GAC: Brief on Universal Acceptance Strategies

Universal Acceptance

Session Agenda

* Welcome by GAC - Nicolas Caballero - 5 mins

* Universal Acceptance (UA) and why it is important – Sarmad Hussain and Elizabeth Oluoch, ICANN – 15 mins

* How UA Steering Group (UASG) is addressing the UA challenges – Anil Jain, Chair of UASG – 15 mins

* UA efforts by ccNSO – Abdelmonem Galila and Regina Fuchsova, Co-Chairs UA Committee, ccNSO – 10 mins

* GAC discussion on UA and next steps - Nicolas Caballero - 15 mins

Universal Acceptance (UA) and why it is important

Sarmad Hussain and Elizabeth Oluoch

ICANN

Universal Acceptance
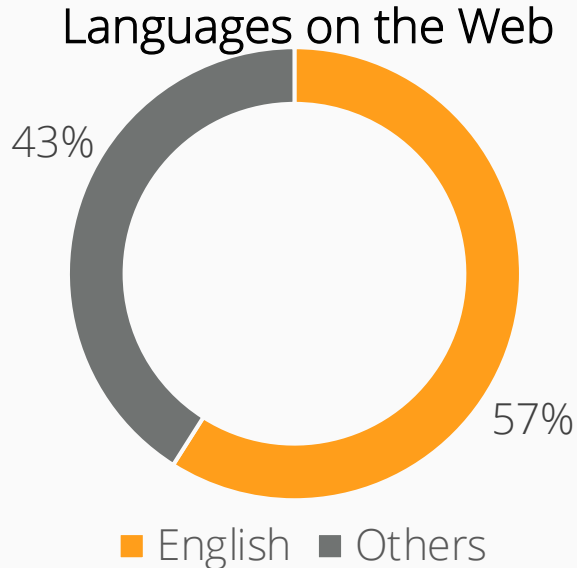
Digital Inclusion, A Long Standing Commitment

United Nations sponsored the World Summit on Information Society (WSIS) for **Building the Information Society, A Global Challenge in the New Millennium.**

The following Principles were affirmed by the global community during WSIS at the Geneva Summit 2003:

* We, the representatives of the peoples of the world, assembled for the first phase of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), declare our common desire and commitment to:
    * Build a people-centered, inclusive and development-oriented Information Society,
    * Where everyone can create, access, utilize and share information and knowledge,
    * Enabling individuals, communities and peoples to achieve their full potential in promoting their sustainable development and improving quality of life.

We Live in a Multilingual World!

Globally, language usage is diverse. English comes third in terms of native speakers around the world, after Mandarin and Spanish. English represents 57% of the total written content online and the percentage is decreasing.

Languages on the Web

43%

57%

■ English ■ Others

Language	Native Speakers
Mandarin	1300 million
Spanish	475 million
English	373 million
Arabic	362 million
Hindi	344 million
Bengali	234 million
Portuguese	232 million
Russian	154 million
Japanese	125 million

Source:
https://w3techs.com/technologies/history_overview/content_lang
uage.

Source: https://www.babbel.com/en/magazine/the-10-
most-spoken-languages-in-the-world

Multilingualism, A Key To Digital Inclusion

* A linguistically diverse Internet significantly contributes toward a knowledge-based society by bridging the digital divide

* Therefore, linguistic diversity online was a key principle in <u>WSIS Geneva Declaration</u> in 2003, leading to a commitment "towards multilingualization of the Internet" in the <u>WSIS Tunis Agenda</u> in 2005. This included a specific ask for the following:
  * Advance the introduction of multilingualism in domain names and email addresses by implementing programs and strengthening cooperation for their global deployment

