfer Policy, and the UDRP. These outreach efforts are discussed further and guided through Preliminary Recommendation 50.

Rationale for Implementation Guidance 49:
The URS complements the UDRP and its substantive grounds for filing a URS complaint are similar to the UDRP. A URS complaint must establish that: (i) the registered domain name is identical or confusingly similar to a word mark; (ii) the registrant has no legitimate right or interest to the domain name; and (iii) the domain was registered and is being used in bad faith.

The URS provides mark owners with a quick and low-cost mechanism to address clear-cut cases of intellectual property rights infringement. A URS complaint may include multiple disputed domain names, provided they are registered by the same registrant. If the complainant prevails, the sole remedy is to suspend the disputed domain name(s) for the remainder of the registration period. During suspension, the website, email, and other associated services cease to function, and the domain name may resolve to an informational suspension page hosted by the registrar. However, the registrant remains unchanged during the suspension period. In addition, under the URS Procedure, the complainant may request that the gTLD registry operator extend the suspension remedy for an additional year.

That said, the LD PDP WG aligns with the EPDP-IDNs that a URS complainant should consider the full ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set of a disputed domain name when filing a URS complaint, in light of the "same entity" principle that governs the allocation of future domain names, as set out in Preliminary Recommendation 40. If the disputed domain name has other allocated domain names registered to the same registrant, the complainant should be aware of them and determine whether they meet the three (3) substantive URS criteria mentioned above. Therefore, the onus should be on the complainant to decide whether to include any or all of the other allocated domain name(s) within the same ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set in the URS complaint.

It is important to note that the URS suspension remedy should only apply to the specific domain names included in a complaint and for which the complainant prevails. The suspension of one domain name does not automatically extend to other allocated domain names within the same ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set. The "same entity" principle does not imply identical treatment or status for all domain names within the ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set. Furthermore, the standard of proof required in a URS proceeding is high as the complainant must satisfy all three substantive criteria by demonstrating clear and convincing evidence against the disputed domain names. If the complainant seeks suspension remedy of the other allocated domain names within the set, those domain names must be explicitly included in the complaint, with supporting evidence provided to substantiate the claim. In any case, the management of specific details in the domain name lifecycle remains at the discretion of gTLD registry operators and registrars, in accordance with their policies and practices.

To address this complex issue and enhance understanding, the LD PDP WG upheld the approach set forth in EPDP-IDNs, requiring ICANN org to conduct outreach to various stakeholders, including trademark owners. The outreach aims to enhance their understanding of ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD labels that constitute an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set, domain names that constitute an ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set, their compliance with the "same entity" requirement, Transfer Policy, UDRP, and URS, and the associated implications. The WG has repeatedly emphasized the importance of ICANN org's outreach through the discussions of

Preliminary Recommendations 45-48, which will be further detailed and guided through
Preliminary Recommendation 50.

Meanwhile, Final Recommendation 12 from the EPDP-IDNs Phase 2 Final Report was also
reviewed and discussed with the TPR WG at the time to ensure that this policy would not
contradict with TPR WG's policy and to develop a consistent solution for both groups. Though
URS is not a part of the ICANN org's existing Consensus Policies, the LD PDP WG recognized that
since this recommendation remains consistent with the EPDP-IDNs, no additional concerns are
raised, and further analysis on the matter was not required.

Rationale for Preliminary Recommendation 50:
The ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set and the ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set are entirely new
concepts, similar to the variant domain set from EPDP-IDNs. The simultaneous delegation of
ASCII gTLDs and their corresponding Latin diacritic gTLDs in the root zone is likewise new to the
DNS. As the policies and their associated technical considerations are complex, they will require
significant understanding from the relevant stakeholders and educational efforts from ICANN
org.

Throughout the development of the LD policy, especially those concerning second-level labels
(Topics 6-8) and dispute resolution *(see Preliminary Recommendations 47-49)*, the LD PDP WG
repeatedly emphasized the critical importance of education and outreach led by ICANN org.
During deliberations, the WG affirmed that relevant stakeholders – including the gTLD registries,
registrars, registrants, and end users, as well as dispute resolution providers (e.g., UDRP, URS,
and TM-PDDRP providers) and trademark owners – should be effectively informed to enhance
their understanding of the requirements for, and the definition of, an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD
set, identify the domain names comprising an ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set, and be aware of
the WG's policy position and their potential impact on dispute resolution proceedings.

The underlying purpose of clearly and effectively communicating this information to relevant
stakeholders is not only to enhance their understanding of domain names and their relationship
within the specified sets, but also to encourage trademark owners to consider these domain
names when using existing mandatory rights protections to secure their verified legal rights in
the DNS and to pursue further protection through marketplace Rights Protection Mechanisms
(RPMs). When a disputed domain name is part of an ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set and
allocated to the same registrant, complainants should account for all related names constituting
the set when filing a complaint, per the UDRP administrative proceeding as guided in
Preliminary Recommendation 48. In accordance with the "same entity" principle and the WG's
decisions regarding the set, the transfer process must include all domain names that constitute
the ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set.

In short, the LD PDP WG agreed that ICANN should assume a leading role in conducting outreach
to stakeholders and that accordingly, an expansion of the description – "conduct outreach"

taken from EPDP-IDNs Phase 2 *(See Final Recommendation 13)* – is required so that this action can be carried out with greater clarity and seriousness. Therefore, the WG changed this language to "provide necessary information." At this stage, the "necessary information" should include: 1) the requirements of the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set and the ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set; and 2) the policy position determined by the WG. This aims to deliver clarity yet maintain sufficient clarity for implementation.

Rationales for Preliminary Recommendation 51 and Implementation Guidance 52:
The LD PDP WG remains aligned with EPDP-IDNs and what was established through Final Recommendation 14 and Implementation Guidance 15, while also recognizing that these recommendations have not yet been adopted by the ICANN Board nor implemented.[132] With this in mind and staying consistent with the established rules, the LD PDP WG strongly recommends establishing a mechanism that enables gTLD registry operators and ICANN-accredited registrars to communicate with one another to support the registration and management of domain names that constitute an ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set. Such a mechanism is essential for upholding the "same entity" principle, identifying all allocated domain names within an ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set, and ensuring that source domain name(s) within an ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set – which may differ per TLD, as described through Preliminary Recommendations 39 and 45 – is (are) clearly indicated during this information exchange. Contracted parties must have visibility into all of this information to ensure compliance with "same entity" requirements and to understand their implications for domain name lifecycle management.

Moreover, a requestor (e.g., registrant, security researcher, an end user, etc.) that is seeking information about allocated domain names (e.g., interest in registering a domain name or filing a URS complaint) needs to have that information and a mechanism to do this. It is considered to be within the public interest for end users to have access to relevant and/or additional information, provided that the public disclosure of allocated domain names held by the same registrant would not cause any data privacy concerns. In particular, in light of its deliberations on the UDRP and URS *(See Preliminary Recommendations 47-48 and Implementation Guidance 49)*, the WG maintains that it is essential for all interested parties to know whether a disputed domain name has other allocated domain names within the ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set, and if so, what they are, in order to consider their impact on the proceedings and potential outcomes. This is recommended through Implementation Guidance 52.

As established through EPDP-IDNs, the requestor can gain access to such information, without compromising the registrant's privacy, by the corresponding sponsoring registrar conducting a balancing test when responding to a request. This is to reduce the risks associated with processing personal data, while also determining the purpose and legitimacy of the request.

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[132] At the time of publication (12 January 2026), EPDP-IDNs Phase 2 final recommendations have not yet been adopted by the ICANN Board.

Accordingly, this balancing test will inform whether to provide the requested information and if there are no data privacy concerns, the corresponding sponsoring registrar should accept the request and grant access to the requested information.

