WELCOME BROCHURE

Information for staff members

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Part 1 - Integration at CERN

1. Introduction

We would like to extend a warm welcome to you as a new staff member at CERN!

In choosing to work for our Organization, you have probably also decided to move to another country and will therefore need to adapt to a lot of changes affecting both your personal and your professional life. To prepare you and to help you get to grips with these changes, CERN has drawn up this welcome brochure, designed to facilitate your and your family’s arrival and integration in your new environment. Those of you who have already been living in the region for some time will also find some useful information here.

The welcome brochure is divided into two parts. The first part deals mainly with your integration at CERN, and the second part with the practical aspects of moving to a new country and integrating in the local area. You are strongly advised to read both parts of the brochure carefully as they contain a lot of important information that will facilitate your personal and professional integration at CERN and in the local area.

Please note: For detailed information on specific issues, please consult the official texts such as the Staff Rules and Regulations, the Rules and Regulations of the Pension Fund, the Rules of the Health Insurance Scheme, the Administrative and Operational Circulars, your employment contract and national legislation.

2. CERN

Founded in 1954, CERN, the European Organization for Nuclear Research, was one of the first joint projects on a European scale, and has now become a shining example of international collaboration. CERN is an intergovernmental organisation based in Geneva, with part of its site also situated on French soil. It currently has 22 Member States and around 2 500\(^1\) staff members. In addition, around 12 000\(^2\) scientists from 792 institutes and representing almost 120 nationalities use CERN’s facilities.

\(^1\)CERN personnel statistics as of 31.12.2015  
\(^2\)2015 annual statistics - Users Office
3. Arrival at CERN

3.1 Where is CERN located?

CERN lies 8 km to the north-west of Geneva, on the road from Meyrin (Switzerland) to Saint-Genis-Pouilly (France). CERN’s main site straddles the French-Swiss border. It has another site in Prévessin, a village in the Pays de Gex (France).

3.2 How to get to CERN by train, plane or car

See the web page Directions.

**NB:** You will need a special motorway sticker if you wish to use the Swiss motorways. The sticker costs 40 Swiss francs at the time of going to print and can be purchased from any customs post. It is valid for a full calendar year (from 1 December of the previous year until 31 January of the following year).

3.3 Reimbursement of the cost of your journey to CERN

The conditions of entitlement to the payment of travel expenses on taking up appointment are laid down in Article R V 1.08 of the Staff Rules and Regulations and in Administrative Circular No. 30. (Rev. 3) (CERN log-in required).

To be entitled to the payment of travel expenses on taking up appointment, you must:

- live more than 70 km from CERN (in a straight line) at the time of your recruitment
  (the place of residence taken into account is your address on the date of the selection board or, if no such board is held, on the date on which you are offered a contract; this place of residence does not have to be in one of CERN’s Member or Associate Member States);

  and

- establish your new place of residence within a 50-km radius of CERN in the two years after you take up your appointment.

**NB:** the travel expenses you receive must be paid back if it later transpires that you did not meet the eligibility criteria.
When a contract is drawn up, the Human Resources department determines whether the first of the two conditions is met.

If the trip is booked by CERN via Carlson Wagonlit Travel, the following classes of travel are authorised:

- plane: economy or equivalent;
- train: first class or sleeper;
- boat: cabin class or equivalent.

If the member of personnel decides to make his or her own travel arrangements, the Organization pays the value of the cheapest ticket available using a means of public transport offering a reasonable journey time.

For more information, please see:


4. Starting work at CERN

4.1 Induction Session

An initial induction session for new staff and fellows is held on the first working day of each month. Designed to facilitate installation and integration at CERN and in the local area, the session consists of:

- a series of short presentations;
- an explanation of the arrival formalities (see section 4.3);
- a chance to put your questions to experts from various CERN services.

A second session takes place every three months. The heads of various services are on hand at this session to explain how CERN and certain activities work. It also includes a question-and-answer session with the Director-General or another member of the Directorate.

You and your family members will be offered the opportunity to sign up for a guided tour of CERN’s facilities.
4.2 What do I need to do on my first day at CERN?

On your first day of work, you should go to the Reception area in Building 33 to complete your arrival formalities. Please take the documents listed in section 4.4 with you.

If the first day of your contract falls on a weekend or an official holiday, you will start work on the next working day (see section 4.8).

Members of the personnel receive an arrival formalities form specific to their circumstances.

4.3 What are the arrival formalities?

Members of the personnel must complete a series of arrival formalities on their first day. They receive information orally, and the various formalities are explained. The aim is for new members of the personnel to:

- contact all the relevant administrative services in order to be able to perform their functions at CERN; and

- learn about the benefits to which they are entitled and the services that CERN provides to help them to integrate into the local area.

A representative of the Human Resources department will explain which services you need to contact in order to register at CERN and will give you various documents, including the forms needed to apply for Swiss or French cards for you and your family members (see section 4.4).

4.4 Do I need to take any specific documents with me?

To avoid spending more time than necessary on administrative matters, you are advised to have all documents and proof of circumstances with you when you complete your arrival formalities, so that your entitlements can be determined.

International civil servants and their family members are issued, via CERN, with legitimation cards (cartes de légitimation) for Switzerland and special residence cards (titres de séjour spéciaux) for France, provided that they are not of Swiss or French
nationality, respectively. The term “family” is defined in Article S IV 1.01 of the Staff Rules and Regulations. Members of the personnel who have permanent resident status in France must keep the residence permit issued to them by their local *prefecture* in addition to the new document issued by the French authorities (*attestation de fonctions*).

