RIPE NCC Response to the CWG-Internet Open Online Consultation on IXPs

The RIPE NCC welcomes the decision of the Council Working Group on international Internet-related public policy issues to hold an open consultation to collect and share best practices for the design and operation of Internet Exchange Points (IXPs).

We would like to share some of the activities undertaken by the RIPE NCC and members of the RIPE community, which includes many IXP operators, towards the promotion of IXPs and interconnection in general.

By facilitating a neutral interconnection point between the independent networks (Autonomous Systems or ASes) that form the Internet, IXPs play a vital role in ensuring a resilient and open infrastructure that can support the continued growth of the Internet in traffic volume, as well as in number of participating networks.

Recognising the unique role of IXPs, and based on a proposal from the IXP communities, the RIPE community adopted a number of IXP-specific address assignment and allocation policies. These measures ensure that IXPs in the RIPE NCC service region can obtain the resources required for their operations. Specifically, a block of 65,000 IPv4 addresses (/16) has been reserved for use by IXPs (ripe-649[1]), supporting the growth of existing IXPs as well as ensuring that new IXPs can obtain the resources required to operate their infrastructure.

This policy became active when the RIPE NCC pool of available IPv4 reached its "last /8" in September 2012 – since that time, 45 Internet Exchange Points in 21 different countries have been assigned IPv4 address blocks from this designated pool.

A separate RIPE policy document, ripe-451[2], describes a dedicated policy for the assignment of IPv6 address blocks to IXPs.[3]

The RIPE community, by means of the Connect Working Group, provides IXPs and their participants a venue to exchange knowledge about interconnection and to raise awareness about the importance of interconnection across the RIPE community.

The RIPE NCC also supports the activities of Euro-IX, the European IXP association (IXPA), as well as other IXPAs and individual IXPs, by contributing to their meetings and cooperating in Internet measurement activities.

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[1] https://www.ripe.net/publications/docs/ripe-649
[2] https://www.ripe.net/publications/docs/ripe-451
[3] Similar dedicated policies exist in other RIR communities, such as the recently ratified AFRNIC policy on Resource Reservation for Internet Exchange Points.

The RIPE NCC provides support for a variety of meetings and forums related to IXP operations and interconnection in its service region, such as the European Peering Forum (EPF), the Middle East Peering Forum and the CEE (Central and Eastern Europe) Peering Day. RIPE NCC Regional Meeting agendas also include interconnection and IXP related topics.

Finally, the RIPE NCC Training Department has provided several IXPs with dedicated training courses, most recently in Montenegro ahead of the establishment of a local IXP.

The RIPE NCC has appreciated the cooperative spirit demonstrated in such activities, and the opportunity to work with the ITU Development Bureau (ITU-D), relevant organisations such as the IXPAs, and IXP communities themselves in capacity building and other activities to promote the establishment of local and regional IXPs.