



Report on TERENA Technical Advisory Council (TAC) Meeting 31 May 2010

Vilnius, Lithuania

Valentino Cavalli, version 1. 22-06-2010

The Technical Advisory Council consists of senior technical managers of the TERENA member organisations. It has as its tasks to review the progress of the TERENA Technical Programme, advise on its future direction and propose new initiatives. Every two years the TAC also makes recommendations to the TERENA Executive Committee on the creation of Special Interest Areas.

The agenda of the Vilnius meeting focused on reporting and obtaining feedback on the latest achievements of the TERENA Technical Programme, on the formal review of the Special Interest Areas, and on discussing developments in potential new directions, such as harmonising Research and Education federations with other sector's initiatives, complementary work to the GN3 Green Study and Research Information Systems.

1. The TERENA Technical Programme

The first agenda item provided technical managers of NRENs with essential information on the TERENA Technical Programme. Christoph Graf, TERENA's Vice President Technical Programme and Chairman of the TERENA Technical Committee, presented the general mechanisms made available from the programme. Task force chairmen presented the details and achievements of each of the currently active task forces (TF-CSIRT was presented by its secretary, Kevin Meynell, on behalf of Lionel Ferette). The slides used for the presentations are available at <http://www.terena.org/about/tac/20100531-presentations.html>.

During the presentations there were no specific questions or comments from the audience. At the end of the session, interaction with the audience was triggered by a question from Jan Meijer, who was wondering why collaboration in TF-Storage is not very high. Klaas Wierenga reinforced the question by asking whether, for instance, NRENs would be interested in working together in setting up a pan-European cloud service. Jan Meijer felt this was something worth trying, and said he'd have the expertise to work in that direction, but unfortunately has not enough resources. However, he added, there should be opportunities for some trusted third party to set up a pilot service.

It was generally felt that the community should get some hands-on expertise on a small-scale cloud service project. Members of the community have started talks with large commercial cloud service providers and as a trend more and more NRENs will deal with them in the near

future. If NRENs joined together, the expertise gained in a small-scale pilot could prove useful in ensuring that members of the community know well what they're talking about when dealing with cloud service providers.

2. Harmonisation of R&E federations and interaction with other communities

Mikael Linden presented an overview of research and education federations. Slides are available at <http://www.terena.org/about/tac/20100531-presentations.html>.

In summary, 24 Identity Federations are known in the R&E sector, 19 of which in Europe, having more than 10 Million end users, with more than 1,000 Identity Providers (IdP) and more than 1,000 Service Providers (SP). After a short explanation of the concepts of federation and confederations, Mikael presented some use cases and proceeded in discussing the issues of harmonization and standardization.

Efforts to talk with other sector's federations are somehow a challenge. Mikael remarked that the e-Government sector does not seem very sensitive to R&E solutions.

Ligia Maria Ribeiro pointed out the importance of federations in supporting student mobility. Some of the benefits of federations could be to facilitate agreement between different institutions in dealing with mobile students; they may provide, for example, ways of regulating the way students access facilities and content. Mikael thought this was an interesting remark and said that unfortunately, participants in the STORK project did not seem prepared to take it up. Diego Lopez was slightly more optimistic. He said that RedIRIS was working together with STORK, and had opened their IdM system to them.

A few countries, including Switzerland, The Netherlands, Finland, Norway and Spain have made concrete efforts to reach out to other communities.

Jan Meijer was wondering how the community should address the issue of lack of credibility about R&E solution and why there was this perception in the first place. There was some question from the audience about how credibility was measured, and which sector does the community want to be credible to. It was also remarked that there are prejudices on both sides. The best approach seemed to be addressing first the companies and service providers NRENs want to work with. Ingrid Melve suggested that the way of gaining credibility is to mention facts, number of users and years of working operational experience.

3. Revision of the Special Interest Areas

Christoph presented the proposal from the TERENA Technical Committee (TTC) concerning the Special Interest Areas (SIA).

These were currently:

- Lower-layer technologies (Layers 0-4)
- Security
- Middleware

- Mobility
- Voice and Video Collaboration
- Virtualisation

In addition, Campus and End-to-End issue coordination are challenges that have an impact across all special interest areas, while Grid collaborations span many of the areas.

The proposal was:

- Network Services and Technology
- Security
- Middleware
- Media Services
- Virtualisation and cloud services

In addition, Campus and End-to-End issue coordination are challenges that have an impact across all special interest areas, while Grid collaborations span many of the areas.

Christoph explained the reasons for the proposed changes, particularly concerning the former areas "Lower-layer technologies" and "Mobility". The motivation was an underlying shift of emphasis from development and technology testing towards organisational aspects and best practice. Today, the NREN community is less involved in network research than in the past, but continues to support network research, particularly towards service provisioning and delivery. In the views of the TTC this includes also on-campus and off-campus mobility.