These documents serve as your residence and work permits. For family members, they serve only as residence permits. To find out more about work permits for family members, refer to Part 2, section 9.2. For further information, please contact the *Cards Office*.

➢ **Documents required by the Swiss authorities**

In order to apply for Swiss *cartes de légitimation* for you and your family, you will be required to scan the following document(s) before the start date of your contract at CERN:

- your passport or identity card (and visa if required).

Please bring the following documents with you on the day of your arrival at CERN:

- a copy of your passport or identity card and those of your family members if applicable (and a copy of your visa(s) if required);
- if applicable, a copy of your marriage or registered partnership certificate in English, French, German, Italian or Spanish or a translation into one of these languages;
- if applicable, a copy of the birth certificates of each of your children in English, French, German, Italian or Spanish or a translation into one of these languages;
- your former Swiss work permit if you have one.

➢ **Documents required by the French authorities**

In order to apply for French *cartes spéciales* for you and your family members, you will be required to present the following documents:

- a copy of your passport or identity card (and a copy of your visa if required);
• if applicable, a copy of your marriage or registered partnership certificate in English, French, German, Italian or Spanish or a translation into one of these languages;
• if applicable, a copy of the birth certificates of each of your children in English, French, German, Italian or Spanish or a translation into one of these languages;
• three identity photos for each person;
• a certificate attesting that your children aged 16 and over remain dependent ("attestation de prise en charge");
• a school-attendance certificate for each child.

For further information, please contact the Cards Office.

4.5 Do I need to undergo a medical examination?

You will be required to undergo a compulsory medical examination upon arrival if you have not already done so before taking up your appointment. The Medical Service will send you a letter specifying the date and time of the examination.

4.6 Arrival in my department

On your first day, once you have completed the arrival formalities with the Human Resources department, you will be required to report to your departmental secretariat. Here, you will be able to apply for the reimbursement of your travel expenses, if applicable, and obtain various administrative documents and other information.

You will then report to your group secretariat, who will introduce you to your group leader (if you have not already met him or her), show you to your office, ensure (in most cases) that you have a CERN access card, inform you about certain formalities and help you to complete them. Your group leader will introduce you to your new colleagues.

4.7 CERN’s working hours

The normal working week consists of 40 hours spread over five days. The normal working day is from 8.30 a.m. to 5.30 p.m. with a break of one hour. These working hours do not apply in the case of contracts involving shift work.
4.8 Official holidays

In accordance with Articles R II 4.38 and R II 4.39 of the Staff Regulations, CERN’s official holidays are:

- 1 January
- Good Friday
- Easter Monday
- 1 May
- Ascension
- Whit Monday
- Jeûne Genevois (the Thursday following the first Sunday in September)
- 24, 25 and 31 December.

CERN also closes for two weeks at the end of the year. These days are not deducted from the annual leave entitlement.

4.9 Occupational safety at CERN

Safety is an important issue at CERN, owing to the nature of its experimental facilities, its international status and its location on the territory of two different countries, France and Switzerland. For these reasons, everyone working at CERN for more than two months is required to follow a safety course on arrival. You will receive information about this safety course with your arrival formality documents.

The course, which is designed to raise awareness about safety issues, comprises 3 levels:

- Level 1 - Safety at CERN
- Level 2 - General hazards
- Level 3 - Specific hazards.

If you have a CERN computer account, you can take the course from any computer on or off the CERN site, by clicking on the following link: http://sir.cern.ch
If you haven’t got a CERN computer account, you can use the computers available in Room R-022 on the ground floor of Building 55. You must have your CERN card with you to prove your identity.

4.10 The advantages of training

By providing appropriate training courses, CERN encourages its personnel to develop their knowledge and acquire new skills that have a direct bearing on their work. You should discuss your training needs with your supervisor and group leader. Each department has its own training officer responsible for the operational aspects of training within the department. The HR-LD group is also there to inform and advise you.

You will have the opportunity to sign up for courses in the following five areas:

- languages (English and French)
- leadership
- communication
- technical management
- technical skills.

CERN’s training programme is continually evolving, with new courses added to and new dates set at regular intervals. New developments are published in the Bulletin for the CERN community, which is sent out electronically. The most up-to-date information can be found at http://hr-dep.web.cern.ch/node/220, which you are encouraged to check regularly.

In addition, CERN also runs “schools” on physics, computing and accelerators at various locations in the Member States. Numerous seminars relating to CERN’s activities are also held on the site.
5. Rights and obligations, privileges, immunities and protection

5.1 Rights

On signing a contract with the Organization, members of the personnel agree to be subject to the Staff Rules and Regulations, which set out their various rights and obligations as well as the privileges and immunities to which they are entitled and the protection that the Organization provides.

➢ Financial benefits

Members of the personnel receive a salary and may also be entitled to other financial benefits. These include the payment of certain expenses (in particular travel and removal expenses at the start and end of the contract (see sections 3.3 and 11 respectively), the cost of travel to the home station and the cost of language lessons for each dependent child), as well as the payment of certain indemnities: international (see section 7.2), installation (see section 11), reinstallation and contract termination.

➢ Family benefits

Where applicable, the Organization pays members of the personnel a family allowance, a child allowance and an infant allowance (see section 7). Members of the personnel are also entitled to the payment of education fees for each dependent child (see section 7.3).

