

April 15, 2021
Vilnius, Lithuania

Dear Colleagues,

It has been a huge pleasure to see so many of you registering for the 51st International Physics Olympiad - IPhO 2021. We, the Organizers, are thrilled to invite you to join us this year in Vilnius, Lithuania or from the safety of your own country.

The preparations have not been easy. It's safe to say that no matter what, the IPhO 2021 will not be like any other IPhOs. Every cloud has a silver lining though. We took this test as an opportunity to apply new measures of safety, review our practices, and even offer a way to participate online. We hope that some of these new practices will make way in adapting the IPhO to the 'new normal' that will shape the world in the next years. For this reason we are asking all delegations who plan to join the IPhO 2021 online format to fill in and send us the IPhO 2021 good practices protocol before July 1st, 2021. We ask those delegations who plan to join IPhO 2021 physical format to sign once per delegation the acknowledgement of health risks document.

In this circular we present some further information to help you prepare for the IPhO 2021 and we dearly ask you to respect the schedule provided in this circular. We would like to emphasize the importance of registering your delegation size and providing the details about your invigilators. The details of the invigilators are required for a successful delivery of the exam kits to your country. As you still have a few weeks left to change the participation format, we ask you to do so in the critical change of circumstances only. If there are any relevant changes, we will keep the whole community informed about them through www.ipho2021.lt, the IPhO 2021 Facebook page and email communications.

Chairman of IPhO 2021 Organising
committee

Dr. Gediminas Beresnevičius



Chairman of IPhO 2021 Academic
committee

Prof. Dr. Habil. Edmundas Kuokštis



CONFIRMED COUNTRIES

Official replies have been received from 85 countries and regions. 48 have chosen to participate physically and 37 - online.

Physical Format

Afghanistan	Ethiopia	Lithuania	Slovenia
Armenia	France	Mexico	Russia
Azerbaijan	Georgia	Mongolia	Spain
Bangladesh	Germany	Nepal	Sweden
Belgium	Greece	Nigeria	Switzerland
Brazil	Hungary	North Macedonia	Thailand
Bulgaria	Iceland	Norway	Tunisia
Colombia	Israel	Oman	Turkey
Croatia	Italy	Pakistan	United Kingdom
Cyprus	Japan	Poland	Uzbekistan
Czech Republic	Kazakhstan	Saudi Arabia	
Denmark	Kyrgyzstan	Serbia	
El Salvador	Latvia	Slovakia	

Online Format

Australia	Estonia	Moldova	Sri Lanka
Austria	Finland	Montenegro	Syria
Belarus	Hong Kong, SAR	Myanmar	Taiwan
Bolivia	India	Netherlands	Tajikistan
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Indonesia	Philippines	Ukraine
Cambodia	Iran	Portugal	United Arab Emirates
China	Korea, South	Puerto Rico	United States of America
Ecuador	Luxembourg	Romania	
Egypt	Macao, SAR	Singapore	
	Malaysia	South Africa	Vietnam

PHYSICAL FORMAT

For online format go to [Page 7](#)

DELEGATION SIZE

Each participating country shall send a delegation consisting of up to five students and up to two team leaders. In addition to the official delegation, the team can be accompanied by observers, and visitors. **Please, set the delegation size immediately, if you haven't done so yet!**

LITHUANIAN HOSPITALITY

As mentioned previously, the IPhO 2021 Organizers will provide and cover the costs of meals, accommodation, excursions, and ground transportation from 3pm local time on July 17, 2021 to 11am local time on July 25, 2021.

Each team will be greeted by our volunteers at Vilnius Airport (VNO), Vilnius train station or Vilnius Bus Terminal. If you arrive by other means of transport or to another transport hub, we will welcome you at your designated hotel. We will inform you about the hotels individually at a later date.

Early arrivals can be arranged by indicating this in the registration system before May 14, 2021. Extra fees for early arrival will be automatically applied to your pro-forma invoice. If your delegation wishes to arrive more than one day early or depart later than the end of the IPhO 2021, you will have to arrange your own accommodation but we are very happy to point you the right direction.

