

Survey Results: The Middle East DNS Forum 2019

Media Rotana Hotel - Dubai, UAE
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1 Introduction

The 6th Middle East DNS Forum ([MEDNSF](#)) took place in Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE) on 20-21 February 2019. The Forum attracted 146 in-person, and around 30 remote participants.

Following the 2018 Forum in Ankara, Turkey, we conducted a five-year assessment survey to see how the event had evolved in its first five years, and how we could improve moving forward. The feedback from that survey was taken into consideration when designing the 2019 agenda with the MEDNSF Program Committee.

We also conducted a survey after the MEDNSF 2019 to learn about the experiences of this year's participants. This allows us timely feedback to inform our planning for the next Forum. The full survey is available under Appendix A.

2 Survey Statistics

The survey received 57 responses. The results of this report reflect the answers of the 34 respondents who completed the survey in full.

3 Survey Results

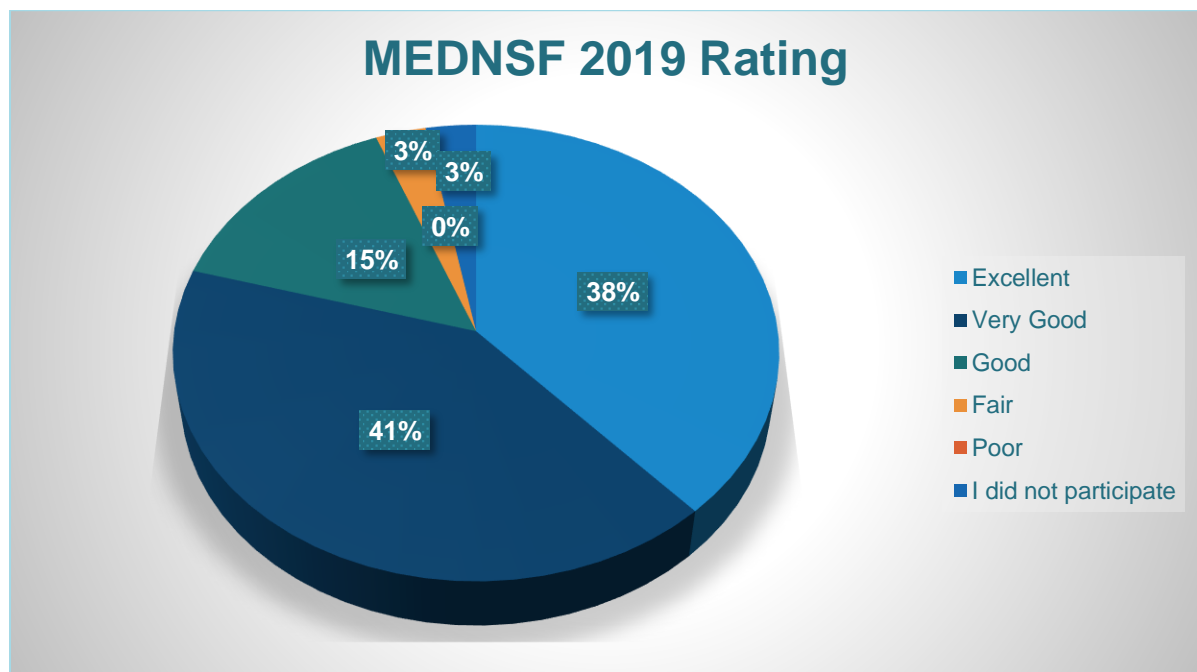


Figure 1: MEDNSF 2019 Overall Rating

Out of the 34 people who responded:

- 47% were anonymous.
- 41% of the respondents have attended at least one previous Forum either in-person or remotely.
- 79% of the respondents rated the Forum as either excellent or very good. Figure 1 shows the responses in detail.

