

Robotic Framework at CERN in BE-CEM

Mario DI CASTRO

CERN, BE-CEM group

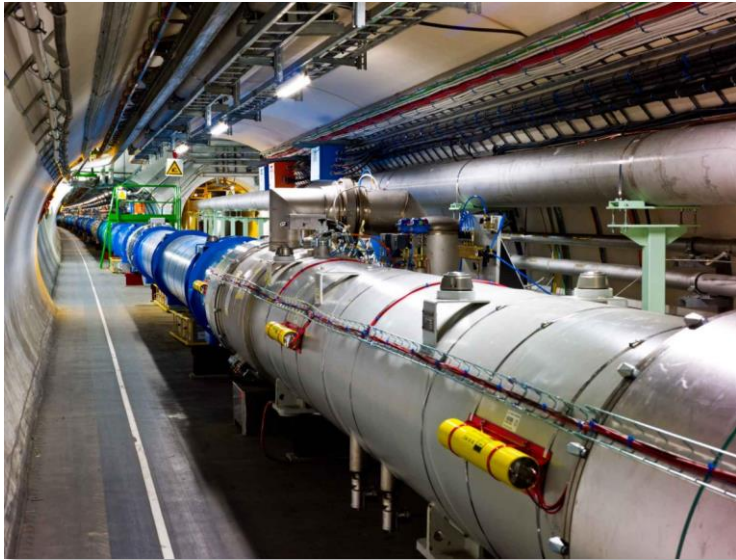


MOCRAF WORKSHOP, ICALEPCS23, 8th of October 2023, Cape Town

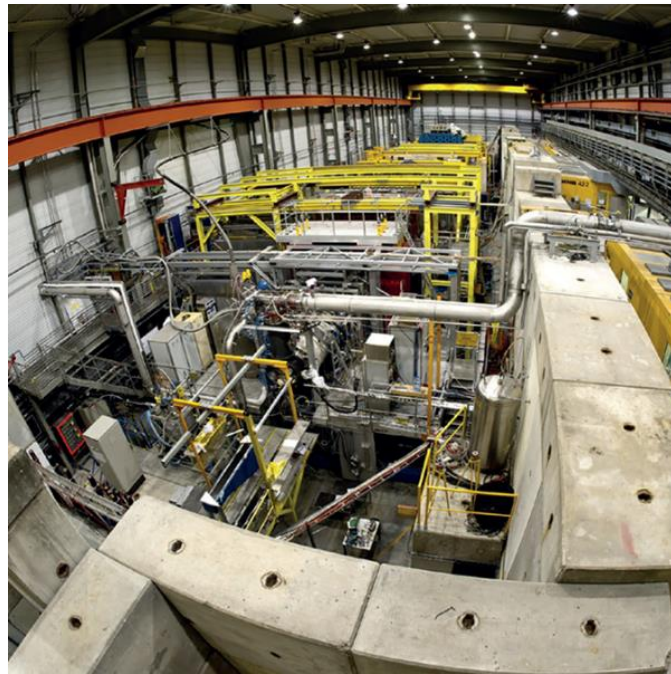
Main needs for robotics at CERN



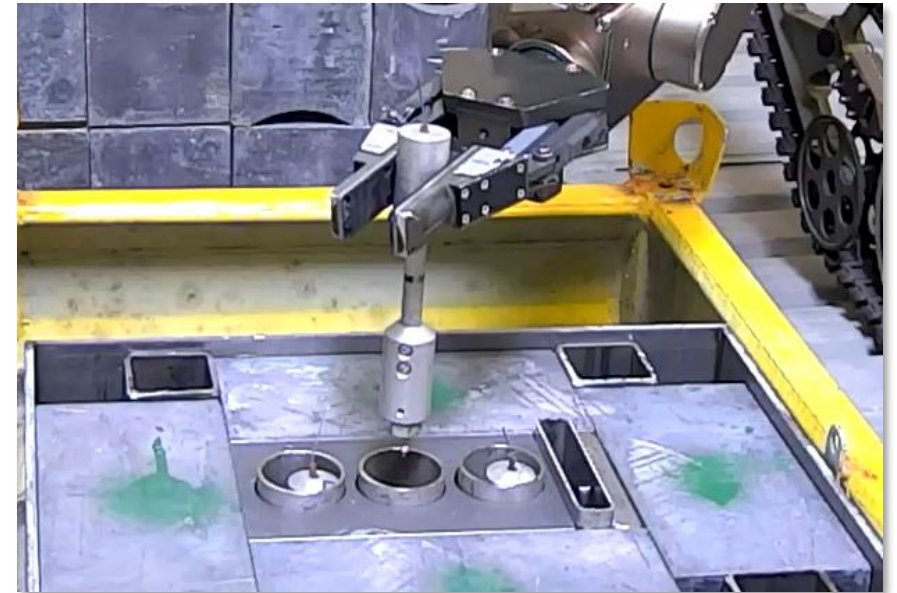
- Inspection, operation and maintenance of radioactive particle accelerators devices for **safety, maintainability, reliability and availability increase**
 - ✓ **Experimental areas and objects not built to be remote handled/inspected**
 - ✓ Any intervention may lead to “surprises”
 - ✓ Several risks, including **contamination**



The LHC tunnel



North Area experimental zone

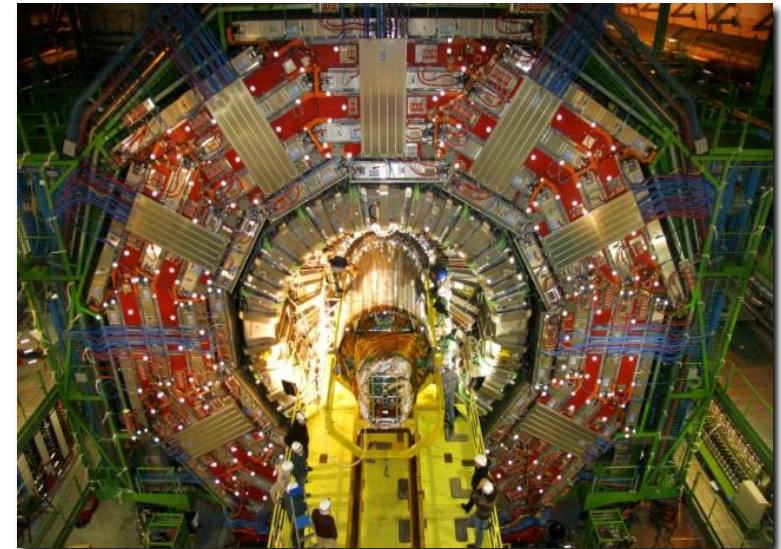


Radioactive sample handled by a robot

Main difficulties for robotics at CERN

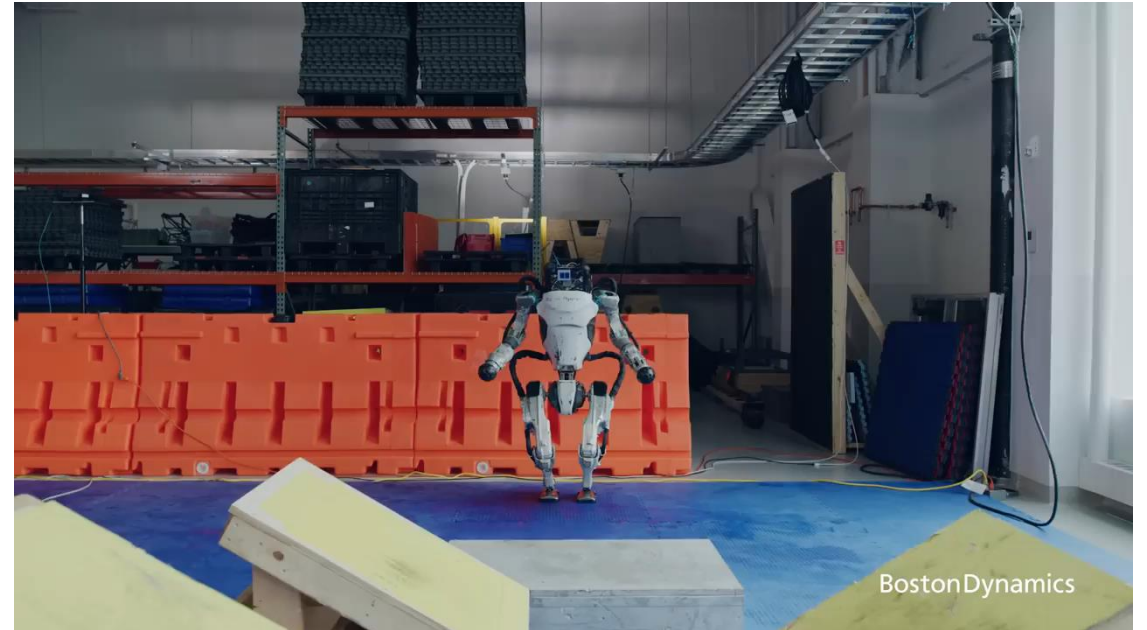


- Harsh and semi-structured environments, accessibility
- Radiation, magnetic disturbances, delicate equipment not designed for robots, big distances, communication, time for the intervention, highly skilled people often required (non robotic operators), etc.

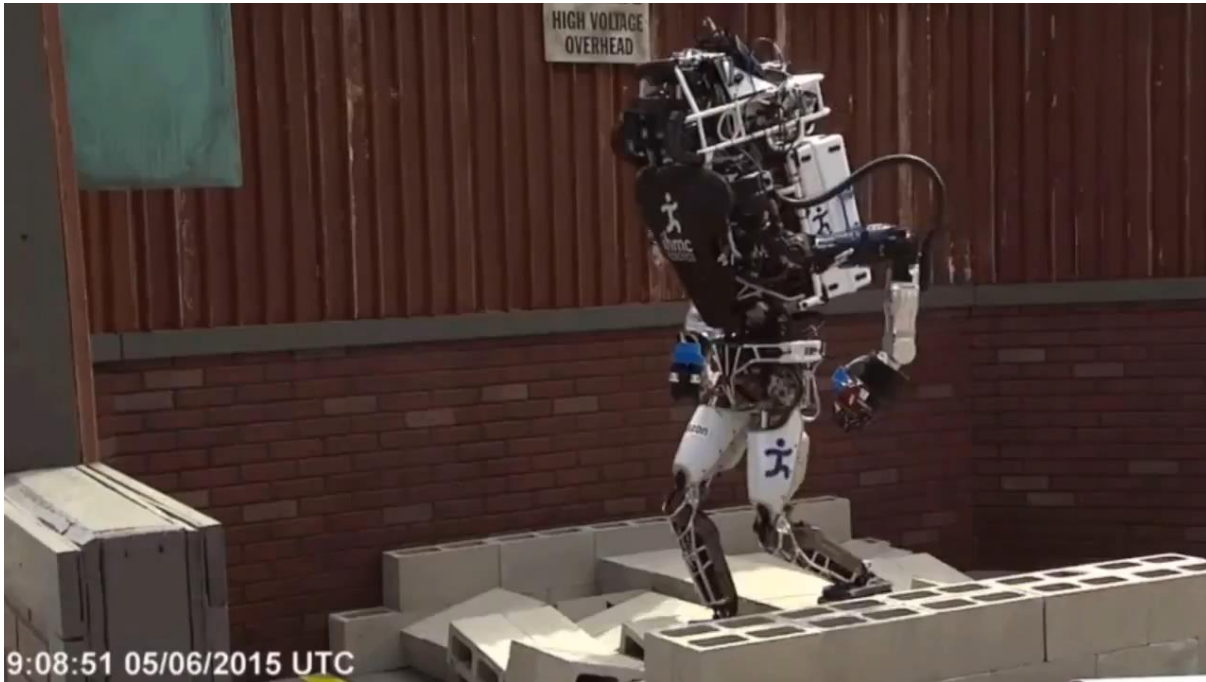


Our dream: Robots made in Hollywood and by Boston Dynamics

iRobot, movie of 2004 anticipating
what we'll have in 2035



Robots trying to solve “real” tasks in difficult environment



Availability of Particle Accelerators



Reliability	Maintainability	Availability
If Constant	Increase ↑	Increase ↑
If Constant	Decrease ↓	Decrease ↓
Increase ↑	If Constant	Increase ↑
Decrease ↓	If Constant	Decrease ↓

Reliable robots must be developed, and recovery scenarios must be foreseen

- @ constant machine reliability, maintainability drives availability
- Improve maintainability increasing efficiency of human interventions
 - ✓ using robots in collaborations with humans
- Accelerator Reliability Workshop (ARW)



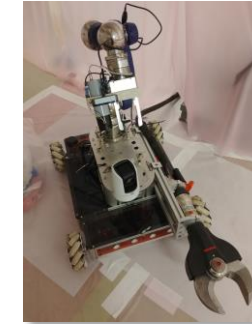
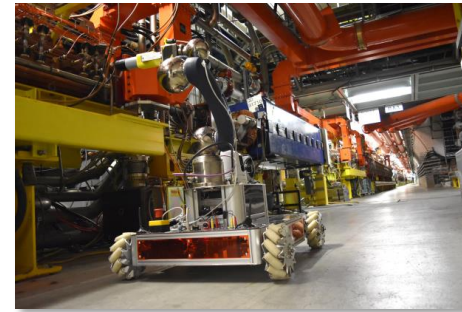
The Robotic Service at CERN: Overview of robots pool



Telex robot



Train Inspection Monorail (CERN made)



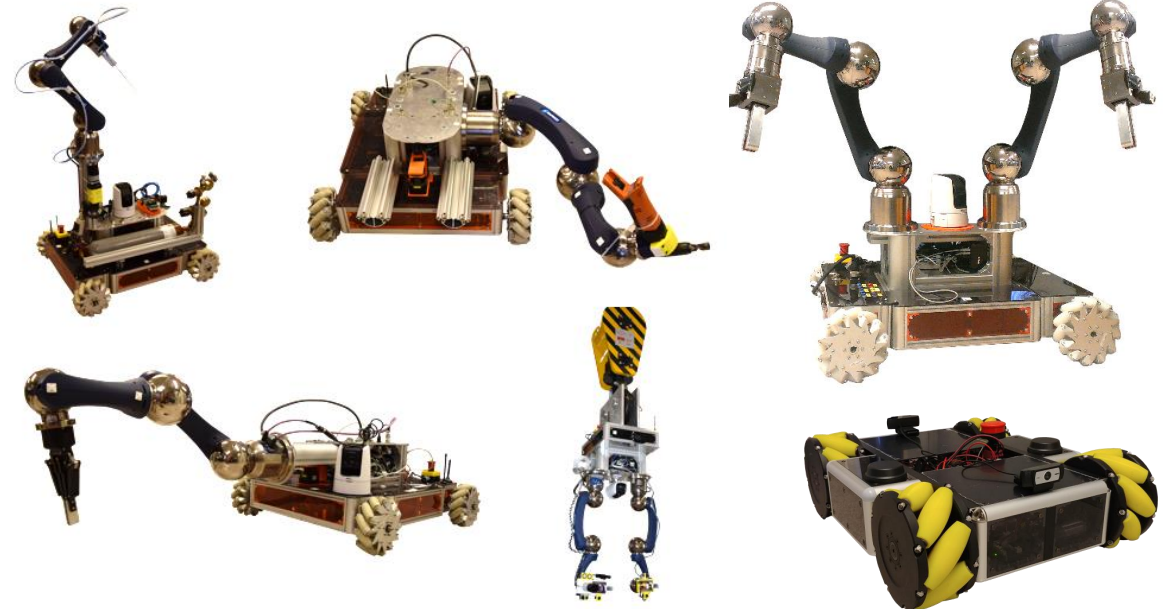
More than 20 robots (custom made and/or industrial with custom controls) are in operation. Mechatronics conceptions, designs, proof of concepts, prototyping, series productions, operations, maintenance, tools and procedures



Teodor robot



EXTRM robot (CERN controls)



CERNBot in different configurations (CERN made)



High payload manipulator



Drone for tele-operation support



Quadrupeds for "difficult" zones

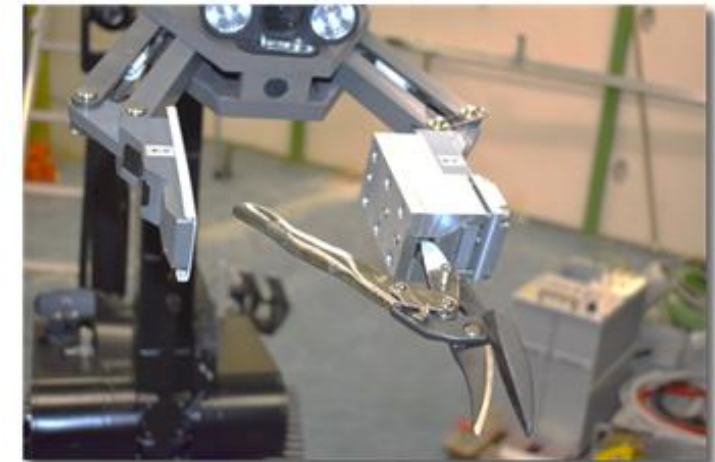
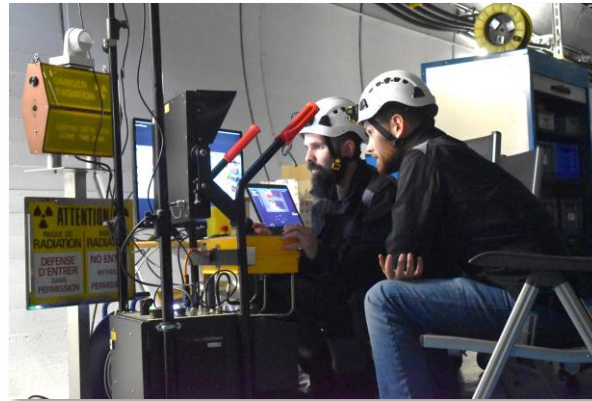


The Robotic Service at CERN



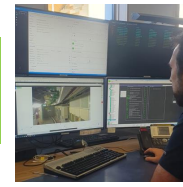
Robotics technologies are mainly used for:

- Remote maintenance
- Human intervention procedures preparation
- Quality assurance
- Post-mortem analysis
- Reconnaissance
- Search and rescue
- And more...

