



IANA Report on Delegation of the .RS Domain, and Redelegation of the .YU Domain

Background

The Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (IANA) function of ICANN, as part of the administrative tasks associated with management of the Domain Name System root zone, is responsible for receiving requests for the delegation and redelegation of top-level domains, investigating and reporting on the circumstances pertinent to those requests, and, when appropriate, implementing the redelegations.

In accordance with ICANN's performance of these functions, IANA received joint requests for the delegation of the .RS top-level domain, and the redelegation of the .YU top-level domain. The .RS domain is designated in the ISO 3166-1 standard for Serbia, a European country with a population of approximately 10 million people. The .YU domain is the former ISO 3166-1 code for Yugoslavia, and is currently is use by both the peoples of Serbia and Montenegro. The applications were received on 27 March 2007.

According to the records IANA has available, the .YU domain was initially delegated in 1989 with operations managed in Ljubljana. With the breakup of Yugoslavia into a successor Yugoslavia, Slovenia, Croatia, F.Y.R. of Macedonia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina in the early 1990s, the operators of the domain were no longer based in Yugoslavia. Operations of the domain were amended to reflect this in 1994, and since that time, .YU has been maintained by faculty members at the University of Belgrade under the name "YUNET".

In 2003, The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was superceded by a different form of union between the states of Serbia and Montenegro. The successor was to be known as "Serbia and Montenegro", and in recognition of this, the ISO 3166-1 code was changed from "YU" to "CS" (i.e. "Crna Gora and Srbija"). The Secretariat of the ISO 3166 Maintenance Agency formally communicated this change to IANA in July 2003.

In discussions the operator of .YU held with IANA, they conveyed an opinion that a planned referendum for self-determination to be held by Montenegro had a reasonable prospect of seeing the union between Serbia and Montenegro dissolved, and result in two separate countries. In light of this, IANA did not seek an immediate transition from the .YU domain to the .CS domain until the outcome of that process was concluded.

In May 2006, the referendum was held in Montenegro and resulted in a decision for independence. The countries subsequently declared their independence in June 2006.

The ISO 3166-1 standard was revised to recognize the two new countries, with a revision issued on 26 September 2006. This revision removed the “CS” code, and added an “ME” code for Montenegro, and an “RS” code for Serbia. Once the standard was revised it became possible for IANA to consider applications for delegation of these new codes in the DNS root zone.

In October 2006, IANA met with Mirjana Tasic, the administrative contact for the .YU registry. In this meeting she explained that initial discussions were being conducted both within Serbia, and with prospective operators of the .ME domain. IANA was advised that it was anticipated there would be delegation applications forthcoming from the countries. In those discussions, the importance of a transition plan from the existing “.YU” domain was stressed.

In December 2006, the Government of Montenegro submitted a delegation application for the .ME domain. This was followed by the applications for the delegations of the .RS domain, and the redelegation of the .YU domain, received in February 2007.

In the time following the receipt of the initial applications, IANA sought additional information and clarifications from the applicants to ensure that they met the established criteria for delegation. IANA also asked that the plan for transition from the .YU domain be documented and proposed as part of the applications.

The applications under consideration seek to assign both the .RS domain, and the .YU domain, to the Serbian National Registry of Internet Domain Names (specifically, *Registar Nacionalnog Internet Domena Srbije*, or RNIDS).

According to its articles of association, RNIDS is a non-profit, non-governmental entity established with the express purpose of the “Technical and administrative management of the central domain register within the national top-level domain allocated to Serbia”. In these articles, it states an obligation to conduct its affairs “with the traditional manners of functioning of similar organisations in the world, as well as recommendations of the current Internet standards and relevant international institutions, enabling transparency of work and participation of the local Internet community in the development process”.

The applicant has provided substantial documentation on the RNIDS organisation, its legal construction, its business and technical planning, and its principals.

In support of the application for .RS, a number of letters of support were received from the local Internet community. These letters included representations made by the Centre for Educational Policy Studies, DiploFoundation, the Serbian Computer Science Society, the Association of Internet Providers of Serbia, and the Serbian Chamber of Commerce.

The Serbian Ministry of Science and Environmental Protection communicated its support of RNIDS to be the operator of the .RS, basing its assessment on a decision made by the Ministry of Culture in February 2007 to support the creation of RNIDS.

The application proposes the Administrative Contact for both domains be Mirjana Tasic, an officer of RNIDS and also present Administrative Contact for the .YU domain. The Technical Contact is proposed to be Nenad Krajnovic of RNIDS.

Transition of .YU to .ME and .RS

In its role as operator of the DNS root zone, IANA is required to maintain the register of country-code top-level domains, and manage them in the public interest in accordance with established practices and procedures. The country-code top-level domain taxonomy is based on the international standard ISO 3166-1. This standard declares a mapping between country names and a series of codes, and the country-code system is based upon the alphabetic two-letter system of codes documented within.

