

ORGANISATION EUROPEENNE POUR LA RECHERCHE NUCLEAIRE
CERN EUROPEAN ORGANIZATION FOR NUCLEAR RESEARCH

ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF CERN USERS

Minutes of the 129th meeting held on 15 September 2020

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic the meeting was held by video-only.

Present (* = part time):

M. Aicheler, F. Barão, C. Biino (Chair), M. Bona, G. Boudoul, F. Briard* (invited),
 A. Calderon, G. Cavallo, L. N. Cojocariu, C. Decosse, C. Delamare* (invited),
 E. Dimovasili, A. Dubnicková, G. Duperrier, E. Elsen, F. Ferri, M. Ferro-Luzzi,
 I. Glushkov, R. Gonzalez Suarez, A. Gorišek, I. Haug, M. Hauschild (Secretary),
 S. Hillier, T. Hryn'ova, A. Irshad, M. Jeitler, P. Koppenburg, D. Kotliński, D. Lazić,
 L. Lejeune, V. Lemaitre, A. Lipniacka, M. Marquina, L. Masetti, L. Miralles,
 S. Nemecek, K. Rabbertz, E. Radicioni, A. Solero (replacing I. Mardirossian),
 M. Stankevičius, T. Šuša, R. Teuscher, M. Trzebiński, K. Vellidis, R. Vértesi, H. Yoo

Apologies:

L. Barak, B. Demirköz, D. Forkel-Wirth, F. Gianotti, J. B. Hansen, W. Lerche,
 I. Mardirossian, B. Mohanty, M. Steinacher, C. Warakaulle

Agenda

- 1) Chairperson's remarks
- 2) Adoption of the agenda
- 3) Minutes of the previous meeting
- 4) The CERN Visit Service
- 5) Covid-19 at CERN
- 6) News from the CERN Management
- 7) Report on services from SMB department
- 8) Users' Office news
- 9) Matters arising
 - a) Update on Internal Taxation certificate change
 - b) Call for nominations of new ACCU representatives for the Mobility Working Group and the Restaurants' Supervisory committee
- 10) Any Other Business
 - a) Listing of imminent events of general interest on CERN home page
 - b) Staff Association information on Users' appeals concerning the Internal Tax Certificate
 - c) Questions concerning the Allianz Health Insurance for MPAs
- 11) ACCU Meeting dates 2021 (proposal)
- 12) Agenda for the next meeting

1. CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

C. Biino, Chairperson, opened the meeting, welcomed new Delegates and mentioned extended Delegates. Apologies for absences were mentioned from Delegates who could not attend the meeting.

New Delegates (until end of 2022):

- **Patrick Koppenburg (Netherlands)**, replacing **Gerjan Bobbink**

Extended Delegates (until end of 2021):

- **Tetiana Hryn'ova (Ukraine)**

Pending decisions

Bulgaria and **Denmark** did not yet decide on extension of the present Delegate or finding a new Delegate.

Finding **non-member State Delegates** for **Middle East & North Africa** and for **Eastern Europe** also did not yet succeed.

2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

At the last meeting in June 2020, beside the regular standing items, reports on the following topics were requested:

- **Report(s) by ACCU representatives:**
 - Housing Service review meeting
 - No Housing Service review meeting was held since June, postponed to a later ACCU meeting.

Additional topics for the 129th meeting:

- **The CERN Visit Service**
 - presentation by Francois Briard (IR-ECO, Head of Visits Service)
 - The presentation was planned for the ACCU meeting in March 2020, which was cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic.
 - Slides of the presentation are available on the March ACCU meeting Indico page, but the presentation was actually not given and there was no opportunity by the Delegates to ask questions.

- **Covid-19 at CERN**
 - presentation by Christophe Delamare (HSE, Head of Covid-19 Response Team)
- **Matters Arising**
 - **Update on Internal Taxation certificate change**
 - presentation by **Gregory Cavallo** (CERN-FAP representative)

Further issues brought up by Delegates since the last meeting were handled under AOB, if not already covered earlier.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Following the distribution of the final draft minutes of the 128th meeting, no comments were received.

The Minutes of the 128th meeting were adopted without modifications.

4. THE CERN VISIT SERVICE (Francois Briard, IR-ECO, Head of Visit Service)

Current offers

Because of the Covid-19 pandemic, current offers by the Visit Service are much reduced. Exhibitions are closed and guided tours have been stopped since March 2020. Reopening depends on the further development of the pandemic. Some LHC experiments at least will not be available to accept visitors before March 2021.

Usual offers to visit CERN are 3 permanent exhibitions: Microcosm, Universe of Particles and the Passport to the Big Bang bicycle trail. In addition, there are various public events: Globe Conferences, Workshops (Girls in ICT, Devoux4Kids and more) Researchers Night and Open Days. No registration is required for these offers, they are free and available most of the time.

Guided tours are also free, but by registration only and are very limited. New since April 2020 are virtual talks, which are also limited and by registration only, but free as well.

Guided tours are offered for individuals and small groups (max. 11 persons), pupils or students (school and university groups, 12 to 48 persons), other groups (non-school or non-university groups, 12 to 48 persons), and private visits by CERN Members of Personnel and their visitors.

Bookings are possible for individuals 15 to 3 days in advance, and for pupils or students and other groups 9 months in advance (was 3 months for other groups before July 2020). Bookings for private visits are depending on the visit programme.

Currently, up to 17 visit points are offered. Each visit point has its own constraints and accessibility, with capacity and age limitations. Not all visit points are always accessible to tours managed by the Visits Service. Some visit points are often not accessible for operational reasons.

The number of guided tours and visitors is steadily raising, from 55'875 visitors on 2'056 tours in 2010 to 151'681 visitors on 8'791 tours in 2019 such that the number of visitors has been almost tripled within a decade. The number of about 150'000 visitors is the capacity limit under the present circumstances (opening hours, number of visit points, occupancy per visit point, etc.).