Please, note your scheduled arrival and departure times to avoid long waiting for check-in or your flight (e.g. if your flight arrives at 00.05 on July 17 and you choose arrival on July 17 your hotel room will only be available from 3pm which means you will have to wait for 15 hours).

REGISTRATION AND IMPORTANT DATES

Deadline to submit the delegation size	April 2, 2021
Last day to submit the details of delegation members and last day to modify the selected format of participation	May 14, 2021
Deadline for payments by bank transfer	June 17, 2021
Deadline for registering the arrival details	July 1, 2021

All students' calculators will be checked at the registration. To avoid any misunderstandings please, indicate the calculator make and model at the registration system.

The calculators will be collected and the data in data storage (if any) will be deleted.

If you wish to use the calculator provided by the organizers, you will have the right to do so. The organizers will provide Citizen SR-270N calculators. You can find the user manual for these calculators online in many languages.

English manual is at:

<https://www.citizen-systems.com/en/products/calculator/sr-270n>

EXAM TRANSLATION & INTERNATIONAL BOARD MEETING

We will be using Oly Exams (<https://www.oly-exams.org>) for exam translations as well as for the International Board meeting. Since this is an online based tool we highly recommend bringing at least one laptop per delegation dedicated to the team leaders' work.

We will send you the login details in an automated message soon. We recommend you to log in before the start of the IPhO 2021 and get accustomed with this tool.

Your electric plug might differ from the sockets used in Lithuania. Don't forget to bring a power adapter. We will be using a wifi network for connection, please make sure that your computer can connect to wifi.

COVID-19 RELATED INFORMATION

Arrivals

It is likely that similar travel restriction measures will stay in place over the summer as they are now.

Covid test. Regardless of the situation, every member of your delegation will have to provide a negative COVID-19 test (molecular or PCR) taken no earlier than 72 hours before your arrival;

or present a record of fully completed vaccination against COVID-19 using European Medicines Agency (EMA) approved vaccines (at this moment these are vaccines from Pfizer, AstraZeneca, Johnson&Johnson, and Moderna);

or a proof of having successfully recovered from COVID-19 in the period of less than 180 days. The document should be stamped by an official stamp and must be accompanied by a Lithuanian, English, or Russian translation.

Self-isolation requirement. We are working to have the self-isolation requirement waived for all the delegations. We will inform the community in the unlikely case of mandatory self-isolation.

If you are coming from within the EU: You will be required to present a negative COVID-19 test upon arrival. We expect to have the self-isolation requirement waived for the delegations.

If you are coming from outside of the EU: You will most probably need to wait for a special decree that will be issued by the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Lithuania. This decree will provide an exceptional reason for the delegation members to enter the Schengen area during the pandemic.

As you can understand, it's very important for the organizers to know the delegation details as soon as possible in order to issue the decree.

Please keep checking <https://koronastop.lrv.lt/en/> for the latest travel restrictions and requirements.

During the IPhO 2021

To be admitted to the IPhO 2021, all participants will have to either show a proof of successfully completed vaccination or a negative COVID-19 test (molecular or PCR) to be presented upon arrival at the airport. Don't forget to bring your favorite protective mask, if you have one.

Testing is planned about every second day of the event using rapid tests.

All teams will be grouped into social bubbles. All students will be grouped into smaller social bubbles (about 3 teams) until the end of exams (afternoon of July 21). From that point on, the students will be grouped into larger social bubbles (about 50 people).

All team leaders, observers, and guests will be divided into 2-3 social bubbles. Cultural activities will be limited but we still plan to organize open-air excursions and experiences for all those willing to join. All those who don't wish to join will have to remain in their hotel rooms for the health safety reasons.

Dinner galas will be cancelled except for the final dinner after the closing ceremony.

All activities will strictly follow the safety and hygiene requirements issued by the National Public Health Center.

In the case of COVID-19 detection

Testing for COVID-19 will be done frequently.

In the case where a student tests positive before the exams, the social bubble will be isolated. Those in the bubble except the student who tests positive will take the exams in an isolated room with high security measures. The student who tests positive will be excluded from the competition.

