

# Community Satisfaction Survey 2010



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## Introduction

Towards the end of 2010, the TERENA Secretariat undertook a Community Satisfaction Survey on behalf of the TERENA Executive Committee (TEC). The objectives of the survey were to determine how the TERENA community views the activities of the Association so that its strengths and weaknesses could be identified, and to serve as a baseline against which future periodic surveys can be compared.

Responses were invited from the TERENA community in its widest possible sense and included individuals from the NRENs, Higher/Further Education institutions, research institutions, research projects and vendors who participate in TERENA activities. Analysis of the responses from these sectors have been analysed individually in order to understand the similarities and differences between the views of the association's membership and others that actively participate.

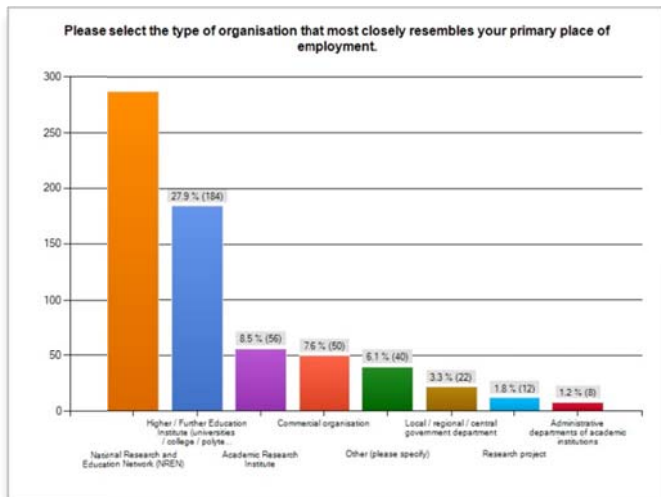
## Survey Responses

An invitation was sent to 3370 individuals. An overwhelming number of recipients responded to the invitation representing a 19.6% response rate. TERENA is thankful to its community for their response to the survey.

## Population Analysis

The make-up of the survey respondents reflects the diverse range of individuals that participate in the TERENA activities, representing a broad range of organisational types:

- 43% from the NRENs
- 28% Higher/Further Education institutes
- 9% Research institutes & projects
- 20% remaining 5 segments



## Job Functions

The most frequently reported job functions were: Technical Staff, Technical Manager and Organisational Director.

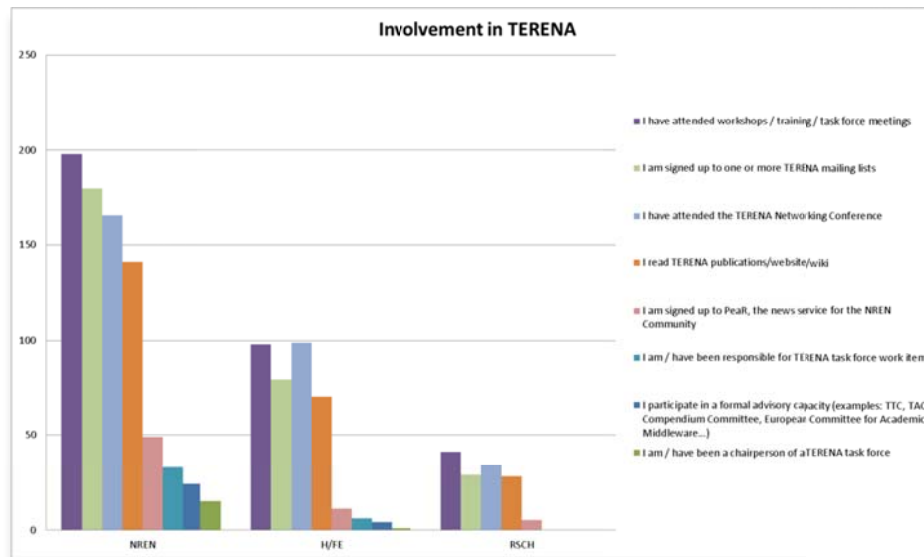
Bearing in mind this spread of organisations and job function, the results can be considered as encapsulating a representative view of the TERENA membership.

