

ON THE EXISTENCE OF U -POLYGONS OF CLASS $c \geq 4$ IN PLANAR POINT SETS

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ABSTRACT. For a finite set U of directions in the Euclidean plane, a convex non-degenerate polygon P is called a U -polygon if every line parallel to a direction of U that meets a vertex of P also meets another vertex of P . We characterize the numbers of edges of U -polygons of class $c \geq 4$ with all their vertices in certain subsets of the plane and derive explicit results in the case of cyclotomic model sets.

1. INTRODUCTION

The (discrete parallel) X -ray of a finite subset F of the Euclidean plane in direction u is the corresponding line sum function that gives the numbers of points of F on each line parallel to u . It was shown in [18, Proposition 4.6] that the convex subsets of an *algebraic Delone set* Λ are determined by their discrete parallel X -rays in the directions of a set U of at least two pairwise non-parallel Λ -directions (i.e., directions parallel to non-zero interpoint vectors of Λ) if and only if there is no U -polygon with all its vertices in Λ . By [18, Lemma 4.5], there always exists a U -polygon with all its vertices in Λ if U is a set of at most three pairwise non-parallel Λ -directions. This leads to the question which U -polygons exist with all their vertices in Λ for sets U of four or more pairwise non-parallel Λ -directions. We refer the reader to [12, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19] for more on discrete tomography and [11] for the role of U -polygons in geometric tomography, where the X -ray of a compact convex set in a direction gives the lengths of all chords of the set in this direction. Dulio and Peri have introduced the notion of *class* of a U -polygon and demonstrated that for planar *lattices* L the numbers of edges of U -polygons of class $c \geq 4$ with all their vertices in L are precisely 8 and 12; cf. [10, Theorem 12]. As a first step beyond the case of planar lattices, this text provides a generalization of this result to planar sets that are non-degenerate in some sense and satisfy a certain affinity condition on finite scales (Theorem 3.1). It turns out that, for these sets Λ , the existence of U -polygons of class $c \geq 4$ with all their vertices in Λ is equivalent to the existence of certain *affinely regular polygons* with all their vertices in Λ , a problem that was addressed in [19]. The obtained characterization of numbers of vertices of U -polygons of class $c \geq 4$ with all their vertices in Λ can be expressed in terms of a simple inclusion of real field extensions of \mathbb{Q} and particularly applies to *algebraic Delone sets*, thus including *cyclotomic model sets*, which form an important class of planar *mathematical quasicrystals*; cf. [2, 7]. For cyclotomic model

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sets Λ , the numbers of vertices of U -polygons of class $c \geq 4$ with all their vertices in Λ can be expressed by a simple divisibility condition (Corollary 4.1). In particular, the above result on lattice U -polygons of class $c \geq 4$ by Dulio and Peri is contained as a special case (Corollary 4.3(a)).

2. DEFINITIONS AND PRELIMINARIES

Natural numbers are always assumed to be positive and the set of rational primes is denoted by \mathcal{P} . Primes $p \in \mathcal{P}$ for which the number $2p + 1$ is prime as well are called *Sophie Germain primes*. We denote by \mathcal{P}_{SG} the set of Sophie Germain primes. The first few ones are

$$2, 3, 5, 11, 23, 29, 41, 53, 83, 89, 113, 131, 173, 179, 191, 233, 239, \dots;$$

