

The Public Consultation text and the relevant results are available on EETT's website²³.

4.4. Promotion of Internet Electronic Services

4.4.1. Electronic Signature

Regarding the issue of Electronic Signature, EETT completed in 2004 the regulatory framework for the Voluntary Accreditation (VA) of Certification Service Provider (CSP) in Greece.

In that context, CSPs interested in receiving voluntary accreditation should select a Designated Body (DB), authorized by EETT to perform the necessary audits to ascertain compliance with VA criteria.

Aiming at the faster implementation and operation of VA, and having taken into account that the market of Electronic Signature certification services is not adequately developed and competitive, EETT decided²⁴ to adopt the electronically Signed List for the implementation of a Registry of VA providers. This means that the voluntarily accredited CSPs as well as their details and the services for which they have received accreditation shall be registered in an electronic list accessible from EETT's website. This list shall be managed and signed by EETT, ensuring authenticity and integrity of its content.

As a next step, EETT published an invitation for tender in order to identify those DBs which will be responsible for the following tasks:

- a) To ascertain compliance of Electronic Signature products (i.e. secure signature devices like smartcards, etc.) - with Presidential Decree (PD) 150/2001 and compliance of the secure codification units with Annex III and II(f) of PD 150/2001).
- b) To ascertain compliance of CSPs with VA criteria.

Following the aforementioned invitation, a number of informative meetings took place with the bodies which expressed their interest to participate in the process.

In order to achieve a greater expansion of the use of Electronic Signature, EETT informed the Ministry of Economy and Finance, the Union of Greek Banks and other public and private bodies about general issues associated with the Electronic Signature such as the existing regulatory framework, and especially the VA procedure.

In addition, EETT introduced the use of Electronic Signature in the procedure of submitting the applications to the Registry of Domain Names holding the [.gr] suffix by the Registrars. Accordingly, it introduced the use of Electronic Signature in the procedure of submitting the applications for Carrier Pre-Selection (CPS) by subscribers. EETT has also set up and operates a Private Certification Authority for the issue and use of Digital Certificates for the internal correspondence of its staff.

During 2005, EETT will focus its efforts on the implementation and operation of the electronically Signed List for the support of CSP VA. EETT is also going to continue the promotion and dissemination of Electronic Signatures in Greece. The operation of VA is expected to create the necessary framework for the provision of high-level services in terms of security and quality. This is going to encourage the use of Electronic Signature and support consumers' confidence in electronic communications and commerce.

4.4.2. Domain Names holding the [.gr] Suffix

Under the EETT's responsibilities with respect to Internet issues, and according to the Regulation specifying the procedures for the assignment of Domain Names holding the [.gr] suffix, the operation of the "Registrants- Registrars-Registry" scheme started on 5th April 2004.

²³ http://www.eett.gr/gr_pages/telec/adeiodotisi/ (Available in Greek only).

²⁴ EETT Decision 308/37/2004.

The Registry is a database used for the real time submission of applications for the assignment of Domain Names. In addition the Registry keeps the order of submission, and forwards the applications to EETT for approval via an online connection. By using the Registry a more flexible procedure has been achieved which is implemented electronically with the use of approved certificates. EETT, following a tender process, awarded in 2003 the management, expansion and maintenance of the aforementioned Registry for a period of five years to the Foundation for Research and Technology Hellas Institute of Computer Science (FORTH-ICS).

Prior to the start of the operation of the above scheme, the Registrar could only address FORTH-ICS, which acted as the Registrant. Nowadays, the role of Registrant can be taken up by interested ISPs or other private companies. In order to ensure the smooth transition to the new scheme, FORTH-ICS continued acting as a Registrant for a transitory period of ninety (90) days from the commencement of Registry operation. The Domain Names assigned by FORTH-ICS acting as Registrant are still valid until their expiring date.

A brand new market of Registrants was created with the full implementation of the Regulation on the assignment of Names and the operation of the scheme. EETT contributed to the development of competition as follows:

- The compliance with the basic principles of competition is provided.
- Individuals can act as Registrants.
- A maximum limit is set regarding the assignment, transfer and renewal of Domain Names²⁵.
- EETT intervened through the Hearing process in cases of complaints for violation of basic competition principles.

It is worth mentioning that within few months the number of Registrants reached 230.

In addition, the procedure for the assignment of Domain Names, -detailed in subsection 2.2.5.- is more flexible and simple and the consumers can apply for a Domain Name via e-mail or by filling an application form on the Internet. As a result, the rate of assignment of Domain Names was significantly increased (see subsection 2.2.5.).

The procedures where EETT is involved are the assignment, rejection, deletion and transfer of Domain Names.

Public Consultation for the Assignment of Domain Names with Greek Characters

Recognizing the importance of Domain Names with Greek characters for the further development of the Internet, EETT held a Public Consultation in the period between 15 September and 15 October 2004. The main issue was the procedure of assignment of Domain Names with non-Latin and mainly Greek characters as well as any other issues that needed improvement or clarification. In parallel, issues related to distinguishing features of Names in terms of the existing assignment procedure were discussed.

10 bodies participated in the Consultation and the results are expected to be communicated in early 2005.

Following this Consultation, EETT intends to proceed to a modification of the Management and Assignment Regulation for Domain Names holding the [.gr] suffix, in order to make provisions for the assignment of Names with Greek characters. Furthermore, in order to use the experience from the first ten months of operation of the new Name assignment and transfer scheme as well as the results of the above Consultation, EETT will proceed to the necessary actions to improve or clarify the existing procedures.

²⁵ EETT Decision 309/48/2004, GG Issue 525/B/23-03-2004.