Many private tours were not registered before 2018, hence *not visible* and most LHC underground visits in LS2 are categorized as private visits. This has changed in May 2018 by the introduction of Visitor Cards such that all visitors and private tours need to be registered. This explains the large increase of private tours from 2018 to 2019.

Visitors must be registered through the Visit Service to obtain Visitor Cards, unless they are already registered as part of another event e.g., a conference at CERN. In case, visitors e.g., university groups stay in the Hostel, they also need to be registered in parallel at the Hostel.

The two systems, registering for Visitor Cards (access to CERN) and registering at the Hostel (staying at CERN), are independent from each other and are not connected, such that similar data needed to be entered twice. There are also data privacy protection reasons. Nevertheless, it will be checked if it would be possible to simplify the registration for both Visitor Cards and the Hostel.

CERN has trained 232 new official guides in 2019 and in total 1854 official guides are available as of 10 March 2020. Over the past 12 months, 1251 have guided at least 1 tour, 610 have guided at least 1 non-private tour and 101 have guided at least 20 non-private tours.

Main constraints are visit sites capacity, availability and accessibility; requested language; guides trainings, languages and availability; transport availability; budget (personnel + transport); programme diversity; specific requests; competing visits services and last-minute requests.

Group tours need to be initially requested with 3 potential dates and must be approved by Visits Service. School and university groups as well as other groups can make requests 9 months in advance, which results in all tours fully booked as soon as bookings are opened.

In 2019, in total 24'768 requests for tours have been made, with only 8'791 accepted tours (35.5%). Requests for 329'407 visitors were received, with only 151'681 visitors accepted (46%).

Various criteria are used to accept requests: the available global capacity (about 10 groups with 300-320 visitors per day), country and language quotas based on experience, own transport (would favour a positive decision), group size (only 2 sites can accept 48 visitors at the same time) and background checking. Sometimes tour operators book tours and offer these tours for payment, which is forbidden, as clearly indicated on the website of the Visit Service.

Tour programmes are decided 21 days before the actual visits, apart from rare exceptions, to take into account availability of sites (operational or safety constraints), actual number of visitors (last reconfirmed 22 days before the visit), actual use of transportation capacity, current guides languages offer and actual accessibility profiles (pregnant women, less than 16 years old etc.). Once the programme is set, guides can voluntarily apply to tour a group on whole or part of the programme depending on their training.

Tours for individuals can have a maximum of 11 visitors, in English or French only, and with predefined times and programme (Synchro Cyclotron and ATLAS Visitor Centre). They start each day except Sundays at 11:00 and 13:00, with the majority in English, except on Wednesday 11:00 and Saturday 11:00 in French. Extra slots have been added during the Summer (as there are less schools).

Half of the seats are released 15 days before, the remaining half 3 days before. All tickets are gone in seconds every morning at 08:30. Unfortunately, the system has some bugs and hundreds of mails have been received complaining about the system. A request has been made in 2018 to allow booking for individual tours also from 9 months in advance as for group tours, which is still under development.

Private tours are organized by CERNois for their colleagues, partners, friends, families etc. Maximum 11 visitors are allowed with transport and guides to be organized by the requestor and not paid by Visits Service. Exceptions on these criteria are possible, however.

Private tours are much more flexible and are usually shorter than group tours with 3 hours fixed duration, transport and other constraints. Private tours are using all slots that cannot be taken by groups and individual visits because of these constraints and can be requested maximum 21 days in advance (when group programmes are known). Hence, reducing the number of private tours would not lead to more group tours.

There is a massive increase of private visits over the past 5 years, from 7642 visitors and 650 tours in 2015 up to 50'996 visitors and 4924 tours in 2019. In 2019, 94% of requests were accepted.

The website of the Visit Service was migrated to Drupal-8 in summer 2020 and has been redesigned at this occasion with a new section on guided tours for individuals.

Possible evolutions of the visit programme

Extending the availability of existing visit points is not always possible. Visit points have operational constraints and workers on visit points do not always want to see more visitors in their work environment. Some collaborations / departments want to keep control of their outreach sites (e.g., LHC experiments) and adding more tours per day has impact on budgets.

Legacy sites (Synchrocyclotron, LINAC-2) are very interesting for visitors, but developing new visit points connected to new/future projects are interesting too (HL-LHC, CLIC, LINAC-4, EHN1). However, developing a new visit point takes a lot of (limited) resources. Bringing visitors to a working site brings extra safety requirements and constraints for people working on the site. Adding a visit point to future venues is not yet part of our culture. Hence, a visitors' gallery in future operation centres should be planned from the beginning.

Training more guides would build-up a bigger reserve of guides with less problems to find suitable and available guides. However, training guides takes time and resources and having more guides means less tours per guide and less experience. There is also a heavy workload in departments and experiments. Newly trained guides also complain they cannot book a tour as they are all taken by experienced and active guides, which enforces the need for a better and fair booking system.

Creating predefined visit programmes with a few defined visit points would lead to simpler administration and a guaranteed visit programme for visitors. However, there are difficulties in case of unexpected operational issues (one site not accessible for a few days) and it's less flexible to last minute or specific requests. It's also a worse use of scarce resources as there will be more gaps and unused points, leading to a massive reduction on number of visitors.

A clear improvement is expected from a better booking system. Currently, pupils' and students' groups can book 9 months in advance, other groups can book 3 months in advance (9 months since July 2020). However, group bookings share the same quota, which mostly is used by schools, and individual tours are very limited and opened for booking only 15 and 3 days in advance.

A differentiated quota for schools, non-schools, individual and private tours would solve these limitations and would also allow the same advanced booking time e.g., 9 months, for all visits. Developments of a new booking system have started in June 2020 and a market survey for a new tool in the frame of the Science Gateway project has been made.

