Periodic Working Group Member Survey: Results for EPDP-IDNs Team

Introduction

The GNSO Council distributed a periodic working group member survey to seek input about the functioning of the Internationalized Domain Names Expedited Policy Development Process (EPDP-IDNs). As the manager of the policy development process and other GNSO projects, the GNSO Council regularly reviews work underway within the GNSO. This includes a regular review of the functioning of WGs, including WG leadership.

The survey was open from 22 May to 3 July 2023, and distributed via google forms.

This report summarizes the results of the survey and includes:

- Aggregated responses to all questions in which respondents select from a menu of choices or from a numerical scale.
- Full text of any narrative responses, such as comments or explanations of their numerical scores.

The report will be publicly available:
- It will be sent to GNSO Council leadership, the EPDP-IDNs leadership team, and the Council liaison to the EPDP Team and will be shared with the full GNSO Council, upon request.
- It will be sent to the publicly-archived EPDP Team mailing list and posted on its public wiki.

Participant Identification

A total number of **twenty (20)** responses were received. The vast majority of respondents responded to all of the questions in the survey.

Nineteen (19) respondents identified their primary organizational affiliation:
- Registries Stakeholder Group (GNSO): **4 (21.1%)**
- Non-Commercial Stakeholder Group (GNSO): **3 (15.8%)**
- At-Large Advisory Committee (ALAC): **3 (15.8%)**
- Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC): **3 (15.8%)**
- Registrar Stakeholder Group (GNSO): **2 (10.5%)**
- Internet Service Provider Constituency (GNSO): **1 (5.3%)**

- Country Code Names Supporting Organization (ccNSO): **1 (5.3%)**
- Other: **2 (10.5%)** (1 selected "Board", and 1 selected "unaffiliated")

All twenty (20) respondents answered the question regarding their working group roles:
- Member: **12 (60%)**
- Participant: **4 (20%)**
- Liaison: **2 (10%)**
- Chair or Co-Chair: **1 (5%)**
- Vice-Chair: **1 (5%)**

Inputs

A) The **Charter/Mission** of the WG where: **1-Highly Ineffective** means confusing, vague, ill-structured, unbounded, unrealistic (e.g., time, constraints), unachievable; **7-Highly Effective** means understandable, clear, well-structured, bounded, realistic (e.g., time, constraints), achievable;

20 responses
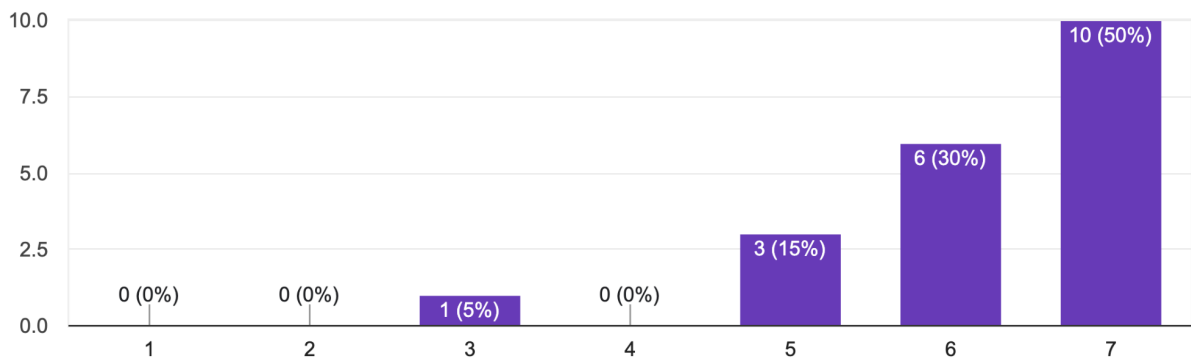
B) The **external Human Resources** (e.g., briefings, experts, consultants, liaisons) provided to the WG where: **1-Highly Ineffective** means inappropriate, inadequate, untimely, not helpful/useful; and **7- Highly Effective** means appropriate, adequate, timely, helpful/useful

