Patrick Zehnhäusern

Participant of the European Physics Olympiad (EuPhO) 2022 in Ljubljana, Slovenia

As I have always been interested in how nature works, I took part in the Physics Olympiad when I heard about it from my physics teacher. I was particularly fascinated by the experimental part.

This year I could take part in the European Physics Olympiad in Slovenia. During the training camps in Switzerland, we could prepare for the EuPhO. I remember very well that during one camp we tried to solve one such task as a team for almost one and a half day!

During the EuPhO, we had to conduct various experiments with light bulbs. So we could observe how a small piece of wood heats up as it gets enlightened. There were interesting theoretical tasks as well. In Slovenia, we also took part in excursions and integration events where we could meet people from all over Europe. I am still in contact with some of them. So it was not only exams and experiments, but also making friends that I particularly enjoyed.

Shortly after the EuPhO, I completed my Matura and will start studying physics at ETH Zurich next year.

Adrian Serrano Capatina

Participant of the International Physics Olympiad (IPhO) 2022 in Stidsholt, Denmark

There is always someone better than you, and to find the best young scientists in the world there is no better place than the Physics Olympiad. For those who have a real interest and ambition in physics, it is an irreplaceable experience which has pushed me to study and understand the phenomena of our world. After seeing the skill difference between the top IPhO participants and myself, I am more motivated than ever to improve and deepen my understanding of physics. To be honest, most of the IPhO problems seem impossible to be fully solved, often involving strange and complicated topics. However, I feel a real sense of satisfaction when I manage to apply my new knowledge in order to find (often wrong) answers to the IPhO problems. I have found that I can often answer questions that would have seemed unintelligible to me before training for this competition, and this progress is extremely encouraging.

The Olympiads are events that require a quite solid theoretical knowledge, but the most important thing is to have the creativity to find the best ways to solve the problems. For example, you need to know how to approximate galaxies to a perfect gas of stars, use symmetries to avoid long integrals and many more mechanisms that seem often very unintuitive.

Finally, there is no better way to test your skill in physics than participating in the Olympiads. I recommend participation to all those ambitious enough to match themselves with the best in the world.