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## 1.6 Information for Newcomers

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1.6 Information for Newcomers

Detailed Review status

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Introduction

Please visit also the CERN Guide for newcomers for more complete information.

The CERN facility spans two sites; Meyrin in Switzerland and Prévessin in France. The CMS detector is located in France, Cessy (Point 5), which is about 15 km from the CERN Meyrin site 'See map'. The facilities and offices that most CMS members will use when visiting CERN are all in the Meyrin (CH) site.
Procedure for obtaining invitation letter for visas for Switzerland and France

In accordance with the Status Agreement with CERN, Switzerland and France facilitate the entry of members of the Organization’s personnel onto their territories. Where relevant, detailed procedures for obtaining visas apply. Please see: * Visa Requirement and Procedure for Switzerland and France

More information by nationality concerning the visa requirements can be found at Swiss State Secretariat for Migration SEM.

Invitation letters request:

- please go to new invitation website to fill in the invitation request. The request will be handled by the CMS Secretariat as soon as possible and the letter (and the relevant documents were applicable) will be sent back to you. On the main page, please read the instructions and select the invitation letter you need from the menu on the right. Please note that the website works only with an active CERN account. If you have a CERN account but you still cannot access the site, please contact the CMS secretariat. If you don't have a CERN account, please register your account as CERN Lightweight account following the instructions on the CERN Account Management main page and, once registered, send a confirmation to the CMS secretariat.

- if you have any questions, please contact cms-invitation@cernNOSPAMPLEASE.ch

- collaborators from US CMS institutes, please go to US CMS invitation website OR contact Yasemin Yazgan.

Please contact the local consulate/embassy about 6-8 weeks before (but minimum 3 weeks) your projected travel date, especially in countries where appointments are required for the visa application. Although early applications are encouraged, they should not be made more than 3 months in advance. Original invitations aren't always requested by the consulates, that depends on the local authorities so you need to check that. You also need to make sure that you have a valid health insurance with 'rapatriement' that covers your whole stay.

IMPORTANT to know: You cannot apply to both Swiss and French visas (as both are Schengen) but you must choose depending on which country you are planning to live in. Especially for a long term visa, we encourage you to apply for the French visa D if you have at least 3-4 weeks time ahead and are not fully sure if you will install in France or Switzerland. The Users Office can apply for a Swiss "Carte de legitimation" for the users having a French visa D with the intention of settling in France, but who are temporarily staying at the CERN Hostel in Switzerland, but one can also choose to live then in Switzerland without too much paperwork. Those who come to CERN with a Swiss visa D, and would then like to live in France, need to apply for a French visa D from the French consulate in Geneva BUT only after the "Carte de legitimation" is delivered. It is obligatory then to stay in Switzerland during that time (at least one month). To apply for the visa in Geneva, note that also a Swiss local address is required (CERN hostel is not accepted).

CERN associated personnel (users) is allowed up to 3 months’ grace at the end of their functions to allow for removal and going back to home countries. The "Carte de legitimation" can be mailed back to the Users Office after home country has been reached.

Short Term Visa

Given that the Organization is located on the border between France and Switzerland, we strongly recommend that you contact the relevant consulates for information on the entry conditions applicable to you in these two countries, specifying the duration and nature of your work at CERN. Where appropriate, you are invited to take the necessary steps to obtain the requisite documents, in particular a visa for entry to the Schengen

Procedure for obtaining invitation letter for visas for Switzerland and France
member countries:

- either by going to the Swiss Consulate competent for your usual place of residence, taking the CERN invitation letter with you, explaining that you will become a member of the CERN personnel and that as such you will be entitled to freedom of access to, and residence on, Swiss territory under Article 12 of the Status Agreement between CERN and Switzerland dated 11 June 1955;

- or by going to the French Consulate competent for your usual place of residence as soon as you receive the CERN invitation, presenting the convention d'accueil and explaining that you will become a member of the CERN personnel and that as such you will be entitled to freedom of access to, and residence on, French territory (without visa charges and without delay) under Article XI § 2 of the Status Agreement between CERN and France dated 13 September 1965, as revised on 16 June 1972. It is important that you sign this convention yourself before presenting it to any authorities.

