

The 33rd International Festival of Children's Folk Ensembles

FESTIVAL OF THE CHILDREN OF MOUNTAINS

Nowy Sącz, 19–25 July 2026



RULES

I. PROGRAMME PRINCIPLES

1. The FESTIVAL OF THE CHILDREN OF MOUNTAINS in **Nowy Sącz** is an event of common fun and games, providing children with an opportunity to become acquainted with the wealth of folk culture and tradition of various parts of the world. The children learn tolerance and respect for a variety of cultures, religions and customs of different nations. The Festival also enables artistic managers and choreographers who run children folk ensembles to cooperate and exchange experiences as well as to share their viewpoints on children folklore and methods for presenting it on stage.
2. **Children's folk ensembles** from mountainous regions participate in the Festival. Ensembles from non-mountainous regions are allowed to be guest participants. They are full participants in the Festival.
3. **!!! The age of participants should remain within the range of 7–14 years old.**
This limit does not apply to members of the musical band accompanying the ensemble.
4. The main programme principle of the **FESTIVAL OF THE CHILDREN OF MOUNTAINS** is that each Polish ensemble is coupled with a foreign partner ensemble with which it performs at all the concerts as well as participates in all accompanying off-stage events.
5. **The Festival is of a non-competitive character.**
6. **!!! During the Festival the ensembles present the folklore of their own regions in an authentic / traditional form** by means of children's dance, singing, games and play. The programme should be suited to the age and interpretative abilities of children.
7. **!!! Ensembles using playback (tapes or CDs with recorded music) or electronic instruments in their performances are not allowed to participate in the Festival!**
8. **!!! The programme of the Festival comprises, among others, the following events:**
 - **19th July (Sunday)**, 5:00 pm – Festival Holy Mass, 6:00 pm – Festival **parade** down the Nowy Sącz streets, 7:00 pm – official opening of the Festival and the **inaugural concert** (performances of up to 5 minutes per ensemble)
 - **20–24th July (Monday–Friday)** – individual ensembles' **NATIONAL DAYS**: 11:00 am – preview on open-air stage (up to 15 min.), 6:00 pm – **main concert** at the Riflemen's Park Amphitheatre in Nowy Sącz (up to 35 min. – divided into two parts: 20 min. and 15 min.)
 - **20–24th July (Monday–Friday)** – a short presentation at the Riflemen's Park Amphitheatre in Nowy Sącz, of the ensemble which has its national day the next day (up to 7 min.)
 - concerts in other towns and health resorts in the region (2 x 15 min.)
 - accompanying events (shared workshops, meetings, bonfires, animations, trips enabling participants to have a good time and affording them a chance to become acquainted with the beauty of the region and places of interest in southern Poland)
 - **25th July (Saturday)**, 6:00 pm – **final concert** according to the script of the director of concerts

*The organizer reserves the right to change the schedule.

9. THE NATIONAL DAY.

Each foreign–Polish ensemble couple is assigned one day in Nowy Sącz, the so-called “national day,” on which they present their main programmes as well as become the “hosts of the Festival.” The idea behind THE NATIONAL DAY is to enable each ensemble to put on a wide-ranging presentation of the culture of its own region and country. For this purpose, the ensemble can also engage in off-stage activities, which in their character will largely depend on the ensembles' own initiative and ideas. As for the implementation of these, the organizers are willing to provide any help required by the ensembles. The ensemble is to describe the proposals for the off-stage activities to be presented on the NATIONAL DAY in the online application form

The programme of THE NATIONAL DAY comprises:

- forenoon presentations of the partner ensembles on an open-air stage in Nowy Sącz and in town streets (up to 15 minutes),
- an optional fair of folk art, handicraft and regional cuisine, typical of the ensemble's country and region. Market stalls for the fair will be provided by the Festival organizer, whereas all the formal issues concerned with the products on offer will be the responsibility of the ensembles.

- the evening **main concert** at the Riflemen's Park Amphitheatre in Nowy Sącz, concluded with shared fun and dancing by the partner ensembles. **!!! The duration of each ensemble's performance (divided into two parts: 20 min. and 15 min.) should not exceed 35 minutes.**
10. For the duration of the Festival an **International Artistic Committee** is appointed by the Director of the Festival in consultation with the Polish Section of CIOFF®. During joint sessions with the ensemble leaders the Committee members evaluate the ensemble's NATIONAL DAY programme, its mode of presentation and stage performance.
 11. **!!!** The leaders of each ensemble shall prepare and teach two technically simple dances typical of their own region to the partner ensemble. The purpose of this activity is mutual knowledge of dance traditions as well as bringing the Festival participants closer together. The learning of the dances shall take place during shared practice or meetings at the accommodation places. The dances learnt will be performed, inter alia, during the Festival's final concert.