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0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	7 (35%)	13 (65%)
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
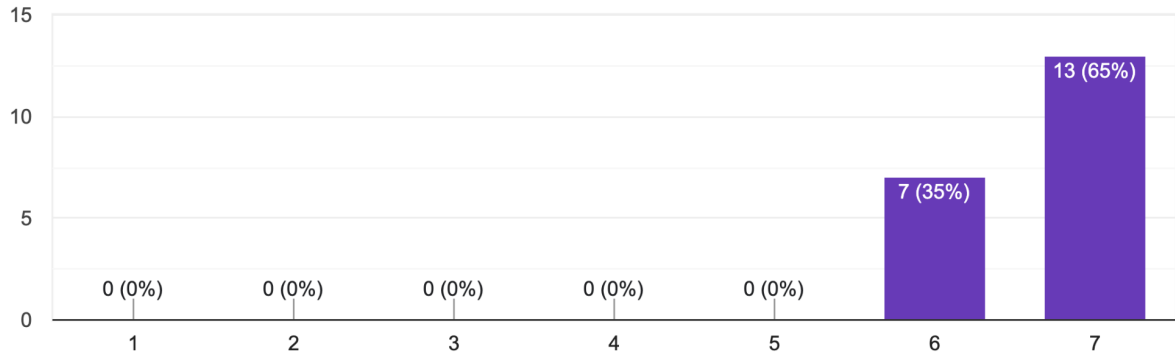
C) The **Technical Resources** (e.g., systems, tools, platforms, templates) provided to and utilized by the WG where: **1-Highly Ineffective** means difficult, challenging, clumsy, awkward, tedious, slow, not helpful/useful; and **7-Highly Effective** means easy, straightforward, clear, efficient, fast, helpful/useful

