

Qualitative Accreditation Programme for Registrars

The accreditation programme is non-standard activity intended to verify the quality and activities of registrars for .SK domain. It is based on point 10.2.7 of the Terms and Conditions of Domain Name Service in .sk Top Level Domain (hereinafter as the “Terms & Conditions”). Its modification is subject to change by SK-NIC.

1. Period and Process of Accreditation

Every accreditation is valid for two years following the successful accomplishment of the accreditation process. The accreditation process typically does not exceed 30 calendar days.

- 1.1 The registrar can apply for accreditation at any time, it is a voluntary activity, and it is free of any charge.
- 1.2 Accreditation renewal can be applied for not sooner than six months following successful accreditation. The period is always renewed proportionally from the date of successful termination of the application for renewal so that the entire accreditation length does not exceed two years.
- 1.3 In the event of unsuccessful accreditation, the application can be filed repeatedly. In the event of unsuccessful accreditation SK-NIC also reserves the right to determine a waiting time for further application, especially with the view to eliminate deficiencies regarding the given registrar.
- 1.4 Application for accreditation begins with completion of a form on the respective page of SK-NIC.
- 1.5 SK-NIC can decide to verify again any criterion at any time during accreditation validity.
- 1.6 If the registrar stops fulfilling the accreditation conditions during the time for which it was accredited, SK-NIC is entitled to terminate accreditation validity prematurely. The aforesaid also includes the conditions for a registrar according to the Rules.

2. Criteria of Accreditation Achievement

Successful accreditation will mean an access to current supplementary benefits (see below). It is necessary to achieve 35 points out of 44 (80%), and to fulfil all criteria marked as KO for successful accreditation. The list of criteria is provided below.

2.1 Market position

Pts	Name
1	Renewed domain names ratio equal to or higher than average (compared to the .sk standard average)

1	Average length of the domain names registration period equal to or higher than average (compared to the .sk standard average)
1	Continuous growth of new domain names (dynamic discount achieved at least 3 times in the last six months)
1	Professional portfolio (at least 500 domain names under management)
2	Number of domain names secured by DNSSEC equal or higher than average (compared to .sk standard average)

2.2 Formal processes/transparency

Pts	Name
KO	Provision of information about the Terms & Conditions to the client (and record of the confirmation)
KO	Provision of information about GDPR to the client (and record of the confirmation)
KO	Compliance with Cl. 9.8 of the Terms & Conditions (prohibition of proxy registrations)
KO	Functional primary contact addresses (according to the Central Domain Registry)
2	Verification of client data upon its registration
2	Existence of timely notification of clients upon the domain name expiration (no later than 14 days in advance)
KO	Existence of a website designated for the registrar's registration activities
1	The website for the registrar's registration activities has a search option
1	Functional SSL on websites that are used for registrar services
1	Functional DNSSEC on websites that are used for registrar services
1	Publicly available price list regarding registrar services on the registrar's website
1	Usage of the EPP interface for communication with the Central Domain Name Register
KO	Timely fees payment related to domain names
1	Certified management of information / cyber security

2.3 Client services

Poin ts	Name
1	Domain name registration provided without additional services
2	Possibility to choose a multi-year domain name registration period

1	Option to set automatic domain name registration period renewal
1	Possibility to bulk order several domains at the same time
1	Ordering services send notification to the client
KO	Possibility to order a domain name on-line
1	Variety of ways to order domain names (more methods)
1	Online payment option for the client
2	Online client environment for domain name management
1	Possibility for the client to check the availability of the domain name before its registration
1	Provision of DN servers to the client
1	Existence of at least 2 DN servers on different HW, located in other places with an independent electricity source and 24/7 dedicated internet connection
1	Placement of at least of 1 DN server in Slovakia
2	Provision of DNSSEC services to the client
2	Provision of other additional services to the client (e.g., hosting, e-mails, web design etc.)

2.4 Support

Pts	Name
2	Existence of multiple client support communication channels (by phone, e-mail, etc.)
2	Existence of changeable technical support (min. 2 persons)
1	Provision of an additional language to the main language in communication with clients (CZ and SK are considered as one)
2	24/7 technical support for clients
1	Quick support response to client's requests (no later than 24 hours)

2.5 Marketing

Pts	Name
KO	Participation in SK-NIC promotions (at least 1 of the last 2 promo events)
2	The .sk domain is preset as the first in the menu / search engine

2.6 Knowledge test

5 questions from the Terms & Conditions. They are all KO.

2.7 Practical test

The practical test consists of 12 practical tasks via the web interface and, if the registrar uses or plans to use the EPP interface, 8 tasks via EPP. They are all KO.

