Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Bundesamt für Kommunikation BAKOM
Office fédéral de la communication OFCOM
Ufficio federale delle comunicazioni UFCOM
Uffizi federal da communicaziun UFCOM

Simply more
Switzerland

dot.swiss

Factsheet:
Use of the **.swiss** namespace

.swiss – the added value

The .swiss Top Level Domain creates added value for website operators, because it
− unmistakably indicates the **origin** and the **base** of Swiss businesses and organisations
− underlines the **identification and connection** with **Switzerland** and Swiss values
− confers **exclusivity** on the web presence of Swiss organisations under .swiss
− signals clearly and explicitly to the **user** at home and abroad that **Swiss content** can be found here

.swiss – the background

.swiss is the exclusive Top Level Domain of Switzerland. In addition to the existing country domains such as .ch and designations such as .org, which have already been assigned, additional generic internet address endings were made possible in 2012 by ICANN (the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers). The Confederation has taken on the administration of the .swiss Top Level Domain in order to guarantee that it is used for the benefit of the Swiss community and the Swiss economy.

The .swiss domain ending is not intended to replace .ch. It is an additional offering which is available exclusively to the community of Swiss businesses and organisations and to public bodies, subject to compliance with specific conditions. On the other hand, .ch addresses can be registered and used by domestic and foreign organisations and private individuals for any kind of internet presence, on a first come - first served basis.

The Federal Office of Communications OFCOM has been entrusted with the organisation and management of the .swiss domain. As the registry, it will assign .swiss domain names according to defined criteria and will promote quality and density (Ordinance on Internet Domains OID, CC 784.104.2).

.swiss – the organisation

OFCOM performs the registry function. It ensures that domain names can be registered and incorporated into the structure of the internet. Customer support is provided by accredited registrars and their resellers. The list of registrars is published at www.dot.swiss and www.nic.swiss.

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.swiss – the product and the prices

The .swiss domain ending, clearly and explicitly linked to Switzerland, has a positive effect on the image of those that use it. As a result of the controlled assignment and the active advertising for the internet ending, .swiss amounts to an online Swiss quality seal and in this way signals the high quality of content and operators. **.swiss therefore confers a digital Swiss identity.**

Registrars' prices are market prices. They include the fees that are payable to OFCOM pursuant to Article 30a of the DETEC (Federal Department of the Environment, Transport, Energy and Communications) Ordinance on Administrative Fees in the Telecommunications Sector (CC 784.106.12). The latest end customer prices in the market are between CHF 100 and CHF 170 for the assignment and annual management of ordinary domain names.

The naming mandates for generic domain names involve an assignment procedure conducted in writing. This costs several thousand Swiss francs on a one-off basis. The continuous monitoring of assigned generic domain names does reflect in a price of a few hundred CHF per year per mandate. If desired, other associated names (name as plural variants or in other languages) can be included in the price of such a mandate.

1 Guide to registration

Applications for the registration of domain names must be made via the accredited registrars or their resellers. A list of registrars is published at www.dot.swiss and www.nic.swiss.

.swiss - who can apply?

1. **Public bodies in Switzerland:** These are the Confederation, the cantons, the municipalities and other organisations under public law.
2. **Entities registered in the Swiss commercial register (CR)** which have a registered place of business and a physical administrative centre in Switzerland. These are legal entities such as businesses and registered associations and foundations, but also registered private enterprises. Applicants must provide a Business Identification Number (BID).
3. **Swiss associations and foundations with no entr**y in the commercial register.

The registration of .swiss domain names by natural persons is not envisaged (with the exception of natural persons registered in the commercial register as private enterprises).

.swiss - what names can be applied for?

Applications can be made for the following domain names:

1. names which are associated with **public bodies** and their activities
2. **trademarks protected in Switzerland**
3. **names of associations and foundations**
4. **companies registered in the Swiss commercial register**
5. **geographical names:** in this case there must be a legitimate interest or official consent from the body concerned.
6. **other names:** the arbitrary character sequences must, however, have a clear connection with the application or the intended use.
7. **generic names:** generic names describe generally a category of goods, services or activities. They are assigned with a naming mandate. Applicants for naming mandates must represent the entirety or a substantial part of the community concerned and must demonstrate a use which brings added value to the entire community.

The naming mandate procedure is described at www.nic.swiss. A non-definitive list with examples of generic names can be consulted at www.nic.swiss.

The names applied for must fulfil the following conditions:

1. They must consist of 3 to 63 characters. The permitted characters can be found at www.nic.swiss >; information about .swiss > Documents > Technical and administrative regulations.
2. They must not have been assigned already.
3. They must not be reserved for other categories. Reserved names include, for instance, the names used by the Confederation, the cantons and the political municipalities. A list of reserved names can also be found at www.nic.swiss.

The registry may reject applications if the names applied for are opposed to the characteristics and values on which the namespace is based.

.swiss - how are domain names assigned?

