

ANNEX 3. RESULTS OF THE ARES-NOMCOM USER SATISFACTION SURVEY 2011

1. SUMMARY

- First user satisfaction survey open to all users of Ares/Nomcom.
- 1.284 replies (14.2% of average daily users)
- Features scored on a scale from 1 (very dissatisfied) to 5 (very satisfied).
- Total average score of 3,5 out of 5 is a reasonable result and provides a baseline for future surveys.
- 6.300 comments received, which provide useful feedback on what users appreciate about Ares/Nomcom and areas for improvement.

2. SURVEY

Last December, the Steering Committee decided that there should be a global satisfaction survey in 2011.

The User Satisfaction Survey was prepared by SG and DIGIT and ran throughout October 2011. It was open to all users in the Commission, the EEAS and executive agencies.

The survey contained seven sections: *Profile*, *Ares*, *Nomcom*, *Remote access*, *Support*, *Training* and *Comparative satisfaction*.

Respondents could score features on a scale from 1 (very dissatisfied) to 5 (very satisfied), and provide optional comments.

1.284 respondents completed the survey. This represents 14,2 % of average daily users (9.041)¹.

3. RESULTS

Most responses were from Commission staff (93 %). The majority (67 %) works as an assistant, secretary or agent, with the second largest respondent group being administrators (26 %). Middle and senior managers accounted for just under 8 % of the replies. 61% of respondents use Ares-Nomcom frequently.

17% of respondents described themselves as document management specialists (DMO, CAD, IT...). 83% described themselves as generalists.

3.1. Total

- Average total satisfaction: 3,5

¹ Hermes statistics October 2011

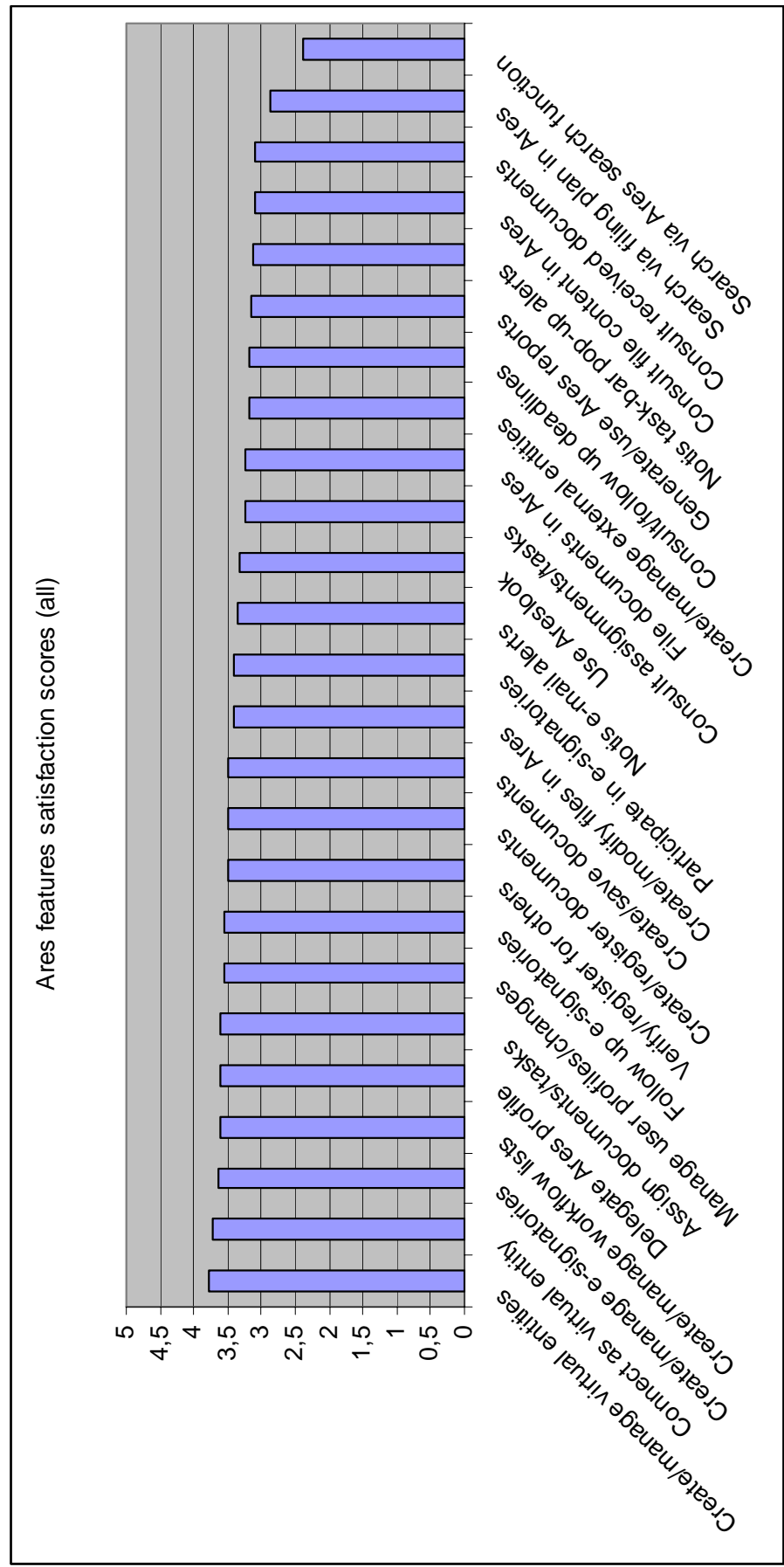
DMO/CAD support to users achieved the highest score (4,1%). The lowest score (2,4%) was for document search in Ares.

