



# ICANN75 Governmental Advisory Committee Capacity Building Weekend (GAC CBW)

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# ICANN75 GAC Capacity Building Weekend\*

**Venue:** Kuala Lumpur Convention Center, Malaysia

**Dates:** Saturday 17 & Sunday 18 September 2022

## I. Executive Summary

During ICANN75, the Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC) held a productive and informational two-day capacity building event on a selection of topics of interest to the GAC, such as:

- Onboarding basics (e.g. describing the committee, its operations and its place in the multi-stakeholder community)
- Key GAC topics (e.g. subsequent rounds of new gTLDs, DNS Abuse and WHOIS)
- Overview of the Domain Name System (e.g. introduction to ccTLD, gTLD Registries and Registrars' role and responsibilities)

The Capacity Building Weekend provided an opportunity for GAC participants to learn the basics or increase their knowledge on aspects of the ICANN multistakeholder model, its structure, and operations. It was also an opportunity for GAC attendees to become acquainted with different community groups in order to facilitate future dialogue, and to share experiences and best practices to enhance GAC internal collaboration on various ICANN matters. In total, representatives from 50 member governments and 5 observer organizations participated in the event.

In light of the positive feedback received from GAC participants and the whole ICANN Community, the GAC Underserved Regions Working Group (USRWG) is contemplating organizing intersessional capacity building sessions online in the lead up to the next event at ICANN76 and plans for ICANN76 capacity building programming are already being contemplated

All the ICANN75 GAC Capacity Building Weekend session materials can be found on the [GAC ICANN75 Meeting Agenda](#).

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*\*The intent of this report is to provide an overview summary of the Capacity Building Weekend ("CBW") event. This report does not make reference to all resources used and information shared during all the event sessions. Unless otherwise indicated, representations in this document are intended to reflect summaries of presenter remarks and should not be construed as formal GAC positions or views. References to all the CBW recordings, transcripts and materials can be found on the GAC website.*

## **II. Background**

As the GAC emerged from more than two years of virtual meetings at ICANN74, many GAC participants expressed the need for in-person capacity building and information sharing.

Within the past few years, there has been a substantial number of new delegates who now participate in the work of the committee - between ICANN66 (November 2019) and ICANN75, 176 new community delegates joined the GAC.

The main objective for re-commencing in-person capacity building activities was to provide GAC delegates opportunities to learn about issues that are important to them and share experiences and best practices on how to address and manage such issues in the committee.

## **III. Objectives**

The workshop had the following primary objectives:

- Increase stakeholder knowledge on the functioning of ICANN and role of the GAC in ICANN;
- Lower information barriers to participation in the work of ICANN;
- Increase participation of GAC members in the activities of the committee; and
- Enhance community and internal collaboration

## **IV. Workshop process**

The workshop was designed to be “non-technical” in nature, providing high-level overviews of the GAC, other Domain Name System (DNS) stakeholders, and various GAC topics of interest in light of the ICANN75 Meeting. The workshop was divided into eight modules, taking place on Saturday and Sunday of ICANN75. Several speakers and panels across the community and ICANN org expertly discussed their topics, and each module provided opportunities for GAC attendees to ask questions and receive answers directly from the speakers. A post-workshop survey was conducted to determine the effectiveness and efficacy of the Capacity Building Weekend. The results of that survey (see the Appendix to this report [here](#)) offer insights on potential future capacity building efforts by the GAC.

## **V. Summaries of GAC Capacity Building Weekend Sessions**

### **Module 1: What is the GAC and How Does It Work?**

Moderators: Karel Douglas, Tracy Hackshaw

Presenters: Manal Ismail, Nicolas Caballero, Mary Wong (ICANN org)

Session Link: <https://tinyurl.com/bdzeaubr>

Manal Ismail, GAC Chair, welcomed remote and in-person GAC members and observers. She also offered thanks to all those who assisted in contributing to this Capacity

Building event. With more than 170 new GAC representatives, this weekend should be very informative.

Mary Wong, ICANN's Vice President of Strategic Policy Management, provided attendees with a brief introduction to ICANN's multi-stakeholder structure and consensus-based policy. Bottom-up, consensus-driven policy development and advice involving all stakeholders is at the core of ICANN's mission. The ICANN community is made up of three Supporting Organizations ("SOs"; GNSO, ccNSO, & ASO) which develop policy recommendations on topics within their remits, and four Advisory Committees ("ACs"; GAC, ALAC, SSAC, & RSSAC) which provide advisory recommendations. Specifically, the GAC is responsible for advising the ICANN Board and community when policy work introduces or impacts issues of public policy that are of concern to governments. If the ICANN Board decides to adopt an SO's policy recommendation that has consensus among all stakeholders, then it becomes a "Consensus Policy" which is then implemented by ICANN org and becomes binding on all of ICANN's contracted parties.

Nicolas Caballero, GAC representative for Paraguay and future GAC Chair, next provided attendees with an overview of the GAC and how it works. The GAC is made up of 180 government members and 38 Observer organizations. Members and Observers participate in discussions equally, but only Members vote. Across the community, the GAC participates in bilateral meetings, Policy Development Processes (PDPs), Working Groups, and Specific Reviews, as well as the biennial High Level Government Meeting (HLGM).

With the handover of IANA Function Stewardship from the U.S. Government to the global stakeholder community in October 2016, ICANN org is now accountable to the "Empowered Community", in which the GAC is a Decisional Participant. The Empowered Community (EC) is the mechanism through which the community may exercise nine powers to hold ICANN accountable, for example, the power to approve changes to ICANN's fundamental Bylaws or even to remove the entire ICANN Board.

The GAC Leadership team is made up of one Chair and five Vice Chairs, each post being elected by GAC members. The GAC meets face-to-face three times a year in conjunction with ICANN Meetings, producing a Communiqué at the end of each Meeting. The GAC also sets its own Operating Principles, which have only been amended slightly since 2017, and are currently under review by the GAC Operating Principles Evolution Working Group (GOPEWG). GAC Working Groups can be created by the GAC Chair (operating principle 27) and be permanent or temporary depending on the assigned task. Any GAC participant can express interest in joining a Working Group by sending an email to [gac-staff@icann.org](mailto:gac-staff@icann.org). The GAC has also made use of other collaborative structures, such as Focal Groups and Small Groups, when certain issues have particular timing pressures or require specific topic expertise.

At this time, topics of GAC priority include: New gTLD Subsequent Rounds and Procedures, WHOIS and Registration Data Services (RDS), Domain Name System Abuse Mitigation, Intergovernmental Organization (IGO) Rights Protection Mechanisms, and

Internationalized Domain Names (IDNs). Many of these topics will be discussed in further detail throughout the Capacity Building Weekend and ICANN75 Meeting.