Multilingualism, A Key To Digital Inclusion

* UNESCO, in its [multilingualism and universal access to cyberspace](#) 2003 recommendations, asked to alleviate language barriers on the Internet by access to content, capacity-building, national policies, and collaborative research and development on and local adaptation of technology with extensive multilingual capabilities.
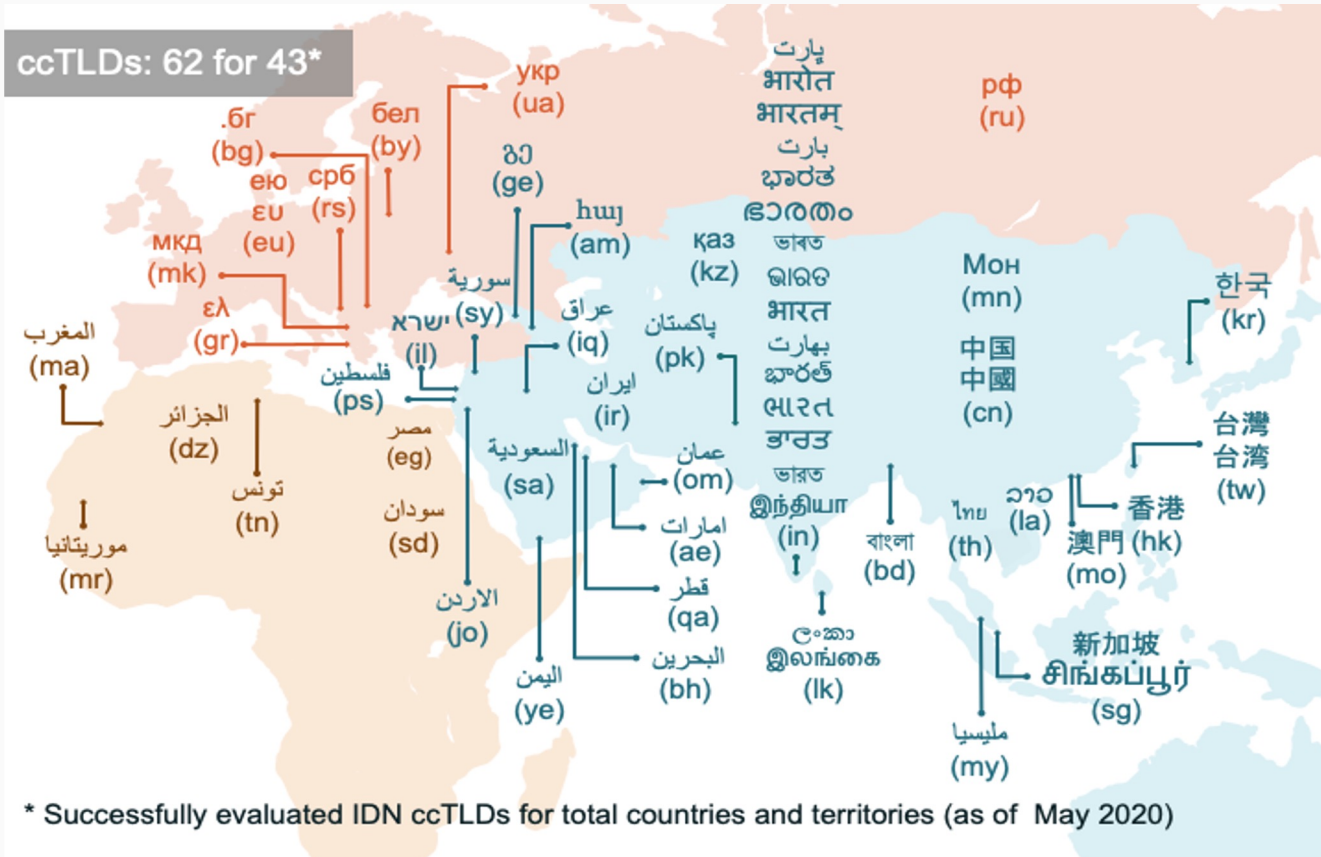

Source:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_writing_systems.

IDN Country Code Top-Level Domains (ccTLDs)

ccTLDs: 62 for 43*

* Successfully evaluated IDN ccTLDs for total countries and territories (as of May 2020)

IDN Generic TLDs (gTLDs)

90 IDN gTLDs are delegated.

Examples of IDNs

1. hամընդհանուր-ընկալում-թեստ.հայ — Armenian
2. ୟୁନିଭରସାଲ-ଏକସେପ୍ତ-ଟେଷ୍ଟ.ଭାରତ — Oriya
3. უნივერსალური-თავსობადობის-ტესტი.გე — Georgian
4. 다국어도메인이용환경테스트.한국 — Korean
5. സാർവത്രിക-സ്വീകാര്യതാ-പരിശോധന.ഭാരതം — Malayalam
6. تجربة-القبول-الشامل.موريتانيا — Arabic

