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Introduction

Dear Readers,

The .pl domain registry closed the second quarter of 2019 with the number of 2,602,326 names active in DNS. As compared to the first quarter of 2019 the number of registrants increased by 1,492, amounting, at the end of June, to 1,085,029. The renewal rate also grew attaining the value of 65.94%.

In the second quarter there commenced first activations of the registry’s new service - .pl Registry Lock. That solution provides a top level domain security. Within promotional activities of the service, carried out by NASK for registrants, there were prepared a leaflet and animation explaining the purpose of the service, as viewed from the perspective of cybersecurity, and in particular existing threats pertaining to domain names. Furthermore, NASK, participating in the IT conference for the banking sector, presented many typical cases of domain hijacking as well as explained the meaning and concept of the .pl Registry Lock service in the field of raising the security level of domain names. In this report you will also find an article presenting selected information on the application the Registry Lock service.

NASK, as usual, co-organized the Seminar of the Court of Arbitration at the Polish Chamber of Information Technology and Telecommunications which was held on 5 June 2019 in Toruń. During this sixth edition of the seminar there were raised the issues of cybersquatting and typosquatting, security incidents as well as legal protection of a domain name as a trademark.

I wish you pleasant reading.
Facts and figures

Over 2.6 million active .pl domain names

Over 196 thousand new names

Almost 490 thousand names secured with DNSSEC

Over 217 NASK Partners

Over 35.7 thousand transfers

Over 65.94% renewal rate

1.08 million registrants

2.1 thousand names registered daily average

64.66% of registrants constitute organizations

35.34% of registrants constitute natural persons
.pl domain names active in DNS

Domains in .pl domain registry

The .pl domain registry ended the first half of 2019 with 2,602,326 domain names active in DNS. During the second quarter of 2019 the number of names decreased by 8,461. The registry’s annual growth dynamics of domain names amounted to 1.27%.

Registration year of .pl domain names active in DNS

Number of domain names active in DNS as divided into the type of zone, Q2 2019

- second level domain names
- functional
- regional

NASK’s report for the second quarter of 2019
.pl domain names active in DNS

Transfers

Within the period from 1 April to 30 June 2019 the registrants of the .pl domain registry 35 752 times changed a registrar servicing .pl domain names maintained for them.

During the discussed period in 1 747 cases the transfers were executed with a simultaneous renewal of a domain name for a consecutive billing period, with 562 of them being effected after the previous billing period had been completed.

Number of .pl domain name transfers

![Number of .pl domain name transfers graph]

Division of transfers, Q2 2019

- active domain names
- active domain names with renewal
- domain names in Blocked state

NASK's report for the second quarter of 2019
.pl domain names active in DNS

Renewal of a domain name for a consecutive billing period

At the end of the first half of 2019 the renewal rate of .pl domain names equalled 65.94%. It has maintained a growing tendency for a consecutive, tenth in a row, quarter.

388 thousand .pl domain names renewed from the beginning of April to the end of June 2019

for 1 726 names the end date of a billing period was shifted by an individually defined number of days

Structure of renewed .pl domain names, Q2 2019

- 77.84% second level domain names
- 17.80% functional
- 4.36% regional

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NASK's report for the second quarter of 2019
During the second quarter of 2019 196 360 .pl domain names were registered, that was by 62 thousand fewer than in the previous quarter. A daily average number of registrations amounted to 2 158 .pl domain names. The registration share of the second level domain names, i.e. directly in the .pl domain, in the total number of registrations amounted to 74.95%. Registrations of functional domains, as compared to the preceding quarter, dropped by 3.97% and amounted to 18.74%. The remaining 6.31% denoted regional domains.
Registrants of .pl domain names

Registrants in the .pl domain registry

At the end of the first half of 2019, in the .pl domain registry, there were 1,085,029 entries of unique registrants. It is by 1,492 registrants more than in the first quarter of 2019.