0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (5%)	4 (20%)	8 (40%)	7 (35%)
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
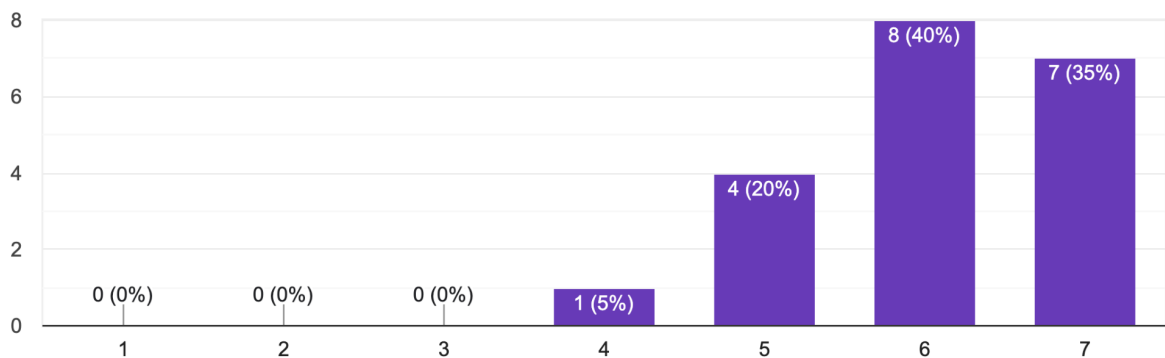
D) The **Staff Support Resources** (e.g., meeting support, guidelines, documentation, drafting) provided to and utilized by the WG where: **1-Highly Ineffective** means inappropriate, inadequate, untimely, not helpful/useful; and **1-Highly Effective** means appropriate, adequate, timely, helpful/useful
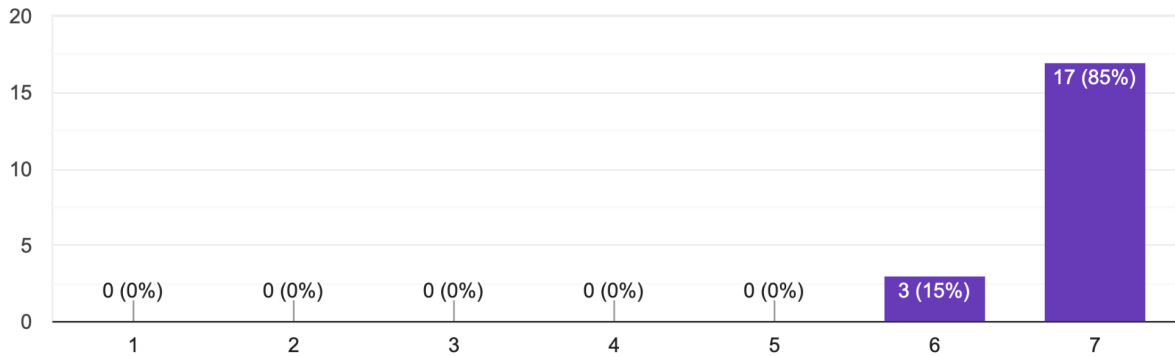
Any other issues or concerns that you think the Council should be aware of in its role as the manager of the process as it assesses the functioning and **effectiveness** of the WG?
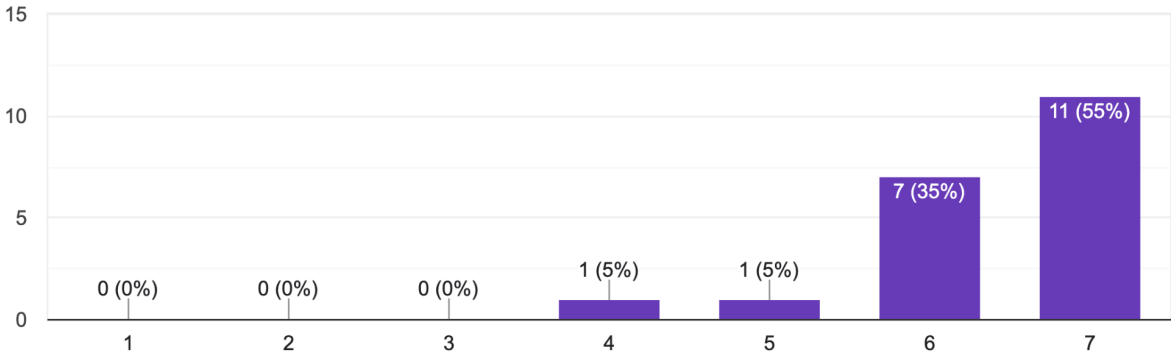
No.	Response
1	This WG has had a few challenges: the original Chair stood down after four months; the SubPro IRT was not established as anticipated in the Charter, which meant the group has had to make assumptions about next round processes and become very familiar with 2012 processes; we have started to see a drop off in attendance as the work hits the 2 year mark. Notwithstanding these, the group is cohesive, amiable and dedicated to the task. Our meetings have had a weekly cadence and over time this has been challenging for staff to prepare presentations to help the consideration of charter questions, develop draft language for the groups consideration and upwardly manage their leadership team. This is not a criticism, but rather an observation that as the PDP has progressed the burden or load on staff becomes more onerous. While our staff team has been outstanding and I'm personally very grateful to have such wonderful support, I do worry that there are times when staff may be under considerable stress due to timelines or other external pressures that they may not feel comfortable asking for help or even more time to get things done.
2	I want to provide more context to my answers to A and C. I rated A as a "6" to gently "penalize" the timeline included in the charter. In hindsight, the timeline created during the charter drafting process was unrealistic. Thus, I could not rate this question as a "7". Let me be clear, this should not be a critique of the drafting team. As the former chair of the drafting team, I struggled with the question of a timeline myself. The charter questions raised complex issues and it was difficult for the team to anticipate how much time it would be required to deliberate each topic. The other factor that we could not anticipate is how much time/effort it would be required to level set all of the working group members so that everyone could speak the same language and had sufficient background on the facts and issues. If my recollection is

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	right, we included an observation in the charter that the incoming working group would be best positioned to develop a more accurate timeline based on their assessment of the questions they will have in front of them. The rating of "4" in question C should be taken as a "Not Applicable". Other than Zoom or Google Docs to enable our conference calls and drafting of documents, which I deem as baseline tools, I don't think we are using any additional tools that warrants a higher rating. I hope this additional question is helpful.
3	Language in the Charter needs to be more precise. There were general terms which were used but were not properly defined. Consistency throughout the Charter would have been more appreciated.
4	Excellent Support
5	The sheer difficulty of subject material for participants

Processes

A) The **Participation** climate within the WG where:
1-Highly Ineffective means inhospitable, unilateral, frustrating, unproductive; and **7-Highly Effective** means inviting, inclusive, accepting, respectful, productive