➢ Social security

Members of the personnel are covered by the CERN Health Insurance Scheme (see section 6.2). CERN also provides old-age and disability insurance via the CERN Pension Fund (see section 6.6), as well as an unemployment insurance scheme (see section 6.7).

➢ Leave

Members of the personnel are entitled to various kinds of paid leave throughout their contract: annual leave, sick leave and leave for family reasons (maternity, paternity, adoption, illness of a close relative and family events). In addition, they may be entitled to paid home leave, to special leave for professional reasons, which may be paid, to
special leave for long service and to saved leave. Finally, they may apply for unpaid leave such as parental leave, compassionate leave or leave for personal convenience.

5.2 Obligations

➢ Conduct

Members of the personnel are expected to conduct themselves with due regard to the interests and proper functioning of the Organization. They must carry out the functions assigned to them with integrity and must demonstrate loyalty to the Organization by refraining from any act or activity incompatible with these functions or prejudicial to the Organization. They are also expected to exercise reserve and tact. Members of the personnel must neither seek nor accept instructions from any authority outside the Organization.

➢ Intellectual property

Intellectual property, an intangible asset, refers to creations of the mind protected by rights of ownership. Any intellectual property resulting from or substantially based on activities carried out by a member of the personnel within or on behalf of CERN automatically belongs to the Organization.

Any member of the personnel who has created intellectual property must immediately declare it to the Organization. In the first instance, he or she should contact the Knowledge Transfer group, which will take the appropriate action in the framework of its mandate to implement CERN’s knowledge transfer strategy.

Members of the personnel may not, without prior authorisation, claim intellectual property rights stemming from their activities at CERN, even after their contract has terminated. However, the Director-General can decide to share or hand over the intellectual property rights or grant the member of the personnel concerned a licence to use the property.

➢ Safety

Members of the personnel must familiarise themselves and comply with the safety provisions applicable to their area of activity.
5.3 Privileges, immunities and protection

Members of the personnel enjoy certain privileges and immunities pursuant to CERN’s agreements with its Member States, particularly the two Host States. These privileges and immunities, which, in particular, guarantee them independence when performing their functions, are granted in the interests of the Organization and not in the member of personnel’s own interests. They do not exempt members of the personnel from fulfilling their personal obligations or from complying with the legislation in force, especially that of their country of residence. Members of the personnel are protected by the Organization in the case of acts that they carry out in exercising their functions.

5.4 The Staff Association

The **Staff Association** is the official body responsible for relations between the Management and the members of the personnel.

It is fully represented on various consultation bodies provided for in the Staff Rules and Regulations, notably the Standing *Concertation* Committee (SCC).

Any general proposal concerning the conditions of employment or association of members of the personnel is subject to consultation, or *concertation*, at the SCC. *Concertation* refers to the process by which the Director-General and the Staff Association strive to arrive at a common stance.

Membership of the Staff Association is optional. The Association invites its members to an Annual General Meeting, and holds other meetings open to all members of personnel whenever it deems fit.

The Staff Association can assist members of the personnel who launch an individual appeal against a decision made by the Management.

In addition to its activities relating to the employment conditions of members of the personnel, the Staff Association also:

- along with the Organization itself, subsidises CERN clubs, which are under its authority;
- along with the Organization itself, subsidies a Mutual Aid Fund for families facing financial difficulties;
- offers supplementary loss-of-earnings insurance (see section 6.5),
- organises exhibitions and lectures;
- manages the CERN Staff Association Nursery, Kindergarten and Pre-school.

6. Social security

6.1 What social security coverage does CERN provide?

Pursuant to the Headquarters Agreement that it has signed with Switzerland and France (the Host States), CERN is exempted from making any contributions to the French or Swiss national social security schemes, on the condition that it provides members of its personnel with social security coverage equivalent to that provided by the two Host States. CERN has fulfilled this obligation by creating its own Health Insurance Scheme and Pension Fund, which protect staff members and their dependents against the financial consequences of illness, accident, disability, old age and death.

Furthermore, CERN pays an unemployment indemnity to former members of the personnel who meet certain criteria (see section 6.7).

For more information about CERN’s social security provisions, please see Articles S IV 2.01 to 2.07 and R IV 2.01 to 2.02 of the Staff Rules and Regulations.

6.2 The CERN Health Insurance Scheme (CHIS)

As a member of the personnel, you are obliged to become a member of the CERN Health Insurance Scheme (CHIS) and will be automatically enrolled. This is a mutual scheme to which your contribution, shared between you and CERN, is proportional to your salary. Your share of this contribution is expressed as a percentage of your basic salary and is deducted from your monthly pay directly. The insurance covers all dependent family members and your spouse or registered partner. If your spouse or registered partner opts to use the CERN Health Insurance Scheme as his or her primary health insurance and has an income, a supplementary contribution, calculated according to his or her earnings, is required.
**LAMal exemption procedure**

New members of the personnel and their families wishing to cancel their Swiss health insurance contract (LAMal) from the date on which they join the CHIS must follow the procedure set out below, after the start of their contract at CERN:

- request a CHIS insurance certificate from UNIQA for the purposes of cancelling the LAMal insurance;

- send a letter to the health insurance service of the canton of residence (or canton of employment for cross-border commuter spouses living outside of Switzerland) requesting exemption from the obligation to have LAMal insurance and attaching the insurance certificate provided by UNIQA.
  - In the canton of Geneva, contact the *Direction Générale de l’Action Sociale*, Route de Frontenex 62, 1207 Geneva;
  - In the canton of Vaud, contact the *Office Vaudois de l’Assurance Maladie*;
  - For all other cantons, please contact the *Social Affairs Service*, which will help you to identify the competent authority;

- the cantonal health insurance service will provide you with a document exempting you from the insurance obligation;

- write to your LAMal insurance provider requesting cancellation, attaching a copy of the exemption certificate provided by the cantonal health insurance service.