Systematic feedback on visits might help tailoring the offers and identifying what expectations and experience are on various offers. It also helps to make a better use of the visit points. This needs to be developed further and to be followed, which is planned for end of 2020.

As a start, virtual talks have been implemented in April 2020 and received very positive feedback. A survey will be made at guided tours, as soon as they can be offered again.

Another option is to integrate permanent exhibitions. It makes more use of what already exists, no transport needs to be organized and the exhibition received good positive feedback from the Geneva Tourism office. However, visitors expect to see the real CERN and exhibitions have limited capacity too.

Virtual underground visits have been already developed by the LHC collaborations. The Visit Service is now considering developing virtual visits with live surface points in the next months, complementing the LHC virtual visits. No visitors need to come and virtual visits are available 24h/7d. However, as for possible integration of permanent exhibitions, visitors want to see the real CERN.

The Science Gateway will expand significantly the exhibitions, labs and show offers. It will also include a Restaurant as an alternative to the Restaurants on site. However, visitors also like the atmosphere in the CERN Restaurants as they come in contact with the researchers and people working at CERN. The Science Gateway will also not extend guided tour offers and it will be operational end of 2022 at best.

In conclusion, it is not impossible to visit CERN, but it is very difficult to get a guided tour. Increasing chances to get a guided tour are making a group of 12, organize own transport, find guides and be flexible with the visit programme. Permanent exhibitions and virtual visits are an alternative if a guided tour is not possible.

Improvements are expected from further development of the present booking tool, or alternatively, implement a new booking tool, and the new Science Gateway.

5. COVID-19 AT CERN (Christophe Delamare, HSE, Head of Covid-19 Response Team)

Covid-19 situation around CERN and at CERN

The number of new cases (positively tested Covid-19) was about stable at around 40 per day in the Canton of Geneva over the past 1-2 months. Weekly numbers and more details can be found on the following website of the Canton of Geneva:

<https://www.ge.ch/document/covid-19-bilan-epidemiologique-hebdomadaire>

However, the numbers are slightly increasing now. The number of cases tested positive per 100'000 inhabitants over 7 days is 58 (week 36 from 31 August to 6 September). At 5% of the tests the result is positive.

In the Canton Vaud the situation is worse than in Geneva. The number of cases tested positive per 100'000 inhabitants over 7 days is 83 (week 36) and increasing. Information on the situation in the Canton Vaud can be found on the following website:

<https://www.vd.ch/toutes-les-actualites/hotline-et-informations-sur-le-coronavirus/point-de-situation-statistique-dans-le-canton-de-vaud/>

In France, data are available at the level of regions (Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes important for CERN) and of départements (Ain and Haute-Savoie important for CERN), but are not available for the Pays de Gex, which is most important for CERN. In the départements Ain and Haute-Savoie, the number of cases tested positive per 100'000 inhabitants over 7 days is 68.5 and 32.8 (week 36), respectively. As in case of Geneva and Vaud, there is an increasing trend.

At CERN, as of 11 September, 37 members of personnel (MPE or MPA) were tested positively and additionally 5 contractors or people on temporary labour. There have been several suspected cases per day with contact tracing. The procedure implies follow-up of people suspected to be ill, their close contacts and their workplaces.

Observations about recent cases have shown that Covid-19 measures are well applied at workplaces, limiting the number of close contacts. Close contacts are mostly related to pauses (coffees, lunches, etc.) or private events outside CERN.

Contact Tracing procedure

If a person falls ill with symptoms related to Covid-19, a declaration to the Medical Service needs to be made, which will assess the health status of the person according to a well-defined protocol. If there is suspicion of Covid-19, the person is referred to a laboratory to have the RT PCR test and is asked to self-isolate. Access to CERN is forbidden.

If the person was present at CERN during the contagiousness period (4 days before start of symptoms, being on the conservative side or without symptoms, 4 days before a positive test), close contacts will be identified (less than 2 m distance for longer than 15 minutes, not respecting CERN's instructions w.r.t. personal protective equipment PPE e.g., not wearing of masks) and workplaces.

In case of a negative test, but with symptoms compatible with Covid-19, the same procedure applies, as recommended in Switzerland and France.

Close contacts will be informed and asked to self-quarantine, access to CERN will be forbidden, workplaces quarantined (5 days) or disinfected and Directorate, Departments and Large Experiments are kept informed.

In case of Users, who need to self-quarantine, but do not have a domicile in the local area, CERN has contacted different hotels in the local area, France and Switzerland who provide such arrangements for quarantine. Staying at the CERN Hostel for self-quarantine is not possible. The full list can be found under this link:

<https://mice-procurement.web.cern.ch/sites/mice-procurement.web.cern.ch/files/2020-08/Quarantaine%20covid%2019.pdf>

Further information from the Housing Service can be found under “Housing - quarantine”:

<https://smb-dep.web.cern.ch/en/content/services-availability-covid-19>

Contact Tracing Devices Project

Contact Tracing Devices would help to make contact tracing (identification of possible close contacts) much faster and more precise.

A call for tender was made and various offers have been received. One offer seems very promising and a pilot is ongoing with volunteers from the EN Department with first extremely successful results. The device also has a training mode, such that one gets an alert in case of a too close contact for a too long time. This training mode is very educative.

Data Privacy impact assessment is in progress with conclusions foreseen before end of September. Identification of contacts will only be possible by the Medical Service.

Delivery of a few prototypes is expected by end of September, a pre-series of a few hundred devices should be available by end of October and delivery of the entire series takes hopefully place before Christmas.

PPE and Space Management

At CERN, there is a current need of more than 30'000 masks per week, which probably will raise to more than 40'000 masks in September. There is a sufficient stock of masks until mid of November.

A mask producing machine has been bought and should be ready for distribution by end of October. If the machine is delayed, additional orders would be performed. The situation of hydroalcoholic gel is ok, for gloves the situation is to be monitored.