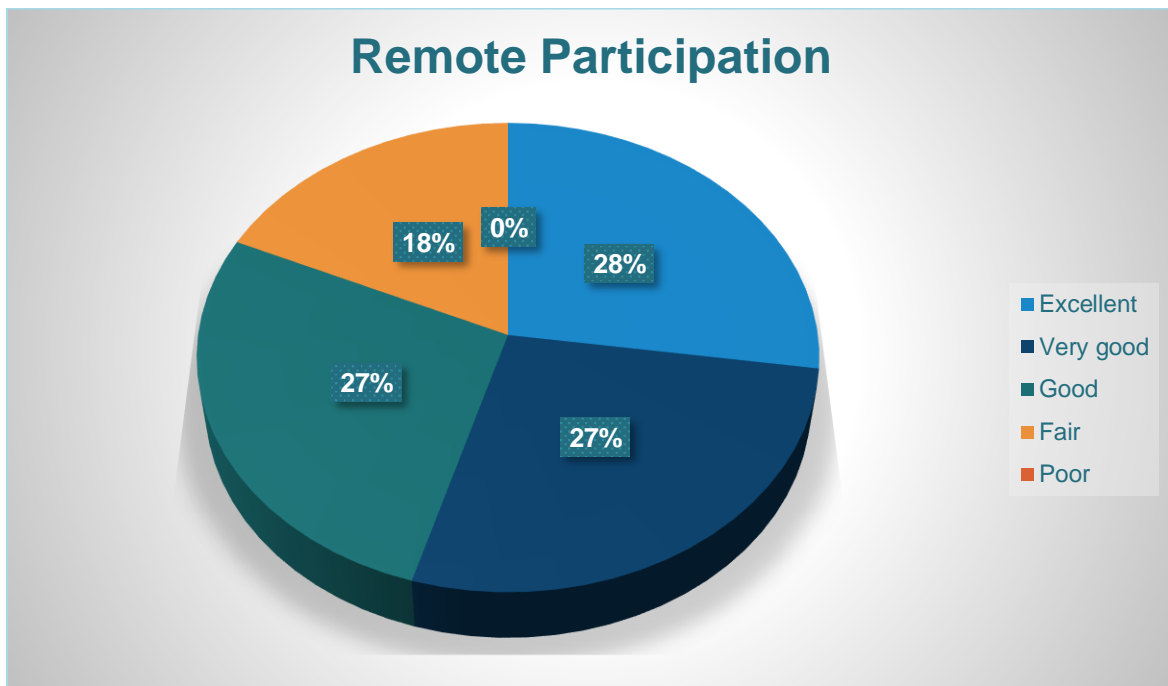


Figure 2: Remote Participation Facilities

- 11 respondents used remote participation facilities provided during the Forum.
 - 28% of those found the facilities to be excellent.
 - 27% found it to be very good. Figure 2 shows how remote participation facilities scored.

EVENT FORMAT

On holding the MEDNSF 2019 in conjunction with the Asia Pacific Top-Level Domain Association’s Annual General Meeting (APTLD75):

- 30 respondents felt that it worked well.
- 2 felt that they did not feel any difference.
- 1 felt it did not work well.
- 1 respondent did not answer.

AGENDA

When comparing the MEDNSF 2019 agenda with the past agendas:

- 19 respondents felt that it was “Better”.
- 14 felt it was “As Good”.
- 1 respondent did not answer.

No one felt that the agenda was worse than past Forums.

Summary of survey comments on the agenda:

- The Generic Names Supporting Organization Policy Development Process (GNSO PDP) closed workshop was appreciated by some of those who attended.

- Covering a variety of technical, business, and marketing topics of the DNS industry was very much welcome.
- Many topics were region-specific.
- Many hot and relevant topics were covered.
- It was easy to find information about the event and the agenda.
- The event was very informative and well-planned.
- Inclusion of the Regional Internet Registry for Europe, the Middle East and parts of Central Asia (RIPE NCC) on the agenda was positive.

Some respondents elaborated further, despite the 2019 edition being their first MEDNSF. The sessions on General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Domain Activity Abuse Reporting (DAAR) were singled out as especially interesting and informative.