**What does the CHIS offer?**

The provisions of the CHIS are explained in Annex I of the CHIS Rules, which you can find on the CHIS webpage.

**How will I be reimbursed for my medical expenses?**

CERN entrusts the administration of its health insurance scheme to UNIQA. After paying your invoices for treatment or medication, you can request reimbursement from UNIQA for a portion of the costs using the “Claim for reimbursement of medical expenses” form, which can be found on the CHIS webpage or obtained from departmental secretariats. Only treatments prescribed by a medical professional are reimbursed.
- What should I do if I'm hospitalised? -

You are free to choose your healthcare provider. However, favourable reimbursement conditions apply to hospitalisation in public hospitals in all countries and in private hospitals or clinics approved by the CHIS (a list of these establishments is provided on the CHIS webpages and is updated regularly).

In order to be admitted to a hospital, you will need to show your CHIS membership card. This is sent to you by post automatically and is sufficient for admission to most of the hospitals in the area. However, some establishments request guarantees before admitting a patient. UNIQA can send a guarantee, which will save you having to pay a deposit, at the request of the hospital or the member.

- Where can I find more information? -

For more information about the CHIS and its health insurance provisions, please consult the CHIS webpages, which include an FAQ page, or contact UNIQA.

6.3 What provisions does CERN make for maternity?

Female members of the personnel are entitled to maternity leave of at least 16 weeks (see Article R II 4.23 of the Staff Regulations).

Maternity-related pregnancy expenses (for staff and their spouses or registered partners) are covered by the CERN Health Insurance Scheme (CHIS) under the same conditions as illness-related expenses.

6.4 Medical and hospital services

Geneva has a number of on-call medical services (permanences médicales) that are open 24 hours a day, primarily to deal with minor accidents and emergencies.

The hospitals provide a high-quality service, and the following establishments are recommended:

- the public Hôpitaux Universitaires de Genève (HUG, formerly known as the Hôpital Cantonal) is the biggest and best-equipped hospital facility in the
Geneva region. It is also the only one to provide a 24-hour emergency service for all types of care and for all ages;

- the private Clinique Générale Beaulieu has a tariff agreement with the CERN Health Insurance Scheme;
- the private Hôpital de la Tour is the closest to CERN. It provides a 24-hour emergency service for adults only.

The canton of Vaud has its own medical infrastructure (see the list of approved establishments on the CHIS webpage).

In France, the hospitals nearest to CERN are in the Haute-Savoie department:

- the public Centre Hospitalier Annecy-Genevois, Saint-Julien-en-Genevois site;
- the public Centre Hospitalier Alpes-Léman, Contamine-sur-Arve;
- the public Centre Hospitalier Annecy Genevois, Annecy site.

Links and telephone numbers for the hospitals mentioned above, as well as the numbers for the emergency services in Switzerland and France, can be found on CERN’s Social Affairs Service webpages. A list of general practitioners, specialists and emergency services in Geneva and neighbouring France, indicating the languages spoken, is available on the website of the CERN Medical Service.

### 6.5 Am I insured against loss of earnings?

According to the Staff Rules and Regulations (Article R II 4.13), you are entitled, in any 36-month period, to 12 months of sick leave at full pay, followed by 18 months of sick leave at two-thirds pay, and then 6 months of unpaid sick leave.

If you join the Staff Association, you will be given the chance to purchase supplementary insurance covering the remaining third of your salary from the 13th to the 29th month of sick leave and the full salary from the 30th to the 36th month. UNIQA also offers all members of the personnel the possibility to take out an equivalent loss-of-earnings insurance.
6.6 How does the CERN Pension Fund work?

The CERN Pension Fund pays its members retirement and disability benefits as well as paying benefits to the surviving spouses and orphans of its members and beneficiaries.

Those who join the Pension Fund after 1 January 2012 are entitled to a retirement pension corresponding to 1.85% of the basis for calculation, which is defined in Article II 2.02 of the Rules of the Pension Fund. The maximum possible pension, after 37 years and 10 months of service, is 70% of the average reference salary over the last 36 months of service. At the end of the contract, if the member has accumulated less than five years of service, the transfer value is paid into another pension scheme or, at the member's request, directly to the member. A member who has accumulated between five and ten years of service can choose between a deferred pension and payment of the transfer value into another pension scheme, or, if that is not possible, directly to the member. A member who has accumulated ten or more years of service can choose between a deferred pension and transfer into another pension scheme, or, if that is not possible, to a private insurance scheme offering comparable guarantees.

Since the workings of the Pension Fund are complex and each individual case is different, the Benefits Service is available to respond to your questions. Before coming to CERN, you should find out about the social security system of which you are a member in your home country. Because CERN contracts are of a limited duration, it is important to consider the possibility of maintaining membership of your existing social security system.

6.7 What unemployment benefits does CERN pay?

CERN will pay you an unemployment indemnity after the termination of your contract provided that you have worked for CERN as a staff member for at least six months, that you are involuntarily unemployed and that you are registered as a jobseeker with the relevant authorities. The amount of this indemnity is, according to your circumstances, either 70% or 80% of the basic salary (up to a maximum basic salary currently set at 10 500 Swiss francs/month (see Administrative Circular No. 4)). It is paid for up to 60 weeks. The family allowance, infant allowance and child allowance
are also paid during this period, if applicable. Health insurance contributions may be reimbursed by CERN during this period at the member's request.