see entry A005384 of [20] for further details. The group of units of a given ring R is denoted by R^\times . As usual, for a complex number $z \in \mathbb{C}$, $|z|$ denotes the complex absolute value $|z| = \sqrt{z\bar{z}}$, where $\bar{\cdot}$ denotes the complex conjugation. Occasionally, we identify \mathbb{C} with \mathbb{R}^2 . The unit circle $\{x \in \mathbb{R}^2 \mid |x| = 1\}$ in \mathbb{R}^2 is denoted by \mathbb{S}^1 . Moreover, the elements of \mathbb{S}^1 are also called *directions*. For a direction $u \in \mathbb{S}^1$, the *angle between u and the positive real axis* is understood to be the unique angle $\theta \in [0, \pi)$ with the property that a rotation of $1 \in \mathbb{C}$ by θ in counter-clockwise order is a direction parallel to u . For $r > 0$ and $x \in \mathbb{R}^2$, $B_r(x)$ denotes the open ball of radius r about x . A subset Λ of the plane is called *uniformly discrete* if there is a radius $r > 0$ such that every ball $B_r(x)$ with $x \in \mathbb{R}^2$ contains at most one point of Λ . Further, Λ is called *relatively dense* if there is a radius $R > 0$ such that every ball $B_R(x)$ with $x \in \mathbb{R}^2$ contains at least one point of Λ . Λ is called a *Delone set* if it is both uniformly discrete and relatively dense. A direction $u \in \mathbb{S}^1$ is called a *Λ -direction* if it is parallel to a non-zero element of the difference set $\Lambda - \Lambda$ of Λ . Further, a bounded subset C of Λ is called a *convex subset of Λ* if its convex hull contains no new points of Λ . A *non-singular affine transformation* of the Euclidean plane is given by $z \mapsto Az + t$, where $A \in \text{GL}(2, \mathbb{R})$ and $t \in \mathbb{R}^2$. Further, recall that a *homothety* of the Euclidean plane is given by $z \mapsto \lambda z + t$, where $\lambda \in \mathbb{R}$ is positive and $t \in \mathbb{R}^2$. A *convex polygon* is the convex hull of a finite set of points in \mathbb{R}^2 . For a subset $S \subset \mathbb{R}^2$, a *polygon in S* is a convex polygon with all vertices in S . A *regular polygon* is always assumed to be planar, non-degenerate and convex. An *affinely regular polygon* is a non-singular affine image of a regular polygon. In particular, it must have at least 3 vertices. Let $U \subset \mathbb{S}^1$ be a finite set of pairwise non-parallel directions. A non-degenerate convex polygon P is called a *U -polygon* if it has the property that whenever v is a vertex of P and $u \in U$, the line ℓ_u^v in the plane in direction u which passes through v also meets another vertex v' of P . Then, every direction of U is parallel to one of the edges of P ; cf. [10, Lemma 5(i)]. Further, one can easily see that a U -polygon has $2m$ edges, where $m \geq \text{card}(U)$. For example, an affinely regular polygon with an even number of vertices is a U -polygon if and only if each direction of U is parallel to one of its edges. The following notion of *class* of a U -polygon was introduced by Dulio and Peri; cf. [10, Definition 1]. For $0 < c \leq \text{card}(U)$, a U -polygon P is said to be of *class c* with respect to U if c is the maximal number of consecutive edges of P whose directions belong to U .

Definition 2.1. For a subset $A \subset \mathbb{C}$, we denote by \mathbb{K}_A the intermediate field of \mathbb{C}/\mathbb{Q} that is given by

$$\mathbb{K}_A := \mathbb{Q} \left((A - A) \cup \overline{(A - A)} \right).$$

Further, we set $\mathbb{k}_A := \mathbb{K}_A \cap \mathbb{R}$, the maximal real subfield of \mathbb{K}_A .

For $n \in \mathbb{N}$, we always let $\zeta_n := e^{2\pi i/n}$, as a specific choice for a primitive n th root of unity in \mathbb{C} . Denoting by ϕ Euler's totient function, one has the following standard result for the n th cyclotomic field $\mathbb{Q}(\zeta_n)$.

Fact 2.2 (Gauß). [21, Theorem 2.5] $[\mathbb{Q}(\zeta_n) : \mathbb{Q}] = \phi(n)$. *The field extension \mathbb{K}_n/\mathbb{Q} is a Galois extension with Abelian Galois group $G(\mathbb{Q}(\zeta_n)/\mathbb{Q}) \simeq (\mathbb{Z}/n\mathbb{Z})^\times$, where $a \pmod{n}$ corresponds to the automorphism given by $\zeta_n \mapsto \zeta_n^a$.*

It is well known that $\mathbb{Q}(\zeta_n + \bar{\zeta}_n)$ is the maximal real subfield of $\mathbb{Q}(\zeta_n)$ and is of degree $\phi(n)/2$ over \mathbb{Q} ; see [21]. Throughout this text, we shall use the notation

$$\mathbb{K}_n = \mathbb{Q}(\zeta_n), \mathbb{k}_n = \mathbb{Q}(\zeta_n + \bar{\zeta}_n), \mathcal{O}_n = \mathbb{Z}[\zeta_n], \mathfrak{o}_n = \mathbb{Z}[\zeta_n + \bar{\zeta}_n].$$

Note that that \mathcal{O}_n and \mathfrak{o}_n are the rings of integers in \mathbb{K}_n and \mathbb{k}_n , respectively; cf. [21, Theorem 2.6 and Proposition 2.16]. For n odd, one has $\phi(2n) = \phi(n)$ by the multiplicativity of the arithmetic function ϕ and thus $\mathbb{K}_n = \mathbb{K}_{2n}$; cf. Fact 2.2.