The general information related to Covid-19 at CERN (<https://hse.cern/covid-19-information>) include two appendices about HVAC (Heating, ventilation and cooling), venting of offices (Appendix A) and about Office Workplace (Appendix B). This is managed by Departmental Space Managers, taking into account current needs and possibilities of the teams.

6. NEWS FROM THE CERN MANAGEMENT (Eckhard Elsen, Director for Research and Computing)

Gradual restart plan

When the gradual restart plan was announced in May, a full opening of CERN was foreseen for September, without restrictions for people coming to CERN, but obeying all hygiene measures. Various measures have been implemented in view of that goal,

such as checking office spaces, defining the maximum number of persons in a shared office and in conference rooms with the intention was to bring back people to CERN.

The Main Amphi with abouts 400 seats can now accommodate a maximum of 60 people under Covid-19 conditions, which is not sufficient for conferences and collaboration meetings, but enough for expert discussions of typically 30-40 people. Hybrid meetings, with part of the people in the room and other people connected by video are also a possibility.

MPEs and some MPAs receiving statutory subsistence have been asked to come back to CERN at least 50% of their time. Even that video conferences are a huge success, CERN is a place to spread and to discuss ideas, which is much more efficient when on site.

High risk zones are restaurants, cafeterias and meeting places. To mitigate the risk, distribution points for lunch boxes have been created such that people are able to pick-up their meals and eat in their offices. While at good weather, the terrace can be used, this is excluded at most of the coming winter period. Hence, a tent is under discussion to expand the available space at Restaurant 1.

People with vulnerabilities to Covid-19 or living under the same roof with a person with vulnerabilities and presently persons above an age of 65 should not come back to CERN. The age limit of 65 will soon be raised to 70, as the retirement age for new contracts at CERN is 67 and an age limit of 70 will also relief some pressure from the experiments, who rely on Users on that age group. Exceptions for these groups of people for short stays at CERN are possible e.g., to pick-up documents, mail or equipment from their offices.

Presently, access to CERN sites requires to be on an access list, where Users can be put on only by request of the Spokespersons or Technical Coordinators. This access list will be replaced by a veto list, such that there is free access unless a person is on the veto list e.g., because of Covid-19 symptoms, age etc. The transformation from an access list to a veto list takes longer than expected and has not been finished yet.

Symptoms for standard flu can be very similar to Covid-19 and to have both flu and Covid-19 enhances the risk of complications enormously. CERN has ordered 5000 doses of flu vaccine free of charge for all persons working at CERN including Users, exact procedure and schedule still to be defined.

The situation over the next months and in 2021 cannot be predicted, but it has to be expected that Covid-19 and related measures continue. This effects also the summer student programme 2021 as well as other lectures, programmes, visits at CERN in 2021. If Geneva and the French neighbourhood will face a second wave of infection with lockdown measures similar to spring 2020, CERN needs to adapt. A shutdown as in spring should be avoided, though.

Impact on LS2 schedule

At a meeting in June, a new and ambitious base plan for the LS2 schedule was presented. LHC Injectors Upgrade (LIU) is more than 90% complete and commissioning of injectors has started in August. Beam to ISOLDE is planned in March 2021 and to AD-ELENA in May 2021, the SPS fixed-target programme would get beam in June 2021.

The LS2 schedule is delayed by about 3 months, with 2-3 additional weeks in some cases. The LHC cool down should be finished by end January or February 2021, to be followed hardware commissioning, powering tests and magnet training.

Ramp-up of experiments may be slower, as it depends on availability of personnel (e.g., Users and other MPAs) from outside France and Switzerland (with possible travel and border restrictions) and delivery of components from institutes. All left-over shutdown work, in particular the New Small Wheel C at ATLAS, should be finished in 2021, to have smooth and uninterrupted running as of 2022. This avoids the extra opening and closing of ATLAS for 2 months that was foreseen to happen later during Run 3.

The LHC should be ready by August 2021 and in September 2021 probe beams at low intensity are planned for testing the machine optics thoroughly to get ready for high luminosity running in the years 2022-24. These low intensity beams do not require to fully close the detectors. In case of ATLAS, a patch beampipe will be installed, but the detector will remain open such that installation can continue afterwards.

Regular meetings with machine and experiments take place to review and optimize a gradual and flexible ramp-up. The next meeting reviewing status, progress and plans will be held on 23 October.

Update of the European Strategy for Particle Physics

The Update of the European Strategy for Particle Physics has been approved by Council during the June Council week at a dedicated session on 19 June.

Most important is a strong support for the High Luminosity LHC, which might well run into the 2040s. This also because of the upgrade programme of ALICE and LHCb in the beginning of 2030s and the ATLAS and CMS phase-2 upgrades, which all need sufficient time to collect enough luminosity.

Strong recommendation for a future programme is a dedicated Higgs factory as the highest priority, which could be the ILC in Japan as the machine, that might be closest to approval. Intensifying R&D on accelerator components such as high field magnets is another priority as well as to explore the feasibility of the FCC as a machine at the energy frontier. Feasibility of the FCC depends both on geological constraints of the tunnel and the development of a financial plan over the next years.

Computing

Because of the Covid-19 pandemic, big conferences such as the LHCp and ICHEP conferences have been held fully virtual in summer with large support from the CERN IT Department, which was a big success.

Because of its different architecture, Vidyo is not as scalable as Zoom, such that Vidyo cannot be used at large conferences. CERN is negotiating a contract with Zoom, which has the capabilities and features needed. An important point is data privacy of meta-data, which CERN requires to keep at CERN or in Europe, at least.

There are also high demands from the experiments on data processing and storage in view of the coming LHC running period. A new computing center will be built on the Prévessin site, which replaces the Wigner computing center in Hungary, that is part of the Tier-0 center since some years.

