

# European Union Science Olympiad Constitution

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(Draft Document: - This draft document is based on discussions that took place at a GB meeting in Klagenfurt, Austria in August 2013)

## Introduction

The first European Union Science Olympiad (EUSO) Constitution was written in 2001 by Dr. Michael A. Cotter. This document was translated from the original English to French, German, Italian and Spanish and circulated to the Education/Science Ministers of the then fifteen member states of the European Union (EU). In May 2002 the first Governing Body (GB) held in Dublin was attended by six members and the first EUSO took place in Dublin in 2003. This draft Constitution includes the changes made to the original EUSO constitution between 2003 and 2012.

## Aim of the EUSO

### §1 – Mission Statement

- (1) The European Union Science Olympiad (EUSO) is a multidisciplinary, integrated science, practical-based, team competition for EU second level school science students who are sixteen years of age or younger on December 31<sup>st</sup> prior to the competition. It was established to provide young EU students with a platform to display their scientific capabilities, to challenge and stimulate gifted science students to develop their talents and to promote their career as scientists, to provide invaluable experience for students who may take part in the subject based international Science Olympiads, to offer the opportunity to compare the syllabi and educational trends in science education within the EU member states which could help improve science education at national level.
- (2) The EUSO tasks are intellectually challenging and demand teamwork. They integrate the sciences; biology, chemistry and physics across the disciplines. They are problem oriented, context-based, relevant and connected to the real world. The tasks engage all the team members and foster their ability of cooperative problem solving. They are self-directed in terms of pace, direction and outcomes. They involve the construction of knowledge and higher-order thinking. They require the interpretation of experimental data, facilitate the manipulation of information and ideas, encourage substantive communication between the team members and often allow for alternative solutions.
- (3) Objectives of EUSO
  - to stimulate the active interest of students in the sciences and challenge science students to develop their talents.
  - to promote and reward the pursuit of excellence in scientific endeavour by selecting the top young EU science student teams at the annual EUSO.
  - to prepare EU science students for the subject based international Science Olympiads.
  - to develop problem based material on experimental integrated science that may be used in schools.

- to encourage greater contact and co-operation between secondary school students and teachers from the EU and to exchange ideas and materials about science education among EU states.
- to convey to students, schools and the community the importance of advanced study and progressive learning in science and to raise interest in pursuing technical and scientific career paths.
- to encourage an appreciation of the value of science amongst the wider community and to foster a positive and high profile image of science and scientists.
- to provide an opportunity to foster European identity among EU students and mentors.

## **Organization of the EUSO**

### **§2 – Eligible countries**

- (1) The EUSO is open to all member states of the European Union (EU).
- (2) Each eligible country wishing to participate in the EUSO must nominate a contact person for the EUSO. This person, usually the Country Coordinator (CC), should be nominated by the Ministry of Education or a designated institution.

### **§3 – Organization and Invitation**

- (1) The EUSO is carried out in one of the participating countries each year in spring. It is organised by the Director, a nominee of the Ministry for Education or a designated institution of the hosting country. The exact date of the EUSO is announced by the Director during the preceding EUSO at the latest.
- (2) The GB evaluates the applications of countries offering to host the EUSO and decides on the future host countries.
- (3) The Director has to ensure equal participation of all eligible countries by inviting all EU member states, which have either participated fully in or sent an observer to the EUSO in at least one of the three years prior to the competition to send a full delegation. All other EU countries should be invited to send an observer.
- (4) The Director may invite Guest Delegations from the host country or from countries that are not members of the EU. The student teams of the Guest Delegation participate in the competition as additional teams. They may be awarded medals but their results are not considered for the determination of the numbers of gold, silver and bronze medals. The subsequent host country is not obliged to invite Guest Delegations.
- (5) At least nine months prior to the EUSO, the Director sends an official invitation to all CCs of the EUSO member countries and the Ministry of Education/Science of the non participating countries.
- (6) The invited countries must confirm their participation six months prior to the EUSO.
- (7) Each participating country is expected to indicate as soon as possible when it will organize the EUSO.

- (8) In the event of the EUSO being cancelled all participating EU-countries including those countries that had agreed to send an observer are invited to send full delegations to the next EUSO.

## §4 – National Delegations

- (1) Each invited country may send a full delegation consisting of, at most, two teams of three science students each accompanied by a number of mentors. An EU country not eligible to send a full delegation may send an observer.

