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An online database of nuclear electromagnetic moments

T.J. Mertzimekis *, K. Stamou, A. Psaltis

University of Athens, Faculty of Physics, Zografou Campus, GR-15784 Athens, Greece

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ABSTRACT

Measurements of nuclear magnetic dipole and electric quadrupole moments are considered quite important for the understanding of nuclear structure both near and far from the valley of stability. The recent advent of radioactive beams has resulted in a plethora of new, continuously flowing, experimental data on nuclear structure – including nuclear moments – which hinders the information management. A new, dedicated, public and user friendly online database (http://magneticmoments.info) has been created comprising experimental data of nuclear electromagnetic moments. The present database supersedes existing printed compilations, including also non-evaluated series of data and relevant meta-data, while putting strong emphasis on bimonthly updates. The scope, features and extensions of the database are reported.

1. Introduction

Just over a hundred years after the discovery of the atomic nucleus by Rutherford, the field of Nuclear Physics is going through its second blooming season. The principal reason of flourishing is the advent of radioactive beams (RIB) that have become available at a routine basis in several international facilities around the world, providing new and exotic probes for nuclear-structure and reactions studies. As a direct consequence, several novel experiments are planned and carried out in RIB factories, resulting in a plethora of new data spanning all edges of the nuclear chart. Observables, such as lifetimes, electromagnetic moments and spectroscopic factors in exotic species are measured, taking advantage of newly developed or upgraded methods.

The importance of nuclear magnetic dipole and electric quadrupole moments (hereafter EM moments) in understanding the structural properties of isotopes is well recognized (see for example [1]). Magnetic dipole moments of ground and excited states provide reliable input on the nature of the wave function in terms of proton and neutron contributions, while the electric quadrupole moment is the most important tool to collect evidence on the shape of the nucleus. With RIB factories creating nuclei far from stability and making them accessible to experimenters, investigations of EM moments have been expanded to these new species, thus providing important feedback to nuclear structure. For the same reason, experimental data of nuclear EM moments are now collected at fast rates, offering invaluable understanding of the extremes limits in the Segré chart.

Gathering and organization of the experimental nuclear EM moments data into an efficient scheme that would be able to facilitate systematic search and usability of those data is thus considered of paramount importance. Along the same line, tabulations of nuclear electromagnetic moments data were attempted already in the 1950s [2–4] and continued [5–9], while they are sometimes accompanied by theoretical interpretation of moments [10].

The latest and most complete compilation existing today is the extensive work by N.J. Stone [11]. Stone's compilation organizes horizontally evaluated experimental data of magnetic dipole and electric quadrupole moments in tables in a systematic way. It has established itself as the main reference in the field for longer than a decade [9,11–13], including data and meta-data from earlier compilations, mainly from the works of Raghavan's [6] and Pyykkö's [8].

Independently of the integrity and completeness of tabulation, updates (if any) of all existing printed compilations have appeared sporadically, essentially been left in an asynchronous mode compared to experimental data accumulation. The important evaluation procedure is also time consuming. The necessity to enrich and expand the existing EM data compilations with recently published data, but mainly the intention to provide the scientific community with easy access to those data by means of modern online technology, is the main motivation behind the present work. It has to be noted that continuous maintenance and frequent updates of the database are also important issues confronted on the practical end.

* Corresponding author.
E-mail address: tmertzi@phys.uoa.gr (T.J. Mertzimekis).

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2. Database scope and structure

The primary scope of the online database is to provide published experimental data collected during low-energy and intermediate-energy nuclear experiments and associated metadata involving nuclear EM moments. Existing tabulated data until 2010 were transferred directly from published material, such as Stone's compilations existing in both preprint [12] and published versions [9,13]. More recent data have been collected by searching articles in more than twenty (20) international peer-reviewed journals, as well as Proceedings Volumes of International Conferences (e.g. AIP and IoP series), with relevant material. The searching procedure has been greatly assisted by modern technologies offering dynamical content, currently available in most online journals (e.g. RSS feeds), social networks and online archiving tools that provide automation at several stages. Additional data sets have been found by researching listings in the Nuclear Science References (NSR) database [14]. The NSR, hosted at the National Nuclear Data Center (NNDC), has been invaluable in tracking down citations and links to original articles missing from previous compilations. NNDC also hosts the ENSDF [15] and XUNDL [16] databases. XUNDL acted as a role model at the beginning for the EM database development. However, the archiving and evaluation of EM data differs significantly from XUNDL's. The EM moments database is enriched with experimental data that have not been evaluated. Despite evaluated nuclear moments data are considered crucial for the community, thorough evaluation presents a great level of difficulty, demanding close collaboration of experts in the field of nuclear moments at an international level. If the nuclear community moves towards such a direction in the near future, the nuclear EM moments database will incorporate those data sets.

