DomainWire

Edition 14 – **Q4 2015**

Global TLD Stat Report

DomainWire Stat Report is CENTR's quarterly publication covering status and trends in global top-level domains with a focus on European ccTLDs (country code top-level domains). A ccTLD is a two-letter domain name extension such as .de (Germany), .es (Spain) or .cz (Czech Republic).

CENTR is the association of European country code top-level domain (ccTLD) registries, such as .de for Germany or .si for Slovenia. CENTR currently counts 52 full and 9 associate members – together, they are responsible for over 80% of all registered country code domain names worldwide. The objectives of CENTR are to promote and participate in the development of high standards and best practices among ccTLD registries.

ccTLD - gTLD
GLOBAL MARKET SHARE

- ■ ccTLDs
- ■ legacy gTLDs
- ■ new gTLDs

	SEP 2015	DEC 2015
new gTLDs	2.6%	3.5%
legacy gTLDs	51.5%	51.0%
ccTLDs	46.0%	45.5%

Worldwide Status and Growth in Top-Level Domains
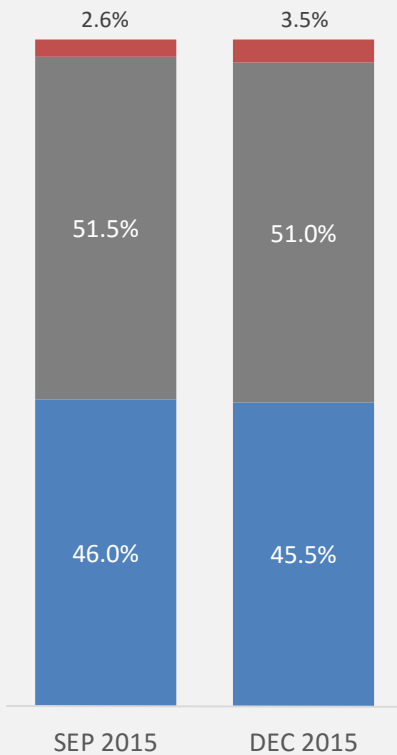
There are now **311.5 million domains** combined across all top-level domains (TLDs) globally (Dec 2015) – an increase of 4.4% over Q4 2015.
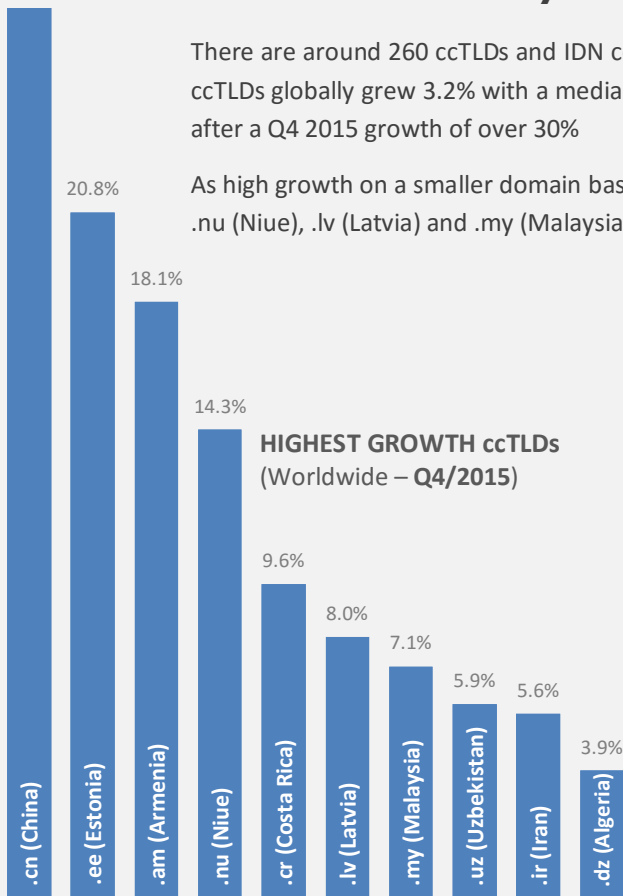
In absolute terms, most growth came from legacy gTLDs (largely .com) which grew higher than average due to sales in China*. ccTLDs grew a combined 3.2% over Q4 2015 – similar to the average observed for the fourth quarter over the past few years. New gTLDs grew from 7.6 to almost 11 million domains over around 800 TLDs. These new gTLDs represent a small but growing piece of global TLD market share (see left) However, it's important to recognise that some may not be interested in domain count and growth due to different business models compared to traditional gTLDs and ccTLDs (see last page).