### (2) Students and Teams

- a) Students must be 16 years of age or younger on December 31<sup>st</sup> of the year prior to the competition and attend a second level school (corresponding to ISCED level 2 or 3) in the country they represent.
- b) Each student may participate twice at most in the EUSO.
- c) The students form one or two teams of three students each, called Team A and Team B. The teams have to be formed in such a way that it has expertise in the areas of biology, chemistry and physics.
- d) The responsibility for the selection of the team members lies with each participating country. It is recommended that the selection is carried out in such a way that all eligible students of the country have the chance to compete for participation in the EUSO.

### (3) Mentors and Country Coordinators

- a) The students are accompanied by at least one and up to three Mentors which share between them expertise in Biology, Chemistry and Physics.
- b) Each delegation may include up to two additional Mentors, who must pay a participation fee to be determined by the Director.
- c) One of the mentors of each delegation is appointed CC.

### (4) Observers

- a) The role of the Observer is to observe the running of the EUSO. This should serve as a preparation for future participation in or organization of the EUSO.
- b) Observers may attend all GB, General Assembly (GA) and International Board (IB) meetings in a non-voting capacity.
- c) Observers must pay a participation fee to be determined by the Director.

## §5 – Obligations of the Director

- (1) The Director of a future host country confirms to the EUSO President at least two years in advance that it accepts the responsibility for the organisation of the EUSO.
- (2) For the management of the EUSO the Director must appoint
  - a Scientific Committee (SC) and a chairperson for this committee
  - an Organizing Committee and a chairperson for this committee
- (3) The Guidelines Manual (GM) for the EUSO gives detailed information and recommendations on the organization the EUSO. The Director of the host country is obliged to follow the GM.

- (4) At the EUSO preceding the year of hosting, the next Director must give a detailed report to the GA on the progress towards the preparation of the EUSO.
- (5) The Director is obliged to invite the EUSO President and the Chairperson of the International Board (CIB) on an inspection visit and consultation on the level of preparation three to six months prior to the EUSO. The expenses must be borne by the Host Country.
- (6) The Director must provide for the period of the EUSO:
  - a detailed programme of the EUSO for Students and Mentors/Observers.
  - suitable accommodation and subsistence for each delegation.
  - transport from and to the designated Port, Airport or Bus/Rail station to the venue of the competition as well as transport during the official programme.
  - rooms for the discussion, translation and evaluation of the tasks.
  - laboratories, materials and other amenities necessary for the competition.
  - suitable measures to ensure the health and safety of the delegations.
  - at least one team guide for two student teams.
  - a cultural and social programme.
  - medals and certificates for all participants.
- (7) After the EUSO the final tasks, answer sheets, solutions and marking schemes must be sent to the President and the CIB together with the full results of each team.
- (8) The Director is responsible for providing a written report on the EUSO to the GA during the following EUSO. The report should be in electronic form and has to include
  - the names and roles of all participants at the EUSO.
  - the tasks, their solutions and the marking scheme.
  - statistics on the results including a summary of the results for each task, a comparison of results before and after moderation and the final ranking of all medallists. The results of the bronze medallists should only be given without team and country names.
  - information on the programme.
  - an account of important decisions taken by the GB, the GA and the IB during the EUSO.
  - any other information deemed interesting or important.

## **§6 – Financial matters**

- (1) The total cost of running the EUSO is borne by the host country.
- (2) Each participating country must pay the travel expenses of their delegation to the designated Port, Airport or Bus/Rail station in the host country.
- (3) Each participating country must provide adequate travel, medical and other insurance cover for its entire delegation.
- (4) Additional Mentors and Observers must pay the participation fee determined by the Director in the official invitation letter.
- (5) The travel expenses of the President and the CIB must be borne by the Director.

## **EUSO offices, bodies and their functions**

### **§7 – Mentors and International Board**

- (1)** The IB consists of all Mentors participating in the EUSO. The IB elects a Chairperson.
- (2)** Meetings of the IB are chaired by the Chairperson of IB (CIB) or his/her nominee.
- (3)** The duties of the IB are:
  - to inspect the laboratories and equipment where the experiments will be carried out.
  - to discuss and approve the tasks, the solutions and the marking scheme in the presence of the SC.
  - to approve the final results of the evaluation and to decide on the number of Gold, Silver and Bronze medals to be awarded in accordance with the Constitution.
  - to resolve all other issues in relation to the tasks and the markings.
- (4)** The Mentors are responsible for
  - the translation of the tasks into the native language of their students.
  - the grading of their students' solutions according to the agreed marking scheme.
  - the moderation of their students' results.
- (5)** Decisions of the IB are taken on the basis of a simple majority with at least 75% of the countries participating in the EUSO present. Each country has one vote. In case of equal votes, the CIB has a casting vote.