7. Benefits paid by CERN

7.1 Family allowance, child allowance and infant allowance
CERN pays monthly family, child and infant allowances. You can find the amounts of these allowances in Annex R A 3 of the Staff Rules and Regulations.

7.2 International indemnity
Every member of the personnel meeting the criteria (see Article R V 1.26 of the Staff Rules and Regulations) receives an international indemnity amounting to either 9% or 12% of the basic monthly salary, according to their family situation, for every 6 months of service completed. If an indefinite contract is awarded, the amount of the international indemnity decreases year by year until it reaches zero at the end of the sixth year following the award of the indefinite contract (see Annex R A 8 of the Staff Rules and Regulations).

7.3 Reimbursement of education fees
CERN contributes to the school fees for each of your dependent children (see Article R IV 1.04 of the Staff Rules and Regulations).

- For staff members eligible for the international indemnity, CERN contributes 75%, up to a ceiling that depends on the geographical location of the educational establishment (see Annex R A 4, Article R A 4.01 of the Staff Rules and Regulations);
- Staff members not eligible for the international indemnity may, under certain conditions, be entitled to full reimbursement of school fees from nursery up to secondary school. From post-secondary education onwards, CERN contributes 75%, up to a ceiling that depends on the geographical location of the educational establishment (see Annex R A 4, Article R A 4.01 of the Staff Rules and Regulations);
- Special provisions apply to children with special educational needs (see Annex R A 4, Article R A 4.02 of the Staff Rules and Regulations).
Part 2 - Integration in the local area

8. Preparing for your move to another country

8.1 Administrative formalities to be completed in your current place of residence

The preparations for an international move include a number of formalities that must be completed. This section is intended to remind you of the relevant procedures. Announce your departure as early as possible to your various contacts, such as:

- the tax office and other official authorities;
- schools and education authorities (if you have school-age children);
- social security providers (pension provider, etc.);
- insurers (health, accident, disability, life, car, etc.);
- the owner of your house if you live in rented accommodation;
- doctor/dentist (prescriptions, check-ups, etc.);
- telephone company;
- gas, water and electricity providers;
- the post office;
- subscription services (newspapers, magazines, etc.)

8.2 Which documents should I bring with me?

You will need to provide a number of documents for the standard administrative and customs formalities. You are advised to have the documents required by CERN translated into French or English by an official translator.

In general, the most commonly requested documents are:

- birth certificates (adults and children);
- marriage/partnership certificate;
- recent extract from the civil registry;
- for unmarried couples living together (common-law spouses), proof of long-term cohabitation (e.g. tenancy agreement);
- children’s school reports, or school certificates for children aged over 18;
- vaccination booklets for all family members, as well as for your pets (anti-rabies vaccines);
- health insurance documents;
- all documents relating to your CERN contract;
- driving licence;
- visas (for Switzerland and France), if required (see section 8.3);
- valid passport and/or identity card;
- eight identical passport photos (not home-printed digital photos).

8.3 What important things do I need to know before my departure?

Preparing to leave a country also means finding out about the various requirements in your new country of residence.

- Entry visas for Switzerland and France (if required)

Before your departure, you are strongly advised to contact the Swiss and French consulates to enquire whether you require a visa to enter Switzerland and France. As a general rule, members of the personnel who wish to live in France but do not have Swiss nationality or the nationality of an EEA (European Economic Area) country must have a long-stay visa. For more information, contact the Relations with the Host States Service.

- Installation

It is important to be well-prepared for your international move. You will save a lot of time and energy by starting your search for housing as soon as your departure is confirmed. In addition, information about life in Switzerland or France will help you to choose which country you wish to live in (see section 9).
• Social security

In preparing for your international move, you must take all social security issues into consideration in order to make all the necessary arrangements (e.g. cancelling your health insurance, transferring your pension, etc.) (see section 6).

• Crèches, nurseries, kindergartens and schools

Contact the establishments you are interested in as early as possible to find out about enrolment options and procedures (waiting lists, entry tests, etc.) (see section 9).

9. Where to live: in Switzerland or in France?

As CERN is based on both sides of the French-Swiss border, you will need to choose which country to live in. You have the right to live in France or Switzerland. Your final decision is a personal choice and will depend on financial considerations, your family situation and your desired lifestyle. Several social and economic factors may come into play and lead you to choose one of the two countries over the other.

9.1 Cost of living

It is important to compare the cost of living between Switzerland and France due to the differences in prices between the two countries not just for housing, but also for food, leisure, etc. The prevailing viewpoint is that Switzerland has a high cost of living. However, due to the large number of international civil servants who wish to live in France, rents in neighbouring France are not far off those in Geneva. A useful reference document is the brochure entitled Elements for the assessment of the cost of living in Switzerland (Canton of Geneva) and in France (Pays de Gex), available on CERN’s Social Affairs Service website.

9.2 Work and residence permits for your family

If you are intending to take up residence with your family, please note that the rules regarding work permits (including for frontalier workers) and residence permits for the members of your family (spouse, registered partner and dependent children) are not the same in Switzerland and France. Make sure that you compare the job opportunities
in Switzerland and France before you arrive. As Geneva is an urban area, it offers a wider range of job opportunities than neighbouring France.