## **Module 2: GAC in the Multistakeholder Model (“MSM”) - Community Relationships and Collaboration**

Moderator: Karel Douglas

Presenters: Negar Farzinnia (ICANN org), Giovanni Seppia (ICANN org), Cheryl Langdon-Orr (ALAC), Ian Sheldon (GAC)

Session Link: <https://tinyurl.com/yckhurum>

Giovanni Seppia and Negar Farzinnia from the ICANN Implementation and Operations Team began the session by providing an overview of the ICANN Multistakeholder Model (MSM) evolution project.

The continued evolution of ICANN’s multistakeholder model and the challenges the model faces have been an important priority to the ICANN community. The Enhancing the Effectiveness of ICANN’s MSM Project was initiated in 2019, and over the course of nine months of facilitated dialogue, six webinars, and three public comments, there emerged a total of six “overarching issues” hindering the effectiveness of the multistakeholder model. Three of these issues were prioritized for more immediate implementation, and the community identified over twenty activities/projects to help address them. Some of these initiatives have been fully implemented already, some are in progress, and others have not yet begun.

To make the multistakeholder model most effective, it must be evaluated and adjusted based on the changing needs of the ICANN ecosystem. This necessitates an evaluation methodology that can be applied iteratively or on an as-needed basis. The evaluation methodology has been designed and is currently being applied to four selected projects: Improving Communication between the ICANN org and the community, the Consensus Playbook, the Fellowship Program, and ICANN Learn.

A ten-question poll was then conducted among session attendees on the topic of consensus-based decision making. Similar polls will be conducted with the other ICANN communities and analysis of the consolidated results will be shared in November 2022. A dedicated MSM wiki page will be continually updated, and the list of evaluated projects will also be expanded.

A flip chart was made available in-room for attendees to provide feedback on where they believe enhancements can be made to the effectiveness of the multistakeholder model.

The next part of the session module offered a case study of the interactions between civil society and governments in the country of Australia. Ian Sheldon, GAC representative of Australia, and Cheryl Langdon-Orr of the At-Large Advisory Committee (ALAC), explained the value of forging a productive relationship between civil society and governments. In Australia, two core themes underlie this productive relationship: trust and frequent-open communications.

Cheryl Langdon-Orr shared that Internet Australia and ACCAN (both part of ALAC), along with various industries and everyday Internet users actively engage with the Australian government in the annual Internet governance event, NetThing. Mr. Sheldon shared that the Australian government often engages with Internet Australia & ACCAN for trusted input on behalf of their communities. Other governments were encouraged to engage with similar groups in their respective countries.

The GAC and ALAC have cooperated on several topics of mutual interest, such as past and future dialogues on new generic Top-Level Domains (gTLDs). The speakers shared that the ICANN Consensus Playbook is a very valuable resource within each community, especially when collaborating across different parts of ICANN.

### **Module 3: GAC Representative Roles and Committee Involvement - A Dialogue**

Moderators: Karel Douglas, Tracy Hacksaw

Presenters: Nicolas Caballero, Jorge Cancio, Nigel Hickson

Session Link: <https://tinyurl.com/bdfjrdy7>

During this session GAC representatives shared their expectations and experiences about working effectively in the committee individually and with their colleagues. Representatives had the opportunity to ask each other questions regarding work both within the committee and the broader ICANN community. Several opening questions were introduced to the GAC:

- Outside of the context of the committee, how do governments/representatives collaborate and interact?
- How is ICANN viewed by governments in your country and what can be done to enhance the perception of ICANN in developing countries?
- From your delegation's perspective, consider the ICANN75 key topics for discussion in the GAC this week, which issues do you believe merit particular attention and why?

Tracy Hacksaw, GAC representative for the Universal Postal Union, kicked off the discussion to share his experience with the GAC and remind attendees that an ICANN Meeting is not only a meeting, but also a broader opportunity to understand what is going on in the Internet policy and Internet governance space.

Jorge Cancio, GAC representative for Switzerland, added that efficient and effective participation in ICANN requires participants to be active within the GAC, such as in meetings, plenaries, different working groups and work streams, to understand the issues and have a meaningful influence and voice on those issues. It also requires participants to have meaningful participation beyond the GAC, such as in cross-community working groups with the Generic Names Supporting Organization (GNSO). Especially for newcomers, there is great value in networking and conversing with colleagues within the GAC, as well as in other ICANN communities and ICANN org.

Nigel Hickson, GAC representative for the United Kingdom, addressed the fact that, for many GAC participants, ICANN work is not their only job. To maximize participation in the GAC, participants should try to join meeting calls and intersessional calls as well as read the background to GAC issues and other community issues for a fuller understanding. It is also important to select topics that are of interest, as it is nearly impossible to know and attend everything. He indicated it is worth reading about ICANN and being involved outside of ICANN, such as in the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) or other multistakeholder bodies. Such involvement will enable greater appreciation of Internet governance on a wider scale, and also place ICANN's work in greater context.

To the question of government perceptions about ICANN, several GAC representatives offered their views, noting that sometimes governments prefer to work with decision-making bodies and do not consider ICANN a priority since the GAC is an Advisory Committee. Similarly, it is sometimes difficult to translate ICANN work to governments in a way that is comprehensible and applicable to the government's concerns. However, it is still vital to try and bridge that gap of understanding and clarify for governments what ICANN does and why its work is important.

#### **Module 4: New gTLD Basics - Subsequent Rounds**

Moderator: Karel Douglas

Presenters: Lars Hoffman (ICANN org), Karen Lentz (ICANN org)

Session Link: <https://tinyurl.com/bdcvb9rc>

Karen Lentz, ICANN's Vice President of Policy Research & Stakeholder Programs, presented the background and history of new gTLDs and advised on the current state of affairs regarding the next round of new gTLD applications.

Seven new gTLDs were introduced both in 2000 and 2003. Based on the results of these rounds, the GNSO conducted a Policy Development Process (PDP) from 2005-2007 to consider the introduction of new gTLDs. In 2011, the GNSO's final recommendations resulted in the ICANN Board adopting the "Applicant Guidebook" and authorizing the launch of the New gTLD Program. Among other goals, the program aimed to enhance innovation, competition, and consumer choice in the domain namespace. A total of 1,930 applications were submitted during the 2012 application period.

Some notable aspects of the New gTLD Program included the creation of an Applicant Support Program (designed to increase underserved regions' access to new gTLD applications), the Community Priority Evaluation (CPE) process, allowance for GAC Advice & Early Warnings on potentially sensitive or problematic new gTLDs applications, and the creation of Public Interest Commitments (PICs) between ICANN and Registry Operators to help implement various GAC advice related to public policy issues. In April 2013, the GAC issued its first Advice on new gTLD applications in its Beijing Communiqué.