II. ORGANIZATION

1. **!!! The ensembles are accommodated at dormitories, boarding houses.**
All board and lodging expenses are fully covered by the Festival organizer for the duration of the Festival.
2. **!!! The total number of members of each ensemble** (including musicians, childminders, accompanying persons and coach drivers) **must not exceed 35**. Participation of each extra individual is subject to approval obtained from the Organizer.
3. The Organizer shall provide every ensemble with constant assistance of a guide representing the Organizer. In addition, foreign ensembles will be provided with interpreters. English shall be the preferred language of communication during the Festival.
4. Ensemble **transport**:
 - **Polish ensembles**
 - **The ensembles are expected to arrive in their own coaches.** Given the fact that the Festival organization provides for concerts in various towns in the region, as well as accompanying events during the Festival week, the coach must be at the ensemble's disposal for the duration of the Festival.
 - The transport costs incurred by all the Polish ensembles will be refunded by the Organizer in the form of fuel vouchers to be redeemed while the Festival programme is realised – as of the arrival in Nowy Sącz. The settlements will be based on the conversion factor of 30 litres of diesel oil per 100km.
 - The Organizer shall not cover costs of any technical failures or repairs made to the coaches.
 - **Foreign ensembles**
 - **The ensembles that arrive in Nowy Sącz by their own means of transport** will get a refund on the transport costs from the Organizer in the form of fuel vouchers to be redeemed while the Festival programme is realised – as of the arrival in Nowy Sącz. The settlements will be based on the conversion factor of 30 litres of diesel oil per 100km.
 - The Organizer shall not cover any costs incurred by the ensemble while crossing the Polish national border, nor costs concerned with any technical failures or repairs made to the coaches.
 - **The ensembles that arrive in Poland by plane will be provided, for the duration of the Festival, with a coach, and the transport costs thus involved will be covered by the Organizer.**
5. For both the Polish and foreign ensembles, the dates of arrival in and departure from Nowy Sącz shall be scheduled so that the ensembles are able to take part in the official opening of the Festival (19th July, from early morning onwards) and the final concert (25th July, in the evening). **We suggest that the ensembles stay in Nowy Sącz between 18th July, 4:00 pm and 26th July, 10:00 am.**
6. The Festival participants shall not be granted any other compensation for the stay during the Festival.
7. During the Festival the ensembles remain at the organizer's disposal and are obliged to take part in all the concerts and other Festival events specified in the programme of the FESTIVAL OF THE CHILDREN OF MOUNTAINS. The ensembles shall receive a detailed programme of stay after the qualification process has been finished, and on receipt of the written invitation to the Festival.
8. The Organizer reserves the rights to record, film and photograph the Festival, including participants' performances, off-stage activities and to have them rebroadcast by means of television, radio and electronic media without any special remuneration or fees (including ones concerned with copyright) due to the ensembles.
9. The ensemble leaders and childminders are responsible for the children's behaviour and for any damage done to the accommodation occupied by the ensemble members during the Festival.

10. The ensemble leaders are obliged to take out disease and casualty **insurance** for the ensemble members in their own country. The organizer shall not cover costs of any hospital treatment. The members of the ensembles from the European Union are advised to obtain European Health Insurance Cards.
11. The ensembles that are required to have visas to enter the territory of the Republic of Poland, must **fulfil the visa obligation** by **31st May 2026** at the latest. Failure to meet this condition will result in the Organizer withdrawing its invitation of the ensemble to participate in the Festival.

III. PARTICIPATION CONDITIONS

POLISH ENSEMBLES

1. **The Festival Organizer shall appoint a Qualification Committee whose task will be to select Polish ensembles from the group of the ensembles participating in the Carpathian Festival of Children's Folk Ensembles in the town of Rabka-Zdrój, and recommended by the Carpathian Festival jurors.**



The ensembles are obliged to prepare two programmes: the dance-based one and the custom-based one which is a shortened version of the programme presented during the qualification stage.



!!! The artistic programmes of the ensembles recommended for the **FESTIVAL OF THE CHILDREN OF MOUNTAINS** shall be in addition subject to consultation – approval procedure by the Qualification Committee based on a live performance at the ensemble's place.



In the exceptional case of there being no full complement of Polish ensembles (5 ensembles), the Qualification Committee is entitled to include ensembles which have not participated in the Festival in Rabka-Zdrój.



The ensembles are obliged to fill in, by the **31st March 2026**, the ONLINE APPLICATION FORM, which can be found at swietodziecigor.pl/formularz-polska, describe, and enclose the materials specified in the form:

- **information about the ensemble** (its history, repertoire, achievements),
- **information about the region** the ensemble comes from, with particular emphasis on folk culture,
- **4-6 photos of the ensemble** of quality allowing for their use in the Festival publications (minimum resolution: 10cm, 300dpi, size at least 800KB). At least one photo must show the whole ensemble. and – after the programme has been consulted by the Qualification Committee – to send in the final **script of the programme** to be presented during the **FESTIVAL OF THE CHILDREN OF MOUNTAINS**.



The Organizer shall not cover any costs resulting from copyright protecting the above-mentioned materials.



