

# World Trademark Review *Daily*

**'no' registry launches major data cleansing operation  
Norway - Hogan Lovells International LLP**

**Domain names**

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NORID, the registry responsible for '.no' domain names in Norway, has launched a data cleansing operation to update the ownership details for registered domain names in line with the registration requirements for '.no' domain names.

The reason behind the operation is that NORID believes that a large proportion of the domain names currently registered no longer meet the registration requirements for '.no' domain names. To meet these requirements, a domain name must be registered to a company listed in the Norwegian Companies Registry, known as the 'Brønnøysund Register Centre', and the number of domain names that can be registered to one company is limited to 100.

At the time of the announcement, of the 552,517 '.no' domain names registered, NORID estimated that as many as 350,000 were likely to be affected by this verification campaign, in most cases due to the fact that the company indicated as the owner of the domain name was no longer listed with the Norwegian Companies Registry and, as such, the domain names did not meet NORID's registration requirements. Up until now, NORID verified the company information only when the domain name was initially registered, and no further verifications were carried out during the lifecycle of the domain name.

Over the coming weeks, NORID will be sending out notifications to the owners of any '.no' domain names where the registrant company is no longer listed with the Norwegian Companies Registry. Upon receipt of the notification, the owner of the domain name will have a period of 60 days in which to ensure that the ownership details are updated in line with the registration requirements. If the ownership details are not updated during this time, the domain name will be suspended and, after a further 30-day quarantine period, it will be released and thus become available for registration by the general public.

In this regard, the tightening up actions of NORID would seem to go against the general trend of liberalisation for country-code top-level domains (ccTLDs). In recent years, most ccTLD registries have tended to make it easier for domain names to be registered by relaxing the rules relating to local presence, rather than more difficult. However, NORID clearly wishes '.no' to remain relatively exclusive, presumably to limit the cybersquatting problems that plague ccTLDs with fewer or no local presence requirements.

The rules also perhaps help to ensure that the content of websites to which '.no' domain names point remains relevant to the Norwegian population. While nothing prevents foreign companies from registering under '.no', they must be committed enough to doing business in Norway to seek out a local Norwegian company to hold the domain name on their behalf in order to fulfil the eligibility restrictions, which is unlikely simply for cybersquatting purposes.

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