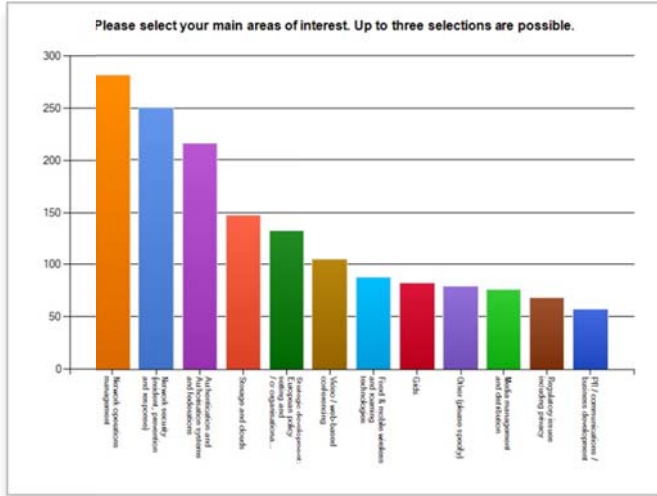
## Survey Results

As one might expect, NRENs are more engaged in TERENA activities than other distinct segments such as Higher/Further Education or research institutions.

Involvement in TERENA through attendance at task force meetings, workshops and training events is shown as a major channel of interaction in each of the three sectors, in most cases even higher than TNC, which in itself is a highly rated and prestigious event.

This likely reaffirms the importance of TERENA as a collaboration forum where the community can meet and exchange experiences and ideas.



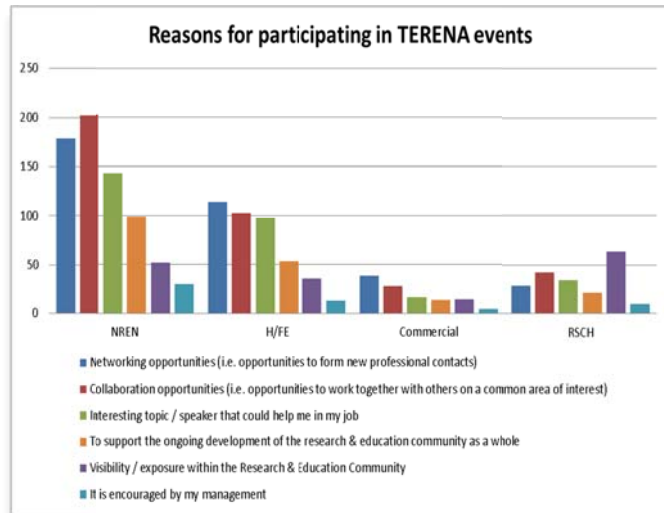


The survey asked respondents to indicate up to three areas of activities that they found most interesting. The most frequently selected topics were:

1. Network Operation Management
2. Network Security
3. Authorisation & Authentication

Please note those topics that occur to the right hand side of the graph should not be considered “uninteresting”. Rather, these are mostly new or important non-technical topics not traditionally associated with the development and running of NREN networks. Each of these areas was selected by 50-150 individuals as a major area of interest.

### Reasons for Participating in Events

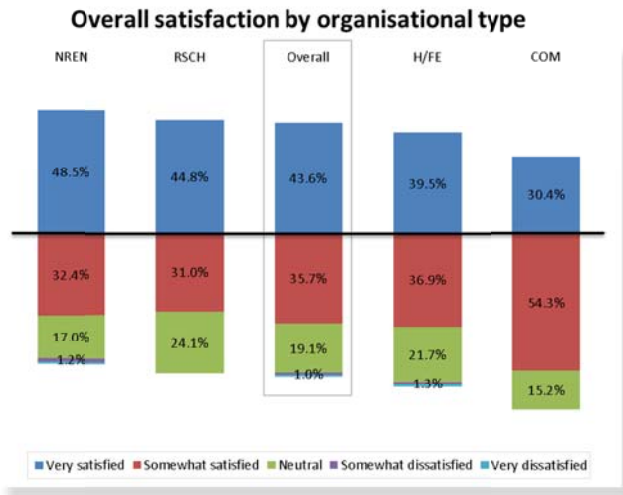


In order to understand what participants value most about participating in TERENA activities, they were invited to indicate the aspects that they individually found most important.