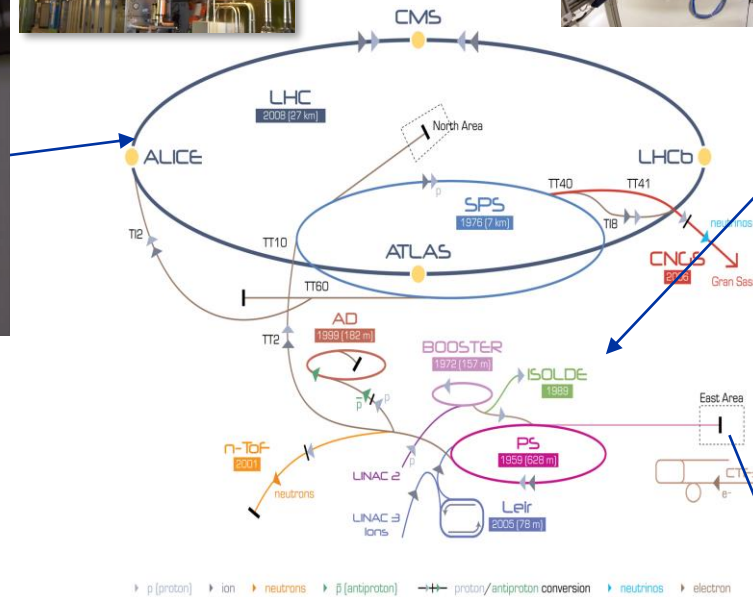


Robots integrated within accelerator facilities

More info on Tuesday mini-oral and poster session (paper TUMBCMO25)



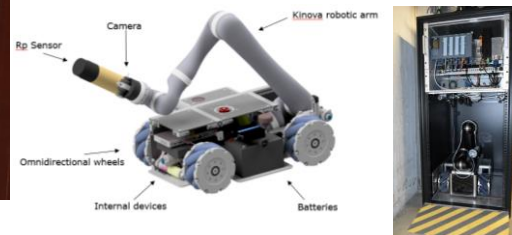
4x Train Inspection Monorail (TIM)



3x ISOLDE / MEDICIS high payload industrial robots

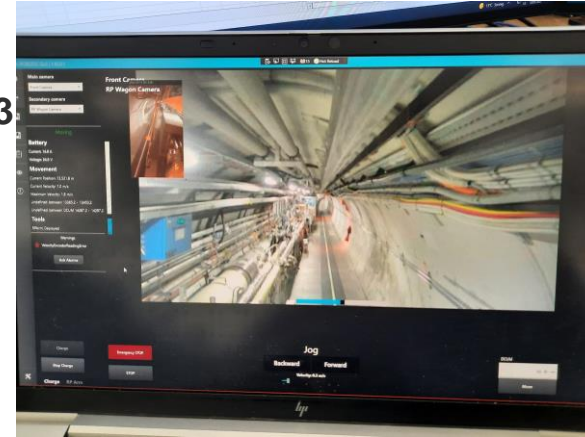
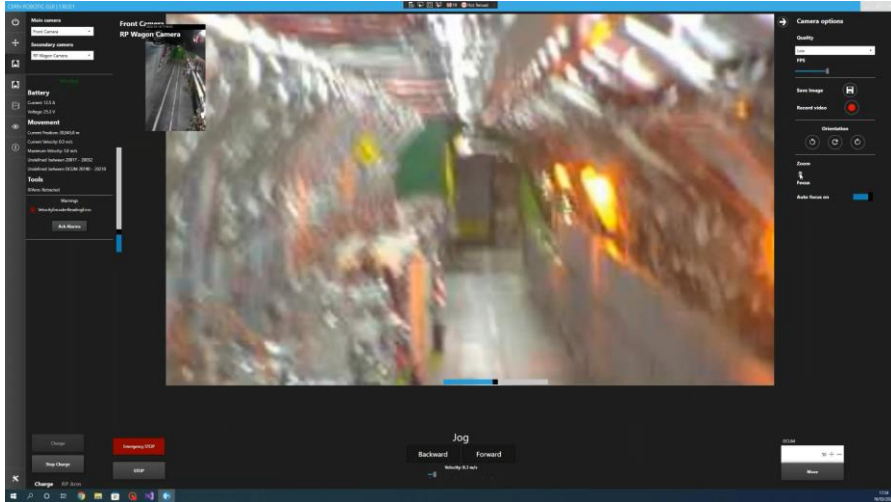


2x SPS robot

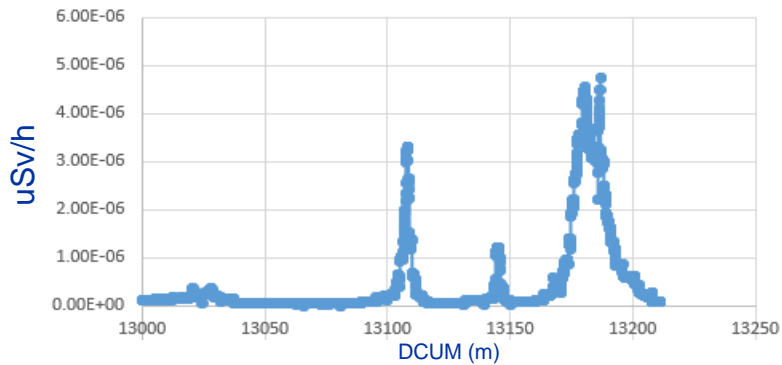


CHARM robot

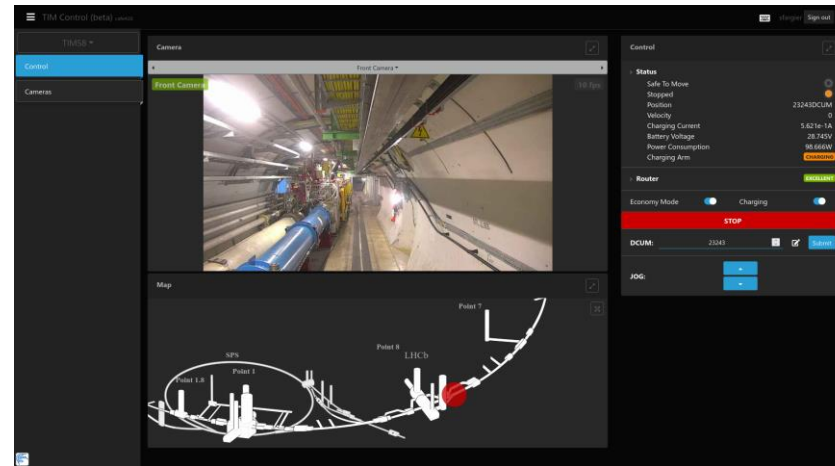
- TIM x4 RP survey to open LHC sectors for access
- Finalization of OP-TIM interface for operations by TI crew from Q1-2023



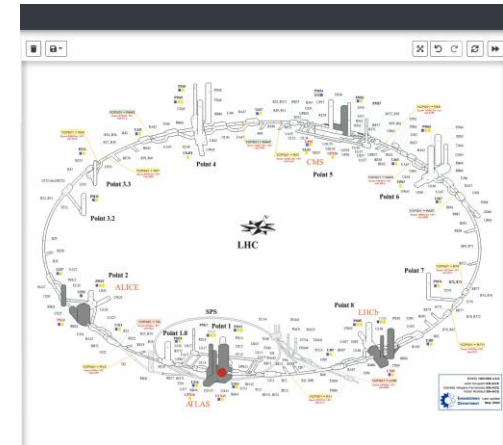
TIM operation for RP measurements through the expert interface from CCC



Example of RP measurement taken with TIM

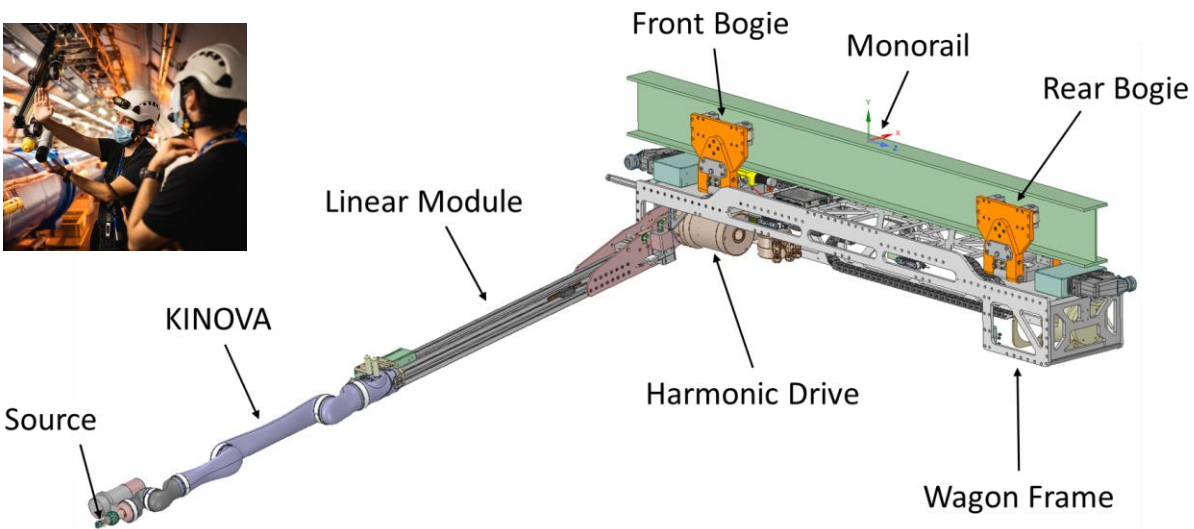
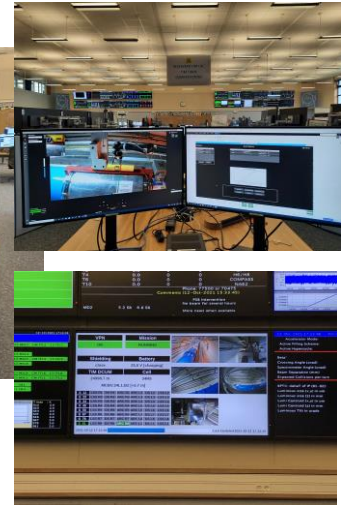
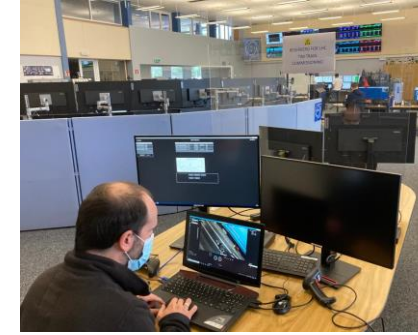


Beta version of the new TIM TI/OP interface through FESA and SSVG part to show the robots location within the LHC

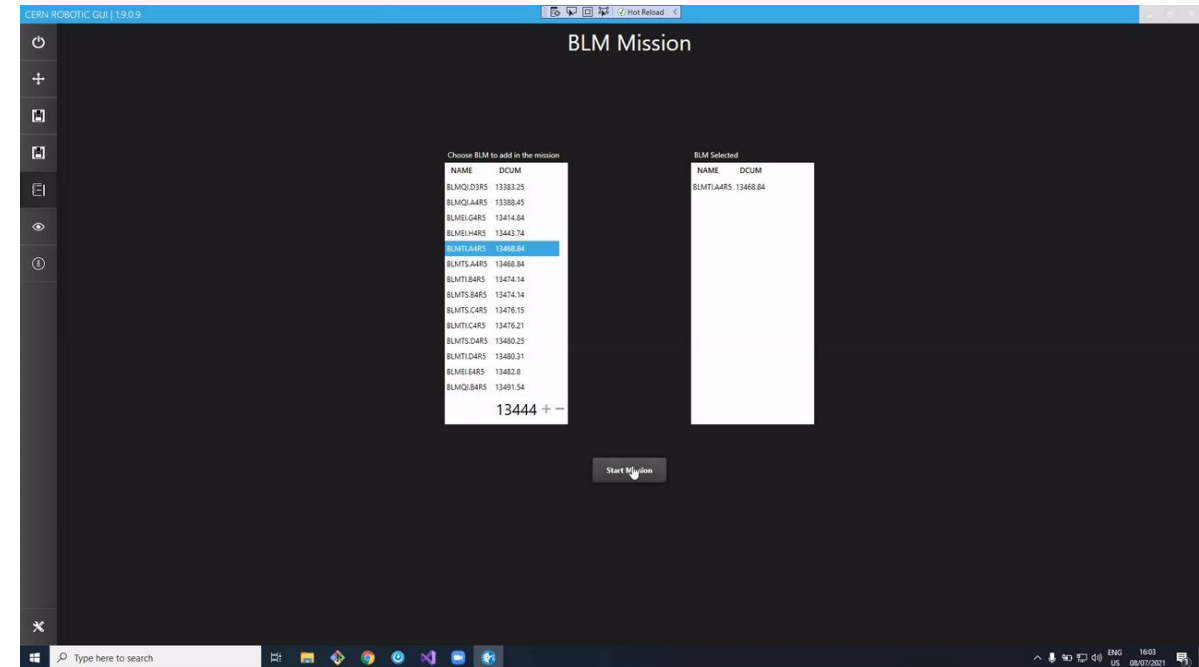


Novel TIM robotic wagon

- 6 DoF (rotational axis) + 1DoF (linear axis) for dexterity
- 2 DoF (harmonic drive, backlash-free) for transversal positioning
- 1 stabilization axis
- 5 cameras



New TIM robotic wagon with extracted arm



Robotic preventive maintenance and inspection



SPS MKP oilers refill



Remote radioprotection surveys



Cabling status inspection



Temperature sensor installation on AD target

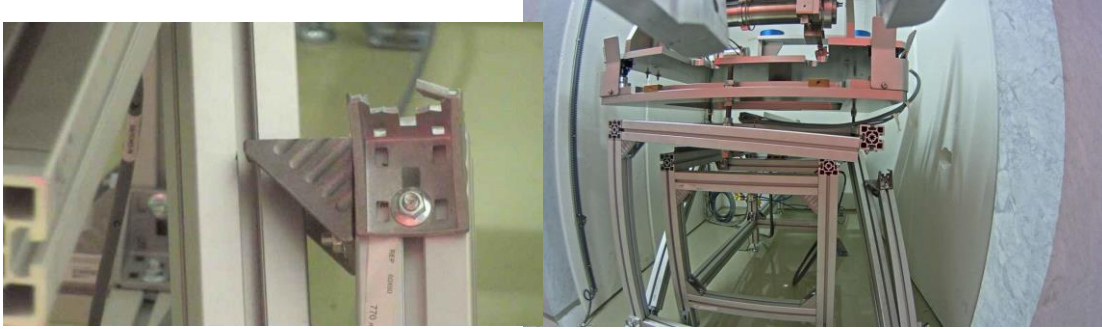


Tunnel structure monitoring

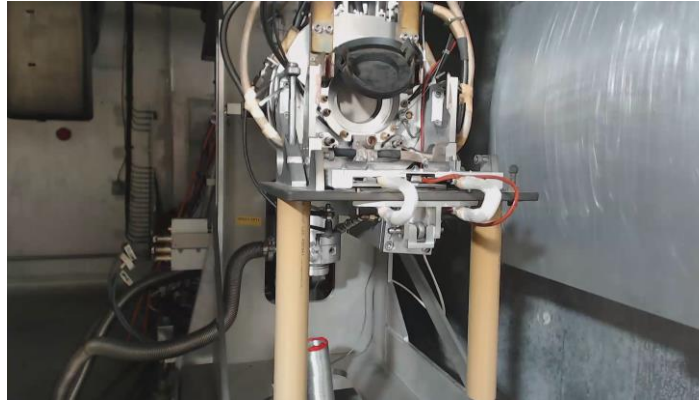


Remote Vacuum Leak detection

Fast reaction to equipment failures in radioactive areas



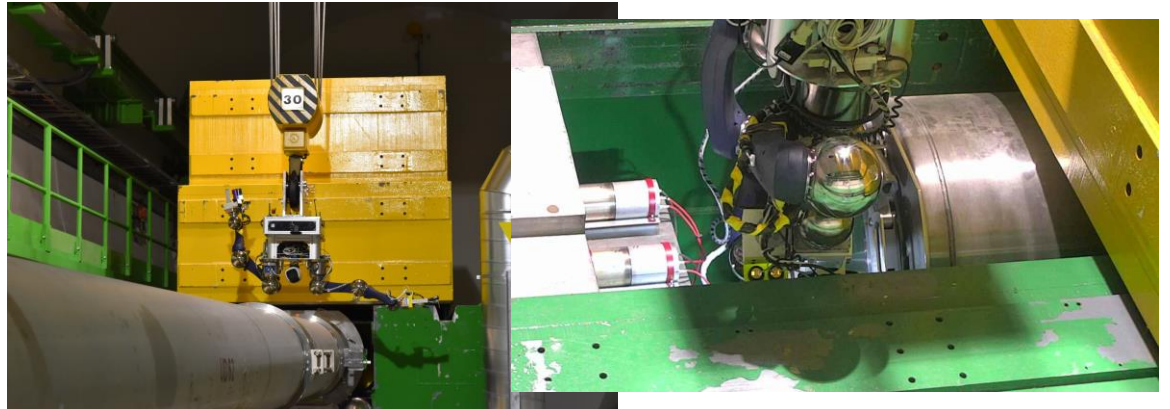
CHARM Target
In place 1 hour after the call