Examples of Internationalized Email Addresses

1. Էլփոստ-թեստ@համընդհանուր-ընկալում-թեստ.հայ   Armenian

2. 电子邮件测试@普遍适用测试.我爱你   Chinese

3. ईमेल-परीक्षण@सार्वभौमिक-स्वीकृति-परीक्षण.संगठन   Devanagari

4. تجربة-بريد-الكتروني@تجربة-القبول-الشامل.موريتانيا   Arabic

5. ηλεκτρονικό-μήνυμα-δοκιμή@καθολική-αποδοχή-δοκιμή.ευ   Greek

6. மின்னஞ்சல்-சோதனை@பொது-ஏற்பு-சோதனை.சிங்கப்பூர்   Tamil

Multilingualism Online, A Continued Challenge

* Due to the need for multilingual Internet and the continued gaps in the technology (among other factors), WSIS+10 Outcome Documents noted the continued need for supporting multilingualism on the Internet

* As part of the priority areas to be addressed in the implementation of WSIS Beyond 2015, the report specifically asks for:
  * Working towards multilingualization of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs,) including email and native capability for international domain names (IDN), so that all members of the community are able to participate in online life
  * Supporting and encouraging stakeholders, in their respective roles and responsibilities, to work together for technical evolution of the ICTs with a vision of a linguistically diverse digital world

Universal Acceptance of Domain Names and Email Addresses

Goal

All valid domain names and email addresses work in all software applications.

Impact

Promote consumer choice, improve competition, and provide broader access to end users.

A Call to Action

* International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Plenipotentiary [Resolution 133 (Revision Bucharest 2022)](#) focuses on the Role of administrations of Member States in the management of internationalized (multilingual) domain names:
  * Emphasizes
    * IDNs contribute to sustainable development through the promotion of greater Internet accessibility and use in local languages.
    * The need to continue to implement technical solutions to enhance the implementation of IDNs.
  * Recognizes
    * The role played by governments, technical communities and other stakeholders in advancing multilingualism, including the introduction of internationalized domain names.
    * The importance of community engagement and information-sharing to get a better understanding of existing challenges and to support solutions, particularly in developing countries.

A Call to Action

* International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Plenipotentiary <u>Resolution 133 (Revision Bucharest 2022)</u> focuses on the Role of administrations of Member States in the management of internationalized (multilingual) domain names:

  * Invites Member States and Sector Members

    * To consider how to further promote the adoption of Universal Acceptance in respect of IDNs and to collaborate and coordinate with relevant organizations and stakeholders in enabling the use of IDNs in the Internet

How UASG is addressing UA challenges

* UA challenges and achievements
* UASG 5-Year Plan
* Governments' Roles in UA
* Collaboration on UA Day Events

Discussion on collaboration moving forward

Challenges

1 Lack of Universal Acceptance

Many Internet applications, systems, and devices still do not fully support Internationalized Domain Names (IDNs), new generic top-level domains (gTLDs) and email addresses on them. This leads to exclusion and frustration for users whose online identities are not represented in Latin characters.

2 Reduced Accessibility and Innovation

Failure to achieve Universal Acceptance hampers innovation and limits accessibility to the internet for millions of users worldwide, particularly in regions with non-Latin scripts.

3 Economic Impact

Businesses, governments, and organizations with IDNs and New gTLDs challenges in reaching their target audiences, affecting economic growth and global inclusivity.

Challenges

IDN TLDs allow for multilingual domain names and email addresses for communities to register and use, allowing for more digital inclusion.

But, there are issues in their acceptance, e.g., a valid email is rejected by a form on a website and is incorrectly displayed from left-to-right instead of right-to-left:

Achievements

1 **Awareness and Education**

Conducted awareness campaigns, such as UA Day, and workshops to educate developers, businesses, and policymakers about the importance of Universal Acceptance. Developed resources, best practices, and guidelines for implementing Universal Acceptance.

2 **Technical Improvements**

Reached out to software providers to improve support for non-Latin scripts and new gTLDs. Encouraged the development of plugins, libraries, and APIs to facilitate Universal Acceptance.