CERN is further moving toward open-source software to reduce the dependence from certain vendors in some areas. There is good progress with such products, and many are in its testing phase. However, it was experienced that scalability of some promising products did not work as expected.

There is world-wide progress in quantum computing, although it's still a long way until quantum computers can be used regularly. CERN has presented to Council a plan for "Quantum at CERN", which includes quantum computing and quantum algorithms, as well as quantum communication through entanglement, quantum sensing e.g., as detectors for dark matter, and also quantum theory and gravity, which is one of the long outstanding questions.

CERN can help to bring experts together, to establish connections with companies, to deal with licence fees and will make devices and algorithms available to Users and students in the Member States.

7. REPORT ON SERVICES FROM SMB DEPARTMENT (Laetitia Lejeune, CERN-SMB)

Service Management & Support

The Service Management Consulting team continues assisting numerous service improvements, consolidations and Service-Now integrations across CERN. The Service Desk is now back on site with full capacity, but still prefers opening requests via the [Service Portal](#), email or by phone (77777).

With the recently renewed Service Portal, quick access is possible to the service catalogue and web forms to create tickets via the CERN Service Portal. All [attestations](#) that can be printed on a self-service basis are now centralised on the Service Portal.

Housing

The occupancy rate had a good start in 2020 in January and February, but then dropped down dramatically in March due to the Covid-19 related shutdown. Both the Hostel on the Meyrin site and the St. Genis Foyer remained open, but occupancy rates in April and May were around 1% only in the Meyrin Hostel and around 9% in the St. Genis Foyer. A decrease of out of order rooms on the Meyrin site was overall in line with the low occupancy of rooms.

There is a higher occupancy in the St. Genis Foyer due to longer stays, as cost and kitchen facilities are compliant with Covid-19 sanitary constraints (individual storage and material). In contrast, this is not the case for the Meyrin Hostel.

The decrease of apartment occupancy is less clear than for the Hostel because some customers were forced to stay there due to measures implemented by States that impacted movements both across the borders and within the borders.

A number of safety measures have been enforced to protect against Covid-19: Shared rooms and common sanitary facilities are closed; rooms without bath are closed; there must be one empty room between two rented rooms; kitchen facilities are closed; only one person is allowed in twin rooms; a purge plan was implemented for showerheads and faucet (health precaution against legionella due to underuse). Reservation rules are being continuously adapted to the changing circumstances.

Quarantine for people, who are coming from risk areas according to the French and Swiss lists is not allowed at the Meyrin Hostel. However, only the French list applies for the St. Genis Foyer. Hence, quarantine for people, who are coming from risk areas according to Swiss list only is therefore possible in the St. Genis Foyer.

Renovation of building 38 has started as planned on 15 June and is due to be finished by 30 June 2021. Because of the low occupancy due to Covid-19, the renovation strategy was changed and building 38 will now be completely closed until January 2021, instead of closing floor by floor as initially planned. This prevents epidemiological risks between clients and workers and is more cost efficient despite stronger safety measures to be implemented.

The following fields are covered: Security upgrade (safety lighting, fire detection; evacuation sound system), Electricity (cabling and lighting) and HVAC (system upgrade); Sanitary renovation; Interior renovation of the rooms and corridors (painting, flooring).

Works are proceeding efficiently and floors 4 and 5 might re-open by mid-January 2021, provided all security and sanitary measures are implemented to prevent epidemiological risks between clients and workers. Three new boilers are being installed to solve the previous recurrent problems with the heating and hot water system. Replacement of the furniture on floors 0, 1, 2 and 3 are currently being reviewed.

Catering

All 3 Restaurants at CERN are open, as well as the cafeterias with the exception of the cafeteria in buildings 864/865 on the Prévessin site. The Kiosk in the Main Building and the Grab'n'Go are also open. Opening hours are reduced, however.

Microwaves and coffee machines are available and the [reCircle@CERN](#) system has been more widely implemented in all selling points. Additional tables on terraces are still to be installed. The number of meals served at all restaurants has increased from about 250 per day at the beginning of June up to 1400 meals per day early September. This includes pick-up of meals in restaurants and cafeterias ordered through the [MyNovae](#) webpage.

Several sanitary measures have been implemented in the restaurants and cafeterias: Physical distance of 2 m, resulting in a major decrease in seating capacities; mandatory use of masks, except when eating; use of an alcohol-based hand sanitiser before entering the free-flow and when collecting orders; circulation flows to be respected; no work meetings and private gatherings; protective screens installed at cashier points; reinforced cleaning and disinfection.

Still to be implemented is information on tables related to the maximum number of persons per table, seats' location and safety rules reminder. A contingency plan is in place in case of a Covid-19 case within Novae staff: The *medecin cantonal* will be informed, designated areas will be disinfected (within 24 hours) and a reserve team will replace part or all of the regular team, who are in potential quarantine.

Sanitary renovation at Restaurant 1 is on track. Works are to be start in the fourth quarter 2020 and will last one year. Targeted areas are both public areas (sanitary facilities, reduced mobility accessibility to sanitary facilities - elevator), but also the catering contractor areas (sanitary facilities including changing rooms, office space, waste management area). Temporary sanitary facilities will be installed outside, as well as temporary office and storage space for Novae.

Kitchen floor renovation (350 m²) at Restaurant 2 is on track too. Works have started 20 June and will last 3 months until mid-October.

Cleaning

Standard office cleaning will be back to normal as of 21 September. As general principle, all common spaces, entrance, corridors, circulation, toilets, restaurant, crèche, conference rooms are cleaned **daily** and in addition, Covid-19 reinforced cleaning measures are applied (regular disinfection and additional cleaning).

For offices, laboratories and workshops, the usual frequencies are maintained (weekly for offices, monthly for workshops) and in addition, Covid-19 reinforced cleaning measures are applied. For this type of premises, cleaning will be done according to real occupancy.