From 2015 to 2021, a PDP for New gTLD Subsequent Procedures (“SubPro”) was conducted with wide community input to identify changes to the 2007 GNSO policy recommendations and their implementation. The Final Report was published and sent to the ICANN Board, which then requested ICANN org to undertake a SubPro Operational Design Phase (ODP) to provide the Board with additional analysis to inform its decision. This ODP work is ongoing, and the resulting Operational Design Assessment (ODA) Final Report is planned for December 2022. Ms. Lentz said there is clear value in having another round of new gTLDs, as it will help to build the multilingual Internet in different scripts and multiple business models, and further open the namespace for innovation and opportunities.

Lars Hoffman, ICANN’s Senior Director of Policy Research & Stakeholder Programs, continued the presentation with an overview of various topics of interest to the GAC, which are also part of the SubPro ODP work. These topics include: Predictability, Registry Voluntary Commitments (RVCs)/Public Interest Commitments (PICs), Applicant Support, Closed Generics, Name Collisions, Consensus Advice & Early Warnings, Community Applications, and Auctions. Once the work conducted in the ODP is complete, and if the Board approves the ODA Final Report, then ICANN org will begin operationalizing the revised Applicant Guidebook and upon completion, commence opening the next round of new gTLDs.

## **Module 5: Key GAC Topics - Priority Interests for Governments**

Moderators: Karel Douglas, Tracy Hackshaw

Presenters: Carlos Reyes (ICANN org), Jorge Cancio, Gabriel Andrews, Laureen Kapin

Session Link: <https://tinyurl.com/yc69smea>

Karel Douglas, GAC representative for Trinidad and Tobago, began the session by acknowledging that the GAC has expanded its involvement in ICANN policy development matters beyond simply providing advice to the Board. For example, many GAC members join cross-community working groups supporting PDP work of the GNSO. In this session, attendees examined the GNSO Policy Development Process and learned about the fundamental government interests in a number of priority areas, specifically new gTLDs, registration data directory services, and DNS abuse.

Carlos Reyes, ICANN’s Director of Policy and Strategy, provided GAC attendees with a high-level overview of the steps of GNSO’s Policy Development Process (PDP). While the GNSO Council ultimately determines how its working groups are structured, various membership models are employed in different PDP scenarios, some of which allow liaisons from outside the GNSO. The baseline for a PDP working group is to be open and inclusive of different participant backgrounds and perspectives.

Jorge Cancio, GAC representative for Switzerland, described the reasons why subsequent rounds of new gTLDs are important to governments and the GAC. For example, Top Level Domains (TLDs) can serve as an element for developing a country or region’s economy and society (business development as the Internet economy grows, taxation, communications, government services, etc.). In addition, TLDs are closely linked to the



promotion and protection of intellectual property, and can also have substantial geographic connections and public safety implications. To date, the GAC has been closely involved in every step of the SubPro PDP process. Since the outcome of the current SubPro ODP will be the basis for policy/rules governing the next phase of gTLD expansion, the next round of new gTLDs is a fundamental and high priority for the GAC.

Although the ODP will not conclude until later this year, in the meantime there are multiple opportunities for the GAC to participate in these important issues:

- Engage in potential GAC Advice regarding SubPro recommendations (while the GAC Communiqué is the primary vehicle for GAC advice, circumstances between ICANN75 and ICANN76 may present the opportunity for further advice or input from the GAC)
- Engage in the GNSO Guidance Process (GGP) on Applicant Support (in roles of GAC appointee or observer to the effort)
- Engage in the upcoming GAC/GNSO facilitated dialogue on Closed Generics (as reports and information are provided by current GAC designees)
- Engage with national/regional communities to identify potential interest for applying for new gTLDs in the next round. As demonstrated by previous new gTLD round experiences, outreach, notice and awareness to local and regional businesses communities are critical as early as possible.

Gabriel Andrews, member of the GAC Public Safety Working Group (PSWG) next presented an introduction to the topics of DNS Abuse and WHOIS. He began by reiterating that DNS Abuse is often difficult to define, and precise definitions vary depending on who you ask. However, ICANN's Domain Abuse Activity Reporting (DAAR) which "identifies and tracks domain names identified as threats to the security of the domain name ecosystem, known as DNS Abuse" is an increasingly helpful tool in measuring abuse. He also noted that DNS Abuse is addressable by ICANN Policy (Section 1, Article 1.1) within limits. Further, the GAC is an important venue for all governments to further discuss DNS Abuse and work toward solutions both within and outside ICANN.

Mr. Andrews went on to describe another topic of GAC interest, which is WHOIS. He provided a historic overview of WHOIS from its "humble beginnings" on physical paper to its now global usage. The collection and publishing of domain name registration data in WHOIS lookups by gTLD registrars and registry operators has helped promote transparency and accountability, being particularly useful to law enforcement agencies worldwide. However, recent privacy laws such as the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) have greatly impacted WHOIS and its display of personal information. Mr. Andrews shared that, today, most domain name registration data is redacted for privacy or masked by privacy or proxy services, rather than being publicly displayed and easily accessible.

According to Mr. Andrews, efforts to develop a GDPR-compliant WHOIS system have been the focus of a multiyear Expedited Policy Development Process (EPDP). This EPDP was made to design a System for Standardized Access/Disclosure, now renamed the "WHOIS

Disclosure System”, the outcome of which is still uncertain. There is ongoing discussion of the estimated costs of the system and its anticipated value, and whether or not it will meet the needs of its intended users, including law enforcement, cybersecurity practitioners, and many others. Discussions also continue regarding the accuracy of registrant information and to what degree it has to be verified, which may further impact the reliability of domain registration data and how useful it is to those requesting it, when/if they are granted access. A new technical protocol, known as the Registration Data Access Protocol (RDAP) has already been established and is set to eventually replace the older WHOIS technical protocols.

## **Module 6: Domain Name System (DNS) Roles and Responsibilities - Country Code Managers and Generic Name Relationships with Governments**

Moderators: Karel Douglas, Tracy Hackshaw

Presenters: Jia Rong Low (ICANN org), Chris Disspain, Bruce Tonkin, Edmon Chung, Ram Mohan, Roelof Meijer

Session Link: <https://tinyurl.com/5n6u6h9r>

During this session, GAC attendees heard from community stakeholders responsible for managing various aspects of the Domain Name System (DNS), including operators of country code and generic name registries. This panel of ccTLD & gTLD registries shared their experiences, business practices, and how they manage their industry relationships and their interactions with governments on a wide range of topics.

