

NEWS FROM TERENA (147)

TERENA publishes results of focus study on funding, management and operations of research networks in Europe



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Today, TERENA published the report on a study of the funding, management and operations of research and education networks in Europe. The publication, written by John Martin of Cardiff University and TERENA Project Development Officer Baiba Kaskina, reports on the study that was carried out in the spring of 2004 as a complement to the information collected in the annual TERENA Compendium of National Research and Education Networks. The study was funded by the European Commission through the COM-REN project, an accompanying measure in the European Union's Fifth Framework Programme, which has also provided financial support to the final version of the 2002 edition of the Compendium and the full production of the 2003 edition.

The objective of the focus study was to examine a selected number of features of research networks in Europe in more depth than had been possible in the context of the Compendium. In particular, the study was intended to look at the funding levels and trends in funding, analysed across the levels of the network hierarchy.

The first part of the study has analysed funding, management and operations by network level. For this investigation of the current situation, the same network hierarchy was used as in the Compendium, namely: international and commodity Internet links, the core of the national research network, links from the national backbone to the connected institutions, regional or metropolitan networks, and the local-area networks inside connected institutions. The second part of the study looked at current trends, i.e., changes in all of the funding, management and operations factors that have occurred during the last year or are expected during the coming year.

The third part of the report is devoted to an inventory of multiple-domain issues, such as performance bottlenecks, security issues, and premium and end-to-end service.

Finally, two wider issues are discussed in the report. The first are bottlenecks that are due to the high cost of telecommunications. The second issue is related to bottlenecks that are the result of a charging policy where connected institutions pay a fee related to the bandwidth of their connection, which in some cases results in institutions being unable, or unwilling, to fund an adequate network for their researchers, teachers and students.

Printed copies of the report on the focus study may be obtained from the TERENA Secretariat, as long as stocks last. The report is also available in pdf form from the TERENA Compendium website:

<http://www.terena.nl/compendium/>

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