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IDNs to be launched under '.si' extension

Domain names

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ARNES (the Academic and Research Network of Slovenia), the entity responsible for managing the '.si' country-code top-level domain, has announced that new rules governing '.si' domain names will enter into force on October 20 2010, allowing the registration of internationalised domain names (IDNs).

IDNs may comprise non-Latin characters, such as characters with diacritical marks, which are used in many European languages - for example, 'à' (the Latin letter 'A' with a grave accent), 'á' ('A' with an acute accent) and 'š' ('S' with a caron).

Currently, it is possible to register only '.si' domain names using:

- the standard Latin alphabet ('A' to 'Z'),
- the numerals 0 to 9; and
- hyphens.

The Slovenian language uses the Latin script, but also includes three characters with a caron, namely 'c', 'š' and 'ž'. The new rules will thus create opportunities for companies and internet users by allowing them to register and use domains in the Slovenian language.

This is especially important for the country because some Slovenian words have a different meaning depending on whether or not a caron is used (eg, 'most.si' refers to a bridge, while 'mošt.si' refers to an alcoholic drink).

Under the new rules, it will also be possible to register two-character domain names (instead of the current minimum of three characters), while the upper limit of 63 characters will remain unchanged.

There will be no sunrise period, so the new domain names will be registered on a first-come, first-served basis.

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