

SOLARNET TAS PROGRAMME

USERS ASSESSMENT 2014

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SOLARNET Transnational Access and Service Programme

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The SOLARNET Transnational Access and Service Programme (TAS) supports the access to some of the best European telescopes ([VTT](#), [THEMIS](#), [SST](#) and [GREGOR](#)). To enhance the efficiency of data usage, the observers receive support for post-factum reduction of data with the aim of providing them science-ready data. In addition to the aforementioned telescopes, located at Tenerife and La Palma, the [IBIS/DST](#) and [ROSA/DST](#) instruments, installed at the US Dunn Solar Telescope, are also offered by this programme.

Observing teams awarded with telescope time under the SOLARNET TAS Programme receive free access to the infrastructure/instruments as well as scientific and technical support to carry out the observations. EC funds are also available to cover travel, accommodation and subsistence costs during the observing run.

SOLARNET is also supporting the access to the most demanded European Science Data Centre, providing data gathered by the solar satellite [Hinode](#) ([SDC Europe](#)) and the [Solar Dynamics Observatory](#) ([BE-WISSDOM](#) and [GSC-SDO](#)). The access to databases is internet-based and completely open.

User teams awarded with telescope time under the 2014 SOLARNET TAS Programme received a brief questionnaire to assess the quality of the access and service provided. A total of 8 observing teams were supported under the 2014 TAS campaign.

The questionnaire was distributed among astronomers supported with travel and subsistence grants. A total of 16 questionnaires were distributed. 15 questionnaires (93,8%) were completed and returned to the SOLARNET Project Office. The most relevant information from this feedback is as follows:

- Most of the astronomers completing the questionnaire knew about the possibilities of SOLARNET supporting access mainly through personal contacts (13) and SOLARNET Webpage (6). Other two options were also indicated.

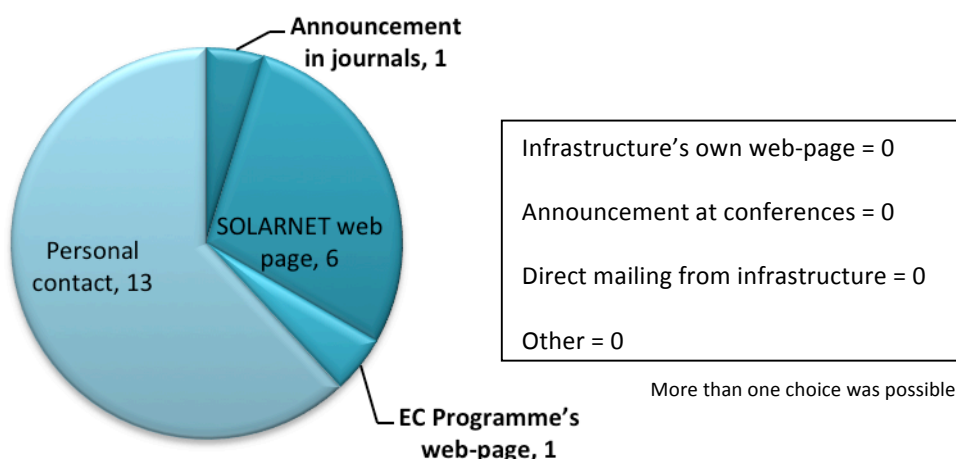


Chart 1: Where did you find out about the possibilities of SOLARNET supporting access?

These results state the need of continuing improving the communicating mechanisms in order to increase the number of astronomers that are informed about the possibilities of the SOLARNET TAS Programme.

- 14 astronomers would have not been able to carry out their project without SOLARNET support.
- Astronomers were asked about reasons they would not have been able to carry out the observations without SOLARNET support. Majority of them referred to the travel and subsistence expenses.