Klaas felt that the proposal was losing the topical qualification of SIAs to the advantage of a classification following the network stack. The discussion moved in the direction of slicing vertically or horizontally. Valentino Cavalli clarified that the proposal did not intend slicing in one direction or another.

Klaas said he would find it more interesting to have meaningful names such as "federations", "student mobility", etc. However, in the end he consented that the middleware area covers most mobility stuff already.

Peter Kaufmann asked a clarification about the content of the end-to-end campus issues.

Mauro Campanella felt that the special interest areas were too broad and general. Karel Vietsch and Christoph Graf remarked that these by definition are areas of interest and therefore essentially general in nature.

Mauro added that the areas seem to overlap with GN3. Christoph explained that this is a positive sign that TERENA work and GN3 are inline and converging on matching NRENs interests. Ingrid Melve remarked that it's in the nature of GN3 as a project to close off the work for communities that are not participating, with the disadvantage that part of essential open networking, which is done via the TERENA working groups, is lost. Lars Fischer thought that both GN3 and the open task forces work are needed. Valentino observed that the level of detail in the GN3 work programme and in the formulation of the TERENA special interest areas is different and hence not comparable.

Mauro clarified that his intention was merely to discuss the presentation of the SIAs and was suggesting highlighting the differences, so that technical managers who do not follow TERENA

activities very closely can understand better what TERENA does.

4. Update on the GN3 Green Study and possible complementary work in TERENA

Victor Reijs presented the HEANet green strategy and the preliminary outcome of the GN3 Green Study (GN3/NA3/T5). Then he extended the picture to look at what other NRENS are doing, with the goals of stimulating feedback from the TAC about support for broadening the activity beyond GN3.

Victor concluded that there is plenty of scope for TERENA to set up a discussion forum, but also for some real collaboration among NRENS. NRENS' common business should lead to synergies and they could join in developing and sharing a "climate accounting template" as well as exploiting their "market strength" in joint measures and assertions.

The slides are available at <http://www.terena.org/about/tac/20100531-presentations.html>.

5. Update on Research Information Systems

Ligia Maria Ribeiro explained that information management includes much more than just Institutional Repositories (IR). Ligia remarked that interoperation and connection of Research Information Systems (RIS) with IR is very weak. RIS are high in the agenda of the EU and they pose very important problems for campuses. NRENS are in between so there is an interesting opportunity for them. In the conclusion of her talk, Ligia discussed a few possible areas (and challenges) for NRENS' collaboration, including liaisons with existing coordination activities, storage, digital preservation and interoperation.

Ligia's presentation is available at <http://www.terena.org/about/tac/20100531-presentations.html>.

List of Participants

First Name	Last Name	Affiliation
Claudio	Allocchio	GARR
Kristine	Andersone	SigmaNet
Kurt	Bauer	ACOnet
Artur	Binczewski	PSNC/PIONIER
Erik-Jan	Bos	SURFnet
Marko	Bonac	ARNES
Mauro	Campanella	GARR
Valentino	Cavalli	TERENA
Tomas	De Miguel	RedIRIS
Gareth	Eason	HEANet
Jón Ingi	Einarsson	RHnet
Jan	Ferre	Forskningsnett
Lars	Fischer	NORDUNet
Licia	Florio	TERENA
Christoph	Graf	SWITCH and TTC
Klaus	Grobe	ADVA
Avgust	Jauk	ARNES
Sæpor	Jonsson	RHnet/Univ. Iceland
Peter	Kaufmann	DFN
David	Kelsey	RAL and TTC
Ole	Kiergaard	UNI-C/ Forskningsnett
Felix	Kugler	SWITCH
Jean-Paul	Le Guigner	RENATER
Mikael	Linden	CSC
Diego	López	RedIRIS and TTC
Jan	Meijer	UNINETT
Ingrid	Melve	UNINETT
Kevin	Meynell	TERENA
Jari	Miettinen	Funet/CSC
Miroslav	Milinović	CARNET and TERENA TEC
János	Mohácsi	NIIF/HUNGARNET
Per	Nihlén	SUNET
Victor	Reijs	HEANet
Ligia Maria	Ribeiro	EUNIS/Univ. Porto and TTC
Olaf	Schjelderup	UNINETT
Brook	Schofield	TERENA
Stanislav	Šíma	CESNET
Milan	Sova	CESNET
Helmut	Sverenyák	CESNET
Péter	Szegedi	TERENA
Karel	Vietsch	TERENA
Pavle	Vuletic	AMRES

Klaas	Wierenga	Cisco Systems
Stefan	Winter	RESTENA
Andy	Zbinden	SWITCH