Get Ready for ICANN69!

Register now for the ICANN69 Virtual Annual General Meeting. **Community Days will take place from 13 – 15 October 2020** and **Plenary Week from 19 – 22 October 2020**.

The ICANN69 **schedule** will be published on 28 September 2020. Sessions will be held online between 08:30-18:00, Central European Time (CET). All public sessions will have a Zoom meeting link posted in the event schedule.

ICANN69 was originally scheduled to be held in Hamburg, Germany, but moved online due to the COVID-19 pandemic. ICANN thanks the Hamburg host committee and our regional partners in Europe for their input during the planning process.

**Register Now**

Pandemic Internet Access

To facilitate participation during the virtual ICANN69 among community members with limited Internet capacity, ICANN will offer financial assistance to increase Internet bandwidth for the Virtual Annual General Meeting.

Please read more about the Pandemic Internet Access Program Pilot [here](#).

**Strengthening ICANN Org and Enhancing Collaboration**

ICANN President and CEO Göran Marby announced the next steps in an organizational evolution to improve efficiencies, strengthen collaboration, and maximize resources. ICANN org
has integrated Global Domains Division (GDD) and Multistakeholder Strategy & Strategic Initiatives (MSSI) into a new function called Global Domains Strategy (GDS). This function is led by Senior Vice President Theresa Swinehart.

Xavier Calvez now leads planning and implementation operations, in addition to his role as Senior Vice President and Chief Financial Officer.

Read Göran Marby’s recent blog about these changes and read an earlier blog for more background information.

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**Updated Coronavirus Guidance**

ICANN org has extended its suspension of face-to-face meetings, business travel, and returning to the workplace until 31 December 2020. ICANN org has a dedicated team monitoring COVID-19 developments and will keep the community updated on any changes to this guidance.

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**ICANN Announces the Location for ICANN75**

ICANN selected Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, as the location for ICANN75. The Annual General Meeting will be held 17-22 September 2022 at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre.

Read more about this announcement here. You can find more information about upcoming ICANN Public Meetings on ICANN’s Meeting website here.

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**SPOTLIGHT**

**2020 Nominating Committee (NomCom) Update**

Read 2020 NomCom Chair Jay Sudowski’s update on NomCom’s progress selecting qualified candidates for open ICANN leadership positions.

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**POLICY UPDATE**

**GNSO Holds PDP 3.0 Webinar to Discuss Implementation**

On 15 September 2020, the Generic Names Supporting Organization (GNSO) will hold a community webinar to discuss the implementation status of Policy Development Process (PDP) 3.0, a GNSO Council initiative designed to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the GNSO Policy Development Process. The GNSO Council adopted the PDP 3.0 Final Report in February 2020. Many work products related to the PDP 3.0 improvements have already been deployed.
There are three objectives for this webinar:

- Review the purposes and practical examples of the PDP 3.0 work products that have been applied in ongoing GNSO working groups.
- Kick start the preliminary assessment of PDP 3.0 impact.
- Help other Supporting Organizations and Advisory Committees evaluate the applicability of PDP 3.0 improvements in their internal processes.

Participants are encouraged to join the discussions. Learn more.

New Series of Webinars for ccNSO Members

The Country Code Names Supporting Organization (ccNSO) has begun conducting webinars to inform and prepare members for submitting Public Comments, participating in working groups, and voting in elections. The aim of the webinars is to educate the ccNSO community and lower barriers for participation for its members. Recent ccNSO webinars include:

- A webinar on the (de-)selection of Internationalized Domain Name (IDN) country code top-level domain (ccTLD) strings held in July 2020 prior to the call for volunteers to join the working group.
- A webinar on the nomination process for joining the ccNSO Council. The next ccNSO Council elections will be held in early September. The webinar aimed to encourage new participants so councilors can be replaced at regular intervals.
- Later this month, a ccTLD community webinar will welcome newcomers to the ccNSO, provide an overview of the ccNSO and detail its plans for ICANN69.

Recordings of past ccNSO webinars can be found here. Information about the ccNSO Council nomination process can be found here.