20 responses

B) The **Behavior** norm of WG members where:
 1-Highly Ineffective means disruptive, argumentative, disrespectful, hostile, domineering; and
7-Highly Effective means accommodating, respectful, collaborative, consensus-building
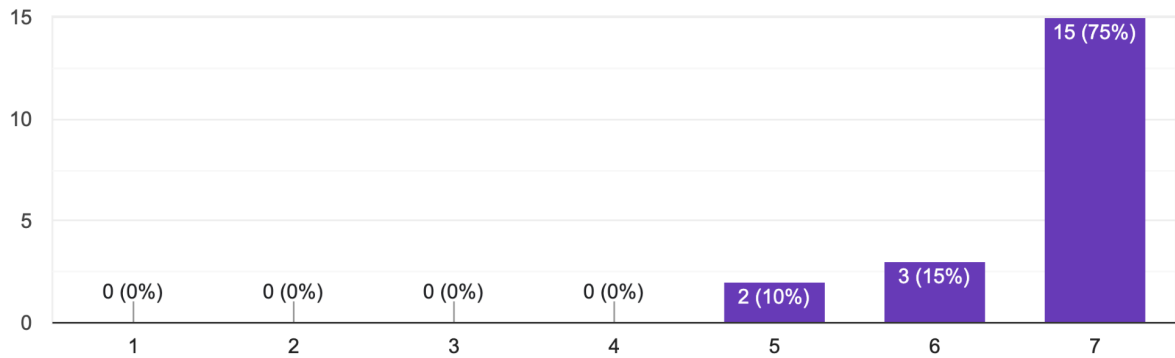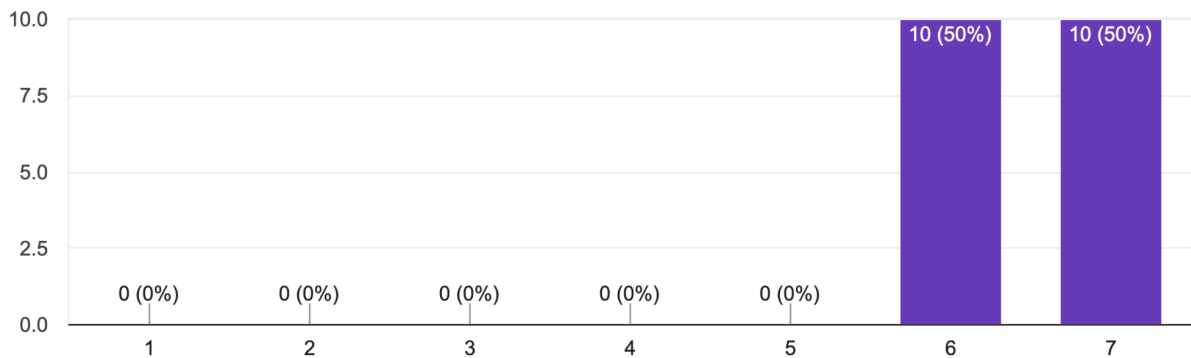
C) The **Session/Meeting Planning** (e.g., agendas) where:
1-Highly Ineffective means disorganized, haphazard, unstructured, untimely notice; and
7-Highly Effective means organized, disciplined, structured, timely notice
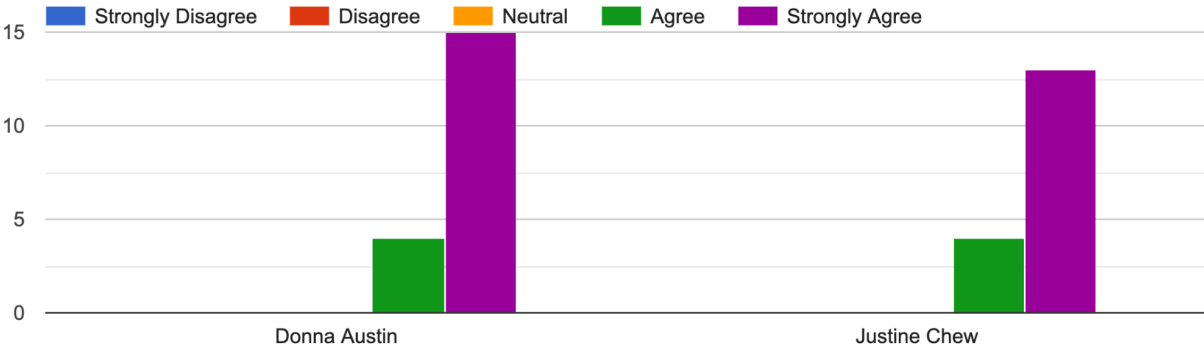
20 responses