TOPICS OF INTEREST

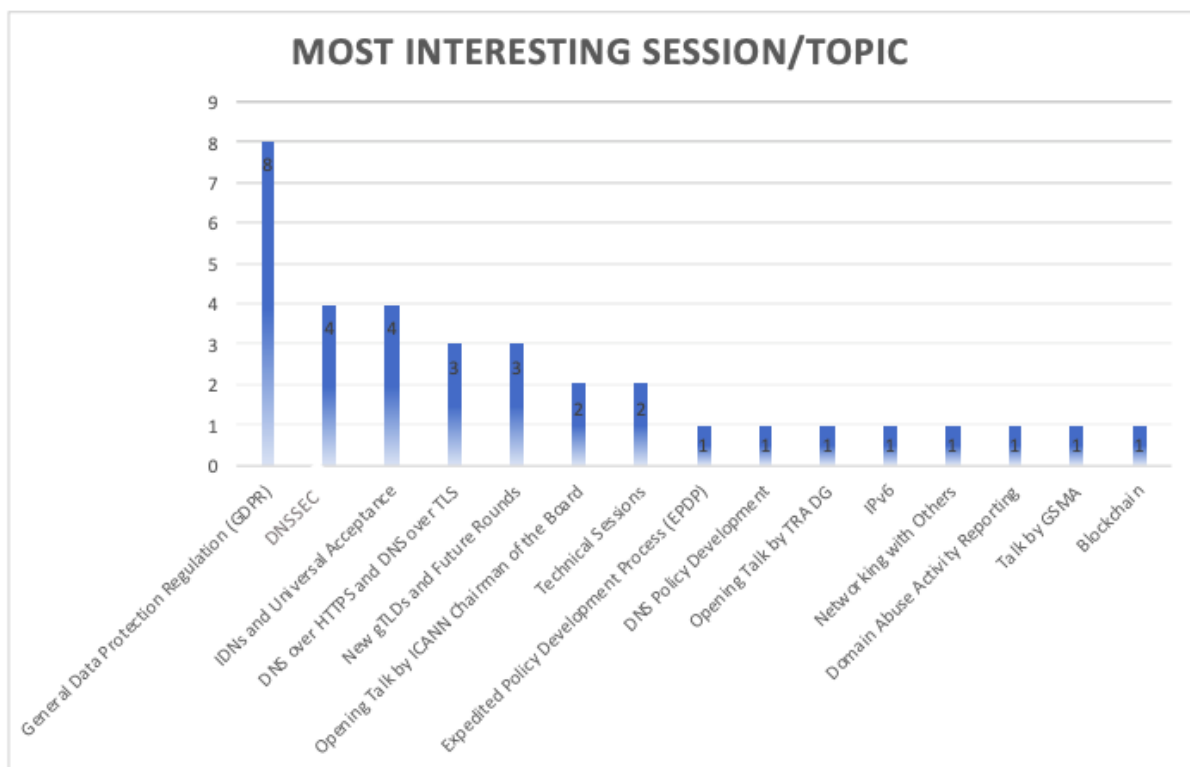


Figure 3: The most interesting sessions or topics

Attendees named GDPR as the favorite topic. DNS Security Extensions (DNSSEC), Internationalized Domain Names (IDNs), and Universal Acceptance (UA) were among the others found to be the most interesting.