	DOMAINS	GROWTH Q4 2015	
	(million)	COMBINED	MEDIAN
ccTLD	140.1	3.2%	1.2%
ccTLD IDN	1.6	23.0%	0.3%
Legacy gTLD	158.7	3.4%	1.3%
New gTLD	10.9	43.5%	4.8%
Total	**311.5**	**4.4%**	

Country Code Top-Level Domains (ccTLDs)

There are around 260 ccTLDs and IDN ccTLDs globally with a **combined 140 million domains**. Over Q4 2015 ccTLDs globally grew 3.2% with a median rate of 1.2%. .cn (China) also took the top spot as the largest ccTLD after a Q4 2015 growth of over 30%

As high growth on a smaller domain base may not be as big a challenge, it's worth pointing out .ee (Estonia), .nu (Niue), .lv (Latvia) and .my (Malaysia) who each saw relatively high growth on zones larger than 100K.

HIGHEST GROWTH ccTLDs
(Worldwide – **Q4/2015**)

ccTLD	Growth
.cn (China)	30.8%
.ee (Estonia)	20.8%
.am (Armenia)	18.1%
.nu (Niue)	14.3%
.cr (Costa Rica)	9.6%
.lv (Latvia)	8.0%
.my (Malaysia)	7.1%
.uz (Uzbekistan)	5.9%
.ir (Iran)	5.6%
.dz (Algeria)	3.9%

.cn (China) not to scale

LARGEST ccTLDs WORLDWIDE

	COUNTRY / ccTLD	DOMAINS (millions)
1	China (.CN)	16.4
2	Germany (.DE)	16.0
3	United Kingdom (.UK)	10.6
4	Netherlands (.NL)	5.6
5	Russian Federation (.RU)	5.0
6	European Union (.EU)	3.9
7	Brazil (.BR)	3.7
8	Australia (.AU)	3.0
9	France (.FR)	2.9
10	Italy (.IT)	2.9

The table does not include ccTLDs which give domains mostly for free. ccTLD .tk (Tokelau) run by Freenom is one of these and is reported to have around 28.6 million domains.
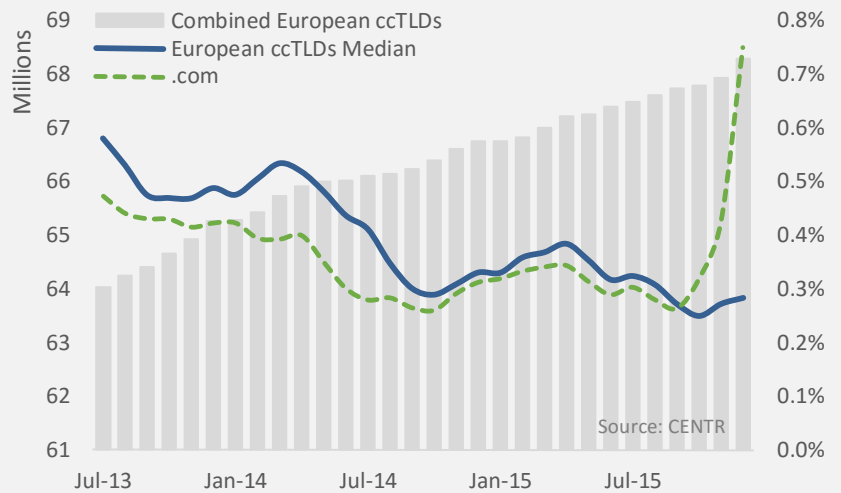
European ccTLDs

Q4 2015 Status & Trends

European ccTLDs closed 2015 with just over 68 million combined domains under management – and a net increase of 707K domains (1.04%).

The chart (right) shows a longer term trend of combined ccTLDs in Europe as well as the median growth rates. There is a long term decline in the growth rates among ccTLDs most of which is due to declines in the rates of new domains being added. Retained (renewed) domains are, however relatively stable over the past few years. The average renewal rate is around 85%.