Other comments about the WG's **Processes:**

No.	Response
1	I'm not sure where this comment fits, but there have been times when I have expressed concerns to staff that there are too many conversations taking place among staff that the Leadership Team is not privy to that could potentially undermine the relationship with leadership. There have been other occasions where I have become aware that staff on other ICANN teams are discussing our work with Board members or ICANN senior staff and our support staff have not been included in these discussions, which again has the potential to undermine relationships. The EPDP is an open and transparent process and to the extent possible any ICANN org related discussions about our work should also be. Our team includes liaisons from the Board and ICANN org: these roles seem to be predominantly one way. Our product could be enhanced by those liaisons being able to more readily share with the group any

	concerns or discussions on topics under discussion that the Board or ICANN org may have.
2	Very inclusive style of leadership.
3	Excellent
4	Excellent coordination and planning; but two meetings a week is too time consuming for several members
5	The work sometimes proceeded slowly. At all times, the participants were collegial and sought consensus.

Leadership

A) The Working Group leadership facilitates goal-oriented Working Group meetings aligned with the requirements of the Working Group's charter and work plan.
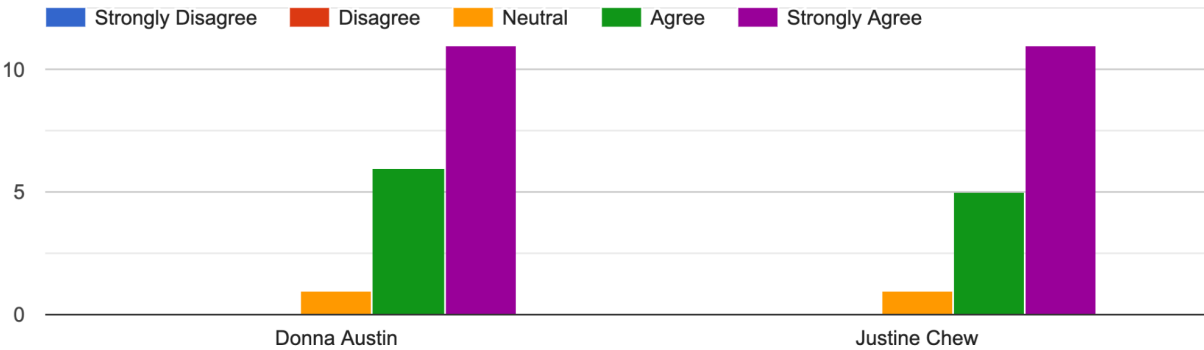

- Donna Austin: 4 Agree + 15 Strongly Agree
- Justine Chew: 4 Agree + 13 Strongly Agree

Comments:

No.	Response
1	A comment about Justine: I have over the course of this EPDP needed to take time out for personal reasons and Justine has always stepped up to the mark and filled my shoes very well. Justine is also a very good Vice Chair in that she will challenge my thinking, while also having my back. Her dedication is sincerely appreciated.

2	Both our chair and vice chair have been instrumental in keeping the WG effective and on target with respectful and thorough discussions.
3	Donna does her best, and I can only aide her in our endeavour to achieve the goals for the EPDP WG, with strong staff support.
4	We are fortunate in having excellent and understanding leadership

B) The Working Group leadership adequately manages disruptive behaviors such as raising irrelevant issues or reopening topics that have already been closed.


