

# Ordinary General Meeting of 4 June 2024

■  
Minutes

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# Preamble

On 4 June 2024 at 10:00 am, the members of Afnic met in an ordinary general meeting at the Campus Cyber, 5 Rue Bellini, 92800 Puteaux and online <https://visio.afnic.fr/b/sop-geq-nim>.

Notice of the meeting, containing the agenda, had been sent on 14 May 2024, electronically, to all members.

The date and place of the meeting, the agenda and the working documents were available in the members' area: <https://members.afnic.fr>.

## 1. Agenda

- Opening by the Chair
- Appointment of a Recording Secretary and Scrutineer
- Activity report 2023
- Presentation of the 2023 annual accounts
- Auditor's report
- Approval of the accounts for the 2023 financial year and appropriation of profit
- Vote on the 2025 overall budget allocated to trustee compensation
- Election of a trustee representing Registrars and a trustee representing Users

## 2. Attendees

Upon entering the meeting, each member present signed an attendance sheet; for members attending online, a screenshot was taken of the list to identify them and record their online presence on the attendance sheet. These documents can be consulted at the Afnic Members service.

In total, 57 members were present or represented, 53 of whom were entitled to vote. Those present were counted each time a resolution was voted on.

### 4 Founding Members represented by Afnic trustees:

- Inria represented by Mr Godefroy Beauvallet
- Inria represented by Mr Luc Saccavini
- Ministry of Electronic Communications represented by Ms Mirelle Campana
- Ministry of Industry represented by Ms Isabelle Amaglio-Terisse

### 1 Honorary Member (non-voting):

- Ms Annie Renard, attending online

### 11 User Members, individuals (including 1 non-voting):

- Mr Sébastien Bachollet
- Mr Sory Bah, attending online
- Mr Antoine Boutignon
- Mr Chagny Nicolas
- Ms Eugénie Chaumont, attending online
- Mr Benjamin Louis
- Mr Nicolas Pawlak
- Ms Elisabeth Porteneuve, attending online
- Mr Jean-Benoît Richard, attending online

- Mr David-Irving Tayer
- Ms Mireille Yamajako, having given power to Mr Nicolas Pawlak

#### 9 User Members, legal persons (including 1 non-voting):

- Bibliothèque Nationale de France represented by Mr Vladimir Tybin
- CCI Métropolitaine Bretagne Ouest, represented by Mr Claude Ravalec, having given power to Mr Nicolas Pawlak
- Fédération Française du Bâtiment, represented by Mr Clément Vuillemin, having given power to Mr Sébastien Bachollet
- INPI, represented by Mr Paul Perpère and Ms Caroline Beauvillain
- ISOC France, represented by Mr Nicolas Chagny
- NOVAGRAAF, represented by Mr Marc-Emmanuel Mellet
- Plasseraud IP, represented by Mr Fabrice Bircker, attending online
- Sparkling, represented by Mr Benjamin Louis
- Titan Datacenters France, represented by Jean-Sébastien Femenia, having given power to Mr Nicolas Chagny

#### 17 Registrar Members:

- Cabinet Germain Moreau, represented by Mr Gaël Mancec, attending online
- CELEONET, represented by Mr Yann Szkolnik, having given power to Mr Eric Lantonnet
- CSC Corporate Domains, represented by Mr Patrick Hauss, attending online
- DATAXY, represented by Mr Bernard Dulac, attending online
- DGS Monaco, represented by Mr Eric Lantonnet
- Domainium, represented by Mr Philippe Franck, attending online
- GANDI, represented by Mr Arnaud Franquinet
- IP TWINS, represented by Mr Gianni Chiarolini
- KEY SYSTEMS, represented by Mr Olivier Fries, having given power to Mr Frédéric Guillemaut
- Nameshield, represented by Mr Arnaud Wittersheim, attending online

- NETIM, represented by Mr Sébastien Almiron
- ONE2NET, represented by Mr Pierre Geoffroy, attending online
- ORANGE, represented by Ms Sophie Jean-Gilles
- ORDIPAT, represented by Ms Jennifer Korn
- OVH, represented by Ms Emma Caner
- SAFEBRANDS, represented by Mr Frédéric Guillemaut
- SFR, represented by Mr Arnaud Web

15 correspondent members of the International College (including 1 non-voting):

- ADETIC, represented by Mr Mahamat Ali Batran, attending online
- ANSI, represented by Mr Antoine Kammiri Souroumpo, attending online
- ARCEP, represented by Mr Serge Roland Sanou, attending online
- ARTCI, represented by Ms Nicaise Yapoga, attending online
- CAMEROON DIGITAL, represented by Mr Oumarou Mounpoubeyi, attending online
- CII, represented by Mr Vojo Spahiu, attending online
- CNI, represented by Mr Félix Ndayirukye, attending online
- INPHB, represented by Mr Souleymane Oumtanaga
- NIC Madagascar, represented by Mr Raft Razafindrakoto
- NIC Sénégal, represented by Mr Idrissa Sarr, attending online
- Rwanda Internet Community and Technology Alliance, represented by Ms Grace Ingabire, attending online
- SAN, represented by Mr Agim Cami, attending online
- Société Congolaise des Postes et des Télécommunications, represented by Mr Maurice Mufusi Nteteubaka, attending online
- Transversal, represented by Mr Max Henry, attending online
- Webnet Africa, represented by Ms Rita Tshimanga, attending online

