



**.stiftung**  
**digitale-chancen**

# Childrens-rights.digital

The Impact of Domain Names on  
Children's Rights and Child Safety

Jutta Croll, Digital Opportunities Foundation  
[jcroll@digitale-chancen.de](mailto:jcroll@digitale-chancen.de)

# UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

- Adopted and opened for signature, ratification and accession by General Assembly resolution 44/25 of 20 November 1989.
- Guiding Principle: „Best interest of the child“ (Art. 3)
- Right to express his/her own views freely (Art. 12)
- Right to freedom of expression / Right to freedom of thought (Art. 13/14)
- Right to freedom of association and to freedom of peaceful assembly (Art. 15)
- Right to access to Information (Art. 17)
- Right to protection from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, (Art. 19)
- Right to protection from all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse (Art. 34)

# Top Level Domains

## Different types of Top Level Domains - TLDs

- Country Code Top Level Domains – ccTLDs [.uk](#)
- Geographic Top Level Domains – geoTLDs: Geographical names like [.swiss](#)
- Generic Top Level Domains – gTLDs, Generic terms, like. [.kids](#), [.play](#) or [.digital](#)

New types of Top Level Domains expand the address space of the Internet.

# Domain names

## Players acting in domain name procedures

- ICANN – Internet Corporation of Assigned Names and Numbers
- Registries
- Registrars

# Safety issues

Risks for children's safety result from two different areas of domain names

1. Sub domains under all TLDs they host
  - either content specifically attractive to children or attractive or
  - Content inappropriate for children.
2. Generic TLDs, that can be assumed especially attractive to children [.play](#), [.school](#) or [.kids](#)

# Safety issues

Risks for children result from :

- Dissemination of child sexual abuse imagery under domains where the purpose is obvious from the names, f.e. [www.naked-children.com](http://www.naked-children.com)
- Confrontation with inappropriate content, f.e. [www.barbie.play](http://www.barbie.play)
- Children's data being collected by websites f.e. via moderated chats
- Contact with the purpose of sexual abuse f.e. at [www.children.play](http://www.children.play)