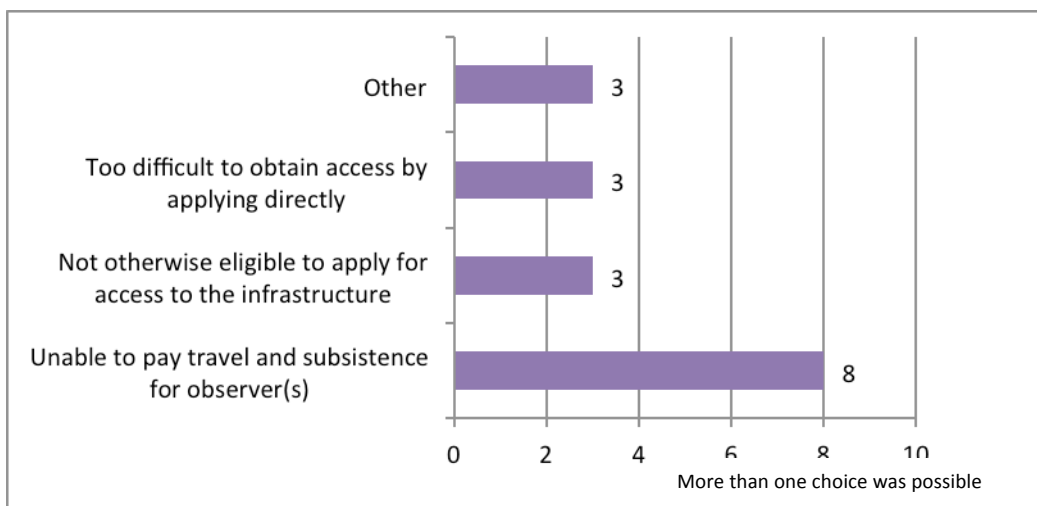


Chart 2: Causes because astronomers could not carry out the project without the support of SOLARNET

- Majority of the specific aspects related to the services provided by the infrastructure were assessed with the highest rating. The overall appreciation of the services provided was considered 'very good' by 9 astronomers, and 'good' by the other 5.

