# ICANN

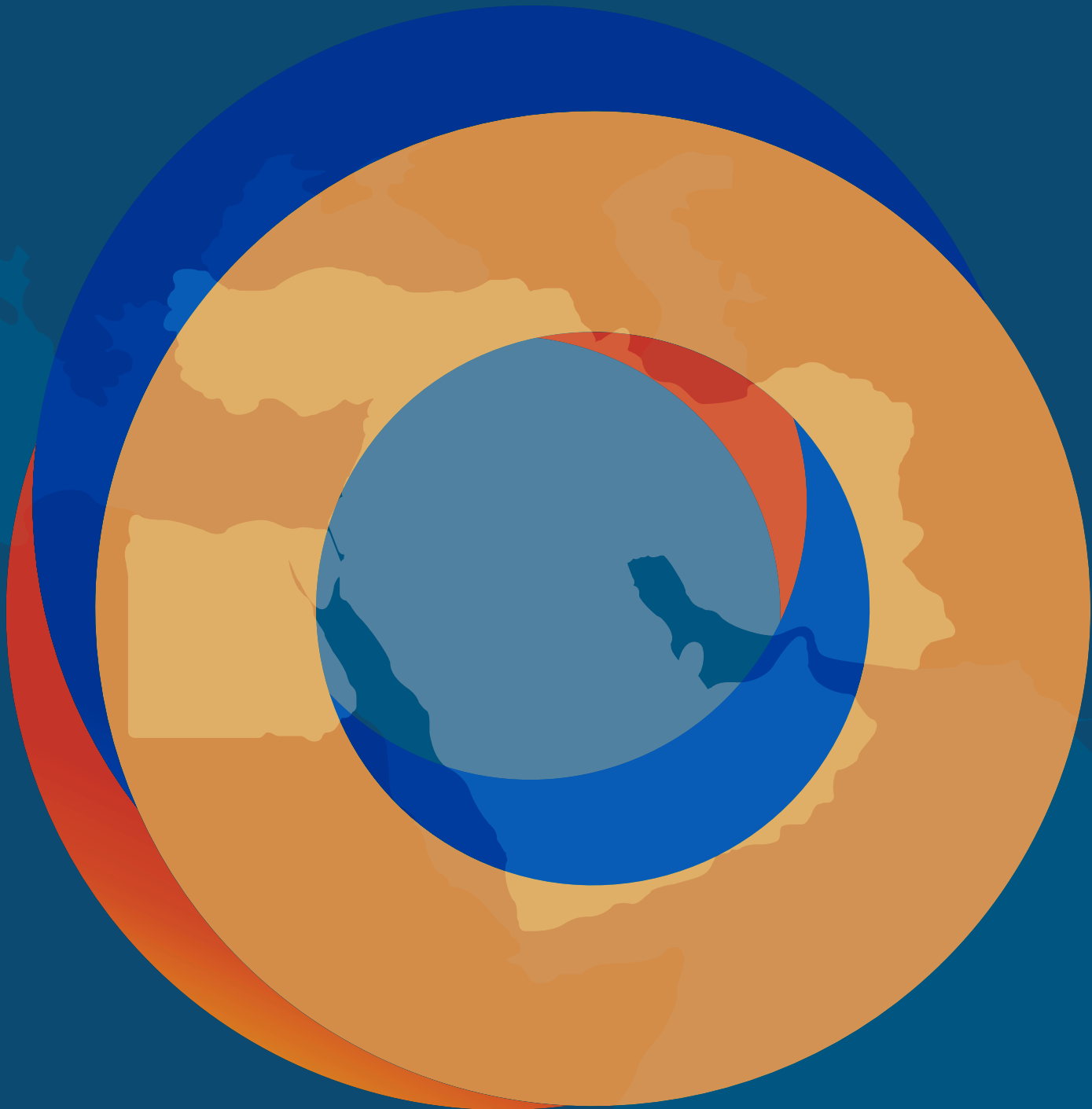# Middle East Engagement
# FY18

*Baher Esmat, Vice President for Global Stakeholder Engagement in the Middle East*

The past year has been full of accomplishments as well as challenges. This report gives you an overview of our efforts and results in the Middle East region in FY2018.