In the case where a student tests positive after the exams, the social bubble will be isolated. All those in isolation will be offered to join the activities of the online format remotely from their hotel rooms.

In the case where a team leader, an observer, or a guest tests positive, the whole social bubble will be isolated. The team leaders and observers will join the relevant activities online from their hotel rooms.

IMPORTANT! If any member of a delegation needs to remain in isolation after the official end of the IPhO 2021, they will have to cover all expenses on their own including the accommodation, food, and healthcare costs. The Organizers do not assume any liability for the possible financial or health damages especially those related to getting COVID-19.

Other risks related to COVID-19

The times of pandemic require special measures and pose certain risks. The Organizers of the IPhO 2021 would like to emphasize the free choice between the physical and online versions of the competition. Those who join the physical format do so under no pressure and assume all the risks. For this reason we ask you to sign the acknowledgement of health risks involved in the physical events. **We ask you to sign one copy per delegation and send it to info@ipho2021.lt before July 1, 2021.**

ONLINE FORMAT

DELEGATIONS

Each virtually participating country shall establish a delegation consisting of up to five students and up to two team leaders. In addition, at least one invigilator will be required. Please, check the [preliminary guidelines](#) for the online format to learn more about the duties of the invigilator.

If you haven't done so yet - please submit your delegation size as soon as possible!

DELIVERY OF THE EXAM KITS

We will deliver the experiment kits to the invigilators' address. The invigilator will be responsible for all the customs procedures (if applicable) and for safekeeping of the kits until it's time to use them. We plan to send the kits in mid-May to allow enough time for them to reach the destinations. Needless to say, **it's imperative to have full and accurate data about the invigilators to deliver these kits.**

We will also send some standard equipment such as pencils, rulers, etc. and some IPhO 2021 goodies to your teams. We plan to send this separately from the exam kits.

IMPORTANT! We cannot guarantee the delivery of the exam kits to you in time for the IPhO 2021 if you are late to provide the delegation size and full details of the invigilator. Therefore, failure to provide those details by May 14, 2021 will be considered as a refusal to participate in the IPhO 2021.

REGISTRATION AND IMPORTANT DATES

Deadline to submit the delegation size	April 2, 2021
Last day to submit the details of delegation members and last day to modify the selected format of participation	May 14, 2021
Deadline for payments by bank transfer	June 17, 2021

ACCOMMODATION AT HOME

If you join the online version of the IPhO 2021, your team will have to cover all the travel and accommodation costs associated with the participation in the IPhO 2021. We would like to ask you to properly monitor the students from July 18 to 21, 2021 either in one place or several places under strict supervision. We will require further details about it in the good practices document.

THE GOOD PRACTICES PROTOCOL

IPhO 2021 is the first IPhO in history to offer online participation. Along with the honor of being pioneers, we take responsibility for providing a precedent for the future IPhOs in the world of 'new normal'. We therefore ask all delegations who join the online format to fill in the Good practices protocol to the best of their knowledge. Not only will this document allow you to better prepare for this year's event, we hope it will prove useful in the future olympiads. **We ask you to fill one copy per delegation and send it to info@ipho2021.lt before July 1, 2021.**

EXAM START TIME

Participants of the IPhO 2021 will have a choice when to start the examinations (experiment and theory) within the time window of 8:30am EEST and 1:30pm EEST. All participants will have up to 5 hours for solving the problems. Please, indicate this time clearly in the good practices protocol.

CALCULATORS

All students' calculators will have to be checked by the Invigilator(s) before the exams. To avoid any misunderstandings please, indicate the calculator make and model precisely at the registration system. The calculators will have to be collected and the data in data storage (if any) will have to be deleted. Random checks will be done during the IPhO 2021. If you have any specific troubles or issues with the use or selection of calculators please ask the organizers about it as early as possible.

THE VENUE

We will require to follow the guidelines mentioned in the Preliminary guidelines for online participation ([Page 10](#)). In addition, we kindly ask you to describe the good practices as thoroughly as possible in the good practices document.