There has been significant effort in updating the EM moments database at a frequent, regular basis in a consistent and systematic way so as to preserve the integrity of information embodied to the database. In the recent past, the time interval between updates has averaged a period of two months. This time interval seems to be optimal for the amount of work required compared to the number of available experimental data published in various sources. Once gathered, the information is filtered offline to obtain the EM moments data, the data are then post-processed and formatted before being uploaded to the server.

The database is currently hosted on a leased cloud server under a privately own URL, equipped with the latest version of the Apache webserver [17], MySQL database backend [18] and PHP handlers [19]. The server is accessible over the standard SSH communication protocol, additionally safeguarded by firewall software. Automatic backups occur weekly on both the server end and the offline mirrored directory.

The structure of the database is sketched in Fig. 1. Its essential parts are described in more detail below.

2.1. The frontend

The frontend of the database is the place where the user sends a query to the database. This query is processed, the data are retrieved and presented back to the frontend. In the present paper, version 2 of the database is discussed, as it evolved from version 1 that was built exclusively in HTML. Version 1 was developed in 2009 [20] and included a limited set of experimental data found in literature up to 2005, about 30% of what the database contained when this manuscript is written.

Version 2 of the database has been completely redesigned from scratch to improve functionality and user friendliness. Cutoff date of the database reported here is early 2012. Two ways of interaction with the user are currently available. The first option of a user

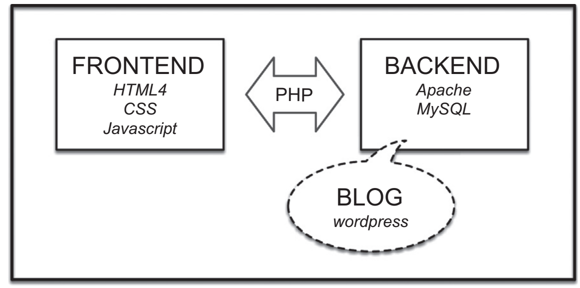

Fig. 1. Outline of the database structure. The technologies supporting the main components are shown in smaller font.

interface (UI) utilizes a standard periodic table graphical structure (Fig. 2). The second UI is a helix-type graphical interface, where information can be retrieved by selecting the atomic number, Z, of the element (Fig. 3). Both UI options use the same backend, assisted by standard CSS3 web technology. Once an element (i.e. the corresponding Z) is selected, all available isotopes of the element appear in a horizontal list. That list may be explored further by choosing the desired isotope. For each isotope, all available EM data are presented in a table format that is explained below. In addition to those two methods of retrieving data from the backend, a webform is provided in the first UI, where the user can input queries for Z, A or both. This method functions dynamically and can be used in a more powerful way (e.g. obtain data for a specific mass chain simultaneously).

For each isotope requested, a table of data is printed on the frontend, organized in columns and rows. Columns given are the following:

- The isotope selected (e.g. ^{26}Mg).
- The level energy in keV (e.g. 1809).
- The halflife of the level (e.g. 476 fs).
- Spin and parity of the level (e.g. 2^+).
- The magnetic dipole moment value, μ, given in nuclear magneton units (μ_N); in case several measurements exist, typically the most recent value appears on top (e.g. $+1.0(3)$).
- The electric quadrupole value, Q, in units of $e \cdot b$; for multiple values, data are given as described above.
- The reference isotope and corresponding energy level in case of a relative measurement (e.g. ^{24}Mg 1369 keV).
- The experimental method used to perform the measurement, abbreviated (e.g. TF for "Transient Field"). Abbreviations are adopted from Stone's compilation to maintain user's familiarity with earlier conventions. A short description of the technique is provided when hovering the mouse over the abbreviation listed in the table.
- The NSR keyword, e.g. 1981Sp04. The corresponding URL has been added to hyperlink the NSR to the relevant citation [14].
- The Digital Object Identifier (DOI) [21] is provided for easy access to the published material containing the original measurement (e.g. 10.1016/0370-2693(81)90200-8). The DOI is provided with a URL to lead the user to the original source. To the best of our knowledge this is the only specialized nuclear database (other than NSR) that provides **direct** link to the publication via the DOI.

Besides nuclear EM moments data, the database has included evaluated data of elementary particle magnetic moments, incorporated directly from the Particle Data Group website [22]. Data are listed per particle in a simple data format, selecting from the categories: baryons, mesons, leptons, gauge. It is noted that no magnetic moment data are yet available for mesons. This category is included only for the sake of completeness.