



LANGUAGE POLICY

LANGUAGE STATUS AT TALLINN EUDC

You can be classified as an ESL or an EPL speaker during Tallinn EUDC 2017. ESL stands for English as a Second Language and represents everyone for whom English is not their native language and who have not had extensive exposure to English. Speakers will be classified as EPL (English as Proficient Language) speakers if they have spent a considerable amount of time in English language environments, or if they are native speakers of English.

The language committee making these decisions consists of Yair Har-Oz and Ieva Skrīvere. The language committee will make all decisions regarding language before the tournament starts, so if you want to make sure you're granted the appropriate language status, please make sure you provide us with all the necessary information when registering as an ESL speaker. Following your answers to the ESL questionnaire, the language committee will grant all applicants a language status on the basis of the information they have provided. That status can be: ESL, EPL or Interview. The "Interview" status means that the committee wishes to ask the participant further questions and will do so at the EUDC. Any status decision can be



appealed in a procedure that will take place during the tournament. The appeals will be handled by the language committee and other prominent members of the debating community that will for this purpose be assigned to a Complaints Committee.

THE ESL QUESTIONNAIRE

The classification will be done on the basis of the answers to the language questionnaire. The questions are based on the EUDC constitution, and the decisions made by the EUDC Council at Zagreb EUDC 2014.

LANGUAGE STATUS ACCORDING TO THE EUDC CONSTITUTION

Language status at EUDCs has historically been determined based on articles 22 and 31 of the WUDC Constitution. Following the decisions of the EUDC Council at Zagreb EUDC 2014, changes have been made to article 31 with regards to its usage at EUDC. The language used in the articles of the Constitution are a bit unclear, so here's a summary (please do refer to the original wording for more precise language).

1. If you have:



- spoken English for more than six years as a primary language in your home or social circle
- spent more than six years when of school age or above in a country where English is the primary medium of exchange
- spent more than six years enrolled in an educational program where English is the effective medium of instruction in a non-native English environment, or where the English language is the subject of instruction, or
- worked for more than six years in a workplace where English is the effective medium of exchange.

You will **not** be considered an ESL speaker.

2. If you were between 6 - 12 years old inclusive in the period where one of the above criteria is applied, these years are counted as half (so 4 years become 2 etc.)

3. If the educational program was in a native-English environment these years are counted double (so 2 years become 4 etc.)

4. These criteria are cumulative – if you've studied in English for 4 years and have now been working in a



workplace where English is the effective medium of exchange for 3 years, you are no longer eligible for ESL status

Let us look at a couple of examples:

1. Someone who lived and studied in the US between the ages of 7-12 inclusive will be granted ESL status. They have spent 5 years in the US, this figure is halved because it occurred between the ages of 6-12. This figure of 2.5 is then doubled because they studied in a native English environment. This equals 5 years which is fewer than the limit of 6 years.
2. Someone who lived and studied in the US between the ages of 7-12, and studied in an English-speaking university program in France for two years, will **not** be granted ESL status. They have spent 5 years in the US, this is halved and then doubled as above to give 5 years. Two years is then added in respect of them studying in an educational program where English is the effective medium of instruction. This equals seven years in total, which is more than the limit of six.
3. Someone who lived, studied, and worked in the US for two years would be granted ESL status. The two years



they spent in the US would be doubled because they studied in a native-English speaking country; this results in a figure of four years.

4. Someone who studied in the US for two years, then lived and worked in the UK for two years, and then studied English in France for two years will **not** be granted ESL status. The first two years are doubled because they studied in a native-English speaking country. This figure of four years is then increased by two years in respect of them living and working in an English speaking environment. A further two years is then added in respect of them studying in an institution where English is the subject of instruction. This results in a figure of eight years.

QUESTIONS

If you have any questions about the Tallinn EUDC Language Policy, please e-mail Ieva and Yair at TallinnLanguage@gmail.com



APPENDIX

The original text of the WUDC constitution can be found here: <http://wudc.yaledebate.org/wudctemp/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/WorldsConstitutionasofDecember2014.pdf>

These are the relevant WUDC articles, with the changes voted in by the EUDC Council applied to them:

Article 22. Determination of Language Status

- a. Before each Championship, the Organizational Committee of the Championships shall appoint a committee of Language Review Officers (the Language Review Committee) to assist in the determination of language status of participants.
- b. The Language Review Officers shall be appointed with regard to experience with the issue and equitable geographical distribution.
- c. Before and during the preliminary rounds of the Championships, the Language Review Officers shall gather information about and shall interview participants claiming



ESL status, to determine if they meet the requirements of Article 31.

d. A list of all teams and speakers with ESL status shall be published before the announcement of the teams qualifying for the elimination rounds with at least enough time for the procedure outlined under Part f. to complete.

e. Participants' status may be awarded without interview if at least two Language Review Officers agree.

f. Any participant who believes their status has been determined incorrectly shall have the right to appeal to the full Language Review Committee, whose decision shall be final.

g. No team shall have ESL status unless both its participants have ESL status.

h. Speakers may be awarded their status for future championships, if a change in status is not expected.

i. Unless the criteria change, participants cannot re-apply for a language category that they have been ultimately denied at previous championships.



j. Records must be kept by the Registrar of all decisions including reasons. A waiver of confidentiality of applicants must be obtained.

Article 31 ESL Status

1. The purpose of the English as a Second Language classification is to recognize the achievement of speakers and teams in overcoming the inevitable burden of debating in a language that is not their own.

a. The Language Review Officers shall evaluate the inevitable burden of a speaker both with regard to the amount of previous exposure to spoken English, as well as the level of complexity of said exposure.

b. Speakers are expected not to be suffering a sufficiently significant disadvantage to qualify as ESL when they:

1. Have spoken English for more than six years as a primary language in their home or social circle, or
2. Have spent more than six years when of school age or above in a country where English is the primary medium of exchange, or
3. Have spent more than six years enrolled in an educational program where English is the effective



medium of instruction in a non-native English environment, or the English language is the subject of instruction, or

4. Have worked for more than six years in a workplace where English is the effective medium of exchange.

5. The cumulative period of time under which at least one of conditions (b) to (d) is fulfilled may not exceed six years.

6. Time shall be halved for education in a native English environment.

7. Years of exposure to English between the ages of 6 to 12 in any of the above ways should count half as much as years after 12.

c. The committee shall have discretion in evaluating speakers towards the quality of their exposure, specifically:

1. The content, structure, and quality of English used for the instruction that speakers are enrolled for.

2. The persons instructing the speakers.



3. The language distance between English and the speakers' native tongue and general exposure to English in the country.
- d. A consistent classification of speakers should be maintained across the competition and a record of jurisprudence in marginal/borderline cases and/or cases of appeal should be passed on to following language committee in an anonymized way.