
8 April 2019

Katrina Sataki, Chair, ccNSO
Keith Drazek, Chair, GNSO

Re: ICANN Board Resolution on the Recommendations for Managing IDN Variant TLDs

Dear Katrina and Keith,

As you may be aware, the ICANN Board approved a set of Recommendations for Managing Internationalized Domain Name (IDN) Variant Top-Level Domains (TLDs) on 14 March 2019 and requested that the ccNSO and GNSO take these recommendations into account while developing their respective policies to define and manage IDN variant labels for current and future TLDs. The ICANN Board has also requested that the ccNSO and GNSO keep each other informed of their progress in developing the relevant details of their policies and procedures to ensure that a consistent solution, based on these IDN variant TLD recommendations, is developed for IDN variant ccTLDs and gTLDs.

IDNs enable people around the world to use domain names in local languages and scripts. Some script communities (including Arabic and Han/Chinese) have identified that technically distinct domain labels are considered indistinguishable or interchangeable with other domain labels, referred to as variant labels. For example, simplified Chinese labels are considered variants of corresponding traditional Chinese labels. The community has identified a need for IDN variant TLDs and identified them in applications for both IDN ccTLDs and gTLDs. However, the ICANN Board resolved on 25 September 2010 not to delegate IDN variant TLDs “until appropriate variant management solutions are developed” and directed ICANN organization to identify “what needs to be done with the evaluation, possible delegation, allocation and operation” of IDN variant TLDs towards developing workable approaches for IDN variant ccTLDs and gTLDs.

Subsequent work by ICANN organization and the community led to the identification of two issues:

- (i) there is no accepted definition for variant TLDs, and
- (ii) there is no ‘variant management’ mechanism for TLDs.

For the first issue, the Root Zone Label Generation Rules (RZ-LGR) Procedure was developed with the support of the community and adopted by the ICANN Board on 11 April 2013. The Procedure has been implemented and RZ-LGR is now being

incrementally developed. To date, rulesets for 19 out of the 28 scripts identified for the current phase have been [completed](#) and are being integrated into RZ-LGR, whereas other scripts will be added as their proposals are finalized by the relevant script communities.

For the second issue, ICANN organization undertook a detailed examination of variant management mechanisms for TLDs, and [published](#) the recommendations for IDN variant TLD Recommendations on 5 February 2019 as a collection of six documents. These recommendations have been finalized after incorporating the community feedback received during the [public comment](#) period.

The ccNSO and GNSO work on relevant policy and procedure for implementing IDN variant TLDs will help inform the ICANN Board's consideration of their delegation. We remain available to provide any support needed for this purpose.

Sincerely,



Cyrus K. Namazi
Senior Vice President
Global Domains Division