

# Report of preparatory meeting

## for the 21<sup>th</sup> European Championship in Forestry Skills for Students

**Date:** 14<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> of October 2024  
**Location:** Ogre Technical School, Ogre, Latvia  
**Countries present:** 13: Austria, Estonia, Belgium, Luxembourg, Germany, Italy, Latvia, Norway, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, Sweden, The Netherlands.

### Monday 14<sup>th</sup> of October 2024

The team of Ogre Technical School welcomes us to the school. During the day all participants of the preparatory meeting arrive. We enjoy the free evening to meet and talk.

### Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> of October 2024

After the breakfast director Ilze Brante welcomes us to the school, to Latvia and opens the preparatory meeting. Thirteen nations are present as well as representatives of the ministry of Education and the ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. On behalf of the ministry of Education, an introduction is given about the VET-system in Latvia. Followed by an overview of Latvia's forestry sector and forestry system by the head of the forestry department of the ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. Peter Tretter, thanks Ilze for the warm welcome and the representatives of the ministries for their presentations. He gives a short overview over the ESCFS and the goals. Ilze gives a brief overview about Ogre Technical school, a merge of three schools in 2011. Combining several disciplines in education in one school. Ogre is the only school in Latvia for forestry and in number of students the second largest school of the country. The programme continues with a tour around the school.

In the afternoon, we start with a video-report from Romania, about the 2024 championship. Michael gives a short overview and gives special attention to the measuring tools. In Romania it was not easy to get enough tools for example for determining the angles at precision bucking.

Armands introduces the voting cards, one card for each nation. He continues with the presentation of the time schedule for the championship in May 2025: **27<sup>th</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> of May 2025**.

We discuss the time schedule, particularly the combination of the tree felling (in the forest – **real tree felling**) at the same day as the forestry course. Armands and his team will make sure that there is enough time for the teams for preparation of the disciplines, lunch and so on between the two disciplines. Armands will send a proposal to the committee.

We also discuss the organisation of the ESCFS in 2026. The Netherlands is considering, but the school Helmi represents has not decided yet. We talk about the possibility that each team makes some financial contribution to the organising school; for example: the benefits from Europea. This could be a solution for keeping the championship organised in the future. For 2026: The Netherlands will take a decision in January 2025; but other nations/schools that are willing to organise can inform the committee.

In the afternoon we discuss a large number of topics, very well prepared by Armands, combined with demonstrations of the disciplines fitting a new chain, bucking by combined cuts and precision bucking. The decisions about the rules, will be voted for Wednesday.

After the dinner we have a free evening.

### Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> of October 2024

In the morning we visit the forest for the real tree felling and the forestry course. The forest, similar to the forestry course location is a nice forest, with not too much height difference. We discuss some disciplines of the forestry course and afterwards we have a look at the location for the real tree felling. Some students and Janez Meden carry out the felling discipline for us as a demonstration. The

demonstration gives a good overview of the discipline, the safety rules and the special care that must be taken when real tree felling is carried out at the competition.

After the lunch we go back to the school to continue the discussion and vote for the rules.

### Head jury 2025

**The headjury for 2025 will be the same as for 2024**

- Pro: 13 votes
- Con: 0 votes
- No vote: 0 votes

Proposal is accepted.

### Head of the Task 2025

**When the participants are clear, the committee will draw a proposal for the head of the tasks.**

Proposal was accepted.

### Check on arrival

In the rules it is clear every contestant must have an insurance. This will not be checked at arrival. **On arrival: date of birth, age and number of competing times will be checked.**

### Chain saw check

The chain saw check will be carried out at the **start of fitting a new chain, felling and limbing. If the chain saw does not meet the requirements, the contestant has 5 minutes to solve the issue.**

Proposal was accepted.

### Bolts, nuts and cover

**The bolts, nuts and cover must be with a serial number and produced/approved by the manufacturer.**

### Chains

The length of the teeth will be checked **at the smallest side of the teeth and from the side, not from above.**

Proposal was accepted.

### Helmet

We discuss about the experience date of the helmet that should be used by the contestants but no changes will be made to the rules at this point.

### Grinding

**The proposal is to leave the decision of the type of grinder (hexa, triangle) to the competitor.**

- Pro: 12 votes
- Con: 0 votes
- No vote: 1 votes

Proposal was accepted.

### Safety equipment referees

Armands prepares an overview of the personal protection equipment that must be worn and used by the referees during the competition. **The list shall be added to the annex of the rules to make sure referees are well prepared.**

### Gloves

As given in the rules: contestants must wear gloves during the 4 disciplines where the chainsaw is in use. We do not give any (EN/CE) standard of gloves.

### Starting the chain saw

There are no changes on this subject, we discuss several proposals but the starting rules of the chainsaw stays the same.

### Not keeping the hand closed (thump)

During last championship the mistake (not keeping the hand closed while operating the chainsaw) was punished multiple times during a discipline. Proposal is to punish it only **one time per discipline** and the mistake must be **clearly made, as always seen by two referees, clearly open thumb and will not be punished when changing the position of the chainsaw**. For example at felling to change from the lower cut to the upper cut.

