

Open for all – 7 April 2006: yourname.eu!



As of 7 April 2006, the “.eu” top-level domain opens for all residents within the European Union – citizens, associations, clubs, etc. – providing new Internet space and promoting an EU internet identity.

.eu – a new star on the web

The “sunrise period”¹ for .eu registration has been a great success: **More than 300 000** public bodies, trademark holders and holders of other prior rights, such as company names and artistic names, have applied for a “.eu” web address in the **four months** from 7 December 2005 until 7 April 2006.

From 7 April 2006, upon the completion of the sunrise period, **any resident** within the European Union can register a domain name without the need to search for any prior rights.

I am a .eu-ropean too !

This means **everybody** having an address within the EU can register for a .eu website or email address on the Internet. Some examples:

- **citizens** featuring their blogs or simply sharing holiday pictures with family and friends on their private websites;
- sports or cultural **clubs** searching for partners or opponents across national borders;
- **schools** and other organisations promoting their activities on a common website with their partners in other European countries;
- flower shops, toy or arts-and-crafts manufacturers or any other **SMEs** extending their marketing reach.

The European Commission expects .eu to become as important for Europe as .com – the world leader among the Top Level Domains.

The **latest update** on .eu application numbers: <http://status.eurid.eu/>.

Why .eu?

The advantages of the .eu TLD are numerous for both industries and citizens.

European citizens not only enjoy a special identity in cyberspace but also get the protection provided by European laws for their rights as consumers and individuals in particular as regards privacy and personal data protection.

European industries can ensure their visibility both within the single market and beyond. They will also profit from greater certainty as to the applicable law in case of conflict.

The .eu TLD will be particularly useful for organizations operating at European level, such as companies taking advantage of the EU single market. Until now such companies either based their internet presence in one country or created web sites in each of the EU countries they operated in. The “.eu” TLD makes possible one internet identity for the entire EU.

What is a top-level domain name? – What is .eu?

A domain name is a simple way for a computer or network to be identified on the Internet. Rather than having numerical addresses that are difficult to remember, Internet users prefer domain names.

Examples include ‘europa.eu’ (the home page of the European institutions) and the part following the ‘@’ in any email address.

Top Level Domains (TLDs) are at the heart of the international Internet domain name system – they are the ‘suffix’ at the end of the domain name, and come in two basic categories:

- generic TLDs (gTLDs): not tied to any country, these include “.com”, “.org”, “.net” or “.int”;
- country code TLDs (ccTLDs) such as the German “.de”, the French “.fr” or the British “.uk”.

The “.eu” TLD will **not replace** the existing national country code TLDs in the EU, but will **complement** them and give users the option of having a **pan-European Internet identity** for their ‘internet presence’ – generally web sites and e-mail addresses.



How has .eu been created?

The Regulation on the implementation of the .eu Top Level domain (EC Regulation 733/2002, 22 April 2002) established that the new TLD should be managed and operated by a **private, non-profit organization** known as the **.eu Registry**.

Following a call for expressions of interest in May 2003 the European Commission chose **EURid** - <http://www.eurid.org>, a consortium of Belgian, Italian and Swedish organizations, to be the .eu Registry.

EC Regulation 874/2004 (28 April 2004) deals with issues like speculative and abusive registrations of domain names, intellectual property and other rights, issues of language and geographical concepts, and the extra-judicial settlement of conflicts – the **Alternative Dispute Resolution**².

During the second half of 2005, the Registry has accredited a number of **Registrars** – national companies which have access to the automated systems of EURid and can register domains.

How to apply for a .eu domain name?

Four Steps to *yourname.eu*

1. Choose a name

Your domain name should still be free.

Some domain names are blocked, e.g. geographical or geopolitical concepts or names reserved for EU governments.

Domain names must meet a number of technical requirements, e.g. minimum of two characters among the letters a to z, the numbers 0 to 9 or the hyphen “-”.

*Be aware ...
Domain names are
registered on a
“First come, first
served” basis.
Don't delay!*

2. Choose an accredited .eu registrar

EURid does not accept direct registrations. For a list of accredited Registrars: see link below.

3. Registrar sends in your application

Be sure to provide your registrar with a valid e-mail address!

4. You will receive a notification of the activation of your .eu domain name

Detailed instructions on the web site of EURid: http://www.eurid.eu/en/general/howToGetEuDomainName/normal-procedure?set_language=en&cl=en

How much will it cost?

This is a matter for the Registry (EurID), but also for the registrars in Member States. The EURid website already lists hundreds of registrars who compete with each other to register names. Customers can therefore **shop around** to find the best deal on price, quality, and services offered.

Registering domain names under .eu should not be very expensive. The **Registry** will make a **basic €10 charge** to cover administration costs.

Registrars will **add their profit margin**, which should reflect the level and quality of the service they provide.

In any case, end users are advised to check carefully the offers of the registrars, because prices and services may differ substantially.

¹ The purpose of the **sunrise period** was to provide holders of prior rights with an initial period allowing them to apply for the registration of their protected names with the aim of reducing the so-called “cybersquatting” – where an organisation or individual finds that someone else has registered their trademark, company, personal or other name as a domain name, and then tries to sell it to the right holder for a profit. The sunrise period has been **widely welcomed** by public bodies and businesses alike.

² The uniqueness of the Domain Name System means that a domain name can be owned by only one person. To deal with foreseeable disputes that may arise over the registration of domain names, the European legislator has created a fast track extra-judicial system for the settlement of conflicts. This procedure, also known as **Alternative Dispute Resolution** procedure (or ADR), applies without prejudice to any Court proceedings that an interested party may initiate against the holder of the domain name or against a decision of the Registry. The body in charge of dealing with ADR disputes is the Czech Arbitration Court - <http://www.adreu.eurid.eu/>.

Further Information

- **Europe's Information Society: Thematic Portal**
http://europa.eu.int/information_society/
- **Europe's special “.eu” website:**
http://europa.eu.int/information_society/policy/doteu/index_en.htm
- **Registry's website:** <http://www.eurid.org>
- **Czech Arbitration Court's website:**
<http://www.adreu.eurid.eu/>
- **Information Society Directorate-General:**
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