### **§8 – Country Coordinators and Governing Body**

- (1)** The CC is the heads of the national delegation. The main duties of the CC are:
  - to act as contact person of the country until the next EUSO.
  - to ensure that participation of their country in the EUSO is arranged.
  - to confirm that Mentors have been appointed and to provide them with all relevant information on the next EUSO.
  - to guarantee that the rules of the EUSO are upheld.
  - to serve as GB member.
- (2)** The GB consists of the EUSO President, the CIB, the Vice-Presidents and the CCs or his/her nominee. Members of the GB stay in office until the next EUSO.
- (3)** The GB is responsible for the long-term development of the EUSO and ensures a continuous exchange of information between the participating countries. Meetings of the GB are held during the EUSO and are chaired by the President or his/her nominee
- (4)** The main duties of the GB are:
  - to discuss issues of relevance to the on-going EUSO or for the future development of the competition.
  - to approve changes to the EUSO Constitution.
  - in the event of a breach of the rules to take appropriate actions including the expulsion of teams or delegations from the competitions.

- (5) In the event of the EUSO not taking place or in danger of not taking place in any year, the President takes over the management of the EUSO and to invite the GB of the last EUSO to remain in office until a new host country has been accepted.
- (6) Decisions in the GB concerning changes of the Constitution require a two-thirds majority in the presence of at least 75% of the CCs present. Each member has one vote.
- (7) Decisions in the GB not concerned with changes of the Constitution are taken on the basis of a simple majority of at least 75% of the CCs present. Each member has one vote. In case of equal votes, the chairperson has the casting vote.

## **§9 – EUSO President, CIB and EUSO Vice-Presidents**

### **(1) EUSO President**

- a) The EUSO President is responsible for managing the affairs of the EUSO and the coordination of the long-term development of the EUSO. The main responsibilities of the EUSO President are:
- to be an ex-officio member of all EUSO committees.
  - to ensure that the EUSO constitution is upheld.
  - to chair GB and GA meetings.
  - to support the future Director in the preparation for the EUSO.
  - to organize the election of the Vice-Presidents.
- b) Prior to the EUSO the President should
- visit the host country three to six months before the EUSO to evaluate the level of preparation and give advice to the Director.
  - liaise with the CIB on the development of the tasks.
  - report to the GB on the level of preparedness.
  - arrive at the EUSO location one day prior to the beginning of the EUSO and support the Director in the final preparation for the event.
  - support the Director at the opening and closing ceremony
- c) Eligibility for the office and the election of the President is regulated for in the GM.

### **(2) Chairperson of the International Board (CIB)**

- a) The CIB is responsible for managing the scientific affairs of the EUSO. The main responsibilities of the CIB are:
- to chair meetings of the IB.
  - to support the future Director in the preparation for the EUSO.
  - to act as an EUSO Deputy President.
- b) Prior to the EUSO the CIB should
- visit the host country, with the President, three to six months before the EUSO to evaluate the level of preparation concerning the tasks and give advice to the SC.
  - liaise with the EUSO President on the development of the tasks.
  - ensure that the tasks conform with the Constitution and the GM.

- arrive at the EUSO location one day prior to the beginning of the EUSO and support the SC in the final preparation of the tasks.

c) Eligibility for the office and the election of the CIB is regulated for in the GM.

### **(3) EUSO Vice-Presidents**

a) The Vice-Presidents assist the President in managing the affairs of the EUSO. The number, role, functions and duties of the Vice-Presidents are determined by the GA. The duties of the Vice-Presidents may include the following activities:

#### *Administrative*

- to support the Director in questions of administrative matters.
- to collect and provide information on the administrative managing of the EUSO.
- to keep up to date the EUSO website.

#### *Scientific*

- to support the Director in questions regarding the scientific part of the EUSO.
- to collect and compile information on the tasks and results of the EUSO.
- to publish the EUSO tasks.

#### *Financial*

- to support the Director in questions regarding financial matters.
- to look for means of sponsoring and other financial support for the EUSO.
- to act as a treasurer for the EUSO.

b) The eligibility for and the election of the Vice-President is regulated for in the GM.

