



Q4  
2017

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# .pl domain name market

NASK'S REPORT FOR THE FOURTH QUARTER OF 2017

**NASK**

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# Introduction



**Wojciech Kamieniecki**  
NASK Director

## Dear readers,

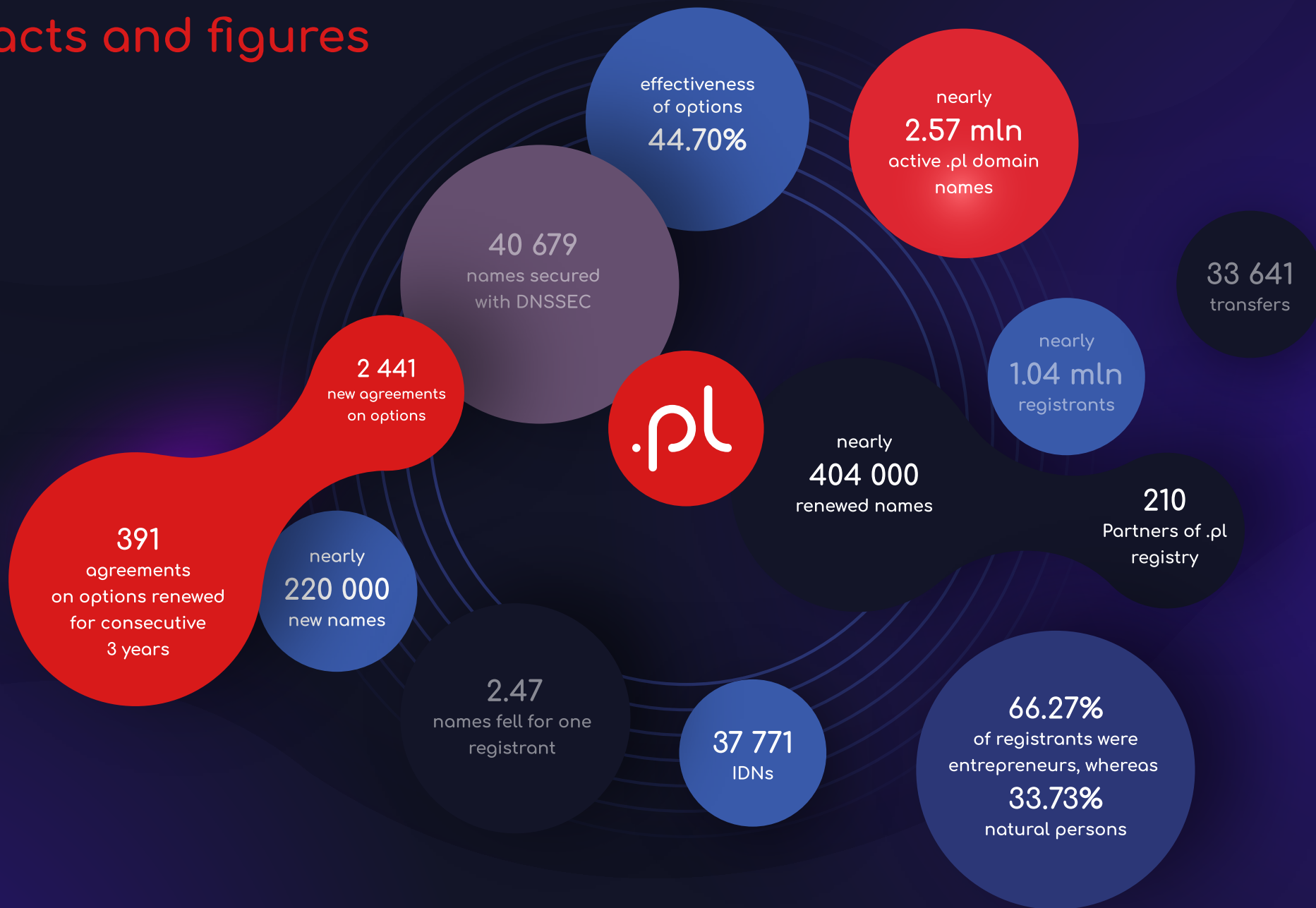
From January to December 2017 883 258 names were registered in the .pl domain. At the end of 2017 2 576 063 active domain names were being maintained for more than one million of .pl domain name registrants. The number of .pl domain names, secured with a DNSSEC service, in the .pl registry at the end of 2017, amounted to 40 679. Entrepreneurs, who from the beginning of October to the end of December 2017 registered 136 035 names, constituted nearly 62% of registrants of the names registered within that period. Total number of registrations executed during the fourth quarter amounted to 220 275, i.e. 84 240 names were registered by natural persons.

During the last quarter of 2017 registrants were registering daily average 2 396 names. The most numerous new registrations, nearly 76%, were effected directly in the .pl domain, almost 20% of registrations were pertaining to functional domains, whereas ca. 5% of names appeared in the regional domains. From the beginning of October to the end of December 2017 daily average 27 names, secured with DNSSEC, were being entered in the registry, while an approximate result last time was recorded in January 2014.

In December 2017, within the framework of the Open Day of the .pl registry, we invited to NASK all entities declaring interest in joining the NASK Registrar Programme. This event has already entered in the calendar of meetings, organized by the .pl registry, for current and potential registrars. The upcoming Open Day at NASK is scheduled for spring 2018. Among the events of the last quarter of 2017 worthy of note is also the fact that NASK was awarded a certificate of information security management system which includes, among others, selected processes in the Domain Department, consistent with the requirements of ISO/IEC 27001:2013 standard. In chapter "Insight into .pl registry" you will find an interview with NASK PIB's Quality Assurance Officer, Paweł Goławski, who describes the quality issues regarding the implementation of ISO 9001 standard on the registration and maintenance of domain names.

I invite you to get acquainted with the newest report, presenting the data from the .pl registry for the fourth quarter of 2017.

# Facts and figures



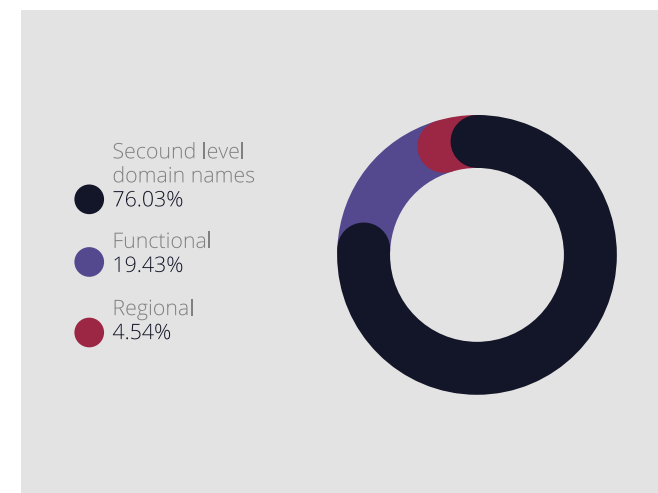
# .pl domain names active in DNS

## Domains in .pl registry

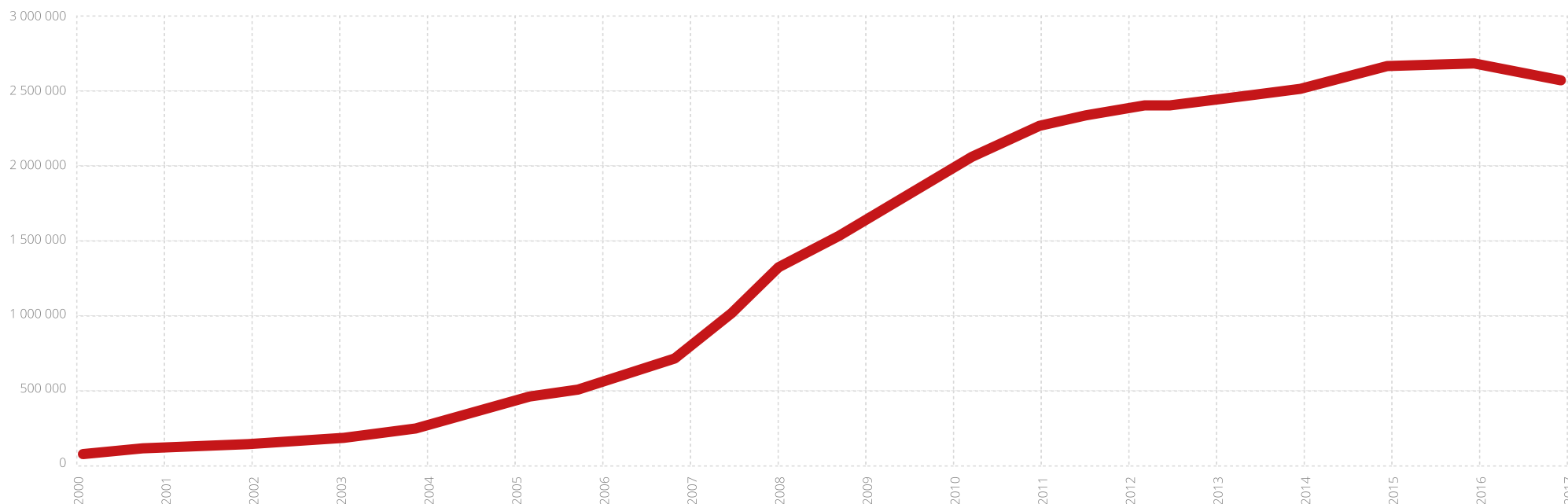
In the .pl registry at the end of the fourth quarter of 2017, there were **2 576 063** domain names active in DNS. As compared to the third quarter the volume of the registry decreased by **18 951** names.

