

IDN ccTLD Fast Track Process

The IDN ccTLD Fast Track Process enables countries and territories that use non-Latin scripts for their languages to request top-level domains and offer their users domain names in a variety of local scripts. The process involves three steps:

1. **Preparation** – Involves in-country community consensus on which IDN ccTLD to request.
2. **String Evaluation** – Evaluates the string requirements for those requests.
3. **String Delegation** – Determines which entity can manage an IDN ccTLD using the standard ccTLD delegation and redelegation process.

Since the Fast Track Process launched in late 2009, ICANN has received requests for IDN ccTLDs from 33 countries and territories.

For more details about the IDN ccTLD Fast Track Process, visit <http://icann.org/en/topics/idn/fast-track/>

Your Choice

IDNs are all about user choice of script or language for a domain name. It allows local users to brand themselves better and target desired markets more effectively. Printed materials can show web references and text content in the same script. And a website can have more than one address - in different scripts and languages.

How to Register Your IDN

IDN ccTLDs – These registrations are available through registrars or their resellers, and for some ccTLDs (e.g., .gr, .cn) directly through the TLD registry manager. IDN ccTLD managers offer more information about how to register a new IDN country code domain name (e.g., مصر, السعودية, امارات, and φ).

IDN gTLDs – Any domain (including IDNs) under a gTLD (e.g., .com, .info, .cat) can be registered through ICANN-accredited registrars or their resellers. ICANN-accredited registrars are listed at <http://www.icann.org/en/registrars/accredited-list.html>. IDN gTLDs are yet not available

All TLD managers and operators are listed at <http://www.iana.org/domains/root/db/>.

ICANN has not authorized pre-registrations in any potential future TLDs. There is no way to be sure that a certain string will become a TLD and hence available for domain name registration until all steps in the associated evaluation and delegation processes are successfully completed. Details at <http://www.icann.org/en/announcements/icann-pr29sep00.htm>



About ICANN

To reach another person on the Internet you have to type an address into your computer - a name or a number. That address has to be unique so computers know where to find each other. ICANN coordinates these unique identifiers across the world. Without that coordination we wouldn't have one global Internet. ICANN was formed in 1998. It is a not-for-profit public-benefit corporation with participants from all over the world dedicated to keeping the Internet secure, stable and interoperable. It promotes competition and develops policy on the Internet's unique identifiers. ICANN doesn't control content on the Internet. It cannot stop spam and it doesn't deal with access to the Internet. But through its coordination role of the Internet's naming system, it does have an important impact on the expansion and evolution of the Internet. For more information please visit: www.icann.org.

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IDNs

INTERNATIONALIZED DOMAIN NAMES
USABILITY AND AVAILABILITY



Internet domain names have long been restricted to a limited set of ASCII characters (a-z, 0-9 and "-"), but increasing Internet use among diverse global linguistic groups has intensified the demand for multilingual domain names. IDNs consist of characters in non-Latin scripts such as Arabic or Chinese, or may contain Latin letters with diacritical marks, as is common with European languages. The introduction of IDNs is considered the biggest change in the Internet's history. Although IDNs have been in use for several years at the second level, ICANN now offers a process that facilitates top-level IDNs.