Although EPDP-IDNs discussions included certain suggestions to accomplish this through technical solutions such as EPP, the LD PDP WG did not prescribe any specific mechanisms, similar to EPDP-IDNs, and left the implementation at the discretion of the gTLD registry operators and the ICANN-accredited registrars. Some contracted parties already provide visibility into allocated variant domain names in their responses, and such practices could be extended to identify the allocated domain names within an ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set.

Rationale for Preliminary Recommendation 53:

The LD PDP WG upholds the EPDP-IDNs policy that the Root Zone Database on iana.org,[133] which represents the delegation details of top-level domains, must denote, in a transparent manner, the relationship between the delegated gTLDs that belong to the same ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set and are operated by the same entity. The ASCII gTLDs and their corresponding Latin diacritic gTLDs must be explicitly identified in this database, even if their categorization and relationship may already be apparent. This requirement reinforces the "same entity" principle while also respecting the set, which ultimately supports transparency in data practices. It is also essential for impacted parties to know whether a gTLD involved in a TM-PDDRP proceeding has other allocated gTLD labels within the same ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set.

That said, there is no prescriptive way for displaying the relationships among the delegated gTLDs that constitute an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set operated by the same gTLD registry operator; this will be left to IANA's discretion to implement this requirement.

Rationale for Implementation Guidance 54:

The LD PDP WG agreed with EPDP-IDNs that gTLD registry operators should transparently publish policies, reflecting their implementation of the LD PDP recommendations at the second-level. To align with this rule, the specific policies that the LD PDP WG agreed should be published include the ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set requirements (Preliminary Recommendation 39), "same entity" principle for allocating domain names that constitute an ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set (Preliminary Recommendation 40), and ceiling value for allocatable domain names (Implementation Guidance 41). In addition, gTLD registry operators should publish policies reflecting the implementation of IDN Table harmonization (Preliminary Recommendation 44), the management of exempted domain names (if applicable) (Preliminary Recommendations 42-43), and responses to domain name queries (Preliminary Recommendation 51). Hence, Preliminary Recommendations 39-40, 42-44, 51, and Implementation Guidance 41 are highlighted in this implementation guidance. The decision of whether and how to publish these policies is at the discretion of each gTLD registry operator.

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[133] See the Root Zone Database here: https://www.iana.org/domains/root/db

4.1.2 Charter Question 3

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, or Topic 25 on IDNs from the SubPro Final Report, relevant, or warrant discussion specific to Latin script diacritics?

WG Response:

> In response to Charter question 3, the WG reviewed Topic 25 on IDNs from the SubPro Final Report, as well as Phases 1 and 2 of the EPDP-IDNs. The WG dedicated a substantial amount of time on thoroughly reviewing the policy recommendations from both phases of the EPDP-IDNs. Since the final recommendations from EPDP-IDNs were built upon the SubPro Final Report, the WG chose to focus exclusively on the EPDP-IDNs Outputs; most elements from EPDP-IDNs were relevant and could be directly transferred to the LD PDP. The WG's deliberations and agreements are documented in detail in the Worksheet developed by GNSO Support Staff.[134]
>
> However, the Outputs (preliminary recommendations and implementation guidance) that address Charter question 3 – most of which are derived from EPDP-IDNs – are presented above under the response to Charter question 1, organized by the eight (8) topics listed earlier.

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[134] The WG leveraged the Outputs from SubPro Final Report and EPDP-IDNs Final Reports - both phases - by using the Worksheet as a review tool which was developed by the GNSO Support Staff.

4.2 Charter Questions with No Preliminary Outputs

4.2.1 Charter Question 2

If a solution is needed to this issue, are any of the elements of the ccTLD Fast Track process transferable?

WG Response:

> The WG reviewed the ccTLD Fast Track Process to assess whether any elements could be applied to the LD PDP. While the overall Fast Track Process and the Extended Process Similarity Review Panel (EPSRP) – essentially also an exception process – were found to be generally informative, they were not deemed directly relevant for detailed consideration within the context of the LD PDP. However, the articulation of the "same entity" principle within the Exception Process received particular attention, especially in relation to preventing user confusion. This issue was deferred for further consideration under the EPDP-IDNs.

4.2.2 Charter Question 4

If a solution is needed to this issue, will it have any impact on existing Consensus Policies?

Starting with this PDP, the LD PDP WG is expected to consider the potential impact its recommendations may have on ICANN's existing Consensus Policies. This step is intended not only to ensure alignment between the recommendations during their development and current Consensus Policies, but also to identify any conflicts or areas where amendments to the recommendations, or even attention to specific Consensus Policy elements, may be required. Should such issues arise, they can be promptly escalated by the WG to the GNSO Council level for consideration through the GNSO Council liaison to the WG.

That said, similar activities have also been conducted in previous PDPs, but this is the first time that this question has been formally incorporated as a Charter question for the WG. This process ensures that this impact analysis is consistently conducted and that no such review is overlooked.

WG Response:

In response to Charter question 4, the WG briefly reviewed the list of ICANN's existing Consensus Policies presented on the ICANN website,[135] noting that they have been adopted by the ICANN Board and that the majority have been updated since 21 February 2024, to reflect the changes required for the implementation of the Registration Data Policy.

The WG further deliberated on the existing Consensus Policies in relation to the preliminary recommendations that it had developed, through the Worksheet developed by GNSO Support Staff.[136] In short, most recommendations had either minimal or no impact on the existing Consensus Policies, as they aligned with the existing Consensus Policies once they were adopted and put into effect, not altering or impacting any substance.

While most Consensus Policies were classified as having no impact from the LD PDP's policy recommendations, there were three (3) policies that were assessed as potentially receiving a low level of impact, namely: UDRP, Transfer Policy, and TDRP. These were in particular connection with Preliminary Recommendation 47 (Transfer Policy), Preliminary Recommendation 48 (UDRP), and Implementation Guidance 49 (URS). At present, the LD PDP WG's analysis indicates that its recommendations align with the Transfer Policy and avoids any conflict once implemented. Moreover, its recommendations will only come into operation as a result of UDRP, having no impact on altering or impacting its substance.

It is important to note that there may be increasing concerns in the future that confusingly similar ASCII gTLD and Latin diacritic gTLD strings could create legal challenges or strengthen UDRP complaints, potentially prompting UDRP to evolve and adapt to such scenarios; however, these concerns are addressed through the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set and the ASCII/Latin diacritic domain set requirements, the associated application processes, contractual requirements, delegation and removal obligations, as well through Preliminary Recommendation 48 and Implementation Guidance 49 themselves. In fact, all the measures taken through this PDP help minimize any negative impact on UDRP.

Consequently, the LD PDP WG agreed that its entire set of preliminary recommendations is generally safe and aligns with the existing Consensus Policies, signaling that there is no high alert impact here.

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[135] See ICANN's existing Consensus Policies here: https://www.icann.org/en/contracted-parties/consensus-policies
[136] The WG reviewed ICANN's existing Consensus Policies by using the Worksheet as a review tool which was developed by the GNSO Support Staff.

5 GPI/HR Framework Analysis

The WG was chartered to consider the potential impact of any LD PDP recommendations on the Global Public Interest (GPI) and human rights.[137] To facilitate these analyses, ICANN org, developed by the ICANN Board in consultation with the ICANN community, introduced a GPI checklist and a human rights impact assessment (HRIA) checklist for the WG to utilize in conducting work.[138] Though not prescriptive toolkits, the LD PDP WG decided to consult and benefit from utilizing these checklists to guide the work along, where they found them to be convenient and effective for completing this task.

In essence, the WG reviewed each topic under which the preliminary recommendations are presented – eight (8) topics in total – per the GPI and HRIA categories, rather than delving into each preliminary recommendation and implementation guidance – fifty-four (54) in total – once they were all formulated. This approach was taken in recognition of the WG's understanding that its Outputs have minimal impact on GPI and human rights, consistent with the Outputs from EPDP-IDNs.

