

IMUNION

25 YEARS OF IMUN

IMUN grew out of a long-standing agreement between CAISL (then called the American International School of Lisbon) and the American School of Madrid in the 1980s and early 1990s. Ever since its humble beginnings, IMUN has served as a catalyst in motivating and inspiring students in matters of global importance. Though the values behind IMUN have remained constant since its initial establishment, it has grown throughout the years in order to reach its current status in 2019. The original concept behind this agreement was to provide practice for high school students for the upcoming THIMUN experience. Both schools would meet at Merida's public auditorium, halfway between Madrid and Lisbon, and debate inside a small room.

As more and more schools were getting involved in the MUN scene, this venue was later changed to the Luso American Foundation in Lisbon. This featured a larger auditorium with 80 seats where CAISL, the American School of Madrid, and nearby schools would continue to practice their debating over the next three years until the venue was changed one last time. This time, it would be held at the Centro Cultural de Belém, where IMUN has been held ever since. Among the staff organizing this event, were Mr. Peter Andrews, current MUN coordinator and IB History and TOK teacher, and Ms. Helen Jenkins, current librarian, the original founders of IMUN.



Ms. Blannie Curtis, our current director, then high school teacher, was also involved in the very early stages, personally leading the trips to Merida.

IMUN quickly established its own identity, no longer perceived as a stepping stone to THIMUN, but as a fully developed conference, ready to stand on its own. Having started from only two schools, it had now grown to larger proportions than ever anticipated.

As of now, there are 29 different schools from all around the globe that are participating, with over 200 delegations and the inclusion of the General Assembly, Special Conference, Security Council, and International Court of Justice.

Though IMUN has changed significantly, it has retained its original ideals. Like those that have participated in it, IMUN has grown, developed, and improved for the better after each successful

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Delegates are responsible for any costs resulting from loss or damage to placards/badges during the conference. (placards - 30€; badges - 10€)

conference. Through trial and error, success upon failure, and constant improvement, IMUN, and its participants - whether as delegates, admin staff, press, judges or

advocates – have grown as individuals and as a community and will continue to do so in the years to come.

Eidan M.

Past Conferences



CRISPR BABIES – Is This Ethical?



The discovery of the double helix structure in the 1950s, opened up the possibility of curing diseases and altering traits by changing DNA sequences. It wasn't until the mid-20th-century, however, that researchers realized that small changes in the sequence of DNA bases can mean the difference between health and disease. This led to several projects and discoveries, the results of which can be seen today. The one that stands out is CRISPR (Clustered Regularly Interspaced Short Palindromic Repeats) Cas9 (a protein). It was originally discovered in 1993 and is still being studied today, but what is it and what makes it special? To put it simply, CRISPR is a tool that scientists use to edit genomes. What makes it stand out is how easily and efficiently you can create cell and animal models, which can greatly accelerate the research of diseases such as cancer. So, what is the problem? Why should we discuss the ethics behind it?

During the Second International Summit on Human Genome Editing (November 27-29, 2018), a Chinese researcher, He Jiankui, announced that he had successfully used CRISPR to genetically alter twin girls to prevent them from getting HIV.

This action was met with skepticism and outrage, igniting ethical debates worldwide.

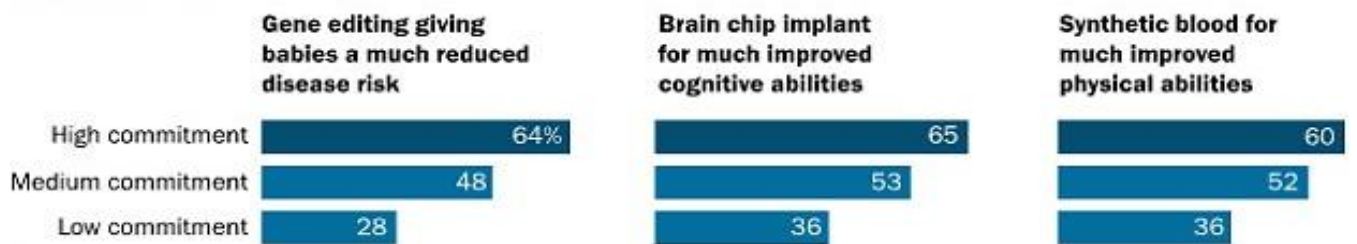
Regarding any research or procedure involving humans, there are always ethics involved. One of the main ethical ideas that comes up repeatedly is informed consent. It is not possible to obtain informed consent for germline therapy (the process of genetically modifying sperm or egg cells to create a new offspring) from an embryo.