- Pro: 13 votes
- Con: 0 votes

Proposal was accepted.

### Injury

Proposal is to check if an injury during fitting a new chain is slightly bleeding: by testing with a napkin if there is any blood. Proposal is not accepted. Bleeding will be checked visually only.

### Bad behavior

There are some questions about bad behavior: how to note it and where to punish when it is for the team or team leader. Bad behavior is written in the rules to make clear the ESCFS has high moral standards. Behavior such as written in the annex does not meet the spirit of the championship and is not done by anyone involved. If a case of bad behavior occurs the referee/referees can report this to the head jury. The head jury will take a decision. **For individual competitors the penalty will be awarded at the discipline which is carried out at the moment. In general situations (not during a discipline) the minus points are counted from the total points of the competitor for all technical disciplines.**

**Team situations and bad behavior by team leaders and other guests from the country will be counted at the team result for the forestry course.**

- Pro: 13 votes
- Con: 0 votes

Proposal was accepted.

### Mast felling rules IALC

For mast felling the IALC has drawn a situation sketch how to set up the area. Proposal is to add this to the rules. Proposal accepted.

### Type of felling 2025

Latvia has prepared **real tree felling (pine trees) in the forest for the 2025 championship**. It is demonstrated in the forest to us and we have discussed the issues of safety, time and logistics.

- Pro: 12 votes
- Con: 0 votes
- No vote: 1 votes

Proposal was accepted.

The committee asks strongly to train the students well and prepare them for this event!

As well as an extra call for experienced referees.

### Swinging cut

The definition of a swinging cut will be made clear in the rules. At felling the last cut must be made from outside the stem to the inside.

### Safety zones

In the rules the safety zone changes at felling when the tree bounces or falls down outside the aiming point. **Proposal is to delete figure 7 in the rule and not punish for incorrect safety zone when the tree does so.**

- Pro: 13 votes

- Con: 0 votes

Proposal was accepted.

### Size of the target at felling

We discuss the size of the aiming target at felling: should it be decided what the size should be? We keep it open for the organizing country.

### Fitting a new chain

**If the stop-button drops down from the table this is not counted as extra mistake.**

### Combined cuts: marking the center lines

At combined bucking the **four center lines** in the colored marking should be marked on the logs to make measuring easier.

### Female teams

All nations can announce if there will be female teams or extra female competitors in 2025. Latvia will make clear how many teams can join and if there will be an international female team.

### Precision bucking: center lines

At precision bucking the **three center lines** in the colored marking should be marked on the logs to make measuring easier.

### Precision bucking: change length of the saw dust

The IALC has changed **the length of the saw dust** in an image (it was already written changed). Proposal is to adapt this also in the rules. This proposal is accepted.

### Limbing: during preparation crossing the line

At limbing it is normally punished as false start when the competitor crosses the starting line during the warming up of the chainsaw. **Proposal is not to punish this, only one 'real too early start'.**

- Pro: 11 votes
- Con: 2 votes

Proposal was accepted.

**According to the rules the arrangement of the branches will be the same as in the World championships 2024 (IALC).**

### Punishment for only one injury

During a discipline more than one injury can be caused. **Proposal is to only punish for one injury even if there are more.**

- Pro: 10 votes
- Con: 3 votes

Proposal was accepted.

### First aid

With the shortage of time we did not discuss the first aid. We agree the committee will send a proposal to prevent situations that are judged differently in different countries.

### Excluded nations

As decided Russia will be excluded for the championship for as long as it keeps continuing the war against Ukraine. For Belarus the committee will draw a proposal.

### Wildcard for the WLC

The committee has send in a proposal to the IALC general assembly 2024 to hand out a wildcard for the World Logging Championship for the overall winner (male OR female) of the ESCFS of the year before the WLC. This proposal was accepted. The costs for the competitor who wins the technical

discipline total individually with the most points (it does not matter if the highest points are in male or female-category only the highest will be qualified), must be paid by the sending nation. The committee will inform the nation after the ESCFS and also the IALC-board..

Around 17:00 we close the discussion and thank all nations for their attendance and Armands for all the preparations he and his team took for the discussion. Latvia will announce in February if any measuring tools are needed to bring to the championship next year.

In the evening the dinner is served at a very nice location, a distillery nearby.

### **Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> of October 2024**

After breakfast we join a visit of the "Latvijas Finieris" factory that is specialized in birch wood solutions. A factory tour and presentation about the company take place at the plant near Riga. A short visit to the beach afterwards and then lunch in Riga. After the lunch there is time to visit the beautiful city of Riga.

The final dinner is presented at the school.

### **Friday 18<sup>th</sup> of October 2024**

We would like to thank the organizing school for the warm welcome, a well-organized preparatory meeting and the generous programme. We are looking forward to join the competition in May 2025 and are convinced it will be a very good championship.

Protocol secretary:

Gerard van Looijengoed