



# Comment on Work Stream 2 Draft Recommendations to Improve ICANN’s Diversity

Status: FINAL

Version: 3

14-Jan-2018

**Business Constituency Submission**

**GNSO//CSG//BC**

## Background

This document is the response of the ICANN Business Constituency (BC), from the perspective of business users and registrants, as defined in our Charter:

The mission of the Business Constituency is to ensure that ICANN policy positions are consistent with the development of an Internet that:

1. promotes end-user confidence because it is a safe place to conduct business
2. is competitive in the supply of registry and registrar and related services
3. is technically stable, secure and reliable.

## BC Comments on Draft Work Stream 2 Recommendations to Improve ICANN's Diversity

The BC is pleased to provide comments on the CCWG – accountability – WS2: Draft Recommendations to Improve ICANN's Diversity<sup>1</sup>.

The BC commends members of the Diversity sub-group for recommending important steps that both ICANN.org, and the broader ICANN community can take to improve leadership, participatory and structural diversity within ICANN as a means of strengthening ICANN's legitimacy as a global organization in alignment with its Strategic Objective number 1: "Evolve and to further globalize ICANN".

The BC endorses all the recommendations of the sub-group on CCWG-Accountability -WS2. However, the BC provides the following comments:

1. There may be need to indicate the timing during the year by which the diversity criteria should have been published and updated on the SO/AC websites. It will also be useful to note that at a minimum, annual updates will be made to the SO/AC websites, after the initial publication.
2. The fulfillment of 1 above may be tied to an important ICANN event for which SO/AC are active participants and/or beneficiaries, such as the AGM, which provides a date well known to the full ICANN community, well ahead of time.
3. With respect to language diversity, the BC offers a few comments:
  - a) While supporting the objective of broader inclusiveness when it comes to language diversity as the BC as business users are very familiar with the challenges of language as a barrier to engagement, however, the BC notes that ICANN should adopt a reasonable and best efforts approach beyond the official languages of the United Nations. As pragmatic business leaders, the BC notes that not even the budgets of the UN organizations support every language in the world; and most working meetings are conducted in English, with translation and interpretation limited to the official UN languages.
  - b) Still, ICANN has a unique accountability related to the IANA functions and also supporting IDN services. Thus, some unique support may be required in fulfilling such functional responsibilities, and may require focused translation of materials.
  - c) The BC acknowledges that each community can do more to address the barrier of language, but only when financial resources or human resources are available. As an example, the BC does

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<sup>1</sup> Comment page at <https://www.icann.org/public-comments/accountability-diversity-2017-10-26-en>

not have human or financial resources to translate all website/policy submissions or to conduct its meetings with interpretation, or translate all other materials into all of the six UN official languages. So the BC takes a targeted approach to support engagement, and translates its outreach materials into languages most relevant to the ICANN meeting, and when conducting outreach activities, into the most prevalent language relevant to said event, often using ICANN support, but also using volunteer resources from members. As appropriate, and as resources have allowed, the BC has also translated into the local language, while recognizing that the working language of ICANN, as with the UN organizations, is English. Having said that, the BC supports ICANN efforts to translate into the six UN languages, and where specific issues indicate a requirement, e.g. the IANA functions additional translations.

- d) Both translation and interpretation are needed, and present significant cost implications for ICANN. Thus the BC suggests that this recommendation be tempered with respect for what is practical, and what is essential for fulfilling ICANN's core mission and activities.

**4) Comment about data gathering of participation and representation in ICANN meetings:** The BC suggests that much more can be done to gather and publish information about participation and representation at ICANN meetings, but also in online participation.

- a) the IGF, for instance, asks for affiliation by stakeholder group, and publishes such data. ICANN could establish a clearer definition of which stakeholder group an individual is most affiliated with for use in registration for ICANN meetings; statistics can also be inclusive of gender; language preference/language fluency; age, geo location, etc. ICANN could also update the Statement of Interest process to gather such statistics, which will provide an ongoing sample of participation in community work activities, above and beyond the membership data that can be gathered by the Constituency/SO/AC.
- b) statistics could also be gathered from remote participants in the official ICANN meetings to identify the "footprint" of ICANN beyond those who are attending in person. This could be a part of registering for remote participation/carefully distinguishing between those who are using online resources while on site. Such statistics will be helpful to ICANN to also understand its engagement with remote participants, but if inclusive of stakeholder interest group, will help the relevant SG/Community group.

**5) comment regarding diversity of business entities**

It is the belief of the BC that businesses of all sizes and specialties are affected by ICANN's policies and the consequences that those carry for their online presence. In this sense, we would like to reinforce the idea that not only is it important to have diversity of stakeholders, but also to find a broader diversity within those groups. As far as commercial users are concerned, the involvement of large corporations along with SMEs and class entities is vital to gather a variety of views that comes close to reflecting a shared set of values that can be called both global and beneficial to as many businesses as possible. It is our desire to continue increasing collaboration with the ICANN organization to reach a broad variety of actors, and to always become more representative of the many ventures we speak for.

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This comment was drafted by Marilyn Cade, Jimson Olufuye, Mark Datysgeld, and Tola Sogbesan.

It was approved in accord with the BC charter.