

Activity Plan 2010

Introduction

When writing this Activity Plan, the TERENA Executive Committee looked at the requirements of the TERENA membership, but also studied carefully the factors that will allow TERENA to fulfil its members' expectations, in terms of support from the membership and the wider research networking community, and the personnel and financial resources of the organisation. The Executive Committee noted that there is a balance between income and expenditure, and more generally, that the conditions are fulfilled to undertake the work described in this Activity Plan. And this holds not only for the year 2010, but also when taking a longer, three-year financial perspective.

The Activity Plan 2010 is therefore based on solid grounds – it has been verified that the work that is planned can actually be done. The longer-term perspective underlines the aspect of sustainability, which is an important goal for the European research and education networking community as a whole, and also for TERENA as the association of the organisations in this field.

General

The year 2010 will bring important changes and challenges to many research and education networking organisations in Europe. In some countries, the worldwide economic crisis leads to cuts in government budgets that also affect the financing of research and education networking. By contrast, in other countries research networking organisations may benefit from investments in innovation that governments undertake to stimulate recovery from the economic crisis. In some countries there will be reorganisations that are not or only partially related to economic considerations. All these developments encourage research and education networking organisations to consider their portfolio of services and activities, and set priorities when necessary.

At the European level, the start of the GN3 project in April 2009 was a major development. Unlike the initial GN1 project and to a greater extent than in the GN2 project, the GN3 project encompasses not only the provision of the pan-European backbone network GÉANT but also a number of other services, coordination and support activities and joint research activities. The National Research and Education Networking organisations in Europe have committed much more manpower to the GN3 project than to its predecessor projects. As a consequence, a large part of the resources that TERENA's national member organisations can contribute to international activities has been fixed for a four-year period.

This also holds for the TERENA organisation itself. Encouraged by the TERENA members, the TERENA Executive Committee has been successful in achieving a larger involvement of TERENA in the GN3 project than in the earlier projects. Members of the TERENA Secretariat staff have a leading role in a number of Activities and Tasks within the GN3 project. As a consequence, it is expected that in 2010 the GN3 project will account for about 40% of TERENA's expenditure and about 30% of the income of the organisation.

This does not mean that plans of the European research networking community are completely fixed for the coming years and no new initiatives can be taken. In addition to its efforts for the GN3 project TERENA has resources that can be used to support other and new activities that the membership finds important. The same holds for the TERENA member organisations and for the many other organisations and individuals that participate in TERENA activities. Moreover, there is flexibility within the GN3 project to give attention to new areas within the existing project framework.

The general status of Europe's research networking organisations and their environment, as described above, makes it even more important than before for TERENA to know and understand the needs, wishes and priorities of its member organisations. European collaboration offers opportunities for combining forces and achieving the necessary critical mass and economies of scale. But this requires matching of the organisations' requirements and resources in terms of manpower, knowledge, experience and finances.

The TERENA Executive Committee would like to intensify the information exchange between the TERENA member organisations and with the TERENA Executive Committee and Secretariat, in order to meet the challenges indicated above. The meetings of the TERENA General Assembly and the Technical Advisory Council serve the purpose of information exchange, but they are not frequent and do not offer sufficient time to discuss matters in some detail. Therefore, following up on an initiative from 2008, the TERENA Executive Committee and Secretariat increased in the second half of 2009 the number of bilateral meetings between TERENA member organisations and TERENA Executive and Secretariat members. In 2010, the frequency of these meetings will be increased further, with the goal that by the end of the year there will have been at least one meeting with each of the national member organisations, either face-to-face or via video-link.

Better communication and more collaboration between those who provide networks and services within universities and other institutions and the research and education networkers at national and international level is very important to meet the general challenge of achieving a wider deployment and use of services, and for specific services such as end-to-end provisioning and compatible authentication and authorisation infrastructures. The Activity Plan for the year 2008 already identified a role for TERENA in promoting that communication and collaboration, and in June 2009 the Executive Committee had to report that on this particular aspect of the Activity Plan results had been more limited than had been hoped for. The TERENA Executive Committee feels that this challenge is becoming increasingly important and intends to pursue it vigorously in 2010. Collaboration with EUNIS and national organisations of campus networkers will be important, but these reach only part of the local-networking community in Europe. The help of TERENA's national member organisations will be needed to learn about the status, possibilities and limitations of local networkers in the various countries, and to establish communication with them.

