

# World Trademark Review Daily

Number of '.nl' domain names registered in 2013 down 13%  
Netherlands - Hogan Lovells LLP

Domain names

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The registry responsible for the running of the '.nl' country-code top-level domain (ccTLD) in the Netherlands, SIDN, has announced that growth was down 13% in 2013 when compared to 2012, with 5,338,364 domain names registered at the end of 2013 compared to 5,115,652 across the same period in 2012. This trend was observed across a large number of ccTLDs during the same period including '.be' (Belgium), which noted for the first time in its history a decrease in the number of new registrations.

Roelof Meijer, the CEO of SIDN, commented:

*"The declining growth of the major West European country-code domains was due primarily to the poor economic conditions. There is a strong link between levels of trade and demand for domain names. Outside Western Europe, and particularly in the emerging economies, domain name growth remained higher. The national domains of the so-called BRICS countries expanded by more than 25% in 2013, for example. Furthermore, there is simply less scope for growth in Western Europe, because the number of registered domain names per head of the population is much higher than elsewhere."*

Meijer went on to add:

*"Numerous new gTLDs will come online in 2014. The arrival of the new gTLDs may be expected to permanently change the domain name landscape. SIDN regards the introduction of the new domains as an opportunity. We will be acting as registry service provider for '.amsterdam', for example. At the same time, we expect growth in the '.nl' domain to slow further in 2014."*

SIDN has also been [working hard to make security a priority](#), introducing a new feature for '.nl' domain name registrants to enable them to prevent unauthorised changes to the glue records for their domain names, thus allowing more protection against the increasing number of Domain Name System (DNS) server hacks. SIDN has also set up AbuseHub, which is a system that enables information about botnet infections to be shared quickly.

SIDN also saw the number of '.nl' domain names secured with DNSSEC increase from 1.3 million to almost 1.7 million which, according to SIDN, is more than any other TLD. The aim of DNSSEC technology is to secure weak points in the DNS which would potentially be exploitable by pirates. DNSSEC works by digitally signing responses received from the DNS. It thus helps to ensure that internet users reach their intended destination and are not misdirected to, for example, lookalike websites used to fraudulently collect personal details such as account numbers and passwords (often referred to as 'phishing').

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