- Donna Austin: 1 neutral + 6 Agree + 11 Strongly Agree
- Justine Chew: 1 neutral + 5 Agree + 11 Strongly Agree

Comments:

No.	Response
1	In general both our chair and vice chairs have been effective but also the IDN EPDP has not experienced much disruptive behavior from its members or participants. The working atmosphere is congenial.
2	I don't recall any such incident which required Donna's intervention. The WG members are very collaborative and respectful even if they expressed differences in opinions during EPDP WG calls.
3	Do not think we have much "disruption" in meetings
4	I did not observe any disruptive behavior

C) The Working Group leadership keeps the Working Group on track to meet target deadlines through discussion items or deliverables.
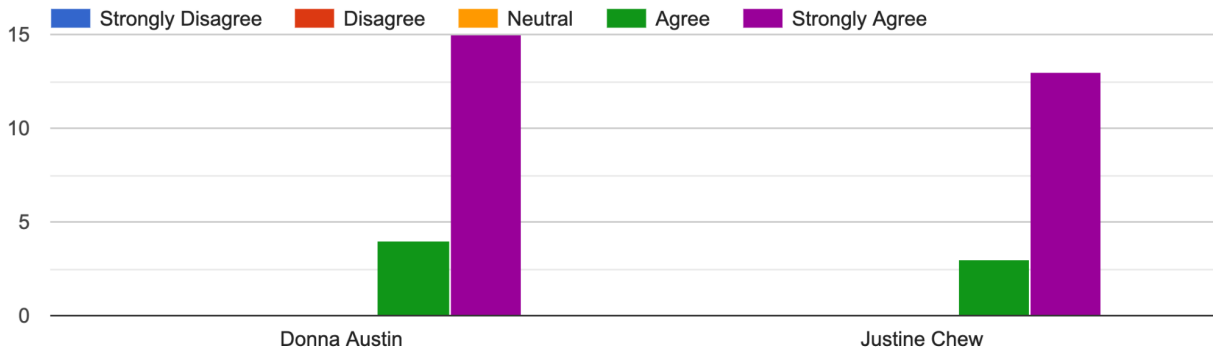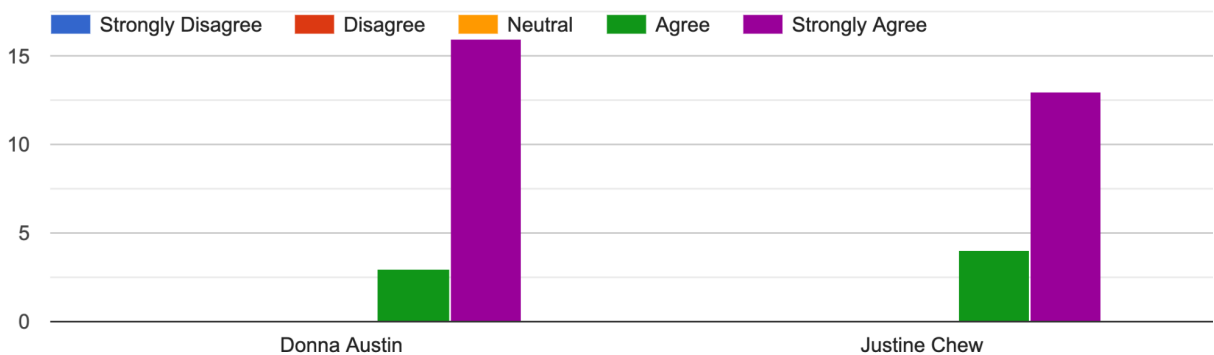

- Donna Austin: 4 Agree + 15 Strongly Agree
- Justine Chew: 3 Agree + 13 Strongly Agree

Comments:

No.	Response
1	Donna does her best, and I can only aide her in our endeavour to meet target deadlines, again with strong staff support.
2	The work sometimes proceeded slowly, but the leadership kept the participants on track