Data needed (as in passport) for the short term (less than 3 months stay) visa request:

1. Family name(s):
2. First name(s):
3. Civil Status (Ms/Mrs/Mr):
4. Date of birth:
5. Place of birth:
6. Nationality:
7. Complete current address of residence:
8. Telephone:
9. Email:
10. Academic title or status: (undergraduate, graduate, master, PhD, etc):
11. Employing institute or University:
12. Address of the institute/univ:
13. Foreseeable start date of the stay:
14. Foreseeable end date of the stay:
15. Date of last entry into Schengen Area (if applicable):
16. Number of foreseeable visits during one year:
17. Name of the requesting person (if applicable):
18. University and Department of the requesting person:

Important! Everybody coming to work at CERN with a Schengen visa issued by the Swiss authorities for any period of time less than 3 months and needing to go to France for any reasons are requested to have an official CONVENTION D'ACCUEIL document that they must keep with them together with the passport at all times and show at the Users Office when registering.

This document is prepared at CERN, signed by the person coming to CERN then sent for approval to the Sub-Prefecture in Gex, France and then returned to CERN.

The Convention d'accueil covers normally only the duration of the stay in question. A new one must be requested for every new stay. However, for the persons coming regularly to CERN (and who are registered at the users office for less than 51%), it is proposed to issue it for a period of 2 years if the stay does not exceed 90 days at one time.

In most cases you can collect the Convention from the Secretariat.

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Long Term Visa

Given that the Organization is located on the border between France and Switzerland, we strongly recommend that you contact the relevant consulates for information on the entry conditions applicable to you in these two countries, specifying the duration and nature of your work at CERN. Where appropriate, you are invited to take the necessary steps to obtain the requisite documents, in particular multiple-entry long-stay visas:

1. a Swiss D+C type visa if you are establishing your place of residence in Switzerland, or
2. a French D type visa if you are establishing your place of residence in France or if you have not yet decided where to establish your future place of residence.

For Switzerland: you must go to the Swiss Consulate competent for your usual place of residence, taking this letter with you, and request a visa bearing the words prise de fonctions au CERN, explaining that you will become a member of the CERN personnel and that as such you will be entitled to a legitimation card issued by the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs and to freedom of access to, and residence on, Swiss territory under Article 12 of the Status Agreement between CERN and Switzerland dated 11 June 1955.

For France: you must go to the French Consulate competent for your usual place of residence and request a visa bearing the words carte PRO-MAE à solliciter dès l'arrivée, making reference to CERN's Note Verbale to the French Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs and to the agreement that the Ministry has addressed to the above-mentioned Consulate in your favour, and specifying that you are entitled to freedom of access to, and residence on, French territory (without visa charges and without delay) under Article XI § 2 of the Status Agreement between CERN and France dated 13 September 1965 as revised on 16 June 1972.

As mentioned before, if you get the French long-term visa D, you do not need to have the Swiss visa D as you will receive the Swiss legitimation card at CERN. However, the Swiss visa D is not enough to able one to live in France.

Data needed (as in passport) for the long term (more than 3 months stay) visa requests:

1. Family name(s):
2. First name(s):
3. Civil Status (Ms/Mrs/Mr):
4. Date of birth:
5. Place of birth:
6. Passport number:
7. Passport issue date:
8. Place of issue of passport:
9. Passport validity:
10. Nationality:
11. Complete current address of residence:
12. Telephone:
13. Email:
14. Academic title or status: (undergraduate, graduate, master, PhD, etc):
15. Employing institute or University:
16. Address of institute/univ:
17. Foreseeable start date of the stay:
18. Foreseeable end date of the stay:
19. Foreseeable place of residence (France/Switzerland):
20. Date of last entry into Schengen Area (if applicable):
21. Will you be accompanied by your family:
22. Name of the requesting person:
23. University and Department of the requesting person:
Please note that it is important that you provide the same information for your spouse and/or family accompanying you.