ISOLDE HRS Front-End
In place 2 hours after the call

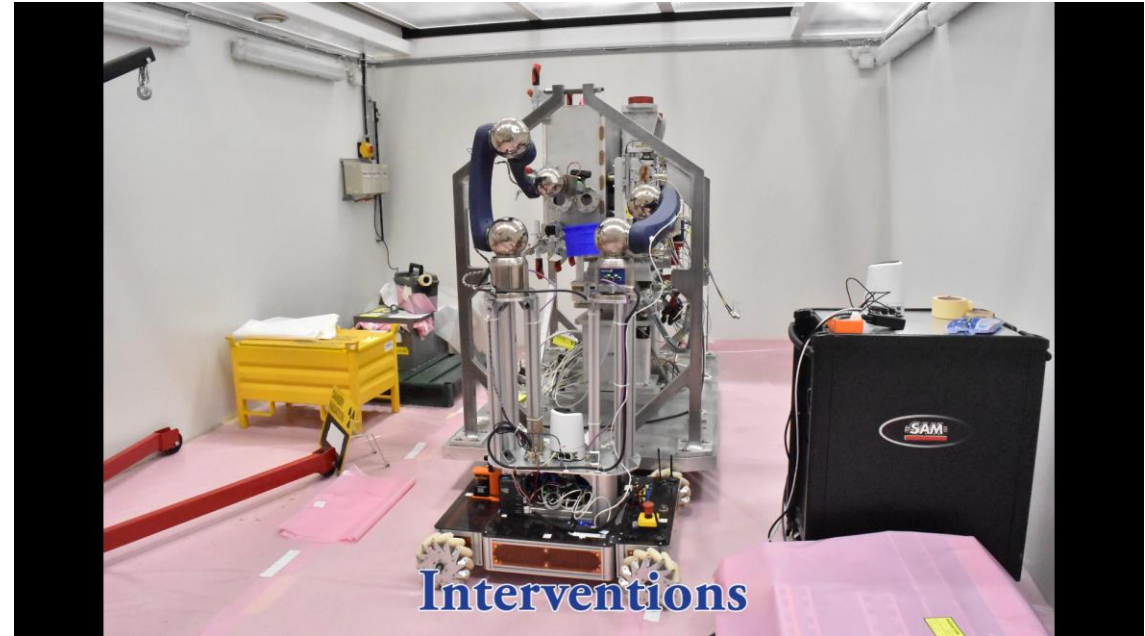
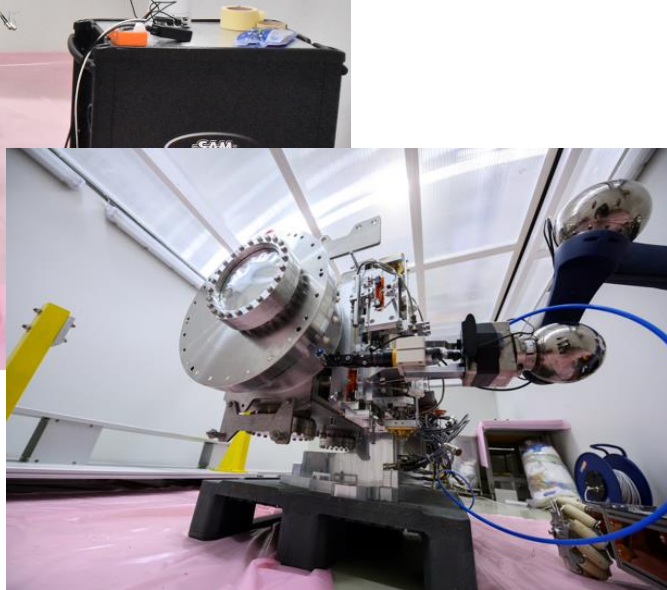
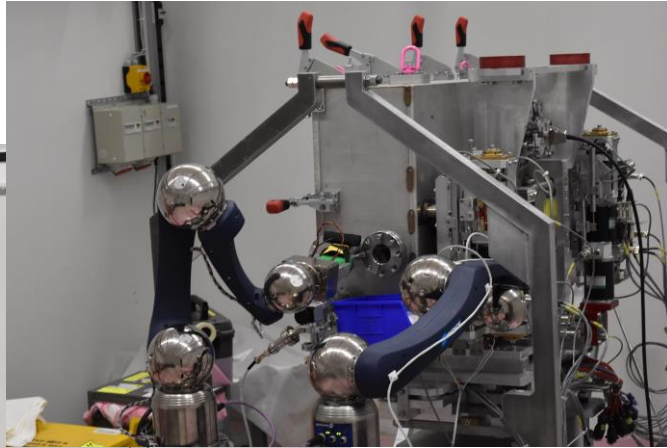
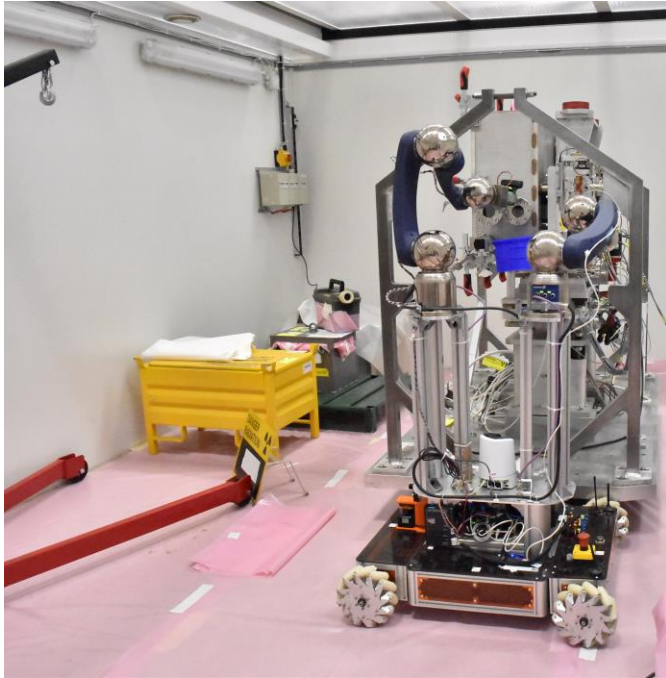


North Area BLM cables connection
In place 50 minutes after the call



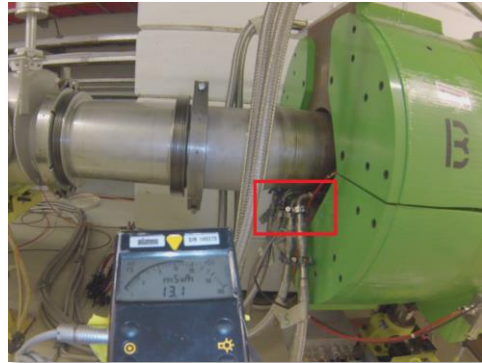
LHC TDE
New robot built in 3 days

Post-Mortem Analysis



Importance of the design phase

- Designing machines that can be maintained by robots using appropriate and easily accessible interfaces will increase maintainability and decrease human exposure to hazards

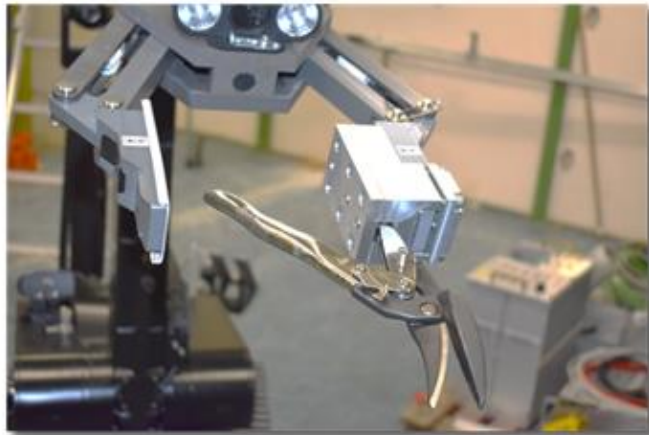


Easier remote or hands-on manipulation than chain-type connection

Procedures and Tools

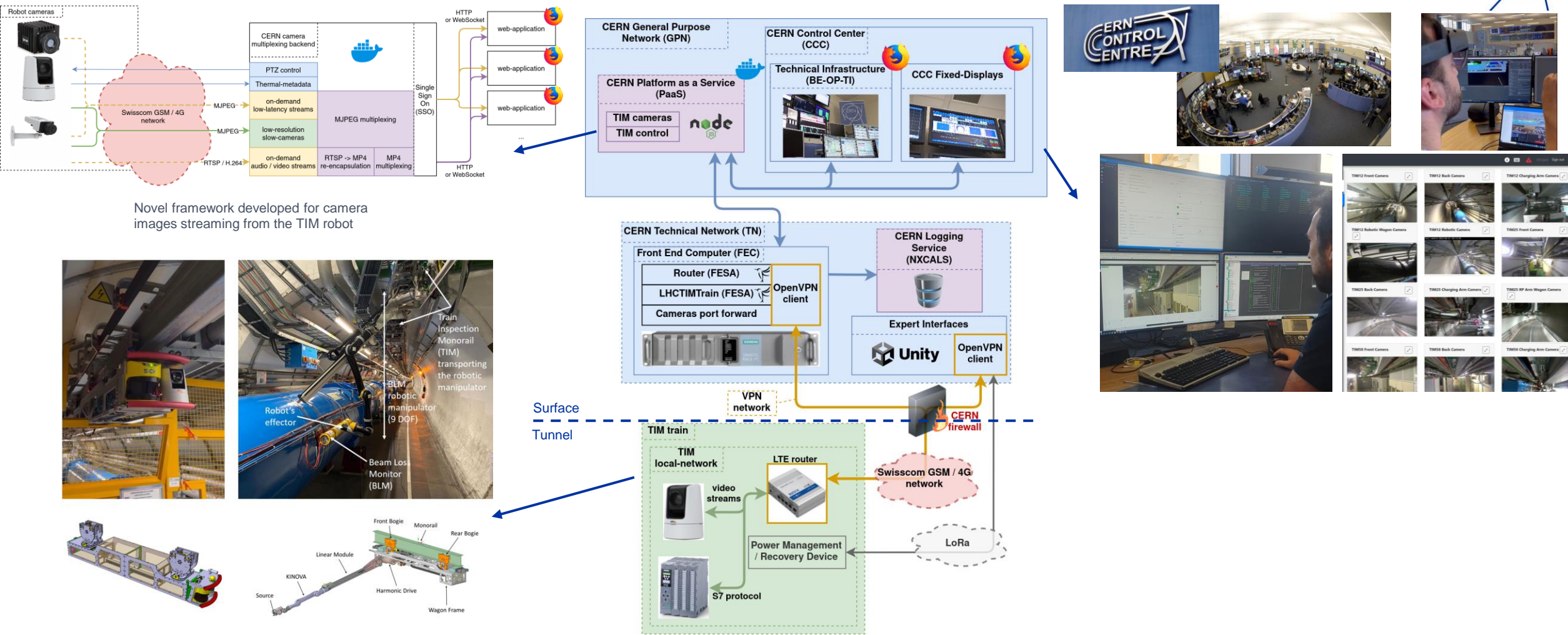


- Several time consuming and costly tools, procedures and Mockups done for intervention on non-robotic friendly interfaces during the last years (several done also in emergency situations)
 - ✓ **Intervention procedures, recovery scenarios, tools and mock-ups are as important as the robot/device that does the remote intervention**
 - ✓ Standardization of interfaces → standardized tools and procedures, reduce costs and intervention time

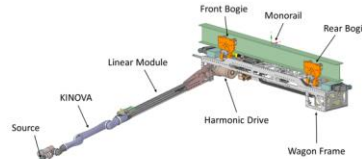
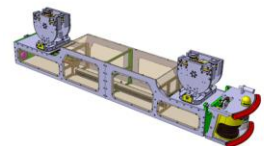
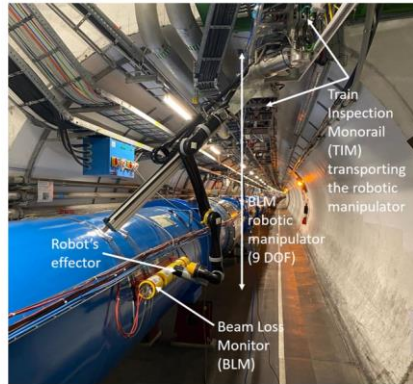


[More on L. Buonocore lecture](#)

Operational Controls for Robots Integrated in Accelerator Complexes



Novel framework developed for camera images streaming from the TIM robot



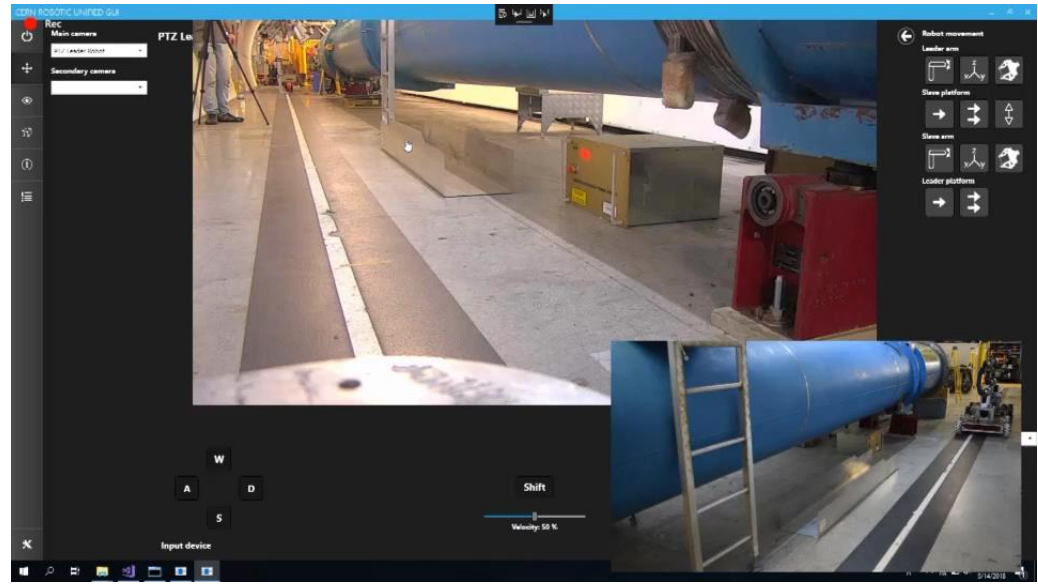
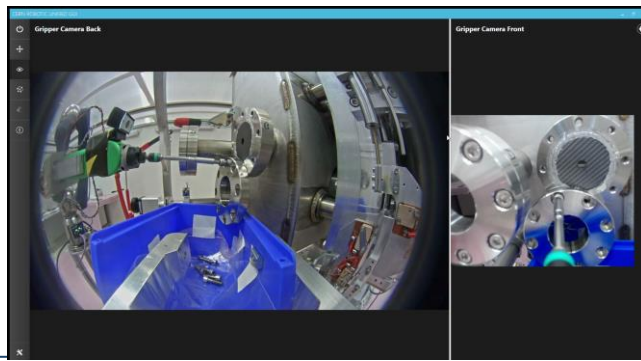
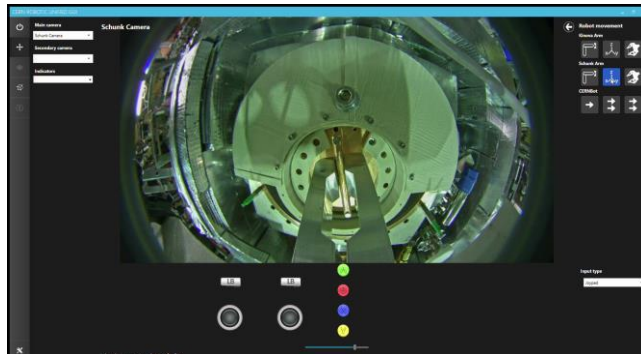
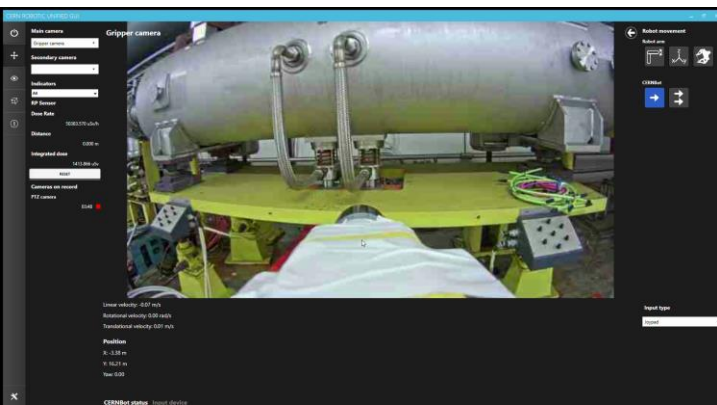
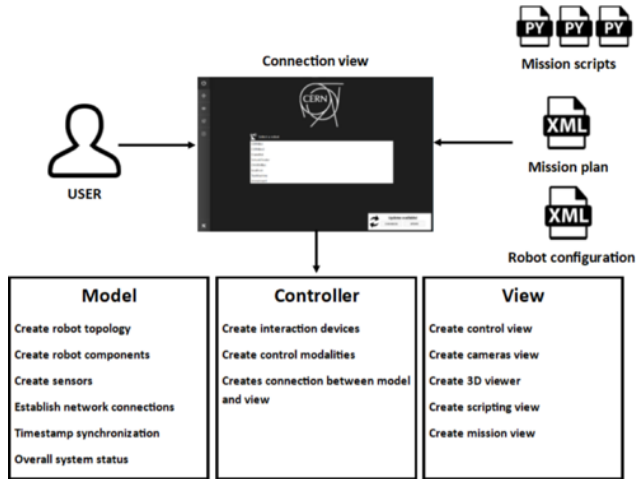
TIM robot passing the LHC sector doors (top left), 3D view of a TIM wagon (bottom left), 9 degrees of freedom robotic wagon (top right), 3D view of the robotic wagon (bottom right).