The first speaker was Jia Rong Low, ICANN’s Vice President of Stakeholder Engagement & Managing Director of the Asia Pacific region, who provided an introduction to the DNS and how it works. He explained the steps that each DNS query takes, and the parties involved, such as root zone managers, root server operators, Internet Service Providers (ISPs), and TLD registries. He explained that it is important to have a holistic view when making policy or considering regulations that may impact the DNS.

Chris Disspain, former ICANN Board Member and former Chair of the ccNSO (now with Identity Digital), introduced the panel: Bruce Tonkin (former ICANN Board Member), Edmon Chung (current ICANN Board Member, .ASIA, .KIDS), Ram Mohan (former ICANN Board/SSAC liaison and now with Identity Digital), and Roelof Meijer (.NL) to talk about ccTLD and gTLD registries and their interface with governments. Bruce Tonkin began by explaining the role of registries in the DNS and the differences between country-code TLD registries and generic TLD registries. Fundamentally, he said, ccTLD registry policies are determined within their respective countries, under local laws, in conjunction with their local Internet community and local government, whereas gTLD registry policies are primarily determined by the work of the GNSO within ICANN.

Mr. Tonkin explained that, unlike ccTLD registries which typically only operate under one government’s laws, gTLD registries must comply with the laws of the respective country where they are based, in addition to their governing contracts with ICANN and ICANN-accredited registrars. The unique relationships ccTLDs and gTLDs have to governments also extends to

law enforcement. For gTLDs, there is some common ground found in the policies set by the GNSO. Typically, requests from any law enforcement are received, and the gTLD registry advises them of their policy to see what action the registry can take or who may be in better jurisdiction to deal with the potential abuse, such as the relevant registrar. For ccTLDs, requests coming from law enforcement within the governing country are typically easier to assist with, whereas requests from outside law enforcement, while still considered, can be more difficult to handle and are sometimes referred to the law enforcement body of the ccTLD registry's governing country.

## **Module 7: Domain Name System Roles and Responsibilities - GNSO Registries**

Moderator: Karel Douglas

Presenters: Samantha Demetriou, Beth Bacon, Alan Wood, Karen Day, Nacho Amadoz, Benjamin Louis

Session Link: <https://tinyurl.com/4j8pt5mh>

During this session, representatives from geoTLD registry operators and the GNSO Registries Stakeholder Group (RySG) explained the registry's role in the domain name registration process and how they fit into the ICANN community. The panel consisted of Samantha Demetriou (Verisign/RySG Chair), Beth Bacon (PIR/RySG Vice Chair Policy), Alan Wood (RySG Vice Chair Administration), Karen Day (RySG Treasurer), Nacho Amadoz (geoTLD Group/.CAT), and Benjamin Louis (geoTLD Group/.ALSACE).

Panelists explained that the RySG represents the interests of gTLD registry operators in the multistakeholder community. All RySG members (currently 82, representing over 600 gTLDs) must have a signed Registry Agreement with ICANN. A gTLD registry operates the authoritative database of all domain names registered in a particular gTLD. The registration of a gTLD domain name involves multiple actors, including the registrant (domain holder), potentially a domain reseller (third party provider), the registrar (which registers the domain name), and the registry operator at the top-level (which manages the database/records).

Under their Registry Agreements (RA) with ICANN, all gTLD registries agree to abide by existing and future consensus policies. Compliance with the RA is enforced by ICANN Compliance. The RySG is dedicated to working within the community, such as by joining PDPs, evaluating contracts, and helping move the multi-stakeholder model work forward.

The RySG panelists acknowledged the important role of registries in the mitigation of DNS Abuse, but clarified that it cannot alone be seen as a solution to all Internet abuse. The registry's role must be appropriate to the abuse identified and the response must be tempered to consider the broader consequences of its actions. Direct action from a registry typically involves the interruption of the domain name's functionality; it does not delete, remove, or change website content. Registry operators ordinarily escalate abuse reports to their registrar partners for investigation of allegations with their customers, but registries can take direct action where appropriate.

Nacho Amadoz presented on behalf of the geoTLD.group, which is a member of the RySG that represents the interests of geographic TLDs representing a city, region, language or culture (.e.g .CAT, .ALSACE, .AFRICA, .TOKYO, etc.). He explained there are 69 geoTLDs currently delegated, each characterized by their proximity to the communities they serve. A typical geoTLD is operated on behalf of the local government (by contract or formal assignment) or with the explicit support of the local government. Like other gTLDs, geoTLD registries are required by their RA to monitor for DNS abuse, and several geoTLD registries also have additional obligations or agreements with their local government, however, reported abuse cases in geoTLD names remain relatively low (< 0.01% of total number of registered names). The next round of new gTLDs will present many opportunities for those interested in new geoTLDs.

## **Module 8: DNS Roles and Responsibilities - GNSO Registrars**

Moderator: Tracy Hackshaw

Presenters: Ashley Heineman, James Bladel, Owen Smigelski

Session Link: <https://tinyurl.com/mrxjxd4f>

During this session, speakers Ashley Heinemen (RrSG Chair), James Bladel (GoDaddy), and Owen Smigelski (NameCheap) presented on the current state of the registrar/domain name industry, and identified their current priority issues and views on topics of mutual interest for registrars and governments in ICANN.

The Registrars Stakeholder Group (RrSG) participates in the ICANN policy-making process as part of the GNSO and serves as the main representative body of ICANN accredited registrars within the multistakeholder community. Within the RrSG, the RrSG Policy Sub Team represents the diverse interests of the RrSG, and is deeply involved in ICANN policy issues that impact both registrars and domain holders. Consensus building occurs within the RrSG Sub Team, who then report their comments to the full RrSG.

In the domain name industry, registrars are the entities contracted with ICANN to manage domain names on behalf of registrants (domain holders). Registrars may choose to offer domain names ending in any gTLD, and operate under a variety of business models (retail, wholesale, corporate, aftermarket, etc.). Registrars enforce ICANN Contracts, including Consensus Policies and Temporary Specifications, and are accountable to ICANN Compliance.

According to the panelists, the RrSG has noticed several trends in the domain name industry, such as growth in aftermarket domains and slowing of new domain registrations. There also appears to be a growing commoditization of domain names and consolidation of domain name sellers. James Bladel also noted that there is increasing complexity in registrars' technical obligations and Service Level Agreements (SLAs), as well as financial challenges with ICANN accreditation fees payable only in USD. With the margins of smaller registrars shrinking, he explained that those interested in selling domains are now choosing to become resellers of an established registrar, rather than becoming new ICANN-accredited registrars. Today, there are fewer registrars from Africa and Latin America/Caribbean compared to other regions. Potential

solutions that were mentioned to address this disparity included translation of all ICANN agreements and applications, and training for prospective registrars on RAA contract requirements.

