



European Girls' Mathematical Olympiad 2017- Tuesday, 11 April

Address by Dr Silvia Steiner, Head of Canton Zurich Department of Education

Dear contestants, deputy leaders, leaders, coordinators and volunteers

I'm delighted to be talking to you today as the sixth European Girls' Mathematical Olympiad draws to a close.

In the last few days you've put in some fantastic intellectual performances. I hope you've had a lot of success, but I also hope you've had a lot of fun. Having fun isn't just motivating for young people like you, but also for adults like me. If I'm enjoying my work I get it done much better and more quickly.

As head of the education department I'm very proud that this year's Olympiad took place in Zurich. I think there are many reasons why Zurich was a good choice but I'd like to talk about three in particular:

- The first reason is Zurich's global standing as a centre of higher education and research. Zurich has not just one, but two top-ranked international universities: the University of Zurich, and the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, what we call the ETH.

The large number of successful businesses that operate internationally out of Zurich help make it even more attractive as a centre of knowledge and learning.



So if at any point in the future you're looking for a great place to study or a job in an innovative company, I can warmly recommend Zurich!

- The second reason why Zurich is the ideal venue for the Olympiad is the fact that our canton particularly encourages science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, the so-called STEM disciplines. The Zurich government has even made this a strategic priority.

To function properly, our economy and society need highly skilled people in these disciplines. So whether you choose to work in industry, medicine, banking, insurance or another field, we need you, the girls who take part in the Mathematical Olympiad – and we'll need you in the future too!

- The last reason why Zurich was such a good choice, but a very important one, is that we unfortunately still have too few women working in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. By taking part in the European Girls' Mathematical Olympiad you're showing the way forward for girls and young women all over the world. You're giving them an example of what can be achieved if you're curious and have confidence in yourself. I'd like to thank you for that. I'm also delighted that the long-term goal of the European Girls' Mathematical Olympiad is to increase the proportion of female participants at the International Mathematical Olympiad, the IMO.

In addition to promoting the next generation of thinkers, the European Girls' Mathematical Olympiad makes it possible for young people from different academic, social and cultural backgrounds from all over Europe to get together and



share. That's just what we need, because Europe's future belongs to young people!

Zurich is right at the heart of Europe. I hope you had the chance to get to know our beautiful city and the surrounding canton, and I hope to see you in Zurich again soon!

Many thanks for taking part!