Continuing with our community demand-led approach throughout the past year, we tailored our activities further to better meet the requirements of the various stakeholder groups in the region.
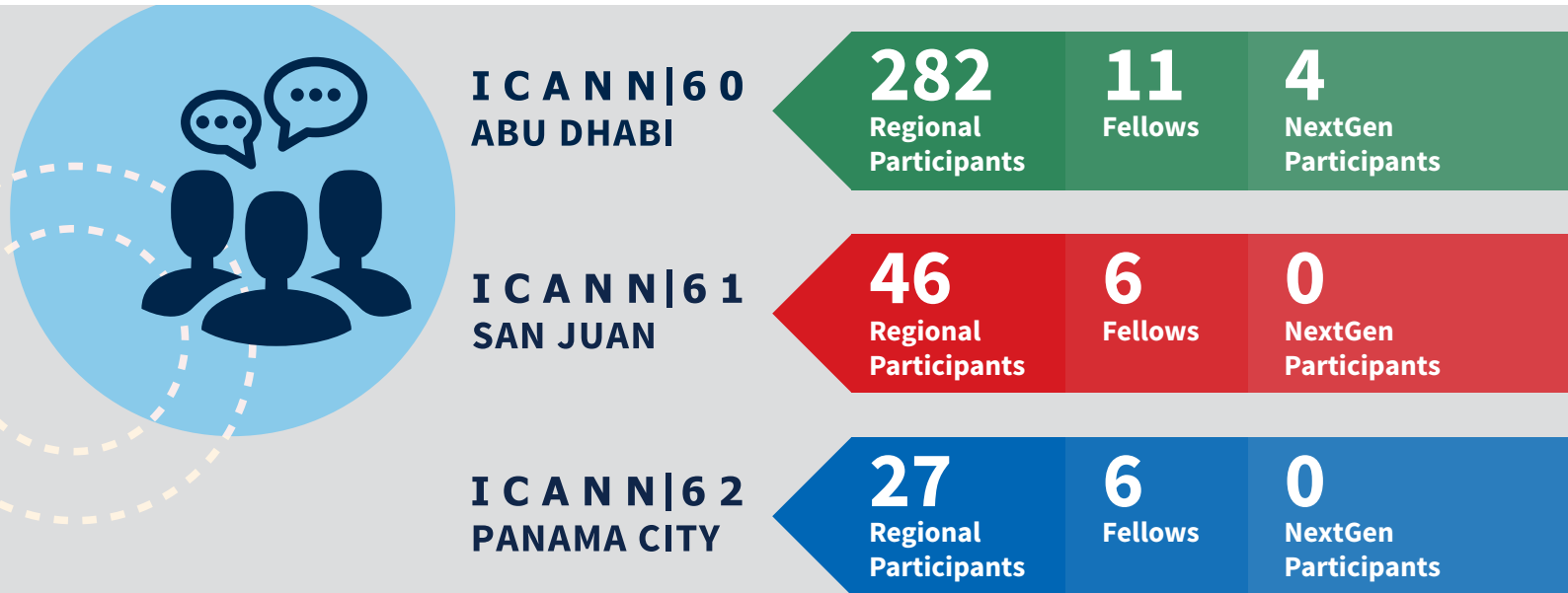
Some highlights of FY2018 in the Middle East were:

- New constituency-focused webinars for Middle East Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC) representatives and the country code top-level domain (ccTLD) community.

- Local community experts taking the lead in organizing capacity-development activities on a regular basis.

- Various surveys to help us improve our engagement programs and help community members participate more effectively in ICANN.

- Debut of the Middle East Space, which enables regional community discussions on key issues and better participation in ICANN.

