

ICANN GEOGRAPHIC REGIONS

A. Introduction

Pursuant to ICANN Board Resolution 07.92, the GNSO and other ICANN bodies were invited to provide input to the ICANN staff on a proposal by the ccNSO recommending that the ICANN Board appoint a community-wide working group to review the structure of ICANN's present Geographic Regions and related issues.

The GNSO strongly supports the formation of such a Community-Wide working group and will provide volunteers to serve on the group.

The GNSO recommends a public comment period on the working group terms of reference.

The GNSO supports geographical diversity in the ICANN community and supports efforts to explore improvements to the definitions of regions. Geographic regions are relevant to the GNSO with respect to creating an implementation mechanism for the diversity of GNSO Council members.

GNSO reform

The application of diversity based on regions will need to be addressed in the context of the forthcoming new structure of the GNSO Council. In that new structure the GNSO recommends that the balance between regional diversity goals and effective Council membership should be considered.

Moreover the goals of geographical diversity should be considered in the working group model for policy development.

B. Principles for Consideration by the Community-Wide Working Group

The GNSO recommends that the following set of principles be adopted into the working group terms of reference.

Principles on the Relevance of Regions

1. ICANN regions should take into consideration the varying needs and concerns of different regions.
2. ICANN regions and selections based upon them should provide the opportunity for those needs and concerns to be represented.
3. The makeup of ICANN's regions should be considered in the wider context of the geographical region requirements imposed on all ICANN bodies.
4. Geographic requirements relevant to membership of ICANN bodies should be measured by citizenship.
5. ICANN regions should seek to balance three goals: diversity of representation, ease of participation, and simplicity.
6. ICANN regions should enfranchise both existing and future users.
7. ICANN should avoid, wherever possible, making geo-political decisions in the designation of regions.

Principles on the Change of Regions

8. Any change to ICANN regions should improve on specifically identified imbalances.
9. A single set of designated regions for ICANN, as it is today, adds to simplicity but this goal should be balanced with the evolving needs of ICANN's supporting organisations and other bodies.
10. There should be nothing sacred about the number of ICANN regions remaining at five.
11. Where there is uncertainty in the relationship of countries or territories to regions, there should be a mechanism for resolving that uncertainty.
12. ICANN regions should be reviewed with appropriate regularity: to that end ICANN should have in place means to understand the evolving needs and concerns of different regions.