

## Media Release

Lucerne, 11 March 2021

### Winter Universiade 2021: Ice Hockey and Curling nations announced

*The Winter Universiade 2021 is set to take place in Central Switzerland and Lenzerheide from 11 to 21 December 2021. The International University Sports Federation (FISU) has today announced which Curling and Ice Hockey nations will be heading to Central Switzerland. The Swiss team will be competing for medals in both the men's and women's competitions in the two sports.*

The Winter Universiade is being held from 11 to 21 December 2021 in Central Switzerland and Lenzerheide. Ice Hockey and Curling are the two team sports on the event programme. The International University Sports Federation (FISU) has today announced which nations will be competing. The following teams have been selected in Ice Hockey and Curling:

Ice Hockey		Curling	
Men	Women	Men	Women
Canada	Canada	Canada	Canada
Czech Republic	Japan	Czech Republic	Japan
Estonia	People's Republic of China	Japan	Norway
Kazakhstan	Russian Federation	Netherlands	People's Republic of China
Latvia	Switzerland	Norway	Republic of Korea
Republic of Korea	United States of America	Republic of Korea	Russian Federation
Russian Federation		Russian Federation	Spain
Slovakia		Sweden	Sweden
Switzerland		Switzerland	Switzerland
United States of America		United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

The teams from the current and future Winter Universiade host countries, namely Switzerland and the United States of America, and the defending champions from the Winter Universiade 2019 will be participating in both sports. The FISU has also selected the nations that achieved the highest positions at the previous Games or are at the top of the FISU rankings. In Ice Hockey, both the men's and women's teams from Russia will also attempt to repeat their winning performances from the last Universiade. In Curling, the Norwegian men's team will compete as the reigning champions, joining the Swedish women in their bid to defend their title.

### **Ice Hockey matches in Sursee and Zug**

The Sursee Ice Center and Bossard Arena Zug will host the Ice Hockey events at the upcoming Universiade. Ten men's teams and six women's teams will be fighting for the respective titles. The President of the Local Organising Committee in Zug, Urs Scholl, is delighted with today's announcement of the competing nations. As a member of the organising committees for two Men's Ice Hockey World Championships and the Women's World Championship in 2011, as well as the Women's Under-18 World Championship in 2013 and the Men's Under-18 World Championship in 2015, Scholl knows the sport inside out. "I was surprised by the quality of the Ice Hockey matches at the Winter Universiade 2019 in the Russian city of Krasnoyarsk. I'm excited to see how our home team will perform against the big nations like Russia and Canada. The silver medallists from Krasnoyarsk 2019, Slovakia, are also sure to display some exhilarating play." His counterpart in Sursee, Philipp Häfliger, continues, "As well as the defending champions from Russia, I also think Team USA and Canada are going to be favourites. But of course, I also hope to see good results for the Swiss men and women."

### **"The level of the Curling competition is high"**

The Curling medals will be decided in Engelberg. "The level of competition has always been very high," says Christine Urech, Competition Manager on the Local Organising Committee in Engelberg and herself a former Curling world champion. "Many players have taken part who have also been competing at the World and European Championships and the World Cup. Like last time in Krasnoyarsk 2019, when the team led by Yannick Schwaller of Team Bern Schwaller, who would go on to become European silver medallist, came tantalisingly close to winning the bronze medal play-off. I'm excited to see which famous faces we will be welcoming to Engelberg." The Swiss team is always in the running for medals, however the gold has so far eluded both the men and women. Swiss discipline leader Pascal Hess wants to see this change at the Winter Universiade 2021. "Our aim is to shine at our home Games and get in on some medals."



### **Biggest Swiss team of all time**

The Swiss team will also be out to impress in other sports. Famous sporting greats such as Ramon Zenhäusern (Alpine Skiing) and Patrizia Kummer (Alpine Snowboarding) have medalled for Switzerland at previous Games. As the host nation for this year's Universiade, Swiss University Sports President Mike Kurt estimates that there will be a delegation of around 120 athletes and approximately 60 support staff, which represents the largest Swiss team ever sent to a Winter Universiade. It is also the first time that Swiss athletes have competed in every discipline. Exactly who these athletes will be is set to be announced in November 2021.

### **The Winter Universiade**

The Winter Universiade is the largest winter multisport event after the Olympic Games. In 2021 the 30th occasion of this unique event will take place in Central Switzerland. The organisation is a joint project of the six cantons of Central Switzerland Lucerne, Uri, Schwyz, Obwalden, Nidwalden and Zug, and the City of Lucerne. The programme from the 11 to 21 December 2021 comprises ten sporting disciplines, to be contested at seven event venues. Around 1600 Students aged between 17 and 25 from more than 540 universities in 50 countries are expected to attend.

More about the Lucerne 2021 Winter Universiade may be found here:

[www.winteruniversiade2021.ch](http://www.winteruniversiade2021.ch)

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