

The ‘Global Multistakeholder Community’ is Neither Global Nor Multistakeholder

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CIS research shows how Western, male, and industry-driven the IANA transition process actually is.

In March 2014, the US government announced that they were going to end the contract they have with ICANN to run something called the Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (IANA), and hand over control to the “global multistakeholder community”. They insisted that the plan for transition had to come through a multistakeholder process and have stakeholders “across the global Internet community”.

Analysis of the process since then shows how flawed the “global multistakeholder community” that converges at ICANN has not actually represented the disparate interests and concerns of different stakeholders. CIS research has found that the discussions around IANA transition have not been driven by the “global multistakeholder community”, but mostly by males from industry in North America and Western Europe.

CIS analysed the five main mailing lists where the IANA transition plan was formulated: ICANN’s ICG Stewardship and CCWG Accountability lists; IETF’s IANAPLAN list; and the NRO’s IANAXFER list and CRISP lists. What we found was quite disheartening.

- A total of *239 individuals* participated cumulatively, across all five lists.
- *Only 98 substantively contributed to the final shape of the ICG proposal*, if one takes a count of 20 mails (admittedly, an arbitrary cut-off) as a substantive contribution, with 12 of these 98 being ICANN staff some of whom were largely performing an administrative function.

We decided to look at the diversity within these substantive contributors using gender, stakeholder grouping, and region. We relied on public records, including GNSO SOI statements, and extensive searches on the Web. Given that, there may be inadvertent errors, but the findings are so stark that even a few errors wouldn’t affect them much.

- **2 in 5** (39 of 98, or 40%) were from a single country: the **United States of America**.

- **4 in 5** (77 of 98) were from countries which are part of the WEOG UN grouping (which includes *Western Europe, US, Canada, Israel, Australia, and New Zealand*), which only has developed countries.
- **None** were from the EEC (Eastern European and Russia) group, and only **5 of 98** from all of GRULAC (Latin American and Caribbean Group).
- **4 in 5** (77 of 98) were *male* and 21 were female.
- **4 in 5** (76 of 98) were from industry or the technical community, and only 4 (or 1 in 25) were identifiable as primarily speaking on behalf of governments.

This shows also that the process has utterly failed in achieving the recommendation of Paragraph 6 of the **3 in 5 registrars are from the United States of America** (624 out of 1010, as of March 2014, according to ICANN's accredited registrars list), with only 0.6% being from the 54 countries in Africa (7 out of 1010).

45% of all the registries are from the United States of America! (307 out of 672 registries listed in ICANN's registry directory in August 2015.)

66% (34 of 51) of the Business Constituency at ICANN are from a single country: the United States of America. (N.B.: This page doesn't seem to be up-to-date.)

This shows that businesses from the United States of America continues to dominate ICANN to a very significant degree, and this is also reflected in the nature of the dialogue within ICANN, including the fact that the proposal that came out of the ICANN 'global multistakeholder community' on IANA transition proposes a clause that requires the 'IANA Functions Operator' to be a US-based entity. For more on that issue, see this post on the jurisdiction issue at ICANN (or rather, on the lack of a jurisdiction issue at ICANN).