➢ **In Switzerland**

Spouses, registered partners, and unmarried children who enter Switzerland before the age of 21, and who reside with members of the CERN personnel, may exchange their *carte de legitimation*, issued by the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, for a Ci work permit. Only family members who are EEA nationals are authorised to keep their work permit if they have obtained it prior to the member of the personnel taking up his or her appointment.

**Note:** the Swiss authorities may issue a *carte de légitimation* to the non-registered, non-Swiss partners (common-law spouses) of non-Swiss members of the personnel, provided that they supply proof of having lived together for an extended period. This residence permit does not entitle the holder to take up gainful employment.

➢ **In France**

Spouses, registered partners and children who are nationals of a Member State of the European Economic Area (hereinafter “EEA”: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom) or of Switzerland are authorised to take up gainful employment without returning their special residence permit (*titre de séjour special*) issued by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development (see the “*Européens en France*” pages on the Service-Public.fr website).

If EEA or Swiss nationals do not have a special residence permit (*titre de séjour special*) issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development and require a *titre de séjour préfectoral* permit for administrative reasons, they can request one from their local *Préfecture* (see [https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/F2651#R24622](https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/F2651#R24622)).

If they are not nationals of an EEA country, spouses, registered partners and children of members of the personnel must obtain a long-stay visa from the French consulate
or embassy in their place of residence, prior to their arrival in France. They may also apply for authorisation to work in France from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development.

For more information on work and residence permits, contact the Relations with the Host States Service.

9.3 School systems

You can enrol your child at a state school in your country of residence; in principle he or she will be assigned to the school closest to your home. State schools are free of charge. There are many private schools in the region, including international schools. The advantage of an international school is the opportunity to prepare for national and international examinations. In Switzerland, these types of school are private and therefore charge fees, whereas in France this is not always the case. The Collège et Lycée international de Ferney-Voltaire in France is a free school (except that a contribution is required for certain courses).

The standard of secondary education in Switzerland and France is high and is roughly equivalent between the two countries, but it is worth noting that if your child attends school in France and wishes to pursue higher education in Switzerland, specific admission criteria will apply. For example, for admission to the University of Geneva (regardless of the faculty), an L, S or ES baccalauréat with a minimum grade of “assez bien” (12/20) is required.

For further information regarding the education systems in Switzerland and France, in particular regarding primary and secondary schools in the two countries, contact the Social Affairs Service or consult the information on the website.

- Education in Switzerland
- State schools

The quality of state schools in Switzerland is very high, generally allowing entry to most foreign higher education institutes. In the canton of Geneva, school is compulsory from the age of 4. Children aged between 4 and 15 may complete free compulsory schooling at the school closest to their home. The final three years of compulsory education are known as the Cycle
Subsequently, various free secondary schools are available, including the collège, which leads to the maturité, a compulsory diploma for entry into Swiss universities or polytechnic schools and foreign universities.

**Private schools**

There are many private schools in Switzerland, particularly in Geneva. The advantage of these private institutions is that they offer programmes in French, English, German or even in Swedish. In addition, they follow teaching programmes that correspond to specific final examinations. Most private schools work towards either the Swiss maturité, the French baccalauréat, the international baccalaureate, the English GCSE or the entry examinations for universities in the United States.

For more information on private schools, see the following links: http://www.agep.ch / http://www.avdep.ch / http://www.swiss-schools.ch

**Note:** Most state and private secondary schools have an entrance examination. In addition, some final diplomas issued by private schools are not recognised by Swiss universities.

**Education in France**

As in Switzerland, state schools in France offer high-quality education and are free of charge. Children aged between 3 and 6 attend the école maternelle. For children aged 6 to 11, attendance at the primary school in the commune where they live is compulsory. The first part of secondary education, for students aged 11 to 15, is compulsory and takes place in either general or technical schools known as collèges. The next part of secondary education takes place in lycées and leads to the award of the baccalauréat, which allows entry to French universities and under certain conditions Swiss universities. In terms of state schools, there is also the Collège et Lycée international de Ferney-Voltaire, which is free of charge but requires a financial contribution for its national foreign-language programmes. Students attend this school from the sixième (11-12 years) to the terminale (17-18 years) and can prepare for the French baccalauréat, the international baccalaureate and other diplomas in the various international sections.
9.4 Crèches, nurseries and kindergartens

Both Switzerland and France operate childcare systems but they take slightly different forms.

At CERN, a facility is available for children from the end of maternity leave until the age of 6. For more information, contact the Nursery, Kindergarten and Pre-school of the CERN Staff Association.

Champs-Frèchets day-care centre: In 2007, CERN signed an agreement with the commune of Meyrin, making 20 places available for children of members of the CERN personnel aged between 4 months and 4 years. For more information, see the following links:

http://hr-dep.web.cern.ch/social/espace-vie-enfantine-des
http://www.meyrin.ch/jahia/Jahia/lang/fr/administration/petite_enfance/pid/375

The Jardin de Capucine (private crèche in Saint-Genis-Pouilly)

In 2011, CERN signed an agreement making 40 places available for children of members of the personnel aged between 4 months and 4 years. For more information, see the following link:

http://hr-dep.web.cern.ch/social/jardin-capucine-saint-genis

In Geneva, you will find a large number of crèches. Children (generally aged between 2 months and 4 years) can attend the crèche closest to their home. It is important to note that waiting lists are common. You must therefore enrol your child as early as possible. For children between 2 and 4 years old, kindergartens (childcare on a half-day basis) and garderies (one-off or irregular childcare) are present in all communes. Another option is a maman de jour who will look after your child in her own home. All of these options involve certain costs for parents. Your child can attend the primary school closest to your home from the age of 4.