D) The Working Group leadership is responsive and effectively communicates with Working Group members.
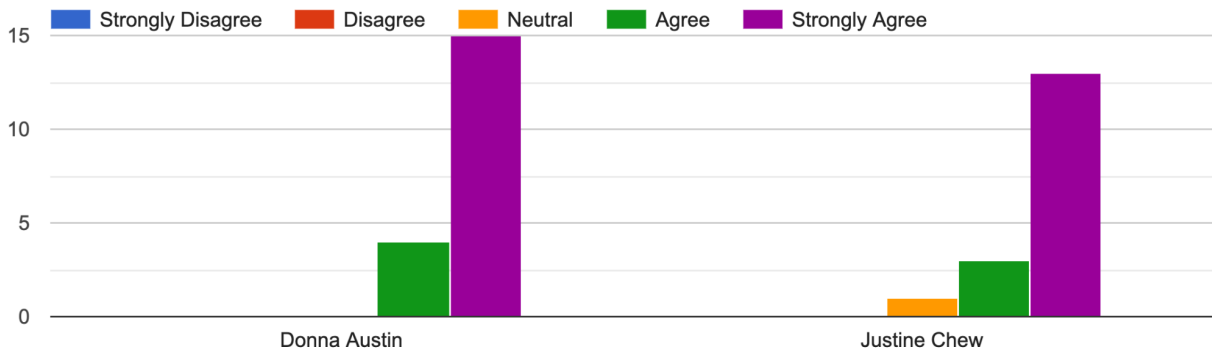

- Donna Austin: 3 Agree + 16 Strongly Agree
- Justine Chew: 4 Agree + 13 Strongly Agree

Comments:

No.	Response
1	I think Donna communicates well with WG members and sends the occasional message to the WG mail list as and when needed. Staff support is very good and we have been able to keep WG members informed with no grouses. We have even gone the extra mile to keep up WG members (or their appointing groups) apprised to the extent feasible - eg (a) separate outreach sessions with GAC, SSAC, ccPDP4; and (b) asking appointing group(s) whose members' attendance are irregular if they could remedy their situation.
2	The leaders did an excellent job of incorporating discussion outcomes into documents.

**E) The Working Group leadership ensures fair, objective treatment of all opinions within the Working Group.**

- Donna Austin: 4 Agree + 15 Strongly Agree
- Justine Chew: 1 neutral + 3 Agree + 13 Strongly Agree

Comments:

No.	Response
1	Yes, Donna does her best to encourage opinions from all within the EPDP WG.
2	Time is always given to everyone to contribute

F) The Working Group leadership is able to seek and identify a diversity of views within the Working Group (Examples to consider when answering this survey question: Did the Working Group leadership assess and encourage representational balance? Identify and

address "capture"? Determine when outreach is necessary to bring in additional views? Undertake this outreach when appropriate?)
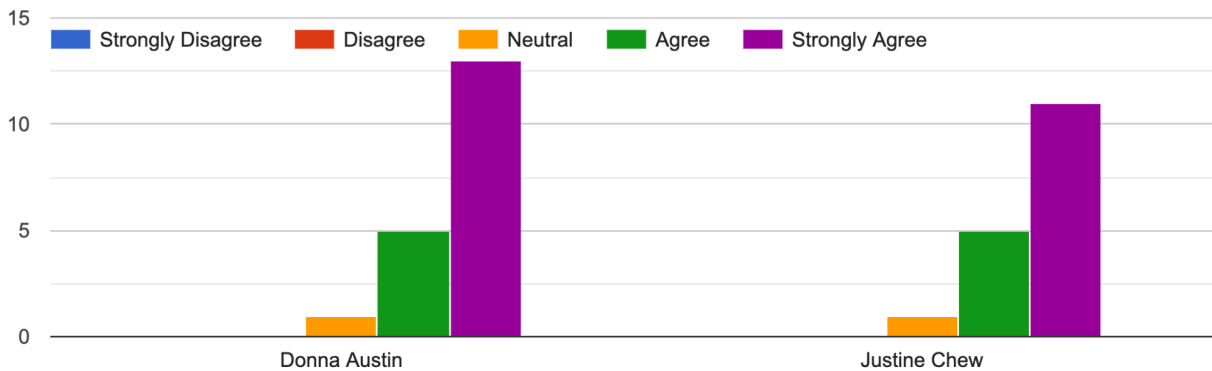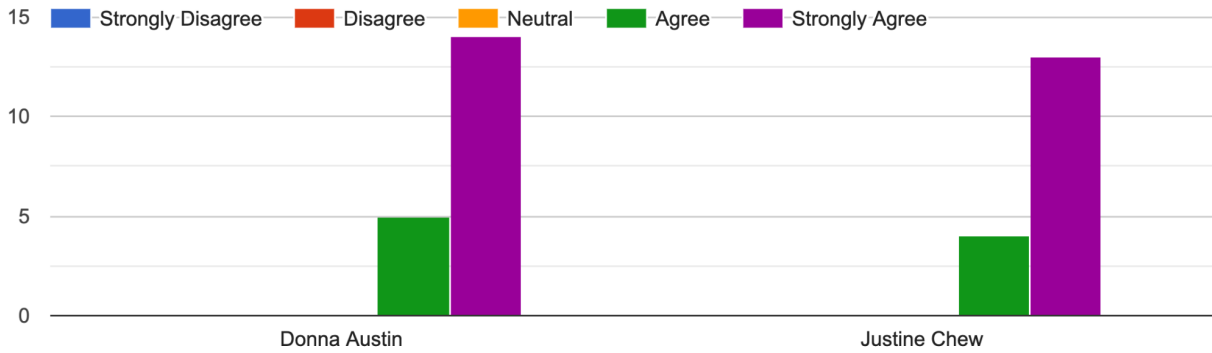