He Jiankui

A majority of highly religious Americans consider these potential enhancements to be meddling with nature

% of U.S. adults in each religious commitment group who say _____ is meddling with nature and crosses a line we should not cross



Data obtained from the Pew Research Center

The counterargument is that parents already make many decisions that affect their future children, including similarly complicated decisions such as PGD (Preimplantation Genetic Diagnosis, a procedure used prior to implantation to help identify genetic defects within embryos to prevent certain genetic disorders from being passed on to the child) with IVF (In vitro fertilization, a process of fertilization where an egg is combined with sperm outside the body). Researchers and bioethicists also worry about the possibility of obtaining truly informed consent from

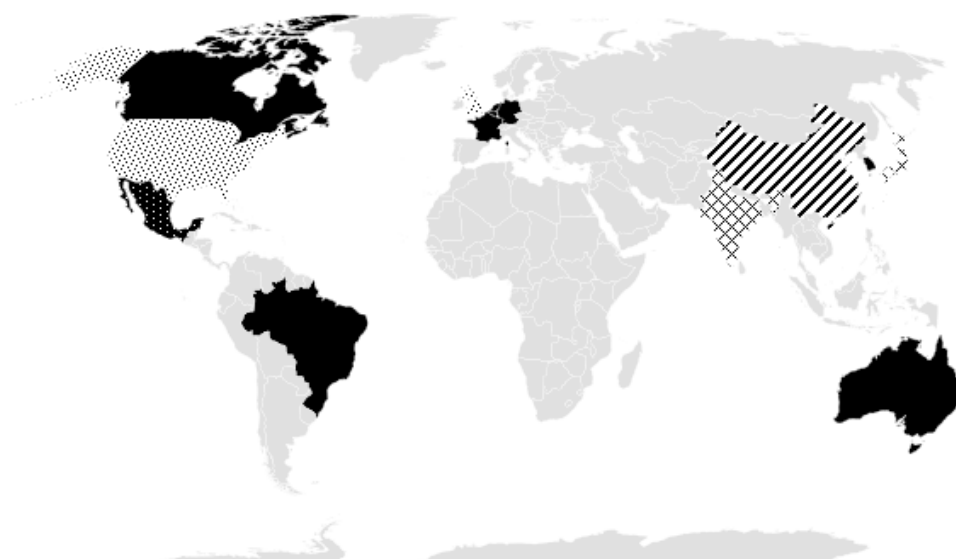
prospective parents, since the risks of germline therapy are still unknown.

Another concern is inequality. As with many new technologies, genome editing will only be accessible to the wealthy and will increase existing divergence in access to health care and other interventions. If taken to its extreme, germline editing could create classes of individuals defined by the quality of their engineered genome.

There are moral and religious objections to the use of human embryos for

A 2016 survey in *Science* examined existing laws (legislation) and documented policies (regulation) that explicitly govern gene editing or might be applied to such activities. The survey labelled countries as restrictive, permissive or something in between. But specialists disagree over whether rules in some nations might be interpreted to permit gene editing.

■ Restrictive ◻ Intermediate ■ Permissive × Regulation and Restrictive / Regulation and Permissive



medical research. In the U.S., federal funds cannot be used for any research that destroys embryos. In addition, the NIH (National Institutes of Health) in the United States, does not fund any use of gene editing in human embryos. While the NIH will not fund gene editing in human embryos at this time, many bioethical and research groups believe that research using gene editing in embryos (as long as it is not used for reproductive purpose) is important for a variety of reasons, including to address scientific questions about human biology. Countries like Sweden, Finland, Belgium, Greece, Britain, Denmark, and the Netherlands have already allowed genome-editing research on nonviable embryos (those that could not result in a live birth), and others have approved genome-editing research studies with viable embryos.

In general, research that is conducted in embryos could use viable or nonviable embryos leftover from IVF, or embryos created expressly for research. Each case has its own moral considerations.

There have always been ethical questions surrounding gene editing. However, they weren't discussed because they were just experiments conducted on a very minor scale. This specific case shows that this is the beginning of something much bigger. It shows that genetically edited humans are no longer science fiction but a part of our reality.

Elizaveta K.

SECURITY COUNCIL ISSUES



The Hong Kong Protests

Hong Kong is currently a special administrative region in People's Republic of China. It was a colony of the British Empire following the two Opium Wars, and it was returned to China in 1997 where it maintained its special government system following mainland China's "One Country, Two Systems" policy.