Also attending the General Meeting:

- Mr Olivier Souillard, auditor, Audit France
- Mr Laurent Toutain, Chair of Afnic’s Scientific Council
- Mr Benoit Ampeau, Partnerships and Innovations Director, Afnic
- Ms Gabrielle Apfelbaum, Communication Director, Afnic
- Mr Pierre Bonis, CEO of Afnic
- Ms Sophie Canac, Head of Associative Governance, Afnic
- Mr Lucien Castex, Research internet and society / Internet governance, Afnic
- Ms Clémence Davoust, Events Communication Manager, Afnic
- Ms Caroline Duval-Favre, Secretary-General, Afnic
- Ms Marianne Georgelin, Legal Director, Afnic
- Ms Margot Gueguen, Communication Department, Afnic
- Mr Régis Massé, Director of Information Systems, Afnic
- Ms Virginie Navailles, Head of Transversal CSR Approaches, Afnic
- Ms Mégane Passereau, Assistant to the CEO, Afnic
- Ms Kaviya Senthillingam, Communication Officer, Afnic
- Ms Emilie Turbat, Sales & Marketing Director, Afnic
- Mr Pascal Vella, Head of Digital Communication, Afnic

## 3. Minutes

### Opening by the Chair

The ordinary general meeting being lawfully convened, the Chair Mr Godefroy Beauvallet opened the session. He welcomed all participants.

Godefroy Beauvallet announced that the agenda would conventionally include the activity report and the financial statements, but also the election of a trustee representing Registrars and a trustee representing Users.

# Appointment of a Recording Secretary and Scrutineer

Mégane Passereau (Afnic) was appointed recording secretary and Sophie Canac (Afnic) was named scrutineer.

## Activity report 2023

### 2023: A year of construction

Godefroy Beauvallet opened the General Meeting with the key moments of 2023 for the association:

Acquisition and renovation of the head office:

- The high level of accumulated surplus and the period of inflation accompanied by low interest rates allowed Afnic to invest in a more secure building with better energy efficiency, at the heart of Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines.
- The head office provides a site to receive members and bring the association to life through the different meetings of its bodies, but also provides a venue for receptions and events involving the French Internet community.

In 2023, Afnic renewed its organisational structure with the creation of a bona fide General Secretariat, headed up by Caroline Duval-Favre and encompassing the finance, HR, work-life quality and building management departments.

The fight against abuse and the creation of new tools were major focuses in 2023 in order to best adapt to changing threats. Various initiatives were deployed, namely a system for the verification of holders' data before publication and graduated sanctions on registrars who do not fulfil their commitments regarding the fight against abuse.



Afnic has also worked on a non-judicial dispute resolution method with the introduction of a mediation procedure as a free and amicable means of resolving disputes.

Lastly in 2023, Afnic took the decision to increase the .fr fees for the first time. This increase is a result of several factors: rising input costs, inflation, and pay rises for tech employees. The fee increase was confirmed following consultation with the members, the public and the French State with a view to ensuring the smooth functioning of the .fr TLD.

Godefroy Beauvallet thanked all of the Afnic teams and members for their contributions to Afnic's success.

## **The external context: Security**

The registry is facing a context of regulations, new legislation, and new legal and regulatory frameworks.

- *The French Military Programming Act (LPM)*: gives new powers of enforcement to the French Cybersecurity Agency (ANSSI) over the registry for the blocking and deletion of domain names that may be used to pose a threat to the national interest.

- *NIS 2*: European directive that will be transposed. The discussions between Afnic, ANSSI and the Directorate General for Enterprise (DGE) have improved the texts of the transposition in order to remedy certain ambiguities.

This year has also seen the implementation of a Liaison Committee between the State and DNS stakeholders that play an important role in this dialogue with ANSSI.

- Since the outbreak of the conflict in Ukraine, Afnic has been on high alert to remain vigilant to various threats (with a particular focus in the context of the Olympic Games)

However, Afnic has not stressed an increase in threats and attacks in connection with the conflict between Israel and Hamas.

## The external context

- In 2023, a significant increase was observed in the targeting of entities responsible for the transmission of sensitive data, such as telecoms companies,
- Cybercrime is still a major threat for the public sector and for entities particularly vulnerable to service interruptions,
- Profit-driven attacks remained at a high level in 2023 (30% higher than in 2022),
- The *energy – transport – logistics – telecoms* sectors are still considered as particularly vulnerable to the threat of destabilisation,
- The trend in ransoming exclusively based on data exfiltration (without ransomware) observed in 2021 has been confirmed in 2023.