- Donna Austin: 1 neutral + 5 Agree + 13 Strongly Agree
- Justine Chew: 1 neutral + 5 Agree + 11 Strongly Agree

Comments:

No.	Response
1	Where necessary the chair allowed time for members to outreach and solicit feedback from their respective stakeholder groups for input into the wg discussion. In areas where expertise is needed for the operational items or additional IDN knowledge, the appropriate experts from ICANN staff (Sarmad's team) or industry group (i.e. CPH TechOps) is sought.
2	Donna has done well to encourage views from across the groups who participate in the EPDP WG, especially during the EPDP calls. As mentioned earlier, we have even gone the extra mile to keep up WG members (or their appointing groups) apprised to the extent feasible so as to not actively ignore any inputs they may have - eg (a) separate outreach sessions with GAC, SSAC (who didn't appoint any members to the EPDP) and (b) asking appointing group(s) whose members' attendance are irregular if they could remedy their situation.
3	Leaders proactively called for comments from specific participants

G) The Working Group leadership works to identify common ground among members as well as areas of divergence, consistent with the Standard Methodology for Making Decisions included in Section 3.6 of the GNSO Working Group Guidelines.

- Donna Austin: 5 Agree + 14 Strongly Agree
- Justine Chew: 4 Agree + 13 Strongly Agree

Comments:

No.	Response
1	Yes, and the fact that where divergence arises, we have been able to get the WG to convert such divergence to some lowest common consensus is a credit to Donna. The way we generate preliminary agreed text (which we then develop recommendations off) is evidence of that.
2	Yes, consensus is sought
3	Leaders proactively called for comments from specific participants

Final Comments

Please feel free to provide any additional feedback about your Working Group experience, any improvements that should be considered, or any other matter not covered elsewhere in this questionnaire.

No.	Response
1	This is not a controversial EPDP in the sense that we rarely have moments of significant disagreement. However, what we have experienced is a crash-course for most of the team (Chair included) of understanding the technical elements of IDN variants and also the layers of process involved in applying for new gTLDs in 2012, to understand their applicability to the Charter questions. The hybrid representative model does have some challenges for our members as they need to confer with their

	stakeholder groups or constituencies to develop positions to bring into the discussion. I commend the EPDP Team and staff for gaining the necessary level of understanding required and their dedication that enabled us to recently publish our Initial Report for public comment.
2	My Sincerest regards to the ICANN staff dedicated to the EPDP: efficient, available and knowledgeable.
3	Thank you for giving me the opportunity to provide additional feedback about my Working Group experience. I must say that my overall experience with the Working Group has been exceptional. The level of collaboration, engagement, and professionalism demonstrated by the members has truly made it a valuable and enriching experience. The Working Group provided a conducive environment for open discussions, idea sharing, and problem-solving. The diversity of perspectives and expertise among the members greatly enhanced the quality of the EPDP.
4	The complex and detailed nature of the work of this Group is different from most PDP processes I have been involved in. There are dangers (though leadership avoids this) of the "experts" (mainly in Org) effectively dominating discussion and assuming the answers to the questions. This needs to be continually monitored. It is a pleasure to be part of exercise
5	No problem so far.