Baher Esmat Appointed Managing Director for the Middle East and Africa (MEA) Regional Office

In August, ICANN org announced the appointment of Baher Esmat as Managing Director, for the Middle East and Africa (MEA) office in Istanbul, Turkey. He will also continue his role as Vice President, Global Stakeholder Engagement for the Middle East. Esmat is replacing Nick Tomasso. Tomasso served as Managing Director since 2017, in addition to his role as Vice President, Global Meeting Operations, in which he will continue to serve.

You can find the full announcement here.
Virtual ICANN Events in the Middle East

ICANN68 Readout Session
On 21 July 2020, a joint ICANN68 Virtual Readout session for the Middle East and Africa was held, covering the key topics discussed during ICANN68. It attracted 68 participants from both regions. Interested in the highlights? Contact us at meac.swg@icann.org for more information.

Middle East Space
A Middle East Space session was held 27 July 2020 to discuss the Final Report from ICANN’s third Accountability and Transparency Review Team (ATRT3). A submission from the webinar’s 10 participants was developed and submitted to the report’s Public Comment proceeding.

Pakistan School on Internet Governance
Between 17-20 August 2020, the 2020 Pakistan School on Internet Governance (pkSIG 2020) was held virtually for the first time. ICANN was a sponsor and led a session on ICANN’s role in the Internet ecosystem.

Capacity Building Focus: Turkey
As part of the 2021 regional action plan goal, “Support and grow active and informed stakeholder participation from the region,” ICANN org is planning a number of activities with stakeholders, including governments.

The first of these activities, initiated in August, has been a series of educational webinars to further improve our engagement with the Turkish government and its Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC) representative. The capacity-building webinars aim to fulfill the regional goal of supporting the growth of active and informed stakeholder participation from the region. The content of the webinars is tailored for a specific team under the Ministry of Transformation and Information of the Republic of Turkey, responsible for developing regulations and policies related to Turkey’s ccTLD, .tr.

ICANN org organized three webinars covering topics such as ICANN’s role in Internet ecosystem, the Domain Name System (DNS), Internationalized Domain Names (IDNs), Universal Acceptance, and rights protection mechanisms.

Two more are scheduled for September 2020.

ICANN to participate in CloudTalk Online Summit 2020
ICANN org will participate in the CloudTalk Online Summit on 29 September 2020. Baher Esmat, ICANN’s newly appointed Managing Director for the Middle East and Africa (MEA) office in Istanbul, will give a talk on ICANN and its operations in the region. A virtual panel with local stakeholder participation will discuss the current status of the domain name marketplace in Turkey and its future.

More information, including the session schedule and remote participation tools, are available online at https://cloudtalksummit.online/en/.
ICANN’s Global Stakeholder Engagement (GSE) Africa team have continued to partner with various ccTLD registries in Africa to initiate and invigorate their respective remote engagement efforts during this pandemic. A number of ccTLDs have either started or are in the process of launching webinar series targeted at their national stakeholders. Topics include DNS security, branding, online marketing, as well as policy-focused discussions. The objectives are twofold:

- Enhance the brand awareness and visibility of ccTLDs as an important component of the digital economy.
- Highlight the importance of the DNS as a critical component of the Internet and infrastructure.

Webinars held to date:
On 9 July, ICANN supported a webinar hosted by the Kenya Network Information Center (KeNIC) called “How To Secure Your Business Online With The Right Domain Name.” More webinars are planned to help keep engagement efforts with DNS industry stakeholders active in Kenya.

On 14 July, ICANN supported an online event, organized by the Autorité de Régulation des Communications Electroniques et de la Poste du Bénin (ARCEP BENIN) and the Internet Society of Benin. Discussions revolved around ICANN’s role and the fundamentals of the Domain Name System (DNS), DNS abuse during COVID-19, and an update on the .bj registry activities. Due to the positive feedback from the local community, more similar events will be planned.

ICANN at Africa DNS Events
ICANN shared information about the multistakeholder model, efforts to combat DNS abuse, and the African domain name industry at virtual regional events.

- School of Internet Governance in Benin on 1-3 July 2020.
- Internet Governance Forum in Benin on 4 July 2020.
- Webinar organized by the working group on Internet Governance Forum on 15 July 2020.
- Ghana School of Internet Governance on 15 July 2020.
- Ghana IGF on 17 July 2020.