# Potential Measures

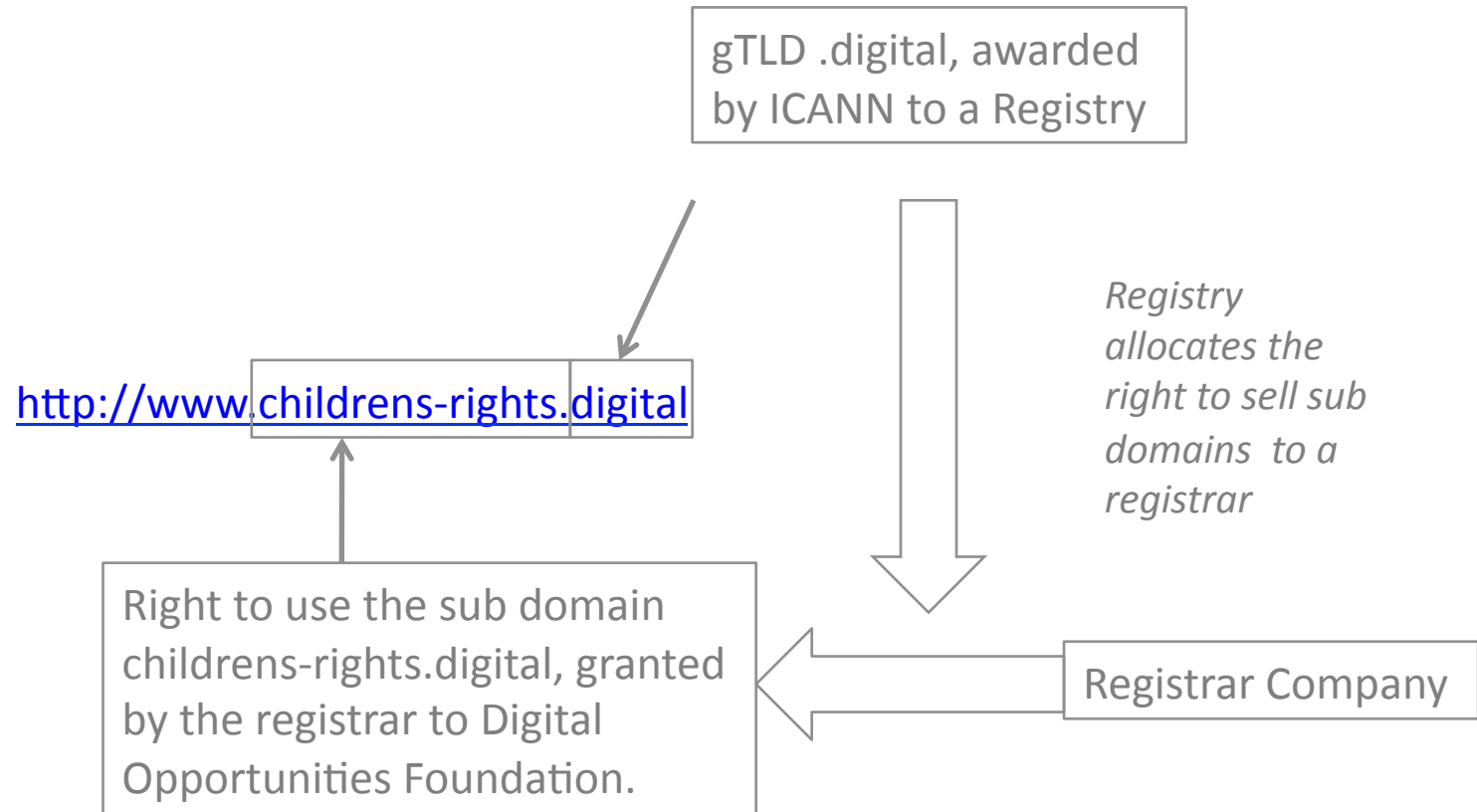
## Registries

- Contractual obligation to the registrars to implement review procedures for requests for registration of a sub domain.

