

Session Title: GDPR: It Begins Next Week

Program Bucket: Privacy, Surveillance, and Data Protection

Session Format: Workshop

Affiliation: ICANN Non-Commercial Users Constituency

Please describe what you want to do in your session

Next week, enforcement of the European Union's new General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) comes into effect. The GDPR is a pronounced and extraordinary revision to European privacy law, which will have significant repercussions for the Internet's Domain Name System.

For over two decades, domain name registrants have been subject to emotional, financial, and in some cases, physical harm, as a result of registering a domain name. This is because when a domain name is registered, sensitive and personally-identifiable information about the registrant is collected and stored in databases that can be accessed by any actor for any reason through WHOIS queries.

The GDPR may well spell the end of the WHOIS service, a protocol used for querying databases that store the name, address, and telephone number of the registrant of a domain name. In this panel, featuring privacy practitioners and experts in the WHOIS service, we will consider the impact of European privacy standards on the global Internet. This will be an interactive panel orientated towards newcomers to the topic, and will be divided into three segments:

1. The first part will introduce the Domain Name System and WHOIS, as well as international understandings of/approaches to privacy.
2. The second part will focus on ICANN and its institutionalised conflict with data protection laws, seeking to provide clarity around why ICANN does not respect privacy law and does not seek to protect registrants from the harm that arises from not respecting their privacy.
3. The third part of the session will provide a look ahead, focusing on the enforcement and implementation of the GDPR, looking at ICANN's preparations (or lack thereof) and the potential consequences that may follow.

Who will be joining you in this session (if applicable), and have you confirmed their participation?

The following individuals will be invited to participate in the session. Their participation will be confirmed following acceptance of the workshop:

- Becky Burr, Member of the Board, ICANN, USA, female
- Joseph Cannataci, United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to Privacy, Malta, male
- Stephanie Perrin, Digital Discretion, Canada, female

What outcomes would you like to achieve with your session, and how will you transition these activities into post-conference action?

- More integration of marginalised voices of privacy advocates into tech policy discussions
- Raise the visibility and value of civil society members conducting research and advocacy at the policy and discursive intersections of privacy, technology, and governance