3. Supplementary benefits

Every accredited registrar will be issued a virtual certificate, entitling them to use it for their own purposes, relevant to .sk domains registration. Verification of accreditation validity of a particular registrar will be possible on the dedicated website of SK-NIC.

3.1 List of benefits

The current benefits especially include:

1. Discounted or direct promotion of an accredited registrar in campaigns and activities focused on .sk or org.sk.
2. Advantageous position of a registrar in the lists of registrars on the websites of SK-NIC.
3. Advantageous or free access to conferences organised by SK-NIC or selected partners.
4. Possibility to refund a part of expenses of the registrar's campaign aimed to support the .sk or org.sk registration and related services. Details are provided below.

3.2 Campaign refund for the accredited registrar

Accredited registrar has a possibility to apply for a refund of part of the expenses of a campaign promoting services received by SK-NIC (mainly .sk domain and org.sk domain). The following types are determined for refunding:

- A. Campaign solely offering .sk domain name and/or org.sk domain name - refund is up to 100% of the refundable amount;
- B. Campaign offering .sk domain name and/or org.sk domain name with other gTLD domain name - refund is up to 75% of the refundable amount;
- C. Campaign offering .sk domain name and/or org.sk domain name in connection with other ccTLD domain name - refund is up to 50 % of the refundable amount.

The refundable amount is dependent on the number of domain names registered by the registrar during a campaign as follows:

Category 1: at least 20 domain names - the max amount is EUR 200 (excluding VAT),

Category 2: at least 100 domain names - the max amount is EUR 1,000 (excluding VAT),

Category 3: at least 300 domain names - the max amount is EUR 3,000 (excluding VAT),

Category 4: at least 500 domain names - the max amount is EUR 4,000 (excluding VAT).

The amount is not cumulative, it is determined for the purpose of refund according to the highest achieved number of domain names registered in a campaign. Only real costs will be refunded.

For a refund, it is necessary to proceed as follows:

- 3.2.1 Registrar applies for an approval of campaign expenses not later than 30 days before the beginning of the given campaign at e-mail hostmaster@sk-nic.sk (application template will be available on January 1, 2023 at: <https://sk-nic.sk/en/registrars/>). In its application, registrar provides mainly information about a campaign type according to the aforesaid criteria (A, B, C), name and brief description of the campaign, campaign objectives, campaign duration, partners and expected amount of total and refundable expenses of the campaign.
- 3.2.2 SK-NIC will assess the application according to Cl. 3.2.1 no later than within 14 calendar days, and should it be approved, the campaign will become refunded and the registrar will be entitled to submit materials for refunding after the campaign end. Mainly the following conditions are considered within the campaign's approval:
 - a. Refundable campaign duration does not exceed 30 calendar days.
 - b. To refund another campaign of the given registrar within a campaign duration is impossible.
 - c. Registrar can't have more than 3 campaigns refunded in the same calendar year.
- 3.2.3 SK-NIC is entitled to reject an application at their discretion (e.g., if means for the given period refunds have been spent, or if a campaign focuses on services unrelated to .sk or org.sk domain).
- 3.2.4 The registrar shall send the documents for the refund to the address according to Cl. 3.2.1 no later than 14 calendar days after the end of the approved refunded campaign. These include:
 - a. descriptive evaluation of the campaign (mainly the campaign name, whether objectives have been achieved, method of campaign conduction, complications that appeared),
 - b. simple budget form, which provides the amount and types of expenses, as well as the total amount of requested refund of expenses (the form, including fields for the point a), will be available on January 1, 2023 at: <https://sk-nic.sk/en/registrars/>,
 - c. relevant information or documents for costs with a clear indication of which budget item it belongs to (e.g., copies of invoices of suppliers, cash receipts, etc.).
- 3.2.5 SK-NIC will review the data and documents submitted according to Cl. 3.2.4 and confirms their eligibility within 30 calendar days at the latest after their receipt. Should SK-NIC identify a reduction of the requested amount due to absent, unjustified, or insufficiently

proved expenses, the registrar will be informed of such a fact as part of the eligibility confirmation.

- 3.2.6 Registrar shall subsequently, without undue delay, no later than within 14 days following the eligibility confirmation delivery, issue an invoice to company SK-NIC in the amount of eligible expenses determined by SK-NIC, and delivers it to SK-NIC, whereas the due date of the invoice must not be shorter than 30 calendar day. If the deadline for invoice delivery has not been met according to this Clause, the registrar will lose its entitlement to refunding.
- 3.2.7 SK-NIC will pay the invoice no later than within 30 calendar days following its delivery according to the Cl. 3.2.6.
- 3.2.8 In the event of a faulty invoice, such invoice will be returned to the registrar for correction, and its due date according to Cl. 3.2.6 and the payment deadline according to Cl. 3.2.7 of this procedure will restart its counting.

Effective as of September 1, 2023.