Out of all domain names, active in DNS, **76.03%** were being maintained directly in the .pl top level domain, **19.43%** in functional domains (e.g. .org.pl, .net.pl) whereas **4.54%** in regional domains (e.g. .szczecin.pl, .katowice.pl).

Number of domain names active in DNS as divided into the type of zone, Q4 2017



Number of .pl domain names in DNS

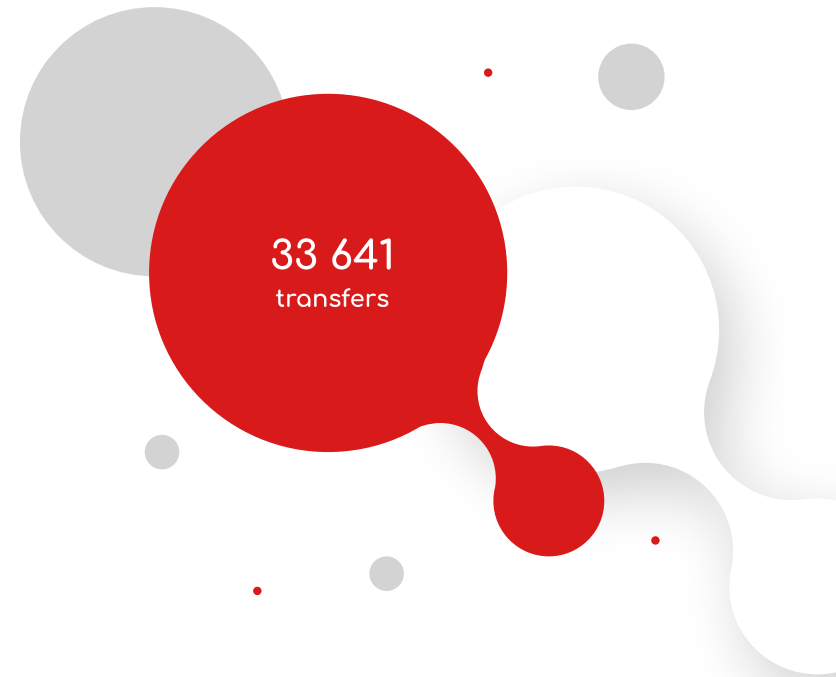


# .pl domain names active in DNS

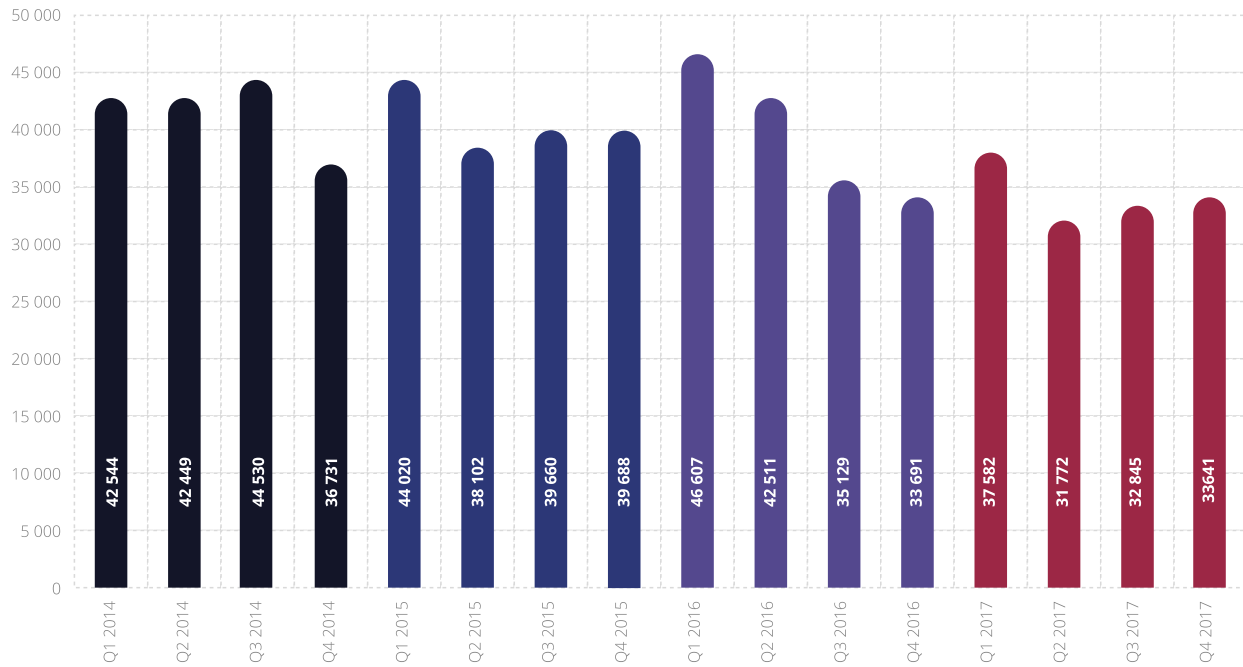
## Transfers

From the beginning of October to the end of December 2017 .pl domain registrants **33 641** times changed a registrar servicing their .pl domain names, which constituted **366** domain transfers daily average.

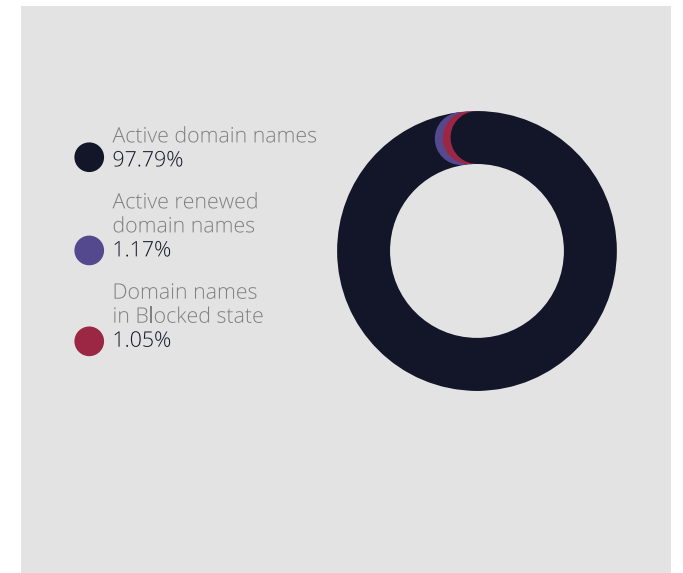
In **774** cases the transfer was executed with a simultaneous renewal of a domain name for a consecutive billing period while **352** of them being effected after the previous billing period had been completed.



Number of .pl domain name transfers



Division of transfers, Q4 2017



# .pl domain names active in DNS

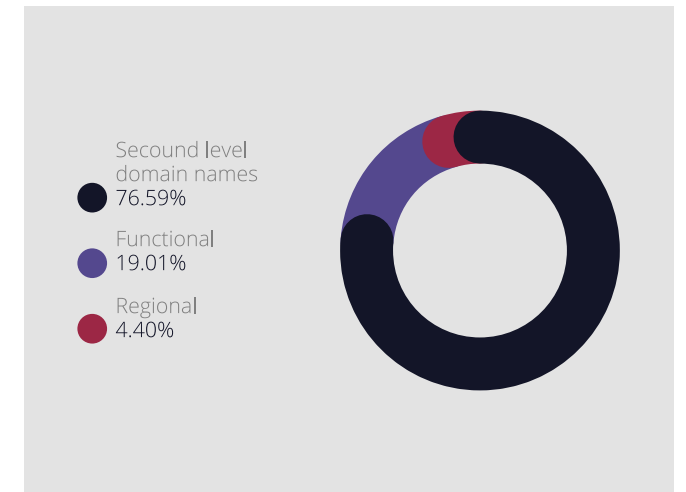
## Renewal of a domain name for a consecutive billing period

The renewal rate, at the end of December 2017, amounted to **62.62%**. In the fourth quarter of 2017 over **404 thousand** names were renewed, with second level domain names constituting **76.59%**, functional domain names **19.01%** and regional domain names **4.40%**.

**81.17%** of .pl domain names, renewed between 1 October and 31 December 2017, were registered before 2016, **16.93%** in 2016, while remaining **1.90%** in 2017.

