

Press Release

Bern, 30 March 2017

European Girls' Mathematical Olympiad to be hosted in Zurich for the first time

The mathematically gifted young women come from 43 countries. From 6 to 12 April 2017, 168 middle school students will come together for the European Girls' Mathematical Olympiad to take place in Switzerland for the first time. The competition is organised by the Swiss Mathematical Olympiad and will be hosted by the University of Zurich and ETH Zurich. The young mathematical talents will compete in two examinations for medals and build friendships across countries.

The European Girls' Mathematical Olympiad (EGMO) has been promoting mathematically gifted young women since 2012. Now the International Scientific Olympiads will be held in Switzerland for the first time. The opening ceremony at ETH Zurich on 7 April marks the official start of the competition.

The University of Zurich (UZH) and ETH Zurich have agreed to serve as host institutions. Volunteer members of the Swiss Mathematical Olympiad SMO (imosuisse) are responsible for organising the event. Viviane Kehl, President of imosuisse and student of mathematics at ETH is emphatic: "We want to offer the young women challenging examinations that are instructive and impart the fascination for mathematics. Equally important is the exciting social program in which the girls can get to know each other." A team of around 65 volunteers provide support during the week.

Logic and creativity help win a medal

On 8 and 9 April, the 168 mathematical talents from 43 countries get down to business. They complete two four-and-half hour examinations – the most important feature of the Olympiads. The three problems are from the areas of algebra, combinatorics, geometry and number theory. Andreas Bärtschi, Organiser of the EGMO and doctoral student at ETH explains what is needed in order to solve them successfully: "Required are logical thinking, creativity and stamina – as well as a lot of practice beforehand." Gold, silver and bronze medals await the best students. The medals are presented on 11 April during the closing ceremony on the Irchel Campus of the University of Zurich.

Mathematics is the common denominator of the 43 country delegations

At the EGMO 2017, each of the 43 countries is represented by a team of four middle school students. The participants come from all over Europe, from Spain to Ukraine. In addition, the organisers are pleased to welcome ten non-European delegations, such as Japan, Tunisia, Mexico, Saudi Arabia and the USA. The 168 students are among the most gifted young mathematicians in their home countries, where they have qualified for the EGMO in Zurich in national competitions. Being the host country, Switzerland is allowed to participate with two delegations. The team includes four students from the canton of Zurich and one each from the cantons of Geneva, Vaud and Glarus. An additional delegation comes from the Principality of Liechtenstein, whose students have also qualified in the national competition in Switzerland (see back page for a list of the delegations).

Intellectual challenge combined with intercultural exchange

In addition to the goal of instilling an interest in mathematics in young, talented women through intellectual competition, the Olympiads are also based on the idea of promoting cultural exchange. Over the course of one week, the participants and their approximately 110 chaperones have the opportunity to connect and communicate across language and cultural divides. The program of activities includes a trip to Mount Rigi, a scavenger hunt through Zurich and a panel discussion with female mathematicians about their career and professional environment in research, industry and business.

The contenders of today are the professionals of tomorrow

The EGMO contributes to the promotion of young females with mathematical talent. Women in particular are underrepresented in many study programs in the STEM disciplines of science, technology, engineering and mathematics as well as in scientific and technological occupations. The EGMO wants to motivate and inspire the participants into these fields— and to tap into the potential of young female talent more effectively. Mathematics is a key technology for our society. Without it there would not be any pin codes, computer tomography or internet search engines. Promoting good young talent is therefore absolutely essential.

Links:

www.egmo2017.org

www.facebook.com/EGMO2017

www.imosuisse.ch

www.olympiads.ch

Photos of delegations from Switzerland and Liechtenstein:

www.flickr.com/photos/137351000@N04/sets/72157678197718123

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European Girls' Mathematical Olympiad 2017 Delegations

Switzerland

First name	Name	Place of residence		School
Nathalie	Bäbler	Elm	BoD	Kantonsschule Glarus
Ivana	Klasovita	Aeugst am Albis	ZH	MNG Rämibühl
Viera	Klasovita	Aeugst am Albis	ZH	MNG Rämibühl
Kanella	Minakaki	Bachenbülach	ZH	Kantonsschule Zürcher Unterland
Yunshu	Ouyang	Grand-Saconnex	RU	CEC André-Chavanne
Anaëlle	Pfister	Yverdon	VD	Gymnase d'Yverdon
Yuxi	Zheng	Hedingen	ZH	Kantonsschule Limmattal

Principality of Liechtenstein

First name	Name	Place of residence		School
Annika	Oehri	Ruggell		Liechtensteinisches Gymnasium
Nicole	Ospelt	Vaduz		Liechtensteinisches Gymnasium
Ladina	Wohlwend	Schellenberg		Liechtensteinisches Gymnasium