The top three of these were:

- Networking opportunities
- Collaboration opportunities
- Interesting topic that could help me in my work

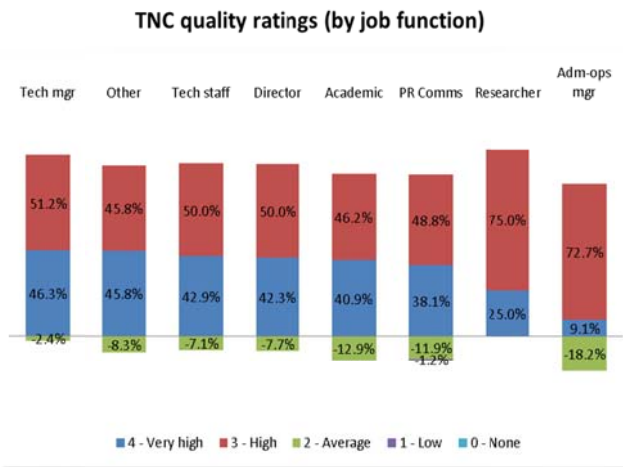
## Overall Satisfaction with TERENA



High aspirations were set when analysing the responses about overall satisfaction of TERENA. The graph to the right is normalised on the percentage of respondents saying they were very satisfied with TERENA.

Using this approach, NRENs appear more satisfied with TERENA than other segments. Dissatisfaction was close to zero in all segments.

## TNC ratings



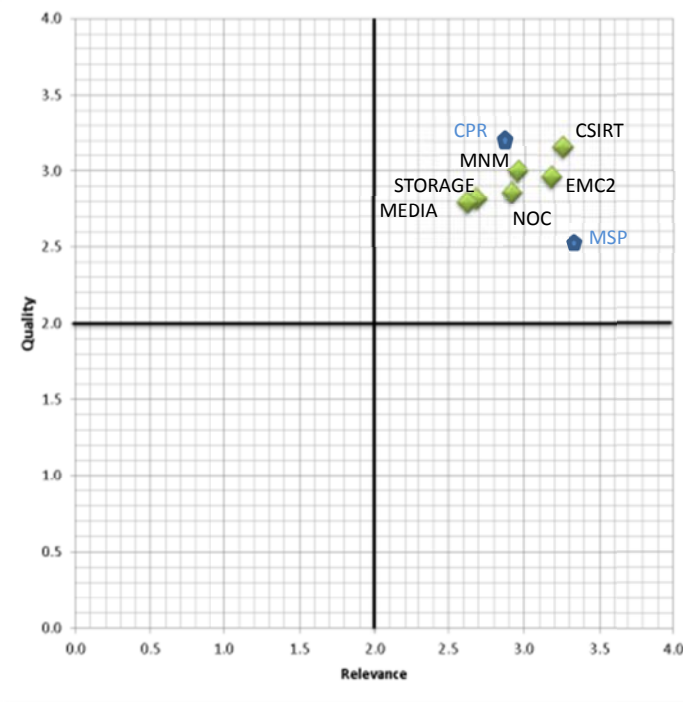
The TERENA Networking Conference (TNC) is thought by many to be the most important European Networking conference for the NREN community in Europe. Since TNC serves many differing types of individuals ranging from Organisational Directors to hands-on Network Engineers, quality was analysed by job function.

Over 90% of respondees that are Technical Managers, Technical Staff, Directors researchers and Operations Managers rated the quality of TNC as either 'very high' or 'high'.

### Task Forces Ratings

In order to assess the community perception of the TERENA technical task forces, the survey asked respondents to rate both the relevance and quality of the activities. The responses were translated into a numeric score ranging from zero (poor) to four (excellent).

Ratings of all TERENA technical task forces fall in the top right segment quadrant of the matrix, indicating the community consider them to be highly relevant and of good quality.



