"Research network organisations are an important asset for a country, driving innovation and the dissemination and wide adoption of new technologies and services, thereby eventually contributing to the development of industry and commerce and to economic prosperity."

SERENATE (Foresight Study), Summary Report, 2003

"In networking, as in so many other fields, we Europeans cannot do everything alone in our countries. We need to work with our neighbours, even if they speak different languages, or the same language with different accents…"

David Williams
(TERENA President 1999-2003),
TERENA Annual Report, 1999

From a university student checking her email, to a doctor performing remote surgery on a patient far away; from astronomers capturing data from a gamma-ray burst, to mainland musicians rehearsing with Scottish school children on a distant island; everybody in the research and education community needs to be connected.

The needs of the research community have driven developments in computer network infrastructures and services since their beginning, several decades ago. In return, new tools and services have stimulated new fields of research and the formation of scientific communities that can share instruments, data and expertise more easily than ever before.

Around Europe and other parts of the world, many countries have a national organisation that provides Internet and other network connections and services for the research and education community. To maintain and improve the international reach now on offer, these national organisations must work together, and seek partners in government, industry and other organisations.

TERENA is the association for Europe's research networking organisations and their users, along with research institutes, equipment vendors and telecommunications operators.

By bringing together network engineers, managers and researchers from these different organisations from all over the region, TERENA contributes significantly to advances in international networking.

TERENA Networking Conference
TERENA's annual conference has become increasingly significant in recent years. Around 500 managers, engineers, researchers, policy makers and industry representatives meet to discuss infrastructure, projects, and issues of common concern.
www.terena.org/activities/tnc

The core business of TERENA is to bring together managers, technical specialists and other people in the research networking community with their colleagues from other countries.

TERENA mobilises the expertise and experience of hundreds of professionals. Its activities build on the human and other resources that they contribute.

Participating experts work in TERENA 'task forces' that address key issues within different areas, such as Internet and system security, video-conferencing, and policies and protocols to ensure users can access the services they need.

TERENA is uniquely placed to foster collaboration between the research and education networking community and industry. Companies may join TERENA as associate members or contribute as sponsors and their staff can take part in activities and events.

Each year TERENA organises numerous workshops, training courses and meetings as well as a major European congress, the TERENA Networking Conference.

By arranging opportunities for collaboration, TERENA offers a forum in which people from all organisations can gather together, share knowledge, and develop new services, technologies and infrastructures for the research and education community.

"Close and fruitful collaboration has developed between the technical experts from the different countries, so that best practice and new ideas spread quickly and effort is coordinated across Europe".

Dorte Olesen
(TERENA President 2003-2008),
TERENA Celebrating 20 Years, 2006

TERENA funds and conducts a number of pilot projects and participates as a partner in other, external projects. It actively collaborates with other organisations in Europe and beyond. It has close ties with DANTE, which manages the pan-European multi-Gigabit backbone network. It also liaises with non-European counterparts, which represent national and regional research networkers in other continents.

Trust is vital in the international networking community, especially among those who must deal with security. By helping to build trust through its collaborations, task forces and projects, TERENA can develop and offer reliable services to its members and their users.

For example, TERENA's Trusted Introducer accreditation scheme allows computer security incident response teams from different organisations to share accurate operational knowledge and to cooperate swiftly and efficiently when cyber-attacks occur.

When users connect to a web or mail server to download, access or store important data, it is essential that they connect to the right server and that their communication is secured by encryption. This can be guaranteed by server certificates, but the best-known ones are expensive. TERENA's Server Certificate Service provides affordable certificates to participating research and education organisations.

Foresight Studies - SERENATE - EARNEST
In December 2003 and October 2007, TERENA completed studies anticipating the evolution of research and education networking in Europe. Such exercises help national governments and funding bodies, university managers and national research and education networking organisations to develop strategies for the future, and provide input for initiatives that could help to keep European research networking at the forefront of world-wide advances.

"In general, the people who built the first networks are still involved in the development of the Internet or other networks. Those first contacts still exist. We still meet each other. We still need each other."

Rob Blokzijl
(Chairman of RIPE),
SURFnet Magazine,
June 1997

As a trusted member of the European research and education networking community, TERENA plays a role in exchanging information through various online and print publications. These range from forecast studies and 'country needs assessments', through project brochures and technical reports, to a calendar of events and a round-up of relevant news and features.

TERENA also gathers information about national research and education networks and the issues they face. An annual Compendium documents the work, budgets and users of these networks in more than 50 countries. It has prompted similar publications in other world regions.

Most of Europe's national research networking organisations are TERENA members. The association promotes its members' interests with governments, funding bodies, industry and other organisations. It keeps track of trends that could have an influence on the community, and develops tools and arguments to support the members' goals and needs.

TERENA is committed to sharing information and expertise with networking communities in Europe and other regions of the world, and pursues knowledge transfer to less advanced regions.

Cutting-edge training courses on a variety of specialist topics are regularly deployed around Europe and neighbouring regions to help build expertise and foster professional contacts.

TERENA invites you to seek more information about its events, activities and people from its information sheets, publications and its website: www.terena.org

In 2006 TERENA celebrated 20 years of participation in the European research networking scene.

TERENA's membership includes more than 35 national research and education networks, two international members and more than ten associate members from the commercial world.

The association's General Assembly steers its technical programme and policies, keeping TERENA at the forefront of developments and ensuring it continues to contribute to European leadership in research and education networking.

TERENA welcomes the participation of any organisation or individual who can offer appropriate expertise, manpower, equipment or services for its projects and task forces.