TIM operation general overview.



Human-Robot-Interface

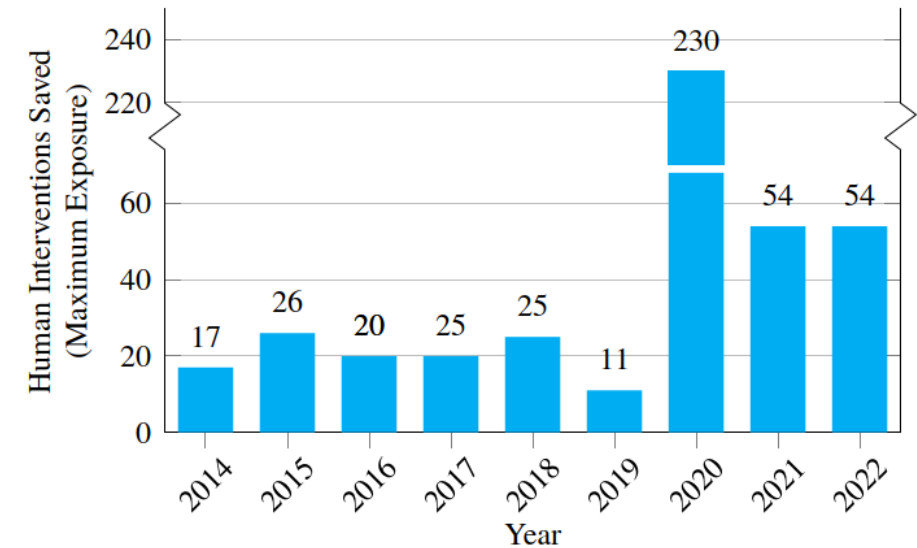
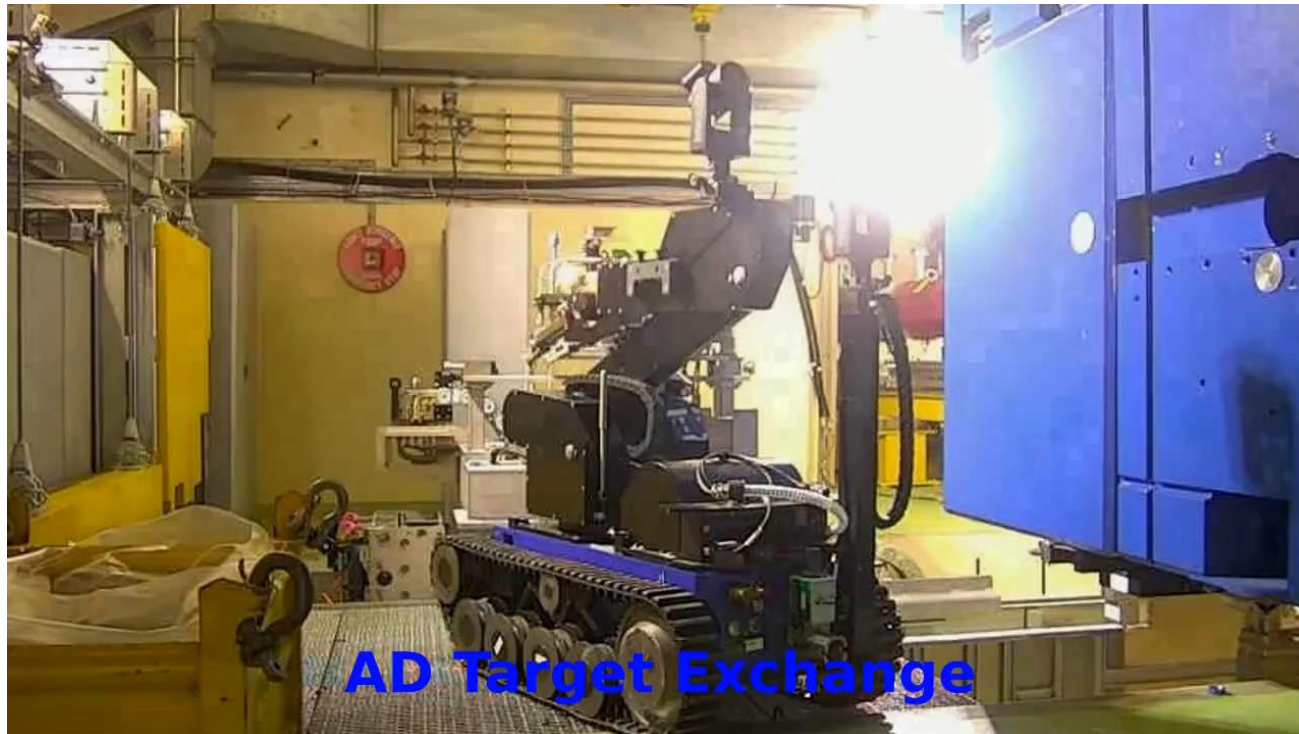
- Controls all the BE-CEM robots
- Includes enhanced reality modules
- Different inputs device (keyboards, joystick, master arm etc.)
- Operators training options
- Multi screens capability
- Time-delay passivation



Robotics Interventions



- More than **1000 robotic operations** over the last 8 years
- More than **1500 hours of in-situ robotic operations**
- Strong machine **availability boost** thanks to planned and unplanned/emergency missions
- ✓ Continuing developing **best practices** for equipment design and robotic intervention procedures and tools including recovery scenarios

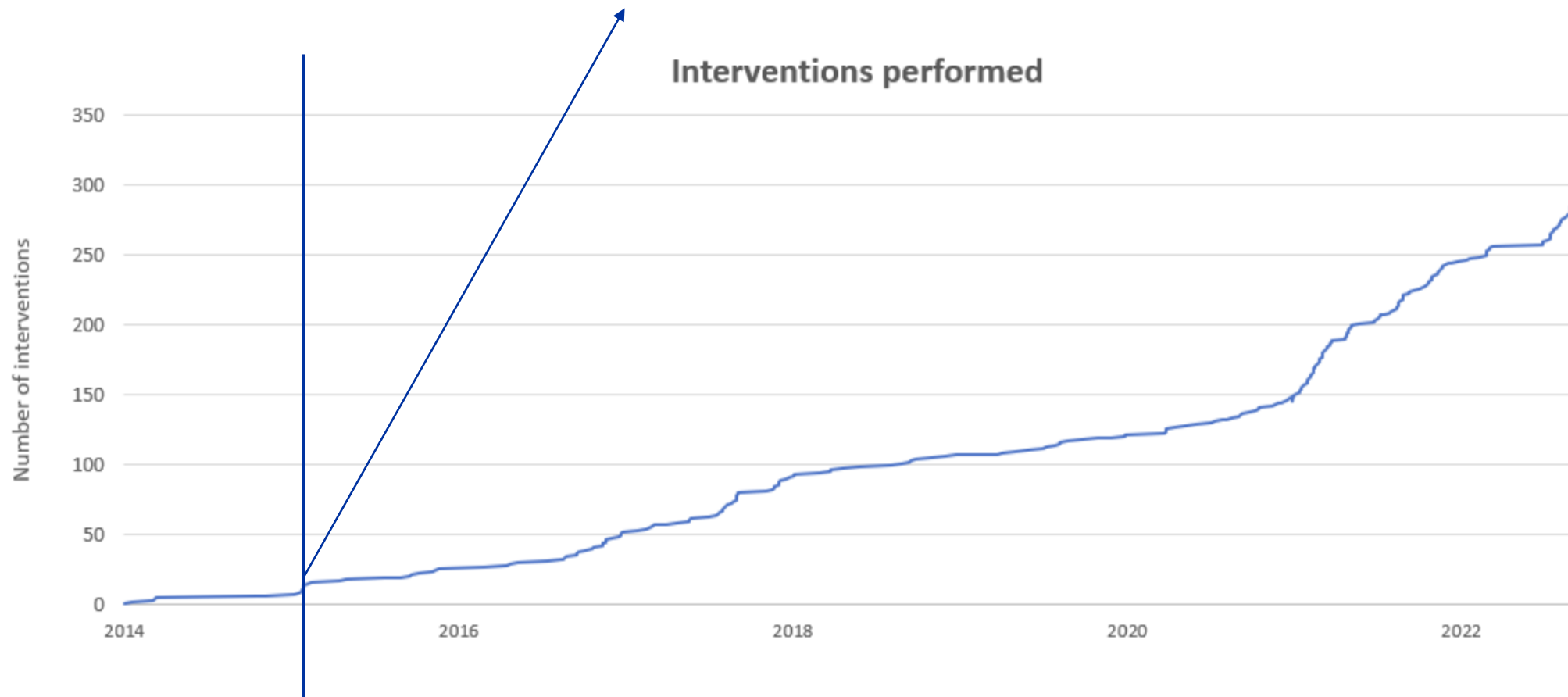


The equivalent number of human interventions saved with robotic interventions assuming maximum annual exposure

Robotics Interventions



Started to apply CERN custom made robotic solutions.
Remote maintenance capabilities and modularity strongly increased!



Main Motivations for Custom Robotic Development #1



- No single existing solution can fulfill different the needs
- Mobility and manipulation capabilities are required
 - ✓ A “fusion” of several type of robot would be needed
 - ✓ **A modular robot could fulfill several needs**

Novel Modular framework

MODULAR
HARDWARE

+

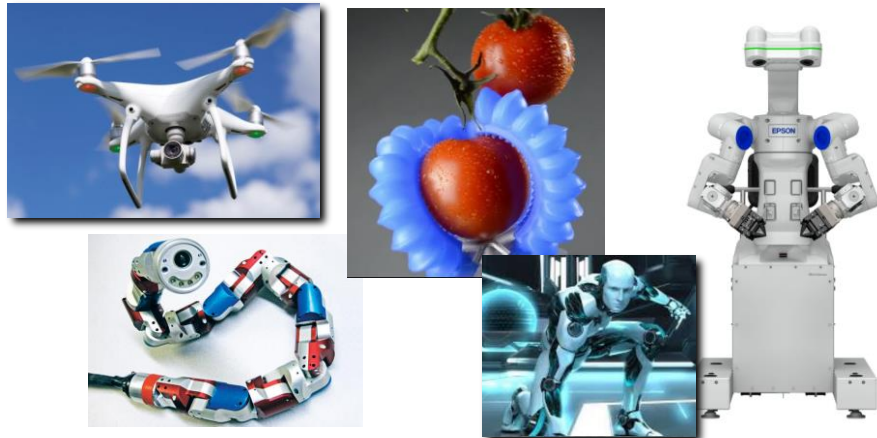
MODULAR
SOFTWARE

Di Castro, Mario, Manuel Ferre, and Alessandro Masi. "CERNTAURO: A modular architecture for robotic inspection and telemanipulation in harsh and semi-structured environments." *IEEE Access* 6 (2018): 37506-37522.

Requirement or remote maintenance:
Be strong while stay gentle



TOPOLOGY AND
CONTROL
DESIGN
OPTIMIZATIONS



Main Motivations for Custom Robotic Development #2



➤ Industrial robot have very complicated human-robot interfaces demanding intense operators training, controls are not open to be integrated in our control system, communication channel is often via radio signal, not built to reduce contamination risks etc.



➤ Necessity of having the human, the machine and the interface working together adopting **user friendly interfaces**

- ✓ Increase of proprioception reducing operators stress



CERNTAURO framework [7]