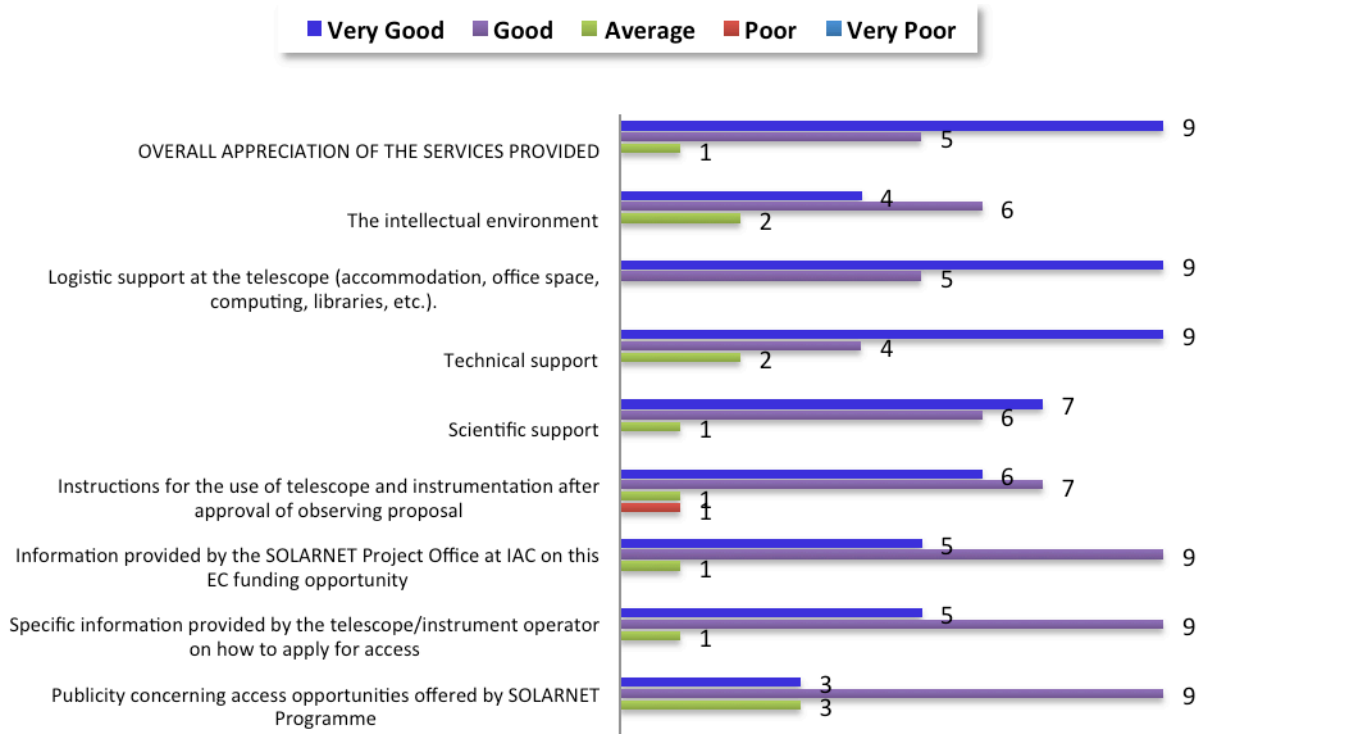


Chart 3: Assessment of the services provided by the infrastructure

- Other services, mainly provided by the SOLARNET Project Office, were also assessed as 'very good' or 'good'.

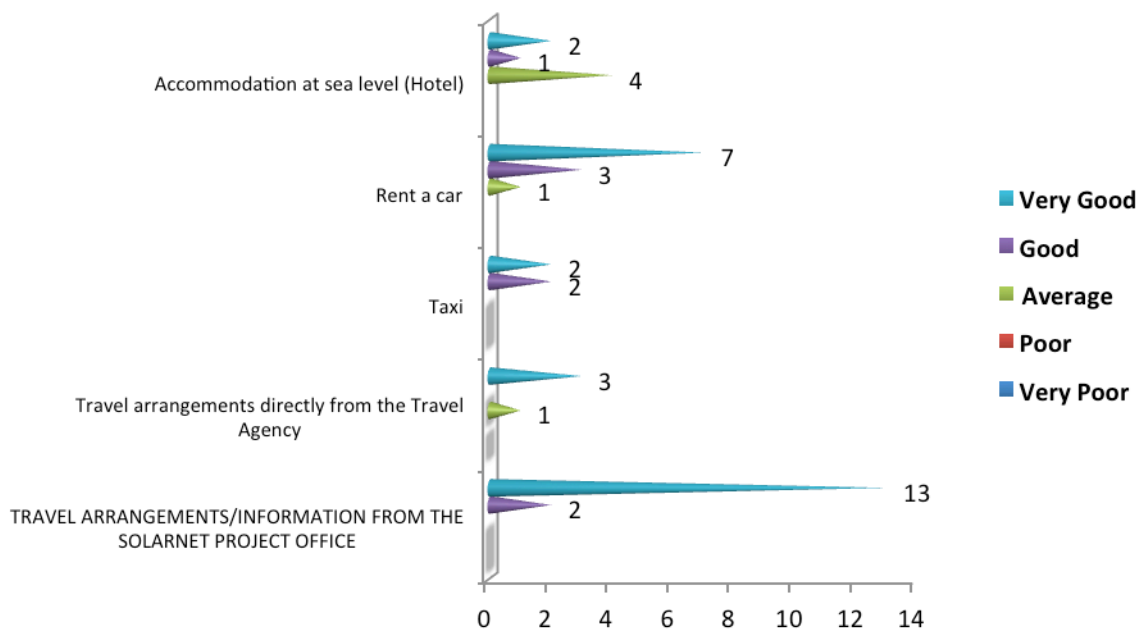


Chart 4: Other services assessment (provided by the Project Office)

- Concerning accommodation at OT and ORM Residences, astronomers are very satisfied in general, but some aspects could be analyzed for improvement, specially "meals".