In France, for children between 0 and 3 years old, you have the choice of employing an assistante maternelle or sending your child to a crèche. For one-off childcare needs, you can contact an halte-garderie. These options involve certain costs for
parents. Children aged 2.5 to 6 years old may also attend the école maternelle in their place of residence, but school hours often mean that this must be combined with another form of childcare.

For any additional information regarding childcare in France or Switzerland, including lists of the addresses of the relevant establishments, contact the Social Affairs Service or consult their website.

**9.5 Town or country?**

Geneva is predominantly an urban canton, with a well-developed public transport network, whereas neighbouring France is essentially rural, located between the Swiss border and the foothills of the Jura and dotted with several small towns and villages. If you wish to live in France, you are therefore advised to have your own vehicle (see section 11).

**9.6 Public transport facilities**

No direct public transport connection exists between CERN and Gex. The journey between CERN and Ferney-Voltaire takes 30 to 45 minutes on the Y bus. Geneva is better served by public transport, not only in terms of the extent of the network but also the higher frequency of the services. Tram 18 directly links CERN to the Geneva Cornavin train station in around 20 minutes.

For timetables, consult the Transports publics de Genève website.

CERN also operates its own shuttle service (for adults only), including a route between CERN and the airport.

**10. Housing**

**10.1 CERN Housing Service**

The Housing Service offers a range of useful accommodation solutions for members of the personnel. Please see further details at:

http://smb-dep.web.cern.ch/en/CERN_Housing
10.2 Housing service of the International Geneva Welcome Centre (CAGI)

This service was set up to help international civil servants in Geneva to find accommodation. It runs a housing exchange and an information service, offering help and advice, for example regarding the applicable legislation and usual practices when renting accommodation.

For additional information:  http://www.cagi.ch

Tel: (+ 41) (0) 22 546 14 17 E-mail: immo.cagi@etat.ge.ch

11. Installation in your new country of residence

This section covers the costs associated with moving in general and various customs procedures. For more information, see the Installation Service website.

11.1 Removal expenses

The Organization pays or reimburses the removal costs for furniture and personal effects within the limits and conditions set out in Articles R V 1.19-21 of the Staff Rules and Regulations.

You must submit quotations from three removal companies, on a special CERN form, to the Installation Service, at the latest six weeks before your intended removal date. CERN will send to the company it chooses an e-mail confirming that your removal can be undertaken by that company in accordance with the conditions specified in the quotation, including insurance. You will be informed of this choice at the same time so that you can make the necessary practical arrangements. The invoice will be paid directly by CERN in accordance with Articles R V 1.19-21 of the Staff Rules and Regulations and Administrative Circular No. 30.

The right to payment or reimbursement of removal costs includes a right to the payment or reimbursement of the cost of storing furniture for up to 12 months, if required. Furniture storage costs must be clearly indicated in the quotation.

Under certain conditions, the Organization will pay you an installation indemnity, which is calculated according to the amounts set out in Annex R A 9 of the Staff Rules and
Regulations. CERN will pay the total amount of the indemnity when you take up your appointment. This indemnity is paid by the Human Resources department and must be repaid if you resign during your first year of service.

11.2 What formalities must be completed in order to import personal effects?

➢ Customs duties and formalities in Switzerland

Under certain conditions, personal effects may be imported into Switzerland free of customs duties. You may claim this entitlement only once and must do so within five years of taking up your appointment. You must complete the following customs formalities:

- draw up a list of all of the items you wish to import, preferably in French, or else in German, Italian or English, including the values of the items in Swiss francs. Include the brand and serial number of any electronic devices and give full details of any valuables;
- at least 10 days before the arrival of your shipment, submit this list along with your precise addresses both abroad and in Switzerland to the Installation Service, which will prepare your import file.

➢ Customs duties and formalities in France

Personal effects may be imported free of customs duties. The Installation Service will guide you through the preparation of a file for the French customs.

You must complete the following customs formalities:

- draw up a list in French of all personal effects, including their values in euros;
- all valuables must be clearly specified;
- a reasonable quantity of brand-new personal effects may be included, provided that they were purchased in your country of residence and that they are already in your possession. All new items (purchased less than 6 months before the removal) are subject to the payment of import duties and taxes. Members of the personnel must draw up a separate inventory for new furniture and provide copies of the purchase invoices so that the French customs authorities can
calculate the amount of duty and taxes to be paid. This rule is also applicable for imports into Switzerland;

- at least 10 days before the arrival of your shipment, submit this list along with your precise addresses both abroad and in France to the Installation Service, which will prepare your import file.

11.3 Which formalities need to be completed to import and register a car?

You have the right to import your personal vehicle into Switzerland or France. However, the Swiss or French authorities will ask you to complete various formalities and in some cases to pay duties.

- **For Switzerland**
  - **Customs formalities**

At the same time as your removal, you have the right to import, free of customs duty, any passenger vehicle, motor-boat or aircraft that you have owned for more than 6 months before taking up your appointment at CERN, provided they are destined for your personal use. The import formalities must be completed as soon as you are in possession of your residence permit (Swiss *carte de légitimation*). You may continue to drive your vehicle with registration plates from your country of origin for up to one year after you move to Switzerland. After one year, you must register your vehicle on normal Swiss registration plates. You will be required to take out Swiss insurance (third-party liability).