Each individual is in charge of the disinfection of workstations, phones, IT equipment, tools, machines, etc. (for individual workspace and shared spaces for shifters, open space, etc.). Disinfection material can be ordered via central stores: <https://cern.service-now.com/service-portal/article.do?n=KB0006661>

Cleaning and disinfection in Covid-19 suspected or confirmed cases follows processes prepared with HSE. A form is to be implemented for quicker action.

Green Plates

All requests for Green Plates must now be submitted in first instance [via the CERN Service Portal](#). Opening times of the Installation Service reception at the ground floor of Building 56 are back to normal (14:30 - 15:30 every day except Wednesday). The *Préfecture de Police* is also back to normal.

There are 27 green plate applications still to be approved by the French authorities (applications were sent mid-July to end of August).

Current average waiting time for CPI (temporary plates) is 2 months, and current average waiting time for the final "carte grise" is 3 months (was 3 - 5 months during the lockdown), in parallel to the waiting time for CPI (if needed). Temporary plates are not mandatory. They can be avoided if the car is registered on export plates, when bought outside France and imported from there.

Mobility

There was low activity on bike rental this summer due to Covid-19 and various summer programme cancellations. Only 20% of the bike fleet was in use during this period.

The bike rental policy was maintained: The mobility services retrieved bikes on behalf of Users before deadline to avoid payment of rental fees. There were less out of order bikes compared to last year thanks to the bike fleet renewal.

The Shuttle service reopened only for circuit 2 between Meyrin and Prévessin sites via the St. Genis Foyer. The passenger level is monitored daily. In 2019, approximately 300 passengers per day used shuttle circuits 2 and 5 (inside Prévessin site), whereas 100 passengers per day are using circuit 2 at the moment. Additional buses and/or reactivation of line 5 is planned if the trend continues to increase. The airport shuttle service is not running, but could be reactivated within a few days, if needed.

Sanitary measures are in place for the shuttle service and on-demand transportation: the driver area has been separated from the passenger area; all passengers shall wear masks; passengers shall not use the front door of the shuttle if another door exists; hand sanitizers are available at the entrance; shuttles are cleaned before and after each service.

The CERN car-sharing service has been stopped as from the beginning of the CERN shutdown period for sanitary reasons and will remain suspended until 2021. There were only very few requests for alternative solutions in the past 6 months. Short term car rental remains operational with a specific checklist implemented to ensure that each car used is cleaned afterwards.

The car-sharing vehicles are operated by Mobility.ch on CERN's behalf and are using the 2G mobile network for communication. However, the Swisscom 2G network will be switched off by end of 2020 and the technology upgrade investment proposed by Mobility.ch is too high compared to the benefits.

This resulted in an early ending of the Mobility.ch contract with savings of 20 kCHF in 2020 as [announced in the Bulletin on 8 July](#).

A new service provider is being studied with a test phase as from October 2020. If successful, the new system will be implemented in spring 2021. The new system will optimize usage (release availability in case of no-show) and will provide a better booking system.

The planned car fleet renewal is on track, despite some delivery delays for the new CERN cars due to supplier, customs and Covid-19 issues. Car exchange is ongoing on the CERN site. Despite the sanitary situation an acceptable level of car exchanges was managed to keep (old vs new one): 80% of new cars delivered at CERN have been distributed so far.

In preparation of the planned Science Gateway, the Mobility Centre has to move near entrance A. Works are ongoing and the Mobility Centre should be operational by 28 September at its new place. It is relocated temporarily to building 130 in between.

Site Engineering

The Kindergarten has been relocated to a new building 664 in between the Reception (building 33) and Entrance B and opened in time for the new school year. It is able to host 105 children from the age of 0 - 4 years and has a net area of 1242 m². The new building was built in a record time of only 9 months between December 2019 and August 2020, despite Covid-19.

Works to widen Gate E with two exit lanes will start on 23 September and will last about a month. No impact on vehicle traffic is expected.

A retention basin is being constructed on the SPS-BA2 site. Construction works have started January 2020, are proceeding well without interruptions and are expected to finish in the first weeks of October.

The retention basin will allow to implement rainwater regulation (~60%); to retain accidental releases of hydrocarbons; to retain foam if present in the wastewater; to reduce the temperature of any discharges of superheated water; and to decant discharges charged with suspended matter (turbid discharges).

It will not retain basic or acidic discharges; these will need to be intercepted as close as possible to the facilities at risk.

Security Service

During the Covid-19 related shutdown, Gate A and Gate C on the Meyrin site were temporarily closed but are now back in use.

All people inside a car (driver and passengers) must badge on the reader with their access card to enter the site (not on exit any longer).

If people, who want to enter CERN, do not have a safety mask, CERN' security guards will refuse access to CERN.

8. USERS' OFFICE NEWS (Gaëlle Duperrier, Users' Office Supervisor)

Users' Office

The Users' Office is still closed to the public until further notice. Swiss and French Cards can be handed over and collected in Building 55 next to Entrance B outside of the CERN fenced area.

It is highly recommended that people register online, complying with the CERN internal Data Privacy Protection Regulation and using CERNbox to transfer documents safely.

Nevertheless, Users can come to the Users' Office upon appointment. However, safety measures taken by CERN regarding Covid-19 allow for a maximum simultaneous occupancy of 3 people in the office and 3 in the waiting room. Therefore, a new appointment tool has been set up and will be released as of 16 September.

Since July, on request of INFN, a general certificate has been issued for the purpose of certification of access rights. This document is available upon request in the admin-guide: https://cds.cern.ch/record/2725476/files/MPA_Certificate_SiteAccess.pdf

Contract Extension - Revision of the "Grace Period"

As of 1 July, Users are receiving an extra 60-day reminder before their contract end date. It aims at informing Users to proceed with either the extension or the termination of their contract.