## External context and cooperation on cybersecurity

National cooperation in the form of our strengthened relations with ANSSI has been expanded on by the introduction and development of international cooperation between counterparts:

- This the case of the new “TLD ISAC” supported by Centr, which brings together the main national European registry operators to share threat intelligence, exchange best practices, and act as a lever for security coordination and mutual aid in case of cyber-attacks on one or more members.
- This is also the case of the ICANN “TLD OPS” which aims to share best security practices and organise cyber skills transfer between members.
- Afnic plays a leading role in these two bodies, and organised a joint TLD OPS/ISAC exercise during the Centr meeting last week.

## The international context: the market

- The domain name market remained relatively dynamic in 2023, notably with regard to ccTLDs, with performance above the European average again for .fr.

- There are, however, early signs of a bottoming out in Europe in particular, which reflects the economic difficulties currently facing households and businesses in a context of inflation and geopolitical uncertainties.
- .com meanwhile, the market leader, has taken a hit and its stock is down. The most problematic domains in terms of abuse are in decline, which is good news. Fees have risen moderately to take into account inflation, an increase that has also affected the .fr TLD (+11% on 1 March).

### **The association in 2023**

Godefroy Beauvallet gave an update on the association's membership in 2023, which totalled 129 members, a stable figure compared to 2022.

Around 42% of the members of Afnic have been members for over 15 years and around 34% joined Afnic in the last 5 years.

Members' participation in the General Meeting in 2023 was the lowest of the past three years, which is usual in a year without elections; whereas turnout at the consultative committee meetings was consistent.

The association held the following in 2023:

- 1 General Meeting
- 2 registrars' and users' consultative committee meetings
- 1 Operational Working Group (OWG) was launched to allow volunteer members to work with the Afnic teams on different projects
- 5 meetings of the Board of Trustees
- 1 strategic seminar on the evolution of the Association's promise
- 1 meeting with the members of the International College

### **2024 and the implementation of the renewal of the Association's promise: progress**

New developments are on the horizon for 2024, including:

- A new membership brochure
- New members (IT, academia, representatives of rights holders)
- The consultation in March to explain the proposals, collect feedback and identify priorities
- Launch of the TWG on Abuse with volunteer members
- Tariff discounts on Afnic training programmes
- Themed webinars and meetings of the different colleges

## **2024 and the implementation of the renewal of the Association's promise: organisation**

Afnic is preparing to organise:

- Two half-day open-door sessions to build links between members and employees and give members an insight into their work
- An event in the provinces jointly organised with one of our members: 5 December in Quimper to celebrate the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of .bzh
- An onboarding document that contains all the useful information for new (and existing) members
- Price discounts or free use of training/meeting rooms

## **Momentum and growth for .fr**

Pierre Bonis underlined that the volume of create operations stood at an excellent level in 2023 and that, for the first time in its history, the .fr TLD exceeded 800,000 annual registrations to reach 801,427 creations, i.e. a 6.4% increase compared with 2022.

The renewal rate, meanwhile, was slightly down, at 83.4% compared with 83.5% in 2022, due to a higher than usual delete rate for names reaching expiry (66% as against 68–70%).

On 31 December 2023, stock reached 4,133,832 domain names, i.e. growth of 3.4%, above the average growth of EU ccTLDs of 1.8%.

## **Afnic's continued actions in favour of the online presence of VSEs/SMEs and young people**

The digital transformation of French companies and awareness-raising among young people regarding the issues surrounding an online presence remain at the core of Afnic's missions. In 2023, its support programme for online presence, Réussir-en.fr ["Succeed with .fr"] (réussir-en.fr) helped inform and train over 28,500 VSEs/SMEs and more than 4,500 young people as part of in-person and online sessions centred on creating a website, adopting good practices for a controlled and independent digital identity, improving their SEO, and choosing the right .fr domain name.

To further this guidance towards the right digital choices, Afnic also uses the Tous en ligne Maintenant ["All Online Now"] (tousenlignemaintenant.fr) and Foliweb (lesfoliweb.fr) initiatives and its partnerships with the French federation of student associations (FFBDE) and Pix. Furthermore, for the fourth consecutive year, the "Foliweb Awards" rewarded the digital strategy of six small businesses, enabling them to develop their activity and ensure its continuity.

At the same time, Afnic has continued its collaboration with France Num and Studio Next for a third season of the TV programme Connecte ta Boîte ["Connect your Business"], broadcasting of which began in December and continued in early 2024.