In addition to barriers to entry and regional representation, another industry challenge is balancing registrant privacy concerns with transparency and accountability. According to panelists, the legal implications associated with the recent General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and privacy protection is one such example where local laws can diverge from ICANN policy. Registrars are also facing difficulties mitigating reports of DNS Abuse, where the subject of abuse pertains to the content of the website and should therefore be addressed to the relevant hosting company or operator of the website. The RrSG recommends usage of a new lookup tool, Acidtool.com, to help identify the appropriate party to report abuse concerning a particular domain name.

## **VI. Achievements/Outcomes**

Overall, survey respondents were satisfied (22%) or very satisfied (78%) with the event. Based on the responses to the post evaluation survey, the Capacity Building Weekend achieved the following:

- Increased comprehension of the role of ICANN and the GAC
- Increased awareness of government activities in the ICANN ecosystem
- Increased knowledge of ICANN's policy development process (PDP)
- Increased awareness of the GAC's working methods, consensus development, relation to other constituencies, and current policy issues being considered by the GAC
- Lowered barriers for GAC internal dialogue and experience sharing

## **VII. Conclusion/Recommendations from GAC workshop participants**

The Capacity Building Weekend was widely recognized by attendees and observers as being valuable and informative. According to the feedback received at ICANN75 and the post workshop survey, further Capacity Building Weekends should be conducted at least once per year. Future sessions should include more technical aspects on topics such as GDPR, regional Internet issues, cybersecurity, and alternative DNS roots, while also using tangible examples and case studies for more in-depth experiences. Regarding social gatherings, participants recommended having more opportunities to socialize with their colleagues outside of the meeting sessions.

## **VIII. Next Steps for GAC Capacity Building and Onboarding Events**

Based on the positive feedback received from the successful ICANN75 CBW, and in light of the suggestions made by GAC participants, it is envisaged that a framework for hosting future capacity building and onboarding events at ICANN Public Meetings be put in place following the general framework below:

- **ICANN Community Forum** (6-day meetings – Saturday to Thursday): Focus on the region where the ICANN Meeting is being held and tailor the agenda according to regional participants' needs, e.g ICANN76 Cancun – Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC).
  - Timeframe: 1<sup>st</sup> day of the meeting week (Saturday).
- **ICANN Policy Forum** (4-day meetings – Monday to Thursday): Focus on policy topics of importance to the GAC that will be discussed during the meeting week, and additional topics, if requested by the committee.
  - Timeframe: ½ day event on Day 0 – 1 day prior to the start of the meeting week or Day 1 – on the first official day/morning of the meeting week (to be determined).
- **ICANN Annual General Meeting** (6 days – Saturday to Thursday) : Focus on GAC basics, topics of importance to the GAC at the meeting and potential joint introductory sessions with the ICANN Community.
  - Timeframe: 1 to 2 days depending on identified agenda topics, to be scheduled over the weekend (Saturday/Sunday) prior to the core 4 meeting days.

This recommended framework was submitted by CBW planners to the GAC Leadership for consideration and received positive feedback. The GAC Leadership agreed that the GAC should continue holding such events while taking into account the results of the GAC survey to better guide the organization of future events. As a result, in the lead up to ICANN76, the GAC Underserved Regions Working Group (USRWG), Government Engagement (GE) and Global Stakeholder Engagement (GSE) Teams will collaborate on planning for the next Capacity Building and Outreach event as well as organizing intersessional webinars on topics identified by GAC participants.

## **IX. Thank You and Acknowledgements**

In addition to the organizers, planners, moderators and presenters, the GAC would like to thank the following groups for their collaboration and work on making the ICANN75 GAC CBW a successful event: ICANN GAC Support, Government Engagement (GE), Global Stakeholder Engagement (GSE), Implementation Operations, and Policy Development Support Teams.

## **APPENDIX**

### **GAC Post ICANN75 CBW Survey Report**

#### **Background**

The ICANN75 Capacity Building Workshop (“CBW”) provided an opportunity for GAC participants to learn the basics or increase their knowledge on aspects of the ICANN multistakeholder model, its structure and operations. It was also an opportunity for GAC attendees to become acquainted with different community groups in order to facilitate future dialogue, and share experiences and best practices to enhance GAC internal collaboration on ICANN matters.

After the CBW, on 20 September 2022, a post-event survey was sent to participants and responses were collected until 29 September 2022. A total of 32 participants responded to the survey.

#### **Analysis**

Overall responses regarding the CBW were very positive. This document reflects specific areas of feedback in response to the 12 questions that were part of the survey.

The first four questions in the survey were related to participants’ experience of the CBW. All participants who responded to the survey were either “very satisfied” or “satisfied” with the event. Ninety percent (90%) of participants found the length of the event “just right”. Ninety-five percent (95%) of the respondents were satisfied with the content and materials presented while only one participant responded he was “not satisfied”. However, in the next question, all respondents indicated that the content and materials improved their knowledge and understanding of the topics.

The fifth question of the survey asked whether the knowledge gained from the CBW will be useful in the participants’ GAC or governmental work, to which all respondents answered yes. In the subsequent question (5.a), respondents could explain the reason for their response (e.g: “If “Yes”, would you like to provide more details?”). Twenty-six (26) respondents explained how those sessions will help them in the future. Their answers are available in the “Results” section below.

Question six asked participants what was the most effective part of the CBW. Thirty-one (31) respondents answered the question. Input ranged from the speakers’ interventions, the sessions’ content, planning and level of detail, while also providing input on some specific sessions. All answers are available in the “Results” section below.

The seventh question asked what improvements can be made to the CBW. Participants made suggestions on a wide range of matters such as more interactive sessions with more Questions and Answers (Q&A) time, a more regional focus, additional case studies and deeper content and background. All answers are available in the “Results” section below.



Question eight asked about the frequency of future GAC CBW meetings. The majority of the participants answered that the CBW should happen once per year (71%), while ten percent (10%) of the participants answered that CBW should happen biennially. Additionally, the following suggestions were made by one respondent respectively: twice per year, and, at every ICANN Meeting.

Question nine asked participants about each of the eight modules of the CBW. For each part, respondents indicated that they were satisfied, except for part 2, “GAC in the Multistakeholder Model”, where one participant indicated dissatisfaction.

