# Implementation of the .eu Top Level Domain

2000/0328(COD) - 19/02/2020 - Follow-up document

In accordance with Regulation (EC) No 733/2002 on the implementation of the .eu Top-Level Domain (.eu TLD), the Commission presented a report on the implementation, functioning and effectiveness of the .eu TLD in the last two years, in particular during the period from 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2019.

***Key findings and developments***

The report noted that the .eu domain continues to function in an effective way, facilitating access to the Digital Single Market in a secure and trustworthy way and allowing Europeans to display their European identity online.

With 3.7 million registered domain names, the .eu domain remained the seventh largest ccTLD worldwide. The growth stagnated during the period covered due to the maturity of the domain name market. The performance of the .eu domain however remained on par with other ccTLDs despite a significant decrease in .eu registrations caused by the United Kingdom's intended withdrawal from the European Union and the suspension of domain names due to stricter checks on registration data.

The impact of the United Kingdom's intended withdrawal from the EU on the .eu domain began to be felt in 2018. For United Kingdom's residents, the possibility of losing eligibility for the registration of .eu domain names triggered cancelations, non-renewals and a decrease in new registrations. In addition, some United Kingdom-based registrars ceased to offer the .eu domain. As a result, the number of .eu registrations in United Kingdom fell from around 240 000 to around 190 000 by the end of the first quarter of 2019; a decrease of 24 %.

Confronted with growing competition, the .eu Registry focused increasingly on quality of service and security, rather than on price. This proved successful: the renewal rate of .eu domain names remained high and grew from 78.6 % to 80 % in the period covered in this report.

***New framework***

In 2017, the Commission evaluated the .eu regulatory framework under the Regulatory Fitness and Performance Programme (REFIT) review process and subsequently undertook a revision. The Commission made a legislative proposal to replace the existing .eu Regulation(s). This proposal was ultimately adopted into law as Regulation (EU) 2019/517 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the implementation and functioning of the .eu top level domain and amending and repealing Regulation (EC) No 733/2002 and repealing Commission Regulation (EC) No 874/2004 ('revised .eu Regulation').

The revised .eu Regulation provides the legal flexibility for the .eu domain to adapt to market changes, modernises its governance structure, and expands the eligibility criteria for .eu domain names to enable EU citizens to register a domain name, regardless of their place of residence.

The revised .eu Regulation entered into force on 18 April 2019. It shall apply from 13 October 2022, on which date Regulations 733/2002 and 874/2004 will be repealed, except for the provisions expanding the eligibility criteria, which apply from 19 October 2019.

***Trust and security***

The increased focus on quality of service and security helped the .eu domain to maintain its market position during the period considered in the report. It also directly contributed to the EU objectives of increasing trust and security on the internet and in the Digital Single Market.

The .eu can become a model for other domain names in terms of building a trusted and secure domain name space.

Based on its solid customer base, its strong relations with registrars and targeted actions towards under-served geographic markets and EU citizens living abroad, the .eu domain has the potential to strengthen further its position as the domain of choice of EU citizens and businesses.