On the 31st of March of this year, the citizens of Hong Kong started protesting the government's introduction of the Fugitive Offender's Amendment Bill.

If enacted, criminals can be extradited from Hong Kong to Mainland China. Due to Mainland China's political system, protesters fear that the extradition law will be used to target political enemies and effectively end the "One Country, Two Systems" policy, thus putting the human rights and freedom of Hong Kong's citizens at risk. Conflicts between the police and citizens are still ongoing, as currently almost 2000 citizens are under arrest, and multiple public transport systems have stopped functioning.





The Instability in the Persian Gulf

The Persian Gulf is located on the coast of Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates.

On the 5th of May of 2019, military tension between Iran and the United States escalated. Intelligence by the American government suggested that Iran and its allies had plotted against US forces in the Persian Gulf. This caused the US to withdraw from the nuclear deal between Iran and multiple world powers, and both nations listed each other's Ministry of National Defense as a terrorist organization.

Afterwards, several merchant ships were damaged in the Persian Gulf in May and June of 2019 which the US blamed Iran for. Iran also shot down an American RQ-4A surveillance drone, nearly resulting in an armed confrontation between the two powers. Britain and Iran later seized each other's oil tankers, resulting in the British taking a stand with the Americans.

Currently, these three nations are frequently engaging in minor clashes, such as firing warning shots at each others' ships or detaining their naval crews. There seems to be no foreseeable end to this conflict as both sides continue provoking each other.

The crisis in South Sudan

Sudan and South Sudan split from what was previously known as Sudan in 2011. As one of the youngest countries in the world, South Sudan scored the third highest score on the American Fund for Peace's Fragile States Index. It is currently experiencing a massive humanitarian crisis, where over 7 million people are misplaced due to war and droughts, and 6.9 million are experiencing hunger.

Currently, 1 in 3 people are displaced and struggling to survive due to lack of food and housing. Even worse, measles and parasitical diseases are breaking out. The country is getting support from the UN, but it's far from enough as not enough of the UN's budget and attention is being directed at this humanitarian crisis.

Nina Z.



THE CONCEALED POWERS OF JOURNALISM



With contrasting opinions on wars, the press has been vital in the US since the American Revolution. Tories and Patriots witnessed the same events, yet had wildly different perspectives and journalists were intent on covering both sides of the story. Being a journalist is far from an easy job, as the press is not always welcome on the scene, often being censored and manipulated, and putting the journalists' lives at risk. Frequently, riots break out due to a clash of ideologies, and journalists get caught up in the middle as they attempt to be unbiased and factual.

The American Bill of Rights was created to give American citizens basic human and civil rights. Written in 1791, it consisted of 10 amendments to the US Constitution. It states, among other laws, that Congress cannot pass any law "abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press;" establishing verbal expression through speech and press as a fundamental basic right. These rights should never be taken for granted, as they are vital to a democracy.

In the cases where dictatorship takes over a country, one of the first democratic elements they try to control is the free press. If people can't obtain accurate news, then they can be misled more easily. The government may not be able to control people's innermost thoughts but by controlling the press it can create inaccurate, manipulated news in their favor. A free press ensures that news gets out so people can see the truth or the many facets it's composed of. It encourages people to question their relationship with themselves and their surroundings. By showing both sides of an argument, it wields the power to change opinions.

Free press is the glue that holds the broken pieces of democracy together. It ensures that, as long as it exists, the voices of the people will not be silenced.

Kathryn de M.

NEW SCHOOLS: Welcome to IMUN!

There will be dozens of new faces joining this year's conference to celebrate the 25th anniversary of IMUN. Here are some of their thoughts on the expectations they have and how they've been preparing for it.

"I've already taken part in two MUN conferences, but this is the first time I go abroad for the UN international simulations. I am looking forward to going to IMUN because I imagine it's very well-organized and as stimulating as any other MUN. Other reasons why I am counting the days I have left are the strengthening of international relationships and the increasing of my personal knowledge, as I am representing the State of Israel. These days I am currently researching both the governmental opinions of Israel and the Palestinian Authority, along with the study of MUN procedures and regulations. I truly hope to have the opportunity to present my country's resolution and fulfill my delegate duties exhaustively."

Vittoria M., GeMUN Group Genoa



"For us, the MUN is a way to open ourselves to the current problems around the world, to have more confidence in ourselves to speak in front of an audience, and to meet new people from different countries. IMUN is our last outside conference for our high school years so we are expecting to enjoy it immensely, to exceed our limits and to live an unforgettable experience.

