



# The World goes Maths -

## *First International Day of Mathematics launched and celebrated worldwide!*

Press information

(14.03.2020, Paris). On **14 March 2020**, the first-ever **International Day of Mathematics** will take place, celebrating the beauty and importance of mathematics in our everyday lives. This recurring event, proclaimed by UNESCO and co-organized with the International Mathematical Union (IMU), will be marked in more than 107 countries with over 1000 individual events.

Mathematics plays an essential role in almost every area of our daily life: from patterns in nature to climate science, from medical imaging to search engines, from the optimization of transport networks to AI, from the modelling to the control of epidemics.<sup>1</sup> This is why the theme of this year's International Day is "mathematics is everywhere." It widens the scope of Pi Day – previously celebrated on 14 March – to cover the entire spectrum of mathematics, and the entire world.

In Portugal alone, more than 120 events are taking place to challenge Portuguese pupils to imagine a world without mathematics. A local radio station is organizing a "Pi Festival" with prizes for the best poems and music inspired by the number  $\pi$  – the ratio between a circle's circumference and diameter, approximately equal to 3.14. Countries such as Colombia, Turkey, Philippines and South Africa are organizing activities nationwide, including in small cities and rural areas. A special [Live Global Launch web page](#) will accompany all events worldwide on March 14 and will show the new collaborative video "Mathematics is everywhere", created by the international IDM community.

Underlining the all-important nature of mathematics, Shamila Nair-Bedouelle, UNESCO's Assistant Director-General for Natural Sciences, said: "The technical applications of mathematics underpin all areas of our lives today. Algorithms are central to the development of

<sup>1</sup> Find more examples in many languages at <https://everywhere.idm314.org>

artificial intelligence, climate science and technological disruption. This is why they are of key importance for the development of countries, as set down in the United Nations 2030 Agenda.”

This idea was reiterated by Professor Christiane Rousseau from the University of Montreal, the initiator of the International Day of Mathematics project at the International Mathematical Union: *“Mathematics has been an area of study throughout human history. Today, mathematics has developed into a tool so sophisticated that most people do not even notice its omnipresence in our lives. Small communities all over the world are appropriating celebrations for the International Day of Mathematics. And this will grow in the coming years.”*

As Filipe Oliveira, President of the Portuguese Mathematical Society, emphasized, this event will help raise awareness of the discipline: *“The International Day of Mathematics is an opportunity for mathematicians and for society at large to communicate with each other on the importance of mathematics.”*

Enthusiasm for this project is immense, especially on the African continent, where many countries are taking part. *“In my opinion, having an International Day of Mathematics is long overdue, I know that mathematics makes our lives easier because there is mathematics in everything.”* said Professor Adewale Solarin, the former President of the African Mathematical Union.

This enthusiasm was shared by Betül Tanbay of Bogaziçi University, the Vice-President of European Mathematical Society, who said: *“Mathematics is everywhere and has quite a special universal power. Every single person has something to learn from Mathematics. This can be for the benefit of us all.”*

Similarly, Professor Anita Rampal of Delhi University stated: *“We want the International Day of Mathematics to be celebrated in the classroom and in the street across India: this is an opportunity to celebrate and engage thousands of people in enrichment and everyday mathematics on 14 March of each year!”*

The **International Day of Mathematics website** is the main hub for the International Day of Mathematics, online at

[www.idm314.org](http://www.idm314.org).

It hosts **information material** to be used by press and organizers (including logos and flyers in different languages) as well as **proposals for activities** related to the theme for everyone interested in hosting an event. The official material provided through the website is under an open license, which means it can be freely shared, translated and adapted.

### **Partners:**

The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), is headquartered in Paris. As the United Nation’s “House of Peace,” UNESCO serves to develop mutual understanding and the strengthening of bonds among nations through international

cooperation in education, the sciences, and culture. More information:  
<https://en.unesco.org/commemorations/mathematics>

Moreover, UNESCO at its 40th session of the General Conference, proclaimed 14 March of every year International Day of Mathematics. More information:  
<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000372579.page=37>



The **International Mathematical Union (IMU)** is an international non-governmental and non-profit scientific organization, with the purpose of promoting international cooperation in mathematics. The IMU has around 90 countries as members.

The IDM is communicated and supported by the IDM website, which is hosted by **IMAGINARY**, a non-profit organization to communicate modern mathematics. The website and the communication are made possible by the **Klaus Tschira Foundation**, which supports natural sciences, mathematics and computer science and their appreciation in Germany.

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**Pictures:**

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