Without our regional community members, none of the above would have been possible. I would like to thank everyone, particularly members of the Middle East and Adjoining Countries Strategy Working Group (MEAC-SWG), for their tireless efforts and commitment to supporting our work.

In the coming months, we intend to build on our experiences, improve the current programs, and explore new ways to better serve the region. To achieve these goals, we will continue to seek collaboration and feedback.

It is our sincere hope that this report will shed light on how to further our efforts and make participation in ICANN more effective so that our regional voices are better heard. This report is a continuation of our journey together – and highlights our regional efforts over the past fiscal year.

## Regional Participation in ICANN Public Meetings

**I C A N N | 6 0**
**ABU DHABI**

| **282** Regional Participants | **11** Fellows | **4** NextGen Participants |

**I C A N N | 6 1**
**SAN JUAN**

| **46** Regional Participants | **6** Fellows | **0** NextGen Participants |

**I C A N N | 6 2**
**PANAMA CITY**

| **27** Regional Participants | **6** Fellows | **0** NextGen Participants |

## Regional Events

- **Middle East and Adjoining Countries School on Internet Governance (MEAC-SIG) 2017**
  Ankara, Turkey | August 2017 [**32 participants**]

- **Media Outreach**
  Dubai, UAE | September 2017
  Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates | October 2017

- **Middle East Space at ICANN60**
  Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates | November 2017 [**75 participants**]

- **Middle East Space at ICANN61**
  San Juan, Puerto Rico | March 2018 [**50 participants**]

- **Middle East Domain Name System (DNS) Forum 2018**
  Ankara, Turkey | April 2018 [**122 participants**]

## Regional Webinars

**6** **webinars held**

**4** Webinars for GAC members

**1** Webinar for ccTLDs and Internationalized Domain Name (IDN) ccTLDs

**1** Webinar for ICANN60 Fellowship and NextGen participants

## DNS Entrepreneurship Center (DNS-EC)

DNS Entrepreneurship Center

- **DNS Operations and DNS Security Extensions (DNSSEC) Workshops at Ain Shams University, Cairo, Egypt**

- **DNS Operations and DNSSEC Workshops at Cairo University, Cairo, Egypt**

- **DNS-EC/IBM Hackathon, Cairo, Egypt**

- **Computer Engineering Course Projects with Nile University on Universal Acceptance, Cairo, Egypt**

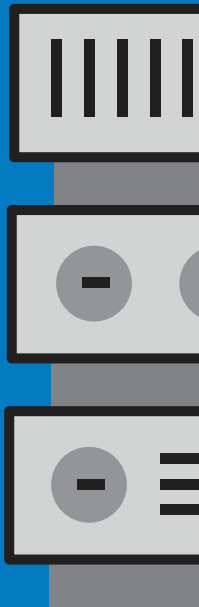## Root Server Instances Operated by ICANN (Also Known As L-Root)

# 4 L-Root Server Instances

Mada AlArab | Ramallah, Palestine | July 2017

Ooredoo Oman | Muscat, Oman | January 2018

Hadara Technologies | Ramallah, Palestine | February 2018

Infonas | Manama, Bahrain | March 2018 (Renewed Instance)

## Engagement and Outreach

Algiers City
G TC

Tunis City
A CS G

Istanbul / Ankara
A CS G PS TC

Beirut
A CS G TC

Kabul [Remote]

Islamabad
A CS G PS TC

Kuwait City
G PS

Cairo / Sharm El Sheikh
A CS G PS TC

Amman
G PS

Manama
A CS G PS TC

Abu Dhabi / Dubai
A G PS

Sana'a [ Remote]

