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QUICK LOWER BOUNDS FOR REGULATORS OF NUMBER FIELDS

by Nils-Peter SKORUPPA

ABSTRACT. A short and simple proof for Zimmert's lower bounds for regulators of number fields is presented.

1. INTRODUCTION. Let K be an algebraic number field with r_1 real and $2r_2$ complex embeddings, let R denote its regulator and w its number of roots of unity. The purpose of this note is to present a surprisingly short proof of the following theorem.

THEOREM. *For any real number $s > 1$ one has*

$$\frac{R}{w} \geq \frac{s(s-1)}{e} \exp\left(-\frac{s}{s-1}\right) \gamma(s) \exp\left(-s \frac{\gamma'(s)}{\gamma}\right),$$

Here $\gamma(s) = 2^{-r_1} \Gamma(s/2)^{r_1} \Gamma(s)^{r_2}$, where $\Gamma(s)$ denotes the gamma function, and $\gamma'(s)$ is the derivative.

If we let $s = 4/3$ then we obtain

$$\frac{R}{w} \geq 0.00299 \cdot \exp(0.48r_1 + 0.06r_2).$$

From this one deduces that regulators of number fields are bounded from below by an absolute constant and grow exponentially in the degree of K .

This result and an estimate similar to the one of the above theorem was first stated and proved by Zimmert [Z, Satz 3 and Korollar]. He proved the sharper estimate

$$\frac{R}{w} \geq \frac{s(2s-1)}{2e} \exp\left(-\frac{2s}{s-1}\right) \gamma(2s) \exp\left(-2s \frac{\gamma'(s)}{\gamma}\right)$$