CENTR Survey Report

Launch and Use of IDNs (2014)

Survey Details

Initiated by: EURid

Survey timing: 20 JAN – 22 FEB 2014

Respondents (28): .at, .be, .ca, .cz, .ee, .es, .eu, .fi, .fr, .hr, .is, .jp, .lt, .lu, .lv, .me, .nl, .no, .nz, .org, .pl, .pt, .РФ , .rs, .se, .si, .sk, .uk

EURid and UNESCO Research - This survey was initiated by EURid (.eu)
EURid and UNESCO have been conducting research on Internationalised Domain Names (IDNs) since 2010 and published yearly reports entitled 'The World Report on IDN deployment'. The reports include assessments of IDN data and status, case studies and a comparative analysis on the factors that may impact (positively or negatively) IDN uptake. The reports are available at http://www.eurid.eu/en/about-us/publications/insights-research-reports

Regional Organisation Data Sharing: To give a broader view of the topic, this report also includes some data from APTLD who ran the same survey as CENTR. CENTR, APTLD and LACTLD have an agreement whereby non-sensitive and aggregated data can be shared for the mutual benefit of reporting in each of the organisations. Individual ccTLDs are not generally mentioned in any reporting.
All geographic comparisons in this report have accounted for duplicate responses (same member in both organisations)
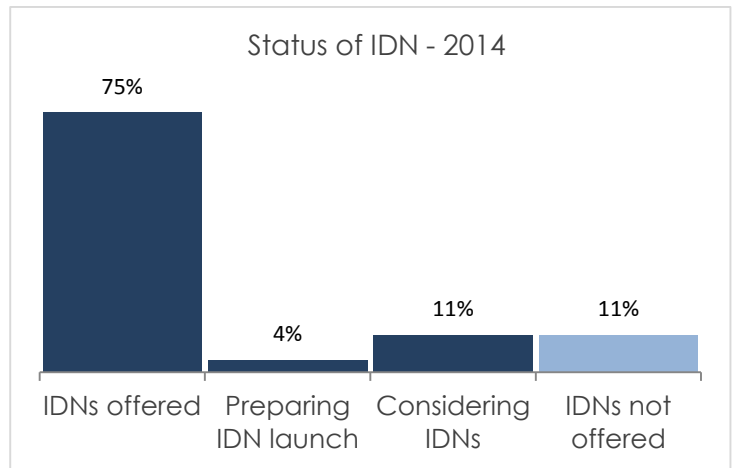
Survey respondents have access to full individual responses from the CENTR survey at request to the Secretariat.

Survey Highlights

- Around 75% of respondents have implemented and offer IDNs
- Around 75% of those that offer IDNs offer the minimum required to support official languages in the country
- The year where most IDN launches were made was 2004 (5) however from 2010 there has been 9 more with 2 more to come in 2015.
- Uptake in IDNs with respect to Registry expectations has decreased between 2013 and 2014
- Registrar support (according to Registry observations) has decreased between 2013 and 2014
- Awareness of IDNs (according to Registry observations) has decreased between 2013 and 2014

IDN Status

The number of Registries offering IDNs is roughly 75% (or 21 Registries) with several others in the preparation or consideration stages. Of the 21 Registries who offer IDN, 75% offer scripts to support the minimum required language/s of the country or territory the TLD is in. The remaining 24% offer an extended character set as seen in the chart below. For a full list of scripts permitted in each of the respondents (including information received in previous years) see the Annex of this report.

Status of IDN - 2014

Category	Value
IDNs offered	75%
Preparing IDN launch	4%
Considering IDNs	11%
IDNs not offered	11%

Geographic comparison: The proportion of ccTLDs offering the 'minimum required' versus those that offer an 'extended character set' is very similar between the Asia Pacific Region and European region.

Minimum Required = Minimum required to support official languages in the country/territory/market of ccTLD.
Extended Character = Beyond minimum required to support official languages.

Type of scripts permitted (% ccTLDs)