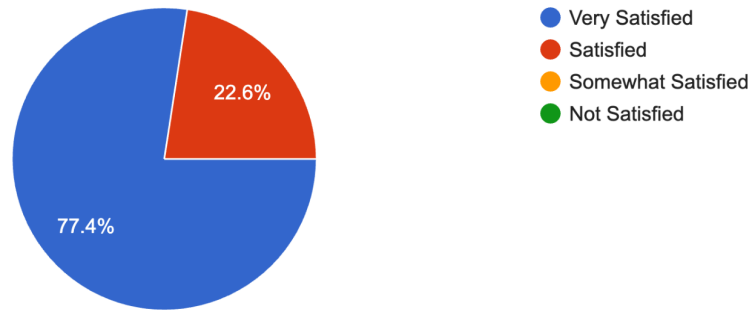
Question ten asked about the topics participants are interested in within the ICANN ecosystem. In a multiple-choice question, respondents favored the topic of “Internet Governance” the most with 74%, followed by “Role of GAC” with 68%, and DNS Abuse with 65%.

The last two questions were asked to learn more about the respondents’ profiles. Among thirty-one (31) respondents, 45% have been participating in GAC activities for between one and five years, 29% from zero to one, 19% for five to ten years, and 7% for more than ten years. It was also asked whether the participants have ever been a member of another Advisory Committee (AC) or a Standing Organization (SO). Four (4) participants indicated that they were members of the Country Code Names Supporting Organization (ccNSO), three for the At-Large Advisory Committee (ALAC) and one for each Address Supporting Organization (ASO) and Generic Names Supporting Organization (GNSO).

## **Results**

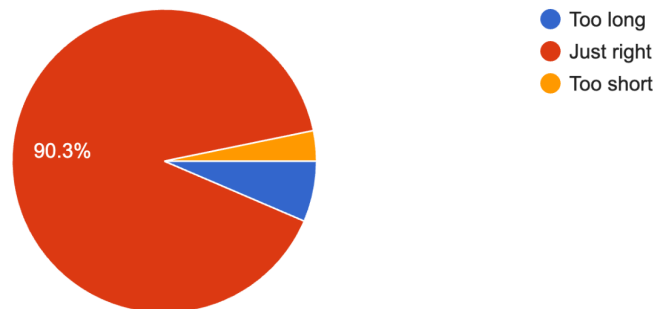
1. Overall, how satisfied were you with the Capacity Building Weekend?

31 responses



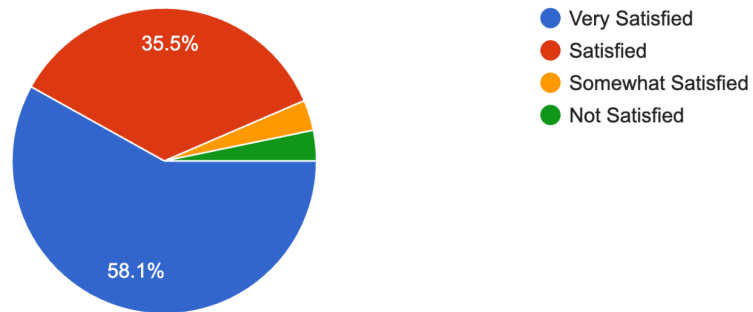
2. The length of the Capacity Building Weekend was:

31 responses



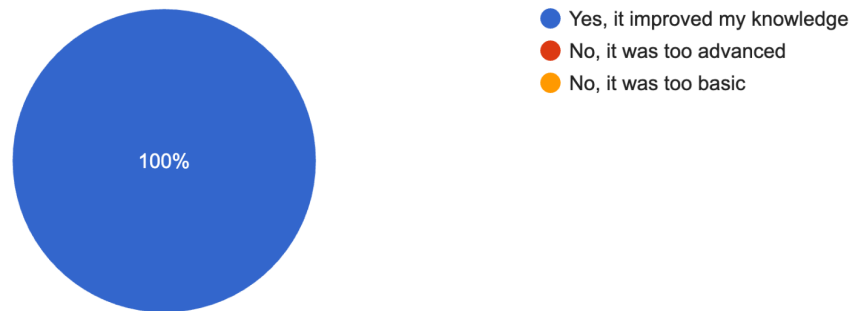
3. Overall, how satisfied were you with the materials and content presented?

31 responses



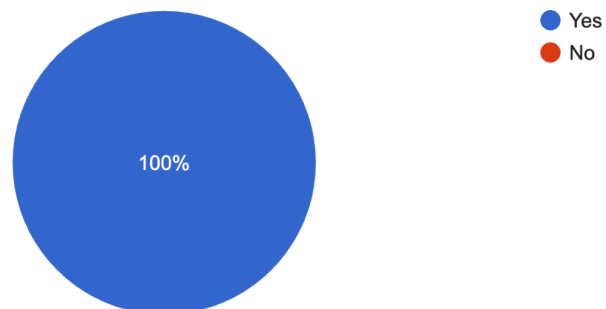
4. Has the presented material improved your knowledge and understanding of topics?

31 responses



5. Do you believe the knowledge you gained from the Capacity Building Weekend will be useful in your GAC or governmental work?

31 responses



5.a. If "Yes", would you like to provide more details?

- Better understanding of internal processes, broadly speaking
- Understanding in-depth the collaboration between the GAC and other communities, and understanding New gTLD, domain name roles and responsibilities even to governments that still have challenges with ccTLD management
- In my capacity of providing better advices and earlier warning in regard to public policies to my Government
- For people who work in government and do public policy, having all this knowledge allows us to connect with ICANN issues.
- As ICT Advisor in the Ministry in charge of the Telecommunication and ICT the knowledge gained will be very useful
- Now I know more about IDN, UA, Whois, Data Protection issues, gtlds and newgtld... etc
- It's improve my knowledge about GAC and multistakeholder process
- It gave better understanding of the ICANN ecosystem: Community, Board and icann.org, their roles and responsibilities.
- It would help us explaining to our government the importance of our implication in ICANN and the different communities of ICANN and to use the multi stakeholder's way in our work and different projects.
- Decision making process is much appreciated.
- all topics in the stage of ICANN were opened and discussed in an executive points>
- I learned more on how the GAC is functioning and its procedures, but also on other ACs and SO's. Some technical presentations are useful to my governmental work too.
- clarify my knowledge on how and when the GAC intervenes in the different issues of importance.
- Most CBW were exactly on topic and useful to understand what the GAC is generally talking about
- In my job
- knowing how Internet Governance and some technicalities, will help me in giving advice to High ranking Government Officers in setting up regulations
- I gained an overview of challenges that merits further GAC work ahead.
- Provided more understanding on technical topics which can be shared with others.
- i think it will be very useful for my further work
- I would like to know more details.
- It has made me understand the various benefits my country can derive and how I can actively participate and contribute to ICANN work in areas such as membership of Working Groups.
- It helps me to better understand the GAC, its functions, and the relevant topics discussed.
- As a newcomer to ICANN and GAC activities, the capacity building weekend provided more background and context to a lot of the issues which improved my understanding. I will go back to my work and see how I can put this in practical terms become a member and get more involved with GAC
- this session was very useful for me : " Domain Name System (DNS) Roles and Responsibilities/ Country Code Managers and Generic Name Operators - Relationships with Governments "
- The knowledge I gained improved my understanding and that will facilitate my work as a policymaker advisor on how we can use our national ccTLD in the DNS industry and using it as a tool of improving and promoting our e-commerce ecosystem