Two new studies resulting from the reactions to the self-diagnostic tool "Réussir avec le Web" ["Succeed on the web"] were published. A study centred on the tourism sector highlighted the specific characteristics of the digital transformation of this sector compared with the more generalised sample of respondents. Emphasis was placed on the fact that the players in this economic sector are expanding their online presence channels in order to develop their business, are investing to optimise their visibility and are applying good cybersecurity practices.

In terms of its distribution network, Afnic has pursued its commercial operations encouraging use of domain names, and in particular based on the offers of its registrars

awarded the “Je passe au numérique” [“I’m going digital”] label, which guarantees alignment with the needs of small businesses.

Thanks to this programme of operations, more than 85,000 .fr domain names received fee discounts in 2023, directly benefiting the digital transformation of French VSEs/SMEs.

## **Development of registry policies to facilitate the fight against online abuse**

Since the opening of .fr domain names to private individuals in 2006, Afnic has been a pioneer in the fight against abuse thanks to judicial and extra-judicial procedures.

Pierre Bonis underlined the efforts of the Afnic teams and of the registrars to keep .fr a trustworthy domain.

Afnic’s approach to abuse has a threefold objective:

- to retain the trust of .fr users in the national TLD;
- to quickly and effectively put an end to the abusive practices of certain holders, while respecting the rights of each individual and maintaining the necessary neutrality of the registry, both indispensable elements of this trust;
- and to develop our practices, in particular by means of innovation, so that strengthening the fight against abuse is consistent with maintaining the simplicity and competitiveness of the .fr domain, in a context of heightened competition.

## **Consultation of stakeholders**

Afnic regularly consults all stakeholders interested in the evolution of the Internet in France with regard to far-reaching projects concerning the .fr domain and the French overseas TLDs. Afnic launched:

- *in June 2022*: an initial consultation on the detection of registration data at the time a domain name is created, contrary to the .fr Naming Policy
- *in September 2022*: a second consultation on access to registration data for authorities having the right of communication

- *in early 2023*: a third consultation on the establishment of a mediation procedure
- *in October 2023*: a fourth consultation on cooperation with the registrars to introduce a common system for the verification of holders' data
- *in November 2023*: a fifth public consultation on the introduction of graduated sanctions applied to registrars accredited to distribute .fr and the oversees TLDs managed by Afnic.

Pierre Bonis thanked members for their participation in the various consultative committee to review the amendment of the registry policies.

### **Mediation: a new service proposed by Afnic**

On 3 July 2023, Afnic put in place a free mediation procedure as an amicable means of dispute resolution. The procedure aims to facilitate the resolution of disputes concerning a domain name.

Mediation has the following three goals:

- to bring some of the disputes to a quick and entirely confidential conclusion;
- to propose a new way of resolving disputes which, unlike the ADR procedures, is free of charge;
- to limit publication of ADR rulings to the cases in which the parties do not reach agreement.

Between 3 July and the end of December 2023, Afnic appointed 6 mediators and received 54 mediation requests.

### **Non-.fr activity – Other activities: Generic TLDs:**

Pierre Bonis indicated that Afnic has maintained its leading position on the French market.

.paris saw its stock fall to 20,000 domain names at year-end 2023

while .museum continued its consolidation at over 1,000 active domain names, reaching 1,032 .museum names as at 31/12/2023.

The Cercle des .marque [“The Brand TLD Club”] community met once again this year with some fifty brands and their representatives to discuss Internet domains and in particular the upcoming ICANN round in spring 2026.

## A developing training organisation

2023 was a pivotal year for the training activity. Afnic is a Qualiopi-certified training organisation. The training department almost doubled its revenue compared with 2022, posting a figure of around €100,000.

One of the specific characteristics of this activity is that the training courses are run by employees trained as trainers.

The training catalogue was expanded in 2023 from 5 to 9 training programmes:

- *The basics of the DNS and the domain name industry*
- *Domain names from A to Z in partnership with INPI (National Institute of Industrial Property)*
- *Understanding and deploying the IPv6 protocol*
- *Domain names and online abuse > New*
- *Understanding the stakes in Internet governance > New*
- *Secure your email thanks to the DNS with DKIM, DMARC, SPF*
- *Secure your DNS infrastructure thanks to DNSSEC*
- *Managing and securing a portfolio of domain names – Key Accounts > New*
- *DNS Administrator > New*



## R&D activity in 2023

### **A year of consolidation for collaborative projects and contributions**

In terms of Research and Development, Pierre Bonis reiterated that Afnic has a duty to examine new technologies and to be attentive to innovations that make sense to our clients and our users.

Afnic has put in place projects in cooperation with more and more partners both in the industry and in academic research.

### **Technical support for the .ga TLD**

7 June 2023 is a historic date for the Internet in Gabon. The .ga national TLD is no longer operated by the company Freenom, but by the National Agency for Digital Infrastructure and Frequencies (ANINF), which has taken over fully as the Top-Level Domain registry.