We are preparing IMUN by researching information on the different topics and by helping and talking to each other in order to be fully ready when we get to Lisbon."

Lycée Françoise de Tournefeuille

"We are very much looking forward to attending IMUN for the first time this year! As a THIMUN-affiliated conference, our delegates are expecting spirited debate in a competitive environment that will allow our team to continue building on their existing skills. Our ICJ officer and judge are excited to have the opportunity to participate in a new conference, and all participants are busily researching their debate topics, refining resolutions, and practicing powerful arguments in the expectation that all the other delegates are doing the same. While our more experienced delegates set examples for our newer members, those newer members are working diligently in anticipation of an enriching, meaningful and valuable debate experience. In short, everyone here is genuinely looking forward to sharing our perspectives and our passion for MUN with everyone at IMUN 2019!"



Anglo-American School of Moscow



“After attending the IMUN conference in 2018 as a visitor, I became particularly interested in taking part in the conference as a delegate myself. I hope for the environment during the three days to be very professional and I expect the overall experience to be challenging enough so that it takes me out of my comfort zone. I also expect the interactions with students from different backgrounds to be very enriching, not only due to their different perspectives and worldviews, but also because those with more MUN experience certainly will have a lot to teach me. Finally, I hope for the experience to be good practice for the future as some of the skills required at MUN, such as public speaking and leadership skills, will be very helpful for the career path I wish to follow.”

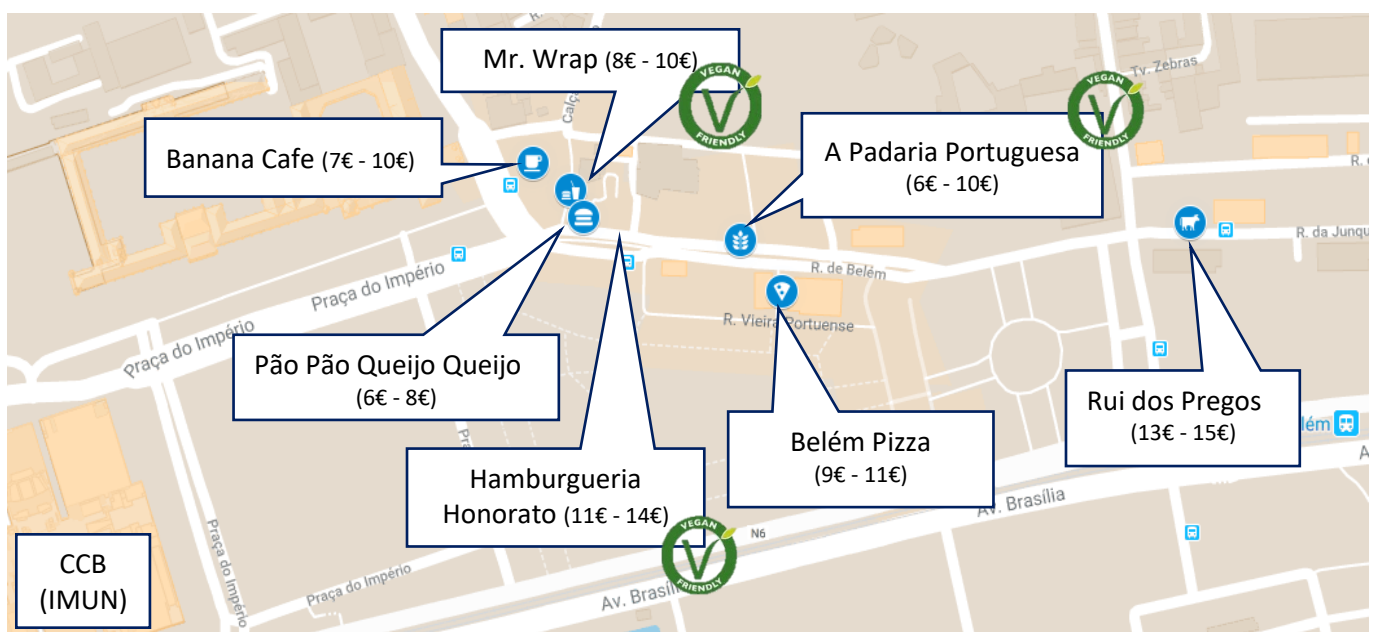
Maria Eduarda R., St. Peter's International School

“We are going into IMUN having participated in only one conference before. It was a "young" conference but it was a great experience and we are very excited for IMUN. We are a little nervous, however as we feel that everyone will be more experienced in big conferences than us. That's why we are doing as much research as possible on our different issues to be prepared so that we can participate and contribute to the conference to the fullest of our ability. Overall, we are so happy and grateful to have the chance to be a part of IMUN and we are looking forward to it with anticipation.”