CERN Telemanipulation semi-Autonomous Unit for Robot Operations



Mechatronic System



← Perception

← Actuation

← Motion

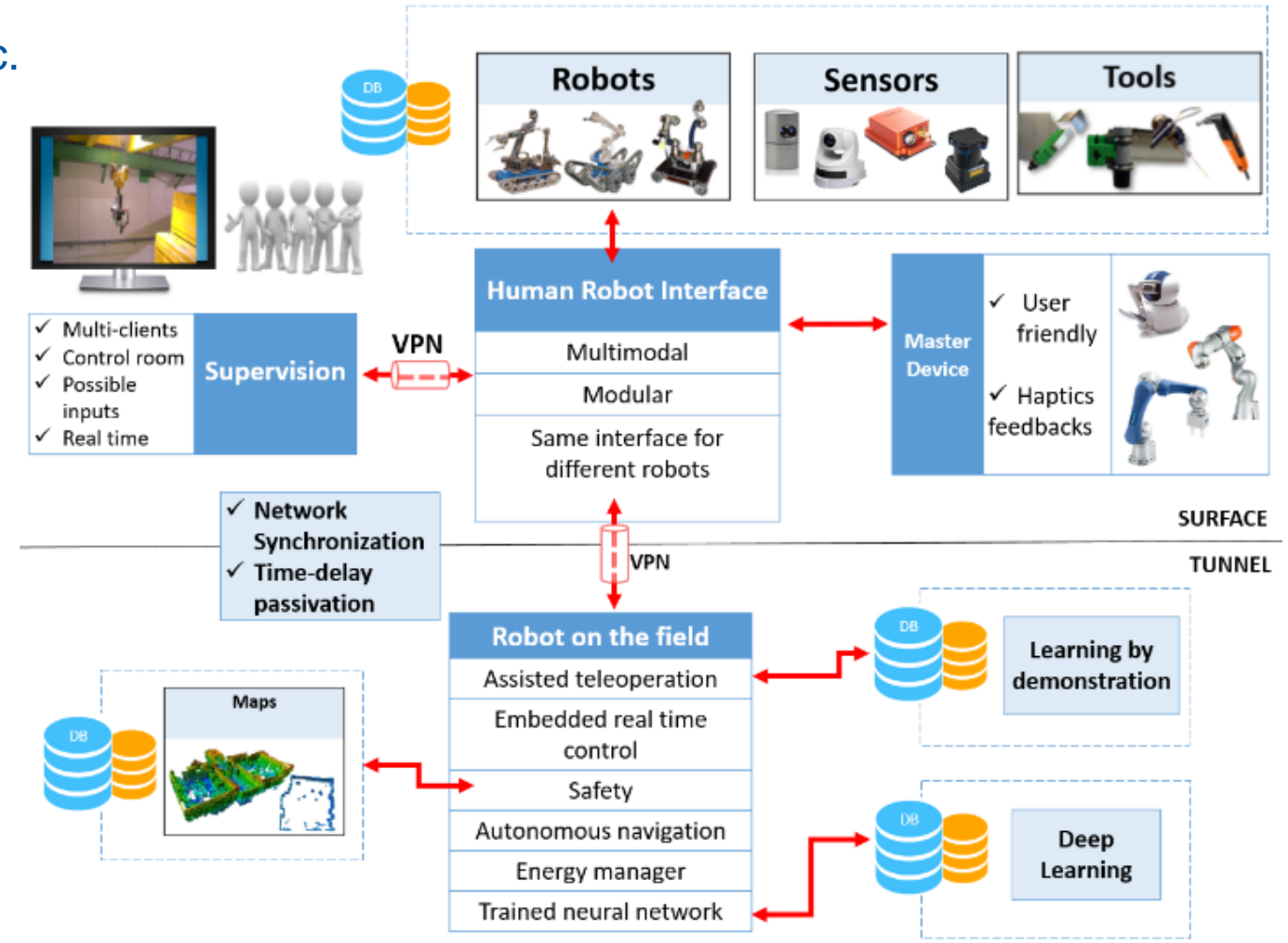
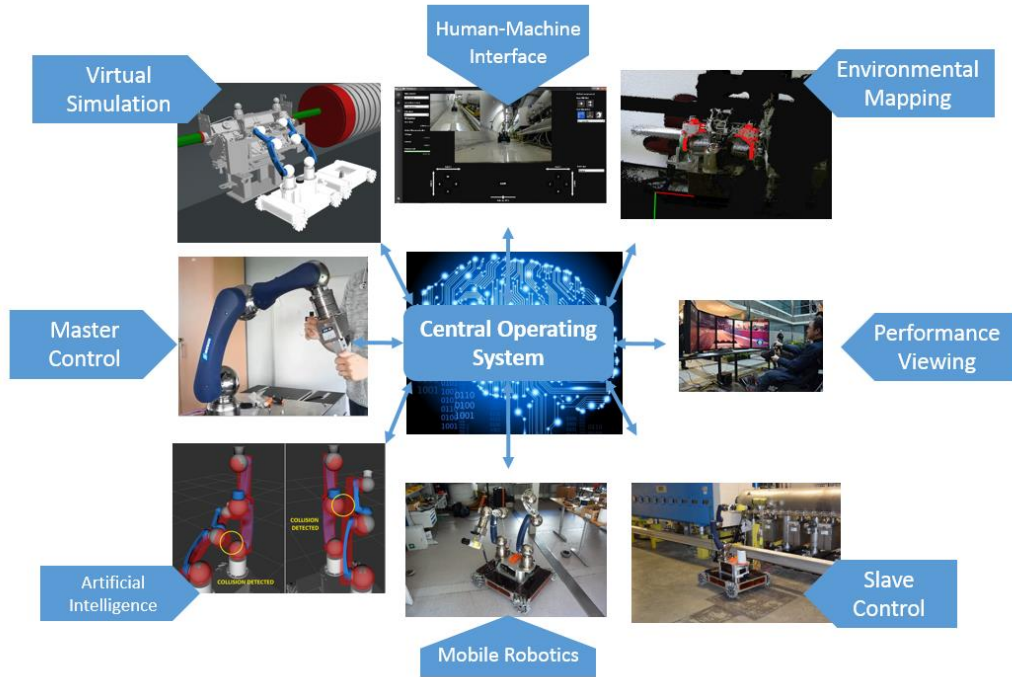
- **New robot and robotic control developed [9-39]**
 - ✓ Human robot interface
- **New user-friendly bilateral tele-manipulation system**
 - ✓ Haptic feedback
 - ✓ Assisted teleoperation
- **Artificial intelligence [30-31-38-40]**
 - ✓ Perception and autonomy
 - ✓ Deep learning
- **Operator and robot training system [41]**
 - ✓ Virtual and augmented reality
 - ✓ Learning by demonstration



CERNTAURO framework



- In house robotic control system [7]
- No use of ROS [8]
- Sensor acquisition, fusion, measurements etc.



Interaction vs Autonomy vs Proprioception



➤ Interaction

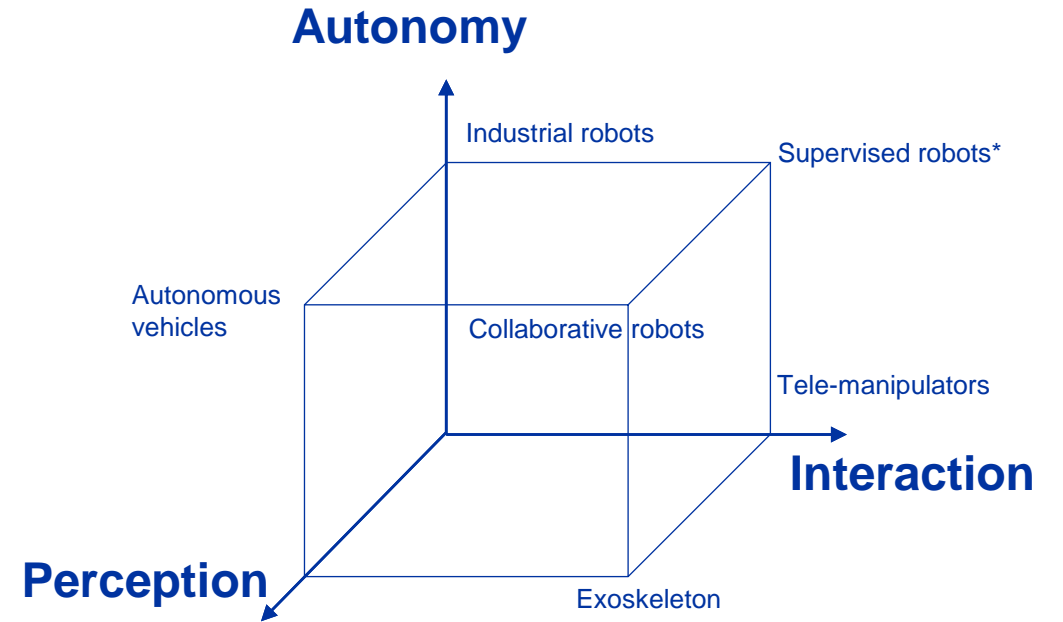
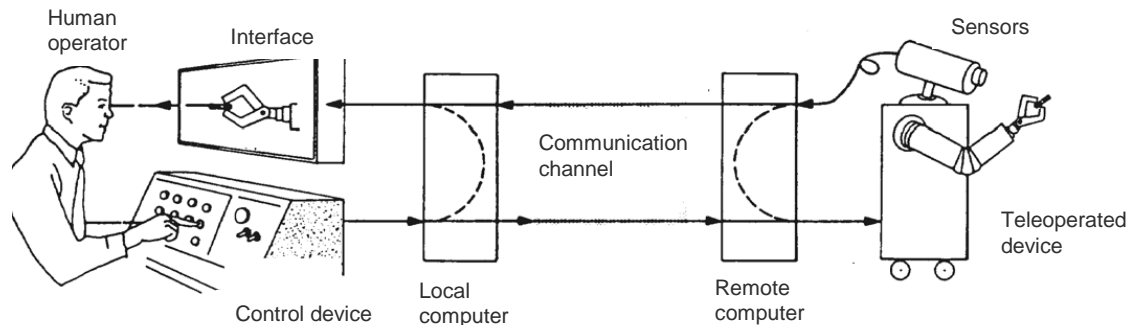
- ✓ Possibility of human-robot communication

➤ Autonomy

- ✓ Capacity to decide independently the action to be taken in function of the environmental perception

➤ Perception

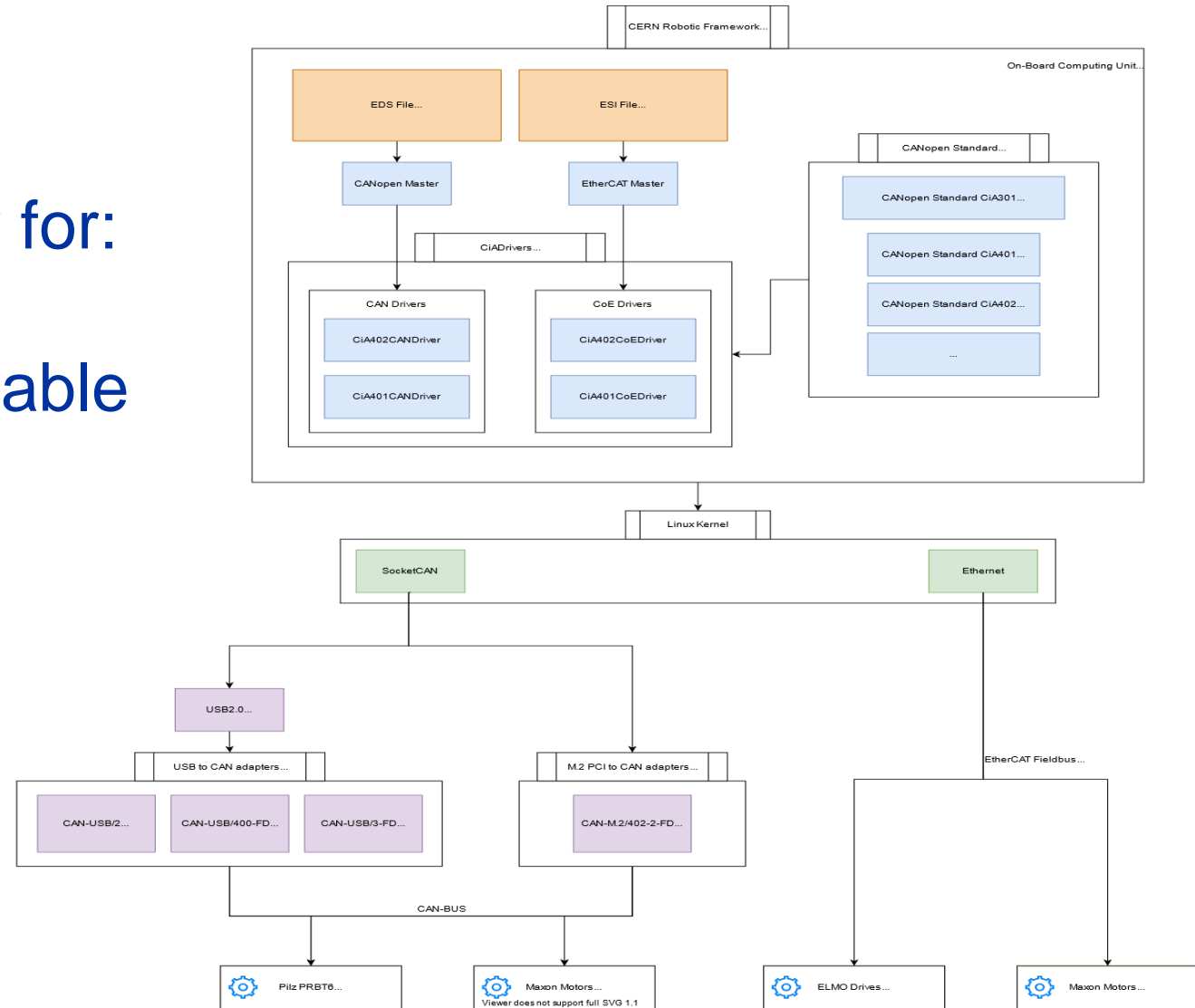
- ✓ Spatial localization of the operator and the robot



FIELDBUSES

Migrating to EtherCat mainly for:

- ✓ Real-time controls
- ✓ Ethernet based, easy to cable
- ✓ Redundancy



Robot Topology Design Optimizations

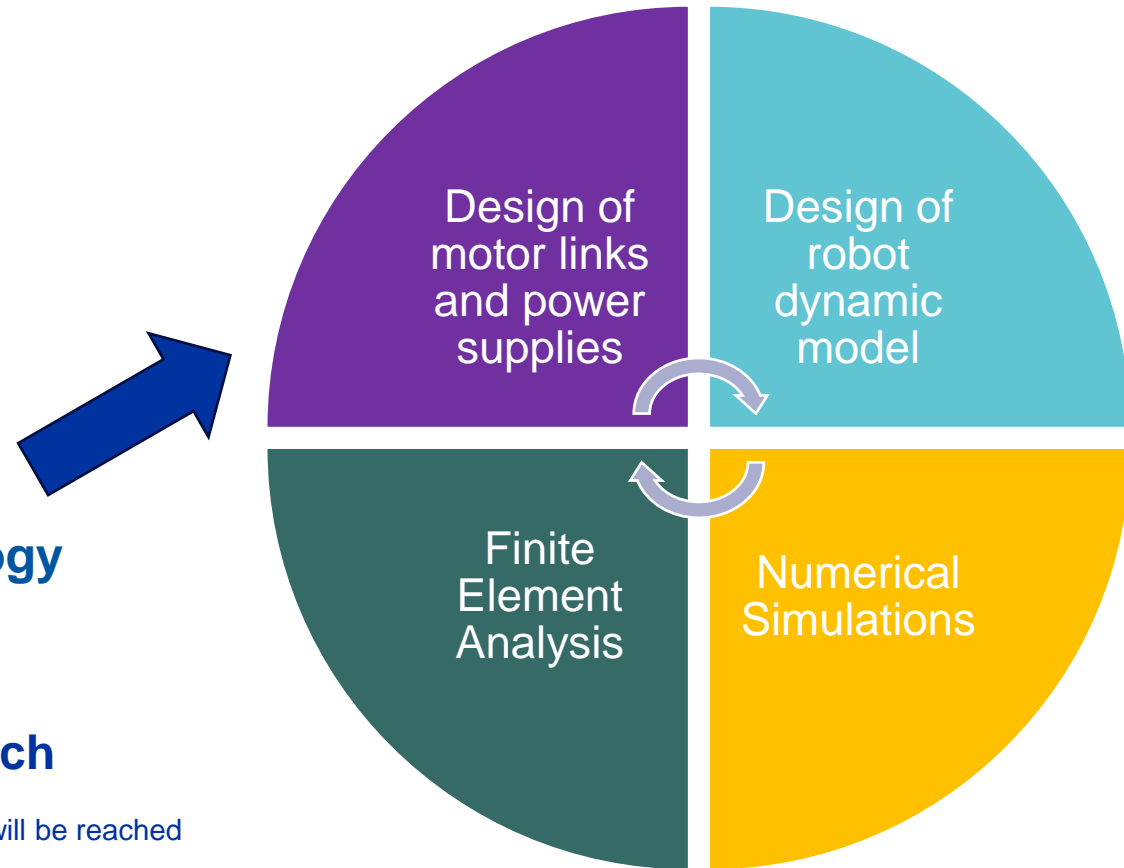


- Main general requirements when optimizing a robotic solution
 - ✓ Accessibility/compliance with environment
 - ✓ Supervised or fully Autonomous Interventions.
 - ✓ Detect Hazards.
 - ✓ Robust Control.
 - ✓ Low Maintenance.
 - ✓ Reliable/Redundant Power Supply.
 - ✓ Intuitive Human-Robot Interface (HRI).
 - ✓ Dexterity in Maneuverability.