In brief, the LD PDP WG agreed that its preliminary recommendations generally have a positive impact on GPI that allows for a diverse and multilingual internet, while prioritizing stability and security. Through its HRIA analysis, although the WG noted potential concerns related to fees, the complexity and cost of processes, and awareness gaps – particularly for underserved communities and smaller registries with limited legal and technical support – from a policy-formulation perspective, the recommendations were determined to address and mitigate these concerns, resulting in an overall positive rather than negative impact.

Another concern raised was about excluded characters which warrants emphasis. While the PDP itself aims to support and enable a multilingual and diverse Internet, it was noted that the exclusion of certain non-diacritic cases or special characters from the Latin script considered in this scope – for example, characters like ø in Norwegian – may have negative implications for human rights and diversity. Treating some languages differently, especially minority languages, could result in future limitations. Keeping the WG Charter in mind and recognizing that this

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[137] GNSO PDPs have been chartered to consider the potential impact of their recommendations on the GPI and human rights since 2023. The new WG charter template includes a section on "Impact on Human Rights," requesting each PDP to consider these aspects and include this analysis as a part of their work. The GPI Framework is a request by the ICANN Board from 2024. These exercises aim to significantly strengthen policy alignment with GPI and human rights. Since the initiation of this effort, the LD PDP WG is the first group to take this work on proactively, setting an example for future PDPs.

[138] The WG conducted this portion of the work by using the following review tools, which were provided by the ICANN Board and the community through ICANN org: GPI Checklist and HRIA. Although these checklists are neither mandatory nor prescriptive at this time, the WG found them to be the most convenient and effective resources for completing this task.

policy does not intend to restrict diversity – and that in practice, many such TLDs may never be applied for at this stage – the WG agreed that characters not included at this stage, as well as scope not covered through this PDP, can be addressed in future efforts.

Details of these analyses can be found in the GPI checklist and the HRIA checklist.[139]

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[139] Access both checklists in the above in Footnote 138.

6 Next Steps

This Initial Report will be posted for Public Comment for forty (40) days. The WG will review the public comments received on this Initial Report and consider whether any changes need to be made to its preliminary recommendations. The WG will finalize all recommendations in a Final Report to be sent to the GNSO Council for review. If adopted by the GNSO Council, the Final Report would, then, be forwarded to the ICANN Board of Directors for its consideration and, potentially, approval as an ICANN Consensus Policy.

Annex A LD PDP WG Charter

ICANN | GNSO
Generic Names Supporting Organization

WG Name:	Latin Script Diacritics Policy Development Process WG
Section I: Working Group Identification	
Chartering Organization(s):	Generic Names Supporting Organization (GNSO) Council
Charter Approval Date:	19 December 2024
Name of WG Leadership:	Michael Bauland
Name(s) of Appointed Liaison(s):	GNSO Council Liaison: Prudence Malinki GDS Liaison: Isabelle Colas-Adeshina
WG Workspace URL:	Latin Script Diacritics PDP Home
WG Mailing List:	Mailing List Archive

GNSO Council Resolution:	**Title:**	Initiation of the Policy Development Process on Latin Script Diacritics
	Ref # & Link:	20241113-4

Important Document Links:	**Procedural Documents:** ● Annex A: GNSO Policy Development Process ● 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.

The 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 Fast Track process 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, or Topic 25 on IDNs from the SubPro Final Report, 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?

What is not in scope: For clarification purposes, this PDP will use the Latin RZ-LGR
https://www.icann.org/sites/default/files/lgr/rz-lgr-5-latin-script-26may22-en.html as one of the relevant
baseline foundational documents when delineating scope. This PDP must understand the work that
was completed by the Latin Generation Panel, including the rationale and impact of the various
exclusions of Section 3: Variant Sets.

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.

Impact on the Global Public Interest

The WG is also expected to consider the potential impact of any recommendations on the Global
Public Interest. In order to facilitate this analysis, the WG may wish to consult this checklist and may
also benefit from consulting the GPI Toolkit Wiki page.

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: Open Model - the Working Group will be open to all parties interested in participating

Rationale: The "Open Model" is to allow any interested parties to actively participate in the Working Group.

The Council anticipates that a limited number of ICANN community members will have the prerequisite knowledge, background, expertise, and interest in the subject matter and as such, wishes to limit barriers to participation. The Council also believes that the Open Model is simpler to administer.

Membership Structure:

Role Descriptions: All persons actively participating in the Working Group will be considered Members and 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. Where applicable, Members should 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, the relevant group should endeavor to keep informed of milestones and potential recommendations that may affect the group.

- **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.

The GNSO Secretariat is expected to circulate a "Call For Volunteers" in accordance with the Working Group Model described above:
- 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.

B. Joining of New Members After Project Launch
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 Member 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 Members can be accepted after the start of the WG effort.

The WG could decide to suspend new Members 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, and neutral Chair 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.

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 Members 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 to the extent possible, the Liaison should be a Council member for the duration 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 to 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 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 of the Policy Development Process on Latin Script Diacritics Working Group:

- I agree to genuinely cooperate with fellow Members 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 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:
  - o Acting in accordance with, and in the spirit of, ICANN's mission and core values as provided in ICANN's Bylaws;
  - o Listening to the views of all stakeholders and working to build consensus; and
  - o 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.

For consensus building purposes, the WG Leadership, WG Members, and GNSO Council Liaison are expected to review the Consensus Playbook which provides practical tools and best practices to bridge differences, break deadlocks, and find common ground within ICANN processes; potential training related to the Consensus Playbook may be provided for WG Leadership, Members, and GNSO Council Liaison.

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 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 Members 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[140] 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:

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[140] Any Working Group member may raise an issue for reconsideration; however, a formal appeal will require 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.

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[141].

Who Can Participate in Consensus Designation:

Consensus calls or decisions are open to all Members who, where relevant, may consult as appropriate with their respective appointing organizations.

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.

Termination or Closure of Working Group:

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: Charter Document History

Version	Date	Description
1.0	19 December 2024	PDP WG Charter approved by the GNSO Council

Staff Contact:	Saewon Lee, John Emery,	**Email:**	saewon.lee@icann.org

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[141] 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.

	Steve Chan		

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

Annex B Stress Test: Edge Case Studies

Acknowledging the complexity of the topics and the technical issues involved, while also recognizing that gaps, instability, or problems could arise if policy and technical elements were not properly aligned, the LD PDP WG decided to conduct a Stress Test. The purpose was to identify and evaluate edge cases that may not have been considered while working with a limited scope or relying mainly on the prior bodies of work for guidance. Since it was considered that this exercise would only be meaningful once a draft set of recommendations had been developed, the WG conducted the Stress Test after the recommendations were formulated. Accordingly, this activity took place during ICANN84 in Dublin once Charter questions 1, 2, and 3 had been addressed and all relevant prior bodies of work reviewed and examined.

While conducting the Stress Test, the LD PDP WG resolved misjudged issues and highlighted edge cases that required further consideration. Once the Stress Test was completed, the LD PDP WG revisited any areas where the results did not align with the recommendations. In such instances, the WG deliberated on the topics again, revising and updating the recommendations, as necessary. If the WG concluded that an edge case was valid but not appropriate for inclusion in this effort, it was set aside and/or reserved for potential future work.