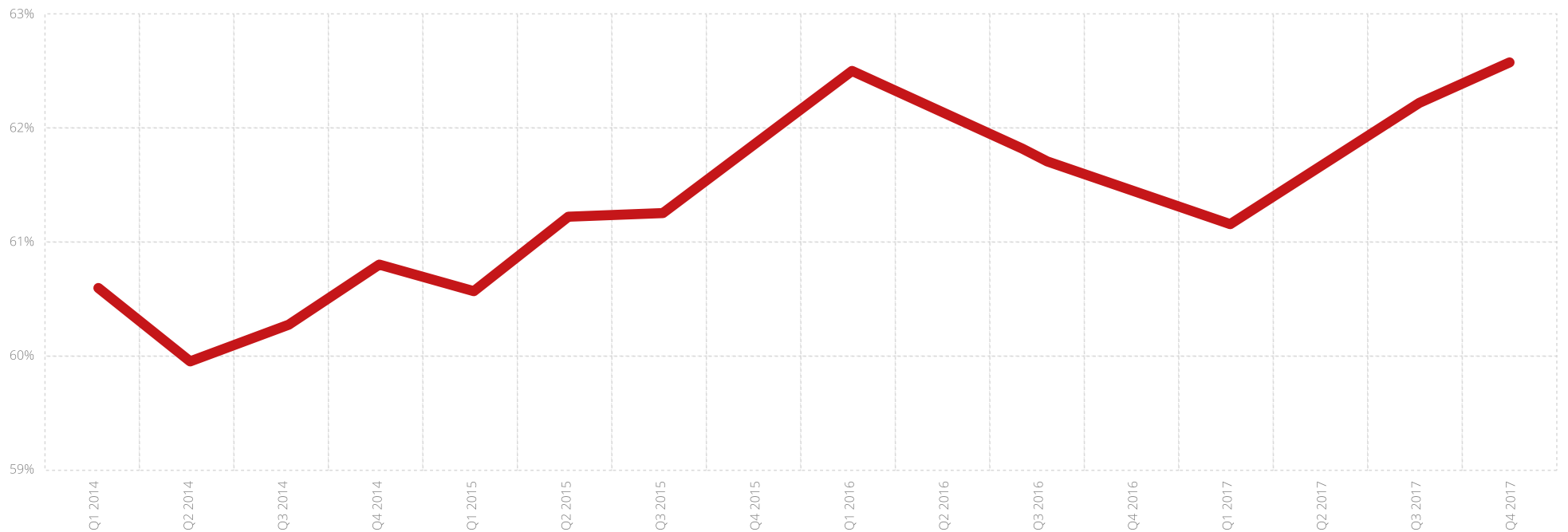
In case of **1869** names the last day of a billing period was shifted by an individually defined number of days.

Structure of renewed .pl domain names, Q4 2017



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Renewal rate of .pl domain names



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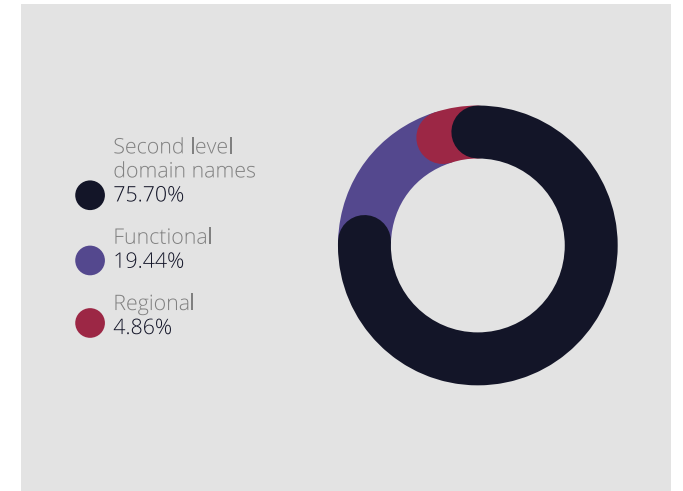
# New domain names in .pl registry

During the fourth quarter of 2017 **220 275** .pl domain names were registered. In October the number of registrations was the highest and amounted to **78 560**. In November **76 754** new names were registered, whereas the number of names, registered in December, amounted to **64 961**.

A daily average number of registered .pl domain names, during the quarter under discussion, amounted to **2 394**. In particular months the amount of daily registrations equalled on average **2 534** in October, **2 558** in November and **2 096** in December.

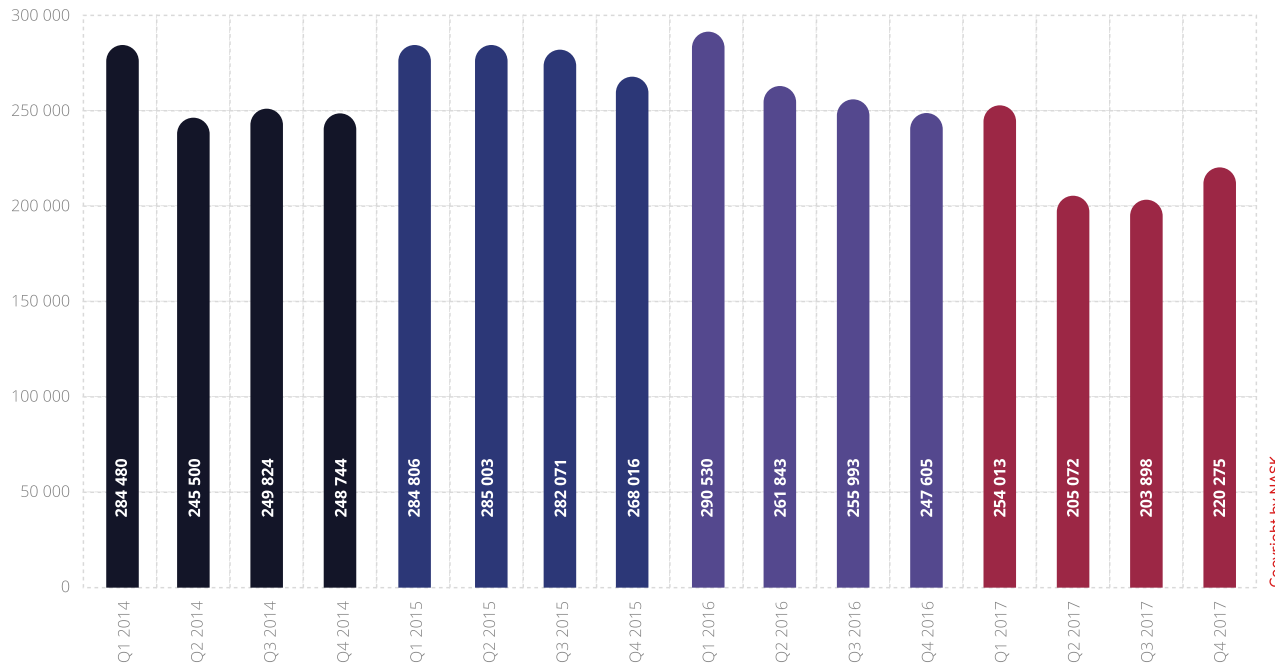
From the beginning of October to the end of December 2017 **75.70%** of registrations were effected directly in the .pl domain (second level domain names), **19.44%** in functional domains, whereas remaining **4.86%** in regional domains.

**.pl domain name registrations as divided into a type of zone, Q4 2017**



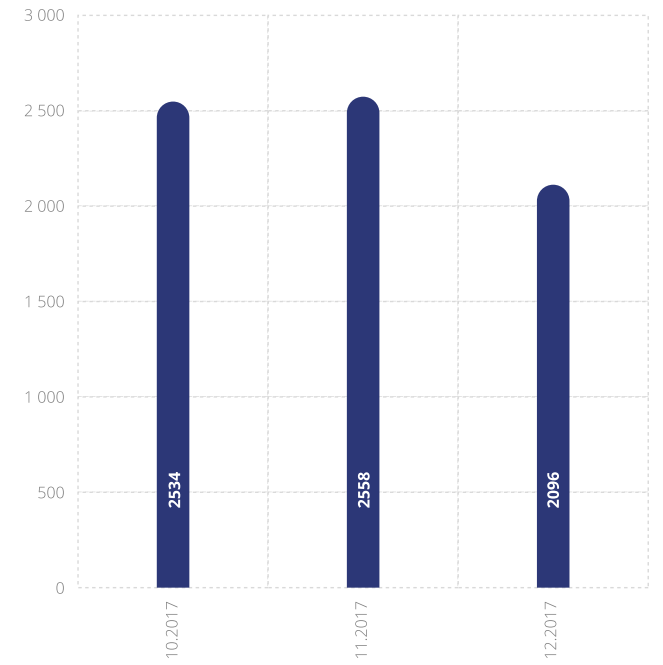
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**Number of .pl domain name registrations**



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**Number of .pl domain name registrations, daily average, Q4 2017**



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# Registrants of .pl domain names

## Registrants in the .pl registry

In the .pl registry, at the end of the fourth quarter of 2017, there were **1 042 138** unique entries of .pl domain name registrants. It is by **6 456** registrants more than at the end of the third quarter of 2017. **2.47** .pl domain names fell for one registrant on average. Entrepreneurs constituted **66.27%** and natural persons **33.73%** of all registrants.