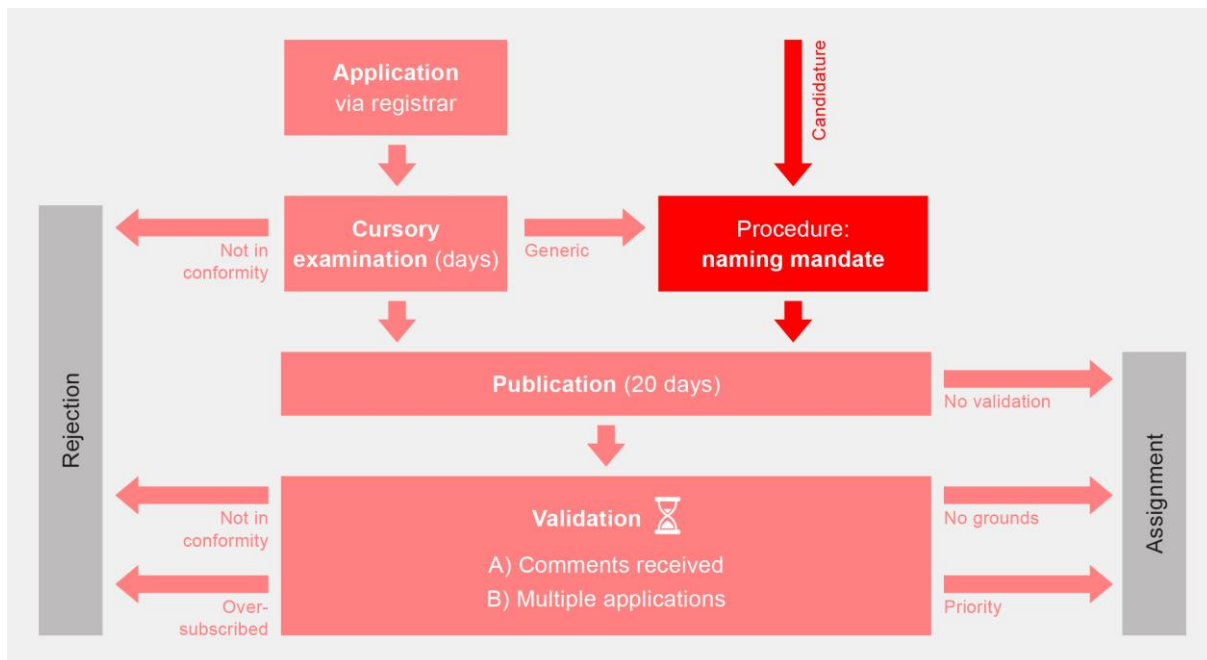The assignment procedure is as follows:

Figure 1: Assignment procedure

Applications received undergo a **summary preliminary examination**. This checks whether:

1. applicants belong to an authorised category
2. the name applied for is objectively connected with the applicant and the intended use (if trademark rights such as brand names or company names are involved, OFCOM only checks whether there is actually a right to the trademark which is associated with the application. It does not check whether the rights of third parties are infringed.)
3. the name is not reserved for another category of applicants
4. the name is not generic
5. the intended use is not illegal.

Applications accepted in the preliminary examination are published every Tuesday for **20 calendar day on the registry's website** www.nic.swiss. All interested parties then have the opportunity to submit a competing application for a domain name which has been applied for or to submit comments using the reporting form at www.nic.swiss.

When the 20-day publication period expires, **domain names** for which no comments or competing applications have been received **are assigned**.

2 The clearing procedure for competing applications

The clearing procedure for competing applications is implemented by the registry, i.e. OFCOM. Its duration is not fixed.

First the applications are prioritised according to the category of their applicant (see Figure 2). Depending on the category, different procedures then come into play (third column).

Priority	Category of applicant	Priority application within category
1	Public law body	1. Confederation has priority (only during the launch phase) 2. Greater added value 3. No agreement between equivalent applications possible: no assignment
2	Owners of trademark rights	1. Auction
3	Not-for-profit organisations	1. Exception: order in which applications received
	Other organisations	1. Greater added value 2. Agreement 3. Auction or decision by drawing lots

Figure 2: Clearing of multiple applications according to category

3   Naming mandates for generic names

.swiss - justification for the naming mandate instrument

Generic names are names which refer generally to a category or class of goods or which describe these. They include goods (e.g. chocolate, watches, property), services (e.g. tax consultancy, letting and leasing), occupations (e.g. lawyer, nurse), groups (e.g. families, community), organisations (e.g. government, associations, legal entities), products (e.g. vehicles, Chinese meals), technologies (e.g. telecommunications), sectors (e.g. steel industry, insurance) or activities (e.g. football, travel, gambling, art).

Generic terms are specially protected. The assignment of such a name can give the holder a considerable competitive advantage. Special conditions therefore apply to assignment (cf. Art. 56 OID). The use of the name must benefit the entire community concerned and include added value for the Swiss community. In addition, the applicant must represent the entirety or a substantial part of the community concerned.

.swiss - application for a naming mandate

As the registry, OFCOM publishes a non-definitive list with examples of generic names which is constantly being expanded.

In order to apply for a naming mandate, the registry can be contacted by e-mail at domainnames@bakom.admin.ch or a dossier/project can be submitted directly in accordance with the Information sheet for the assignment of .swiss domain names by a naming mandate (available only in French, German and Italian – see www.nic.swiss).

.swiss - the assignment procedure

In their dossier/project, prospective applicants should in particular provide the following supporting evidence (cf. Art. 56 of the Ordinance on Internet Domains OID, CC 784.104.2):
- compliance with the general assignment conditions
- representation of the entire community concerned or a substantial part thereof
- added value of the project for the entire community concerned
- a statement to the effect that provisions relating to information on origin are complied with.

Applicants base their submissions on the Information sheet for the assignment of .swiss domain names by a naming mandate (available only in French, German and Italian – see www.nic.swiss).

The project proposal itself is not subject to restrictions. Innovative ideas and solutions are welcome!

As with all categories of names, the registry publishes applications for 20 days, so that competing applications or comments can be submitted.

.swiss - controlled implementation of mandates

The generic names assigned in naming mandates must be used. The registry regularly checks compliance with the conditions and the implementation of the proposed project.