

IGF Dynamic Coalition on DNS Issues

Meeting minutes

IGF MAG Informational Session

Palais des Nations, Geneva

January 29, 2019

The IGF Dynamic Coalition on DNS Issues (DC-DNSI) held an informational session at the first meeting of the 2019 Internet Governance Forum (IGF) Multistakeholder Advisory Group (MAG). The purpose of the 52-member MAG is to advise the Secretary General on the program and schedule of the IGF meetings. The MAG will meet in person three times in 2019 - in January, April, and June. The IGF2019 will take place in Berlin, Germany, from November 25-29, during which the DC-DNSI will present its work.

Approximately twenty-two people attended the informational session in person, and several joined the meeting online, via WebEx. The DC-DNSI Secretariat opened the meeting with a brief presentation on the overarching purpose of the DC: to raise awareness about, and add value to, policy development relating to issues in and around the DNS, within the IGF's unique, multistakeholder environment. This was followed by an "entry level" introduction to the Domain Name System and the issue of Universal Acceptance (UA).¹ UA is the issue that the DC-DNSI will focus on in 2019.

"The ABCs of Universal Acceptance" stand for "Awareness," "Buy-In," and "Completion," and constitute DC-DNSI's objectives for 2019: to raise awareness about UA, to encourage stakeholders towards a decision to become UA-ready, and to provide guidance for technical implementation. This last step is already addressed through the UASG's pre-existing work on technical documentation.

As for Awareness and Buy-In, the DC-DNSI is planning to develop and disseminate a global survey on actors' interest in and awareness of UA. The UASG's work to promote UA has focused on the private sector, so the DC-DNSI will focus on the public sector. The target audience for this survey will be government stakeholders. In order for the survey to be successful, however, the DC-DNSI must work together to identify a great number of survey respondents from all levels of government (i.e. federal or national, state, and local). Insights gleaned from the survey results will assist the DC-DNSI in developing appropriate communications and guidance materials for achieving UA readiness.

Meeting attendees made several contributions from the floor. IDNs are an important issue within South Eastern Europe and have featured on the program of SEEDIG - the South Eastern European Dialogue on Internet Governance - since 2015. Cyrillic and Armenian are amongst other scripts used in the region, and awareness raising for greater UA readiness to support these scripts is needed. SEEDIG organizers have also conducted a survey regarding IDNs, experiences from which they are willing to share with the DC-DNSI. A UK government representative thought that awareness amongst governments on this issue is low and that, accordingly, the work of the DC-DNSI is timely. He further suggested reaching out to the Governmental Advisory Committee within ICANN for engagement and assistance.

¹ Universal Acceptance (UA) is the concept that all domain names should be treated equally.

A technical community MAG member who is part of the UASG and does work in the area of IDNs explained that her efforts will include outreach to the governments of Hong Kong and Singapore, and that she would be willing to share lessons learned. Representatives from ICANN offered to facilitate connection between the DC-DNSI Secretariat and ICANN staff working on these issues for the ICANN64 in Kobe.

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