As of 1 August, the 2-month grace period for contract extension has been shortened to 1 month. This decision was taken due to the risk of Host States documents misuse (especially French Cards bearing an end date different from the contract end date).

This change has no impact on the CERN computing account. That rules remain unchanged and Users can continue to use their account for an extra 2 months after their contract ends.

New EDH document for contract amendment

A new EDH document "Contract Amendment for USERS, COASs and VISCs" has been released, which replaces the former EDH document "Contract Modification and Extension Form for USER, COAS and VISC Contracts".

The interface has been recreated from scratch and the document is now more user-friendly and is the simplest version ever used.

French Cards expired between 16 March and 15 June

French cards which expired between 16 March 2020 and 15 June 2020 are valid for an additional 6 months from the expiry date. This extension was automatically granted.

Users are only able to apply for the renewal of their card between 6 and 8 weeks before its new expiry date (for example: a card that expired on 30 May 2020 is now valid until 30 November 2020 and its renewal application must take place mid-October 2020).

To help the holders of these documents to assert their rights or to facilitate the crossing of borders, the French Ministry of the Interior has published certificates of general information in French and English, available online on:

- <https://www.immigration.interieur.gouv.fr/Immigration/Information-generale-sur-la-prolongation-des-documents-de-sejour-General-information-on-the-extension-of-residency-documents>
- https://cds.cern.ch/record/2721086/files/Annexe1_NoteVerbale_MEAE_COVID-19_EN.pdf

Frequently asked questions related to Swiss and French cards can be found here:

- https://cds.cern.ch/record/2713391/files/COVID-19_FAQcards_CH_FR.pdf

The official document from the French authorities for application of a new French Card is a Word document, that is difficult to open under Linux and also has problems under Windows with accented characters replaced by question marks. These are known problems, but they cannot be avoided, as the original document needs to be used for application.

Reminder about insurance coverage in the Host States

Owing to the situation surrounding Covid-19 crisis and the risk of infection, Users are reminded of the obligation to take out a health insurance policy covering **both** Swiss and French medical care, as stated in the Home Institution Declaration:

- "The social insurance cover of the candidate is the responsibility of the home institution. It must include health and accident insurance (including protection

against occupational illnesses and occupational accidents) providing adequate cover in Switzerland and France, as well as any countries visited on duty travel”.

Hence, Users need to check their general insurance conditions, if infections in the context of epidemics and pandemics are covered or are excluded. In case of any doubts, it should be checked with the insurer to confirm coverage or not.

If infections in the context of epidemics and pandemics are excluded, Users need to take the necessary steps and consider alternative solutions providing coverage.

For information, treatment for Covid-19 is covered for persons insured through the Allianz Insurance for CERN Associated Members of Personnel (MPAs). This was explicitly confirmed by Allianz.

User Statistics

As a consequence of the Covid-19 pandemic, the number of Users registered at CERN started to go down since April. As of 31 August, a drop of 3.5% was observed w.r.t. the average number of Users from January 2019 to February 2020.

9. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

a) **Update on Internal Taxation certificate change (Gregory Cavallo, CERN-FAP)**

The Staff Rules and Regulations stipulates that CERN shall levy an internal tax on the financial and family benefits paid by CERN (not by Third Parties). Occasional (i.e. non-statutory) subsistence on a discretionary basis that is processed by CERN on behalf of a Third-Party are not subject to internal taxation.

In 2017, Internal Taxation certificates were issued to all 14'969 MPAs who **may** receive a subsistence (mostly Users). Out of them, 11'343 MPAs actually received **no** subsistence. The remaining 3,626 MPAs **did** receive a subsistence payment. Despite the fact that occasional subsistence is not subject to internal taxation, the taxable amount indicated on the certificate was 0 nevertheless, whether the User received a subsistence or not.

In accordance with the French Authorities, this practice is going to be changed for all MPAs with status USER, COAS, VISC, who receive occasional subsistence. Other MPAs, like TECH, DOCT, PJAS etc. are not affected as for those, the subsistence is part of their contract (statutory) and they continue not to pay taxes on the subsistence allowance.

For the affected MPAs, the Internal Taxation Certificate will no longer be issued. According to plan, the last certificates were issued in February 2019, for the year 2018.

As of 2020, the Internal Taxation Certificate for MPAs without a statutory entitlement to subsistence in 2019 has been replaced by a Certificate of Payment, containing the amount and the nature of payment.

In 2019, there were 2'802 MPAs (2'424 USER, 245 VISC, 133 COAS), who did receive a subsistence payment and received the new Certificate of Payment on 7 February 2020. About 83% of the Users did not receive any subsistence allowance and no Certificate by default. However, these Users can receive a Certificate of Payment upon request, even at 0, in French and English.

However, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, plans have altered in spring 2020 in accordance with the French authorities:

- For MPAs who received occasional subsistence allowance in 2019, the announced measures are postponed by one year. These MPAs received both the new Certificate of Payment of their received subsistence on 7 February **and** the Internal Tax Certificate on 27 April as an exceptional measure. Issuing of the Internal Tax Certificate will now stop next year for subsistence received in 2020.

Since April, the handling of Internal Tax Certificates has been revised again, following discussions between the Finance Department, HR Department and Legal Service.

- Occasional subsistence allowance paid to USER, COAS, VISC and Guest Professors (GPRO) by CERN will be covered by an internal tax certificate. This concerns subsistence that is paid from a CERN budget code e.g., 19500 where CERN regular rules on subsistence allowance apply, as described in Administrative Circular No. 11:
https://cds.cern.ch/record/2632961/files/CERN_Circ_Admin_Angl_No11_Rev6.pdf
- Occasional subsistence allowance paid to USER, COAS, VISC and Guest Professors (GPRO) on behalf of Third Parties will **NOT** be covered by an internal tax certificate. This concerns subsistence that is paid from a Third-Party Account (aka Team Account) e.g., T122111 where CERN specific rules for occasional subsistence allowance apply.