- Session with GNSO stakeholder group (i.e. registries and registrars) are very much informative and helpful. Huge thanks to those who attended the sessions, and it would be desirable if the GAC could organise such session in advance of each coming GAC meetings to keep our knowledge updated. Many thanks again for GAC support staff and panelists, as well as everybody who made this possible in person at KL.
- Gaining more understanding on the topics and having their historical perspective also allows to better grasp what is at hand.

6. From your experience, what was the most effective part of the Capacity Building Weekend (speakers, session planning, content, etc.)?

- Content and session planning: it basically covered all topics in a very satisfactory way
- Content - particularly on roles of registrars, registries, etc. and on key policy/process points like SubPro.
- Great speakers
- What is the GAC, very useful for newcomers. + Priority interests for Governments.
- Content : hot topics
- the speakers were clear in explaining each of the topics, I understand that the ICANN ecosystem and the role of the GAC in this ecosystem requires further study
- Speaker as session planning were crucial for the clear understanding of the contents related to the capacity building
- Session planning and content were very good and well organized
- overview and level of detail
- Speakers engagement and content quality
- Provide platform for common understanding of ICANN and its associated attributes. Platform to know the participants( 180 countries) across globe, participant views and their experience on DNS and know each other culturally too.
- It was the session on the priority interest for governments and the DNS Roles and Responsibilities - Country Code Managers and Generic Name Relationships with Governments. Because it helped me understand why things aren't working for our ccTLD and what to do to improve the work of the registry and how to help the local registrars being accredited by ICANN...
- Planning and session contents are well structured.
- Selection of the program, idea's , planning, spirit ....., all was excellent really.
- The speakers with the supports (presentations) and the comments from audience are a good manner.
- Session with registries and registrars
- mostly the speakers giving useful insights.
- --> Sorry couldn't find a 'other remarks box, but i wanted to point out: Please do make sure we're not looking at all male panels (that was the case with the ccNSO session).
- Speakers and contents
- Discussions is very usefull but the time allocated is too short.
- Bonding with colleagues.
- The contents provided were suitable in terms of technical and non-technical contents
- speakers and content
- Session planning is the most effective part of CBW.

- The real-time online survey to understand members' views.
- The most effective part would be the content. As a newcomer, to catch up on the topics discussed would be most challenging.
- The overview of the key ICANN and GAC issues.
- The speakers, session planning and content was effective and I appreciate the overall work put in.
- 1. Country Code Managers and Generic Name Operators - Relationships with Governments
- 2. DNS abuse mitigation
- In substance, please refer my answer to Q4 and Q5. On top of them, the Weekend itself was very effective and worthy of devoting the weekend (please note that ICANN75 was my first ICANN GAC MTG to participate), particularly the GAC Social to see and know colleagues from the world.
- I find that all sessions had their interest and added value and all speakers have prepared their interventions seriously.
- Speakers were very knowledgeable and content just great. Most Icann/GAC issues were covered.

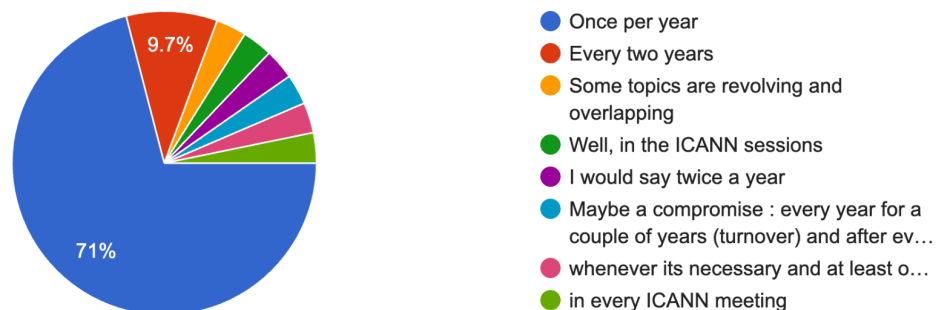
7. What do you think can be done to improve the Capacity Building Weekend (speakers, session planning, content, etc.)?

- In some cases, depending on the subject, it could be good to go a little deeper into the details (technical, sometimes), time permitting.
- Perhaps a bit more information on how to engage/where best to direct questions, with hypothetical examples of issues at different stages of conversation (if a PDP is ongoing, where is that question best addressed? The working group or GNSO council? What is an appropriate question for ICANN board, and which would be better addressed to ICANN staff directly? Those are just some example ideas)
- Planning speakers around topics that are constantly bottle necks and of priority to GAC
- More lighted room. Generally for all GAC sessions.
- Over all good, improvement in all aspects will be welcomed
- I consider that the way in which the seminar was developed was very interesting
- The contents could cover more areas like cybersecurity
- To have more advanced sessions, especially in GDPR and whois issues
- it should be more interactive, including more ways to engage the audience
- Session planning according jet lag
- If the speakes explain it considering the context ( ICANN bylaws and Geo politics ) with examples from each region
- Add some minutes after the session for the speakers to speak in aparté with those interested in having more details or questions. Some people don't like to speak in public
- Provide examples or cases to reflect the reality of challenges of internet in different regions. This will help us to formulate policies and procedures on the way forward in a specific region.
- I would like to see case study behind the PDP topics "Feel it" also more cooeration between GAC members have to be there as a community work withing this capacity building program>
- The interactions in the hybrid format were good and it was a great experience. It would have been s better experience when participating onsite. A tour de table presentation would have been great, especially withe the hybrid format and act as an icebreaker.