Khartoum
A G TC

**Stakeholders Reached**
A    Academia
CS   Civil Society
G    Government
PS   Private Sector
TC   Technical Community

## Community Growth

- WG Next-Generation gTLD Registration Directory Service to Replace WHOIS [**8 member**]
- GNSO Bylaws Implementation Drafting Team [**1 member**]
- GNSO Review Working Group [**1 member**]
- GNSO Standing Selection Committee [**1 member**]
- IGO-INGO Curative Rights Protection Mechanisms PDP [**1 member**]
- GTLD Subsequent Procedures PDP Working Group [**3 member**]
- Review of All Rights Protection Mechanisms in all gTLD's PDP Working Group [**4 members**]
- Cross Community WG on New gTLD Auction Proceeds [**1 member**]
- Cross Community WG on the Use of Country/Territory Names as TLDs [**2 members**]
- GNSO Council Standing Committee on ICANN Budget & Ops Plan [**1 member**]
- Cross Community Working Group on Enhancing ICANN Accountability (WS2) [**10 members**]
- ccNSO Policy Development Process (PDP) Retirement Working Group [**1 member**]
- ccNSO Strategic and Operational Planning Standing Committee (formerly SOPWG) [**1 member**]
- ALAC Subcommittee on Finance and Budget [**3 members**]
- ALAC Subcommittee on Outreach and Engagement [**6 members**]
- ALAC Consolidated Policy Working Group (CPWG) [**5 members**]
- At-Large Technical Issues Working Group [**5 members**]
- At-Large Capacity Building Working Group [**6 members**]
- At-Large Social Media Working Group [**1 members**]
- Cross-Community Working Group on Internet Governance (CCWG-IG) [**2 members**]
- Cross-Community Committee on Accessibility [**2 members**]
- SO/AC Leadership [**11 members**]
- **4** New NCUC Members

## Capacity Development

- **DNS Operations and/or DNSSEC Workshops** (Rabat, Morocco – July 2017 | Abu Dhabi, UAE – October 2017)

- **Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC) Capacity-Development Workshop** (ICANN60 Abu Dhabi, UAE – October 2018)

- **DNS Abuse and Misuse Workshops** (Tunis, Tunisia – April 2018 | Ankara, Turkey – April 2018)

- **DNS Train-the-Trainer Workshop** (Ankara, Turkey – April 2018)

- **Academic Engagement in Tunisia with CCK** (University of Jendouba – December 2017 | University of Carthage – February 2018 | University of Kairouan – March 2018 | Tunis Science City – April 2018)

- **Academic Engagement in Turkey** (Istanbul Bilgi University – November 2017 and February 2018)

- **Academic Engagement in Sudan** (Sudan University of Science and Technology – August 2017)

- **Academic Engagement in United Arab Emirates** (American University of Sharjah – September 2017 | Ajman University of Science and Technology – September 2017 | Rochester Institute of Technology, Dubai Campus – October 2017 | University of Wollongong, Dubai Campus – October 2017)

- **Academic Engagement in Bahrain** (University of Bahrain – October 2017 | Bahrain Polytechnic – October 2017)

- **Academic Engagement in Egypt** (American University in Cairo – November 2017 and April 2018 | Nile University – November 2017)

- **Academic Engagement in Pakistan** (FAST National University of Computer and Emerging Sciences – March 2018)
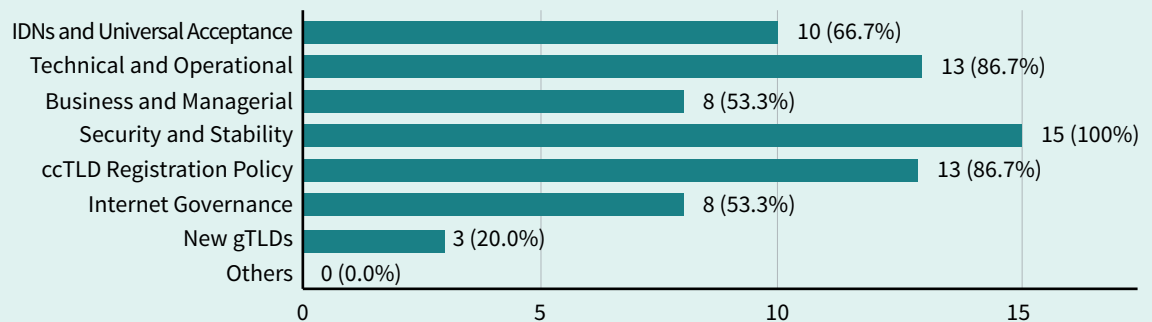
# Regional Studies and Surveys