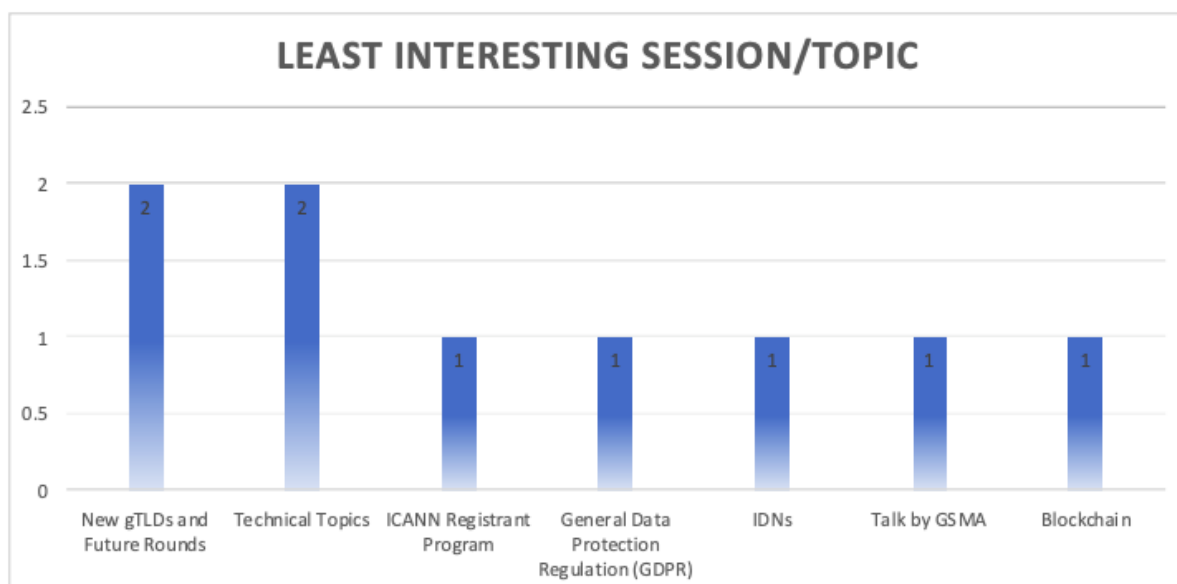


Figure 4: The least interesting sessions or topics

The number of sessions or topics that were of least interest turned out to be much less than those that were found interesting.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE FUTURE

The survey included a question seeking further comments on the Forum. Here are highlights from various responses:

1. Suggestion to build one website for joint events in the future.
2. Request for Arabic to English live interpretation.
3. The need for more region-specific topics in the agenda.
4. Suggestion to hold a MEDNSF entirely in Arabic as a means to promote IDNs and the usage of the Arabic script.
5. Inclusion of more topics related to Arabic IDNs and Universal Acceptance.
6. Facilitate sessions with registries to share experiences and best practices.
7. The joint structure of the MEDNSF 2019 and APTLD75 served as an interesting opportunity for both communities to network.
8. Suggestion to explore more ways to mobilize DNS industry players in the Middle East and encourage them to attend the Forum.
9. Request for more side activities, networking events, and discussion opportunities.
10. Very well organized, and professional Forum.

The survey asked if there were topics not covered in this year's agenda that would be of interest for the next Forum. The topic requests included:

1. ccTLDs, ccTLD Best Practices, and ccTLD Success Stories
2. More technical workshops
3. 5G
4. Encryption and Routing Security
5. ICANN Strategic Plan
6. Open Data Initiative
7. Smart Cities

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8. Internet of Things (IoT)
 9. Collaboration amongst the region on DNS, Safe Internet, and security
 10. Dispute resolution to understand the process and the revenue generation opportunities
 11. DNS Disaster Recovery programs executed by registries and registrars in the region
 12. End user rights
 13. Universal Acceptance
 14. DNS vs Digital Object Architecture
 15. gTLD Internationalized Registration Data (IRD)
 16. New ways to use the existing DNS system, such as how domains can be scanned similar to QR Codes
 17. Explore how promoting standards-based language can help voice Internet enablers
 18. Innovation in new gTLDs marketing studies

Open suggestions to improve or include in the next MEDNSF:

1. Another cooperation with the APTLD.
2. Motivate the technical community to join the Forum.
3. More participation from within the region.
4. Extend the Forum beyond two days.
5. Hold the Forum in Amman, Jordan.
6. Add more sessions on emerging technologies and their impact on the DNS.
7. More capacity development workshops.
8. Include Smart Cities and IoT, and International Governance of IoT.
9. The latest in IDN compatibility and how to make IDNs more attractive.
10. Elaborate and highlight certain case studies on redelegation.
11. If the Forum is a joint event with another event, suggest not to have parallel sessions.
12. Talk about alternative identifiers.

Other input regarding the Forum included the following comments:

1. More awareness about the Forum is needed within the region and reaching out to other stakeholder groups.
2. The MEDNSF has reached its maturity in terms of planning and content but needs more timely media exposure.

4 Summary

- Overall, the 2019 Middle East DNS Forum was well received.
- It was the largest Forum yet in terms of attendance and had a wide variety of topics on the agenda.
- The technical sessions were very well received, and more of them were requested.
- The partnership with APTLD and RIPE NCC received positive feedback.
- Zero-day workshops are demanded.



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