- Novel algorithm for **simultaneous optimization of topology and geometry**

- ✓ \mathbf{p} contains the **N links length**
- ✓ \mathbf{x} contains the **point of interest to reach**

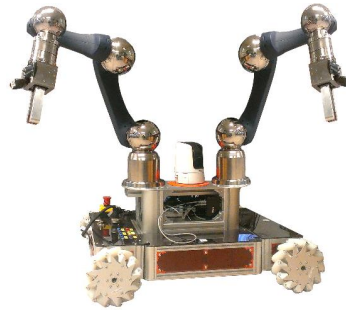
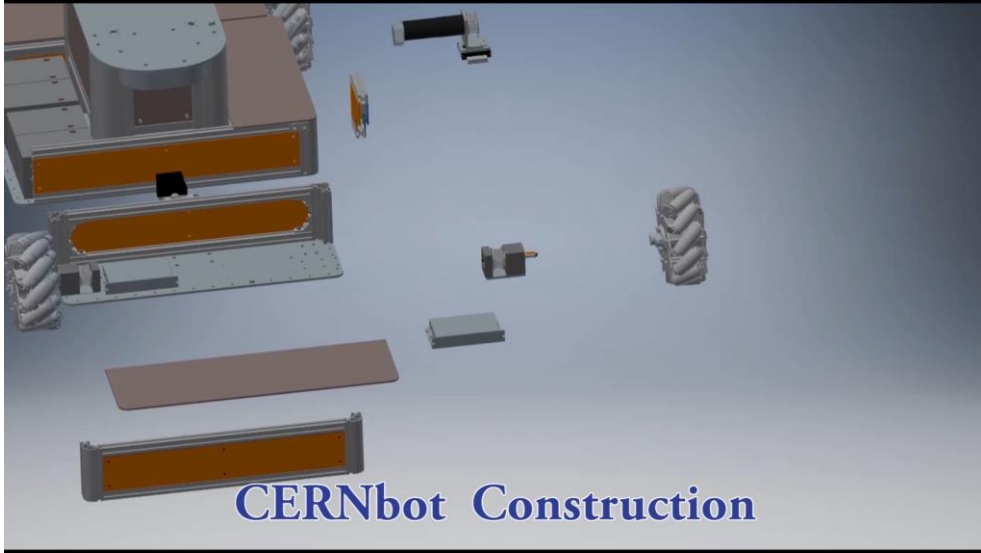
$$\begin{aligned}
 \min_{\mathbf{x}, \mathbf{p}} \quad & J(\mathbf{x}, \mathbf{p}) \\
 \text{s.t.} \quad & \mathbf{f}(\mathbf{x}, \mathbf{p}) - \mathbf{z}_d = \mathbf{0} \longrightarrow \text{Constraint to ensure that the desired end position will be reached} \\
 & -\mathbf{c}(\mathbf{x}, \mathbf{p}) \leq \mathbf{0} \longrightarrow \text{Constraint for collision avoidance} \\
 & \mathbf{ub}(\mathbf{x}, \mathbf{p}) \leq \mathbf{0} \\
 & \mathbf{lb}(\mathbf{x}, \mathbf{p}) \leq \mathbf{0} \longrightarrow \text{Constraints for mechanical joint limits}
 \end{aligned}$$



More info on Monday presentation, paper TUMBCMO25, session Feedback Systems & Optimisation MO3A



Modular Robot/Concept (CERNbot)



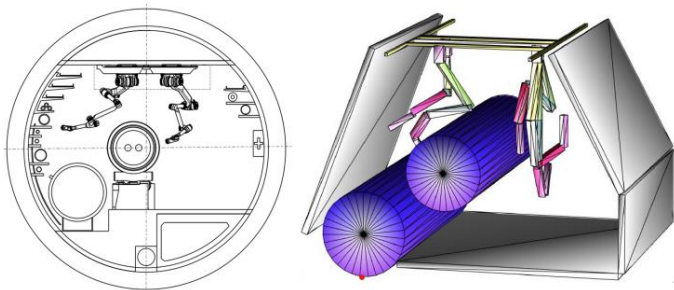
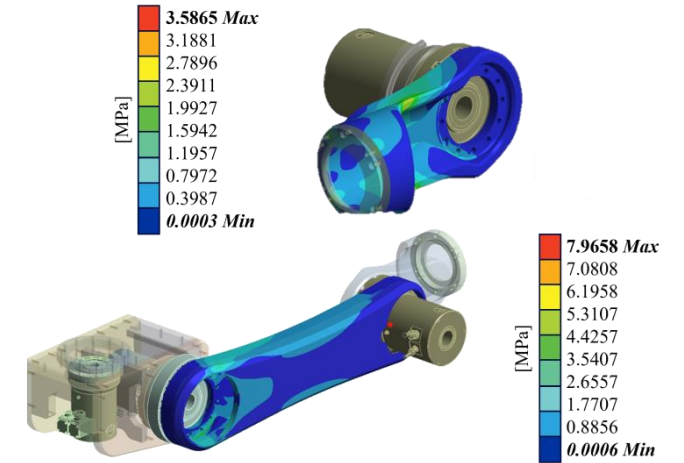
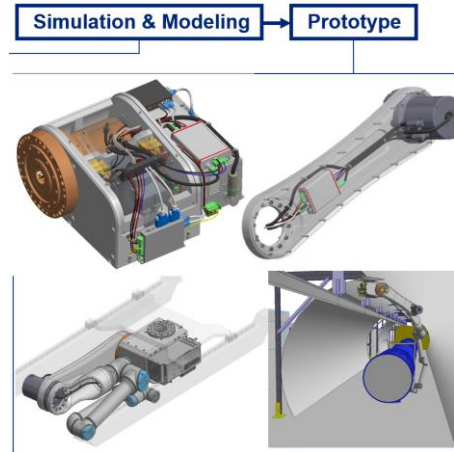
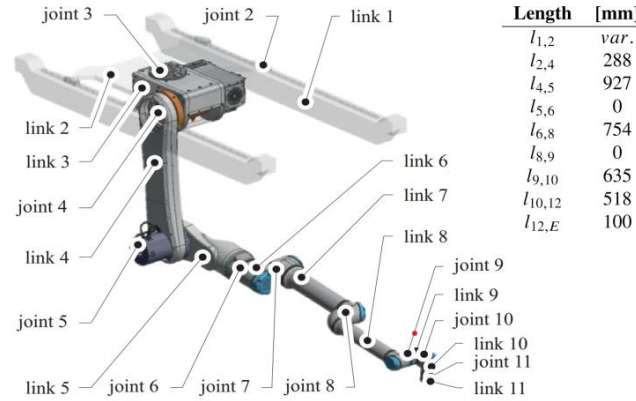
CERNbot, CERNbot2, CHARMbot, MIRA, CRANEbot

FCC Robot Design

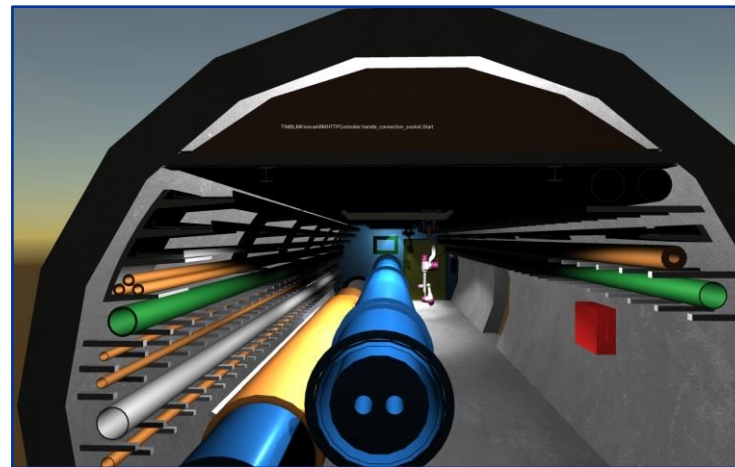
Gamper, H.; Gatteringer, H.; Müller, A. and Di Castro, M. (2021). **Design Optimization of a Manipulator for CERN's Future Circular Collider (FCC), ICINCO 2021**



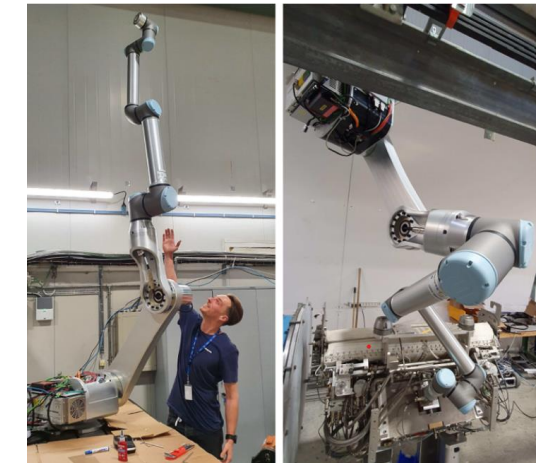
- | | Requirements |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Maintenance | Cover full work space |
| | Stable movement along tunnel axis |
| | Pass Fire Doors |
| | Robust Collision Avoidance |
| | High Dexterity Manipulator |
| | Autonomous operation |
| | Operate in cluttered work space |
| | Specific Tools |
| | Tool Changer |
| | Fast Interventions |
| | Modularity |
| | Teleoperation with Haptic Feedback |
| End-effect payload ~ 15 kg | |
| Material transport Payload ~> 50 kg | |
| Emergency | Not Blocking Emergency Ways |
| | Specific Tools (Infrared Camera, Radar, Locate & extinguish fire) |
| | Move in Harsh Cluttered Environment |
| | Robot Speed ~ 34.2 km/h |



Requirement studies



Optimized Geometry and topology

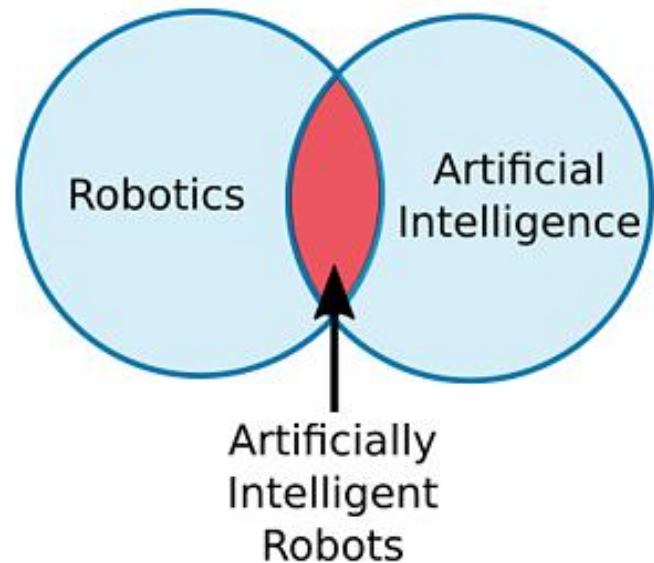


Topology optimization results and device realization

Controls Optimization Are Essential for Physical Interaction



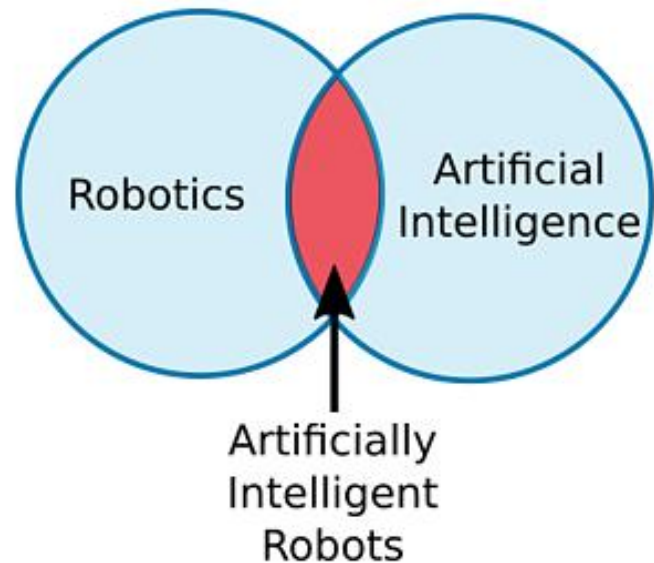
- Main difference between a robot and a computer is a physical action
- In robotics → dealing not only with information technology but with **“interaction” technology**
 - ✓ Physical interaction (e.g. human-robot interaction) that should be treated with specific robotic controls
 - ✓ Compliant robotics controls (**shared controls, haptics, perception, proprioception etc.**)
 - ✓ Compliant mechanics, soft materials etc.



Controls Optimization Are Essential for Physical Interaction

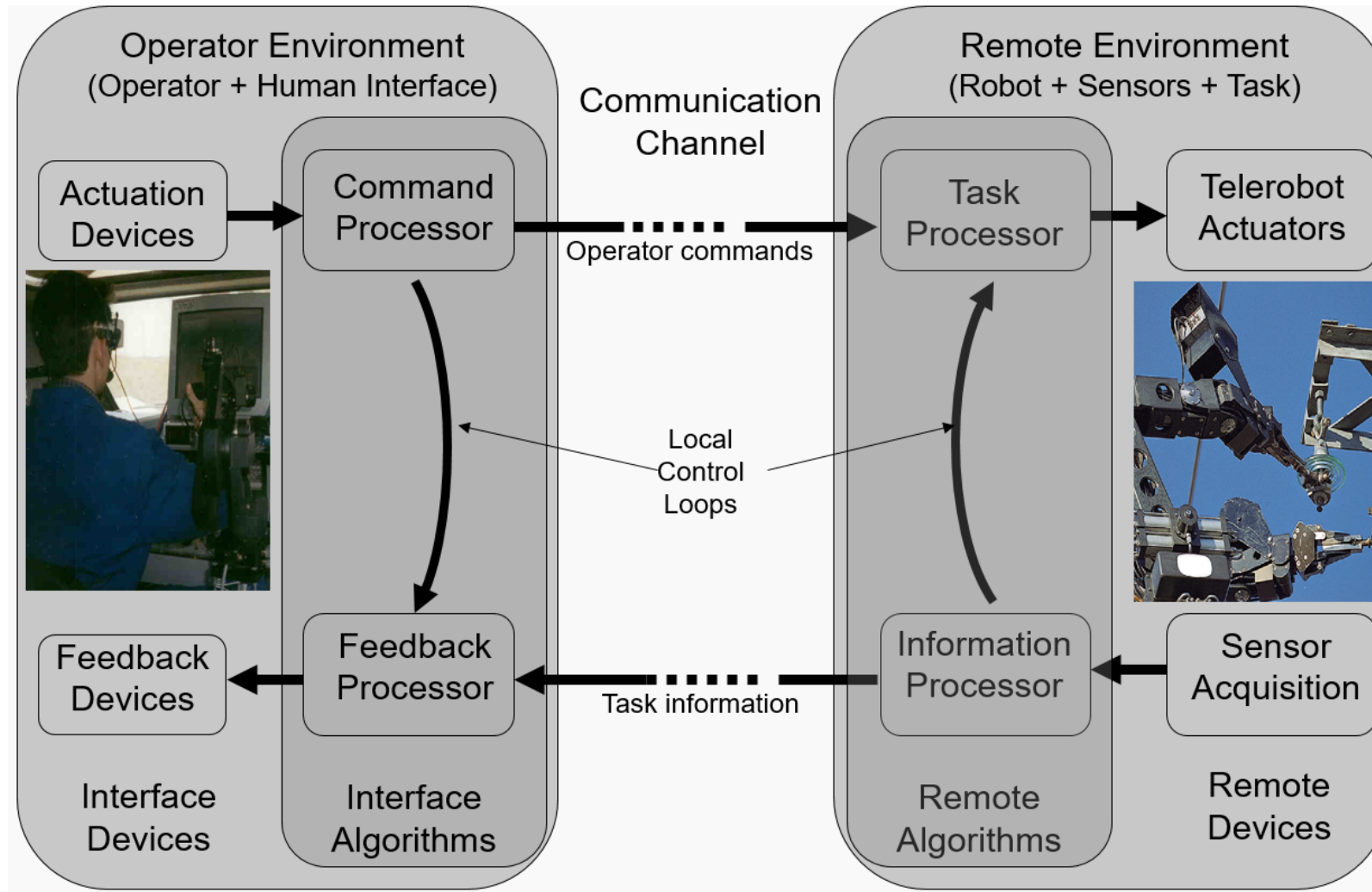


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- In robotics → dealing not only with information technology but with **“interaction” technology**
 - ✓ Physical interaction (e.g. human-robot interaction) that should be treated with specific robotic controls
 - ✓ Compliant robotics controls (**shared controls, haptics, perception, proprioception etc.**)
 - ✓ Compliant mechanics, soft materials etc.