Below are the six potential edge case scenarios that were stress tested against to assess the soundness of the WG's preliminary recommendations:
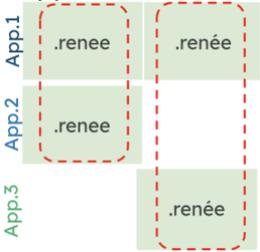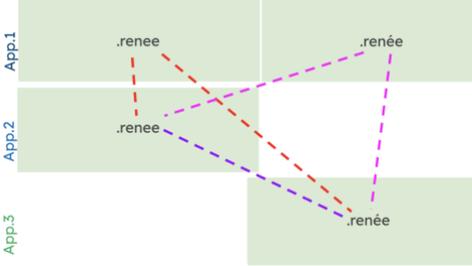
No.	Issue	Scenario	LD PDP WG's Agreement
1	If there are changes in Latin diacritics due to changes adopted in the language by a country/region, what will happen to those already delegated Latin diacritic gTLDs?	Suppose a country/region adopts reform in its script and eliminates a diacritic or changes its use, does this change the already delegated Latin diacritic gTLDs? Examples: - .çay → .chay - .pão → .pao	The LD PDP WG agreed that this issue is covered, to the extent necessary, and handled in its preliminary recommendations: ● Preliminary Recommendation 1.2: *"Per the Unicode Table, only characters that can be decomposed in this manner and appear within the table are eligible for the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set."* ● Preliminary Recommendation 32: *"Consistent with Final Recommendation 8.7 from the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report, for all future versions of the RZ-LGR, Generation Panels (GPs) and the Integration Panel*

			(IP) should follow the stability principle in the LGR Procedure and make best efforts to retain full backward compatibility with delegated gTLDs, their delegated and allocated variant labels (if any), and their delegated and allocated ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set labels (if any). The LGR Procedure must be updated to specify the exceptional circumstances, to the extent known to the GPs and IP, that could result in a proposed update to the RZ-LGR not being able to retain full backward compatibility." ● Preliminary Recommendation 33: *"Consistent with Final Recommendation 8.8 from the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report, in the unexpected event where a proposed update to the RZ-LGR is unable to retain full backward compatibility for validating any delegated gTLDs and their corresponding ASCII or Latin diacritic gTLD label(s) (if any), the relevant GP must call out the exception during a Public Comment period and explain the reasons for such exception..."* ● Implementation Guidance 34: *"...the GP explanation should identify security and stability risks (if any), as well as possible actions to mitigate the risks associated with allowing a delegated gTLD and its corresponding ASCII or Latin diacritic gTLD label(s) (if any) to be exempted. [...]*

			Notwithstanding the recommendation to exempt affected gTLDs, in the event security and stability risks are identified, ICANN org and the affected registry operator should discuss possible measures to minimize the risks that would result in minimal disruption to registries, registrars, registrants, and end-users."

2	If a Latin diacritic gTLD of a corresponding .Brand ASCII gTLD is not allocated / delegated, but a different entity other than the current owner applies with permission from the .Brand TLD owner, can this be considered?	Suppose the owners of the following ASCII gTLD brands allow another entity to own the Latin diacritic gTLD:
		
		Examples:
		- hermes → .hermès
		
		- .lancome→.lancôme
			• Fundamentally, this issue/scenario conflicts with the "same entity" principle.
			• Any applicant has a choice of applying separately or as a set:
			  ○ If separately, the applications will be subject to String Similarity Review and most likely will get blocked/not get the TLD. Either way, this is out of LD PDP scope of work, thus irrelevant.
			  ○ If applied as a set, the LD PDP WG agreed that this issue is covered, to the extent necessary, and handled in its preliminary recommendations:
			• The relevant LD PDP preliminary recommendations are as follows:
			  ○ <u>Preliminary Recommendation 2:</u> *"...all gTLDs that constitute an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set can only be allocated to the same gTLD registry operator."*

			○ Preliminary Recommendation 14.3: *"An applicant for a .Brand TLD string(s) that constitute(s) an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set is required to submit proof that each label that constitutes the set is identical to registered trademarks owned and used by the gTLD registry operator or its affiliate."*
3	If a registry of a .Brand Latin diacritic gTLD loses the brand legally, should we transfer or reserve Latin diacritic gTLD to a new owner?	Suppose Registry A loses .Bránd legally. Should this Latin diacritic gTLD be transferred or reserved to a new owner under the current LD PDP policy?	The LD PDP WG agreed that this issue is covered, to the extent necessary, and handled in its preliminary recommendations: ● Preliminary Recommendation 2: *"...all gTLDs that constitute an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set can only be allocated to the same gTLD registry operator."* ● Preliminary Recommendation 14: *"...all gTLDs that constitute an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set must be subject to the same application requirements and evaluation criteria. [...] 14.3 An applicant for a .Brand TLD string(s) that constitute(s) an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set is required to submit proof that each label that constitutes the set is identical to registered trademarks owned and used by the gTLD registry operator or its affiliate."* ● Preliminary Recommendation 35: *"An ASCII gTLD that is removed*

			from the root zone, either voluntarily or involuntarily, will result in the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set no longer meeting requirements as described in Preliminary Recommendation 1. The removed gTLD(s) shall not be available for re-assignment or selection by an entity other than the one holding the remaining IDN gTLD in the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set for at least 10 years following the removal. The gTLD registry operator may retain a single IDN gTLD and shall no longer be considered an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set.” ● Preliminary Recommendation 36: *“A delegated Latin diacritic label that is voluntarily removed from the root zone will not require the removal of the associated ASCII gTLD or its other delegated Latin diacritic label(s). The removed Latin diacritic gTLD shall not be available for re-assignment or selection by an entity other than the one holding the remaining gTLD(s) in the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set for at least 10 years following the removal. The gTLD registry operator may retain a single ASCII gTLD and shall no longer be considered an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set.”* ● Preliminary Recommendation 38: “*Consistent with Final Recommendation 8.13 from the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report, in the event*

			that a gTLD is removed from the root zone as a consequence of its registry operator's breach of the Registry Agreement, the rest of its ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set, if any, must also be removed from the root zone."
4	Multiple applications are in contention with at least one gTLD from the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set application; Are all resolutions of that contention set viable?	Suppose the following 3 applications are in contention: - App.1: .renee and .renée - App.2: .renee - App.3: .renée Are all resolutions of the contention set viable?	The LD PDP WG agreed that this matter is out of scope for the current work. Such scenarios may arise within the actual New gTLD Program and should be addressed according to the Program's established rules. Therefore, the resolution of these issues falls to the Program, and the WG will not develop or provide recommendations regarding potential contention scenarios. cf. Standard scenario:

5	Applicants having an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set would also like to activate a variant of one of their TLDs; Can they do it? What policies apply – LD PDP, EPDP-IDNs, or both?	Suppose an applicant that owns an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set – .strasse and .strässe – would also like to activate a variant of one of their TLDs.
		
		Is this possible and if so, what policies apply; LD PDP, EPDP-IDNs, or both?
			• The LD PDP WG discussed this issue and the next (Case Study 6) extensively, considering two (2) main options:
			  ○ Option 1. Restricting the variant activation within the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set.
			  ○ Option 2. Allowing variant activation in the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set.
			• In short, the WG members decided on Option 1 where an ASCII/Latin diacritic

			gTLD contract cannot have variants added to it. The rationale behind this decision can be found below in Case Study 6.
			• However, it was noted that under the current Latin script LGR, this scenario is not possible, since the only allocatable variant relationships in the Latin LGR are those involving Turkish dotless "ı" and the sharp "ß," and .straße and .strasse do not qualify as an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set.

6	Applicants having a Variant domain set would also like to activate a Latin diacritic gTLD for one of their TLDs; Can they do it? What policies apply – LD PDP, EPDP-IDNs, or both?	Suppose an applicant with an existing Variant domain set – .straße and .strasse – would like to add .strässe to its existing gTLD .strasse. Is this possible and if so, what policies apply; LD PDP, EPDP-IDNs, or both?	• For this issue, the LD PDP WG had to consider whether a base ASCII gTLD should be standalone, where the requirement, then, would be that it must not be a part of an existing Variant domain set.
			
