

Latvian Booksellers Association, Latvian Book Guild and Latvian Publishers Association are organizations representing and lobbying the interests of small but vivid book community in EU country Latvia on the Baltic coast. We operate in the environment established by 425 years history of printed books while the market of electronic publications just starts to develop. However, thanks to global web, our readers, publishers and readers can widely use the treasures of world literature and all kinds of reading content provided by vast variety of international publishers. Internet can be used also to spread the knowledge about our small, interesting country.

We already see that global technological giants can act both ways: they can strongly benefit to availability of books but they can also put unnecessary limits to this availability and create obstacles that are not easy to overcome. Therefore we would like to ask ICANN Board of Directors to reconsider their intention to grant monopoly control of a TLD to a single member of book industry or any other entity. We think that such step can create an unfair competitive advantage for the industry that is already challenged by needs to incorporate all technological inventions in their businesses.

Latvian Booksellers Association, Latvian Book Guild and Latvian Publishers Association of the strong opinion that closed gTLDs should only be granted for brand names or terms in which the applicant possesses established intellectual property rights and / or trademarks. Otherwise nation-states' established legal procedures for obtaining intellectual property rights and trademark protections could be circumvented or undermined.

In the case of a closed generic TLD like .books, the exclusivity granted to the winning applicant would de facto strengthen the position of a single big operator in the book industry and would be detrimental to the book industry as a whole. In case it still happens, we suggest that particular obligations are put in place making gTLD available without discrimination for registrations by all eligible parties, including all commercial entities within the book industry allowing for the public to participate by registering and using second level domains under this TLD.