Modern Times, 1936 movie from Charlie Chaplin

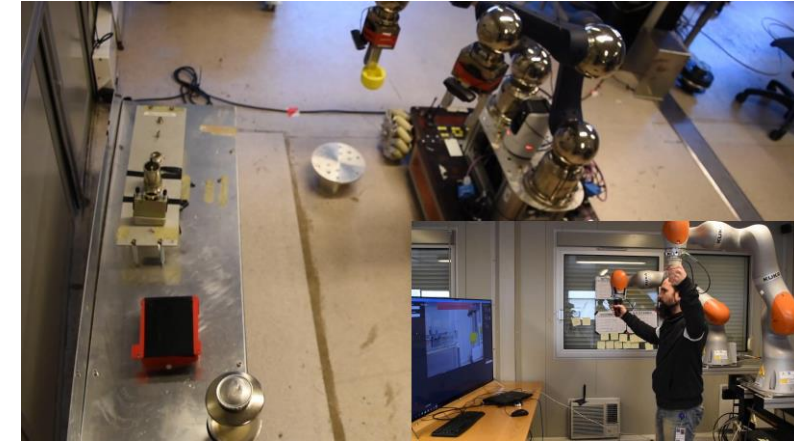
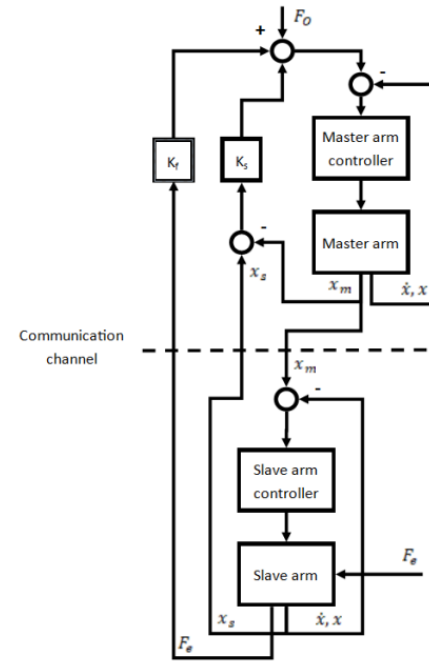
Control Strategies: General Scheme of a Teleoperated System



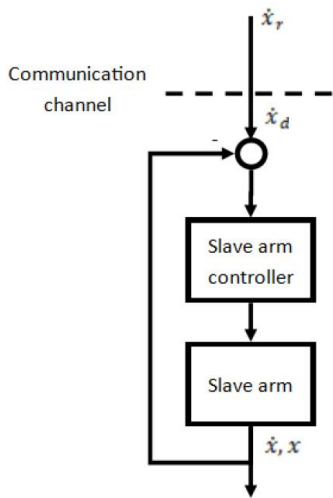
Control Strategies: from standard teleoperation to shared controls



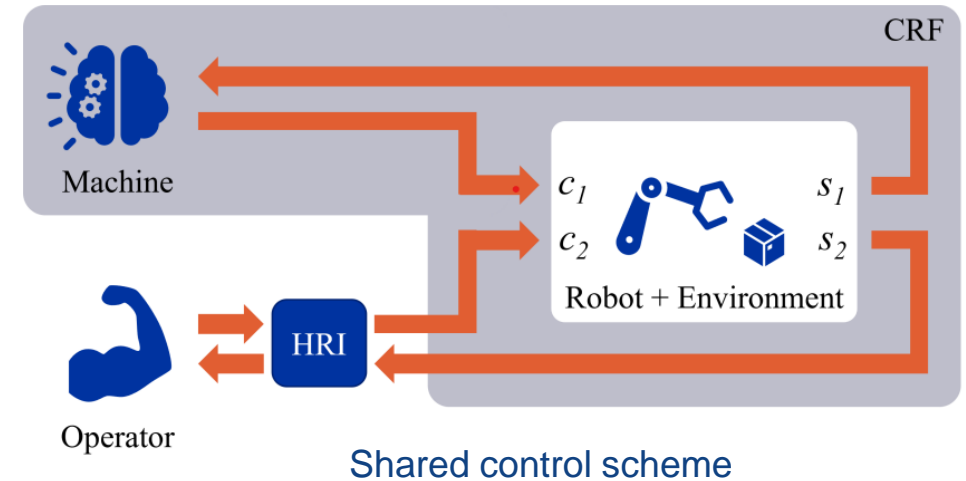
- Improve operation efficiency by moving from **standard teleoperation controls** (unilateral and bilateral) to supervised autonomy
- The control of the robot must be able to adapt to what the human operator believes is pertinent → **Shared Controls**



Bilateral teleoperation



Unilateral teleoperation



Shared control scheme

Shared Controls



- **Semi-Autonomous Control (SAC)**
 - ✓ **Parallel autonomy**
 - ❑ Involves both human operators and autonomous controllers concurrently controlling separate variables

Parallel autonomy: Variable Impedance Control



➤ Adapts the contact forces to the task characteristics

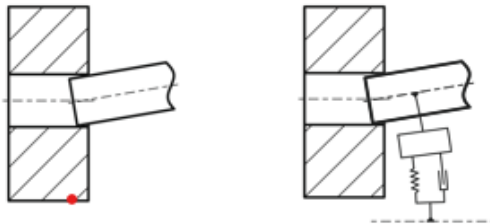
- ✓ Imitation on how we/humans naturally adjust the stiffness of our muscles when we interact with objects that have varying rigidity.

$$F = M\ddot{x} + D\dot{x} + Kx + f + s$$

Mass-spring damper model for the variable impedance

The impedance can be adapted to the task characteristics.

- Compliant robot for delicate tasks.
- Stiff robot for high precision tasks.



Peg-In-Hole

Parallel autonomy: Variable Impedance Control



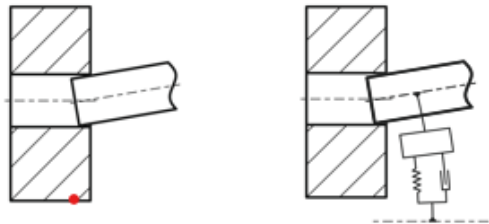
- **Adapts the contact forces to the task characteristics**
 - ✓ Imitation on how we/humans naturally adjust the stiffness of our muscles when we interact with objects that have varying rigidity.

$$F = M\ddot{x} + D\dot{x} + Kx + f + s$$

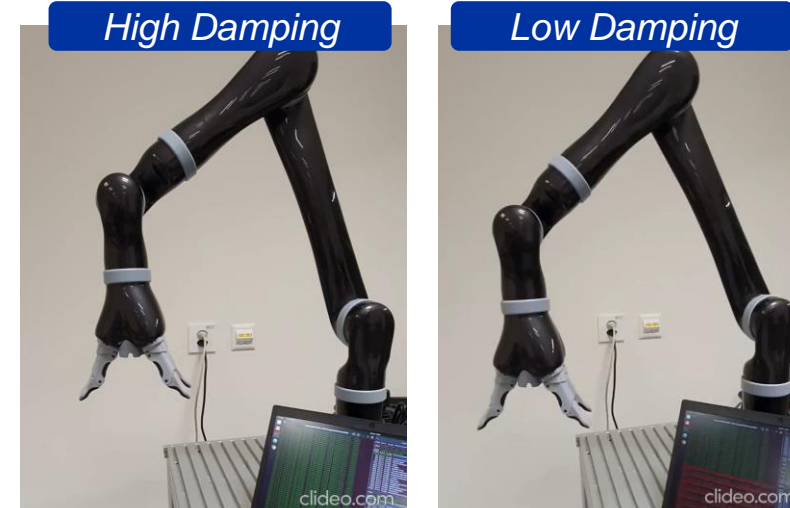
Mass-spring dumper model for the variable impedance

The impedance can be adapted to the task characteristics.

- Compliant robot for delicate tasks.
- Stiff robot for high precision tasks.



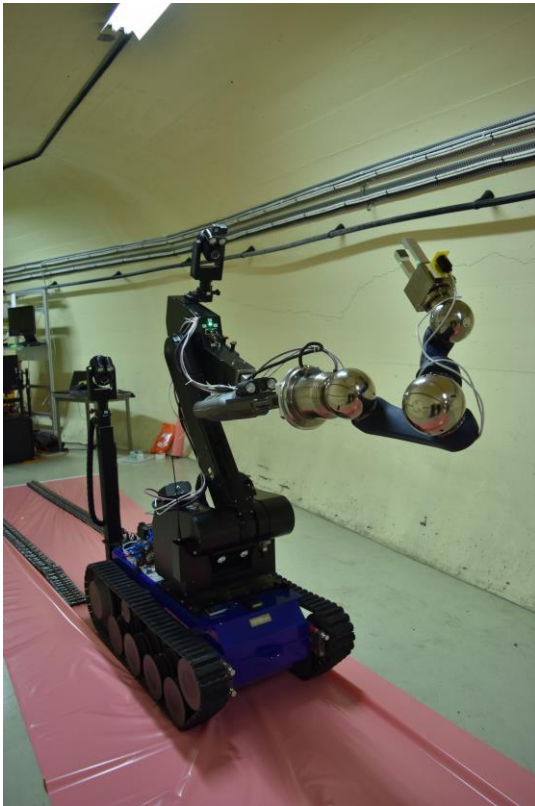
Peg-In-Hole



Modular Controls



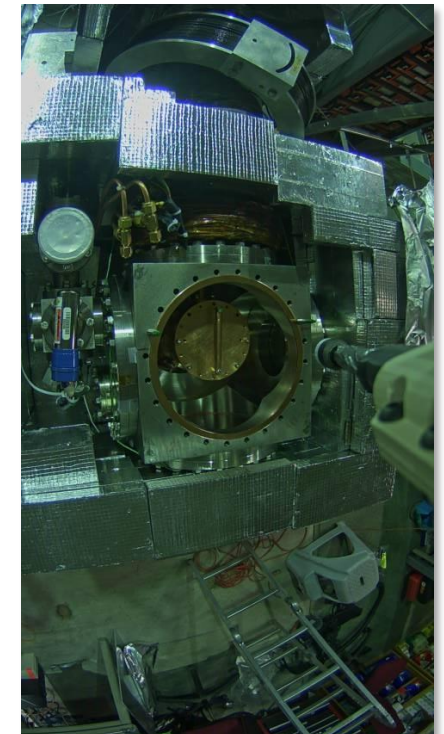
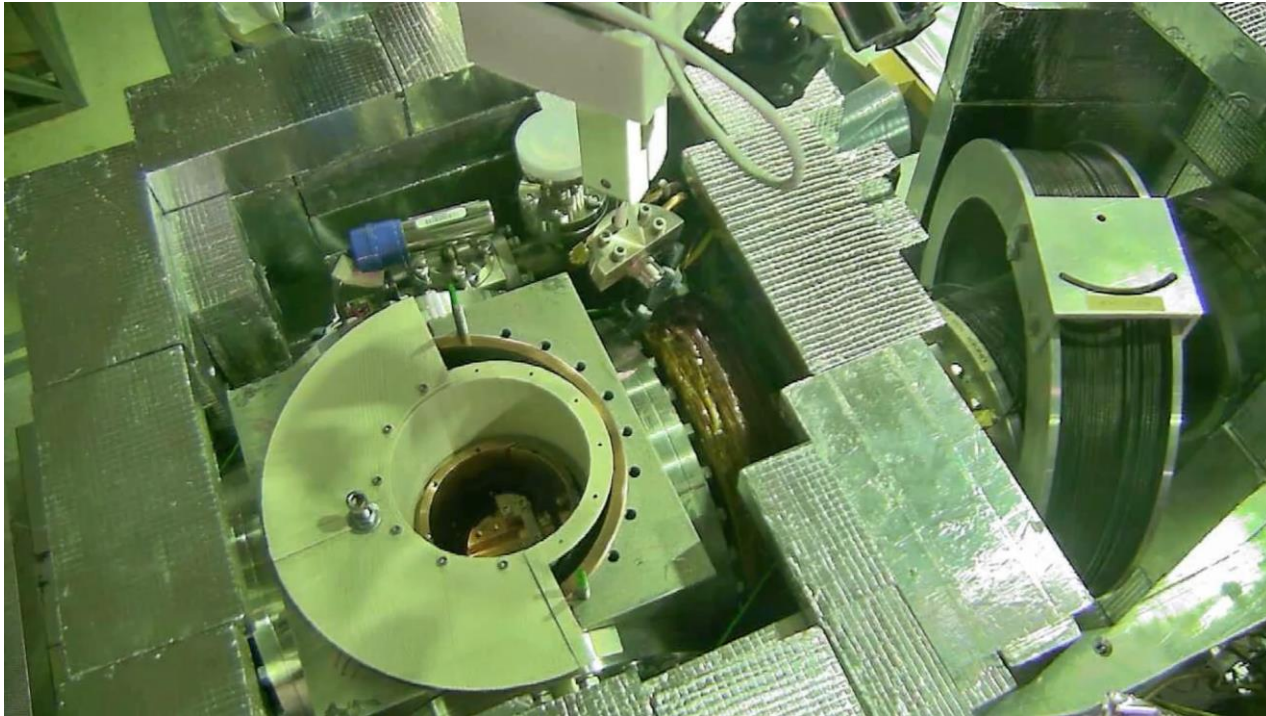
- Particle beam target maintenance, integration of CERNTAURO on industrial robot
 - ✓ CERNTAURO adaptability → seamless control of multi-robots
 - ✓ Manipulation from unstable support



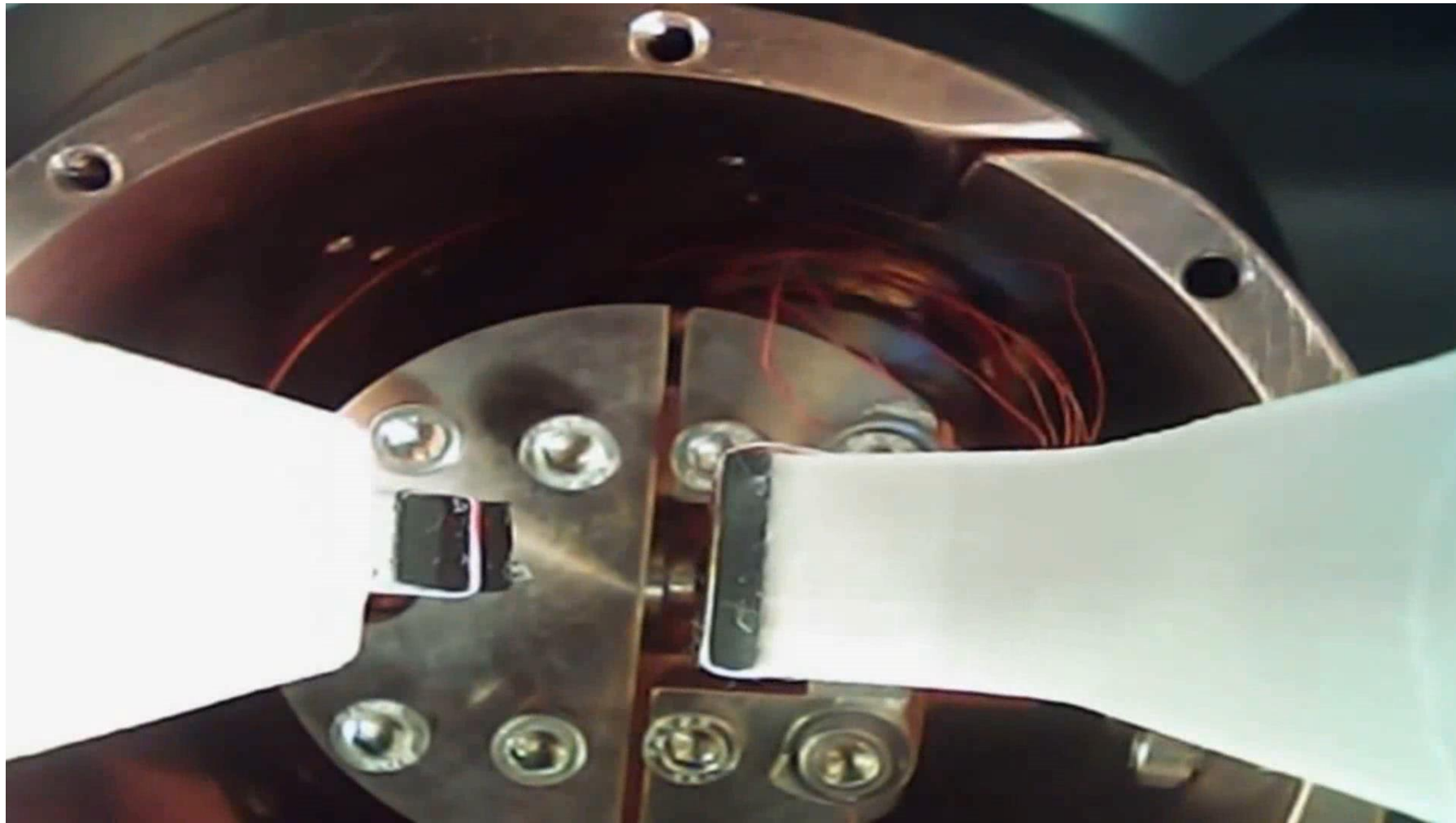
Challenging Teleoperation Example#1



- Radioactive source handling at 2.5 m height using CERNbot 2
 - ✓ **Intervention not possible to be performed by humans**
 - ✓ Bimanual operation, novel procedures and tooling
 - ✓ **CERNTAURO RH procedures and recovery scenarios allowed intervention acceptance by big science facility management**
 - ✓ **CERNTAURO bilateral master-slave control allowed precise telemanipulation of delicate objects**



Challenging Teleoperation Example#1



Robot realized for Quality assurance: RF cavity visual inner inspection

- ✓ Automatic system
- ✓ 8-10h hours of scan per part
- ✓ ~19'000 photos per scan
- ✓ ~1.5 Tb data per scan
- ✓ Anti-collision system based on lasers
- ✓ High resolution camera and Liquid lens
- ✓ System unique in the world

• **Defintions**

Camera positions (end-effector): $\chi_{ee} = \begin{pmatrix} x_{ee} \\ y_{ee} \\ \psi_{ee} \end{pmatrix} \quad \psi_{ee} = \alpha + \beta$

