Implementation and functioning of the .eu top level domain name

2018/0110(COD) - 31/01/2019 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 568 votes to 53, with 25 abstentions, a legislative resolution on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the implementation and functioning of the.eu Top Level Domain name and repealing Regulation (EC) No 733/2002 and Commission Regulation (EC) No 874/2004.

The position of the European Parliament adopted at first reading under the ordinary legislative procedure has amended the Commission proposal as follows:

Objectives

The regulation would implement the .eu country code top level domain (ccTLD) and its available variants in other scripts in order to support the digital single market, to build an online EU identity and to encourage cross-border online activities. Members stressed that the .eu TLD is one of the world's most important national top level domains and that the rapid evolution of the TLD market and the dynamism of the digital landscape require a flexible and sustainable regulatory environment in the long term.

Eligibility criteria for registration

The registration of one or more domain names in the .eu TLD may be requested by: (a) a Union citizen, regardless of where he or she resides in the EU; (b) a natural person who is not a Union citizen and who resides in a Member State; (c) a company established in the Union; and (d) an organisation established in the Union, without prejudice to applicable national law.

Promoting and safeguarding the Union's values

The amended text specifies that the purpose of the .eu TLD, as a clear and easily recognisable label should be to contribute to strengthening the Union's identity and promoting online the Union's values, such as multilingualism, respect for users' privacy and security and respect for human rights, as well as specific online priorities.

Thus, a domain name deemed defamatory, racist or contrary to public policy or public security should be blocked by the registry as soon as the court decision is notified and revoked as soon as the final court decision is notified.

A domain name that is identical or confusingly similar to a name for which a right is established by Union or national law and which has been registered without rights or in the absence of a legitimate interest in the name should, in principle, be revoked and, where appropriate, transferred to the legitimate holder. When it has been found that such a domain name has been used in bad faith, it should always be revoked.

Registry

The registry would be a non-profit organization and could impose fees directly related to the costs incurred.

The register would be kept:

- to promote the .eu TLD in the Union and in third countries;

- to comply with the rules, policies and procedures laid down in the regulation and the contract concluded with the Commission and, in particular, Union law on data protection;

- to organise, administer and manage the .eu TLD in the general interest and to ensure, in all aspects of the administration and management of the .eu TLD, high quality, transparency, security, stability, predictability, reliability, accessibility, efficiency, non-discrimination, as well as a level playing field and consumer protection.

The registry should adopt clear measures to ensure the timely identification of abusive domain name registrations and, if necessary, cooperate with the competent authorities and other public bodies responsible for cybersecurity and information security, such as national computer emergency response teams (CERTS), involved in combating such registrations.

.eu Multi-Stakeholder Advisory Group

This group would be responsible for (i) advising the Commission on the implementation of the regulation; (ii) advising the Commission on strategic issues relating to the management, organisation and administration of the .eu TLD, including issues relating to cyber-protection and data protection; (iii) advising the Commission on good practices in regard to policies and measures against abusive domain name registration.

The .eu multi-stakeholder advisory group would be composed of representatives of stakeholders based in the Union. A representative of stakeholders from outside the Union could also participate in the Advisory Group. It would be chaired by a representative of the Commission or a person designated by the Commission.

Evaluation and review

By 13 October 2027 at the latest, and every three years thereafter, the Commission is to evaluate the effectiveness and functioning of the .eu TLD. By June 2020 at the latest, it should determine whether it is appropriate for the registry to cooperate with the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO) and other EU agencies to combat speculative and abusive registration of domain names, and how simple administrative procedures are to be provided for, in particular with regard to SMEs.