- **Commissioned and released a study entitled** *"Accelerating the Digital Economy in the MENAT Region."*

  *"The digital economy in the Middle East, North Africa, and Turkey (MENAT) has great potential. The population is young and digitally savvy. Social media is extraordinarily popular, and plays a big role in shaping public opinion."*

- **Survey for Regional ccTLDs and IDN ccTLDs**

  *"The topics of most interest to ccTLDs and IDN ccTLDs in the Middle East include security and stability, technical and operational matters, and ccTLD registration policy."*

**NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS INTERESTED IN THE DIFFERENT TOPICS**

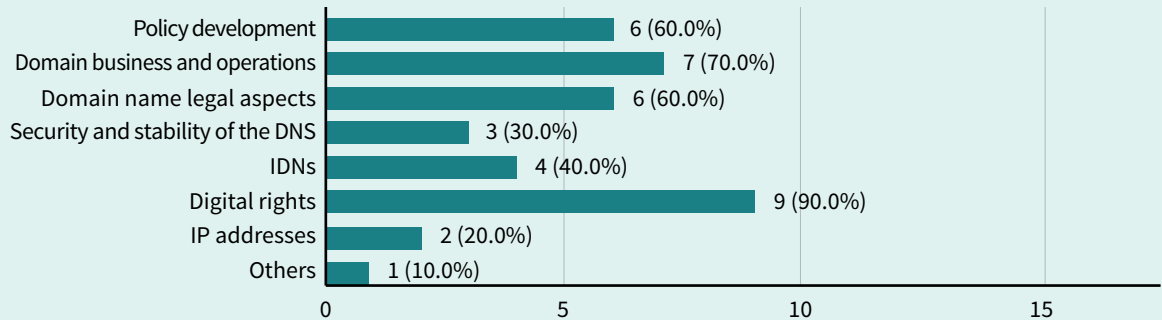| Topic | Value |
|---|---|
| IDNs and Universal Acceptance | 10 (66.7%) |
| Technical and Operational | 13 (86.7%) |
| Business and Managerial | 8 (53.3%) |
| Security and Stability | 15 (100%) |
| ccTLD Registration Policy | 13 (86.7%) |
| Internet Governance | 8 (53.3%) |
| New gTLDs | 3 (20.0%) |
| Others | 0 (0.0%) |

- **Survey for Enhancing Regional Engagement in the GNSO**

  *"The time commitment required to be involved in policy development activities is the biggest challenge hindering more active regional engagement in GNSO working groups."*

  *"Areas of most interest to the Middle Eastern community when it comes to ICANN's policy development processes include digital rights and domain name business and operations."*

**AREAS OF MOST INTEREST TO THE MIDDLE EASTERN COMMUNITY**

| Area | Value |
|---|---|
| Policy development | 6 (60.0%) |
| Domain business and operations | 7 (70.0%) |
| Domain name legal aspects | 6 (60.0%) |
| Security and stability of the DNS | 3 (30.0%) |
| IDNs | 4 (40.0%) |
| Digital rights | 9 (90.0%) |
| IP addresses | 2 (20.0%) |
| Others | 1 (10.0%) |

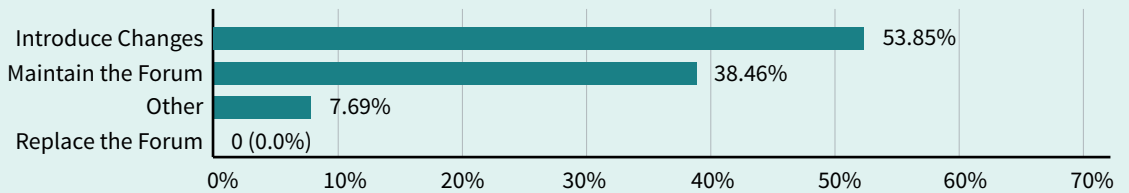# Regional Studies and Surveys (continued)

- **Middle East DNS Forum 5-Year Assessment Survey**

  The survey received 40 responses with 26 completing the survey and the remaining 14 giving partial responses.