Europe (CENTR): Extended characters / Minimum required
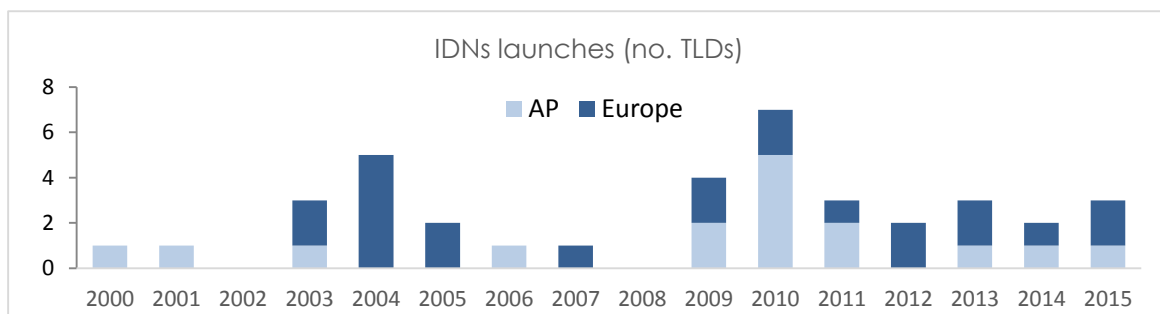Asia Pacific (APTLD): Extended characters / Minimum required
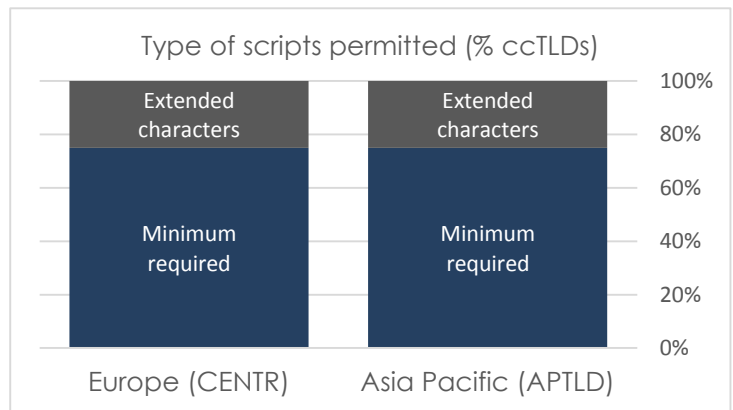
Homoglyphs

Homoglyphs are characters from different scripts that look so similar to each other that it is hard to tell them apart visually. Homoglyph bundling is when the registration of an IDN automatically registers all the homoglyphs of that name. The survey found that only 1 respondent offers 'homoglyph bundling' (See annex for the respondent's explanation).

IDN Launches

The chart (below) shows the number of IDN launches over the years using a sample of 16 APTLD members and 22 CENTR members. Although the sample is slightly different in each case, the chart shows that around 40% of European ccTLDs launched IDNs between 2003 and 2005 and around 50% in the Asia Pacific region were between 2009 and 2011. See Annex for a list of CENTR member IDN launch years. Of all TLDs combined, most launched IDNs in 2010.

IDNs launches (no. TLDs)

Legend: AP, Europe

Source: APTLD, CENTR

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Form use in IDN registrations

In terms of how IDNs are registered, the survey found that most register the domain names in xn *and* IDN or just xn form. Only 20% register the domains *only* in IDN form.

Geographic comparison: Among APTLD members, half use the IDN form for registrations suggesting a higher general focus on IDNs in the Asia Pacific region.

Form of IDN registration

- Asia Pacific (APTLD)
- Europe (CENTR)
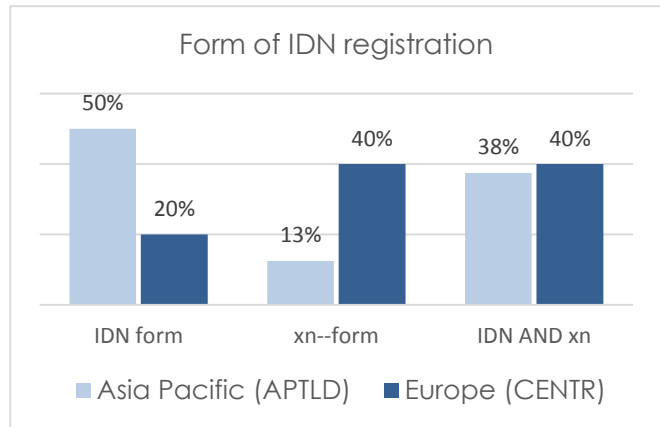
Source: APTLD, CENTR

IDN uptake, support and awareness

The following outlines the results received on the following 3 questions; 1. Uptake of IDN registrations as compared to expectations, 2. Registrar support of IDNs and 3. User-awareness of IDNs
In each question, respondents were asked to on a scale of 0-5 (5 being the best score) rate how they felt in regards to each of the questions. Below shows the distribution of ratings for each question asked. Across each of the categories, the scores have dropped between 2013 and 2014 suggesting Registries are comparatively less satisfied with IDN uptake, Registrar support as well as lower end-user awareness. The results do however reflect slightly better than the Asia Pacific region as seen below.
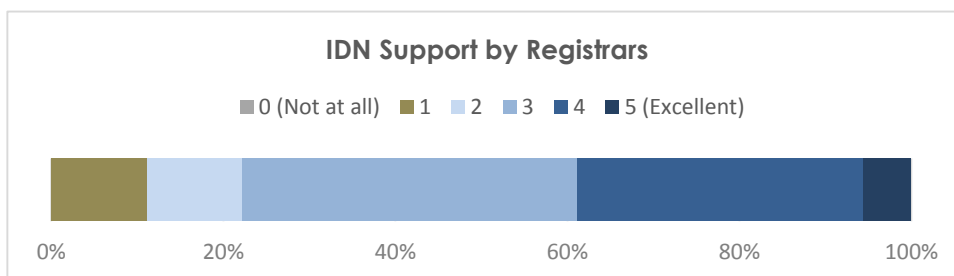
Final Score*

