



**Comment on Latin America  
and Caribbean (LAC)  
Regional Strategic Plan for  
FY2021-2025**

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**Business Constituency Submission**

**GNSO//CSG//BC**

## Background

This document is the response of the ICANN Business Constituency (BC), from the perspective of business users and registrants, as defined in our Charter:

The mission of the Business Constituency is to ensure that ICANN policy positions are consistent with the development of an Internet that:

1. promotes end-user confidence because it is a safe place to conduct business
2. is competitive in the supply of registry and registrar and related services
3. is technically stable, secure and reliable.

## Introduction

The BC welcomes the opportunity to comment on the LAC Regional Strategy Plan<sup>1</sup>, since in recent years we devoted great attention to making sure the region is represented by our group and their points of view reflected in our policies. Several insights that are brought forward in this comment can be found in our self-funded “Building Sustained Business Constituency Participation in Latin America” report<sup>2</sup>, a document which presents significant data points about commercial stakeholders from the region.

## Key areas of interest

In addition to the four points listed as key to the region (Security of the DNS, ICANN’s Multistakeholder Model, Unique Identifier Systems, and Regional Geopolitics) we would like to further add two issues:

a) “**Data protection and Privacy**”. Data Protection and Privacy are strong themes when one considers LAC, being heavily represented in its regional forums and schools of Internet Governance, as well as being an active concern for businesses that need to adapt to these often open-ended laws, something that is often overbearing for companies that already struggle with regional problems. In this sense, we suggest the inclusion of this theme as it relates to ICANN during engagements and on further planning exercises, seeing as it is an essential and ongoing discussion.

b) “**COVID-19 Crisis: Challenges and Opportunities**”. Latin America as a region is coming online fast with connectivity and ecommerce growing quickly. That said, the region still has a large number of newer users. The COVID-19 crisis presents real challenges

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.icann.org/en/system/files/files/lac-regional-strategic-plan-2021-2025-01jan20-en.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.bizconst.org/2019-latin-american-outreach-study-and-report>

for this user base and will almost certainly have lasting effects on the region as many countries are likely to see significantly increased distance learning and distance working. The BC recommends that the strategy be updated to take into account the added stresses caused by this crisis, which could present opportunities for business and policymakers to create more “socially distant” opportunities in new areas, provided we continue to enhance and communicate the community’s focus on maintaining the safety and security of the DNS.

## **1. Security of the Domain Name System**

This is certainly a key area of interest, given how historically cyberattacks have both affected and originated from the region, an ever-increasing trend. We would particularly like to stress that recent data from Sophos<sup>3</sup> demonstrates that 30% of the cybersecurity breaches that transpired in the region originated from malicious websites, surpassed only by malicious email at 33%.

In this sense we would like to stress that DNS Abuse is a topic we hope to see addressed with the attention it demands, and offer our full support in helping ICANN’s regional team with whatever data and speakers we can provide. We are particularly interested in *Objective 1.3*, which aims to “increase cooperation” with local actors “to effectively identify and mitigate DNS security threats”.

## **2. ICANN’s Multistakeholder Model**

As pointed out in “Building Sustained Business Constituency Participation in Latin America”, it remains difficult to recruit business actors from the region, and even more so to subsequently keep them engaged in our policymaking process. The matters of “complexity” and “language” came up as significant barriers of entry in our report, and we wish to convey that many efforts have been taken by this group to be more accommodating of entrant members, and we will continue to offer support in their smooth entry into this ecosystem. In this sense, we ask the staff to establish more active and effective communication with our Executive Committee, in order to help us engage with prospective members and facilitate their inclusion, something that is particularly relevant in these unprecedented times of social distancing.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://secure2.sophos.com/en-us/medialibrary/Gated-Assets/white-papers/sophos-impossible-puzzle-of-cybersecurity-wp.pdf>

### **3. Unique Identifier Systems**

Our proactive interest in Universal Acceptance and new domain names is clear, as demonstrated by the deep engagement of the Latin American members of the constituency in these themes, including in the engagement with other SO/ACs. We support the furthering of these objectives in full, and would like to see more LAC-directed projects coming from ICANN that address these concerns.

### **4. Regional Geopolitics**

This point seems to be presented as less relevant than the others, but an important finding of “Building Sustained Business Constituency Participation in Latin America” is how deeply governments and local Internet Governance actors are intertwined in the region, making it a very important point in our vision. The regional cooperation dynamics often result in scenarios in which potential participants in the ICANN ecosystem will think that “my government already does that”, underscoring the importance of the multistakeholder participation that this institution is known for.

Regional geopolitics need to figure more prominently in ICANN’s planning and interactions with the LAC region.

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This comment was drafted by Mark Datysgeld, with edits from Gaby Szlak and Andrew Mack. It was approved in accord with our charter.