  Of the 26 respondents who completed the survey, 10 suggested maintaining the forum as is, 14 suggested introducing some changes to the current format, and 2 had other opinions, but did not state them. There were no suggestions to replace the forum with a new event.
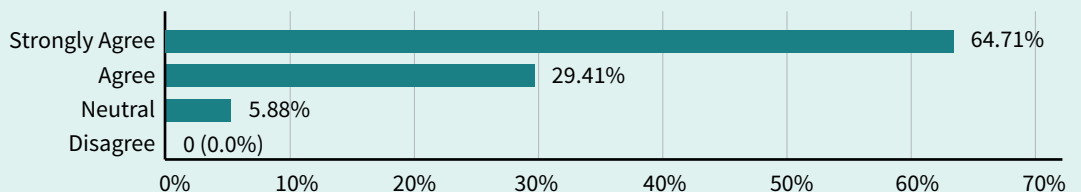
  A detailed report of the survey is available at **https://go.icann.org/2JdcwXJ**

**MIDDLE EAST DNS FORUMS AND THE WAY FOWARD, PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS**

| Category | Percentage |
|---|---|
| Introduce Changes | 53.85% |
| Maintain the Forum | 38.46% |
| Other | 7.69% |
| Replace the Forum | 0 (0.0%) |

**Respondents were generally satisfied with the Middle East DNS Forum. Improvements that they would like to see include:**
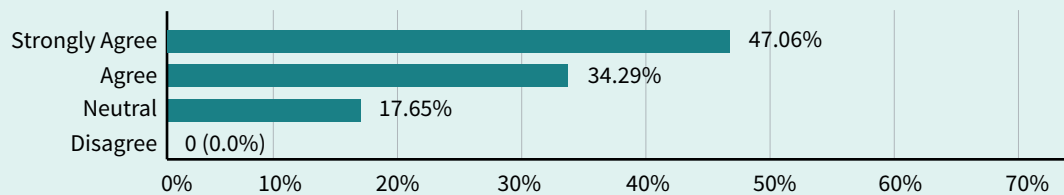
- **Co-locating the forum with other related events**
- **Early planning**
- **Better outreach to a broader and more diverse audience with help from the local host**
- **Improved and frequently updated website**
- **More social media to encourage remote participation**
- **More round tables and small circle discussions**
- **More technical sessions or an additional technical day track**

**THE FORUM WAS EFFECTIVE AT PROVIDING THE REGIONAL COMMUNITY WITH A SPACE TO ENGAGE IN DISCUSSIONS, EXCHANGE EXPERIENCES, AND CONNECT WITH EXPERTS IN THE FIELD.**

| Category | Percentage |
|---|---|
| Strongly Agree | 64.71% |
| Agree | 29.41% |
| Neutral | 5.88% |
| Disagree | 0 (0.0%) |