Useful information can be obtained from the Swiss and French diplomatic representations abroad, as well as from the following Web pages:

- Visa Requirement and Procedure for Switzerland and France
- Relations with the Host States Service and more specifically at: Visas and Residence
- Federal Office for Immigration, Integration and Emigration
- French Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Arriving at Geneva Airport (Cointrin) or Geneva Train Station (Cornavin)

Taxi

A taxi to CERN Reception, building 33 from the airport will cost approx. 35 Swiss francs, from the railway station approx. 70 Swiss francs. The journey takes about 10 minutes from the airport and 20 minutes from the train station.

Public Transport from the Airport and Train Station

On arrival by air, take a free ticket from the ticket machine (baggage claim area). The Unireso ticket, issued free of charge by Geneva International Airport, enables you to use public transport in Geneva public transport in Geneva for 80 minutes. This ticket is only valid with your flight ticket to prove that you have arrived on that day.

Otherwise you will need 3 CHF (or equivalent in EUR) to buy a bus ticket from the ticket machine at the bus stop.

To get to CERN take bus 28, 23 or 57 from the Airport to Blandonnet, and from there tram 18 (marked with terminus "CERN" in front) to CERN. You can also take bus Y from the Airport to CERN directly (it goes ~ twice per hour).

There is a regular shuttle service between CERN (building 500) and the Geneva Airport every hour from 08:00 to 19:00, from Mondays to Fridays (except public holidays and CERN end of year closure). Shuttle bus No 4

Note that continuing roadwork at the airport requires frequent change of the shuttle stop location. Please consult the web site before your arrival.

To get to CERN from the Train station take the tram number 18 (marked with terminus "CERN" in front) to CERN directly.

You can find more information about coming to CERN on the CERN homepage under 'How to Get to CERN'.
Arriving at CERN

CERN Reception is open from 8.00 a.m. to 5.45 p.m. (Monday – Friday) and from 8.30 a.m. to 5.15 p.m. (Saturday).

If you arrive during working hours, your first stop should be the CERN Reception in Building 33. You will receive a temporary visitor pass from the reception. They will indicate to you where to go e.g. to the CMS Secretariat in bldg 40-5-B01.

Accommodation

Be fairly quick with a hostel reservation as they are often very full, but they only take reservations two months in advance. It is a bit cheaper to live on the French side of the boarder.

You can consult the CERN Housing Service website which includes information relating to the CERN hostel booking rules, special negotiated rates for hotels in the local area, rental offers from the local private sector, etc. Or the CERN Housing Service team can be contacted directly in case you have any queries (reception in Building 39, tel. 74481).

The easiest and quickest way to reserve rooms at CERN is via the web booking tool. Please note that any reservation canceled less than 48 hours in advance will incur a one-night payment penalty - if you change plans please inform the hostel as soon as possible so that the room can be re-allocated.

Please note that some websites (e.g. CERN market) are only accessible to CERN users. You can therefore create a lightweight account prior to your arrival:
<https://account.cern.ch/account/Externals/>

St. Genis Hostel

Address: Foyer Résidence Schumann, 340 rue de l’Europe F-01630 Saint Genis Pouilly, France Tel: 00 33 (0) 450 42 13 66

The reception desk at the St. Genis hostel is open from 16h00 to 19h00 for check-in, but you can leave luggage at the reception desk from 8h00 to 12h00. You have Wi-Fi connection in the hostel.

Transport to the Hostel from CERN

At CERN you can get a shuttle bus to the hostel during the opening hours of CERN. Outside opening hours you can take the Y bus or ask for a taxi from the Guard at gate B.

Equipment in kitchen

The kitchens are equipped with a fridge, hot plate, hot and cold water. There is no equipment for cooking like pots, pans, plates, cups, knives, spoons, etc. The supermarket is close by for buying all kinds of food and essential cooking equipment.
Meyrin Hostel

Address: CERN Meyrin site, Building no. 39, Meyrin, Switzerland Tel. 00 41 (0) 22 767 44 81

The reception desk is open from 7h30 to 00h30. You have Wi-Fi connection in the hostel.