ANINF worked with Afnic for more than one year preparing this transition which forms part of a process of re-appropriation of the .ga domain by Gabon in order to further digital sovereignty.

### **The Afnic Foundation**

Pierre Bonis recalled that the Afnic teams work all year long to generate revenues with which to fuel the Foundation. This enables the Foundation to finance digital solidarity projects throughout mainland and overseas France.

Over the last 8 years, the Afnic Foundation has paid out €10,001,578 in aid to 512 structures across all of France (including the French overseas territories).

The topics covered by this year's winners reflect the major challenges facing our society:

- Climate change
- Health
- Disability

- Women's rights
- Food insecurity
- Inter-generational ties
- The spiral of practices on social networks

The 2023 achievements included:

- 4 tools created or modified
- 5 software programs or applications developed
- 7 platforms, communities or websites managed
- 2 site openings
- 66 workshops or training components
- 3 multimedia cultural tools

2023 was also a year of reflection, in which the Foundation took the time to consider its positioning and its methods of intervention in relation with the foreseeable evolution of usages and needs and seeking complementarity with institutional players operating in the digital sphere.

The Afnic Foundation intends to continue supporting solidarity players, offering a forum to share expertise and knowledge, and encourage dialogue and constant benevolent support.

## **Social responsibility at Afnic**

Pierre Bonis recalled that Afnic had initiated the structuring of the ISO 26000 framework and worked through actions based on pillars of sustainable development.

Afnic is pursuing its development through objectives and the monitoring of their attainment and has put in place a process of continuous improvement.

### **Social results**

Changes in workforce: At year-end 2023, Afnic had 91 employees, 45% women and 55% men. The workforce was stable and the turnover rate was 4.5%, down 4% on 2022.

Diversity and equal treatment: in 2023, the index concerning gender equality in the workplace stood at 98/100, stable over two years and three pp higher than in 2020 and 12 pp higher than in 2019.

Skills development: the training budget represented 3.2% of the total payroll in 2023, in line with our commitment to devote 3% of the total payroll each year to developing employees' skills. 74% of employees followed at least one training course.

Employee satisfaction: In response to the annual internal survey, employees expressed an 89% satisfaction rate with Afnic as an employer and 92% for the quality of life at work, each up by 2 pp relative to 2022.

## Societal results

Afnic Foundation for Digital Solidarity: Out of 393 applications received in 2023, the Afnic Foundation for Digital Solidarity supported 87 projects for a total amount of €1,482,690, financed with the profits made on .fr registrations.

The central theme of the Afnic Foundation for Digital Solidarity annual event, held on 12 December 2023, was that of projects developed by and for women. More than 80 people took part in the exchanges and round tables on the presence of women in digital professions and projects designed by women to improve their daily lives and their health.

Raising awareness of VSEs/SMEs and young people on the need for a controlled online presence and training them accordingly: Through the Réussir-en.fr ("Succeed with .fr") and the Foliweb workshops, more than 26,000 VSEs/SMEs were supported in their move online in 2023 and trained to develop their activities on the Internet, and more than 4,500 young people took part in the workshops organised with our partners on mastering their online presence, particularly on the subjects of their identity and their data.

Furthermore, more than 3,000 VSEs/SMEs, retailers and tradespersons with limited experience of the digital world attended "Tous en ligne Maintenant" ["All Online Now"] training courses run by Afnic and its partners.

Regional roots reaffirmed: In 2023, Afnic strengthened its position as an economic and social actor in Saint Quentin-en-Yvelines by purchasing its future head office in Guyancourt, which will host training sessions for local associations and partners.

Afnic's teams continued their involvement with universities and schools in the region, but also with job fairs, business and innovation events led by the urban community.

In the context of "Réussir-en.fr" and "Tous en Ligne Maintenant", several workshops were held at the SQY Cub incubator to accompany projects to set up new businesses and/or develop an online activity on themes such as launching online activities, creating a website and getting it well referenced, the keys to choosing the website address, etc.

The HR and CSR teams were also active in 2023 within dedicated inter-company community task forces to develop the practices of local businesses, in particular as regards attraction, inclusion and integration of new employees and persons with disabilities, the feminisation of scientific and technical professions, environmental impact and a nature initiative.

Afnic also continues to buy from local suppliers and service providers and to favour insertion whenever possible in the context of its responsible purchasing policy.

## Environmental results

### Afnic, a committed actor in the responsible digital ecosystem

Afnic's commitment to sustainable development has been made official since 2019 within its strategic lines of action.

The 2022/2025 roadmap proclaims our ambition to be a recognised and useful player in digital solidarity and a sustainable digital sector.

It is for this reason that Afnic has a seat on the Numeum Digital and Environment committee and became a signatory to Planet Tech'Care in 2023.

Led by Numeum, Planet Tech'Care is the first initiative to bring together a network of partners with the aim of supporting companies wishing to integrate digital technology into their environmental trajectory and providing support to the stakeholders involved in training with regard to developing skills in sustainable IT.