## Place of residence of .pl domain name registrants

At the end of December 2017, from amongst all the domain names, active in DNS, **93.87%** were being maintained for the registrants domiciled in Poland, while **6.13%** of names for registrants from abroad. In this group the most numerous registrants were from Germany (**1.51%**), Great Britain (**0.67%**) and United States (**0.59%**). Out of all new .pl domain names registrations, effected in the fourth quarter of 2017, **91.43%** were realized for registrants from Poland, while remaining **8.57%** of names for foreign registrants, amongst whom predominant were registrants from Cyprus (**4.10%**), Germany (**0.92%**) and Great Britain (**0.59%**).

## Registrants vs .pl domain names

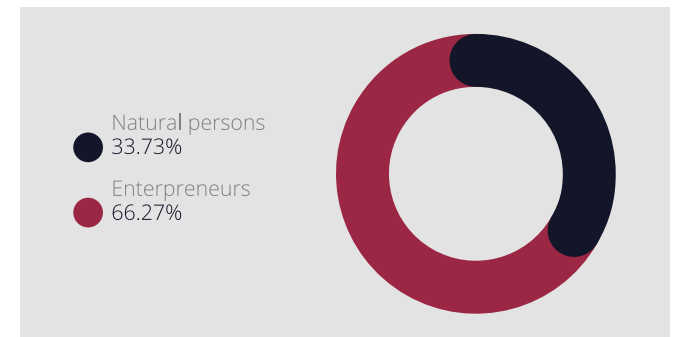
For entrepreneurs and organizations there were being maintained in the registry **68.35%** of names, active in DNS, whereas remaining **31.65%** for natural persons. For entrepreneurs and organizations **61.76%** of new registrations were executed, while for natural persons **38.24%**.

At the end of December 2017 the .pl registry was maintaining one domain name for **66.59%** of registrants, two domain names for **15.65%**, three domain names for **5.81%**, and 10 and more .pl domain names were held by **2.27%** of registrants.

## Assignments

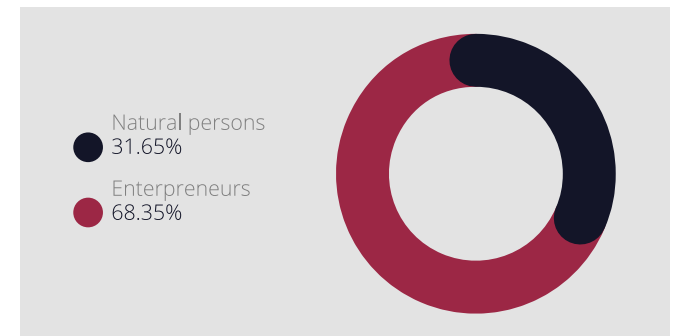
In the fourth quarter of 2017 there were **33 528** changes of .pl domain names registrants.

Division of registrants of .pl domain names, Q4 2017



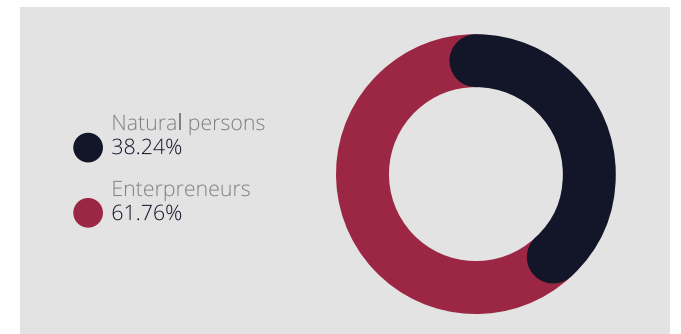
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Division of active .pl domain names for registrants, Q4 2017



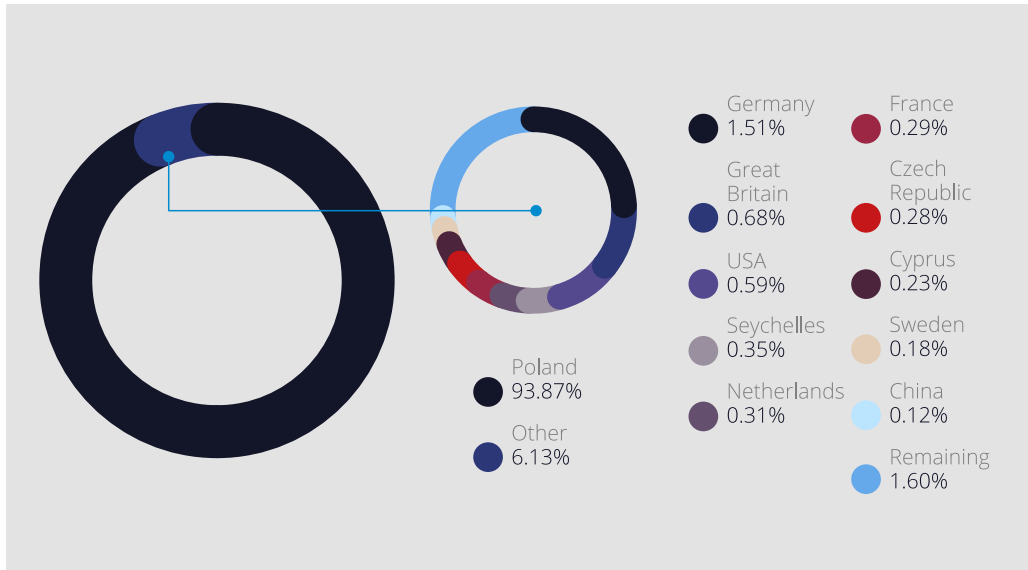
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Division of .pl domain name registrations for the type of registrant, Q4 2017

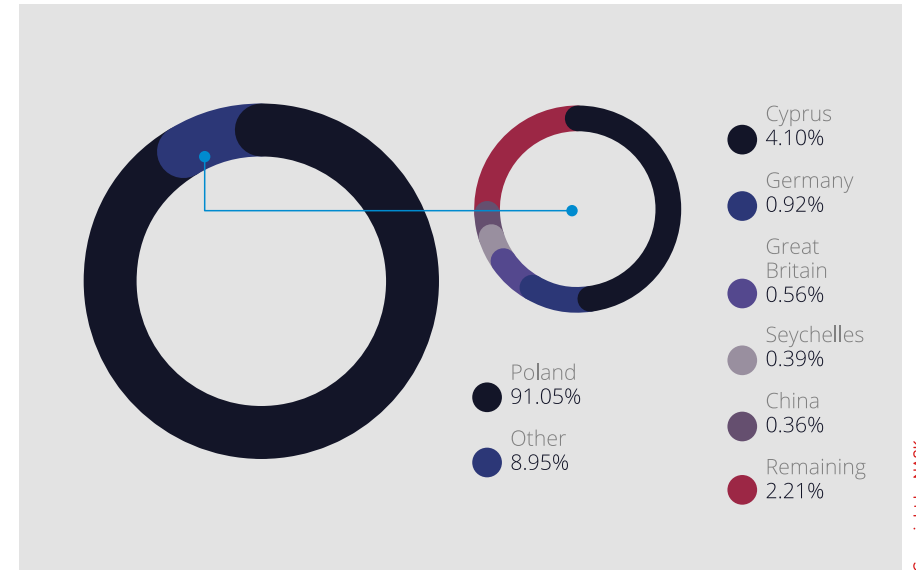


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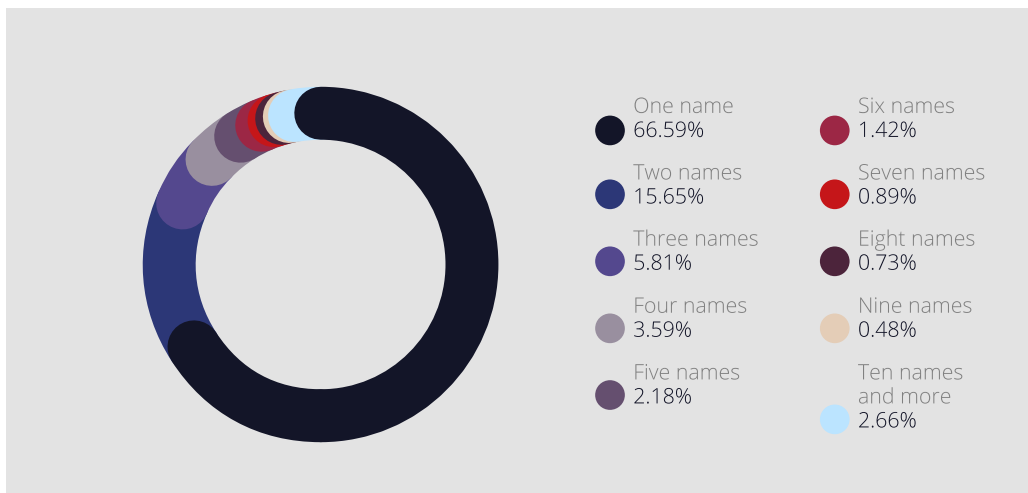
**Division of .pl domain names active in DNS for registrant's country, Q4 2017**



