Implementation of the .eu Top Level Domain

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The purpose of this Report from the Commission is to inform the European Parliament and the Council on the implementation, effectiveness and functioning of the '.eu' Top Level Domain (TLD), as provided for in Article 8 of Regulation (EC) No 733/2002. The aim of introducing the '.eu' TLD was to provide Community residents, organisations and undertakings with a specific pan-European identity on the Internet. The Report focuses on recent developments concerning the '.eu' TLD which took place from the adoption of the previous Report on 6 July 2007 until 31 March 2009.

The report notes that, three years after its launch, the '.eu' TLD has succeeded in becoming a valued option for Europeans when choosing an Internet identity. With over **three million domains**, '.eu' has **exceeded expectations** and is well established among the world's top ten TLDs. After the initial surge in registrations, there is a growing trend towards using **'.eu' domains immediately when they are registered as opposed to simply registering them as a precautionary measure pending a later decision on their use**. Nowadays, '.eu' domain names are increasingly adopted by undertakings, organisations and individuals for the unique benefit they offer. The number of disputed domain names has been constantly decreasing and the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) system has been seen as effective in protecting the rights of registrants. Whereas the overall registration growth of 22 % over the period 2006-2008 can be judged satisfactory, it has been particularly impressive in Poland (+149 %), Lithuania (+142 %), Luxembourg (+95 %) and Ireland (+94 %). In addition, the Registry operates smoothly and in line with industry best practices. Nevertheless, the Registry will face a **series of challenges** in the coming years. The most immediate milestone will be the introduction of Internationalised Domain Names (IDN).

Further down the road, the coming introduction of new generic TLDs as well as the uncertain economic environment could limit the growth of '.eu'. A **proactive strategic approach** is therefore required. In particular, the Registry should work to **further raise awareness** of the existence of the '.eu' TLD and to **strengthen its perception**. By doing so, it will attract more registrations, as well as boosting the adoption of '.eu' websites, if possible, by renowned undertakings and organisations.

Given the dynamic nature of the TLD environment, the Registry should continue to maintain and expand its dialogue and exchanges with the Internet community. This will allow the Registry to **identify relevant market developments** and to continue to adopt best practices. The Commission will continue to closely monitor the development of the '.eu' TLD, ensuring that it meets the needs of EU residents, organisations and undertakings.