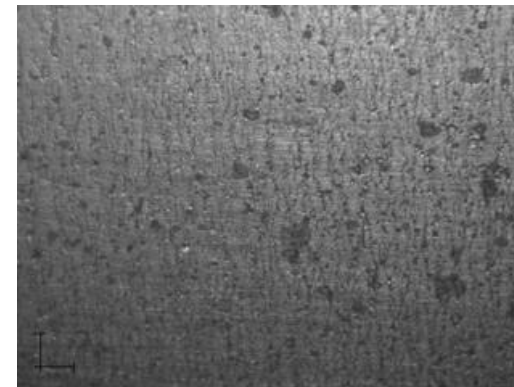
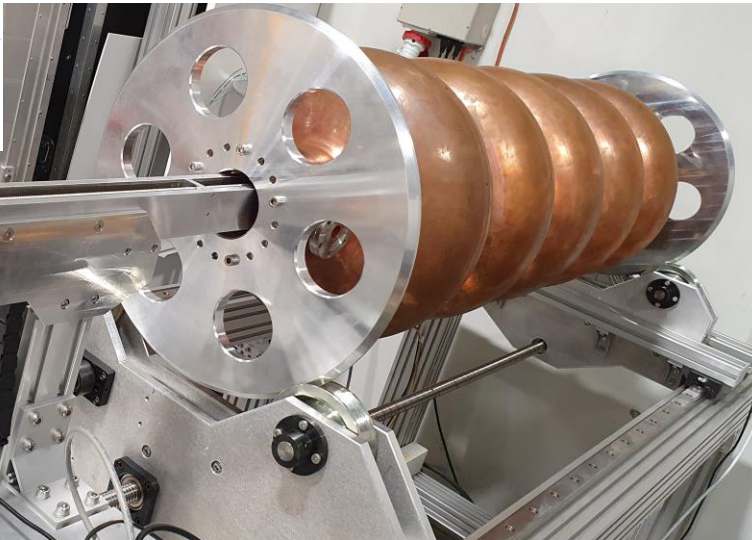
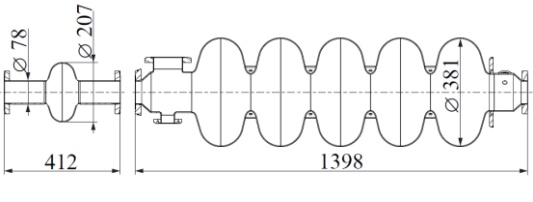
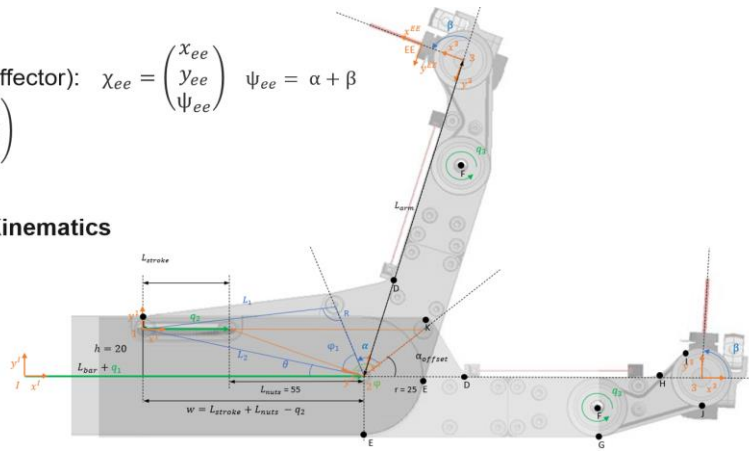
Joints Space: $q_{ee} = \begin{pmatrix} q_1 \\ q_2 \\ q_3 \end{pmatrix}$

• **Forward & Inverse Kinematics**

$$\dot{\chi}_{ee} = J_A(q) \dot{q}$$

$$\Delta q \cong J_A(q)^{-1} \Delta \chi_{ee}$$

$$q_{Next} \cong q_{Actual} + \Delta q$$



Images size: 1 x 1 cm taken at 23 mm distance

Collaboration with SY-RF, Courtesy of A. Luthi

Established partnerships for European Projects



- We are chairing the Teleoperation topic group of the EuRobotics consortium (<https://www.eu-robotics.net/>)
- Consortiums built for European Projects calls (RECONDITION, BIANCA, HUROSHARE, SCORE, POLE)
- Participation in the European robotic Challenge (EUROC) and Puresafe projects

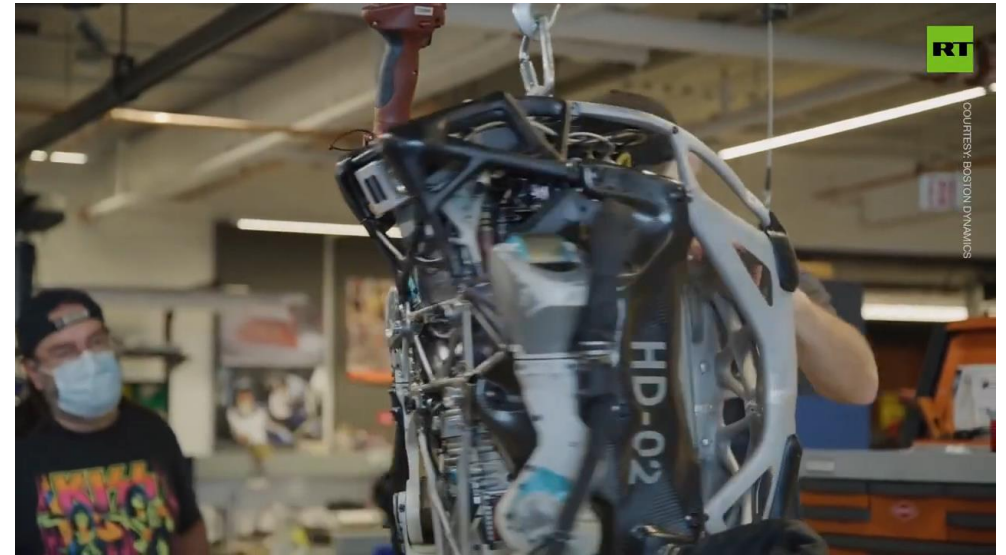


Conclusions



- Particle accelerators devices are normally installed for many years and tasks of dismantling radioactive objects is inherited by the future generation of physicists/technicians/engineers
- Maintenance and dismantling tasks, over a lifetime of a particle accelerator device, must be taken into account at design phase
- Robotic intelligent and robust systems can increase personnel safety and machine availability in performing such tasks
- Ready-to-use industrial solutions do not exist for user friendly remote maintenance and inspection
- We gained an important knowledge and experience in designing, producing and applying robots in harsh and hazardous environment
- External collaboration with Robotics Research Centres and Universities is crucial to take advantage of the cutting edge technology

Are Robot “serving” humans? ... or we are serving robots?



RI

COURTESY: BOSTON DYNAMICS





Many colleagues contributed to the robotic activities during the last years .
 Lots of students (TRNEE, TECH, DOCT)



Robots and robotic instrumentation need a crew to use them and maintain and experts in-house to be effective

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More on : Academic training lectures on
robotics,
<https://indico.cern.ch/event/1055745/>

“If you have an apple and I have an apple and we exchange these apples then you and I will still each have one apple. But if you have an idea and I have an idea and we exchange these ideas, then each of us will have two ideas.”

George Bernard Shaw

Mario.Di.Castro@cern.ch

Backup Slides

Robotics and Ethical aspects



- Ethical aspects [3] [4]
 - ✓ Will robots replace humans?
 - ✓ Will robots take our jobs?
 - ✓ Will robots make humans unnecessary?
 - ✓ Is humanity just a phase in a robotic evolution?



Robotics for us



- There is a lot of potential in this technology to be beneficial for people
- Ultimately, everything depends on how we decide to use the technology

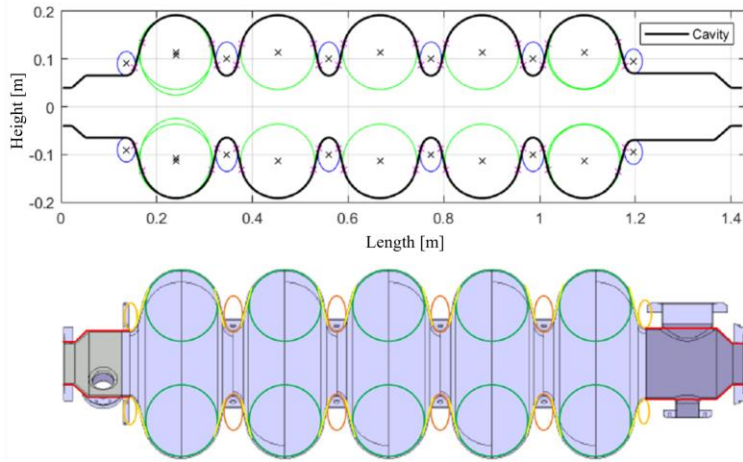


**Robots must improve the quality of work by taking over dangerous, tedious and dirty jobs that are not possible or safe for humans to perform.
ALARA principle followed for each intervention**

Case Study #2: RF cavity inner surface visual inspection



➤ The optimal design of the inspection arm gives the starting point for the mechanical design of the robotic system.



• **Defintions**

Camera positions (end-effector): $\chi_{ee} = \begin{pmatrix} x_{ee} \\ y_{ee} \\ \psi_{ee} \end{pmatrix}$ $\psi_{ee} = \alpha + \beta$

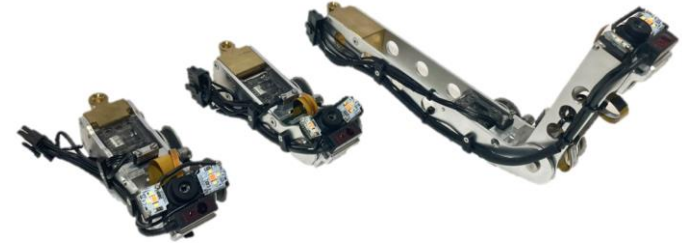
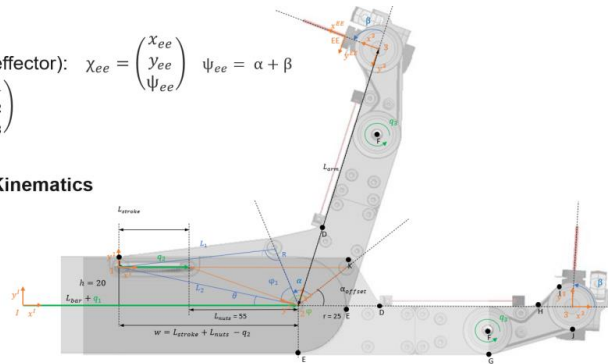
Joints Space: $q_{ee} = \begin{pmatrix} q_1 \\ q_2 \\ q_3 \end{pmatrix}$

• **Forward & Inverse Kinematics**

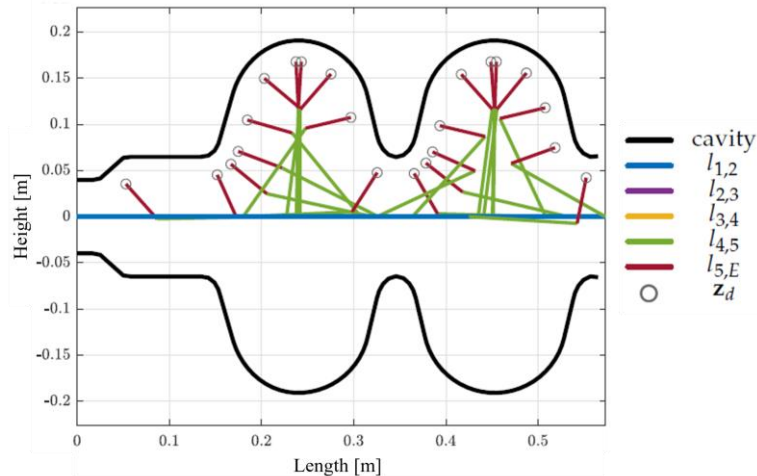
$$\dot{\chi}_{ee} = J_A(q) \dot{q}$$

$$\Delta q \cong J_A(q)^{-1} \Delta \chi_{ee}$$

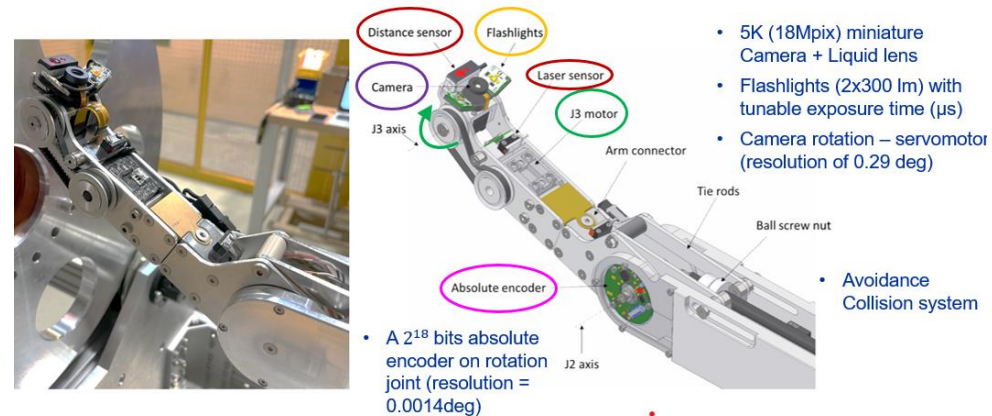
$$q_{Next} \cong q_{Actual} + \Delta q$$



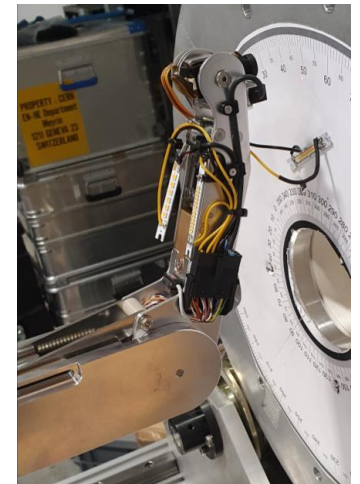
The operation requirement/environment of the cavity inspection robot



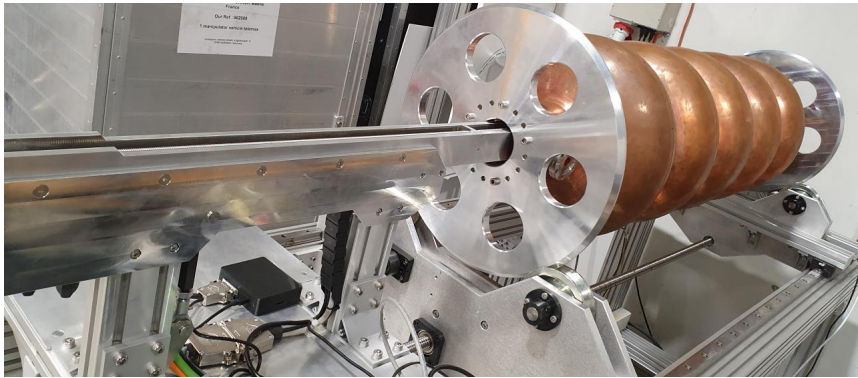
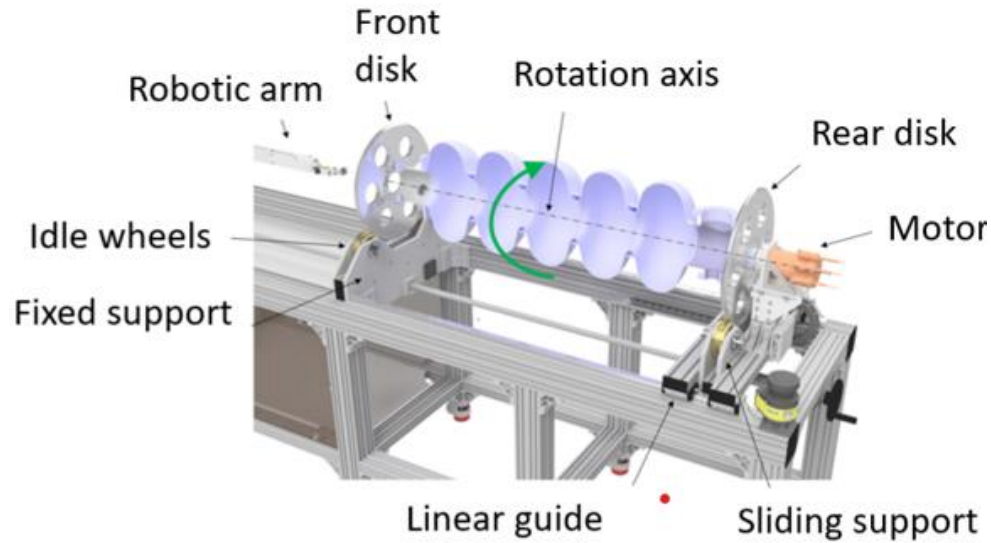
The optimal topology and geometry of the cavity inspection arm after applying the model pruning technique



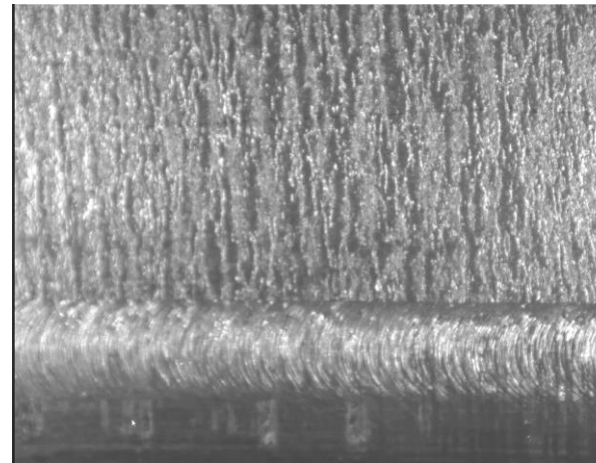
The mechanical design of the robotic arm and its realization based on the optimized design space



Case Study #2: RF cavity inner surface visual inspection



RF cavity inspection test bench



Autofocus on image of the cavity iris welding.
Size: 1 x 1 cm taken at 23 mm distance



Robotic arm inside the cavity