3.2. Ares

- Average satisfaction: 3,3
- Ares is used widely and principally by staff who are not document management specialists.

Staff use Ares most often to consult documents, give and receive assignments, search for documents and to perform workflow tasks. Features such as reporting and user management are mainly used by document management specialists.

The following graph shows the full range of satisfaction scores for Ares.



Ares scores well for sharing work and ensuring continuity of service (virtual entities, delegations), managing workflow, registering and filing documents. Consulting documents is one of the most commonly-used features, but scored low. The reasons for this will need to be examined. The lowest score of all (2,4) features was for Ares search. This is a known concern and a major refactoring has been prepared with the user community for release in Q1 2012.

Notis alerts via e-mail score better than Notis desktop pop-ups, which suggests that users may be unaware that they can choose how they prefer to be alerted about new documents and tasks.

Some comments on Ares features (with corresponding score)

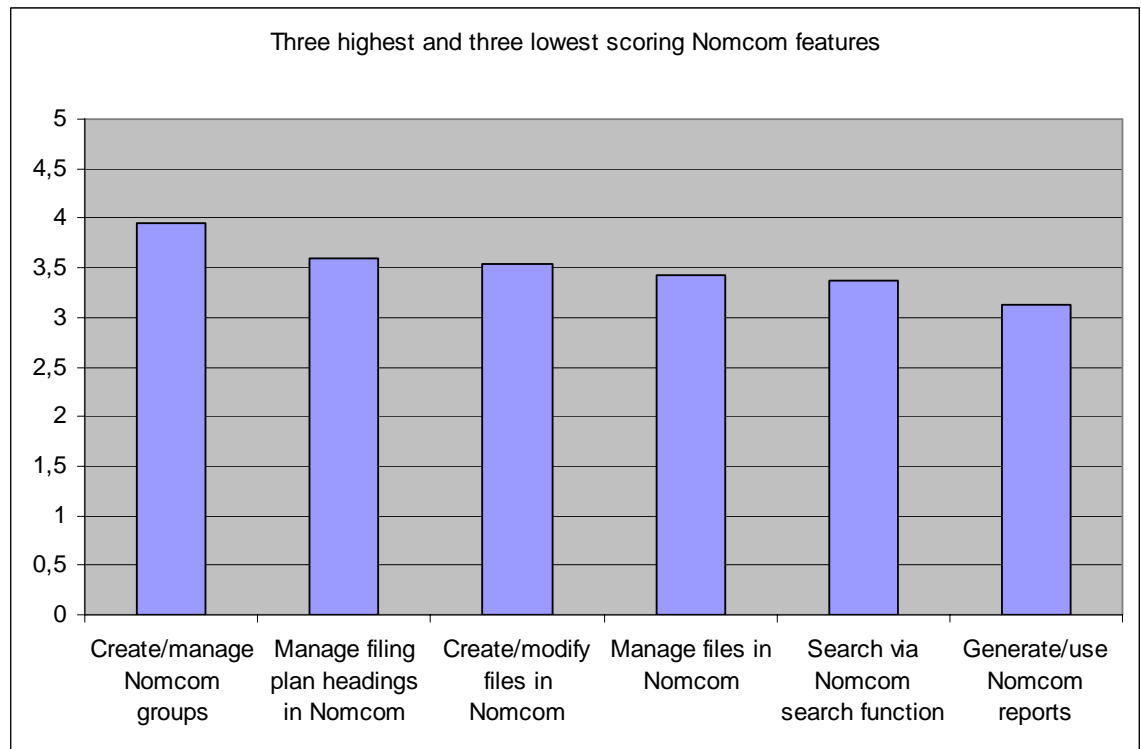
- *It is faster to receive documents via Ares than to wait for a paper copy. If it is an internal document it is already registered and you do not have to do it again. (5)*
- *e-Signatory workflow is a very good feature. I like the fact that there is a possibility to comment/instruct on the workflow. Unfortunately, still many colleagues do not sign off in Ares themselves but leave this to their assistants. (4)*
- *Le module de recherche n'est pas conviviale, souvent les documents ne sont pas disponibles. (3)*
- *Lenteur excessive de l'application. (2)*
- *Système trop lourd, temps d'attente trop longs quand documents scannés. (1)*

3.3. Nomcom

- Average satisfaction: 3,5
- Nomcom is a file management tool used mainly by DMO and CAD specialists.

Only 15 % of respondents use Nomcom, which is the tool for managing the filing plan and file list.

The following graph shows the three highest and three lowest scoring features in Nomcom.



The highest scoring feature, “create and manage Nomcom groups” (3,9), was considerably improved earlier in 2011 (Nomcom 3), which may explain the high level of satisfaction. Nomcom users were less happy with the search and report features, although at 3,4 the result is higher than for Ares search..

Some comments on Nomcom features (with corresponding score)

- *Ça serait encore mieux si je pouvais sélectionner plusieurs dossiers/sous-dossiers pour les clôturer d'un coup. (5)*
- *Plus convivial qu'Ares. (4)*
- *It would be useful if files headings could also be exported with the unit files into an Excel sheet. (3)*
- *Nomcom is extremely slow and not very clear. (1)*

3.4. Remote access

- Average satisfaction: 3,6

As a web application, Ares-Nomcom can be accessed remotely and securely, with or without a token and runs. Most, but not all functions are available on mobile and tablet devices.

Remote access scored well at 3,8 (with token) and 3,4 (without). Comments indicate that users find remote access to give the same or similar experience compared to working in the office..

