

SURVEY of OR/MS PRACTICE CALLS FOR MORE RESPONDENTS

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IFORS has commissioned a survey of OR practice in member countries, updating an earlier one carried out in 1996. Fourteen years on we know too little about OR in practice and the organisations which make good use of analytical methods. The aim of the survey is to gain a better understanding of the usage of quantitative tools, techniques and approaches and their impact on decision-making in organisations, as well as the background of the OR analysts involved. The results should enable IFORS to improve their support to and promotion of OR in member countries.


The principal instrument is a comprehensive online questionnaire, aimed at OR practitioners in non-academic organisations. The questionnaire covers information on organisational aspects of an OR activity; the usage of quantitative techniques and software packages; the perceived barriers to the use of OR; and the background of the OR analysts involved.

The main questionnaire was circulated to 49 IFORS country Representatives in April, requesting them to forward the web link to as many practitioners as possible in their country. Reminders were issued in June and August and as of 25th August, 242 completed questionnaires had been received from 28 countries, as shown in the accompanying Table.

Questionnaire Responses by IFORS Regions

Region	Member countries/ Responding Countries	Responses Received
APORS (Asia/Pacific)	11/9	31
ALIO (South and Central America)	6/4	12
EURO (Europe, including Turkey, South Africa)	30/13	119
NORAM (USA and Canada)	2/2	82
Total	49/28	244

The completed questionnaires are dominated by the USA (71 returns) and UK (80), which have well developed – and well known – practice communities but four countries (Australia, Canada, Philippines and South Africa) provided 8 or more returns. Unfortunately 21 countries did not elicit any responses and several countries provided just one or two returns (including such countries as Germany and The Netherlands, which we believe to have a substantial OR activity). This will limit the analysis that can be carried out and any findings will have to be qualified. However, it is clear from a preliminary analysis of UK returns, that some useful results can be obtained.

The main analysis is planned for the period from October to December and consequently **THERE IS STILL TIME FOR THE QUESTIONNAIRE TO BE COMPLETED AND RETURNED.** For inquiries and to participate in the survey, email the author at jranyard@cix.co.uk. 

Country	To 7/7/2010	To 24/8/10
APORS (11 countries)	19	31
Australia	1	8
China	3	3
India		1
Jordan		1
Malaysia		1
New Zealand	7	7
Philippines	8	8
Singapore		1
UAE		1
(9)		
ALIO (6 countries)	10	12
Brazil		1
Chile	3	4
Mexico	5	5
Uruguay	2	2
(4)		
EURO (30 countries)	116	119
France	5	5
Germany	3	4
Greece	3	3
Hungary	2	2
Netherlands		1
Norway	2	2
Poland	1	1
Slovenia	1	1
South Africa	10	10
Spain	6	6
Switzerland		1
Turkey	3	3
UK	80	80
(13)		
NORAM (2 countries)	8	82
Canada		11
USA	8	71
(2)		
Total	157	244
(28/49)		