## Registrars

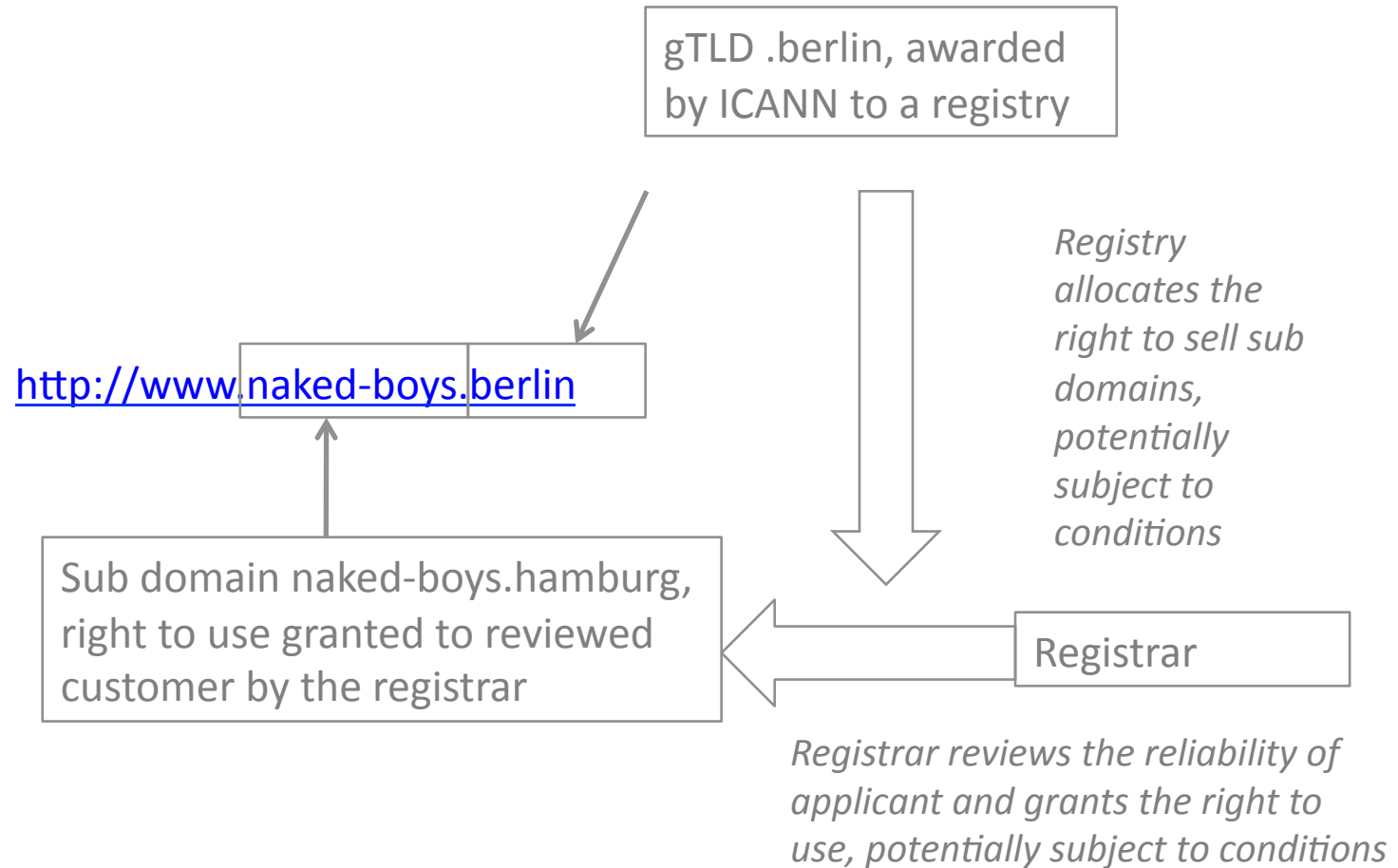
- Review of all requests for registration of sub domains under all TLDs in regard of potential misuse, f.e. by checking the words of the domain name against a list of words used in communication of paedophiles (such a check is done by NOMINET in UK on a daily base)
- Review of applicants for registration of sub domains under generic TLDs, especially attractive to children. The objective would be to ensure that , neither the applicant nor their staff have a criminal record in regard of child abuse.

# Process of registering a domain





# Process of registering a domain



# Possible Instruments for more safety I

- Self regulation: Codes of Conduct of registries und registrars
- Collaboration of the Registries handling child sensitive gTLDs in a consortium in order to create a safe domain space based on the example of the Verified Top Level Domain Consortium ([.bank](#); [.pharmacy](#))

# vTLD Consortium

- The **Verified Top-Level Domains (vTLD) Consortium** was established in May 2016 as an informal, voluntary association of registry operators of generic Top-Level Domains and third-party providers that administer or support vTLDs.
- Mission: to **enhance public trust, online safety, and internet commerce** by promoting the unique value and increasing the awareness of verified domain name extensions as trusted channels for products, services, and communications online.
- A vTLD requires:
  - Verification of registrant eligibility prior to domain use
  - Registrant adherence to the vTLD's registry standards
  - Autonomy to take back a name in the event of violations
  - Ongoing verification to ensure continued eligibility
- vTLDs have had **zero reported incidents of abuse.**



# Possible Instruments for more safety II

- Obligation to perform an extended review when ICANN awards a gTLDs specifically attractive to children to a registry
- Establishing a fund to finance the extended review of applicants for child sensitive sub domains.



**NEWS:** Read here in the upcoming days current news from the IGF in Geneva.  
continue reading



**IGF**  
**GENEVA**  **2017**  
**18-21 DECEMBER**



**INTRO**

Learn more about Child Protection and Children's Rights in the Digital World.



**FOCUS**

Here you can find our current essays on children's rights digital.



**BACKGROUND**

Have a deeper insight into studies and official documents and find recommendations for reading further.