### Non-Technical Task Forces

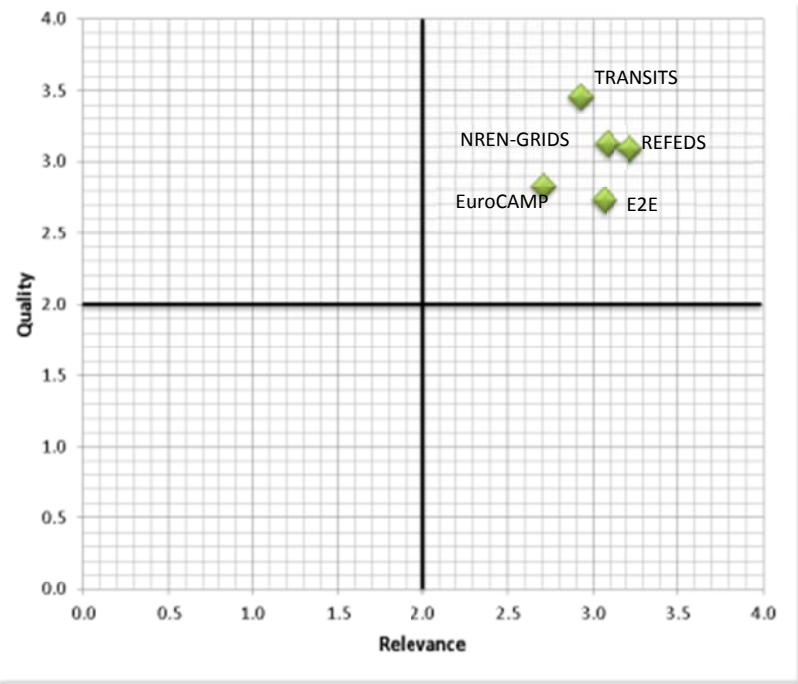
There are two non-technical task forces, TF-CPR (Communications and Public Relations) and TF-MSP (Management of Service Portfolios).



## TERENA Workshops & Training

TERENA has been running a range of workshops that include: End-to-End, EuroCAMP, NREns and Grids, REFEDs and TRANSITS.

In a similar fashion to the task forces, TERENA workshops and training activities are all highly regarded in terms of relevance and quality. The scatter between the evaluations of each is small.

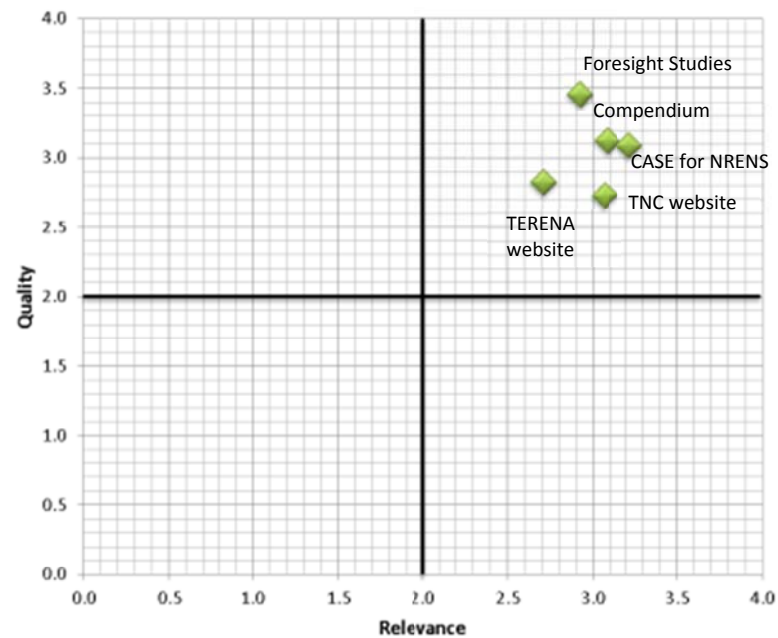


## Publications and Knowledge Transfer Tools

Publications and knowledge transfer tools serve to enable information to be disseminated, raising awareness on important topics and communicating insights.