- include study cases close to reality
- After this first CBW, I'd like to get some more presentations on some more technical things; eg alternative DNS roots and a bit more on the numbering aspect of ICANN. Finally it would be nice to have some smaller break out sessions. So eg. after a presentation of 3/4 people split up in groups and have a smaller conversation with one of the speakers. I hope it would encourage some colleagues to ask questions if they are shy (to speak via a mic).
- Session planning
- The content need to be deeper, both for technical and non technical aspects; The discussion need to be longer; Previous cases might be taken for discussion
- More Q&A time; less text-heavy slides.
- Currently no further comments as I am quite new on this.
- N/A
- I think,contents can be done to improve the CBW.
- Request for focus areas from members before the sessions.
- Everything seems right.
- More speakers.
- Probably to get the participants more involved by introducing some interactivity beyond the normal questions and answers.
- providing many study cases and sharing best practrices for each session
- Would be appreciated if more "social" opportunities were provided. Meaning that coffee breaks are also such opportunities but we cannot necessarily allocate breaks only for socials.
- Some preliminary materials could be sent as the briefs GAC support does for the GAC sessions. What is important is also to understand the different positions (when such exist) across the community so that the GAC members consider where their contribution could be helpful to the ICANN Board, but also in order to understand what is at stake.
- Provide more detailed background on issues.

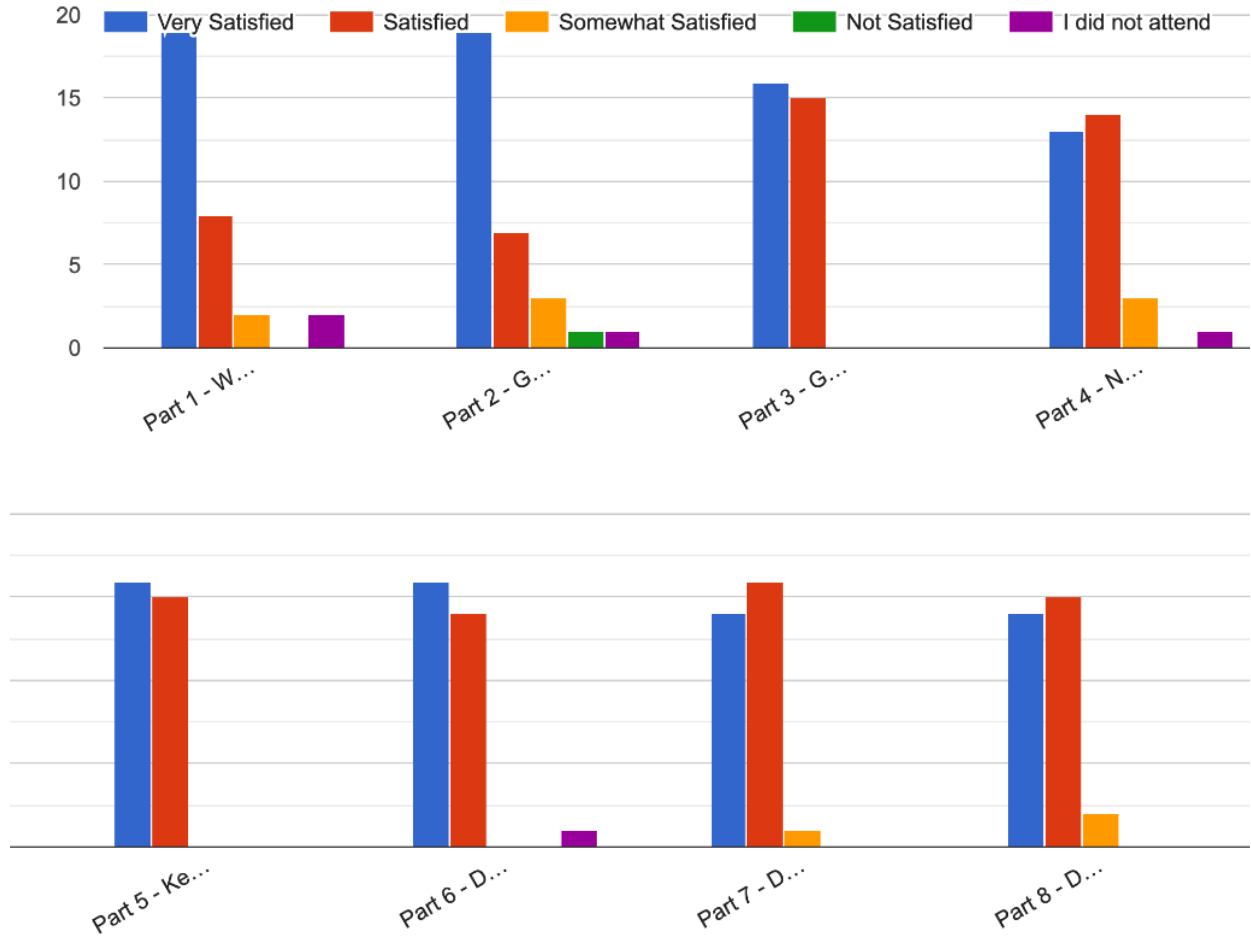
## 8. How frequently do you think the GAC Capacity Building Weekend should happen?

31 responses



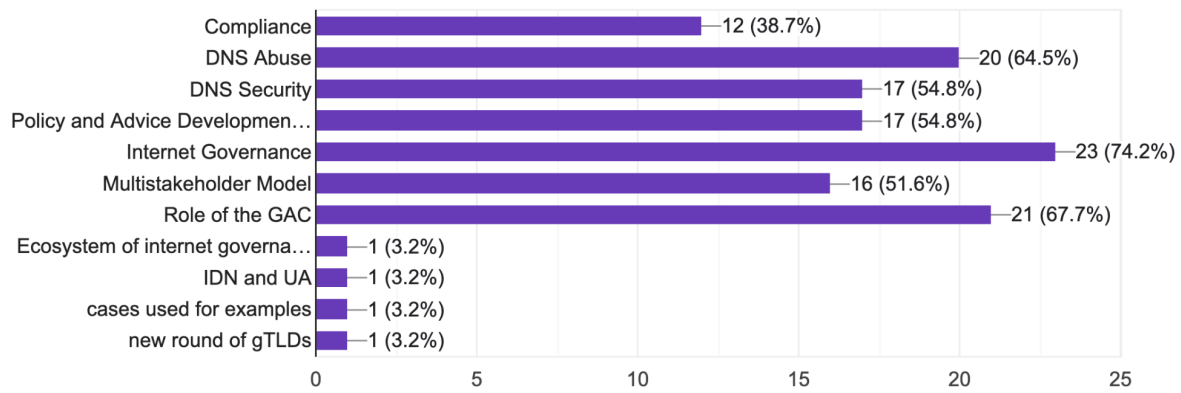


9. Overall, how satisfied were you with each module of the Capacity Building Weekend?



### 10. Which topics in ICANN's ecosystem interest you the most?

31 responses



### 11. How long have you been a GAC Participant?

31 responses