### Afnic's Carbon Balance Sheet

Inputs constituted the main source of emissions, which represented around 66% of the carbon footprint, followed by travel at 13%; energy at 12% and fixed assets at 11%.

Freight and waste together accounted for less than 1% of emissions.

### Plan to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions

Workshops conducted with the management committee allowed us to draw up a new plan for reducing GHG emissions, targeting the three biggest items of the carbon balance sheet. This roadmap was adopted by the Board of Trustees in November 2022 for implementation as of 2023.

Afnic has also committed to offset its GHG emissions as of 2022 via the contribution to global carbon neutrality.

### Contribution to global carbon neutrality

One of Afnic's commitments in the 2022/2027 Agreement with the French State was to reach carbon neutrality by putting in place a carbon offset policy.

In 2023, the members of Afnic chose to support two carbon contribution projects:

A Low Carbon Label ("Bas Carbone") project - CarbonAgri aimed at accompanying the transition of a dairy operation in Désertines (Allier *département* of France).

A technological carbon sequestration project managed by Inuk: a thermal solar power plant now supplies the electricity for the heat networks of the town of Issoudun (Indre).

In 2024, Afnic chose to support the Tour d'Auvergne forestation and reforestation project (Puy-de-Dôme): 4,750 trees, selected for their hardiness and their contribution to

biodiversity, will be planted to reconstitute forest stands, restore biodiversity and improve the region's ecological resilience.

### Protection and rehabilitation of biodiversity

Beyond carbon contribution, Afnic has voluntarily opted to support the EcoTree Fund for Biodiversity, which aims to strengthen terrestrial biodiversity in ecosystems spread throughout France by means of various projects:

- Bat conservation in the forest of Préaux (Mayenne)
- Restoration of two wetland areas in Ploërdut (Morbihan)
- Actions in favour of birds in the forests of Ruillé and Pontvallain (Sarthe)
- Creation of 42 biodiversity enclaves in Monceaux-sur-Dordogne (Corrèze)
- Actions in favour of pollination

### Employer mobility plan

In 2023, Afnic established its first employer mobility plan.

- The average round trip distance that employees travel between home and Afnic was 66 km.
- 60% of employees travelled to work by road
- 35% travelled by public transport and train
- 5% walked or cycled to work
- The two main levers identified for reducing GHG emissions linked to commuting were the continued use of home office working and the introduction of a mobility allowance. These were the subject of two agreements signed with the employee representatives.

## Presentation of the 2023 annual accounts

### Trends in revenues

Caroline Duval-Favre, Afnic Secretary-General, announced that total revenues were up by 5.5% at €20,019 for the year to 31 December 2023. This growth is mainly in line with that of

the .fr TLD (revenue from which was up by 5.8%, i.e. +€1,116k). This was correlated with the annual growth of the stock of .fr domain names, which stood at 4,133,832 at the end of 2023.

This growth in revenues was largely due to domain name creations (+6.1%), to renew operations (+2.3%), to the strong momentum of the FR Lock and FR Rush products (+7.1%) and to income from the project to raise small enterprises' awareness of digital technology ("Tous en Ligne Maintenant").

Relative to the budget objectives, revenues from the .fr TLD were ahead by 2.5%, in line with the 0.3% forecast growth in the stock of .fr names.

In terms of revenues from other activities, the overseas TLDs were stable with 59,000 domain names as at 31 December 2023.

Afnic's revenues from its back-end registry operations were down slightly by 3% as a result of a tariff adjustment for one TLD and the fall in revenues from the .paris TLD, despite an increase in its domain name portfolio.

Revenues from Consultancy and Training increased sharply, however, exceeding the target of €100,000.

## Trends in operating expenses

Caroline Duval-Favre emphasised that operating expenses had increased compared with 2022, up 8.0% at almost €20 million.

This increase was primarily due to three factors:

- Purchase of Afnic's head office and the subsequent payment in 2023 of incidental acquisition costs (notary fees of €150,000, estate agency commission of €115,000, and payment of €170,000 to the previous lessor for refurbishment of the former premises)
- Increase in personnel costs in line with the workforce increase, wage increases and training
- Build-up of the Réussir en .fr programme

## Trend in Operating Profit

Afnic's operating profit (before taxes) was positive in 2023 despite a slight fall relative to the previous year, amounting to €2,200,300 (approximately 10% of revenues), reflecting Afnic's operational performance.

Net profit came to €1.7M, up substantially on 2022. The new State-Afnic Agreement provides for the outlay of the Foundation to be deducted from the association's taxable profit.

## Focus on activities

The operating profit of the .fr TLD was down 18% but consistent with the decline in the overall operating profit.

The operating profit of non-.fr activities (overseas territories, back-end registry operations and Consultancy and Training) was also down by 38% compared with 2022.