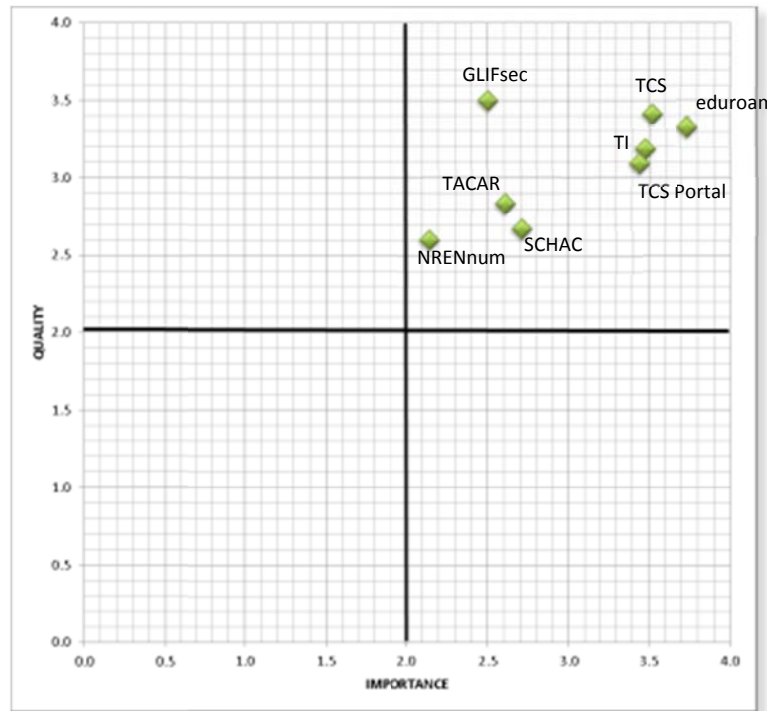
The most highly rated in terms of relevance and quality are the strategy-oriented publications:

- The Case for NRENS
- Foresight studies (most recently EARNEST)
- The Compendium



### Community-Support Services

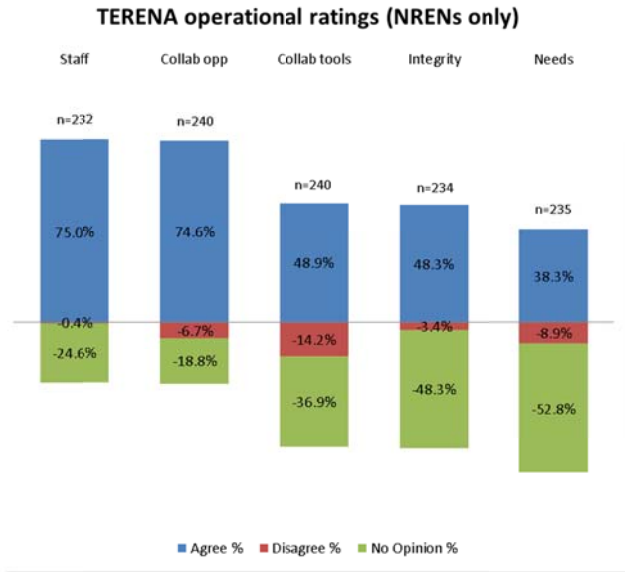
For the purpose of this document, TERENA 'community-support' services include services that have been developed as a result of a TERENA activity and later offered to the academic and research community at large, for example TACAR, or a service in which TERENA plays a broker role between a supplier and NREN members, thereby aggregating demand to fulfil a common community need, for example TCS. The services in which TERENA plays a broker role were rated the highest overall.



A much larger spread in the evaluation can be seen in this data. All are positive in terms of importance and quality.