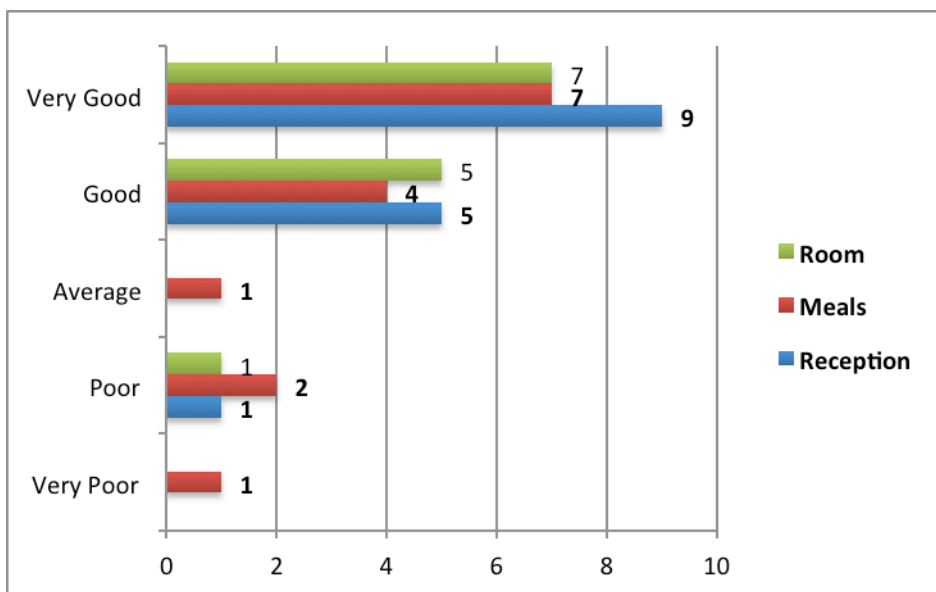


Chart 5: Other services assessment (accommodation at OT and ORM Residences)

- Comments added by the astronomers at the end of the questionnaire:
 - “I believe that the SOLARNET TAS program is an excellent program for European researchers and provides invaluable access to some of the best facilities in the world for solar physics research.”
 - “None. The whole process was seamless.”
 - “Some of the everyday equipment at the SST should be renewed. This concerns especially chairs (we were 4 up there and there were only 3 roughly ok chairs). Also, we had several difficulties concerning the motor controlling the azimuth and declination angle of the telescope. Due to dirt in the Turret’s gear it would fail to move properly and it would go to parking position automatically, especially around noon. Each day we had roughly 5 such incidents.”
 - “We would like to pay tribute to the telescope operator at the SST (Pit Sutterlin) for consistently outstanding support during our observation campaign. He did an essential and fantastic job. We would like to pay special tribute to Alberto Escobar for his support and guidance in making the logistics of this campaign incredibly easy and efficient. We are highly impressed with the services provided by the SOLARNET team. Fantastic work.”
 - “Because it was just my duty to give the scientific support during the campaign, I would like to leave that question open. There have been replacements of hardware just before this campaign, and some new software was installed, but that was not easy to handle by the people at the site.”
 - “None. All the arrangements were excellent... I would like to apply for more SST time within the next 1-2 years... best observing experience to date. Again, I would like to thank the IAC and in particular Alberto.”
 - “Instrumental setup of telescope met only partly our demands specified in primary proposal and THEMIS electronic technical proposal submitted well in advance of campaign. However, feasibility of proposed observations was discussed and confirmed by a THEMIS staff member Dr. Lopez Ariste prior submission of the proposal. We experienced only a very short periods of good seeing during observations. Therefore, we plan to repeat the campaign in the future.”
 - “Although a side matter, I think it still should be mentioned: I ranked the meals low because, although the quality of the food was good, it was repeatedly lukewarm at best and sometimes outright cold (even when eating as short as half an hour after the canteen opened). Otherwise I had a pleasant experience and am very satisfied with the organizing support SOLARNET offered.”

SOLARNET Project Office
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