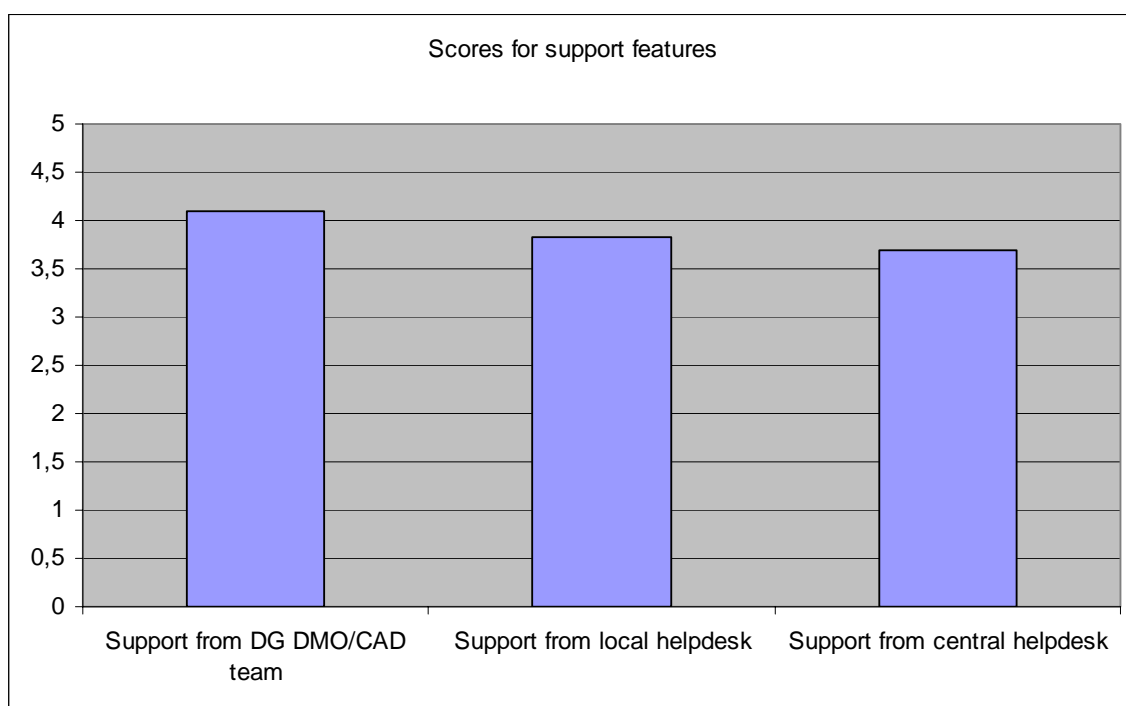
Some comments on remote access features (with corresponding score)

- *Works identically the same as in the office. (5)*
- *Pour le télétravail, il est clair qu'Ares est un atout considérable. (5)*
- *Mêmes problèmes de lenteur et lourdeur qu'au PC au bureau. (3)*
- *I used to, but not anymore. It's become too complicated with the security measures installed after the cyber attack. (1)*

3.5. Support

- Average satisfaction: 3,9

The following graph shows the scores for support features.



Ares is one of the most widely used corporate IT tools in the Commission and the quality of user support is very important. When users have a problem, first-level support is provided by the DG's own DMO/CAD or IT helpdesk (in DGs using ITIC, DIGIT provides the IT helpdesk). Most functional and technical problems are resolved at this level. Those that cannot are referred to the central user service management team in SG and DIGIT.

The survey result shows that users are very satisfied with the support from local and central helpdesks and underlines the importance of the DMO/CAD team in each DG.

Some comments on support features (with corresponding score)

- *Nous avons une excellente équipe de DMO et très efficace dans leur domaine et nous donnons des très bonne explications lorsqu'on pose des questions sur ARES. (5)*

- *DMO/CAD team were all extremely patient when we started on ARES, and have proved very helpful since. Good on them!. (5)*
- *The support helpdesk is quite efficient and prompt in replying to our needs. (4)*
- *The local helpdesk do their best but they are overloaded. (3)*
- *The DIGIT support was efficient. (3)*
- *Our DG has had no DMO for as least 6 months. (2)*
- *The local helpdesk are not well acquainted with ARES and most of the time instruct end users to contact the DMO. (2)*

