Europhysics Notes

● **EC Human Capital**

Some 160 **networks** for a total of 80 MECU (out of 920 proposals) have been approved by the Human Capital and Mobility programme's management committee in the delayed, first selection round. CEC procedures mean that only the 80 covered by the 1992 budget were officially announced on 27 November. Young scientists are being urged by the CEC to contact the coordinator of each network regarding possible fellowships and support. However, the list of networks is not easily available (it will even not be published in the EC's *Official Journal*). As was the case for fellowships, the list is planned to be available by email from EPS: you simply send an email message asking for the list of HCM networks to EPNEWS@CERNVM.CERN.CH.

There has been a change of policy regarding the **resubmission** of HCM proposals. If you wish to have an unmodified proposal considered for the next round you must write to the HCM Director by the end of December 1992 (it is unnecessary to resubmit the proposal). The closing date for proposals that will be decided upon in late-March 1993 has passed. The closing date for proposals for 1993's second selection round (in November 1993) is in June 1993.

Dr. Dreux de Nettancourt, formerly head of the CEC's DG-XII Biotechnology Unit, has been appointed **Director** of the EC Human Capital and Mobility Programme as part of a restructuring of DG-XII and XIII anounced earlier this year [*EN* **23** (1992) 139]. Dr. Louis Bellemin will be responsible for fellowships and conferences and Dr. Peter Kind joins HCM to take charge of large-scale facilities and networks.

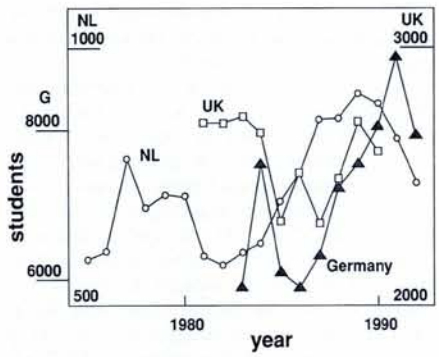
● **France Awaits Italian VIRGO Go-Ahead**

The VIRGO project for the construction of a wideband interferometer for detecting periodic (as opposed to pulse) gravitational waves is moving forward at the present stage as a joint French/Italian project. A common letter of intent was signed by the Presidents of the French CNRS, the Italian INFN and the Vice-President of Germany's Max-Planck-Institut in September 1991 to realise a joint European project with two detectors. The Council of the French CNRS has approved the VIRGO project based on the *Final Conceptual Design* and the French science minister decided in September to allocate 420 MFF if the Italian government makes a similar commitment.

Adalberto Giazotto, who heads the Italian VIRGO team, reports that VIRGO is proposed as a special research (as opposed to facility) project in the INFN's next five-year plan (1994-99), with construction of the device in two 3 km long tunnels some 10 km from Pisa. The government's finance committee must now decide on the funding available (this takes about six months).

VIRGO is considered an "outstanding and challenging experiment" and is essentially the Plan's new item as the other special research projects involve extensions to current accelerator-based items. Some 50-60 people are presently working in France and Italy on VIRGO R. & D. The UK continues to show interest after the SERC withdrew from the UK-German GEO collaboration which just missed German funding in 1990. The SERC says it cannot provide investment funds for at least two years and the German BMFT will not be financing any large new projects during a similar period. As official participation requires a commitment to finance a hardware

component, Karsten Danzmann who heads the MPI's gravitational wave research says the UK and German teams will concentrate on research and back-up, hopefully within the framework of an R. & D. collaboration. Meanwhile, the US Congress has approved the full LIGO programme of 212 M$US for the construction by 1997 of two antennae, with spending in fiscal '92 and '93 of 20 and 83 M$US, respectively.



Physics students entering universities in The Netherlands, UK and Germany. (Courtesy: E.W.A. Lingeman, P. Diamond and M. Schwoerer, respectively)

● Long-Term Student Numbers Constant

E.W.A. Lingeman, Chairman of the Physics & Society Committee, has sent data (see figure) for the numbers entering universities in the UK, Germany and The Netherlands as physics students. The Netherlands' data show a drop from 900 to 740 over the last four years; the data for the UK and Germany are less alarming (UK students were redefined in 1991 so data for 1991-2 are not plotted as they must be renormalised).

Extending over a longer period, trends are less disturbing as the numbers in each of the three countries seem rather constant.

● New Tokamak Starts Experiments

A new plasma physics research reactor called TCV *(Tokamak à Configuration Variable)* started last month a five-year experimental campaign financed jointly by EURATOM and the Swiss government. TCA is sited in Lausanne at the Centre de Recherches en Physique des Plasmas, which has been the Swiss laboratory associated to EURATOM since 1978. As the name implies, TCV aims to study the effect of the cross-sectional shape of a torroidal plasma on the confinement properties up to relatively large aspect ratios. TCV's main parameters are: 1.54 m high, 1.76 m diameter vacuum vessel; 1.2 MA maximum plasma current. TCV follows on from TCA, the CRPP's (and Switzerland's) first research reactor. TCA is similar in size to TCV but designed for a much smaller plasma current; it ceased operation in 1991 and may be sent to Brazil.