Growth Lines: 6 month moving averages are used to smooth the line
Data Source: CENTR, ICANN (gTLDs)

EUROPEAN CCTLDS: TOP 5 DOMAIN GROWTH
### (Q4/2015)
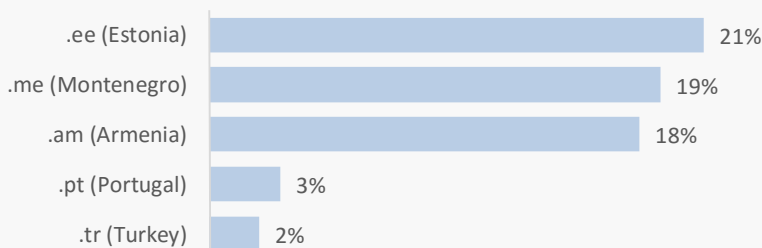
Source: CENTR

The chart (left) shows the top 5 highest growth of European ccTLDs Q4 2015. .ee (Estonia) grew the highest at 21% or 18K domains net*.

Other high growth ccTLDs in 2015 were .am (Armenia), .me (Montenegro), and .pt (Portugal).

* On 1 December 2015 - local presence requirement in .ee was abolished and additional authentication methods added as well as a new registry system.

Av. TLD DISTRIBUTION (EUROPE)
(DOMAINS REGISTERED IN COUNTRY)
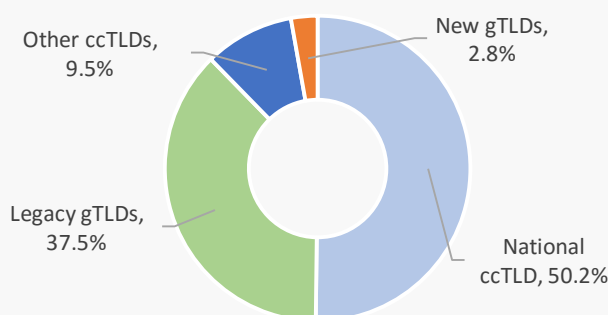
Source: CENTR

The chart shows average breakdown of TLDs based on total domains (gTLDs, national ccTLD and other European ccTLDs) registered from within a set of 30 European countries.

On average, the national ccTLD has the largest share (50%). This figure has decreased slightly from the previous quarter with the rise of new gTLDs. It's worth noting that data does not factor in how different TLDs are being used (eg. if they resolve or are parked) which could give quite a different picture.

Legacy gTLDs

Q4 2015 Status & Trends

Combined domains in legacy gTLDs is currently around 153.9 million and has grown around 3.3% over Q4, 2015 mainly due to strong .com sales from registrars in China[1]

The chart (right) shows the 3-year evolution of the 3 largest legacy gTLDs. In absolute terms .com increased by around 3.2% in Q4 2015. .net and .org also saw higher than average growth at 4.7% and 2.9% respectively.

It is important to remember that like all top level domains, volume is one of several metrics in assessing performance and trends. Another important factor is how domains are being used (eg. websites, email etc).

1 http://domainnamewire.com/2015/11/23/verisign-issues-statement-on-chinese-market-for-domain-names/

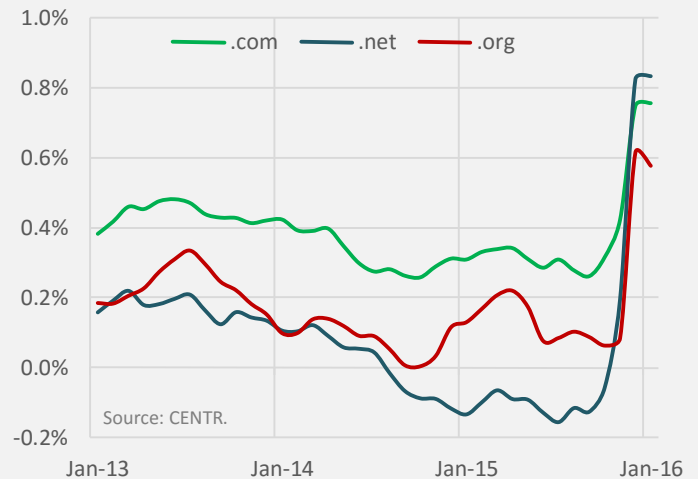|	Domains (million)	Growth (Q4/2015)
.com	123.8	3.2%
.net	15.8	4.7%
.org	10.9	2.9%
.info	5.2	1.2%
.biz	2.4	11.1%

