



RIPE NCC

RIPE NETWORK COORDINATION CENTRE

RIPE NCC and Sanctions

Athina Fragkouli | RIPE 84 | 18 May 2022

Legal Background



- The RIPE NCC must comply with EU sanctions
- Dutch authorities are responsible for enforcement
 - UN sanctions are incorporated in EU sanctions (UN has no enforcement power)
- EU sanctions relate to:
 - Providing specific products and services to a specific country (RIPE NCC Services not included in this)
 - The provision of economic resources to *listed individuals/organisations* (registration of Internet number resources is considered an “economic resource”)
- Failure to comply is an offence under criminal law - criminal court can impose fines, and individuals may be imprisoned for up to six years
- Important note: the RIPE NCC is legally able to receive payments from sanctioned members

2012 - First Compliance Efforts



- Sanctions affecting countries in our service region
 - Received letter from lobby group questioning our relationship with Iranian members
- Confirmation from Dutch authorities that our services are not subject to country-specific sanctions
- New process: rejection of membership applications by individuals/organisations in sanctions lists
 - Including individuals/organisations owned or controlled by listed ones

2014 - Executive Board Resolution



*"The Executive Board of the RIPE NCC believes that the means of communication **should not be affected by political discussions or disputes**. This includes the provision of correctly registered Internet numbering resources.*

*The Executive Board of the RIPE NCC is committed to taking all lawful steps available to ensure that the RIPE NCC can provide **undisrupted services to all members across our service region.**"*

2020 - Further Developments



- Alerted that two members were sanctioned
 - Resources registration frozen until the matter clarified
- Requested exemption from the Dutch authorities
 - Reply: no legal basis for exemption
- Confirmation that the registration of IP addresses are “economic resources” under EU sanctions regulations
 - Sanctioned entities must be prevented from registering new resources and existing resources must be frozen (preventing transfers)
 - Deregistration of resources not required

Updated Sanctions Process



- Independent auditors (EY) reviewed our updated process —> positive outcome
- All current members and End Users screened again
- Third party tools to automate screening
- Still a lot of manual checks, especially for indirect sanctions
 - Checking whether entities are owned or controlled by sanctioned entities/individuals
- Resources are locked while we investigate
 - Liability in case of violation (no best effort basis or grace period)

NL Banks



- They have their own restrictions (AML, KYC)
- They don't accept payments from “Ultra High Risk Countries”
- We had to postpone 2021 invoices for members in Iran and Syria until the matter was clarified
- We eventually decided to invoice the bulk of members in Iran and Syria for 2021

2022 - Sanctions Against Russia



- Six EU sanctions packages in less than two months
- The provision of RIPE NCC services to Russia is not sanctioned
- Sanctions target provision of economic resources to listed individuals/entities (applicable to Internet number resources)
 - Flagged entities/individuals are under investigation
 - No registration updates allowed during investigation
 - New sanctions issued frequently - list is getting longer and longer
 - Manual checks are complicated and time consuming - checking entities owned or controlled by sanctioned entities/individuals
 - So far two Russian members confirmed as sanctioned

Payment Obligations from RU Members



- Sanctioned RU members:
 - We are legally allowed to receive payments but NL banks impose extra restrictions
 - They will have to pay membership fees once sanctions/bank restrictions are lifted
- Non-sanctioned RU members:
 - We are legally allowed to receive payments but their RU banks may be restricted
 - Extra time allowed for them as a result
 - We have done the same for similar cases in the past

Overview for 2022



	Iran	Syria	Russia
Sanctioned members	Frozen registration		
	No invoices sent - fees still due, but not collected yet because of restrictions by NL bank		
Non sanctioned members	All RIPE NCC services provided		
	No invoices sent - fees still due, but not collected yet because of NL bank restrictions (Ultra High Risk Countries)		Invoices sent, but flexible timeframe because of restrictions on RU banks

2022 - Executive Board Resolution



*“[...]The Executive Board of the RIPE NCC believes that the means to communicate should not be affected by **domestic political disputes, international conflicts or war**. This includes the provision of correctly registered Internet numbering resources.*

*The Executive Board of the RIPE NCC is committed to taking all lawful steps available to ensure that the RIPE NCC can provide **undisrupted services to all members** across our service region and the global Internet community.[...]”*

Supporting Network Operators



- Neutral RIPE NCC guarantees equal treatment for all those responsible for providing Internet services
- Data provided by the RIPE NCC can be trusted as authoritative
- Important for the function of the Internet

- *Solidarity “with those operators who have the difficult task of maintaining Internet access to assist the people suffering from the terrible effects of armed conflicts and war”*



Questions



athina.fragkouli@ripe.net