TERENA's mission and current status

TERENA's Mission and Objectives Statement is reproduced in the Appendix to this Activity Plan. The mission statement was adopted by the TERENA General Assembly in 2002 and still expresses well the role that TERENA is expected to play in addressing the current challenges to research and education networking in Europe. Based on the Mission and Objectives Statement, the Executive Committee developed in 2004 a strategic vision¹ on the TERENA organisation.

The strategic vision underlines that TERENA is first and foremost a collaborative organisation. Bringing together managers, technical specialists and other people in the research networking community with their counterparts from other countries is the core business of the association. The TERENA Secretariat consists of a small, professional staff. Primarily, their task is to facilitate and support joint activities carried out by the European research networking community.

The strategic vision describes the nature of the TERENA organisation and its place in the European research and education networking landscape. That vision is still up-to-date. But technology and services, organisational structures and collaboration, and the wider environment are changing continuously, and therefore the TERENA Executive Committee intends to analyse these developments in 2010, which could possibly lead to the formulation of an amended or expanded strategic vision.

¹ See [www.terena.org/about/ga/ga22/GA_04_024Activity Plan.pdf](http://www.terena.org/about/ga/ga22/GA_04_024Activity%20Plan.pdf)

TERENA's current financial situation is satisfactory. In earlier years, the TERENA General Assembly agreed to increase the membership fees with small percentages to compensate for the ongoing inflation. As a consequence, the balance between income and expenditure has been stable. Because of the general economic problems it was decided not to apply this increase in 2009, and also for 2010 it is proposed to leave the unit membership fee at the 2008 level. Despite this, no negative financial result is expected in the budget for 2010 and in the three-year financial outlook that has been prepared at the request of the General Assembly. This is possible largely thanks to the income from other sources, in particular the GN3 project.

Financially, TERENA is highly dependent on the income from the GN3 project, which is expected to bring 30% of TERENA's total income in 2010 and even 35% in 2011 and 2012. This is positive in that it alleviates the pressure on the membership fees, but it makes TERENA's financial situation very dependent on decisions in the GN3 project management and project procedures and accounting. A very large part of the work that is considered to be the core activities of TERENA is funded from the GN3 project budget. As a consequence, there will be very serious problems if the GN3 project would end without being succeeded by another EU-funded project that incorporates those activities. Preparing for the follow-up after the end of the GN3 project in April 2013 will therefore need to be a major focus of attention of the TERENA Executive Committee and General Assembly in the coming years.

Some specific plans for 2010

Outreach

TERENA will maintain its active approach to public relations about the activities of the association. Printed materials will be used to disseminate information targeted at general and specific audiences.

The TERENA website is an important platform for information sharing. It provides full information about all of TERENA's activities, but also, for example, a calendar of events that are of interest to the research networking community and links to news items from that community.

News from the organisation is presented in the form of short announcements ('TERENA News') and 'TERENA Features'. These are published on the TERENA website and sent to the TERENA-news distribution list. The monthly TERENA Executive Newsletter will be continued as a publication for a closed target group: the general managers of the TERENA member organisations.

TERENA will intensify the contacts with the member organisations. TERENA Secretariat staff will participate in national and regional networking conferences; information and printed materials about TERENA's activities will be disseminated at these and other events. A high priority will be given to the series of bilateral meetings between TERENA member organisations and members of the TERENA Executive Committee and Secretariat staff, which serve to discuss at management level the members' interests, their views and their expectations of TERENA. The target is to have had at least one meeting of this kind with each of the national members by the end of 2010, either face-to-face or via video-link. This may be followed up by telephone contacts on more detailed issues.

TF-CPR, Task Force on Communications and Public Relations, is the new name of a successful TERENA task force, whose new two-year terms of reference were approved by the TERENA Executive Committee in September 2009. The TERENA Secretariat will support this task force and actively contribute to some of its specific activities.

Building on the good relations between PR officers of research networking organisations that have grown in the task force, TERENA will coordinate support for actions to promote the deployment and uptake of services at a local level through national promotion actions. This work is part of the GN3 project, namely the 'Partner Services Promotion' Task. It involves a

large effort from the TERENA Secretariat staff, working in collaboration with leaders of Activities and Tasks in the GN3 project and the National Research and Education Networking organisations.