Definition 2.3. For a set $A \subset \mathbb{R}^2$, we define the following properties:

- (Alg) $[\mathbb{K}_A : \mathbb{Q}] < \infty$.
- (Aff) For all finite subsets F of \mathbb{K}_A , there is a non-singular affine transformation Ψ of the plane such that $\Psi(F) \subset A$.
- (Hom) For all finite subsets F of \mathbb{K}_A , there is a homothety h of the plane such that $h(F) \subset A$.

Moreover, we call A *degenerate* if and only if \mathbb{K}_A is a subfield of \mathbb{R} .

Remark 2.4. For any non-degenerate $A \subset \mathbb{R}^2$, the field \mathbb{K}_A is a complex extension of \mathbb{Q} . Trivially, property (Hom) implies property (Aff). If A satisfies property (Alg), then one has $[\mathbb{k}_A : \mathbb{Q}] < \infty$, meaning that \mathbb{k}_A is a real algebraic number field.

We need the following result of Darboux [9] on second mid-point polygons, where the *midpoint polygon* $M(P)$ of a convex polygon P is the convex polygon whose vertices are the midpoints of the edges of P ; compare also [13, Lemma 5] or [11, Lemma 1.2.9].

Fact 2.5. *Let P_0 be a convex n -gon in \mathbb{R}^2 with centroid at the origin. For each $k \in \mathbb{N}$, define $P_k := \sec(\pi/n)M(P_{k-1})$. Then the sequence $(P_{2k})_{k=0}^\infty$ converges in the Hausdorff metric to an affinely regular polygon.*

If, in the situation of Fact 2.5, P_0 is a U -polygon of class c , then, for all k , P_{2k} is a U -polygon of class c , whence also $R := \lim_{k \rightarrow \infty} P_{2k}$ is a U -polygon of class c . This proves the next

Lemma 2.6. *Let $U \subset \mathbb{S}^1$ be a finite set of directions and let $0 < c \leq \text{card}(U)$. Then, there exists a U -polygon of class c if and only if there is an affinely regular U -polygon of class c .*

Let (t_1, t_2, t_3, t_4) be an ordered tuple of four distinct elements of the set $\mathbb{R} \cup \{\infty\}$. Then, its *cross ratio* $\langle t_1, t_2, t_3, t_4 \rangle$ is defined by

$$\langle t_1, t_2, t_3, t_4 \rangle := \frac{(t_3 - t_1)(t_4 - t_2)}{(t_3 - t_2)(t_4 - t_1)},$$

with the usual conventions if one of the t_i equals ∞ , thus $\langle t_1, t_2, t_3, t_4 \rangle \in \mathbb{R}$. The following property of cross ratios of slopes s_z of elements $z \in \mathbb{R}^2 \setminus \{0\}$ is standard.

Fact 2.7. *Let $z_j \in \mathbb{R}^2 \setminus \{0\}$, $j \in \{1, \dots, 4\}$, be four pairwise non-parallel elements of the Euclidean plane and let $A \in \text{GL}(2, \mathbb{R})$. Then, one has*

$$\langle s_{z_1}, s_{z_2}, s_{z_3}, s_{z_4} \rangle = \langle s_{Az_1}, s_{Az_2}, s_{Az_3}, s_{Az_4} \rangle.$$

Lemma 2.8. [18, Fact 4.7] *For a set $\Lambda \subset \mathbb{R}^2$, the cross ratio of slopes of four pairwise non-parallel Λ -directions is an element of the field \mathbb{k}_Λ .*

3. THE CHARACTERIZATION

Theorem 3.1. *For a non-degenerate subset Λ of the plane with property (Aff) and an even number $m \geq 8$, the following statements are equivalent:*

- (i) *There is a U -polygon of class $c \geq 4$ in Λ with m edges.*
- (ii) *There is an affinely regular U -polygon of class $c \geq 4$ with m edges for a set U of Λ -directions.*
- (iii) $\mathbb{k}_{m/2} \subset \mathbb{k}_\Lambda$.
- (iv) *There is an affinely regular polygon in Λ with $\text{lcm}(m/2, 2)$ edges.*

If Λ additionally fulfils property (Alg), then the above assertions only hold for finitely many values of m .

