

Press Release

Zurich, 12 April 2017

Medals for mathematically gifted girls from all over the world

Girls and mathematics: The two go together perfectly as proven by the 168 middle school students from 43 countries at the European Girls' Mathematical Olympiad. The Olympiad came to an end yesterday with the closing ceremony at the University of Zurich. 86 young women earned a gold, silver or bronze medal. Three contestants from Switzerland also received a bronze medal.

On 8 and 9 April, students from 33 European countries and 10 guest countries demonstrated their mathematical ability and creativity. On two glorious spring days, they completed the two four-and-half hour examinations at Irchel Campus of the University of Zurich (UZH). The payoff for all the hard mental work came with a well-deserved reward in the form of the medal presentation yesterday evening. Sixteen students were awarded a gold medal at the festive closing ceremony at UZH. Silver went to 27 young women and bronze to 43. An additional 44 mathematical talents were distinguished with an honourable mention.

Solving problems with creativity and logic

The examinations placed considerable intellectual demands on the participants. Mathematicians and teachers from around 40 countries created the problems prior to the Olympiad. Swiss chair of the problem selection committee, Dimitri Wyss, explains what makes a good Olympiad problem: "The question must be understandable, have a certain degree of difficulty and be 'beautiful' at the same time." A problem is beautiful when it holds a surprise and the solution is discovered using not only a logical approach but creative ideas as well.

Switzerland and Liechtenstein win 3 bronze medals and 3 honourable mentions

Olha Shevchenko (Ukraine) and Qi Qi (USA) were particularly successful in solving the problems: These two young women were the only ones to achieve a perfect score. The other gold medalists were from Bosnia and Herzegovina, France, Kazakhstan, Russia, Serbia, Hungary, Saudi Arabia and the UK. The Swiss delegation is very pleased with the three bronze medals awarded to Yuxi Zheng from Hedingen (Kantonsschule Limmattal), Nathalie Bäbler from Elm (Kantonsschule Glarus) and Ivana Klasovita from Aeugst am Albis (MNG Rämibühl). An honourable mention went to Yunshu Ouyang from Grand-Saconnex (Collège André-Chavanne) and Viera Klasovita from Aeugst am Albis (MNG Rämibühl). Nicole Ospelt from Vaduz (Liechtensteinisches Gymnasium) received an honourable mention for the delegation from the Principality of Liechtenstein.

An experience that shapes the future of the young women in a positive way

Viviane Kehl, organiser of the EGMO and student of mathematics at ETH Zurich, sums up the event positively. The cooperation between the organisers, jury and volunteers from over 40 countries was excellent. She is confident that the EGMO is an experience that will also have a long-term impact: "My wish is for the participants to go home with the feeling that they are not the only women who love

mathematics and have a talent for it.” That is motivating and has a positive impact on the professional development of the young women.

Communicating across countries and cultures

The European Girls’ Mathematical Olympiad was not only about intellectual competition but also about fun and exchange between the participants. During the week, they were busy establishing relationships, and many new friendships were formed. The guests got to discover Switzerland with a trip to Mount Rigi or by embarking on a scavenger hunt through Zurich. The young talents are also thinking about their future: In a panel discussion, they met female mathematicians who talked about their career and everyday professional life – and encouraged them to pursue a career in mathematics. After all, there was no doubt at the EGMO 2017 that mathematics and girls go hand in hand.

Results:

<https://www.egmo.org/egmos/egmo6/scoreboard/>

Links:

www.egmo2017.org

www.facebook.com/EGMO2017

www.imosuisse.ch

www.olympiads.ch

Photos:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/egmo2017/albums>

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