TF-MSP, the Task Force on Management of Service Portfolios, has been very successful in the past two years. Its current terms of reference will expire at the end of February 2010, and plans are being made for a new charter for the next two-year period. There is significant interest from the community in joint service development and procurement along with the adoption of a 'lifecycle' approach to service management. This will assist in more accurately satisfying user requirements and demonstrating value.

The production of the 2010 edition of the TERENA Compendium of National Research and Education Networks in Europe will be financially supported by the European Union through the GN3 project. As in 2009, it is planned to publish the Compendium at the end of the calendar year.

The digital divide remains in the focus of attention of TERENA. Aspects of digital-divide problems will receive attention in various TERENA activities as appropriate. The Networking Development Support activities, TERENA's work in support of research networking organisations and activities in the less advanced regions in Europe and the Mediterranean, will be continued, financially supported by the European Union through the GN3 project. Workshops, training courses or other activities will be organised that will address specific problems in the countries concerned, in some cases following up on an assessment of the country's research and education networking needs that has been produced earlier. In addition, one or two assessments of this kind will be produced for countries that have not received attention in this action earlier.

Technical Programme

TERENA's Technical Programme is carried out via task forces and internally or externally funded projects. The secretariat functions that are provided by the TERENA Secretariat staff to the technical task forces are funded by the European Union through the GN3 project.

The terms of reference of the task forces TF-CSIRT (Task Force on Collaboration of Security Incident Response Teams), TF-EMC2 (Task Force on European Middleware Coordination and Collaboration), TF-Mobility and Network Middleware and TF-Storage will all expire during 2010. These task forces are all very successful, with support and participation from a substantial part of the community. It is therefore expected that each of these task forces will receive a new two-year mandate from TERENA, possibly with slightly modified terms of reference. Among other activities in its wide portfolio, TF-EMC2 will support work on identity federations in Europe. TF-Mobility will be looking at DNSSEC and at the technical aspects of collaboration with mobile operators. TF-Storage will widen its focus of attention by also looking at the technical and business aspects of cloud computing and services.

Plans for a TERENA task force on media management and distribution are being developed, following on from a TERENA workshop in January 2009, which revealed a very large interest from the European research networking community in issues in this area. Initial work items may be coordinating media production, management and distribution service development and deployment, as well as fostering federated media content and/or metadata repositories. These will be discussed in a second event in November 2009. If work items to be undertaken are identified and sufficient commitments to contribute to the task-force work are received, then a new task force TF-Media will be created very early in 2010.

Other suggestions from the TERENA membership for the creation of new task forces will be investigated for their feasibility and support from the community. One such suggestion was a proposal to network people from network operations centres. The idea was received during the TERENA Networking Conference in 2009 and will be followed up early 2010.

Another workshop towards the end of 2009 will discuss issues related to improving the quality of email services. Possible follow-up actions could be taken up in the Technical Programme in 2010.

The TERENA Secretariat provides important contributions to the FEDERICA (Federated E-infrastructure Dedicated to European Researchers Innovating in Computer network Architectures) project, leading two Networking Activities and one Joint Research Activity. FEDERICA will end in June 2010, and plans are being developed for a successor project, FEDERICA 2. TERENA aims to participate in the successor project as well, again leading a Joint Research Activity.

The TERENA Secretariat provides the leader of the Joint Research Activity 'Enabling Communities' in the GN3 project.

The TERENA Secretariat also provides the leader of the Networking Activity 'Status and Trends' in the GN3 project, which encompasses the production of the annual editions of the TERENA Compendium, the secretariat support to the TERENA technical task forces, the promotion of best practices in campus networking, and a study of the environmental impact of research and education networks. Jointly with the team working on that study, TERENA will organise a workshop on environmental issues.

TERENA has a limited budget to support new small projects. If appropriate, it will be investigated if such projects can be funded jointly from TERENA's own resources and from contributions by TERENA member organisations and others.

Services

In recent years, at the request of its membership TERENA has taken on a role in providing services or acting as a clearinghouse for the provision of services, particularly in the middleware area. These services are of a federated nature, based on collaboration between national research networking organisations, and provided at the European level either by a commercial party contracted through TERENA or by a team of expert staff members of national research networking organisations and the TERENA Secretariat. Next to the traditional centrally provided services, these federated services have been growing in significance in the past years. They build on existing collaboration between national research networking organisations that is supported by TERENA.