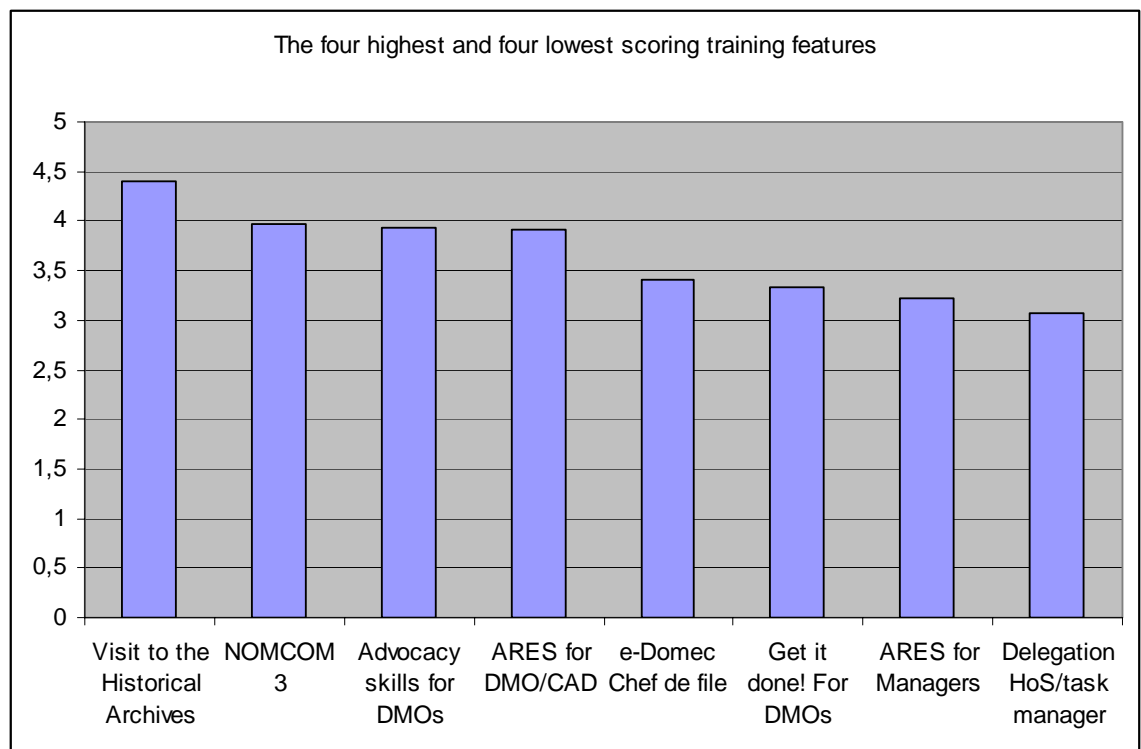
3.6. Training

- Average satisfaction: 3,7

78 % of respondents said that they had followed training on Ares, Nomcom or records management policy.

Most of these (61%) attended the Ares hands-on course, followed by the e-Domec introduction (41 %) and e-Domec secretary (18 %) courses.

The following diagram shows the four highest and four lowest scoring training features.



The visit to the Historical Archives provides a useful insight into the long-term preservation and historical interest of Commission archives. It is not really a training *stricto sensu*.

Training for EU delegations scored the lowest. The EU delegations are generally far less familiar with document management policy than the Commission or EEAS HQ. They also use IT tools specific to the external service. A big effort took place in 2011 to train delegations in eDomec policy using videoconferences.