			• This issue was also discussed at length by the WG, considering the two (2) main options introduced through Case Study 5 above:
			   ○ Option 1. Restricting the ASCII/Latin script diacritic gTLD set activation to single ASCII TLDs and not for Variant domain sets.
			   ○ Option 2. Allowing ASCII/Latin script diacritic set activation for TLDs within a Variant domain set.
			   ○ The summary of WG discussions, including the pros and cons of each option is posted on wiki here:

				https://icann-community.atlassian.net/wiki/x/BIDqJw

- Though Option 2 of allowing activation of ASCII/Latin script diacritic sets for TLDs within a Variant domain set (and vice versa) was considered more natural and complete – rather than prohibiting such cases – the WG members recognized that given the current limited scope of work and the fact that concurrent operation of the ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set and the Variant domain set has never been practiced, such an approach could introduce safety and security risks for the DNS. Moreover, accommodating scenarios that may never arise in real-world operations could significantly complicate and delay the work; this includes, many preliminary recommendations aligned with EPDP-IDNs may need to be revisited, reconsidered, and revised, potentially affecting the EPDP-IDNs rules already adopted by the ICANN Board and under implementation for the Next Round.
- In short, though it was challenging to reach an agreement, the WG members decided on Option 1 – a variant contract cannot have any ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLDs added to it (and vice versa like in Case Study 5 – an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD contract cannot have variants added to it).

			- Accordingly, this restriction was explicitly incorporated into the final clause of <u>Preliminary Recommendation 1</u>, resulting in the following language: *"1.5 None of the gTLD strings that constitute an ASCII/Latin diacritic gTLD set may be part of a Variant TLD set."* - If Full Consensus on this recommendation is not reached during the Consensus Call, Minority View will be received by the proponent, which will be documented in the Final Report. - Meanwhile, the LD PDP WG noted that future versions of the RZ-LGR may change such scenarios in the future. In addition, the WG accepted that any unresolved issues can be addressed through future work.

Annex C Background

This section summarizes key milestones related to the introduction of Latin script diacritics, which also dates back to the introduction of IDNs and events related to the launch of the New gTLD Program. Therefore, most key milestones are taken from EPDP-IDNs and its background.

2003: IDN Registrations at the Second-Level

In 2003, the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF) developed IDNA2003, the standard which first enabled domain names to contain non-ASCII Unicode characters. In the same year, ICANN and leading IDNs registries collaboratively developed IDN Implementation Guidelines version 1.0, which were then endorsed by the ICANN Board.[142] ICANN subsequently began authorizing registries, having agreements with ICANN to deploy IDNs at the second-level according to the provisions of the Guidelines. The Guidelines required registries to work collaboratively with relevant and interested stakeholders to develop language-specific registration policies (including, where the registry determines appropriate, character variant tables), with the goal of achieving consistency in IDN implementation efforts for the benefit of DNS users worldwide.

2007: Groundwork for IDN gTLDs at the Top-Level

In 2007, the GNSO's Final Report on the Introduction of New Generic Top-Level Domains included the following outputs on IDNs, laying the groundwork for the introduction of IDN gTLDs:[143]
- Principle B: Some new generic top-level domains should be IDN) subject to the approval of IDNs being available in the root.
- Principle C: The reasons for introducing new top-level domains include that there is demand from potential applicants for new top-level domains in both ASCII and IDN formats.
- Recommendation 18: If an applicant offers an IDN service, then ICANN's IDN Guidelines must be followed.

2009: Introduction of IDN ccTLDs at the Top-Level

In 2009, the ICANN Board approved the Final Implementation Plan for the ccTLD Fast Track Process, which was based on a proposal produced by the Internationalized Domain Names Working Group (INDC WG).[144] The Fast Track Process enabled countries and territories to submit

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[142] IDN Implementation Guidelines version 1.0: https://www.icann.org/resources/pages/idn-guidelines-2003-06-20-en; ICANN Board resolution that endorsed the IDN Implementation Guidelines: https://www.icann.org/en/board-activities-and-meetings/materials/minutes-regular-meeting-of-the-board-rio-de-janeiro-27-03-2003-en#InternationalizedDomainNames

[143] Final Report on Introduction of New Generic Top-Level Domains: https://gnso.icann.org/en/issues/new-gtlds/pdp-dec05-fr-parta-08aug07.htm

[144] Final Implementation Plan for the ccTLD Fast Track Process published at the time (2009): https://www.icann.org/en/system/files/files/idn-cctld-implementation-plan-16nov09-en.pdf (Most recent updated version as of 2019: https://www.icann.org/en/system/files/files/idn-cctld-implementation-plan-28mar19-en.pdf); ICANN Board resolution that approved the Fast Track Process

requests to ICANN for IDN ccTLDs representing their respective country or territory names in scripts other than Latin, introducing IDNs to the top level for the first time. With ccPDP4 tasked to evolve the Fast Track Process, which involved the Latin script, the scope of IDNC WG was limited to non-Latin scripts to not pre-empt any outcomes of the PDP. To date, 61 IDN ccTLDs have been delegated.

2010: No Top-Level Variant gTLDs Delegated in the New gTLD Program

In 2010, as preparations were underway for the launch of the New gTLD Program, the ICANN Board resolved that *"...no variants of gTLDs will be delegated through the New gTLD Program until appropriate variant management solutions are developed."*[145] The Board directed ICANN's CEO to develop an issues report *"identifying what needs to be done with the evaluation, possible delegation, allocation and operation of gTLDs containing variant characters IDNs as part of the new gTLD process in order to facilitate the development of workable approaches to the deployment of gTLDs containing variant characters IDNs."*[146]

2012: "Gaps" with Respect to IDN Variant TLDs

In 2012, the IDN Variant Issues Project produced "A Study of Issues Related to the Management of IDN Variant TLDs (Integrated Issues Report)," which collated issues associated with the possible inclusion in the DNS root zone of IDN variant TLDs.[147] The Study identified two gaps:
1. No definition of IDN variant TLDs.
2. No IDN variant TLD management mechanism.

2012: New gTLD Program 2012 Round: IDNs at the Top-Level

Also in 2012, the New gTLD Program launched, providing the first opportunity to apply for IDN gTLDs. A total of 116 IDN gTLD applications were received during the 2012 application round. Ninety-two (92) IDN gTLDs were ultimately delegated. While variant gTLDs were not delegated as part of the 2012 round, applicants were invited to declare any variants of the applied-for string in the application. Declaring variant strings was for information purposes only and did not imply any right or claim to the declared variant strings.

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implementation plan: https://www.icann.org/en/board-activities-and-meetings/materials/approved-resolutions-regular-meeting-of-the-icann-board-of-directors-seoul-30-10-2009-en#2; INDC WG: https://ccnso.icann.org/en/workinggroups/idncwg.htm

[145] ICANN Board resolution regarding gTLD variant labels: https://www.icann.org/en/board-activities-and-meetings/materials/approved-resolutions-special-meeting-of-the-board-of-directors-25-09-2010-en#2.5

[146] Ibid.

[147] Integrated Issues Report: https://www.icann.org/en/system/files/files/idn-vip-integrated-issues-final-clean-20feb12-en.pdf

2013: Procedure for Developing Root Zone Label Generation Rules

In 2013, the ICANN Board resolved to implement the procedure for developing RZ-LGR, which aimed to address the previously identified gap 1 that there was no definition of IDN variant TLDs.[148] Generation Panels started developing proposals for script-specific LGR that define a set of parameters that determine valid IDN labels and their variants for the root zone.