In the second quarter of 2019 there were 23,664 changes of .pl domain names registrants.

Number of changes of .pl domain name registrants, Q2 2019

2.40 .pl domain names fell for one registrant on average.

NASK’s report for the second quarter of 2019
Registrants of .pl domain names

Place of residence of .pl domain name registrants

Division of .pl domain names active in DNS for registrant’s country, Q2 2019

- Poland: 93.09%
- Other countries: 6.91%

Division of .pl domain name registrations for a registrant’s country, Q2 2019

- Poland: 88.30%
- Other countries: 11.70%

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At the end of June 2019 in the .pl domain registry, there were 489,945 names secured with the DNSSEC protocol. In the second quarter the number of secured .pl domain names decreased by 11,842.

of secured names were registered directly in the .pl domain
The .pl domain registry, at the end of the second quarter of 2019, contained 35,100 names with national diacritic signs (IDN) – by 550 fewer than in the previous quarter. During that period 2,807 IDNs were registered, i.e. 1.35% of all active .pl domain names.

Number of .pl IDN domain names active in DNS

Number of .pl IDN registrations

Q1 2017
Q2 2017
Q3 2017
Q4 2017
Q1 2018
Q2 2018
Q3 2018
Q4 2018
Q1 2019
Q2 2019
Additional services of .pl domain registry

Options

Within the period from April to June 2019 1882 agreements on options for the registration of .pl domain names were concluded, with 1493 options (79.3%) thereof being exercised.

Since launching the service in 2004 to the end of the second quarter of 2019 100 947 options were exercised
NASK Partner Programme

The .pl domain registry, at the end of June 2019, was cooperating within the frames of the Partner Programme with 217 registrars from 24 countries. 133 registrars had their registered offices in Poland and were servicing in total 61.29% of .pl domain names, 56 registrars, seated in other European countries, were servicing 25.81% of .pl domain names, while 28 registrars, domiciled beyond Europe, were servicing 12.90% of .pl domain names.
Registry Lock – response to an increasing threat of domain name hijacking

The issue of domain name hijacking, although present in the cyberspace for ages, now is assuming ever greater proportions.

In recent years more than 4 thousand domain names, owned by over 600 organizations, have been hijacked. Among the victims of domain hijacking were, among others, Mastercard, ING Bank, McDonald’s, Amazon, Hilton, BBC, Warner Bros. Entertainment, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Lenovo or Google Vietnam. Different scenarios of domain hijacking were first and foremost used to spread spam or discredit victims of a cyberattack. However, a particularly spectacular case, by account of the size of the attack, was hijacking all of 36 domain names owned by one of the biggest banks in Brazil. Seizing network operational activity of the bank allowed the attackers to capture, among others, ATM and POS transactions.

Domain hijacking takes place when the attacker gains an unauthorized access to domain’s registration data, thus taking administrative control over a domain name which, in turn, allows them to modify its elements, including a website or e-mail built in that domain name. The access may be granted through, among others, reckless sharing the credentials to the registrar client panel amongst the employees in the organization or subcontractors, e.g. web designers, SEO companies. Seizure of credentials may also occur as a result of sociotechnical activities of hackers and through phishing of data.

The .pl domain registry offered the implementation of the .pl Registry Lock service at the end of March 2019 while already in June the Partners of the .pl domain registry, Agnat (domena.pl) and H88 (domeny.pl) performed first implementations of the service and secured domain names in the .pl zone.

In Europe the Registry Lock service, also referred to as Security Lock, is provided by, among others, country-code top level domain registries in France, Sweden, Austria, Czech Republic, Slovakia and the registry of the European domain, EURid, as well as VeriSign, a registry services provider of generic top level domains .com and .net.

Compiled by Tomasz Szladowski, basing on the CENTR materials, PCWorld (Jeremy Kirk), KrebsonSecurity (Brian Krebs), ArsTechnika (Dan Goodin) and information provided at the websites of domain registries.