Uptake of IDNs

- 0 (Below expectations)
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 (Exceeded expectations)
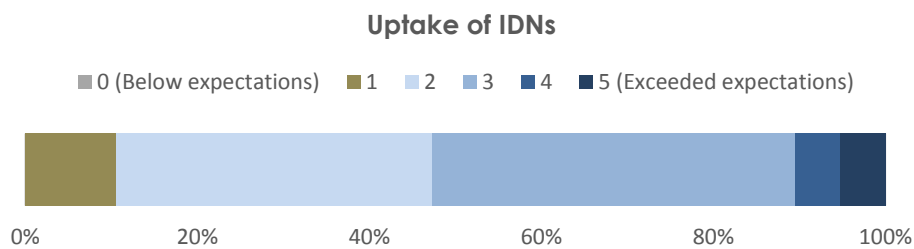
2.6
out of 6

Comparisons:
APTLD = 2.3
CENTR (2013) = 3.0

IDN Support by Registrars

- 0 (Not at all)
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 (Excellent)

3.1
out of 6

Comparisons:
APTLD = 2.4
CENTR (2013) = 3.6

End user awareness of IDNs

- 0 (Very low awareness)
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 (High awareness)
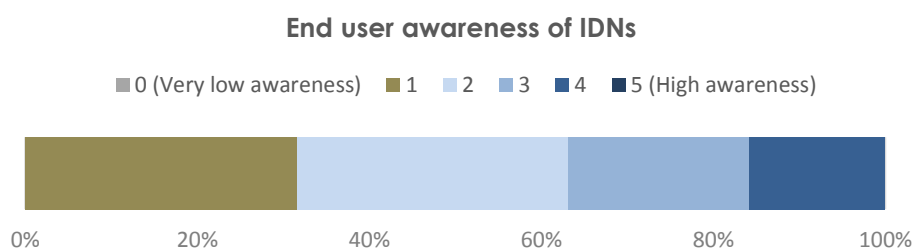
2.2
out of 6

Comparisons:
APTLD = 1.9
CENTR 2013 = 2.4

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Improving IDN uptake

The survey asked respondents what could affect the uptake of IDNs (either from the Registry or from wider market). The following comments were received.

Technical ability of using complete Cyrillic e-mail address, with Cyrillic user name on the left side of the @ sign

E-mail clients should support IDN. Gmail would be a nice start :)

Very few of the Norwegian and Sami words use non-ASCII characters, and the low amount of IDNs under .no is a reflection of this. Thus the one change that would improve uptake of IDNs would be to change the Norwegian language :-) (Or introduce a new, widespread language in Norway that uses non-ASCII characters in almost all words). See the relevant graph at http://www.norid.no/statistikk/domener/index.en.html for an ongoing overview of the number of IDNs vs the total number of domains under .no

Probably the only thing that really would trigger a larger amount of registrations is to lower the registration fee level. We are however not in favour of doing this since it would also attract speculation and squatting activities.

Broader advertising and education

Actual use of IDNs domain names in URLs.

E-mail support in .РФ zone and in other non-Latin domains

IDN would need to work in all contexts and protocols (email, xmpp, sip,....).

Marketing Policy

Significantly larger number of end-users :)

a good question, and a few possible answers; the challenge is that we do not know the right one