3 **Policy Advocacy**

Engaged with ICANN, IETF, and other key stakeholders to advocate for policies that promote Universal Acceptance. Influenced domain registries and registrars to offer services that facilitate Universal Acceptance.

UASG Five-Year Strategic Plan FY25-29

* Move from focus on UA awareness towards "UA Adoption".

* UASG to focus on (1) governments on the demand side, for updating their procurement policies; (2) big tech companies / open source communities on supply side, for supporting UA in their tools and applications; (3) DNS industry and service providers (TLD registries, registrars, ISPs, hosting providers, etc.)

* UA Adoption targets:
    * Applications (websites, etc.):
        * 50% support for EAI;
        * 99% ASCII email using short and long ASCII TLDs.
    * Email servers:
        * 50% support Level 2 or Gold level;
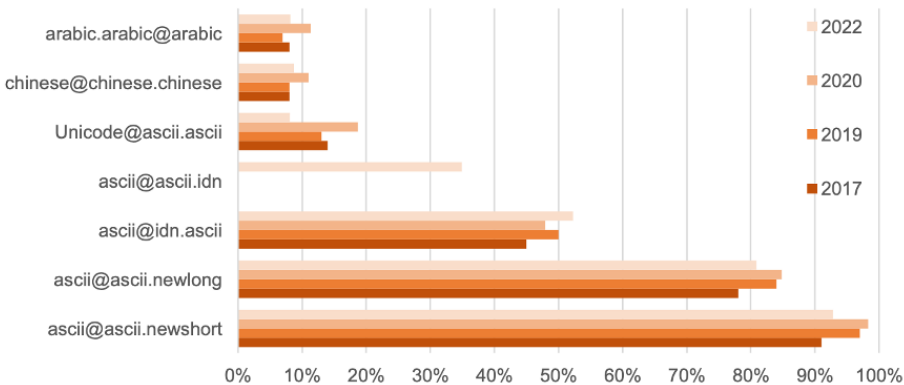   * 90% support Level 1 or Silver level.

Progress of UA-Readiness of Applications

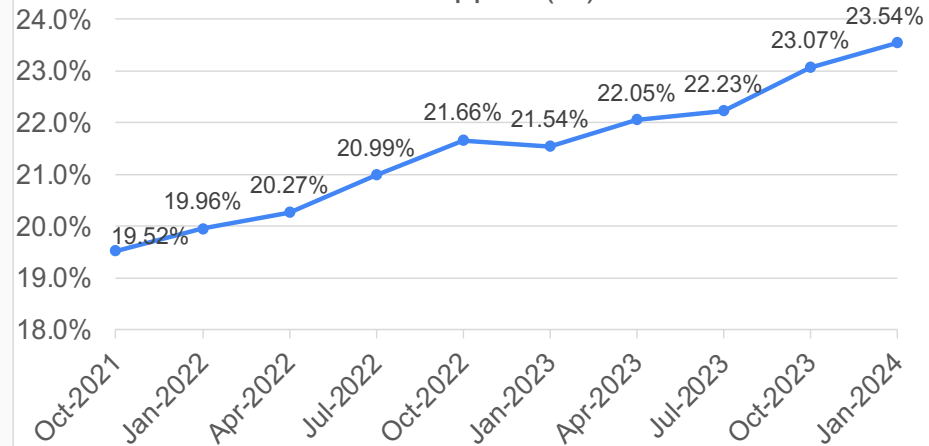UASG has been measuring two global metrics for gauging the UA-readiness of applications.

The acceptance rates of emails created with new, longer or local language top-level domains in software applications and services.

The number of email servers listed in gTLD zone files which support internationalized email addresses.