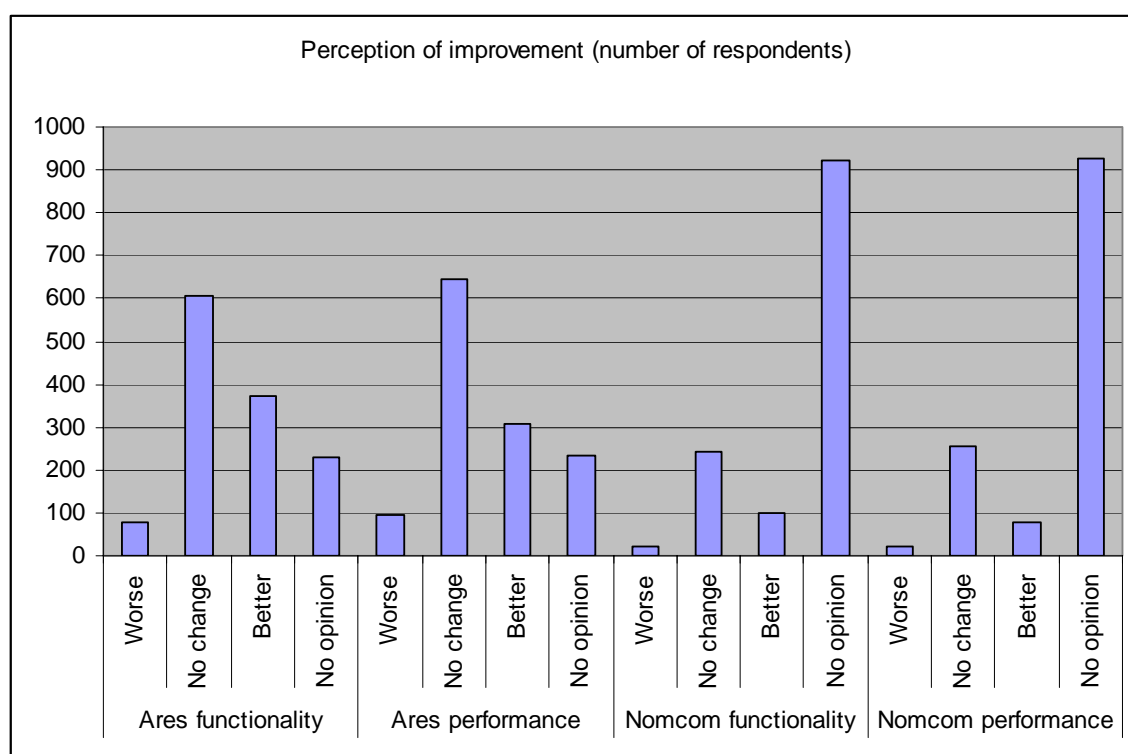
It was not possible to comment on training features.

3.7. Comparative satisfaction

- Average satisfaction: 3,0.

This section asked respondents two questions. Firstly, whether they find that Ares and Nomcom services have improved or not over time. Secondly, how users rate Ares and Nomcom in comparison with “other corporate systems with which you are familiar” (the survey did not mention other systems specifically).

The following graph shows the distribution of answers on perceived improvement.



Over 90 % of respondents who expressed an opinion thought that Ares and Nomcom had improved or not changed for the worse.

When compared with other corporate systems, respondents rated Ares at 2,9 and Nomcom at 3,0.

Some comments on comparative satisfaction (with corresponding score)

- *Ares est bien plus “user friendly” que Syslog, ABAC, Platon, cis-net, ex-adonis etc. (5)*

