

For immediate release

August 2019

Ireland's country domain .ie grows 40% in five years, fuelled by registration rule change, Brexit and social network limitations

- **Total .ie domain database at 273,156 at end of H1 2019, up more than 8% year-on-year; majority registered by businesses and self-employed entrepreneurs**
- **Demand for .ie brand drives 75% increase in number of .ie domains offered for private sale**
- **Growth in .ie registrations from Great Britain suggests ongoing 'Brexit effect' as companies move to secure online assets in Ireland**
- **"Significant growth" in .ie database driven in large part by removal of 'claim to a name' registration requirement, says IE Domain Registry CEO.**

The total .ie domain database grew by 8.3% in H1 2019 compared to the same period last year, and by 39.7% compared to the same period five years ago, according to new figures published today in IE Domain Registry's biannual .ie Domain Profile Report.

At the end of H1 2019, there was a total of 273,156 .ie domains, compared to 252,222 at the end of H1 2018 and 195,440 at the end of H1 2014.

There was a small year-on-year decrease in new .ie registrations (-5.9%), but this a direct result of the 'post-liberalisation cooldown' trend.

In March 2018, IE Domain Registry 'liberalised' .ie registration rules by making it easier and faster for people to register a .ie domain by removing the requirement for registrants to prove their claim to their desired .ie domain (evidence of a connection to Ireland is still required). This resulted in an unprecedented surge in new .ie registrations in the H1 2018 period; registrations have since returned to normal levels.

Business, UK and county registrations

The .ie domain remains an extremely popular way for Irish businesses to demonstrate their authenticity and trustworthiness to local and international customers: **80.2% of the total .ie database is comprised of companies and self-employed entrepreneurs**, up 4% year-on-year.

New .ie registrations by individuals grew by 26.4% year-on-year, which speaks to the growing trend of using websites to build a permanent, personal space on the internet, **free from many of the limitations of social networks.**

Further illustrating the value of the .ie domain, 240 domains were offered for **private sale** in H1 2019, up 75% from 137 in the same period last year.

A .ie domain can be registered by an international party provided they can prove their connection to the island of Ireland. **British-registered .ie domains** make up 42% of the 24,009 domains registered abroad.

While the post-liberalisation cooldown trend also affected new registrations from Great Britain, comparing H1 2019 registrations to H1 2017 registrations shows an 18.9% surge, indicating an ongoing '**Brexit effect**'.

Derry recorded the largest increase in new .ie registrations in H1 2019 (+30.3%), albeit from a low base, followed by **Laois** (+28.5%) and **Roscommon** (+15.6%). **Leitrim** recorded the largest decrease (-43.5%) in new .ie registrations.

IE Domain Registry insight

Commenting on the Domain Profile Report, David Curtin, Chief Executive of IE Domain Registry, said:

"The total .ie database has grown significantly over the last five years, and particularly since March 2018 when IE Domain Registry removed the 'claim to a name' registration requirement. This change made it easier and faster for people with a connection to Ireland to secure their domain of choice.

".ie remains the digital gold standard for Irish businesses, entrepreneurs, communities, and individuals that want to build or enhance their online presence. For Irish businesses that sell online, .ie represents authenticity and trustworthiness, factors that are hugely important for e-commerce and consumers' peace of mind. For individuals, a .ie domain has benefits over a social media presence, particularly in terms of control over content and reach, which many social networks restrict as they continue to change their algorithms.

"Positive increases in domain resales indicate a growing global recognition of the intrinsic value of the .ie brand, while the long-term growth in .ie domain registrations from Great Britain suggests that more British businesses are securing their online assets in Ireland ahead of any potential Brexit-related migration."

Other .ie facts

- 39.3% of .ie websites had SSL (security) certificates at the end of H1 2019, a 58.5% increase year-on-year. Google now downgrades search results for websites without SSL certs.
- 39 .ie domain names have a fada, a 39% increase year-on-year.
- **.ie domains for sale for over €50,000:** sl.ie, baby.ie, sunhotels.ie, billionaire.ie, and blockchain.ie.
- **Deleted or expired .ie domains available for purchase:** 1922.ie, Sk8.ie, P45.ie, SlowCooker.ie, FiveMinutesofHeaven.ie, Flog.ie, and ShoppingIreland.ie.
- **The five most visited .ie domains:** Google.ie, Donedeal.ie, Daft.ie, Independent.ie and RTE.ie.
- **The busiest day ever for new .ie registrations:** 699 new .ie domains were registered on 21 March 2018, the day .ie liberalisation was implemented.

ENDS

The .ie Domain Profile Report is a biannual analysis of the .ie domain database. The H1 2019 report covers the period 1 January–30 June 2019. [Read the Domain Profile Report in full.](#)

For media enquiries, contact:

Nuala Ryan | nuala@pr360.ie | 01 637 1777 | 083 421 2733

Nicola Forde | nicola@pr360.ie | 01 637 1777 | 087 205 5541

About IE Domain Registry

IE Domain Registry is the national registry for .ie domain names and is responsible for the management and administration of Ireland's official internet domain, .ie, in the interest of the Irish and global internet communities. It operates the domain name system (DNS) for the .ie namespace, facilitates an independent [dispute resolution service](#) and operates a public WHOIS lookup service for .ie domains.

The company's mission is to provide unique, identifiably Irish domain names, along with registry and related services to the local and international internet community. Policy development for the .ie namespace follows a bottom-up, consensus-driven approach, through its multi-stakeholder Policy Advisory Committee. Currently, there are over 273,000 registered .ie domain names.

It is committed to being a digital advocate for the SME community. Through the [OPTIMISE Programme](#) and stakeholder engagement initiatives such as [Digital Town](#), the company works with, and supports, SMEs to improve their online presence and e-commerce capabilities.

IE Domain Registry produces fact-based research for the business community and policymakers, such as the annual [SME Digital Health Index](#), which provides key insights into the digital health of SMEs.

The company is focused on providing excellence in customer service through its ongoing customer experience (CX) innovation and improvement programmes. Since March 2018, it is now [easier and faster](#) to register a .ie domain name.

Based in Dun Laoghaire, Co Dublin, IE Domain Registry employs 22 people.

www.iedr.ie