Chart includes top 3 largest legacy gTLDs
6 month moving averages used to smooth the lines. Data Source: ICANN

New gTLDs
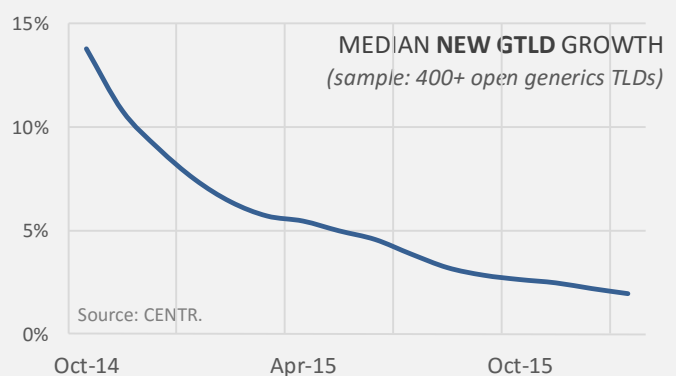
Q4 2015 Status & Trends

Combined domains in all new gTLDs grew 42% over Q4, 2015 to around 10.9 million domains. A few TLDs such as .xyz and .top are beginning to establish their market position in terms of volume.

When looking at TLDs in the top 10 list several have triple digit growth. However, this may have been short lived. Only a few have shown consistent upward trending growth in Q4 2015; .club, .science, .party and .link.

The chart (right) shows median monthly growth rates of new gTLD that are considered to be 'open generics' – i.e. that do not include .brand TLDs. It shows a predictable stabilisation of growth after early growth periods with rates trending towards 1.8% per month.

	Domains	Growth (Q4/2015)	Category
xyz	1,703,489	77%	Lifestyle
top	952,704	77%	Lifestyle
wang	598,102	121%	Technology
win	558,328	355%	Technology
club	538,382	100%	Lifestyle
网址	351,481	-4%	Technology
science	336,521	4%	Education
ren	235,717	NA	Brand
party	217,974	5%	Lifestyle
click	171,053	11%	Technology

Source: CZDAP (ICANN). Data recorded 1 JAN 2016

MEDIAN **NEW GTLD** GROWTH
(sample: 400+ open generics TLDs)

Source: CENTR.

Note: Growth rates include only open generic TLDs. Rates do not include .brand TLDs

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

ccTLD – a Country Code Top Level Domain (ccTLD) is a top level domain used and reserved for a country or dependent territory. Examples include .uk for the United Kingdom or .de for Germany. Each country appoints a manager of its ccTLD and sets the rules for allocating domains.

gTLD – a Generic Top Level Domain (gTLD) is a top level domain that is open to registrants worldwide in contrast to a Country Code Top Level Domain that are often restricted to registrants located in a particular country. The more popular gTLDs are .com, .org and .net

ccTLD IDN – an IDN is a domain name that includes characters used in the local representation of languages that are not written with the twenty-six letters of the basic Latin alphabet (a-z). An IDN can contain Latin letters with diacritical marks, as required by many European languages, or may consist of characters from non-Latin scripts such as Arabic or Chinese. A ccTLD IDN is an IDN at the top level – eg., the ccTLD IDN for the Russian Federation is .РФ which is the Cyrillic script version of .RF (Russian Federation).

sTLD – a Sponsored Top Level Domain (sTLD) is another form of a gTLD overseen by ICANN. An example of a sTLD is .cat for the Catalonia region.

Registrant – The individual or organisation that registers a specific domain name. They hold the right to use that domain name for a specified period of time (often one year however multi-year registrations are increasingly popular).

Registry – An internet domain name registry receives domain name information into a centralised database and transmits the information in internet zone files on the internet so that domain names can be found by users around the world via the worldwide web and email.

ABOUT CENTR

CENTR is the association of European country code top-level domain (ccTLD) registries, such as .de for Germany or .si for Slovenia. CENTR currently counts 52 full and 9 associate members – together, they are responsible for over 80% of all registered country code domain names worldwide. The objectives of CENTR are to promote and participate in the development of high standards and best practices among ccTLD registries.

For any questions on this report, please contact patrick@centr.org