- *Ares works better in comparison to the period when it was introduced. (4)*
- *Sysper est le top: workflow, cohérence. On ne l'apprécie pas en tant que team member, mais en tant que chef d'unité, c'est impressionnant. Dans les mauvaises applications on peut citer MIPS dont il faut m'expliquer pourquoi il faut faire compliqué alors que les workflow existaient dans Sysper 2. C'est un enfer d'introduire une mission lorsque l'on fait cela de temps en temps. Ares est une bonne application (à la recherche près). Il permet une cohésion dans l'information, évite les doublons et contrairement à la comptabilité il y a un système UNIQUE et pas des flavours locaux. (4)*
- *It is better than almost all other Commission IT systems, with the exception of BASIL which is quick, efficient and intuitive. ARES would benefit primarily from increased customisation, better personal filing, and a less restrictive access to documents, which almost defeats the purpose of the system. It is potentially extremely valuable to be able to have access to so many documents, but it needs to be easier to find them/access them. Most files that are not classified should be available. Additionally better names for files and search options have to be developed. (4)*
- *It is difficult to compare to other systems because ARES is much bigger and important than the rest of IT systems the Commission. Therefore, it is more complex. Ares will be a good IT system when the main problems will be solved. (3)*
- *Trop compliqué par rapport à ADONIS (2)*
- *Sysper2. Ergonomics are much better. (2)*
- *Sysper2 is OK. ARES should be at least as simple and quick as that. Possible avenues of development: a powerful and intuitive SEARCH function, producing results nigh instantly; an intuitive, streamlined interface; use of on-the-fly HTML versions of all documents, for consultation purposes; built-in e-mail notifications (scrapping the need for an extra application like NOTIS). (1)*

3.8. Comments

- Comments, both positive and negative, provide useful input.

In total, respondents made just under 6.300 comments. These range from very positive to very negative, in line with the scores. Dissatisfied users were more inclined to comment than satisfied ones, providing 62 % of comments.

Comments from satisfied respondents tend towards specific and constructive criticism, i.e. they frequently take the view that although the feature is already quite good, it could be improved, and then goes on to explain how, in their view, this could be achieved.

Comments from respondents with low satisfaction scores tend towards general criticism that the system is complicated, slow and user-unfriendly. Complaints about Ares search appear frequently in the negative comments.

In a number of comments respondents ask for the system to provide features that are already available. This suggests that users are not always aware of what Ares/Nomcom can actually do.

Some respondents also commented on the survey itself, saying they found it too long and detailed.

Some general comments (with corresponding score)

- *Pour moi ARES est un outil parfait du point de vue utilisateur. (5)*
- *Au CAD-courrier, nous utilisons ARES en permanence et je trouve que c'est un excellent outil de travail et je n'y trouve rien à redire (5)*
- *Like any new system, it took time to get used to it but I find it very user friendly. Criticism of Ares tends to come from colleagues who do not use it regularly. Thanks for the chance to comment. (4)*
- *This survey is much too long. I think you won't get the expected number of respondents because they don't have enough time to go through the whole survey, which will make you lose valuable input. (3)*
- *ARES and especially Nomcom is so heavy to work with. The security is also difficult to understand if you don't use it all the time. (3)*
- *Get rid of the parallel structures. If I sign electronically, why do I still have to sign the "physical" signataire? (2)*
- *I hate ARES, it has certainly contributed to a reduction in my overall satisfaction with work, and an increase in frustration. (2)*
- *I see ARES as a burden in my workflow. It is not user friendly. It is not very practical. I can never find any document in my search attempts. (1)*

4. CONCLUSIONS AND FOLLOW-UP

The survey shows that users are reasonably satisfied with Ares and Nomcom, but that there is room for further improvement, especially to address the perception that the systems are complicated, slow and user-unfriendly. At the same time, one of the goals of Ares Nomcom is to enforce the Commission's document management rules and support electronic record-keeping more uniformly across the Commission. It is therefore not surprising that users tend to indicate a preference for looser ways of working (e-mail folders, shared drives etc) and local practices.

The main objective of the survey was to get feedback, both positive and negative. All comments are valuable and will be analysed in detail to feed into the change management process. Users will be invited to participate in workshops on new developments.

This was the first full scale user satisfaction survey for Ares and Nomcom, and the results provide a baseline for future surveys. Future surveys will be more streamlined and address questions to specific target audiences (e.g. general staff, managers, document management specialists). As more and more IT systems integrate with Hermes as part of the IT rationalisation exercise, client DGs will also be asked to indicate their level of satisfaction with Hermes Repository Services (HRS).