As Host Laboratory, CERN publishes guidelines to help MPs in filling their tax declaration in France and Switzerland. Guidelines for France have been fully updated thanks to good contacts with the French Tax Authorities (SIP Bellegarde). There are still questions about how to declare the subsistence allowance to Switzerland, and impact on taxation.

The [admin e-guide](#) and [FAQ](#) on tax certificates and taxation have been updated accordingly. General questions that are not answered in documents above or private questions can be addressed to the CERN [Social Affairs Service](#), who may help to figure out where to find the answer. Complex/private questions need to be addressed to relevant tax authorities.

b) Call for nominations of new ACCU representatives for the Mobility Working Group and the Restaurants' Supervisory committee

The present ACCU representative both in the Mobility Working Group and in the Restaurants' Supervisory committee, Cristina Biino, has been elected as ACCU Chairperson at the last ACCU meeting in June and would like to step down as ACCU representative in above mentioned committees.

Delegates, who are frequent users of CERN mobility services or of CERN's restaurants and cafeterias are particularly encouraged to volunteer as new representatives.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

a) Listing of imminent events of general interest on CERN home page as on the old CERN homepage a few years ago (Manfred Jeitler, Austrian Delegate + other Delegates)

Before the CERN homepage was restructured some years ago, it nicely listed the imminent events of general interest. With the restructured homepage, however, one has to dig into the relevant pages, in several categories ("Events for scientists", "Events for CERN Community" etc.) to get such information and things are less easy to see.

Several Delegates requested to again include such information on the homepage for CERN people (not the public homepage), similar to the old homepage. A detailed discussion with the Education, Communications and Outreach Group is ongoing.

b) Questions concerning the Allianz Health Insurance for MPAs (Evangelia Dimovasili, Delegate from Cyprus), replies by Michael Hauschild (Head of Users' Support)

- *The premiums of the insurance have significantly increased over the past 5 years, from 246 €/30 days in 2016 to 346 €/30 days in 2020, corresponding to an increase of 40% in 5 years. What are the future perspectives? Will there be more increases?*

Premiums are fixed for one year, from 1 April to 31 March the following year. They depend mainly on the reimbursements paid in the previous year + some admin costs. There was also a reduction in the past, when the reimbursement costs were lower, see slides at the June ACCU meeting:

https://indico.cern.ch/event/875960/contributions/3691358/attachments/2053332/3448036/UsersOfficeNews-ACCU128_-_final.pdf

- *Can CERN do something to control the increase of the price or try to negotiate?*

CERN is well aware of the price increase. However, most medical care is taken place in Switzerland, where costs are rather high and are steadily raising.

It would be possible to reduce the reimbursement costs by reducing the benefits or by introducing deductions. These cost saving options have been discussed in ACCU at previous meetings but were not approved, however.

To mitigate the last increase of 13% on 1 April 2020, successful negotiations have been made to reduce the admin costs. Initial proposed increase was 25%.

- *There seems to be no alternative insurance other than Allianz, such that because of lack of competition, prices might be too high.*

CERN requires that all its Users must have health and accident insurance (including protection against occupational illnesses and occupational accidents) providing adequate cover in Switzerland and France, as well as in any countries visited on duty travel.

There are several insurances on the market e.g., travel insurances with work or business option, but most of them are lacking some benefits e.g., emergency coverage only, no coverage in case of pandemics, too low limit for maximum medical expenses per case, such that they are not providing adequate cover in the sense of CERN.

Because of a lack of insurance products with adequate cover, the Allianz insurance was set-up on CERN's initiative in 2015. ACCU has some control of the costs by reducing benefits or introducing deductions, which however, were not approved to not diminish the overall package and the ease of the scheme.

c) Staff Association information on Users' appeals concerning the Internal Tax Certificate (Evangelia Dimovasili, Delegate from Cyprus)

Some Users have filed an appeal against the suppression of the Internal Tax Certificate in case of occasional subsistence paid from Third-Party accounts as of 2021.

The Staff Association has distributed some information on these appeals, but not all Users received this information. If more Users would have been aware, there might have been more appeals.

The request was made to put the Staff Association's opinion and actions on taxation of subsistence onto the agenda for the next ACCU meeting on 1 December 2020.

11. ACCU MEETING DATES 2021

The following ACCU Meeting dates for the year 2021 were proposed:

- Tuesday, 16 March 2021
- Tuesday, 8 June 2021 (see below)
- Tuesday, 7 September 2021
- Tuesday, 30 November 2021

If the Covid-19 situation allows, all ACCU meetings 2021 will be held in the 6th floor conference room of the main building 60-6-015 (Room Georges Charpak, Room F).

The ACCU meeting on 8 June 2021 would clash with the LHCp conference in the same week. Hence, the question was raised if the meeting could be held one week earlier or later.

Holding the meeting one week later would clash with the June Council meeting and holding the meeting one week earlier would clash with LHCC committee meetings, where the meeting room is occupied, such that the meeting will be kept on 8 June 2021 as proposed.

12. PROPOSED TOPICS FOR THE NEXT MEETING (Tuesday, 1 December 2020)

- CERN's anti-harassment framework and support structures (Louise Carvalho, Diversity & Inclusion Programme Leader)
- Report(s) by ACCU representatives:
 - a) Housing Service review meeting (Emilio Radicioni, if held)
 - b) Academic Training Committee (Evangelia Dimovasili)
- Taxation of subsistence - Staff Association's opinion and actions

Due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, the December ACCU meeting will be held by video-only.

[Michael Hauschild](#), 15 September 2020

Presentations from the meeting can be found with the minutes on the ACCU web site at: <http://accu.web.cern.ch/>