2019: Recommendations for Variant TLD Management

In 2019, to address that there was no IDN variant management mechanism – the previously identified gap 2 – ICANN org published Recommendations for Managing Internationalized Domain Name Variant Top-Level Domains ("Staff Paper"), which the Board subsequently approved.[149] In its resolution approving the Staff Paper, the Board requested that *"the ccNSO and GNSO take into account the Variant TLD Recommendations while developing their respective policies to define and manage the IDN variant TLDs for the current TLDs as well as for future TLD applications."*

2020: Recommendations for the Technical Utilization of the RZ-LGR

In addition, to further address the gap 2 that there was no IDN variant management mechanism, the ICANN Board asked the ICANN community to study and recommend how to technically apply the RZ-LGR in a harmonized way to all TLDs. The RZ-LGR Technical Study Group (TSG) developed Recommendations for the Technical Utilization of the RZ-LGR, which the Board approved in 2020.[150]

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[148] Procedure for developing the RZ-LGR: https://www.icann.org/en/system/files/files/lgr-procedure-20mar13-en.pdf; ICANN Board resolution that adopted the procedure: https://www.icann.org/en/board-activities-and-meetings/materials/approved-resolutions-regular-meeting-of-the-icann-board-of-directors-11-04-2013-en#2.a

[149] Staff Paper: https://www.icann.org/resources/pages/idn-variant-tld-implementation-2018-07-26-en; Board resolution that adopted the recommendations in the Staff Paper: https://www.icann.org/en/board-activities-and-meetings/materials/approved-resolutions-regular-meeting-of-the-icann-board-14-03-2019-en#2.a

[150] Recommendations for the Technical Utilization of the RZ-LGR: https://www.icann.org/en/system/files/files/rz-lgr-technical-utilization-recs-07oct19-en.pdf; ICANN Board resolution that adopted the recommendations: https://www.icann.org/en/board-activities-and-meetings/materials/approved-resolutions-open-session-of-board-workshop-los-angeles-regular-meeting-of-the-icann-board-26-01-2020-en#1.c; TSG: https://community.icann.org/display/croscomlgrprocedure/Study+Group+on+Technical+Use+of+RZ-LGR

2021: Recommendations for Future Rounds of the New gTLD Program

In February 2021, the GNSO New gTLD SubPro PDP WG published its Final Report, which includes hundreds of Outputs on 42 topics related to the future of the New gTLD Program.[151] IDNs were addressed in Topic 25 of the Final Report.

2021: Policy Development Related to IDN Variant TLDs

In May 2021, the GNSO approved the Charter of the EPDP on IDNs, which was expected to develop recommendations by building on the existing body of policy work, research, and analysis on the IDN subject.[152] The EPDP-IDNs Team began meeting in August 2021. The EPDP-IDNs Team also established a small group dedicated to the deliberation on String Similarity Review-related charter questions.

In August 2021, the ccNSO Council approved the Charter for the ccPDP4, which is tasked to recommend a policy for the selection and deselection of IDN ccTLD strings.[153] The outcomes of the ccPDP4 are expected to eventually replace the IDN ccTLD Fast Track Process. The ccPDP was chartered to include a sub-group specifically focused on variant management of IDN ccTLD strings, as well as a sub-group focused on the review of confusingly similar strings. Those topics overlapped with the topics specified in the EPDP-IDNs Charter.

Per the ICANN Board's request that the GNSO and the ccNSO keep each other informed of their respective progress in developing the relevant details of and policies and procedures on IDN variant TLD management, the EPDP-IDNs Team and ccPDP4 appointed liaisons to each other.[154] Both groups also met periodically to discuss the alignment of their draft recommendations.

2022: ICANN Published RZ-LGR Version 5 and IDN Implementation Guidelines Version 4.1

In May 2022, ICANN published the RZ-LGR version 5, which covers 26 scripts: Arabic, Armenian, Bangla, Chinese (Han), Cyrillic, Devanagari, Ethiopic, Georgian, Greek, Gujarati, Gurmukhi, Hebrew, Japanese (Hiragana, Katakana, and Kanji [Han]), Kannada, Khmer, Korean (Hangul and Hanja [Han]), Lao, Latin, Malayalam, Myanmar, Oriya, Sinhala, Tamil, Telugu, and Thai.[155]

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[151] See SubPro Final Report here: https://gnso.icann.org/sites/default/files/file/field-file-attach/final-report-newgtld-subsequent-procedures-pdp-02feb21-en.pdf

[152] EPDP-IDNs Charter: https://gnso.icann.org/sites/default/files/policy/2021/presentation/CharterGNSOIDNsEPDPWorkingGroup20May21.pdf

[153] ccPDP4 Charter: https://community.icann.org/download/attachments/138969190/Draft%20Charter%20ccPDP4%20WG.pdf?version=1&modificationDate=1592141220002&api=v2

[154] ICANN Board resolution that requested coordination between GNSO and ccNSO on the IDN related policy development: https://www.icann.org/en/board-activities-and-meetings/materials/approved-resolutions-regular-meeting-of-the-icann-board-14-03-2019-en#2.a

[155] RZ-LGR version 5: https://www.icann.org/resources/pages/root-zone-lgr-2015-06-21-en

In November 2022, ICANN published IDN Implementation Guidelines version 4.1 after approval by the ICANN Board.[156] The ICANN Board deferred implementation of guidelines 6a, 11, 12, 13, 18 in version 4.0 as they overlapped with ongoing work through the EPDP-IDNs Team.[157] The ICANN Board, then, directed ICANN org to publish the non-deferred guidelines in 4.0 as version 4.1.

2023: ICANN Board Kicked Off SubPro Implementation

In March 2023, during the ICANN76 Public Meeting, the ICANN Board adopted a substantial portion of the Outputs in the SubPro PDP Final Report and officially kicked off implementation efforts to prepare for launching the next application round of the New gTLD Program.[158] The Outputs adopted by the ICANN Board included all the IDN recommendations in Topic 25 of the SubPro PDP Final Report.

2023: GNSO Council Adopted the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report

After kicking off the implementation efforts for SubPro, the ICANN Board requested the EPDP-IDNs Team to deliver an updated project plan by the last day of the ICANN77 Public Meeting (15 June 2023) that identifies all character questions that will impact the next AGB of the New gTLD Program, as well as a new timeline for the EPDP-IDNs Team's delivery of relevant recommendations to the GNSO Council. The GNSO Council submitted this deliverable to the ICANN Board during ICANN77 and provided an updated timeline in July 2023.[159] The EPDP-IDNs Team had already bifurcated its work into two (2) phases to best prepare for the New gTLD Program: Next Round and avoid any potential delays that may affect the implementation work; EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 was to focus on topics related to top-level gTLD definition and management. Consequently, the GNSO Council approved the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report[160] on 21 December 2023,[161] including all sixty-nine (69) Outputs.

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[156] IDN Implementation Guidelines version 4.1: https://www.icann.org/en/system/files/files/idn-guidelines-22sep22-en.pdf; ICANN Board resolution that approved the IDN Implementation Guidelines version 4.1: https://www.icann.org/en/board-activities-and-meetings/materials/approved-resolutions-regular-meeting-of-the-icann-board-22-09-2022-en#2.d

[157] Proposed IDN Implementation Guidelines version 4.0:
https://www.icann.org/en/system/files/files/idn-guidelines-10may18-en.pdf

[158] ICANN Board resolution that partially adopted the SubPro PDP Outputs:
https://www.icann.org/en/board-activities-and-meetings/materials/approved-resolutions-regular-meeting-of-the-icann-board-16-03-2023-en

[159] See details in the GNSO Council deliverable submitted during ICANN77 here:
https://www.icann.org/en/system/files/correspondence/ducos-to-sinha-15jun23-en.pdf; See the updated GNSO Council deliverable here:
https://www.icann.org/en/system/files/correspondence/ducos-to-sinha-25jul23-en.pdf

[160] See EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report here:
https://gnso.icann.org/sites/default/files/policy/2023/correspondence/epdp-idns2-leadership-team-et-al-to-gnso-council-et-al-08nov23-en.pdf

[161] See GNSO Council resolution here: https://gnso.icann.org/en/council/resolutions/2020-current#202312

2024: GNSO Council Delivered EPDP-IDNs Phase 2 Final Report to the ICANN Board

EPDP-IDNs Phase 2 focused on topics related to second-level variant management. Accordingly, the GNSO Council approved all twenty (20) Outputs (fourteen [14] recommendations and six [6] implementation guidance) pertaining to second-level variant management documented in the Phase 2 Final Report[162] on 13 November 2024,[163] delivering the Recommendations Report[164] to the ICANN Board in December 2024. As of 2025, EPDP-IDNs Phase 2 Final Report is pending final decision by the ICANN Board.