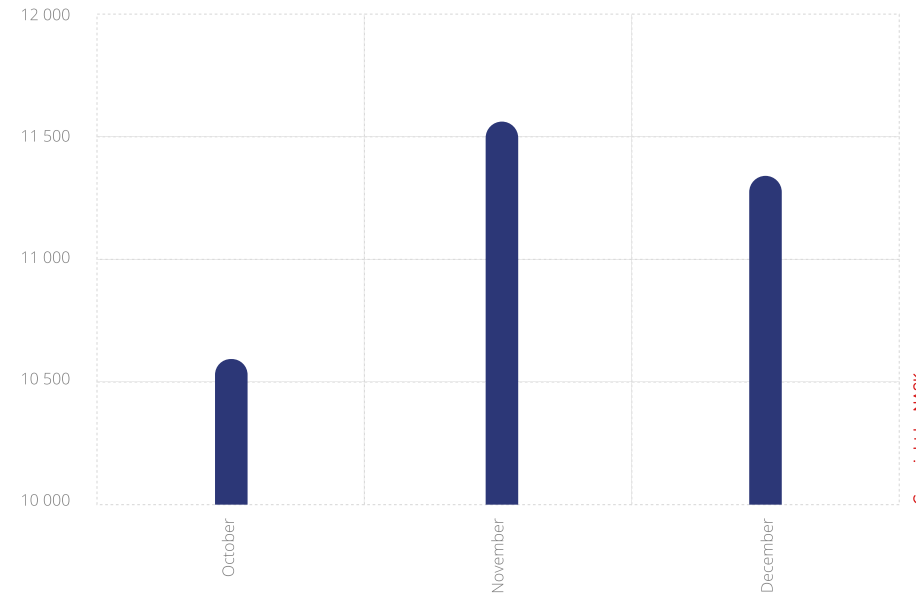
**Division of .pl domain name registrations for a registrant's country, Q4 2017**



**Division of registrants by account of the number of maintained .pl domain names, Q4 2017**



**Number of changes of .pl domain name registrants, Q4 2017**



# Additional services of .pl registry

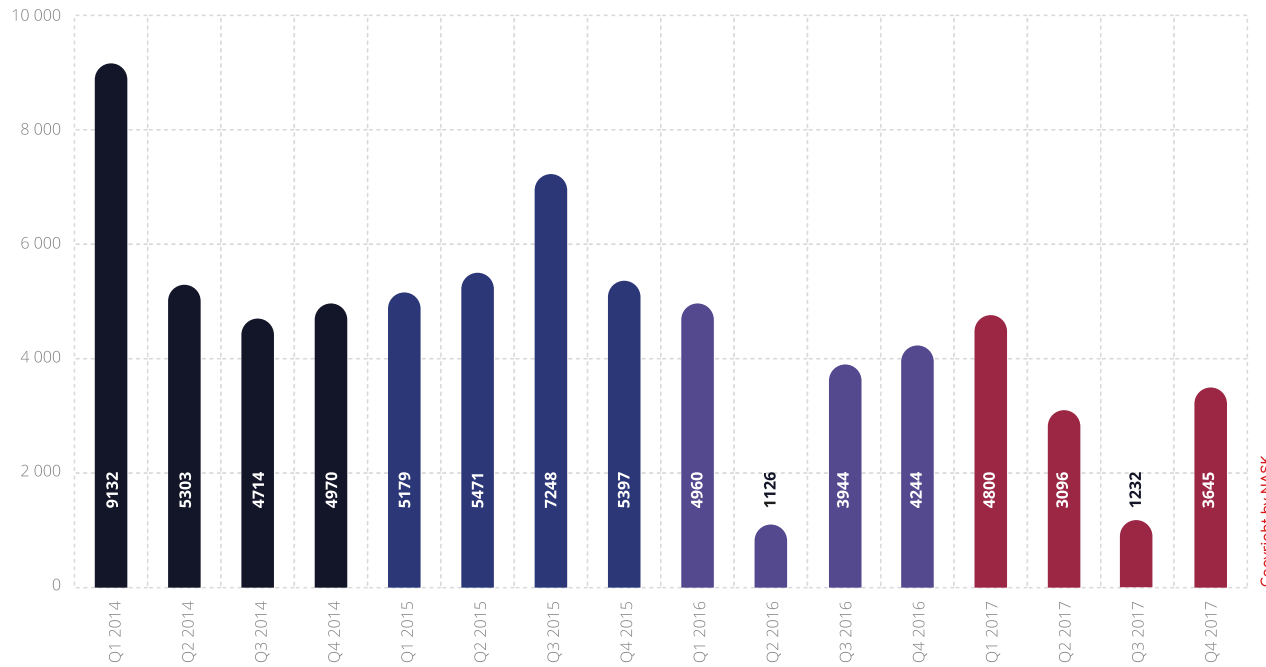
## IDNs

At the end of the fourth quarter of 2017, the .pl registry contained **37 771** names, active in DNS, with national diacritic signs (IDNs), constituting **1.47%** of all active .pl domain names.

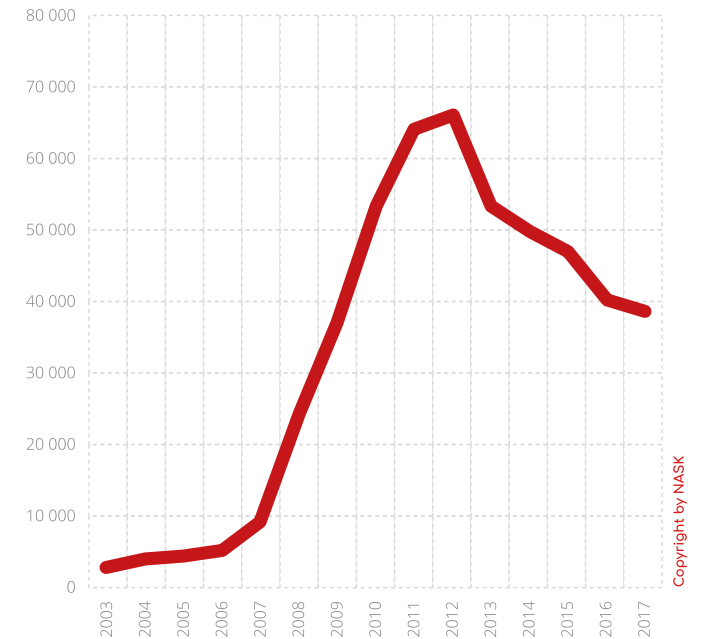
From the beginning of October to the end of December 2017 **3 645** IDNs were registered, i.e. **1.65%** of all .pl domain names registered during that period.

37 771  
IDNs

Number of .pl IDNs registrations



Number of .pl IDNs active in DNS



# Additional services of .pl registry

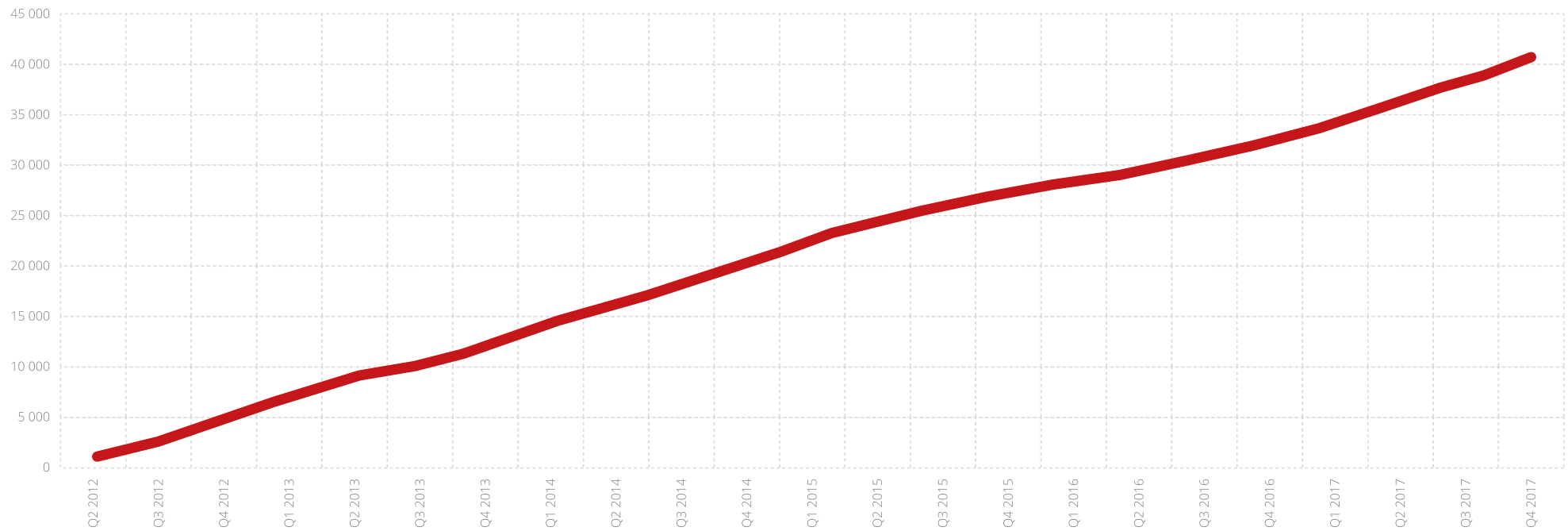
## DNSSEC

In the .pl registry, at the end of the fourth quarter of 2017 there were **40 679** names secured with DNSSEC protocol. From the beginning of October to the end of December the number of secured .pl domain names increased by **2 526**. Daily average, **27** secured domain names, were added to the .pl registry.

