

Never give up!
Poland joins the ESRF
(editorial)

On 1st June 2004 Poland becomes a Scientific Associate of the European Synchrotron Radiation Facility (ESRF), at a level of 0.6% its budget. The funds were allocated by the State Committee for Scientific Research after more than 10 years of efforts of the Polish scientists gathered in the Polish Synchrotron Radiation Society (PSRS). The setting signature of the agreement took place at ESRF, Grenoble, on 16th April 2004. On the behalf of Polish party, the agreement was signed by Director of the Institute of Physics of the Polish Academy of Sciences, Professor Jacek Kossut (in the middle), on the behalf of ESRF, by Bill Stirling (on right), the Director General, and Helmut Krech (on left), the Director of the Administration.



The Polish researchers have got access to the, best in Europe and one from the three existing in the world, source of synchrotron radiation in the high-energy regime. The source, equipped with the modern and continuously upgraded 46 beamlines, is now at our disposal. Twice a year after deadlines for submission of proposals (1st March and 1st September) the proposals of experiments are evaluated by the Review Committees of specialists from the European countries and Israel. The nearest call for proposal ends on 1st September 2004. For the winners, the beamtime will be allocated in the first half of 2005. As we have been informed already at the end of April, 1.3% of proposals were submitted by Polish scientists. We hope that the success rate will be not lower than the mean one at ESRF. Therefore, in the first call available for Polish scientists they can win more than we pay for. Researchers from 15 different Polish institutions have applied for beam time in the second part of 2004, counting not only on the ESRF beamlines but also on the Collaboration Research Group beamlines. The projects selected by peer review get the beam time and the financial support for travel and local expenses for three scientists for each experiment.

Nevertheless, the PSRS Council does not have feeling that the mission is accomplished. Our efforts are now directed towards creation of

CENTRALSYNC, a consortium of three countries: Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland. In this way, these three countries would participate at more than 1% in the ESRF consortium. This would allow them to have an observer on the Council, the body that makes decisions about important issues of ESRF policy.



The Director of the ESRF, Bill Stirling; Maciej Lorenc and Joanna Hoszowska, two Polish scientists from ESRF staff; Krystyna Lawniczak-Jablonska, Bogdan Kowalski and Jacek Kossut during the visit of Polish delegation to the ESRF.

The signing of the documents had taken place just two weeks before Poland became a part of the European Union. It allows us to believe that, finally, Poland actively be a part of the European research area. Polish scientists get access to a state-of-the-art expensive equipment and now it depends only on themselves how they will exploit this great chance. Particularly, it is a big challenge for young generation of scientists. They can also apply for postdoctoral and other scientific positions at the ESRF.

The scientific tools nowadays are so expensive and the progress in used technology and electronics so quick that even very rich countries cannot afford the cost of continuous upgrading. The only economic use of public money is through the creation of international laboratories used by wide community of scientists with a lot of new ideas. Synchrotron is operating 7 days per week, day and night. It also offers the possibility of exchanging ideas, discussing problems with experiences scientists, meet people from another fields of sciences and to form new friendships. All of these create unforgettable and enjoyable atmosphere of scientific work. I wish all of you many hours of successful work at the ESRF.

On behalf of the Council
Vice-president of the PSRS

Krystyna Lawniczak-Jablonska