The ensemble shall be obliged to submit to the Festival organization office a **list of names of all the members of the ensemble** by the **19th June 2026** at the latest.

FOREIGN ENSEMBLES

1. **The Festival Organizer shall appoint a Qualification Committee whose task will be to select foreign ensembles on the basis of the textual and audio-visual materials sent in at the Festival organization office.**
2. The ensemble can participate in the FESTIVAL OF THE CHILDREN OF MOUNTAINS on condition that it submits by **31st January 2026** a carefully filled-in (in English or Polish) ONLINE APPLICATION FORM, which can be found at swietodziecigor.pl/en/application-form, along with the materials specified in the form.
3. The application form must contain such materials that make it possible to determine whether the ensemble fulfils the rules of and programme principles behind the **FESTIVAL OF THE CHILDREN OF MOUNTAINS**:



!!! an audio-visual recording of the ensemble's programme to be presented at the Festival. It is essential and of utmost importance that the musical band (the instrumental group accompanying the ensemble) with the instrument-playing musicians should be made visible in the recording. The recording should be made within the last 2 years to reflect the up-to-date state of the ensemble.



!!! a title and description of the programme to be presented during the **FESTIVAL OF THE CHILDREN OF MOUNTAINS**

PROGRAMME: It is the Organizer's requirement that the ensemble's programme is not composed of a medley of dances without any cultural context. The programme should illustrate dance and song as a function of custom-related behaviour accommodated to the children's age (fun and games). **The cultural context addressed in the programme should be reflected in the title.**



!!! information about the ensemble (its history, repertoire and achievements) and **information about the region** the ensemble comes from, with particular emphasis on folk culture.



!!! 4-6 photos of the ensemble of quality allowing for their use in the Festival publications (minimum resolution: 10cm, 300dpi, size at least 800KB). At least one photo must show the whole ensemble.



The Organizer shall not cover any costs resulting from copyright protecting the above-mentioned materials.

4. **On the basis of the submitted materials, the Qualification Committee appointed by the Organizer shall evaluate the programmes and qualify (minimum 5 groups) ensembles to participate in the Festival, with the following criteria in mind:**
 - a correctly submitted application,
 - a high artistic and substantive level,
 - a Category A artistic programme – authentic material where dancing and music are derived from children's games and play and are in keeping with traditional customs,
 - the ensemble represents a country or region that has not yet been presented at the Festival, or has been presented but a long time ago,
 - the diversity of ethnographic regions presented by the final set of qualified ensembles.

In the exceptional case of there being no full complement of ensembles fulfilling the above criteria, the Qualification Committee is entitled to make concessions on the above-delineated qualification priorities.
5. **Ensembles will be notified of qualification for the Festival by the 28th February 2026 at the latest.**
 - In justified cases the Organizer reserves the right to prolong the qualification process, to not send information about the decision made by the Qualification Committee to the ensembles not qualified by the end of the qualification process, to hold in reserve selected ensembles until the time of the final confirmation of participation by the ensembles qualified, as well as to not enter into correspondence in the case of applications that are incomplete or incompliant with the Festival rules – in particular whenever the required audio-visual materials are missing,
 - The decisions made by the Qualification Committee are final and irrevocable.
6. **An official, written invitation** signed by the Director of the Festival serves as confirmation of participation in the Festival. **A list of names of the ensemble members** shall serve as an attachment to the official, written invitation. The ensemble should submit the list via e-mail at sdg@mcksokol.pl within 14 days of receipt of the notification of qualification for the Festival, or within the timeframe agreed with the Organizer.

ATTENTION!

1. The organizer reserves the right to cancel the Festival, as well as to change the Festival rules or conditions upon which the Festival will be realized, particularly when faced with events or external circumstances of an exceptional or unpredictable nature, which preclude the realization of the Festival in whole or in part.
2. In the event of occurrences caused the so-called force majeure, precluding the realisation of the Festival, and/or the ensemble's arrival or stay in Poland, the Festival organizer and participants shall not seek any material redress (in particular a refund of travel expenses, or compensation for organizational activities).
3. The participants shall follow all the safety procedures and regulations applicable during the Festival; the aforementioned procedures and regulations shall be communicated to the participants on a need-to-know basis, and in the course of the organizational activities. The participants are also obliged to abide by the rules of the Festival discipline. The participants who violate them may be dismissed from the Festival.
4. In emergency or situations not provided for in the Festival rules, any final decision is made by the Director of the Festival.
5. Any disputable issues not included in the regulations shall be settled by the Organizer.

Festival Organizational Office of the **FESTIVAL OF THE CHILDREN OF MOUNTAINS**
 SOKÓŁ Małopolska Culture Centre, 3 Długosza Street, 33-300 Nowy Sącz, POLAND
 tel. 48 18 4482610, fax. 48 18 4482611
 e-mail: sdg@mcksokol.pl
www.swietodziecigor.pl