**86.98%** of secured names were registered directly in the .pl domain, **9.95%** in the functional domains, whereas **3.07%** in the regional domains.



Number of the .pl domain names secured with DNSSEC



# Additional services of .pl registry

## Options

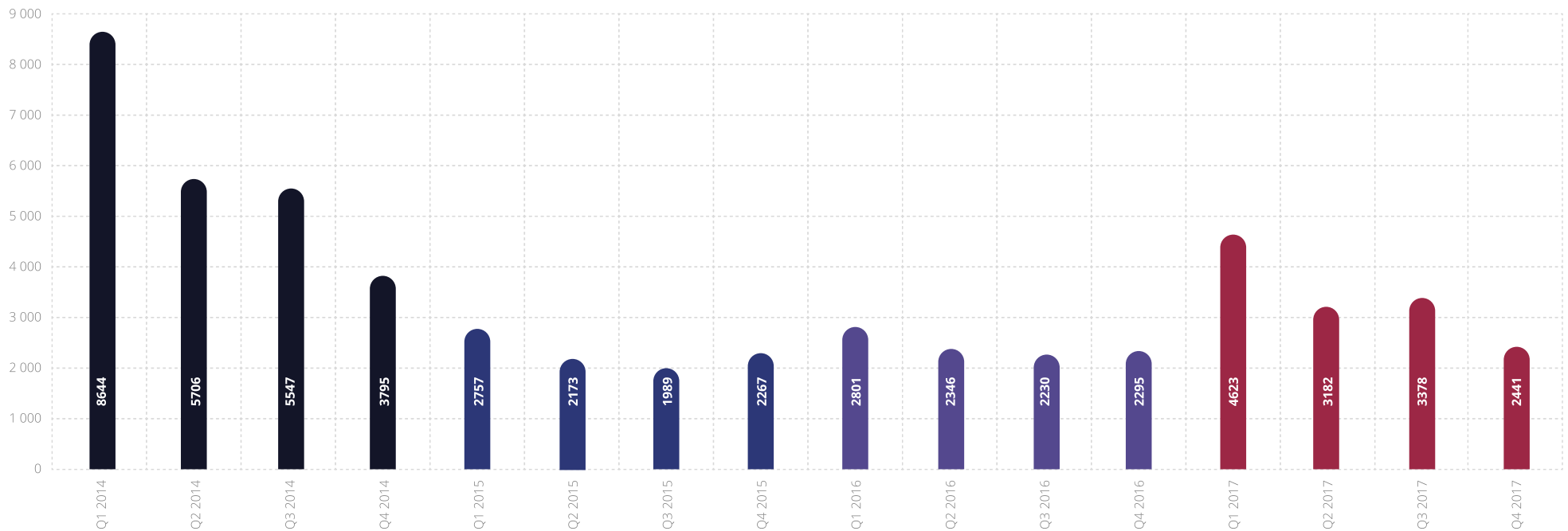
During the fourth quarter of 2017 **2 441** agreements on options for the registration of .pl domain names were concluded, whereas **391** existing agreements were renewed for consecutive three years.

**1 137** agreements on options ended with providing a domain name for registration, whereas in **81** cases the registration procedure was not completed due to reasons attributable to an option holder, which resulted in the domain names being released to the group of names available for registration.

Since launching the service of option for registration of a domain name in June 2004, the .pl registry has concluded more than **207 thousand** agreements, with **44.70%** thereof providing .pl domain names for registration.



Number of WLS registrations



# Registrars of .pl domain names

## .pl Registry Partner Programme

The .pl registry, at the end of the fourth quarter of 2017, was cooperating with **210** registrars from **23** countries. **129** registrars had their registered offices in Poland and were servicing in total **74.95%** of .pl domain names, **54** registrars, seated in other European countries, were servicing **14.68%** of .pl domain names, while **27** registrars, domiciled beyond Europe, were servicing **10.37%** of .pl domain names.



Division of Partners for their place of residence, Q4 2017



Division of .pl domain names for Partner's registered office, Q4 2017



# Registrars of .pl domain names

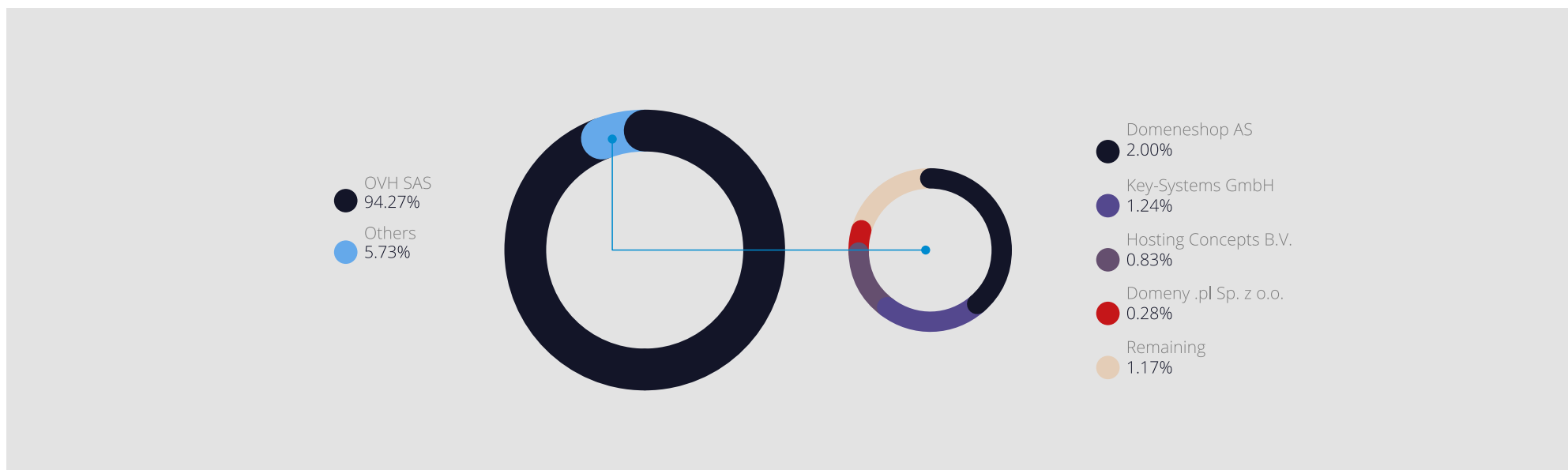
## Division of .pl domain name market

In the fourth quarter of 2017, Nazwa.pl Sp. z o.o. remained on a leader position in the .pl domain name market in respect of the number of new registrations (**33.68%**), the share of domain names serviced by this registrar also ascended (**22.44%**). The volume of .pl domain name registrants, serviced by Nazwa.pl, is the highest (**23.19%**).

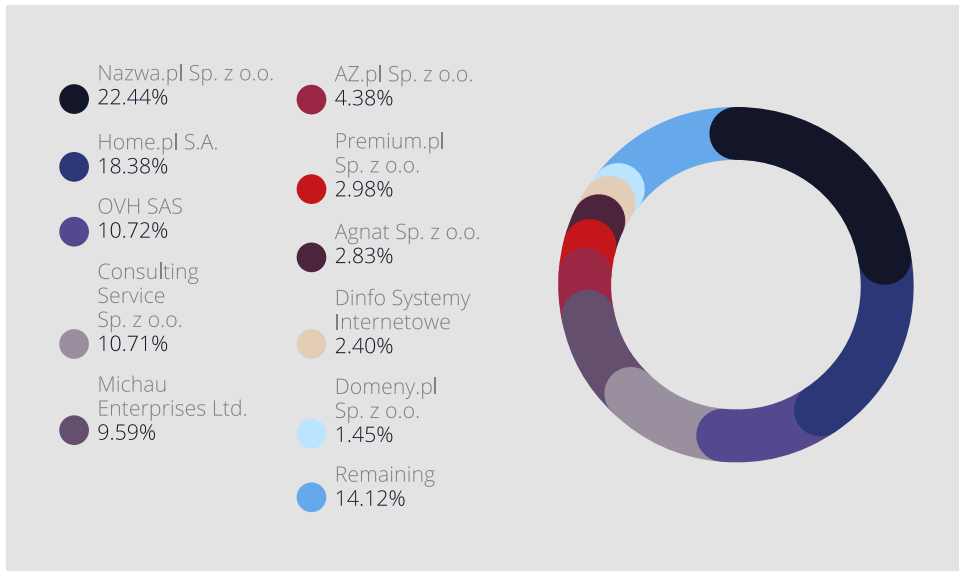
The leader of the market of options for registration of .pl domain names remains Michau Enterprises Ltd., assisting in conclusion of **45.06%** of agreements on options.