Gabriella Schittek Receives an Appreciation Award
The Hungarian Scientific Association for Infocommunications (HTE) honored ICANN’s Gabriella Schittek, ICANN’s Global Stakeholder Engagement Manager for Nordic and Central Europe, with the Puskás Tivadar Award in recognition of her activities in the Association. The award has been granted since 1960 to people who have "achieved outstanding merits in the development of telecommunications,"
On behalf of ICANN, Gabriella worked together with HTE in the past years to inform the Hungarian Internet Community about ICANN and cooperated on several capacity-building events. ICANN and HTE also worked with several other parties to organize the first Hungarian IGF in 2019.

“Reaching the Hungarian Internet Community wouldn’t have been possible without the openness and help of HTE. I am therefore very humbled and honored to receive this award and am looking forward to continuing my work in Hungary together with the Association,” Schittek said.

The award ceremony took place in Budapest on 8 September 2020.

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**ICANN68 Readout for the EECA Region**

An ICANN68 Readout session organized by members of ICANN’s Supporting Organizations and Advisory Committees from Eastern Europe and Central Asia (EECA) attracted 40 participants from 9 countries in the region. The session touched on almost all of the main topics relevant to the EECA community and sparked an animated discussion among participants.

A recording of the session (in Russian) can be found [here](#).

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**ICANN Participates in the First Russian Summer School of Internet Governance**

The first Russian Summer School of Internet Governance (RSSIG) was held in August. A collaborative effort, the event was organized by the Coordination Center for TLDs .RU/РФ together with the **Higher School of Economics** and a number of other universities. Organizers invited representatives from ICANN and RIPE NCC to be guest speakers.

ICANN was invited to cover topics along two major themes: the history of Internet and the development of the multistakeholder model; and how the DNS works and ICANN’s role preserving the stability and security of the Internet identifier system.

Both topics were of great interest to the students, leading to active discussions. The speakers discussed the group of organizations that share responsibilities for coordinating the Internet technical infrastructure, known as the I* group.

Participation in RSSIG helped ICANN reach a wider audience in Russia and raise awareness among students on ICANN’s role and mission. We look forward to continued collaboration, and hope many participants become active members of the ICANN community!

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**Manal Ismail**

Chief Expert, Internet Policies, National Telecom Regulatory Authority (NTRA), Egypt

ICANN Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC) Chair
How are you involved in ICANN?
I’m involved in ICANN through the GAC.

How long have you been involved with ICANN and in which ways?
Egypt hosted two ICANN meetings in 2000 and 2008 and I was part of both organizing committees. I became involved through the GAC for the first time in Accra, Ghana, in 2002 as Egypt’s GAC representative. Then I became one of the GAC vice chairs twice in 2009 and 2017. Currently, I am the GAC chair and GAC Liaison to the ICANN Board.

What are the most challenging things about being a part of ICANN community?
The most challenging things about being part of the ICANN community is the pace of work, the need for multitasking and the overall workload; as well as occasionally having to attend calls held at late hours or on weekends. Moreover, being the GAC chair introduced an additional challenge to me, trying to balance between my responsibilities as a Board member and my responsibilities as the GAC chair.

What are the rewarding things about being a part of ICANN community?
There are so many rewarding things about being part of ICANN community, starting from the great feeling participating in several successful historical milestones such as the introduction of Internationalized Domain Names and the IANA Stewardship Transition, up to having so many friends and colleagues around the globe and being exposed to different norms and cultures. Also, personally, I feel very rewarded every time I succeed in driving a discussion to consensus.

What would you suggest to the newcomers at ICANN?
To newcomers, I suggest that they try to find a starting point, e.g., focus on one or two topics of interest and do not get distracted or overwhelmed by everything that is going on. Once they are on solid grounds and understand what’s going on and how to engage, they can easily organize their participation and prioritize their engagement in other ongoing discussions. It sounds a bit challenging but once you find your way and get involved, it becomes very rewarding and very difficult to stop.
The Registration Data Access Protocol (RDAP), developed by the technical community in the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF) as a replacement for the WHOIS protocol, allows users to access domain name and Internet identifier registration data.

Bookmark this page and access ICANN's registration data lookup tool here.