- **Tax-free purchase and/or import of a vehicle**

In the five years following your arrival at CERN you may, under certain conditions, import or purchase one new passenger vehicle and one motor-boat free of customs duties. You must register this vehicle or boat on normal Swiss registration plates.

As soon as you are in possession of your *carte de légitimation* you will no longer be entitled to drive a vehicle with foreign registration plates in Switzerland (with the exception of vehicles officially imported as part of your removal, as described above), as that would be a violation of Swiss fiscal rules and leave you liable to a fine.
For France

As soon as you are in possession of your residence permit (titre de séjour spécial) you will no longer be entitled to drive a vehicle with foreign registration plates in France. You must therefore follow the procedure to register your vehicle with normal French plates or with green plates. If you wish to equip your vehicle with normal French registration plates, you are strongly advised to enquire about the standards applicable to vehicles registered in France before your departure.


Tax-free purchase and/or import of a vehicle

As an international civil servant, you are entitled to purchase a vehicle tax-free in any country and to import it into France, provided that you are not of French nationality and did not live in France (and were therefore not subject to normal French law) during the 12 months immediately prior to taking up your appointment at CERN. Only holders of a CD-, FI- or AT-type special residence permit (titre de séjour spécial) are authorised to drive a car registered on diplomatic or consular registration plates (green plates). This privilege cannot be exercised more than once every two years, and the necessary formalities concerning your old car must be completed at the French customs before purchasing the new one. If you purchase a new vehicle in Switzerland or within the European Union, you may request temporary French plates to allow you to drive your vehicle before you receive your green plates.

You will not be entitled to purchase a vehicle tax-free until you are in possession of your special residence permit (titre de séjour spécial). The Installation Service cannot handle an application for registering a vehicle on green plates until you are in possession of all the required documents.
11.4 Do I have to exchange my driving licence?

➢ In Switzerland

A valid non-Swiss national driving licence is recognised in Switzerland provided that the holder has a type B, C, D, E or P carte de légitimation issued by the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs. If you have a driving licence in a language other than one of the Swiss national languages (French, German, Italian or Romansch) or English, you must obtain an international driving licence. International driving licences can be obtained from the service responsible for road traffic in the canton where you live.

For those who do not live in Switzerland but occasionally drive there, a national driving licence accompanied by a valid international driving licence is recognised in Switzerland.

➢ In France

Valid national driving licences issued by the Member States of the European Economic Area (EEA) are, in principle, valid in France. All other driving licences are valid in France only if the holder has a special residence permit (titre de séjour spécial) issued by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. For permanent residents who have a driving licence issued by a country that is not a member of the EEA, it is compulsory to obtain a French driving licence, at the latest one year after taking up residence in France (Switzerland is not a member of the EEA).

For those who do not live in France but occasionally drive there, a national driving licence accompanied by a valid international driving licence is recognised in France.

For more information, see the Relations with the Host States Service website.

12. Integration

12.1 What do I need to know in order to integrate well into the local area?

Integration is a very personal matter. Your capacity to integrate both socially and professionally will depend on a number of factors, such as the length of your stay and whether or not you are accompanied by your family. But integration always depends
on a certain amount of knowledge of the social and professional context in which you find yourself.

12.2 Integration of your spouse or partner

The Diversity Programme Office publishes a document for the spouses and partners of staff members, with the aim of assisting them with their personal and professional integration.

For more information, click here.

The Social Affairs Service provides advice to all members of the personnel, particularly new arrivals and their families. Its objective is not only to enable you to integrate better but also to assist you with various procedures and to find appropriate solutions to your problems at any time.

- A one-stop shop for information

The service will answer your questions about the education of your children, your health and the health of your family members, the options for nurseries, crèches and kindergartens, etc.

- Efficient help in solving problems

With the help of professionals, the service provides advice and assistance following an accident or illness, and about the education of your children, divorce, bereavement or problems of a financial nature.

- Tailor-made advice on social security

The Social Affairs Service will advise you on how to adapt your social security cover to your and your family’s personal circumstances.

3Chapter 6 covers social security at CERN
The service works in close collaboration with the relevant services both within and outside CERN in order to support you and offer solutions relating to your integration.

12.3 Relations with the Host States Service

The Relations with the Host States Service deals with various questions relating to the administrative situation of staff members and their families in the Host States.

13. Sources and bibliography

➢ 1. Books


➢ 2. Reference documents available on the Human Resources department website

- CERN Staff Rules and Regulations (2016)*;
- Administrative circulars*;
- CERN Health Insurance Scheme Rules

*a CERN login is required

Social Affairs Service website:

- healthcare;
- the education system in Switzerland and France;
- moving to the area with children: childcare options for children aged 0 to 6 in Geneva and the Pays de Gex;
- brochure on elements for the assessment of the cost of living in Switzerland (Canton of Geneva) and in France (Pays de Gex).

➢ 3. Other useful websites

CERN
- CERN Housing Service
- Learning and development
- Staff Association
- CERN Admin E-Guide (a CERN login is required)
- Clubs
- Newcomer Welcome Center
- Relations with the Host States Service

GENEVA

- All about Geneva
- International Geneva Welcome Centre (CAGI)
- Arts and Culture in Geneva in English
- University of Geneva
- Welcome to the canton of Geneva

PAYS DE GEX

- Communauté de communes dans le Pays de Gex
- Tourism