In the fourth quarter of 2017 the highest number of domain names, secured with the DNSSEC protocol, was being serviced consistently by OVH SAS which was servicing **94.27%** of secured names.

Partner's market share in the service of .pl domain names secured with DNSSEC, Q4 2017

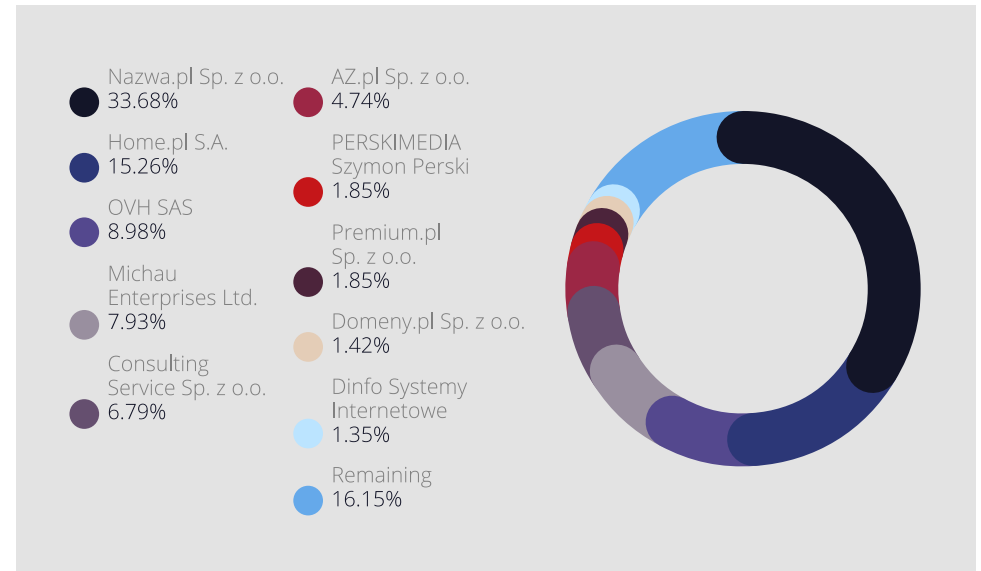


Partner's market share in the service of .pl domain names, Q4 2017



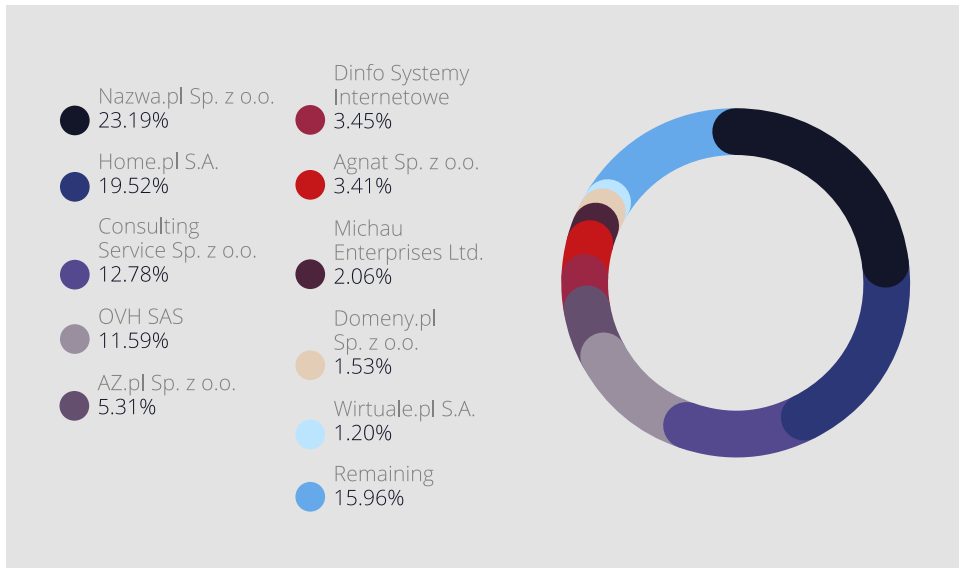
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Partner's market share in registration of new .pl domain names, Q4 2017



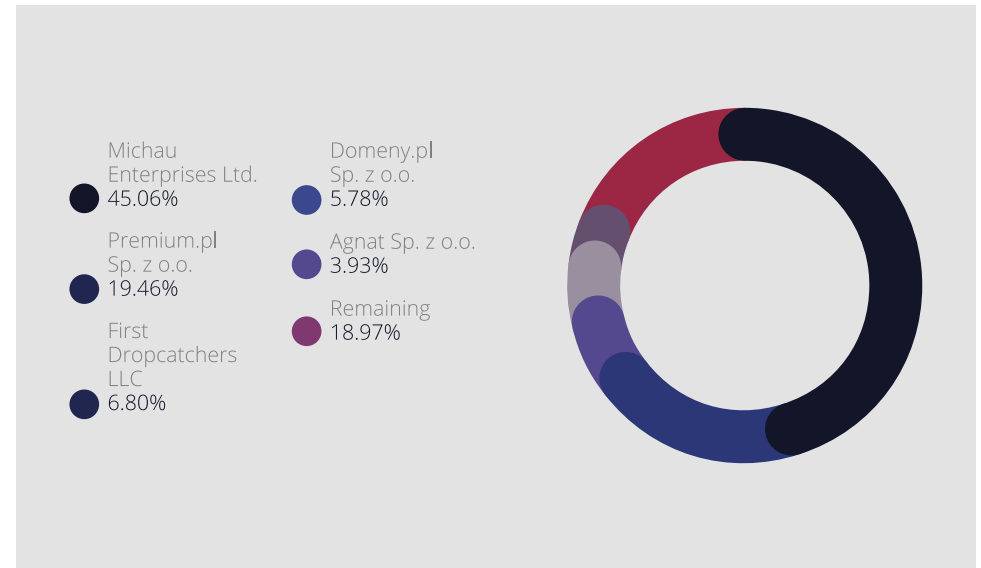
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Partner's market share in the service of registrants of .pl domain names, Q4 2017



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Partner's share in the WLS market, Q4 2017



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# Insight into .pl registry

## Normality in organizations, i.e. how to harness ISO



**Paweł T. Gołowski**, DNS Project Management and Business Analysis Team Leader in the Domain Department, NASK PIB's Quality Assurance Manager, expert in the field of business process management systems and a long-standing professional in quality and security in the area of domain names.

*NASK PIB, running the registry of .pl country code top level domain uninterruptedly since 2004, holds a certificate of Quality Management System in conformity to the requirements of ISO 9001 standard. The system covers all the areas and processes pertaining to the registration and maintenance of .pl domain names. Furthermore, NASK PIB obtained in autumn 2017 a certificate confirming the compliance with ISO 27001 standard in the implemented Information Security Management system.*

*To begin with, I will ask you a very general question: why ISO? What were the circumstances that gave rise to the real need for defining processes by means of a quality standard?*

To answer that question I have to go back to the beginnings of my work at NASK. As you might know, I have been with the .pl registry for over twenty years.

When I started here my adventure, the registry contained 2.5 thousand domain names, i.e. a thousand times fewer than currently. I participated in practically every change being implemented in a domain registration system. Until the end of 1997 the system did not change in a significant way – registration was carried out on the basis of e-mail, in most cases, sent by a hosting provider representing the end user, followed by issuing an invoice for registration a domain name in DNS. Thereafter, when the domain name maintenance had already begun, we were changing the delegation of that domain name as requested by the customer. Those were in fact all the activities we were involved in. Since February 1998 the system has started to change slowly – terms and conditions were more formalized, requests in a written form appeared as well as annual maintenance fees. New terms started to be used, among others, registrant, assignment of agreement, disputes on domain names, etc., there were lots of them. The interest of the domain market grew as well, which, in turn, resulted with increased number of requests for registration and data update, letters and incoming phone calls.

## Insight into .pl registry

... and NASK, at that time, was not operating in an automated Registry system and, what is more, it was only direct service, since the Partner Programme (registry-registrar model) was not in place yet.

It was really so. Taking into account the above circumstances, more and more errors as well as delays in performance of orders started to turn up. At certain moment we were overwhelmed with such number of requests for registration that its process took 2 to 3 weeks... The amount of requests was exceeding 500 daily. It was frequently the case that a half of them we had to verify negatively due to their incompliance with the binding regulations or not precise communication at our end. All the time we were improving something and eliminating problems but new ones were still appearing. And in this tough times, more or less in spring 2002, we came up with the idea that it was necessary to take a different approach – we said “let’s go for ISO 9001”.

What were the implementation phases of the quality system based on the ISO standard?