2024: GNSO Council Initiated a PDP for Latin Script Diacritics

On 16 May 2024, the GNSO Council requested an Issue Report, recognizing an issue to be examined in Latin script diacritics where an ASCII gTLD and the Latin script diacritic version of the gTLD are not variants of each other and may be found visually similar to each other; there was a need to explore whether they could coexist, and if so, to identify those potential mechanisms for doing so. The Preliminary Issue Report[165] received forty-one (41) public comment submissions during the Public Comment period between July and August 2024, prompting a Final Issue Report[166] that was delivered to the GNSO Council on 12 September 2024. Following the presentation of the WG Charter and subsequent discussion on 17 October 2024, the GNSO Council initiated a PDP for Latin script diacritics on 13 November 2024.[167]

2025: ICANN Board Adopted the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report

After receiving the GNSO Council-approved EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report[168] in January 2024,[169] the ICANN Board initially adopted fifty-two (52) of the fifty-eight (58) final recommendations on 8

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[162] See EPDP-IDNs Phase 2 Final Report here: https://gnso.icann.org/sites/default/files/policy/2024/draft/gnso-idn-epdp-phase2-final-report-07oct24-en.pdf

[163] See GNSO Council resolution here: https://gnso.icann.org/en/council/resolutions/2020-current#202411

[164] See EPDP-IDNs Phase 2 Recommendations Report: https://gnso.icann.org/sites/default/files/policy/2024/presentation/epdp-idns-recommendations-report-09dec24-en.pdf

[165] See Preliminary Issue Report for Latin Script Diacritics here: https://gnso.icann.org/sites/default/files/policy/2024/draft/preliminary-issue-report-latin-script-diacritics-17jul24-en.pdf

[166] See Final Issue Report for Latin Script Diacritics here: https://gnso.icann.org/sites/default/files/policy/2024/draft/final-issue-report-pdp-latin-diacritics-12sep24-en.pdf

[167] See GNSO Council resolution here: https://gnso.icann.org/en/council/resolutions/2020-current#202411

[168] See EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report here: https://gnso.icann.org/sites/default/files/policy/2023/correspondence/epdp-idns2-leadership-team-et-al-to-gnso-council-et-al-08nov23-en.pdf

[169] See GNSO Council resolution here: https://gnso.icann.org/en/council/resolutions/2020-current#202401

June 2024. On 7 September 2024, the Board adopted fifty-six (56) final recommendations in total, pending adoption on fee structure related recommendations.[170] Finally, the remaining two (2) recommendations were resolved on 30 October 2025,[171] with all fifty-eight (58) final recommendations from EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 ready for implementation.

2025: LD PDP WG Kicked Off and Developed fifty-four (54) Preliminary Recommendations

With the initiation of the PDP, the WG's charter was adopted on 19 December 2024.[172] Subsequently, membership was established and the LD PDP WG held its Kick-off Meeting on 8 March 2025 during ICANN82 in Seattle. The project plan[173] was approved by the GNSO Council on 10 April 2025, with the WG remaining focused on maintaining a narrow scope centered on 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? As of December 2025, the LD PDP WG has developed fifty-four (54) preliminary recommendations and implementation guidance and is expected to publish its Initial Report for Public Comment by January 2026.

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[170] See ICANN Board resolution here: https://www.icann.org/en/board-activities-and-meetings/materials/approved-resolutions-regular-meeting-of-the-icann-board-07-09-2024-en#section2.a

[171] See ICANN Board resolution here: https://www.icann.org/en/board-activities-and-meetings/materials/approved-resolutions-regular-meeting-of-the-icann-board-30-10-2025-en#section2.c

[172] See LD PDP WG Charter here: https://gnso.icann.org/sites/default/files/policy/2025/draft/latin-script-diacritics-pdp-charter-final-28feb25-en.pdf

[173] See LD PDP project plan here: https://icann-community.atlassian.net/wiki/x/MQTVBg

Annex D LD PDP WG Membership/Attendance

The LD PDP WG uses an "Open Model," allowing for all interested parties to participate. Since the Council anticipated a limited number of ICANN community members to have prerequisite knowledge, background, expertise, and interest in the subject matter, it sought to limit barriers to participation. For details of the WG model and membership structure, please refer to "Section 4. Formation, Staffing, and Organization" in the WG Charter which is presented in "Annex A" of this report.

The list of the WG members can be found on wiki here, along with their Statements of Interest (SOIs): https://icann-community.atlassian.net/wiki/x/4APVBg. Their attendance metrics are presented in the next page.

ICANN org Staff Support for the LD PDP WG is listed as follows:

LD PDP WG Policy Support	LD PDP WG Operational Support	ICANN Org Liaison
Saewon Lee	Devan Reed	Ariel Liang
John Emery	Terri Agnew	Isabelle Colas-Adeshina
Steve Chan	Julie Bisland	Sarmad Hussain
		Pitinan Kooarmornpatana

The WG email archives can be found at https://lists.icann.org/hyperkitty/list/gnso-latin-diacritics@icann.org/

Below is the summary of regular meetings held for LD PDP WG:

Plenary Meetings
- 28 Plenary calls (with 3 cancelled) for 40 hours[174]
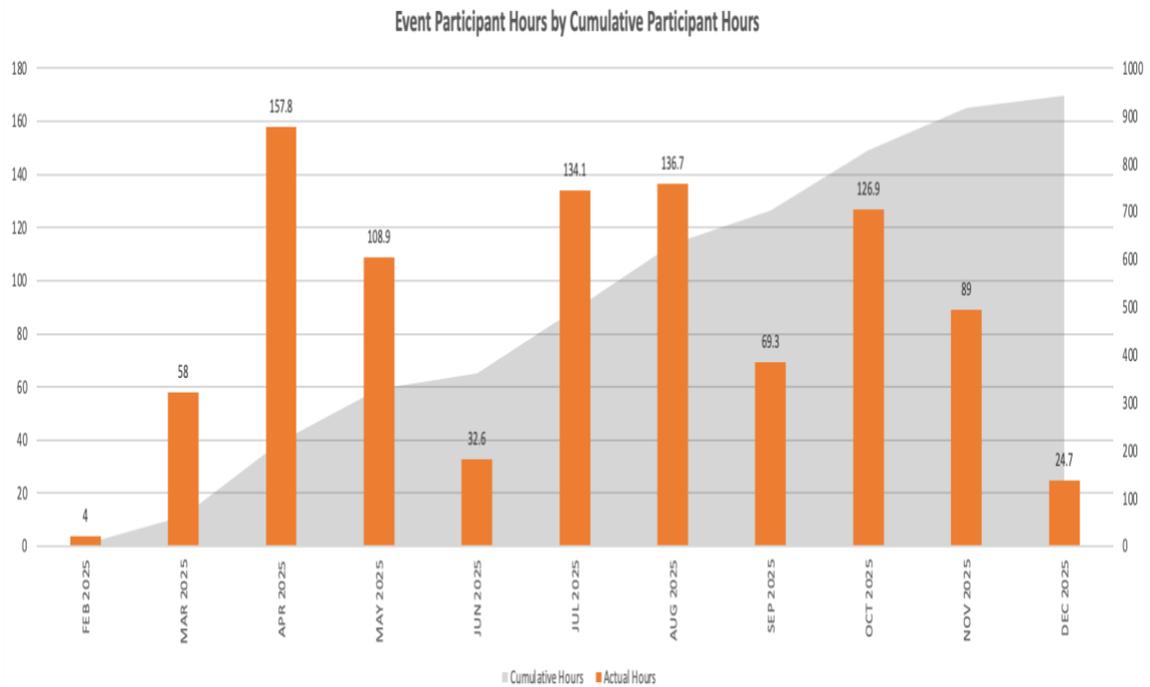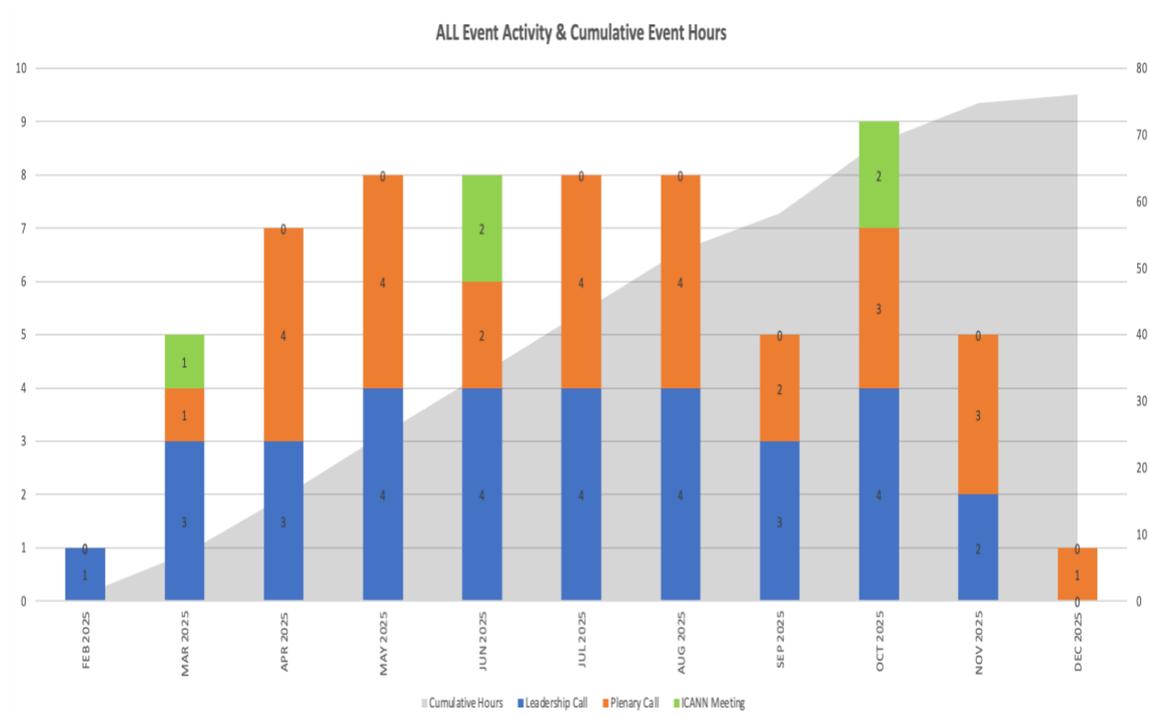
Leadership Meetings
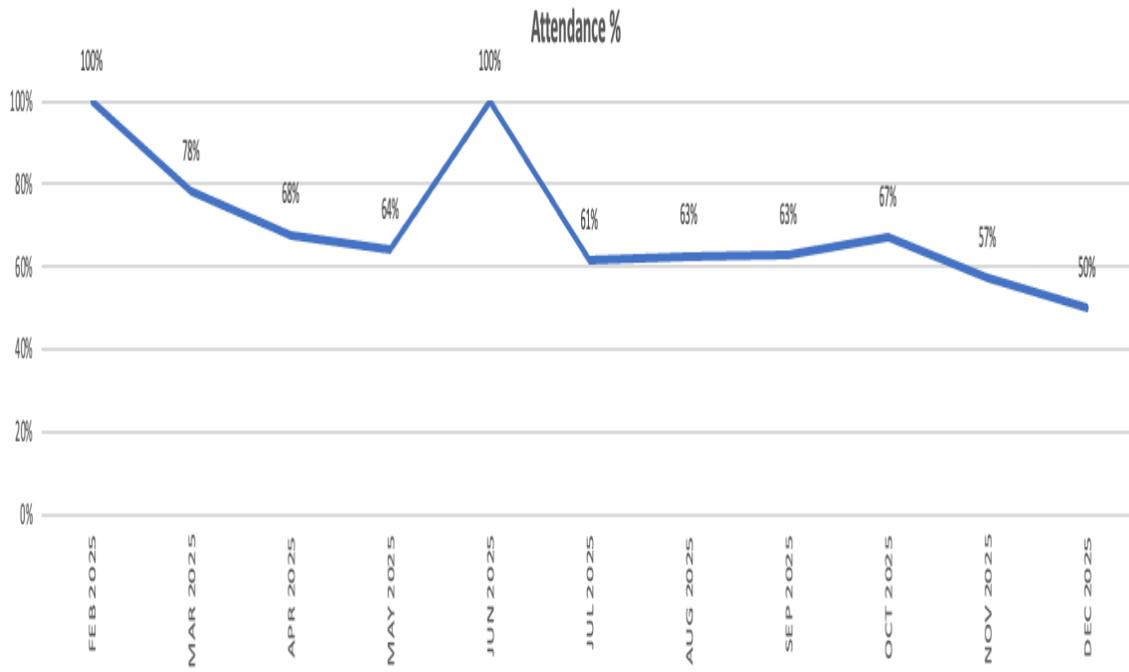- 32 Leadership calls (with 2 cancelled) for 30 hours

Overall Meeting Activities
- 60 total calls (with 5 cancelled) for a total of 70 hours
- 54.3% attendance rate for plenary and leadership calls
- 5 total sessions at ICANN Public Meetings

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[174] The wiki meetings page – and WG Meetings – record 27 Plenary calls, with 2 marked as cancelled. The discrepancy arises because the meeting invite was initially sent and entered into the CES, but later got deleted from the wiki – and not counted either for the actual meetings – after the meeting was cancelled. In both records, the completed meetings still account for a total of 25.

LD PDP WG Activity Metrics:

ALL Event Activity & Cumulative Event Hours

Event Participant Hours by Cumulative Participant Hours

Attendance %

FEB 2025	100%
MAR 2025	78%
APR 2025	68%
MAY 2025	64%
JUN 2025	100%
JUL 2025	61%
AUG 2025	63%
SEP 2025	63%
OCT 2025	67%
NOV 2025	57%
DEC 2025	50%

Annex E Community Input

1. Request for Input

According to the GNSO's PDP Manual, a PDP WG should formally solicit statements from each GNSO SG/C at an early stage of its deliberations. A PDP WG is also encouraged to seek the opinion of other ICANN SOs and ACs who may have expertise, experience, or an interest in the issue. This step of the process is called "Request for SG/C/SO/AC Input," also commonly referred to as, "Request for Early Input."

Per this direction, the LD PDP WG reached out to all ICANN SOs and ACs as well as all GNSO SGs and Cs with requests for input at the start of its deliberations. In response, statements were received from the:

- Registrars Stakeholder Group (RrSG)
- The Internet Service Providers and Connectivity Providers Constituency (ISPCP)

Their full statements can be found here: https://icann-community.atlassian.net/wiki/x/NATVBg

2. Review of Input Received

All of the Early Input statements received were added to the relevant working documents and considered by the LD PDP WG as part of its deliberations on each topic.