Cooperation between nations, universities and scientists is the driving force behind CERN’s research. In 2017, more than 17 500 people from around the world worked together to push the limits of knowledge. CERN’s staff members, numbering around 2600, take part in the design, construction and operation of the research infrastructure. They also contribute to the preparation and operation of the experiments, as well as to the analysis of the data gathered for a vast community of users, comprising over 12 200 scientists of 110 nationalities, from institutes in more than 70 countries.
With users spread all over the world and hundreds of scientists trained at the Laboratory each year, CERN has gradually developed a huge community of former associates, students and employees. These alumni continue their careers in a huge variety of fields, from academia to industry, finance, information technology and medicine. In June, CERN brought this network to life by launching “CERN Alumni – The High-Energy Network”. The network allows alumni to maintain links with CERN, to enjoy the wealth and diversity of their own large community, and to leverage the experience and support of members of the network. It is also a strategic move intended to support CERN’s mission and activities. An interactive web platform forms the backbone of the network, allowing alumni to stay informed and interact with each other. At the end of 2017, the network already comprised 2500 members and was preparing for its first major event at CERN in February 2018.

Continuing its enlargement process, the CERN family welcomed several new countries in 2017. India became an Associate Member State in January, while Slovenia became an Associate Member State in the pre-stage to membership in July. The Republic of Lithuania signed an agreement to become an Associate Member State and Croatia continued its progress towards the same status. At the end of the year, the Organization had 22 Member States and seven Associate Member States, three of which were in the pre-stage to membership.

Many other countries have established formal links with the Laboratory and contribute to its activities. CERN continues to reinforce this network by supporting the countries that develop their particle physics community. In this context, the Laboratory signed cooperation agreements with Nepal and Sri Lanka. This policy of global engagement creates a cultural melting-pot that is vital to CERN’s pursuit of new ideas and ever-deeper knowledge.