## **Competition**

### **§10 – Preparation for the EUSO**

- (1)** In each country participating in the EUSO training or any other special instruction that is carried out for a selected group of 50 or fewer students, containing the EUSO team members, should not be longer than two weeks in duration per school year.
- (2)** Prior to the EUSO the Director should provide information on equipment used in the tasks that students may not be expected to have encountered at school and/or that is not explained in sufficient detail in the tasks themselves.

### **§11 – General rules and structure of the competition**

#### **(1) Structure of the competition**

- a) The EUSO competition is carried out within a period of 7-9 days including a day of
- arrival,
  - the opening ceremony and the discussion/translation of the first task,
  - competition for the first task,
  - discussion and translation of the second task,

- competition for the second task,
  - moderation of the results,
  - the closing ceremony and a farewell party,
  - departure.
- b) In case of a seven day schedule the last three days mentioned above may be compressed into two days.
- c) The two-part competition is spread over two days with an interval of at least one day.
- (2)** The business of the EUSO meetings is conducted in English.
- (3)** The display of national flags and emblems by the delegations at the opening and closing ceremonies is prohibited.

## §12 – Tasks, marking and awards

### **(1) The Tasks**

- a) The SC appointed by the Director of the host country is responsible for preparing the two tasks for the competition.
- b) Details on the structure of the tasks and their discussion in the IB are provided in the constitution and the GM.
- c) The IB members are obliged to keep secret information about the competition tasks until all students have written the tests.

### **(2) Evaluation**

- a) The students' answers are independently assessed by the SC and the respective Mentors.
- b) Details on the assessment and evaluation are provided in the GM.
- c) Before the determination of the awards possible discrepancies in the assessment are resolved at the moderation. During the moderation the Mentors of each country are allocated a given amount of time to discuss the scoring of the SC with members of this committee until a final result is agreed upon. If no consensus can be reached the Mentors may appeal to the IB which takes the final decision.
- d) The final results for each country must be signed by the CC or his/her nominee and a representative of the SC.

### **(3) Prizes and Awards**

- a) The numbers of gold, silver and bronze medals to be awarded is determined by the GA according to the following percentages
- Gold medals: approximately 10% of the contestants
  - Silver medals: approximately 30% of the contestants
  - Bronze medals: all remaining contestants
- b) The total number of gold and silver medals combined must not exceed 50% of the total number of medals awarded.
- c) At the beginning of the GA meeting concerned with the allocation of medals the CCs receive the final scores of their teams for confirmation.

- d) The GA must not be shown the actual scores of all teams but rather a list of numbers or a graph reflecting the ranking and differences between the team results. The numbers of medals to be awarded are determined on the basis of this data.
- e) The medals have to be awarded during the official closing ceremony of the EUSO and are proclaimed on a team basis.
- f) Bronze medal winners must be announced first in random order. The Silver medal winners must be announced next in reverse order, e.g. the team receiving the lowest score announced first. The Gold medal winners are then announced in reverse order with the top team being the last to be identified.
- g) The team receiving the highest total score receives the perpetual challenge trophy.
- h) Each contestant has to receive a certificate indicating the medal received.
- i) Each Mentor and Observer must receive a certificate of participation at the EUSO.
- j) The original scripts remain in the possession of the Director for a period of one year during which time they can be viewed by the GB.

### §13 – Final Regulations

- (1) Countries taking part in the EUSO are obliged to comply with the Constitution and GM.
- (2) Changes to the Constitution are decided by the GA. Revisions to the Constitution become valid only after the completion of the EUSO. Proposal for changes may be submitted by GB members and must be sent to the EUSO President at least six months before the GB meeting at which the changes are to be discussed. An agenda including the proposed changes must be circulated to all CCs at least three months prior to the meeting.
- (3) The GB decides upon any matter that is not included in the Constitution and GM.

### §14 – Glossary of Terms

<b>CC</b>	Country Coordinator
<b>CIB</b>	Chairman of the International Board
<b>Constitution</b>	EUSO Constitution
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>EUSO</b>	European Union Science Olympiad
<b>GA</b>	General Assembly
<b>GB</b>	Governing Body
<b>GM</b>	Guidelines Manual
<b>IB</b>	International Board
<b>OC</b>	Organising Committee
<b>SC</b>	Scientific Committee

Other items that will be on the agenda are reports from the future host countries, the Klagenfurt meeting, progress on Volume 2, the Guidelines Manual, the Website and financial matters. Other topics include the expansion of the EUSO to take in new countries, the gender balance of teams and the predictability of the results.