As IANA's role is to be an independent technical coordinator, the ISO 3166-1 standard was chosen as it provides an independent mechanism of making the assessment of what is, or what is not, a valid country code. As noted by IANA in 1994 in RFC 1591,

“The IANA is not in the business of deciding what is and what is not a country. The selection of the [ISO 3166-1] list as a basis for country code top-level domain names was made with the knowledge that ISO has a procedure for determining which entities should be and should not be on that list.”

The ISO 3166 Maintenance Agency is responsible for maintaining the ISO 3166-1 standard. It adds, modifies and removes entries from the standard following guidance from the United Nations on what it recognises as states or autonomous territories.

In line with the history of the countries involved, the ISO 3166-1 standard has been updated to remove the code “YU”, and add the codes “ME” and “RS”. In order to retain consistency with the standard, IANA must coordinate the removal of the .YU domain in conjunction with the transition to the .ME and .RS domains.

Recognising this framework, the proposed operators of the .ME and .RS domains, the University of Montenegro and RNIDS respectively, have arrived at a mutually agreed plan for the transition to the new domains, and the decommissioning of the .YU domain. This plan calls for the transition of registrations within the CG.YU, MN.YU and CG.AC.YU domains to the .ME domain. These three zones were sub-domains of the Yugoslav domain used by entities within Montenegro. The remainder of the sub-domains within .YU are eligible to transition to the .RS domain.

In an undertaking made to IANA, RNIDS has stated that no new .YU registrations will be permitted upon the conclusion of the .RS sunrise period – that is when open registration is available within the .RS domain. At this point, the only maintenance of the .YU zone will be to allow existing registrants to modify or delete their registrations.

The exact transition period will be determined in coordination with IANA and the local Internet communities, however in discussions and subsequently in a written undertaking, RNIDS has anticipated the transition period will last for up to two years, at which point the .YU domain’s delegation would be removed from the DNS.

In recognition of the need to decommission the .YU domain, RNIDS and the University of Montenegro entered into an accord that spells out the general terms of the transition. The accord mutually agrees that RNIDS should be the temporary caretaker of the .YU zone for the purposes of the transition.

Currently the .YU domain is delegated to a sponsoring organisation of YUNET, based in Serbia, and lead by Ms Tasic. In line with the proposal, she will be involved in RNIDS as the proposed new operator of .RS; and therefore will effectively continue to be responsible as the Administrative Contact for the .YU domain.

Evaluation Procedure

In its role as investigator of delegation and redelegation requests, IANA procedure is guided by the practices summarized in:

- “Domain Name System Structure and Delegation” (RFC 1591). This document describes IANA’s practices relating to delegations at its publication in 1994. See <http://www.rfc-editor.org/rfc/rfc1591.txt>

- “Internet Domain Name System Structure and Delegation.” (ICP-1). This document represents an update of the portions of RFC 1591 dealing with ccTLDs and reflects subsequent evolution of the policies followed by ICANN through May 1999. See <http://www.icann.org/icp/icp1.htm>.
- The Governmental Advisory Committee Principles for Delegation and Administration of ccTLDs (GAC Principles). This document serve as “best practices” to guide governments in assuming proper roles with respect to the Internet's naming system. See <http://www.icann.org/committees/gac/gac-cctldprinciples-23feb00.htm>.

In considering the delegation or redelegation of a ccTLD, IANA staff seeks input from both the requesting party as well as from persons and/or organizations that may be significantly affected by the change, particularly those within the nation or territory to which the ccTLD is designated. As noted in ICP-1, the parties affected include the relevant government or public authority: "The desires of the government of a country with regard to delegation of a ccTLD are taken very seriously. The IANA will make them a major consideration in any TLD delegation/transfer discussions."

Taking these factors into consideration, the burden of proof required to permit a delegation involves determining facts that relate to the applicant’s capacity to meet the following criteria:

- 1. Operational and technical skills**
 - a. The prospective manager has the requisite skills to operate the TLD appropriately. (ICP-1 §a, RFC 1591 §3.5)
 - b. There must be reliable, full-time IP connectivity to the nameservers and electronic mail connectivity to the operators; (ICP-1 §a; RFC 1591 §3.1)
 - c. The manager must perform its duties in assigning domains and operating nameservers with technical competence (ICP-1 §d; RFC 1591 §3.5)
- 2. Operator in country**
 - a. The prospective manager supervises and operates the domain name from within the country represented by the TLD; (ICP-1 §a; RFC 1591 §3.1)
 - b. The prospective administrative contact must reside in the country represented by the TLD. (ICP-1 §a; RFC 1591 §3.1)
- 3. Equitable treatment**
 - a. The prospective manager must be equitable and fair to all groups encompassed by the TLD that may request domain names (ICP-1 §c; RFC 1591 §3.3)
- 4. Community/Governmental support**
 - a. The prospective manager has the requisite authority to operate the TLD appropriately, with the desire of the government taken very seriously. (ICP-1 §a, GAC Principles)

- b. Significantly interested parties in the domain should agree that the prospective manager is the appropriate party to receive the delegation (ICP-1 §a; RFC 1591 §3.4)

In meeting these criteria, the IANA staff requests information from the applicant. In summary, a request template is sought specifying the exact details of the delegation being sought in the root zone. In addition, IANA staff asks for various documentation describing: the views of the local Internet community on a change; the competencies and skills of the organisation to operate the registry; the legal authenticity, status and character of the proposed operator; and the nature of government support for the proposal.