TERENA will continue its role as a clearinghouse for the Trusted Introducer (TI) service. The contract with the external supplier was revised in September 2009 and is now based on a clearer service-level description. Performance will be evaluated in January 2010, in advance of the regular annual review in May. The CSIRTs participating in the service and the TI team are investigating the feasibility of creating some form of a certification service in addition to the current accreditation service. TERENA's role brings a limited amount of work to the TERENA Secretariat. Starting in 2010, that work will no longer be funded from TERENA's general resources but from the earmarked fund for CSIRT-related activities; the intention is to cover TERENA's personnel costs from the annual contributions of the participating CSIRTs by 2012.

Since its start in early 2006, the Server Certificate Service has been growing continuously, with the number of participating national TERENA member organisations rising from the original eight to nineteen by the end of 2008. On the basis of a call for proposals published in September 2008, TERENA concluded a contract with a new commercial Certification Authority provider in 2009. This contract is for a three-year period, from July 2009 until June 2012, and under the arrangement not only server certificates can be provided but also personal certificates and object-signing certificates. By September 2009, twenty TERENA member organisations had entered into a three-year commitment to join the new certificate service. The intention is that not only the payments to the external supplier but also the costs of the work by the TERENA Secretariat staff will be covered from the contributions by the organisations that participate in the service. It is expected that this can be achieved in 2010 if one or two more TERENA members join the service.

The TACAR[®] (TERENA Academic Certification Authority Repository) service has been maintained for a number of years by the TERENA Secretariat, as part of its support to TF-EMC2. Since its launch in 2003, TACAR has become a trusted online repository of trust anchor certificates, related certificate policies and certificate practice statements registered by the Certification Authorities run by organisations in the academic community. It is planned that thanks to additional funding through the GN3 project it will be possible to expand and upgrade the service, including the creation of a Policy Management Authority for PKIs of European research and education networking organisations.

The TERENA Secretariat will continue its role as part of the Operational Team of the eduroam[®] confederation service, which is funded through the GN3 project.

The TERENA Secretariat provides a small contribution to the new eduGAIN service in the GN3 project.

Since 2005, TERENA has been contracted to provide secretariat support functions to GLIF (Global Lambda Integrated Facility). The TERENA Secretariat will continue this role and as such will be involved in the organisation of GLIF working-group meetings and of the annual GLIF workshop. Starting from 2010, the direct and indirect costs of this work will be fully covered by contributions from GLIF participants.

Conferences and workshops

The TERENA Networking Conference 2010 will be organised in Vilnius from 31 May until 3 June. A number of workshops are expected to be held before, after or as part of the conference. Some of these workshops will be organised by, and funded from, EU-funded projects, specifically the FEDERICA and GN3 projects.

TERENA will organise one or more middleware workshops under the name EuroCAMP (European Campus Architectural Middleware Planning). EuroCAMPs are not only addressing staff members of TERENA member organisations but also, and most of all, network engineers at campus level. Basic EuroCAMPs have a training-course character and are aimed at campus and national networkers with limited experience in the field, while in advanced EuroCAMPs the latest developments are presented and discussed. It will be investigated in how far it will be possible to reduce the financial contribution from TERENA's own resources to covering the costs of the workshops, by increasing the registration fees.

A workshop on end-to-end provisioning will be organised towards the end of 2009, following on from a similar, very successful event in December 2008. These workshops bring together networkers at campus, national and European level. Based on the outcome of the second workshop, a decision will be taken about possible follow-ups in 2010.

The 'NRENs and Grids' workshops bring together the Grids community and the research networking community to discuss the network and service needs of Grids, the opportunities offered by research networks and other topics of common interest. TERENA will organise one or possibly two workshops of this kind during 2010.

Since many years, TERENA has been organising TRANSITS training workshops for staff members of Computer Security Incident Response Teams. Sponsorship for these events has been obtained from various organisations, including ENISA, the European Network and Information Security Agency. TERENA will organise one or two of these training workshops in 2010, where possible in collaboration with other organisations. In parallel, plans for new training modules, possibly leading to a more advanced course, are being developed by the CSIRT community.