- Overseas TLDs down (impact of the general increase in the association's expenses)
- Back-end registry operations down despite the strong performance of the training activity

## Workforce

The year 2023 ended with a workforce of 91, up by 2.3% compared with the end of 2022 (six arrivals and four departures).

## Accumulated surplus

The accumulated surplus at the end of 2023 was enough to cover nearly 16 months of personnel costs, data centre hosting and premises rentals.



## Balance sheet and simplified income statement

The balance sheet contains no major changes, but it is important to underscore the difference in terms of asset allocation. 10 million euros in liquid assets were used as fixed assets as a result of the building acquisition.

## Conclusion

Caroline Duval-Favre indicated that the very good results for 2023 allowed Afnic to consolidate the accumulated surplus and to maintain its strategic objectives, and notably for 2024:

- to consolidate its position as the leader in domain names and the DNS in France and in Europe;
- to maintain .fr as the most dynamic TLD in its market with development of its activity aimed at VSEs/SMEs as the priority targets;
- to be a recognised and useful player in digital solidarity and sustainability;
- to bring the multi-actor model of its structure to life.

## Auditor's report

### Report on the annual accounts

Olivier Souillard, Auditor, read the report on the annual accounts:

*“In execution of the assignment entrusted to us by your General Meeting, we have audited the accompanying financial statements of Association Française pour le Nommage Internet en Coopération (Afnic), as attached to this report and as presented for the year ended 31 December 2023.*

*We certify that the annual statements are, in accordance with French accounting rules and principles, regular and sincere, and give a true and fair view of the result of operations over the past financial year and of the financial situation and assets of the Association at*

*the end of this year. We conducted our audit in accordance with the professional standards applicable in France and we believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.*

*In accordance with professional standards applicable in France, we also conducted the specific checks required by the legal and regulatory texts. We have no observations to make regarding the truthfulness of the information provided in the documents sent to members, particularly the financial presentation made to you.”*

The annual accounts were certified without qualification.

### **Special report on regulated agreements**

Olivier Souillard read the special report on regulated agreements:

*Agreement submitted for approval by the association in application of Article R612-7 of the French Commercial Code, we have been advised of the following agreement: Agreement concluded with the association ISOC France of which Mr Sébastien Bachollet is trustee and Honorary Chairman of the association. Over the 2023 financial year, your association made a financial contribution of 20,000 euros to the association ISOC France as part of the FGI France partnership, broken down as follows: 15,000 euros in financial partnership and 5,000 euros in communication services in kind.*

The agreement had already been approved by the association.

#### **Trustee compensation**

*The Extraordinary General Meeting of 20 November 2019 had decided that the elected trustees would receive compensation for the duties entrusted to them, within the limits set annually by the General Meeting. In accordance with Article 14 of the articles of your association and Article 2.1.5 of its internal regulations, this compensation, which must be requested by the elected trustees, is paid quarterly.*

*In respect of financial year 2023, the following amounts were paid to the following elected trustees: Mr Sébastien Almiron: €10,500; Mr Sébastien Bachollet: €10,500; Mr Arnaud Franquinet: €10,500; Mr Souleymane Oumtanaga: €10,500;*

*In respect of the first quarter of 2024, the following amounts were paid to the following elected trustees: Mr Sébastien Almiron: €2,625; Mr Sébastien Bachollet: €2,625; Mr Arnaud Franquinet: €2,625; Mr Souleymane Oumtanaga: €2,625.*

Olivier Souillard thanked Laurence Clément-Zerbib and Caroline Duval-Favre for their welcome and their faultless collaboration in the audits.

## **Approval of the accounts for the 2023 financial year and appropriation of profit**

Godefroy Beauvallet submitted to the vote the two resolutions concerning the approval of the accounts for 2023 and the appropriation of the result.

57 members were present in person or online or duly represented, 53 of whom had the right to vote (46.90% of the total number of members entitled to vote).

The following resolutions were passed unanimously:

**Resolution 1: Approval of the accounts for the 2023 financial year**

The General Meeting, having heard the report of the statutory auditor and the additional explanations provided orally, approved the accounts for the year ended 31 December 2023 as presented.

The General Meeting gave discharge to the trustees for the performance of their duties during the previous financial year.

**Resolution 2: Allocation to the "other reserves and working capital" account**

The General Meeting, at the proposal of the Board of Trustees, resolved to allocate the accounting surplus for the year of €1,654,048 to the "other reserves and working capital" account.

## **Vote on the 2024 overall budget allocated to trustee compensation**

Godefroy Beauvallet reminded members that in accordance with the articles of association, the General Meeting must vote each year on the amount to be made available for elected trustee compensation, and reminded them that this concerned only the five elected trustee, not all trustees.

There was no change in amount compared with previous years.

The following resolution was passed unanimously, with one abstention:

Resolution 3: Setting of a maximum annual budget to cover trustees' compensation for 2025.