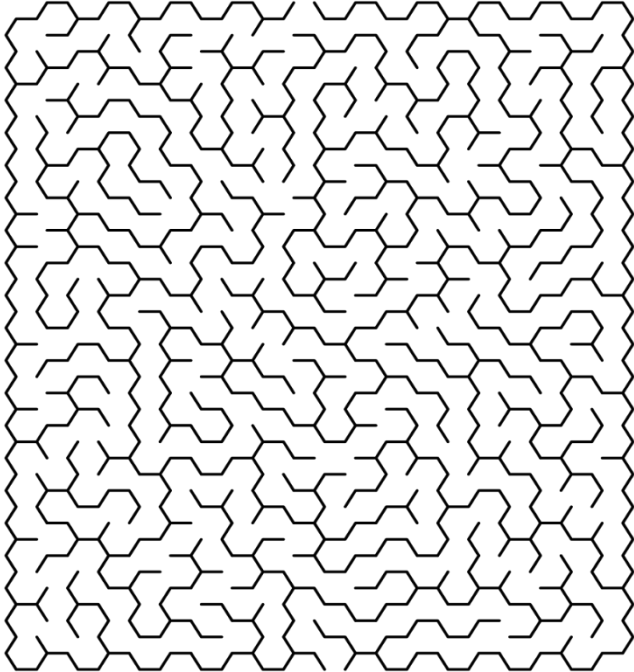
Nicolas B., Lycée Théophile Gautier



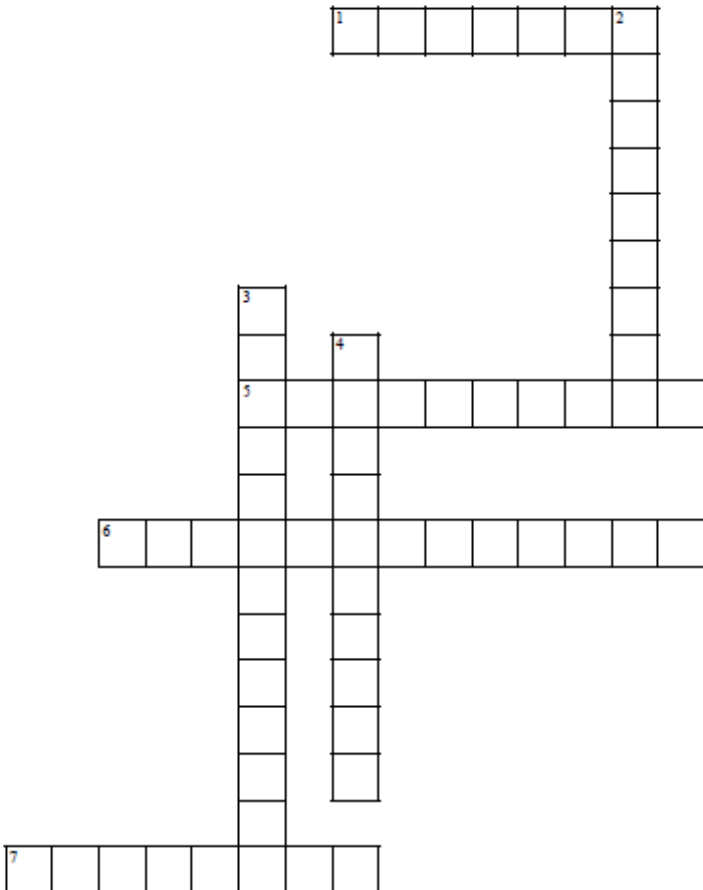
PLACES TO EAT



ENTERTAINMENT



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Across

1. The layer underneath the surface web, which is inaccessible to normal browsers
5. Responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and sustains the well-being of the local people
6. Established after WWII with the aim of preventing future wars, succeeding the ineffective League of Nations
7. Country that the current Secretary-General of the UN is from

Down

2. A field of study concerned with the ethics and philosophical implications of certain biological and medical procedures
3. 15-year-old girl who has gained worldwide recognition through her Climate Change activism
4. The second name of the Sustainable Development goals