**Late arrival** If you arrive after opening hours, go to the Entrance gate B and announce yourself to the Guard. He will give you your room key and show you where the hostel is, just a short walk on foot from entrance B.

**Accommodation Outside CERN**

There are many hostels in or around Geneva center which will take people for anything from a night to several years. However there are always long waiting lists and you must almost always reserve a room long in advance.

**Hostels**

Geneva University

EasyExpat.com

Foyer George Willimas

**Hostels with Dorm-Rooms**

Home Saint Pierre

City Hostel Geneva

**Hotels**

Reasonably Cheap Hotels

Hotels in the Area

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**Insurance**

In accordance with the CERN Staff Rules and Regulations, your social insurance cover, as well as that of any accompanying family members, is the responsibility of your home institute or, failing that, is your own responsibility. It must comprise health insurance covering the financial consequences of illness and accidents at a level adequate for both France and Switzerland. In particular, kindly note that: – at the time of completing the CERN arrival formalities at the latest, you will be required to supply proof of health insurance cover for yourself and any accompanying family members;

For updated information, please refer to Users Office -Health Insurance Information

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Registering at CERN

Before coming to CERN, you must make sure you have all the required documents. You should work your way through the correct registration form. You should get the registration form signed by the authorized person before you come to CERN, this will make the procedure much faster. Please have a look at the Users Office Homepage. These pages contain most of the information you need for coming to CERN.

Find out who your Team Leader is since you will need his/her signature on the Users Office registration form. Team Leader can also pre-register a new user: Pre-Registration Tool.

Note that you will need a copy of the invitation letter(s), your passport, proof of your medical insurance including death and disability (an insurance card is sufficient), and a Home institution declaration, to be completed by an authorized representative of the candidate’s home institution for the purpose of issuing the candidate a contract of association with CERN. As of now, only a Home institution declaration signed by a person from the administration is acceptable, not one signed by the Team Leader (unless a letter from the administration has been sent to the Users Office indicating that the Team Leader has the right to sign such attestations on behalf of the employer).

On your first full working day, you will need to visit the Users Office. It is located near the restaurant, bank, and the post office in building 61. Take all the documentation mentioned above. You will then be asked to go to building 55 to collect your CERN access card.

Registering with CMS

Once your CERN registration is done, please pass by the CMS Secretariat in bldg 40-5-B01 to register in the CMS database. To be officially registered in the CMS people database, please send an email to the CMS secretariat.

After the form has been submitted, an email is sent to your Institute Representative (Team Leader) for approval.

Upon arrival, please have a look at the Twikipages of Welcome to CMS.

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Creation of Computer Account

Before you get a Computer Account on the IT-CMS server, you must be registered both in the CERN Database and as a collaborator in the CMS database. Then follow the instructions given in section Getting a Computing Account.

Laptop Registration

The NICE account is needed (and activate at least one day earlier) for the registration of a laptop. Open the wireless, search for the CERN network and follow the instructions.

In case you need Ethernet, it has to be registered separately as well as the wall plug. For details, see Network.
CMS Safety

Please read carefully the Safety at CMS web pages for information e.g. about Safety Training and Awareness, Internal Accident report and the FAQ, which contains lot of useful information on safety but also about how to organize a private visit to CMS or how to become a CMS guide.

Dosimeters

Please read carefully the Dosimetry Service web pages for information about getting a dosimeter (and note the medical certificate requirements that exist in some cases). You should wear a dosimeter when at CERN unless you are working only in offices. It is compulsory if you are in a radiation controlled area, e.g. a radioactive source in a laboratory. In view of the significant increase in the number of CERN users, the CERN Medical Service is unfortunately no longer able to deliver these certificates. They kindly ask you to provide a new medical certificate delivered by a doctor designated by your home institute or, if your home institute agrees, a local doctor. A list of local doctors able to provide such a certificate is available on the Medical Service website Medical Service.

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Subsistence allowance and other payments

If you are entitled to receive payments from CERN during your stay at CERN, please make sure that your bank details are properly registered by filling out this EDH form, once you have a CERN Computing Account.

More information can be found in the CERN Admin guide:

Registration of bank details

Payment and reimbursement forms

As CERN payments are in Swiss Francs, it is important to make sure your bank will be able to receive this currency.