EAI Acceptance Rate: 2017 to 2022

Legend: 2022, 2020, 2019, 2017

Categories: arabic.arabic@arabic, chinese@chinese.chinese, Unicode@ascii.ascii, ascii@ascii.idn, ascii@idn.ascii, ascii@ascii.newlong, ascii@ascii.newshort

EAI Support (%)

- Oct-2021: 19.52%
- Jan-2022: 19.96%
- Apr-2022: 20.27%
- Jul-2022: 20.99%
- Oct-2022: 21.66%
- Jan-2023: 21.54%
- Apr-2023: 22.05%
- Jul-2023: 22.23%
- Oct-2023: 23.07%
- Jan-2024: 23.54%

UASG 5-year Action Plan – In Summary

Working Groups	Main Directions and Tasks
Measurement	Develop UA Curriculum and integrate it to more courses. Focus on business involvement and work on supply and demand side. Improvement in UASG's effectiveness and structure.
Technology	Remediation through code fragments to support UA, and developing training materials incorporating these codes. Developing a UA self-certification guide for websites. Collaborate with strategic stakeholders on technical issues. Study IDN Variant TLDs' impact.
EAI	Develop a comprehensive EAI self certification program with automated tests and score generator. Encourage certification amongst producers and customers. Publish a registry of vetted certification scores. Engage with market share leaders and technical community.
Communications	Generating and updating the UA promotional materials at all Comms channels per stakeholder and in multiple languages. Partner with local journalists and professional PR for marketing campaigns to promote the economic benefits of UA.

What Is the Role of the Government

Being UA-ready can assist governments and policymakers in reaching their citizens. Government could do the following:

* Evaluate the possibility of including <u>UA requirements</u> in government procurements
* Reach out to government departments involved in e-government services for citizens and ask them to incorporate UA practices to provide digital inclusivity
* Coordinate with your national ccTLD managers and ICANN Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC) delegates to participate in and strengthen UA-related actions

Recent UA Reports

FY23 UA Readiness Report highlights

- ☑ Documentation of current gaps in technology.

- ☑ UA-readiness of tested identity platforms, web hosting tools, websites, and more.

- ☑ Remediation activities undertaken, including the free code samples to support UA.

The UA Activities Report highlights:

- ☑ Outreach and engagement activities by ICANN and UASG, particularly by UA Local Initiatives and UA Ambassadors.

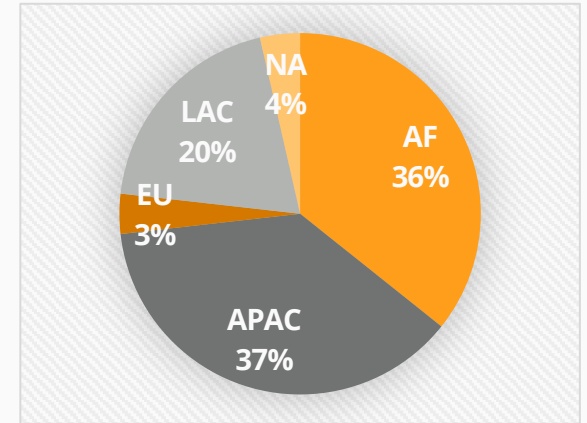- ☑ Technical training materials on programming languages and email configuration.

- ☑ Publications to promote UA adoption.

UA Day 2023 Events

* Of the 89 proposals, over 50 events were shortlisted and held in over 40 countries. Most events were held in March and April 2023.

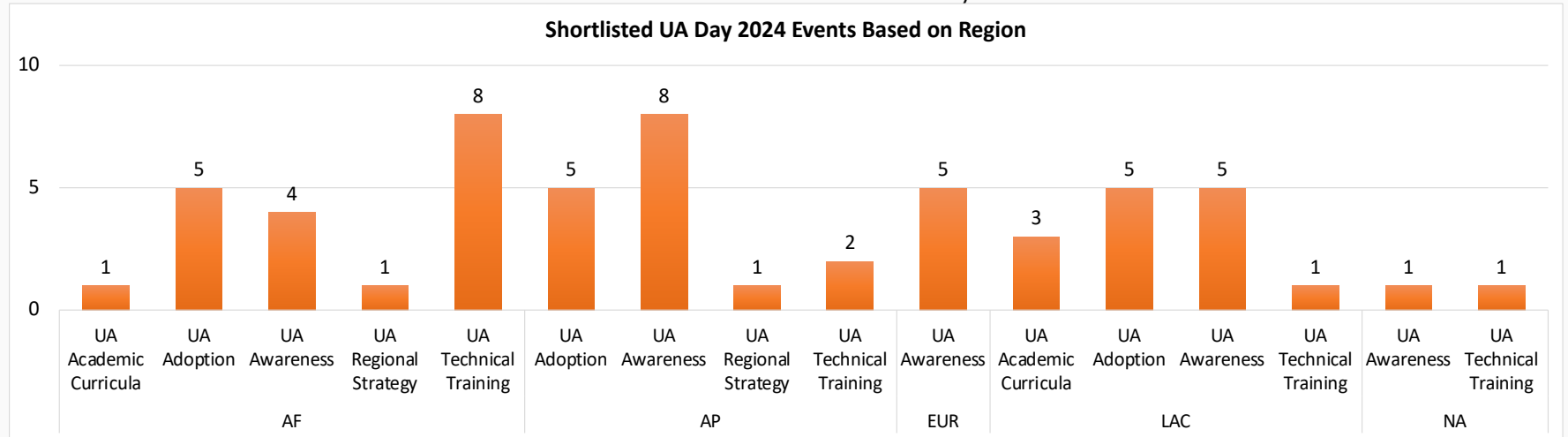| Region	Proposals	Shortlisted
Africa	32	20
Asia Pacific	41	18
Europe	2	2
Latin America and Caribbean	12	9
North America	2	2