Having taken due note of the documents provided and following additional oral explanations, the General Meeting set the maximum budget for the compensation of elected trustees so requesting at €52,500 (excl. tax) for the year 2025.

The amount is to be equitably distributed among the trustees so requesting and subject to their diligence.

None of the five elected trustees may receive more than one fifth of this budgeted amount.

# Election of a trustee representing Users and a trustee representing Registrars

Pierre Bonis thanked the members for their participation in the votes, with voting participation of 50% for the first round online.

Two positions were open on the Board of Trustees, one for a representative of the User College and one for a representative of the Registrar College.

Three candidates nominated themselves for the Registrar College:

- CSC represented by Patrick Hauss
- DGS Monaco represented by Eric Lantonnet
- OVHCloud represented by Emma Caner

And two candidates nominated themselves for the User College:

- Nicolas Pawlak
- ISOC France represented by Sébastien Bachollet then Nicolas Chagny

Voting rules: Who can vote?

- Only members with over six months' membership and that have paid their 2024 fees in full (as at the time of the first event organised by the association which they were asked to attend) may vote
- The electors are the duly authorised representative of the member if the member is a legal person or the member himself or herself where the member is a natural person
- For the election of their representative to the Board of Trustees, only members of the college concerned shall take part in the vote
- Voting by proxy is allowed, but a member who is present cannot hold more than two proxies (valid only for voting in person, therefore for the second round at the GM)
- For online voting: one voter = one unique email address per member (no possibility of change once the election is under way); no proxy possible

How are votes counted?

- No quorum is required.
- To be elected in the first round, the candidate must obtain an absolute majority of the votes cast by the members present or represented.
- NB: possible in 2024 for both colleges and particularly the User College for which there were only two candidates
- Only candidates having obtained more than 10% of the votes will advance to the second round, if a second round is held
- In the event of a tied result in the first round (no absolute majority), a second round is held
- To be elected in the second round, the candidate must obtain the greatest number of votes from the members present or represented (no absolute majority needed)
- In the event of a tied result in the second round, selection shall be by drawing of lots

Election process and partial results:

#### College of Registrars

The 1<sup>st</sup> round of the election was held entirely online from Friday 24 to Thursday 30 May. The partial results were announced by email on Friday 31 May.

32 votes were cast out of 42 voting members.

As no candidate obtained an absolute majority, a 2<sup>nd</sup> round was organised.

Following the withdrawal of CSC, only two candidates remained for the second round: DGS Monaco and OVH Cloud.

For the 2<sup>nd</sup> round, voting was possible online from Friday 31 May to Monday 3 June to present the updated voting list to the General Meeting. Voting subsequently continued on ballot papers.

#### College of Users

The 1<sup>st</sup> round of the election was held entirely online from Friday 24 to Thursday 30 May. The partial results were announced by email on Friday 31 May.

28 votes were cast out of 47 voting members.

As no candidate obtained an absolute majority, a 2<sup>nd</sup> round was held.

For the 2<sup>nd</sup> round, voting was possible online from Friday 31 May to Monday 3 June to present the updated voting list to the General Meeting. Voting subsequently continued on ballot papers.

Report by the Chair of the Nomination Validation Committee

Luc Saccavini, Chair of the Nomination Validation Committee, presented his report to the members of the association.

For the College of Registrars:

Concerning the candidacies of the three registrars and their representatives, the committee had no questions and did not consider any complementary information in addition to the declarations to be necessary.

For the College of Users:

Additional information was requested from both candidates. The responses allowed any ambiguity as to possible risks of conflicts of interest to be dispelled.

Responses were provided in answer to requests. The candidacies were declared admissible by the members of the Nomination Validation Committee.

Before proceeding to the votes, Godefroy Beauvallet thanked Arnaud Franquinet for his contribution to the work of Afnic's Board of Trustees.

The members of the colleges concerned attended the respective polling stations (one for each). The polling stations were each manned by two scrutineers.

Godefroy Beauvallet announced the results of the elections and congratulated the new trustees.

Announcement of the results of the election:

For the Registrar College, DGS Monaco, represented by Éric Lantonnet, was elected in the second round for a term of four years with 24 votes out of 36 voters.

For the User College, Nicolas Pawlak was elected in the second round for a term of four years with 22 votes out of 40 voters.

The two new trustees spoke briefly to thank the members for their support and to assure them of their commitment to their new role.

Godefroy Beauvallet again thanked all the participants in the General Meeting for their presence, in person and online.

He reminded the participants that due to the Olympic Games this year, the annual dinner would be held on 4 October 2024.

He brought the session to a close at 12:45.

Drawn up in Puteaux, on 4 June 2024,

The Chair,

Godefroy Beauvallet

The Recording Secretary,

Mégane Passereau

The Scrutineer,

Sophie Canac