[®] TACAR is a registered trade mark of TERENA

[®] eduroam is a registered trade mark of TERENA

TERENA will generally follow new technical developments, for example those in the context of the Future Internet. One or two TERENA workshops may be organised on new technical topics to facilitate information dissemination and exchange in the European research networking community.

TERENA will continue to contribute to the organisation of the training activities in the GN3 project. In the GN3 project, the TERENA Secretariat will also handle the logistics of the Project Management Conventions and Project Symposia.

Memberships and liaisons

TERENA traditionally has contacts with representatives of national governments and the European Commission through the ENPG (European Networking Policy Group). A revision of the scope of the ENPG is being considered, while at the same time a new cooperation of government bodies in this field is being established in an ERANET project called eInfraNet. TERENA will maintain the liaison with these initiatives.

TERENA is closely collaborating with DANTE on a number of projects and activities, and if possible will build on these good relations for new initiatives.

It is important for TERENA to strengthen its ties with networkers at campus level (among others, via EUNIS), with users of network services (among others, via large international user groups) and with other relevant communities such as the digital-libraries community.

The collaboration with TERENA's counterparts in other continents – APAN, CLARA, Internet2, NLR and CANARIE – will be continued, both on a bilateral basis and through the CCIRN (Co-ordinating Committee for Intercontinental Research Networking), the global forum of these continental research networking organisations.

TERENA will continue to liaise with CEENet, the Central and Eastern European Networking Association, which is currently reviewing its plans for the future.

TERENA will continue its membership of the Internet Society, while critically following the activities of the organisation.

Association support and Secretariat

The technical and administrative staff of the TERENA Secretariat will continue to support the Technical Programme and the conferences, workshops and knowledge transfer activities. The administrative staff also provides support to the General Assembly and the Executive Committee by preparing documents, arranging meetings etc.

Appendix

Formal status of the Activity Plan

The 'Rules and Regulations' of the TERENA association state that the Executive shall each year present an Action Plan for TERENA for the next financial year. The current document contains the TERENA Executive Committee's Action Plan for the year 2010. The 'Rules and Regulations' also require the Executive Committee to report on the implementation of its previous Action Plan at the annual general meeting after the end of the relevant year. The report on the year 2009 will be presented at the meeting of the TERENA General Assembly in June 2010.

Mission and Objectives Statement

In June 2002, the TERENA General Assembly adopted the following Mission and Objectives Statement:

The Statutes of the TERENA association state: "The objectives of TERENA are to promote and participate in the development of a high-quality international information and telecommunications infrastructure for the benefit of research and education. It will take whatever steps are required to accomplish that this infrastructure is based on open standards and uses the most advanced technology available."

These objectives translate into four categories of activities, which are the pillars of the organisation:

- **Fostering new activities**
TERENA provides an environment for fostering new initiatives of the European research networking community. In this context TERENA can provide a neutral basis for investigating the feasibility of ideas and developing and piloting new services for the TERENA community and possibly the Internet community at large.
- **Technical Programme**
TERENA supports joint European work in developing, evaluating, testing, integrating and promoting new networking, middleware and application technologies. TERENA brings together technical specialists from TERENA member organisations and the wider European research networking community in task forces and innovative collaborative projects. TERENA organises topical workshops and ad-hoc meetings to exchange experiences and information, and to plan for joint activities. The TERENA Technical Programme liaises with similar activities in other continents.
- **Knowledge transfer**
TERENA organises conferences, workshops and seminars for the exchange of information between TERENA member organisations and in the wider research networking community, and to make them and the Internet community at large aware of relevant developments. TERENA also pursues the transfer of technical and managerial knowledge to less advanced networking organisations in the countries represented by the TERENA membership, both on a bilateral and on a multilateral basis.
- **Promoting members' interests**
TERENA represents the common interests and opinions of its member organisations in contacts with governments, funding bodies, industry and other organisations. In this context TERENA advises the European Commission, national governments and other authorities on policy and technical matters related to support for the development of research and education networking infrastructures, services and applications. TERENA also liaises with similar organisations from other continents, promoting the European views and expertise.

All activities are undertaken under the guidance and responsibility of the TERENA Executive Committee and under the ultimate authority of the TERENA membership, as represented by the TERENA General Assembly. The Technical Programme is guided by the TERENA Technical Committee and reviewed annually by the Technical Advisory Council.