VIDEO COMMUNICATIONS

The preferred communication tool for IPhO 2021 will be Zoom. We will ask all those who can to use this software for meetings, exam surveillance and extracurricular activities.

We understand that due to certain limitations of some governments, Zoom might not be a viable option. Please, write to info@ipho2021.lt and we will decide on an alternative video communications tool.

EXAM TRANSLATION & INTERNATIONAL BOARD MEETING

We will be using Oly Exams (<https://www.oly-exams.org>) for exam translations as well as for the International Board meeting. Since this is an online based tool we highly recommend bringing at least one laptop per delegation dedicated to the team leaders' work. We also suggest having a reliable internet connection to avoid long waiting times.

We will send you the login details for Oly Exams in an automated message soon. We highly recommend you to log in before the start of the IPhO 2021 and get accustomed with this tool.

PAYMENTS

Participation fee **must** be made by bank transfer for all participants joining online. There should be one payment per country. All bank transfers must be completed by June 17, 2021 and a confirmation receipt should be sent to info@ipho2021.lt. If we don't receive a payment by this date, we will not be able to allow your delegation to join the IPhO 2021.

PRELIMINARY GUIDELINES FOR IPhO 2021 ONLINE FORMAT

Online participation will be treated equally to the participation of the physical IPhO 2021 if the following preliminary guidelines are followed.

1. The students of each virtually participating country will be under strict supervision for the whole duration from the team leaders' receiving the exam tasks to finishing the theory examination (18-21 July, 2021). Preferably in one location, the location would be the capital or a major city.
 - a. The students will have to stay in the hotel or other type of accommodation when they are not taking the exams.
 - b. The students will have to take the exams in a specially prepared hotel conference room, local school or University, or other facility adapted to the process of examination.
 - c. All rules of the IPhO Statutes that apply for the physical event will apply to the virtual event regarding the exams (e.g. the use of calculators).

2. An invigilator observer will have to be appointed by the participating country that is joining online. The invigilator observer can be any person who will cooperate with the Organizers of the 51st IPhO to monitor the preparation and examination activities.
 - a. The invigilator cannot be the participating student, nor the team leader who is appointed to translate and discuss the exams.
 - b. The costs of having the invigilator will be covered by the participating country.
 - c. The invigilator needs to be able to monitor the movements and location of the students at any time, if needed.
 - d. The invigilator will collect the mobile phones, tablets and other communication equipment of the students for the time starting from the revealing of the tasks to the team leaders all the way through to the end of the theory examination.
 - e. The invigilator will receive the experimental exam and shall collaborate with the local customs for a swift arrival of the experimental kits to the participating country.
 - f. The invigilator will open the experimental kits under the surveillance of the 51st IPhO organizers only.
 - g. The invigilator will test and set up the experimental kits to make sure the experiment goes smoothly. Instructions will be included.
 - h. The invigilator will be the person preparing the exam room (e.g. making sure that each student receives the exam questions) and will also observe the exams.
 - i. The invigilator will transfer the experimental kits to the institution that

finances the team's participation in the IPhO 2021 after the experimental exam is finished.

3. Video surveillance will have to be used for random checks throughout the examinations.
 - a. Each student will need to be filmed from the angle where the face and the paper is clearly visible.
 - b. The examination room will need to be filmed where all students are visible from the front and back, unless the students are seated against the wall. Then, only the front or back camera will be required.
 - c. The copy and scan equipment will need to be filmed throughout the printing and scanning of the exams. The setup of the printing equipment will have to be in sight.
4. All students, team leaders, and the invigilator will have to agree to the ethical code of conduct and cheating prevention which will be provided later.
5. Any registered instance of cheating will result in the most strict consequences for the country in question. All individuals involved in the situation will be banned from further participation in the IPhOs. The results of the whole team where cheating is detected will be annulled.
6. The software for the discussion and translation of the theoretical and experimental examination will be Oly Exams.
7. The International Board meeting and votes will take place over Zoom, Oly Exams will be used for counting votes.

CONTACTS

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