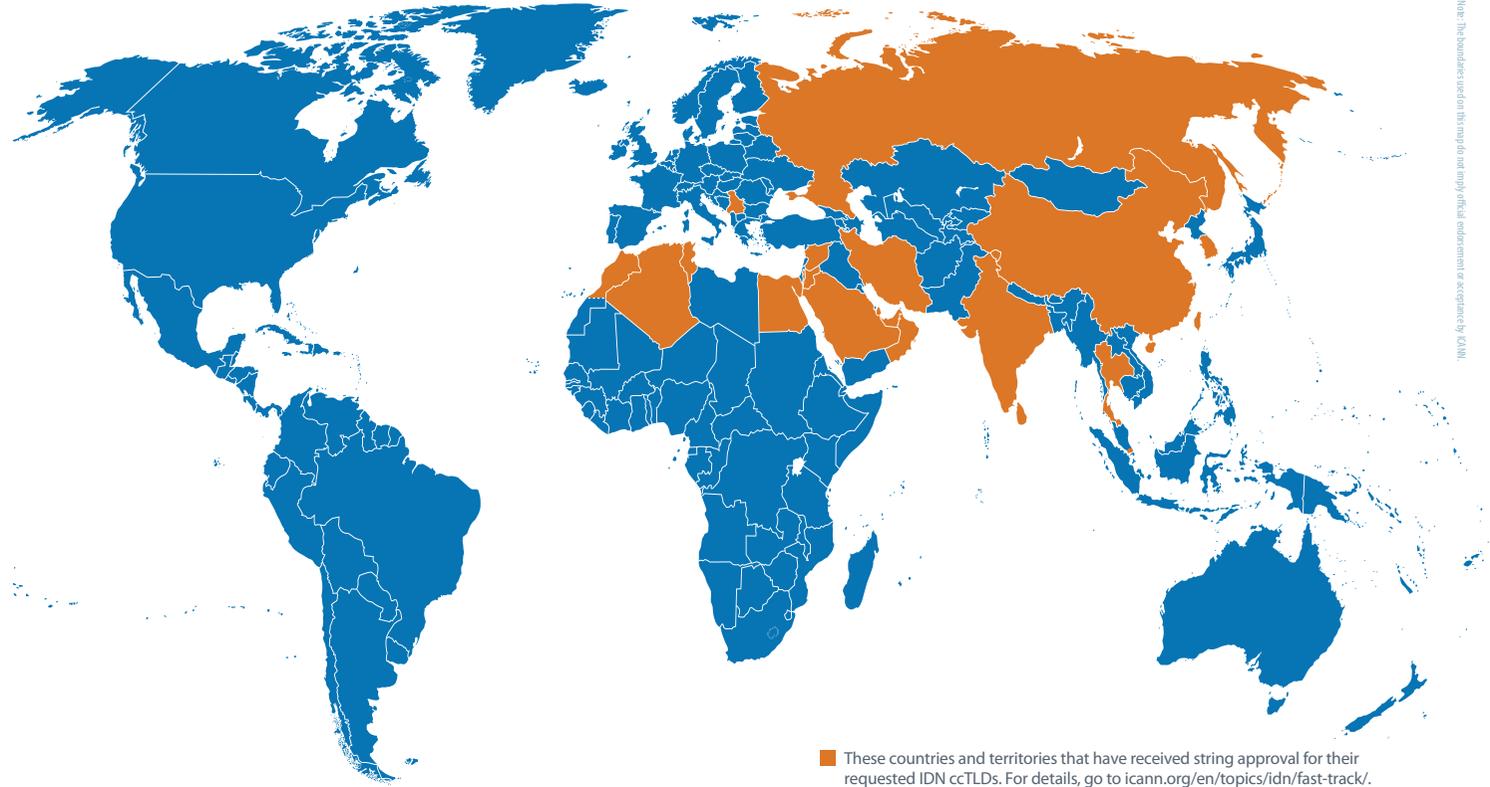
IDNs are one step in making the Internet globally accessible in all languages and scripts, and are helping ensure the continued global interoperability of the Internet.

IDN Usability

Developers of browsers and other application software have ensured that today's versions can handle IDNs. Each browser implements IDNs slightly differently, which gives a slightly different user experience, but all IDN-capable browsers accurately navigate to the desired site.

Due to the different ways that IDNs are implemented, different browsers offer several options, as these examples show. In each case, users get to the desired site. However, the address in the address-bar may not always display as entered.

More details on browser usability are available at <http://blog.icann.org/2010/05/idn-usability/>, which also explains how users can change the IDNs display settings in the address bar.

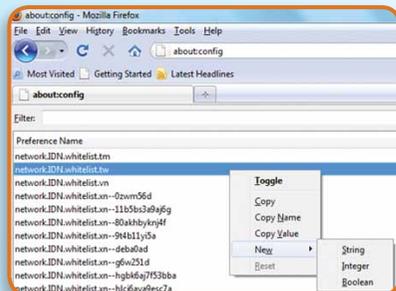


These countries and territories that have received string approval for their requested IDN ccTLDs. For details, go to icann.org/en/topics/idn/fast-track/.



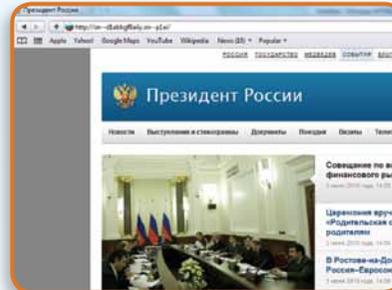
Internet Explorer

IE 7 and later versions support IDNs. The address bar displays the IDN in xn-- format. Clicking the pop-up allows users to change their language settings to display the IDN in local characters.



Mozilla Firefox

Firefox 2 and later versions support IDNs. The address bar displays the local characters for TLDs that Firefox considers safe for users, and the xn-- version of the IDN in all others. Users can modify the white (safe) list of TLDs.



Safari

Safari 2.1 and later versions support IDNs. The address bar displays IDNs in local characters or in the xn-- format. See http://idn.icann.org/IDN-aware_software for more details.



Opera

The Opera browser supports most IDNs directly, but some updating may be necessary – see http://idn.icann.org/IDN-aware_software.

What Is an IDN?

IDNs are domain names that include characters used in the local representation of languages that contain one or more characters other than the twenty-six letters of the basic Latin alphabet “a,b,...z”, “0,1,...9” or “-”.

Example: <http://उदाहरण.परीक्षा>

Since the Domain Name System is not capable of communicating with these characters, a system is made so that the domain name stored is actually:

`xn--p1b6ci4b4b3a.xn--11b5bs3a9aj6g`

This is referred to as the A-label for the IDN and does not make a lot of sense for users and was never intended for users to see. ICANN is actively taking part in conferences and events, with a focus on IDN enabling applications and IDN usability of new technology on the Internet.

If there is an event or application that you would like to focus on IDNs, please email us at: idn@icann.org