e-mail software's acceptance of IDNs

Data Table

	IDNs offered	Homoglyph bundling	IDN registration form	Launch Year	IDNs registered (% of zone)
.at	✓	X	xn--form	2004	2.4%
.be	✓	X	IDN AND xn	2013	0.5%
.ca	✓	✓	IDN AND xn	2013	
.cz	X				
.ee	✓	X	IDN form	2011	1.8%
.es	✓	X	xn--form	2007	1.3%
.eu	✓	X	IDN AND xn	2009	1.6%
.fi	✓	X	IDN form	2005	2.8%
.fr	✓	X	IDN AND xn	2012	1.0%
.hr	Considering			*2014*	
.is	✓	X	IDN AND xn	2004	5.6%
.jp	✓	X	IDN form	2001	9.6%
.lt	✓	X	IDN AND xn	2004	1.0%
.lu	✓	X	IDN AND xn	2010	0.9%
.lv	✓	X	IDN form	2004	0.7%
.me	Considering			*2015*	
.nl	X				
.no	✓	X	xn--form	2004	4.6%
.nz	✓	X	xn--form	2010	
.org	Preparing				
.pl	✓	X	xn--form	2003	2.3%
.pt	✓	X	IDN form	2005	1.6%
.РФ	✓	X	IDN AND xn	2009	
.rs	✓	X	xn--form	2012	4.5%
.se	✓	X	xn--form	2003	5.8%
.si	✓	X	xn--form	2010	1.4%
.sk	Considering			*2015*	
.uk	X				

Annex

Scripts permitted

.at	ACE-String
.be	Subset of the Latin script. More precisely: we accept all lowercase codepoints in ISO-8859-1 and U+0153 (LATIN SMALL LIGATURE OE).
.ca	CIRA supports French character IDN domain names. These include the following French characters: é, ë, ê, è, â, à, æ, ô, œ, ù, û, ü, ç, î, ï, ÿ
.de	latin-1, latin-extended-A
.dk	æ ø å ä ö ü é
.ee	õ – latin small letter O with tilde (U+00F5) ä – latin small letter A with diaeresis(U+00E4) ö – latin small letter O with diaeresis (U+00F6) ü – latin small letter U with diaeresis (U+00FC) š – latin small letter S with caron (U+0161) ž – latin small letter Z with caron (U+017E)
.es	á à é è í ï ó ò ú ü ñ ç l·l
.eu	http://www.eurid.eu/en/get-eu/why-eu-good-business/domain-names-special-characters-idns/supported-characters
.fi	The list of allowed characters is available at https://domain.fi/info/en/index/hakeminen/mitavoihakea/aakkoset.html
.fr	Latin 1
.is	Subset of Latin-1 (a-z0-9- plus icelandic letters: þæðöáéýúíó)
.jp	Japanese (han, katakana, hiragana)
.lt	Latin script plus 9 special Lithuanian characters: ą, č, ę, ė, į, š, ų, ū, ž
.lu	subset of latin1. see: https://www.dns.lu/en/support/general-information/idn/
.lv	Latin plus Latvian characters with diacritical marks (ā,ē,ī,ū,ō,ķ,ļ,ņ,ŗ,ģ,š,č,ž)
.no	We support two Norwegian languages (bokmål and nynorsk) and three sami languages (Nord-, Sør- and Lulesami). A list of the characters can be found here: http://www.norid.no/navnepolitikk.en.html#link3
.nz	ā, ē, ī, ō and ū (maori language macronised vowels - subset of Latin). https://nzrs.net.nz/srs/idn
.org	Chinese, Cyrrilic, Danish, German, Hungarian, Icelandic, Korean, Latvian, Lithuanian, Polish, Spanish, Swedish
.pl	Some characters from: Latin, Latin-1 Supplement, Latin Extended-A, Greek, Hebrew, Cyrillic
.pt	Only a small set of characters from Latin1, currently used in the Portuguese language (á, à, â, ã, ç, é, ê, í, ó, ô, õ, ú).
.РФ	Cyrillic
.rs	Serbian Cyrillic
.se	As early as 2003 it became possible to register .se domains with the characters å, ä, ö, é and ü. In 2007, the characters that occur in the official Swedish minority languages: Finnish, Meänkieli (Tornedalsfinska), Sami, Romany and Yiddish, were added. At the same time the characters of the other Nordic languages were made available for use in .se domains. For more information please read on our website, https://www.iis.se/english/domains/se/idn/
.si	http://www.register.si/fileadmin/dokumenti/register/unicode.pdf
.ua	Cyrillic

Homoglyph bundling

.ca offer homoglyph bundling. The following is a statement of explanation from CIRA:

"CIRA provides administrative "bundling". According to this "bundling" approach, the Registrant of a particular domain name has the exclusive right to register all of the variants of that domain name, and no other Registrant can register any of those domains. For example, only the holder of preside.ca can register préside.ca, prèsïdë.ca, prësîdê.ca, etc. if they wish. Similarly, only the holder of the domain name préside.ca can register preside.ca. A Registrant can also choose to only register an IDN domain name (e.g. grâce.ca) and not the ASCII version (grace.ca). As all variants of the same domain name can only be registered by the same Registrant, in the event a transfer of a domain name takes place, whether voluntary or involuntary (e.g. as a result of a dispute), all variants of the same domain name have to be transferred at the same time"