## Regional Studies and Surveys (continued)

**THE FORUM WAS EFFECTIVE AT RAISING AWARENESS ABOUT ICANN AND DNS-RELATED WORK.**

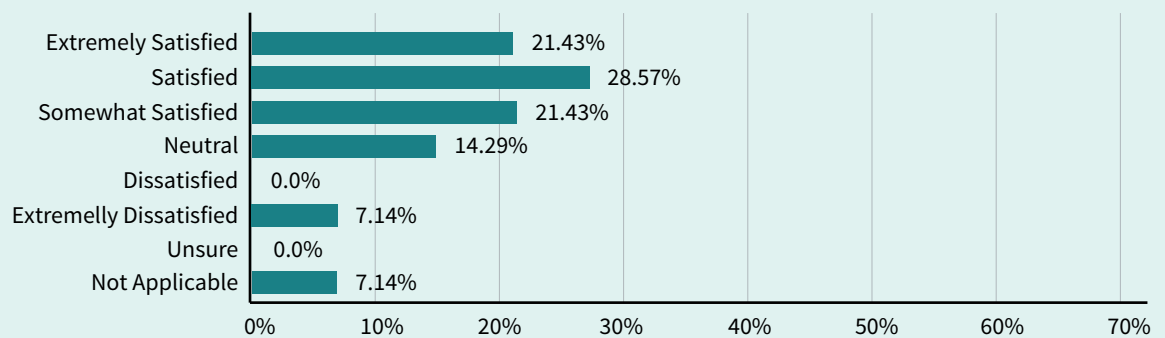| Response | Percentage |
|---|---|
| Strongly Agree | 47.06% |
| Agree | 34.29% |
| Neutral | 17.65% |
| Disagree | 0 (0.0%) |

- **FY18 Middle East Regional Engagement Assessment Survey:**

  **The survey received 24 responses, with 14 completing the survey and the remaining 10 giving partial responses.**

  **A detailed report of the survey is available at https://go.icann.org/2v7xVMW**

**LEVELS OF SATISFACTION WITH THE ICANN ORGANIZATION'S ENGAGEMENT**

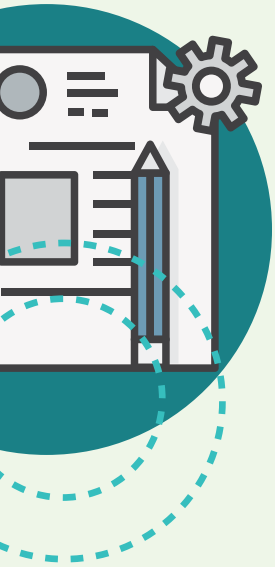| Level | Percentage |
|---|---|
| Extremely Satisfied | 21.43% |
| Satisfied | 28.57% |
| Somewhat Satisfied | 21.43% |
| Neutral | 14.29% |
| Dissatisfied | 0.0% |
| Extremelly Dissatisfied | 7.14% |
| Unsure | 0.0% |
| Not Applicable | 7.14% |

- **Respondents were mostly satisfied with the activities in the region, but would like to see more:**
  - **Engagement at the national and local levels**
  - **Countries involved in ICANN events**
  - **Capacity-development workshops and initiatives**
  - **Partnerships**
  - **Communications around these events and activities in the region**

**There was also a call to use Fellowship and NextGen participants to spur more interest in the region.**

## Task Force on Arabic Script IDNs (TF-AIDN)

- Conclusion of work on Label-Generation Ruleset (LGR) at the second-level for Farsi and Pashto

- Outreach to Arabic Script African and Jawi languages to initiate work on LGR at the second-level

- Work on Universal Acceptance of Arabic Script IDNs, and close collaboration and coordination with the Universal Acceptance Steering Group (UASG)

- Start of work on a paper entitled "IDN Security Issues - Arabic Script Case Study"

