

5733 websites taken offline in 2019

The internet seems to have boundless possibilities. Unfortunately, as it grows, the internet also offers more and more options for cybercriminals. In our fight to keep the internet safe, we took no fewer than 5733 websites offline in 2019.

Because [DNS Belgium wants to provide a safe internet for each and every internet user in our country](#), we have to respond promptly and preferably proactively to possible abuse within the .be zone. The three procedures we use to that end are evidently doing an excellent job. In addition, technical cooperation with Telenet, Proximus and VOO, ensures that we can offer Belgian internet users the safest internet possible.

DNS Belgium detects more fraudulent websites faster

We took 5733 websites offline in 2019. That is nearly double the number we took offline in 2018 (2913) and an absolute record. The growing number of websites we take offline every year is a good indication of our stepped up efforts to keep the internet safe. It may also suggest that possibly more fraudulent websites may be lurking out there, but it means above all that we are more capable of tracking them down and taking them offline.

- 2090 of these 5733 websites were fake web shops that targeted the wallet of unsuspecting internet shoppers.
- We took 5249 websites offline by means of a strict control system which we implement ourselves (Revoke and Revoke+).
- We revoked 163 domain names using the new Notice & Action procedure, which enabled us to take action against illegal website faster when requested to do so by the FPS Economy.

Even faster action

We devised the Notice & Action procedure with the FPS Economy so as to be able take more rapid action against fraudulent websites. It is a good addition to the procedures we had already worked out:

- Revoke procedure. This procedure is used to monitor the accuracy of a registrant's details. If they are found to be incorrect, the registrant is given 14 days to correct them before we revoke the domain name.
- Revoke+ procedure. This procedure is comparable to the Revoke procedure, but we take faster action. We apply this procedure to safeguard against phishing in particular. We make sure that the fraudulent website linked to the domain name is no longer accessible. Here once again, the registrant has 14 days to respond.

It is worth underscoring that registrants rarely respond, which means that the websites at issue are fraudulent in fact.

The Revoke and Revoke+ procedures enable us to take prompt action against fraudulent websites. We can even remove a domain name immediately with a court order.

Cooperation with Telenet, Proximus and VOO

Fighting fraudulent websites will not make the internet safe on its own. DNS Belgium has consequently entered a cooperation arrangement with Telenet, VOO and Proximus so that they can guarantee a safer internet traffic for their customers.

To that end, we placed an identical nameserver in the network of each of these partners, which cooperates flawlessly with the other name servers of DNS Belgium. If problems arise, there is always one sound, rapidly functioning name server available for Telenet, VOO and Proximus customers, and malicious internet traffic never reaches the server installed locally. Better known as [anycast](#), this form of communication ensures that the majority of Belgian internet users can count on a safer internet.

The figures show that our efforts are producing results. But everything relating to the internet is developing at such dizzying pace, that we must constantly keep looking for ways to create a digital environment that is as safe as possible for internet users.

About DNS Belgium

[DNS Belgium](#) is a not-for-profit organisation established in February 1999 by ISPA Belgium, Agoria and BELTUG. Our aim is to register .be, .brussels and .vlaanderen domain names, to make the internet more accessible and to support its usage through domain names. More information on DNS Belgium is to be found on www.dnsbelgium.be

Press contact:

Lut Goedhuys

M: +32 477 676 697

E: lut.goedhuys@dnsbelgium.be