For payments initiated by the CMS collaboration, please contact Ani Yaneva (in 40-5-B05) or Kirsti Aspola (in 40-5-A24).

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Other Useful Information

Cost of living

It is important to compare the cost of living in Switzerland and France as the prices of accommodation, food, leisure activities, etc. do vary from one to the other.

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Bringing pets

We keep pets out of interest in the animals or as household companions. They accompany us and are not intended for sale. Special import regulations apply for dogs, cats, ferrets and birds as pets. Pets are animals of the species, which are kept out of interest in the animals or as household companions. They accompany their owners or persons acting on behalf of the owners. Pets are not to be sold or passed on to new owners. See the links below:

Bringing pets to Switzerland

Federal veterinary office FVO

Bringing pets to Switzerland

Dogs, cats, ferrets from the EU;

Dogs, cats, ferrets from third countries;

Special case birds. Pet birds from third countries;

Restrictions on import: Import bans / Temporary restrictions / Special conditions

* The import requirements arising from the laws on conservation on species apply for protected or non-domesticated species even if those are deemed pets. See link "Wild Fauna and Flora / CITES".

Bringing pets to France

Conditions for importation into France of pets, from countries not members of the European Union

Animals may carry serious diseases such as rabies or bird flu. Customs contributes to the protection of national territories and community health monitoring including documents and support of these animals.

European legislation regulates the movements of domestic carnivores (cats, dogs and ferrets) to limit the risk of introducing animal diseases, including rabies.

You want to bring to France a cat, dog or ferret

More information is available on the website of the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Fisheries.
Phoning

To make local calls, you can purchase cheap SIM cards at the general store in the main building for 20 CHF. You get a SIM card with 20 CHF credit and cheap local calls and texts and good rates for texting overseas. The drawback is that all the instructions are either in French, Italian or German! For international calls you should investigate the calling cards, which are available in many shops.

CERN Phone and Email Directory

Plugs

A universal plug adaptor will be useful, as Swiss and French electric plugs are different. Warning: Electricity at Europe is distributed as: Voltage 220 Volts and 50Hz (USA 120 Volts and 60Hz). Before connecting anything to electricity, please verify that your device works under European Voltage & Frequency, or get a proper transformer

Language and Currency

CERN is a bilingual international organization (French/English).

In Switzerland, Swiss Francs (CHF) are the local currency, while in France the Euro is used, and there are few places that will take either currency. The automatic teller machines in the main building on the Meyrin site provide cash in either currency (though for foreign cards they will provide only Swiss Francs).

Should you need to open a bank account in Switzerland, you can open an account with the UBS bank which has a branch in the main building (building 500), but you need to stay at CERN more than 6 months. You can also open one at the Post Office also located in the main building once you have obtain a local address either in Switzerland or in France.

Getting Around

The tram 18 takes you to the center of Geneva. The ticket costs 3 CHF and it can be bought from a ticket machine at each bus stop. There are two types of machines and the new ones give change. You can also buy 20, 30 or 50 CHF bus cards ("cartabonus") at the news stand in the main building but only the old ticket machines accept these cards.

A recommended point to get off for your first trip into town is the train station, Gare Cornavin. This puts you essentially in the centre of town, and it is very easy to find the tram back to CERN.

Note that you can also borrow bikes from CERN for free during your stay. A refundable deposit of 450 CHF is required (can be backed up by Team Account) and lights and a lock are provided, as well as servicing for punctures and other problems.

Geneva Public Transport (TPG)
Cinema

There are plenty of cinemas with English- and French-language viewings of films in Geneva. You should check in advance to determine the schedules and languages of the presentations.

CERN Student Activities

CERN’s student activities for all young people coming to CERN for any length of time may be found at LPCC page.