- Addition of three new TF-AIDN members

- Sixth face-to-face meeting held in Istanbul for two days

- One member from the TF-AIDN is a Universal Acceptance Ambassador

## Regional Communications in Numbers
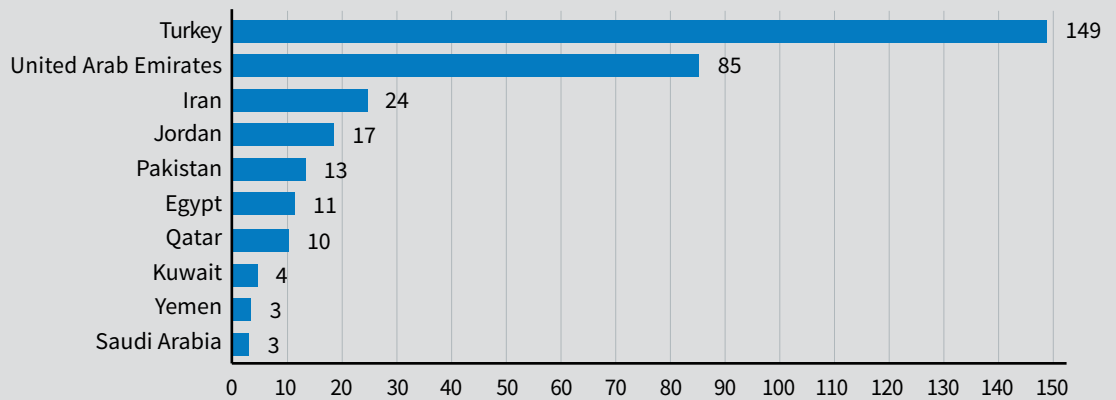
**8**
**Interviews Broadcast and Publications**

**4**
**Press Releases**

**338**
**Media Hits**

**126**
**Media Pick-Ups of Press Releases and Interviews**

**3**
**Media Outreach Events**

## Media Coverage in Numbers

**The number of news pieces that were published on or that mention ICANN in corresponding Middle East countries in FY2018.**

| Country | Count |
|---|---|
| Turkey | 149 |
| United Arab Emirates | 85 |
| Iran | 24 |
| Jordan | 17 |
| Pakistan | 13 |
| Egypt | 11 |
| Qatar | 10 |
| Kuwait | 4 |
| Yemen | 3 |
| Saudi Arabia | 3 |

## Community Feedback

**Dr. Walid Al-Saqaf**
**MEAC-SWG Chair and Senior Lecturer at Södertörn University, Stockholm**

*"Apart from helping introduce the DNS space to stakeholders in the region, MEAC-SWG has been actively contributing to the Middle East Space, which debuted at ICANN60. Furthermore, MEAC-SWG members are discussing holding regular Middle East readout sessions, which demonstrates the community›s interest to have greater visibility within ICANN."*

**Manal Ismail**
**Chair, Governmental Advisory Committee**

*"The GAC and ICANN Government Engagement are jointly working on various capacity-development activities for the Middle East.  These activities help prepare GAC members for substantive discussions and bring them up to speed on topics of interest.  The well-attended capacity-building workshop at ICANN60 in Abu Dhabi was quite successful in that respect. I believe such activities, including regional GAC webinars, have a great impact on improving government engagement from the region."*

## Community Feedback (continued)

**Kadir Erdogan**
**.tr ccTLD Technical Group Manager**

*"nic.tr hosted a DNSSEC train-the-trainer workshop in Ankara this year. Being a co-trainer, I had a chance to work with talented and carefully chosen techies from the across the region. Such events not only help build technical capacity, but also create an active, motivated, and well-distributed community (which is not the case yet)."*

**Ahmed Bakht Masood**
**Deputy Director (ICT), Pakistan Telecom Authority and Chair, Task Force on Arabic Script IDNs**

*"TF-AIDN has finalized LGR 2 (second-level of domain names) work for Persian and Pashto languages and is in the process of outreach to community members of Jawi and African languages using Arabic Script.*

*The Task Force has recently submitted its use cases report to UASG on Universal Acceptance issues in Arabic Script Languages."*

**Prof. Habib Youssef**
**Director General, Centre de Calcul El-Khawarizmi**

*"Our academic engagement with ICANN continued to make progress. Three workshops were held this year, with each workshop ranging between 100 and 150 participants,. Of these, over 75 percent were young students who got exposure to ICANN for the very first time. Such workshops have been very interactive and highly appreciated by the participants, and several universities have expressed their desire to host similar workshops in the future."*

## About ICANN

ICANN's mission is to help ensure a stable, secure, and unified global Internet. To reach another person on the Internet, you need to type an address – a name or a number – into your computer or other device. That address must be unique so computers know where to find each other. ICANN helps coordinate and support these unique identifiers across the world. ICANN was formed in 1998 as a not-for-profit public benefit corporation with a community of participants from all over the world.

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