● Germany Lacks a Reasearch Strategy

The consensus among the roughly 200 participants from politics, government, industry, and academia at a German Physical society discussion meeting chaired by Professor H. Schopper, the GPS President, was that German urgently needs an overall long-term strategy for research. The meeting was held near Bonn on 13 November and it involved a general discussion following presenta-

tions by Dr. H. Riesenhuber, Minister for Research and Technology (BMFT), Professor W. Frühwald, President of Germany's research council *(Forschungsgemeinschaft)*, Professor H.F. Zacher, President of the Max-Planck-Institut, and members of the parliamentary sub-committee for science.

Japan's MITI was held up as a possible model for coordinating funding and it was felt that discussion should be extended to economic and political circles. Another conclusion was that the BMFT does not in fact spend 40 % of its budget on basic research as research is usually mixed up with technical development. While the responsibility for basic research clearly lies at the federal level, the universities "fall between two chairs" since they are supported by both federal and state government. Hence concern about the impact of the BMFT's decision not to extend its 2000 MDM university renewal programme.

Proceedings
Third European
Particle Accelerator Conference (EPAC92)
Berlin 24-28 March 1992
Vols. 1 and 2 (1760 p. in total)
Editors: H. Henke, H. Homeyer
& C. Petit-Jean-Genaz
Price: SFR 340.-

Directory of
Physics Institutes in Central Europe
By: E.W.A. Lingeman
EPS Committeee for East-West Coordination
Price: SFR 120.-

Orders: EPS Secretariat, Geneva

EPS Notices

● ERC Proposals Sought

The Steering Committee of the European Research Conferences aims to finalise 1993 physics ERC's at its next meeting in January 1993. K. Bethge who chairs the EPS Working Group on ERC's would like to propose suggestions for 1994 ERC's to the Committee at the meeting. He has written to the Divisions and Groups asking them to suggest titles, dates, location, chairperson, and frequency (annual or biannual) by mid-January 1993. Please contact a Division or Group chairperson if you wish to have a proposal considered.

● Secretariats

Gero Thomas, the Executive Secretary, will be based full time in Geneva from 1 January 1993. The Society's two full-time staff members in Budapest (Maria Lázár and Judith Török) will continue as at present. The Geneva Secretariat will have Edit Thomas as the assistant to Gero Thomas and Peter Boswell (who mainly edits *Europhysics News*). Christina Bouldin will continue to be the Staff Editor of *Europhysics Letters* and to administer the student mobility scheme; Edit Thomas is the replacement Staff Editor and Alica Rowe mainly handles routine aspects. Nadia Sarteur is engaged half-time to do accounts and to help Cornelia Heschel provide general back-up.

The Secretariats' work will be divided up as follows:

- Governing bodies, prizes (G. Thomas); Divisions (M. Lázár).
- Action Committee follow-up: ACAPPI (G. Thomas), Conferences (E. Thomas), Physics & Society (G. Thomas), Publications (P. Boswell), EWCC (G. Thomas).
- Task forces: finance & constitution (G. Thomas), student mobility (C. Bouldin), professional qualifications (P. Boswell).
- *Europhysics Letters:* editorial (C. Bouldin, E. Thomas), routine (A. Rowe), management & finance (G. Thomas).
- *Europhysics News:* editorial (P. Boswell), advertising & orders (P. Boswell, E. Thomas).
- Associate Members: enquiries (P. Boswell); admin. (E. Thomas).
- Individual Members: subscriptions & enquiries (M. Lázár).

● Restructuring Endorsed

The Executive Committee meeting in closed session in Geneva on 11 November decided unanimously to recommend approval of the restructuring scheme outlined in the document *A New EPS Structure* [*EN* **23** (1992) 75] presented at the 1992 Council. The Executive continues to harmonise the various elements of a proposal that will be submitted to the next Council Meeting in Nice on 26-27 March 1993. A consultation document that synthesizes inputs from Divisions and Groups and from national societies will be circulated to the societies by the end of 1992 for comment. Financial implications will meanwhile be made more precise, ready for preparation of the final proposal.

● Unit Fee Increase to be Proposed

According to Rule 34 of the EPS Constitution, the Executive Committee is obliged to submit to all Ordinary Members any proposal to increase the unit fee. This must be done at least three months before placing the proposal before the next Council (in Nice in March) so that IOM's can consult their Delegates.

The Executive decided at its 11 November meeting to propose an increase of the unit fee from SFR 13.50 to SFR 15.00 (an 11.1% increase) effective from 1 January 1994. Most of the increase represents adjustment for inflation in Switzerland, estimated at 7.5% for the two-year period starting from the date of the last increase (1 January 1992). The remainder (3.6%) is to allow just over SFR 30000.- to be set aside for priority actions run independently of the Secretariat by committees, *etc.*

● Fee Reduction

Council by a mail ballot has unanimously decided to amend Rule 35a) of the EPS Constitution as follows:

Ordinary Members shall pay annual fees as follows:

a) Individual Ordinary Members, Constitution Article 4a)	*8 units per Individual Ordinary Member*

The rule change, which takes effect on 1 January 1993, means that the annual fee for an IOM who is not a member of either a National Society or a Collaborating Society (*i.e.*, an Article 4a member) will decrease from SFR 162.- to SFR 108.-. It has been felt for some time that the relatively high 4a) fee discriminated against those who for professional reasons choose not to belong to other societies.