

The top-level domain .eu

The .eu top-level domain gives Europe its own Internet identity, boosting EU visibility, increasing user choice of domain names and promoting e-commerce.



The .eu top-level domain (TLD) allows users to create a pan-European Internet identity for their websites and e-mail addresses. It is available to all companies and organisations established in the EU and to every resident citizen.

For citizens, the .eu TLD is a place in cyberspace where their rights as consumers and individuals are governed by European rules and standards.

For companies, a .eu website enhances their Internet visibility both within the EU single market and globally, and it advertises their pan-European status. This contributes to an increase in e-commerce presence.

A European Commission initiative led to the adoption of a Regulation establishing the .eu TLD (.pdf) in 2002. This was complemented in 2004 by Regulation 874/2004. After the appointment of the registry operator, the first .eu domain names were registered in April 2006.

The European Commission launched a public consultation in May 2017 to collect input on whether the .eu legal framework still served its purpose. This was part of the Regulatory Fitness and Performance Programme (REFIT) review process, aimed at assessing whether any legislative and/or non-legislative initiative was needed.

Having finalised the related impact assessment, and after receiving positive feedback from the Regulatory Scrutiny Board, the Commission started the process of a legislative proposal to update the current Regulation. The co-legislators reached an agreement on the new provisions for the .eu TLD Regulation on 5 December 2018.

Public consultation

The Public consultation on the evaluation and revision of the .eu top-level domain regulations ran from 12 May 2017 to 4 August 2017.

- 25 responses came from citizens and private individuals residing in 12 EU Member States. Most of them were between 25 and 65 years old (19 out of 25).
- 15 responses came from business representatives, 1 from an industry association and 1 from the public sector. The companies and organisations that participated are active in 9 Member States.

The results of the public consultation are available online.

REFIT of the .eu regulation

The online environment, the market and the EU political and legislative context have changed considerably in the last 10 years. So, the Commission conducted a Regulatory Fitness and Performance Programme (REFIT) review of the .eu Regulations. This led to a new legislative proposal on the .eu TLD. The aim of the proposal is to:

- modernise the legal framework, replacing the current regulations with a lighter, more efficient and future-proof principle-based legal instrument;
- create a new governance structure, involving a separate multi-stakeholder body, with the goal of strengthening and widening input on the performance of the .eu TLD;
- create new eligibility criteria to enable EU/EEA citizens to register a .eu domain, regardless of where they live.

This set of rules entered into force on 18 April 2019 following that of its publication in the Official Journal of the European Union. It shall apply from 13 October 2022. However, the registration of the .eu domain name for citizens living outside the EU will only apply from 19 October 2019.

The proposed changes respond to practical challenges – for example, coping with the rapid market evolutions in the domain name system – but also aim at ensuring that the benefits offered by the .eu TLD reach as many EU citizens, organisations and companies as possible, in particular young people, SMEs and NGOs.

EURid – the registry of the .eu TLD

EURid is a private, independent, non-profit organisation that has operated the .eu TLD under contract of the European Commission since 2003, following an open call.

EURid operates the .eu TLD independently from the European Commission, but under the rules and procedures contained in two main EC Regulations, on the implementation of the domain in 2002 and the principles governing registration in 2004 with specific requirements for the Registry

Regulation: Implementatin and funding .eu

Impact assessment: .eu domain

Staff working document: Review of .eu domain

.eu domain name: Questions and answers

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The European Commission designates the Registry of the .eu Top Level Domain name for the next five years

On 25 October, the European Commission has adopted a Decision designating the European Registry for Internet Domains (EURid) as the .eu

Top-level Domain (TLD) Registry from 2022 to 2027.

DIGIBYTE | 17 November 2017
Winners of the .eu Web Awards

The awards for the best websites with the .eu Top Level Domain in five categories were presented at the .eu web awards 2017.

DIGIBYTE | 12 May 2017
Commission launches a public consultation on the review of the rules on the .eu top-level domain

The Commission is opening a public consultation on the .eu top-level domain rules. The Commission is asking if the existing regulations on .eu are still fit for purpose, or if they need to be changed or updated.

DIGIBYTE | 04 April 2016
10 years of .eu!

This week .eu, the EU's internet address, turns ten years old. Since 7 April 2006 .eu has provided a unique European domain for people and organisations in the European Union. At the end of 2015 .eu was the eleventh largest top level domain in the world, with almost 4 million registrants. Compared to the largest country extensions – .de, .cn, .uk, .nl and .ru – the .eu domain ranks sixth in the world.

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Big Picture

Next Generation Internet initiative

The overall mission of the Next Generation Internet (NGI) initiative is to re-imagine and re-engineer the Internet for the third millennium and beyond.

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