After receiving these documents, IANA staff analyses the input it has received in relation to existing zone management procedures, seeking input from parties both related to as well as independent of the applying organization should the information provided by the applicant in their request be deficient.

Once all the documentation has been received, IANA staff will also perform various technical checks on the proposed operator's DNS infrastructure to ensure name servers are properly configured and are able to respond to queries for the top-level domain being requested. Should any anomalies be detected in the applicant's technical infrastructure, IANA will work with the applicant to address the issues.

Assuming all technical issues are resolved, IANA staff will compile a report, providing all relevant details regarding the applicant, its suitability for operating the top-level domain being requested, and any other information pertinent to the application and submit that report to ICANN's Board of Directors for its determination on whether to proceed with the request.

Evaluation

This report is being provided under the contract for performance of the IANA function between the United States Government and ICANN. Under that contract, ICANN performs the IANA function, which includes receiving delegation and redelegation requests concerning top-level domains, investigating the circumstances pertinent to those requests, and reporting on the requests. Pertaining to the obligations described in the evaluation procedure, in summary IANA staff has assessed the applicant's credentials to be as follows:

- **Operational and technical skills**

RNIDS has provided a comprehensive overview of its operational and technical skills. Its staff have current operational experience in running a country-code top-level domain.

- **Operator in country**

The operator is based in Serbia. With respect to the .YU domain, Serbia is within the territory covered by the former Yugoslavia, and the proposed operator is agreed between the remaining constituencies using the .YU domain.

- **Fair and equitable treatment**

The applicant has made undertakings to IANA that registrations will be performed on a first-come first-served basis that is fair and equitable.

- **Governmental support**

The Government of Serbia has expressed its support for the application to delegate .RS to RNIDS. There is no relevant government consult with respect to .YU.

- **Community sentiment**

IANA has received significant expressions of support for RNIDS from a number of sectors of the community.

Further to these criteria, IANA has assessed the transfer plan that has been developed for the transition of usage from the .YU to .RS and .ME and has found it to be appropriate and responsible. The plan recognises the need to freeze registrations in the .YU zone so as not to disadvantage either existing or prospective registrants, and also charts a clear and predictable process so that the Internet community is fully informed on how the transition is to occur. All this is to be done on a schedule that provides reasonable time for registrants to prepare and transition to the new domains.

Recommendation

According to RFC 1591 and ICP-1, IANA needs to respect the ability for a local Internet community, as well as local law and local government to make decisions concerning the operation of their country-code top-level domain.

In its research, IANA believes that there are grounds for assignment of the .RS domain name under the relevant criteria.

IANA therefore concludes that the .RS domain should be delegated to the Serbian National Register of Internet Domain Names in accordance with their request.

Furthermore, the proposed operator of the .RS domain and the proposed operator of the .ME domain have mutually agreed a transfer and decommissioning plan for the .YU domain that would see a stable transition to the new domains. In this plan, the Serbian National Registry of Internet Domain Names would be the temporary caretaker of .YU until the domain is fully decommissioned.

IANA therefore concludes that the .YU domain should be re delegated to the Serbian National Register of Internet Domain Names in accordance with their request.

Postscript: Board Resolution

On September 11, 2007 the Board of ICANN passed the following resolutions:

Whereas, the .RS top-level domain is the designated country-code for Serbia,

Whereas, ICANN has received a request for delegation of .RS to the Serbian National Register of Internet Domain Names,

Whereas, ICANN has reviewed the request, and has determined that the proposed delegation would be in the best interest of the local and global Internet communities,

Resolved (07.76), that the proposed delegation of the .RS domain to the Serbian National Register of Internet Domain Names is approved.

Whereas, the .YU top-level domain is currently used by the citizens of both Serbia and Montenegro,

Whereas, ICANN has delegated the .RS domain for use in Serbia, and the .ME domain for use in Montenegro,

Whereas, the ISO 3166-1 standard has removed the "YU" code, and the ISO 3166 Maintenance Agency recommends its use be discontinued,

Whereas, ICANN is not responsible for deciding what is or is not a country, and adheres to the ISO 3166-1 standard for guidance on when to add, modify and remove country-code top-level domains,

Whereas, there is a transition plan to move registrations in .YU to the new domains .RS and .ME, with the operator of .RS acting as the temporary caretaker of .YU until the transition is complete,

Resolved (07.77), that the .YU domain be redelegated to the Serbian National Registry of Internet Domain Names in a temporary caretaker capacity.

Resolved (07.78), that the Serbian National Registry of Internet Domain Names be instructed to report their progress on decommissioning the .YU domain every six months to ICANN against a relevant set of metrics.

Resolved (07.79), that the Serbian National Registry of Internet Domain Names, and the Government of Montenegro, work to complete the transition from the .YU domain to the .RS and .ME domains, so that it may be removed from the DNS root zone no later than 30 September 2009.

Comments concerning the layout, construction and functionality of this site should be sent to webmaster@iana.org.

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