* There were over 9,400 participants in 56 UA Day events.

* UA Day events were held in 22 languages, including Arabic, Armenian, Bengali, Cantonese, Chichewa, Chinese, Dutch, English, French, German, Hindi, Myanmar, Nepal, Persian, Portuguese, Russian, Sinhala, Spanish, Swahili, Thai, Turkish, and Urdu.

UA Day 2024

Objectives:

* * Motivate technical and government decision makers for UA adoption.
* * Encourage updates of procurement terms to include UA as a requirement.
* 56 events in more than 50 countries are shortlisted out of 133 proposals.
* Events to be held between 1 March and 30 May 2024.

Shortlisted UA Day 2024 Events Based on Region

Region	Event	Count
AF	UA Academic Curricula	1
AF	UA Adoption	5
AF	UA Awareness	4
AF	UA Regional Strategy	1
AF	UA Technical Training	8
AP	UA Adoption	5
AP	UA Awareness	8
AP	UA Regional Strategy	1
AP	UA Technical Training	2
EUR	UA Awareness	5
LAC	UA Academic Curricula	3
LAC	UA Adoption	5
LAC	UA Awareness	5
LAC	UA Technical Training	1
NA	UA Awareness	1
NA	UA Technical Training	1

UA Day 2024 Keystone Event

Announced the keystone UA Day event to be marked in Belgrade, Serbia on 28 Mar 2024.

Initiated by UA Local Initiative in Commonwealth of Independent States and Eastern Europe (CIS-EE), and RNIDS, .rs .СРБ ccTLD

Further details at:

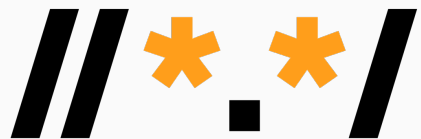* https://uaday.rs/

* https://uaday.rs/?lang=en

* https://UniversalAcceptance.day

Who Can Help Achieve UA?

* **Government Policymakers** - Government officials generating demand for UA-ready products and services by updating accessibility standards and procurement processes
* **Academia** – University programs offering IT-related degree programs
* **Technology Enablers** - Organizations producing relevant standards and best current practices and providers of software programming languages, tools, and frameworks
* **Technology Developers** - Organizations and individuals developing and deploying online applications and services using the programming languages, tools, and frameworks
* Email Software and Service Providers
    * **Email Software Providers** - Organizations and individuals providing different applications, tools, and utilities for the email ecosystem
    * **Email Service Providers** - Organizations and individuals providing services for the email ecosystem
    * **Email (and System) Administrators** - Organizations and individuals deploying and administering email-related software and services

Support from SOs/ACs on UA Day

* ccNSO was actively involved in supporting UASG for shortlisting 133 proposals.

* The ALAC and At-Large community are working with the UASG, RALOs, ALSes and individual members around the world to promote the end users benefits of UA and encourage the adoption of UA at the local and regional levels.

* Can GAC's UA and IDN WG help make a connection with the GAC audience on participating the UA Day events?