## Operational Ratings

In order to gauge how the community considers some of the operational aspects of TERENA are being performed the survey asked the following questions:



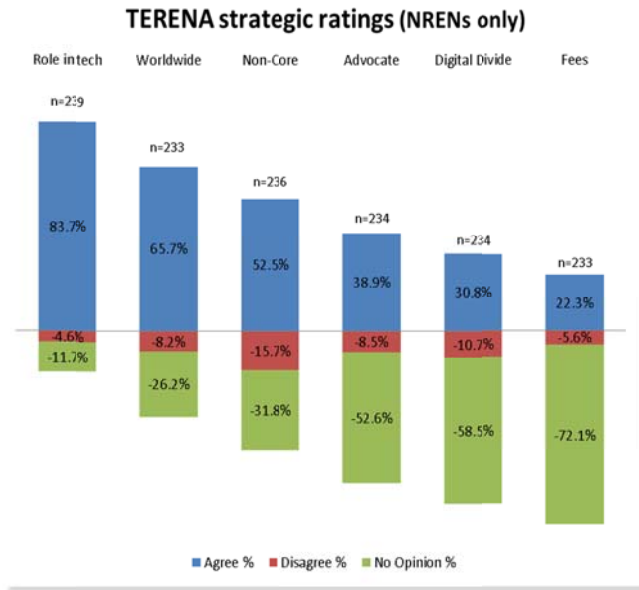
- TERENA Secretariat staff are qualified and competent in the performance of their jobs
- TERENA offers me enough opportunities to collaborate with others in my field
- TERENA offers me enough tools to collaborate with others in my field
- TERENA is known for its integrity and ethical practices
- TERENA is able to react promptly enough to the needs of the European research and education community

Responses show that the TERENA staff are highly valued by the community and therefore are a major asset of the organisation. TERENA's ability to provide collaborative opportunities is equally highly valued.

Most dissatisfaction stems from the limited collaborative tools provided by TERENA and the organisations inability sometimes to address community needs in a timely manner.

## Strategic Ratings

Similarly respondents were asked to rate specific 'strategic' aspects of TERENA. The questions and responses for this section were:



- TERENA plays an important role in the development of Internet technology, infrastructure and services used by the European research and education community.
- TERENA should enable more worldwide collaboration in the research and education networking community
- TERENA should liaise with user communities outside of the core, "traditional" NREN user communities.
- TERENA is effective in working with other community and government organisations to advocate on behalf of the people it serves.
- TERENA does enough to address the issues related to the "digital divide" that exists between countries in and around Europe.
- TERENA membership fees are reasonable and fair.

### Additional Feedback from the Survey Responses

Many respondents provided written comments to supplement their survey answers. This section summarises the comments.

- Respondents indicated that in various ways, TERENA plays an important role in the development of Internet technology for the research and education sector.
- Respondents indicated areas for improvement in their comments. These include stronger relations with other (non-profit) organisations involved in the development of Internet technology as well as research and education user groups, more collaboration at a global level, faster response to member needs and more attention to some of the non-technical aspects of the NREN community.
- Many respondents expressed a concern that not enough remote participation options were available for TERENA events, and that more online collaboration tools were needed.
- Results also show that many would like to see TERENA play a larger role in worldwide collaboration in the research and education community, and in helping to address the digital divide.
- Engagement with external stakeholders was seen to be a weakness.
- Other weaknesses were seen to be the 'one size fits all' approach to membership and reliance on EU project funding for a substantial proportion of the Association's income.
- Many respondents suggested that task forces should create more tangible output and deliverables that are good for the community, should involve more user participation and would benefit from more secretariat involvement beyond coordination.

- Respondents would like to see more research and education user communities involved in TERENA activities.
- Several respondents indicated that TERENA should play a role in cross-NREN exchange of services (especially in small NRENs) and in the coordination of NRENs collaborating on mutual service provisioning.

## Conclusions

The survey results demonstrate that TERENA is widely understood to enable collaboration, community consensus-building and people networking in the research and education networking community. It does this via its activities, its core values of being open and inclusive as well as its active community contributors and credible secretariat staff.

To make the most of these, TERENA could focus more on activities that aggregate community demand, promote the communities interests and help share and distribute knowledge within the community.

There was some concern was expressed about the organisation not always acting in a timely fashion.

TERENA services were rated higher than any other kind of activity including events, despite TERENA's strong reputation for events. TERENA events are also rated very highly in their own right. TERENA activities focussed on network security and AAI were considered of highest value.