Other Useful Links

CERN Welcome Centre
CERN Buildings and Sites
CERN Guide for Newcomers
CERN Health Insurance Scheme-CHIS
CERN Users Office FAQ
Shuttle Service
USCMS Guide to Coming to and Living at CERN
CERN Clubs
CERN Market (vehicles, housing, furniture, etc.)
Swiss Info
Anglo Info

Review status

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<th>Reviewer/Editor and Date (copy from screen)</th>
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<td>KirstiAspola - 2019-04-12</td>
<td>added link to CMS Welcome Twiki page to registering with CMS</td>
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<tr>
<td>AniYaneva - 2019-03-29</td>
<td>updated the Subsistence allowance and other payments information and links</td>
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<tr>
<td>KirstiAspola - 2018-06-13</td>
<td>updated the visa information links</td>
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<tr>
<td>YaseminYazgan - 2018-01-24</td>
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<tr>
<td>KirstiAspola - 2017-02-10</td>
<td>added US CMS invitation website and modified wording to make sure all US CMS collaborators can contact me</td>
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<tr>
<td>KirstiAspola - 05-Nov-2015</td>
<td>added new invitation website information, general editing</td>
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<tr>
<td>KirstiAspola - 26-Jan-2015</td>
<td>updated insurance info</td>
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<td>KirstiAspola - 08-Jan-2015</td>
<td>updated insurance info</td>
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<tr>
<td>KirstiAspola - 17 Nov 2014</td>
<td>updated insurance info for frontierier workers who are family members of a CHIS main member</td>
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<td>KirstiAspola - 06 Nov 2014</td>
<td>updated insurance and dosimeter info</td>
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<tr>
<td>KirstiAspola - 09 Sep 2014</td>
<td>updated and added some Useful information links, modified insurance info</td>
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<tr>
<td>KirstiAspola - 01 Sep 2014</td>
<td>updated CERN and CMS registration information</td>
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<tr>
<td>XuanChen - 16 Jul 2014</td>
<td>replaced the links of &quot;hostel reservation&quot;, CERN Housing Service and Summer Students Information Page</td>
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<tr>
<td>KirstiAspola - 02-Jul-2013</td>
<td>added info about invitations and added lightweight account to accommodation section</td>
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<td>KirstiAspola - 18-Jun-2013</td>
<td>added info on CMS Safety</td>
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<tr>
<td>AnastasiaDolya - 25-April-2013</td>
<td>updated Tram info, Registration at CERN - home declaration</td>
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<tr>
<td>KirstiAspola - 07-May-2012</td>
<td>added Civil Status for information needed for visas</td>
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<tr>
<td>KirstiAspola - 19-Jan-2012</td>
<td>general updating, P5 map, insurance, invitations</td>
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<td>KirstiAspola - 08-Jul-2011</td>
<td>EPLANET, updated links</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KirstiAspola - 23-Jun-2011</td>
<td>minor general editing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PolinaMorozova - 26-Oct-2010</td>
<td>general editing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KatiLassilaPerini - 25-Nov-2009</td>
<td>updated links</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KatiLassilaPerini - 08 Dec 2008</td>
<td>updated users office links</td>
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<tr>
<td>KatiLassilaPerini - 24 Jan 2008</td>
<td>minor edits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KatiLassilaPerini - 28 Nov 2006</td>
<td>Implemented comments from Marie-Claude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JennyWilliams - 07 Oct 2007</td>
<td>General editing, and added comments about cell phones and bikes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I went through chapter 1 section 6 (email from morelos to Kati).

The information is relevant and clear. I would suggest to add a warning message on the voltage/frequency difference between Europe and USA.

This section has several links out of date, they require little direct work.

I would suggest to update the link at "Foyer George Willimas"

I would suggest to update the link at "CMS Secretariat"

I would suggest to update the link at "Getting a Computing Account"

I would suggest to update the link at "Swiss Life"

I would suggest to update the link at "plugs"

I would suggest to update the link at "Geneva Public Transport (TPG)"

I would suggest to update the link at "http://csnl.ptrtovoid.net/"

I would suggest to update the link at "Summer Students Information Page"

Detailed comments 18-Sep-2012 Hide

Detailed comments 19-Sep-2012 Hide

Review status 13
Updated the straightforward links that A.Morelos suggested.

Responsible: KirstiAspola

Please send comments to Kirsti Aspola

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