The final decision on launching in the .pl registry the implementation of the quality management

system in compliance with ISO 9001 standard was made at the highest level of NASK in August 2002. As I have already said, the underlying will to improve processes and facilitate the quality of services was a key factor that moved us to implement that system. To accomplish that it was necessary to specify the scope of responsibility and entitlements of employees as well as to improve inner communication. We also really cared about reducing costs by decreasing the number of errors, and consequently, complaints. The standard recommends to adopt a process approach, thus, in the first phase we were faced with a lot of work consisted in identifying all processes having impact on the quality of rendered services, finding the relations among them and finally dividing them into primary, support and management processes. We identified the needs of our customers and laid down the quality policy on registration and maintenance of domain names. **The adopted policy obliged us to accomplish highest possible level of customer satisfaction, to aim to attain lowest possible level of errors and to improve the cooperation with Registrars which started to be referred to as strategic accounts of NASK.**

Indeed, you have mentioned about NASK’ Partners. In December 2002 NASK launched a Partner Programme which coincided with ongoing work on ISO 9001 standard.

That is right. In that time we were not focusing only on the implementation of a quality system but we also strived to increase our technology level. It was necessary. At the moment, when we decided to launch registration and service of .pl domain names through our Partners, there were 157 thousand domain names registered in the .pl registry and that number was growing fast. So far we were servicing all the registrants directly, but the time to begin the deregulation process of the domain market in Poland had just come. Conceptual work on a modern system of domain registration and service was commenced in the first half of 2002 while in the autumn we started to proceed with development activities. Without waiting for their completion in December we concluded a first Partner Agreement, thus significantly facilitating the registration and update process, but first and foremost, giving our customer a choice where to register and service their domain names – directly at NASK or via our Partners. Within the first months of the NASK Partner Programme being in force a proper agree-

# Insight into .pl registry

-ment was signed by only a few entities. But the number of potential registrars, interested in joining the Programme, began to grow rapidly when NASK, at the end of March 2003, launched, as one of the first registries in the world, a state-of-the-art Registry system, designed to communicate with Partners by means of EPP which in fact gave birth to a dynamic development of the domain market in Poland.

Let's now go back to ISO. How did the parallel implementation of ISO look like?

Yes, going back to the quality system. One could ask a question, why did it take so long? In our case it was entirely a grassroots initiative to implement a quality system – it came from the employees of the Domain Department, and not, as it frequently happens, a quick adaptation of an outsourced product of other organization. In the .pl registry, process flows, procedures, manuals or forms have been developed by us and on our own in accordance with our need and experience, so as it is legible, transparent and comprehensible to each employee. Hardly ever did we have to impose anything on our employees – a vast majority of us saw a sense in it, and those who were not convinced yet, quite a normal response for

implementation of such solutions, managed to get to like it as time went by. Obviously, while implementing the system we had to go through proper trainings on the standard, identify tools supporting process modelling and choose those most suitable for our needs. Taking into consideration all those aspects, the system was being implemented gradually so as we could observe the results of its application on a current basis and then improve it, if necessary. When in autumn 2003 we assumed that the system was totally ready and in our opinion met all the requirements of the standard, we started to endeavour to be certified so as we had independent external confirmation that we did our implementation job properly. Nevertheless, from day to day we observed that the system was operating better and better and that it was bringing positive results such as noticeable decrease in the number of errors, faster completion of tasks and consequently lower number of customers' complaints. After all, it was our aim! It could be also said that **NASK introduced new quality in the world of domain service, since we were the first ccTLD registry worldwide to obtain a certificate of conformity of the quality management system to the requirements of ISO 9001 standard, what happened in March 2004.**

You speak so positively about ISO, but explain please what stands behind it, since so many firms decide to its implementation. And is this system for everyone?

Yes, indeed, the system is for everyone. It may be implemented not only in manufacturing plants but also in trade and service enterprises, organizations, offices, etc. It might be big entities but also those small ones. To make things easier, it is assumed in the standard that all those entities are referred to as "organizations". The scope of implementation in particular organizations may differ, but in general, ISO 9001 standard covers 8 quality principles meeting of which affects the ability to achieve the objectives pursued. I will discuss only a few of them. First of all a client-focus principle, since the organization's position in the market always depends on clients. It is necessary to understand their current and future needs as well in order to respond to their expectations. Employees' engagement is also important. As I have already mentioned, we did not have at NASK any problem with identifying a need of change for the better and our engagement was growing further when we saw the advantages of those changes. First of all, it is the employees who are the most valuable resources of an organization and without their input

## Insight into .pl registry

the organization cannot operate properly. Another two important principles are a process approach and a system approach to management – efficiency and effectiveness of action are higher when processes in the organization have been defined and properly managed and their mutual interaction is comprehensible. And of course, we cannot forget about a need for continual improvement, which in accordance with the requirements of the standard should be a primary objective of the organization. I repeat – a basic efficiency determinant of functioning a quality management system is meeting customer's requirements. It may be evaluated, among others, by a customer satisfaction survey checking to what extent their expectations have been met, thanks to which continual improvement and avoidance of inconsistencies is possible. We make such a survey annually among our key accounts – Partners and analyse their results. If anything requires to be changed, we do it, of course to the best of our organizational and financial abilities.

What may cause the impediments of keeping ISO 9001 standard in place, e.g. rarely applied by the employees or unrealistic standards?

It is frequently the case that the implementation of a quality management system in an organization is imposed from the top down. Top management assumes that this solution will solve all the existing problems and additionally the obtained certificate could be used to boast about among business partners. Unfortunately, some implementations are still referred to as a “cut-and-dried solution”. Since there is time pressure imposed by the executive management it is a common practice to outsource a consulting company bringing “universal” procedures, frequently not adapted to organization's needs and then to let the employees work and proceed in accordance with those unrealistic procedures. Obviously, it is related with resistance of employees who tend to continue their work habits while the system exists only on paper. Afterwards, problems may occur during control audits or recertification. It turns out that the system is insufficient. My observations and experience confirm that the system should operate properly when employees feel that they contribute and influence their work commitment and performance while the management accepts and promotes this state of affairs. In case of errors we should not blame anybody but look for system and organizational reasons and seek to eliminate those errors so as they do not appear again.

You have had long experience as the Quality Assurance Manager at NASK PIB. Has the standard been adapted, over the years, to changing realities, or is it a future-proof standard?

ISO 9001 standard has been changing over the years. It was developed in late 80' but it was based on other quality management standard - BS5750, published in 1979. The implementation in NASK, completed with a certificate being awarded, was carried out in accordance with the requirements of ISO 9001:2000 standard; after a few years we had to switch to 9001:2008 standard. This year all the certificates, issued under the standard version of 2008, are expiring, and in order to improve the system and to maintain the certificate, all organizations have to upgrade to the newest version of the standard – ISO 9001:2015. A part of them has already upgraded their systems, while it is ahead of us in 2018.

What do the changes in the new version of the standard involve?

In the new version the main emphasis was put on attaining the compliance of goods and services with the requirements as well as on customer satisfac-



# Insight into .pl registry

tion. There were implemented the requirements on specifying a so called context of the organization, i.e. adaptation of quality management system to internal and external factors affecting the functioning of the organization as well as approach to develop and attain objectives. The most important change, however, in this standard seems to be the introduction of systematic approach to risk, enabling to ensure identification and control of risk during designing and operating of the quality management system. Certainly, there are much more changes, but I have mentioned only those which I find essential. From among the remaining changes worthy of note is the change of the structure of the standard itself and application of terminology and titles of subchapters so as simultaneous employment of different standards of management systems was less complex.

## What other standards can you mention?

For instance, international standard ISO 27001:2013, which helps organizations keep information assets secured.. We should bear in mind that in the beginning of 2017 we accomplished a successive phase of the deregulation process, initiated several years ago, of domain name market in Poland, which I mentioned in the very beginning of our conversation.

Namely, we ceased the direct service of .pl domain, leaving the function of a registrar to our Partners. We declared, at that time, that NASK would concentrate its actions not only on maintaining highest service quality but also on providing stability and security in the .pl registry. Therefore, last year we implemented in NASK a system based on the requirements of ISO 27001:2013 standard. The system was implemented, among others, in the .pl registry, i.e. in the area of registration and maintenance of domain names, while a proper certificate of conformity to the standard was granted to us in November last year. This time the implementation of the system, consistent with the requirements of the ISO standard, took us less time due to the fact that we already had a paved implementation way and significant experience - ready to use. Our aim is to minimize the risk related to the information security and to be prepared to different incidents pertaining to the information security. Thus, not only quality is important for us, but also the security.

Would you now got engaged in the process of implementing ISO from the scratch? Does your current experience confirm the validity of the need that we mentioned in the beginning?

Certainly, that challenge is very attractive. It facilitates in-depth learning of the organization and the processes occurring therein. It also brings great satisfaction when there is a reason of your endeavours and you can observe positive results of the implemented system you are part of. A quality system may be implemented at any moment and at any level of organization development, since even in properly operating organizations it is always something to improve. One of the requirements of ISO 9001 standard is continual improvement, and it cannot succeed without systematic identification of changing customer's expectations and analysis of the efficiency of the quality system as well as completion stage of those expectations.

*The interview was conducted by Anna Gniadek  
Translation: Piotr Studziński-Raczyński*



Text:  
Alina Wiśniewska-Skura, Anna Gniadek

Compilation of data gathered from the .pl domain name registry system:  
Izabela Domagoła

Translation:  
Piotr Studziński-Raczyński

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