



## Decision of the Executive Committee of the IMU on the upcoming ICM 2022 and IMU General Assembly

The Executive Committee of the International Mathematical Union (IMU) has decided that:

1. The International Congress of Mathematicians (ICM) 2022 will take place as a fully virtual event, hosted outside Russia but following the original time schedule planned for Saint Petersburg.
2. Participation in the virtual ICM event will be free of charge.
3. The IMU General Assembly (GA) will take place as an in-person event outside Russia.
4. A prize ceremony will be held the day after the IMU GA, at the same venue as the IMU GA, for the awarding of the 2022 IMU prizes.
5. The dates for the ICM and the GA will remain unaltered.
6. We will return with further practical information regarding the two events.

The 18<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of the IMU decided in 2018 to award the ICM 2022 to Russia, with the venue being Saint Petersburg. The preparations have been carried out with admirable dedication by our Russian colleagues, battling a global pandemic, and the plans were in place to host a successful ICM in July 2022. We are very thankful to them for this. Preceding the ICM, a meeting of the IMU GA had also been scheduled for Saint Petersburg in July.

An ICM is a unique meeting place for mathematicians from all over the world to assemble, put political and cultural differences aside, and discuss mathematics. The IMU GA is the highest body of the IMU, and at the GA important decisions for the IMU are taken for the coming four years, including elections and budgets.

However, recent developments in Russia and Ukraine have changed the situation dramatically. The actions of Russia have been condemned worldwide, and have made an in-person event in Russia impossible. Indeed, the Secretary General of the UN issued the following [appeal](#) directly to the Russian government on 23 Feb. 2022 «In the name of humanity bring your troops back to Russia. In the name of humanity do not allow to start in Europe what could be the worst war since the beginning of the century». This call has not been heeded.

We, the Executive Committee of the IMU, have analyzed the situation carefully. We strongly condemn the actions by Russia. Our deepest sympathy goes to our Ukrainian colleagues and the Ukrainian people.

Given this situation, it is impossible for the IMU to host the ICM and the GA as traditional in-person events in Russia. We have considered the possibility of postponing the ICM by one year, similar to what happened with the Warsaw ICM. However, it is unclear how the situation will evolve within a year, and thus this is not a feasible option. Another option discussed was to cancel the ICM completely. The IMU considered this option as unnecessarily drastic, and it would not serve the mathematical community. In this day and age, we have the option of

carrying out a fully virtual ICM, following the original schedule of the ICM. Speakers can choose to submit recorded talks, or give live talks. We understand that different time zones will make this problematic for many, but an ICM has a tight program, and we see few alternatives. Participation in a virtual format will however be free of charge. As this requires substantial organizational work, we will return with further details as soon as they are available.

As for the General Assembly, we consider it of vital importance to meet in person. However, as we cannot meet in Saint Petersburg, we will find an alternative venue outside Russia for the GA.

Berlin, 26 February 2022

The Executive Committee of the International Mathematical Union