Be a Part of UA Day 2024

Universal Acceptance

UA Day
#Internet4All

28 March 2024

Join a UA Day Event Near You!

See the list of UA Day events on UniversalAcceptance.day!

Get Involved!

Follow, share, like, and engage with the UASG on social media.

Use the UASG hashtag in relevant posts: #Internet4All

    X: @UASGTech

    LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/company/uasgtech/

    Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/uasgtech/

Join the UA Discuss email alias: https://uasg.tech/subscribe.

Report a problem if you find an application or webpage that is not UA-ready: https://uasg.tech/global-support-center/.

For more information, visit https://uasg.tech or email info@uasg.tech.

The ccNSO Universal Acceptance Committee (UAC)

Abdalmonem Galila
UAC Chair | .مصر
GAC Egypt Delegate and Member of the GAC's UA and IDN WG

Regina Fuchsová
UAC Vice Chair | .eu, .ею and .ευ

About the ccNSO's UA Committee (UAC)

- **PURPOSE UAC |** To provide a platform for the ccTLD community to interact and exchange information on a global level - among ccTLDs and with other groups under the ICANN umbrella - on issues related to UA and IDN acceptance.

- **WHY ccNSO UAC? |** Established to fill (perceived) gaps in information sharing and act as a point of contact. Complementary to existing efforts at local, regional, and global levels. The ccNSO UAC should avoid overlap and duplicating other efforts.

- **UAC MEMBERSHIP |** Open to representatives from all ccTLDS (IDN & ASCII), irrespective of ccNSO membership.

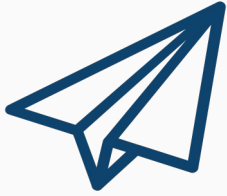- **READ MORE |** https://community.icann.org/x/UIfxDg

ccNSO UAC: Recent Activities

- ⊙ The ccNSO appointed liaison to UASG regularly informs ccNSO Council & UAC about UASG activities

- ⊙ UAC defined its work plan for the year ahead
    - ○ Taking into consideration the UAC scope as defined in its charter, UAC further explored the relevance of the themes for the ccTLD community and ccNSO in general, to better understand how to organise potential work on these themes.
    - ○ Phased approach:
        - • Brainstorming via napkin pitches (completed)
        - • Performing an impact-effort analysis (ongoing)
        - • Setting priorities (ongoing)

ccNSO UAC: Recent Activities

- ⊙ Launch of the UA library
  - ○ **WHAT IS THIS? |** a vetted list of resources on UA, Internationalized Domain Names (IDNs) and Email Address Internationalisation (EAI) for ccTLDs. Includes: link to tools, articles, reports and more.
  - ○ **PURPOSE |** Provide central and open space of relevant information for ccTLDs
  - ○ **HOW? |** UAC subgroup acts as Editorial Board for the UAC library. The Editorial Board reviews incoming requests for inclusion in the library. The group is guided by its Terms of Reference.
  - ○ **READ MORE? |** https://community.icann.org/x/UIAvEQ
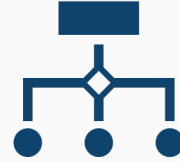
ccNSO UAC: Future Plans

Reaching out to ccTLD managers globally, to increase awareness about UAC and its activities. (E-mail by UAC leadership team)

Finalizing the UAC work plan

Assisting in organizing sessions on UA readiness and practices during ICANN public meetings. (e.g. Tech Day, ccNSO Members Meetings)

Liaising with other relevant ICANN groups (e.g. UASG, GAC IDN WG, Board IDN/UA WG)

Creating an e-mail list for all ccTLDs interested in UA, IDNs and EAI, as a platform for information exchange

Thank you

Abdalmonem Galila
ccNSO UAC Chair | ‎مصر.
GAC Egypt Delegate and Member of the
GAC's UA and IDN WG

Regina Fuchsová
ccNSO UAC Vice Chair | .eu, .ею and .ευ

ICANN | ccNSO
Country Code Names Supporting Organization

ccNSO UAC at ICANN79:
○ **UAC working session**
  Sunday, 3 March (13:15-14:30 local)
○ **Status update to ccTLD community**
  Wednesday, 6 March (13:15-14:30 local)