Proof. Direction (i) \Rightarrow (ii) immediately follows from Lemma 2.6. For direction (ii) \Rightarrow (iii), let P be an affinely regular U -polygon of class $c \geq 4$ with m edges for a set U of Λ -directions. There is then a non-singular affine transformation Ψ of the plane such that $R_m = \Psi(P)$ is a regular m -gon. Since P is a U -polygon of class $c \geq 4$ for a set U of Λ -directions and since, by Fact 2.7, the cross ratio of slopes of directions of edges is preserved by non-singular affine transformations, there are four consecutive edges of R_m whose cross ratio q of slopes of their directions, say arranged in order of increasing angle with the positive real axis, is an element of \mathbb{k}_Λ ; cf. Lemma 2.8. Applying a suitable rotation, if necessary, we may assume that these directions are given in complex form by $1, \zeta_m, \zeta_m^2$ and ζ_m^3 ; cf. Fact 2.7 again. Using $\sin(\theta) = -e^{-i\theta}(1 - e^{2i\theta})/2i$, one easily calculates that

$$\begin{aligned} q &= \frac{(\tan(\frac{3\pi}{m/2}) - \tan(\frac{\pi}{m/2}))(\tan(\frac{2\pi}{m/2}) - \tan(\frac{0\pi}{m/2}))}{(\tan(\frac{3\pi}{m/2}) - \tan(\frac{0\pi}{m/2}))(\tan(\frac{2\pi}{m/2}) - \tan(\frac{\pi}{m/2}))} = \frac{\sin(\frac{2\pi}{m/2}) \sin(\frac{2\pi}{m/2})}{\sin(\frac{\pi}{m/2}) \sin(\frac{3\pi}{m/2})} \\ &= \frac{(1 - \zeta_{m/2}^2)(1 - \zeta_{m/2}^2)}{(1 - \zeta_{m/2})(1 - \zeta_{m/2}^3)} = \frac{2 + \zeta_{m/2} + \bar{\zeta}_{m/2}}{1 + \zeta_{m/2} + \bar{\zeta}_{m/2}} \in \mathbb{k}_\Lambda. \end{aligned}$$

This implies that

$$\frac{q}{q-1} - 2 = \zeta_{m/2} + \bar{\zeta}_{m/2} \in \mathbb{k}_A,$$

the latter being equivalent to (iii). Direction (iii) \Rightarrow (iv) is an immediate consequence of [19, Theorem 3.3] in conjunction with the identity $\mathbb{k}_{m/2} = \mathbb{k}_{\text{lcm}(m/2, 2)}$. For direction (iv) \Rightarrow (i), assume first that $m/2$ is odd. Here, we are done since every affinely regular polygon in Λ with $\text{lcm}(m/2, 2) = m$ edges is a U -polygon of class $c = m/2$ with respect to any set U of directions parallel to $m/2$ consecutive of its edges. If $m/2$ is even, there is an affinely regular polygon P in Λ with $\text{lcm}(m/2, 2) = m/2$ edges. Attach $m/2$ translates of P edge-to-edge to P in the obvious way and consider the convex hull P' of the resulting point set. Clearly, P' is a U' -polygon in \mathbb{K}_Λ of class $c = \text{card}(U')$ with m edges, where U' consists of the $m/2$ pairwise non-parallel Λ -directions given by the edges and diagonals of P . By property (Aff), there is a non-singular affine transformation Ψ of the plane such that $\Psi(P')$ is a polygon in Λ . Then, $\Psi(P')$ is a U -polygon of class $c = \text{card}(U)$ in Λ with m edges, where U is a set of $m/2$ pairwise non-parallel Λ -directions parallel to the elements of $\Psi(U')$. Assertion (i) follows. If Λ additionally has property (Alg), then \mathbb{k}_Λ is an algebraic number field by Remark 2.4. Thus, the field extension $\mathbb{k}_\Lambda/\mathbb{Q}$ has only finitely many intermediate fields and the assertion follows from condition (iii) in conjunction with [19, Corollary 2.7, Remark 2.8 and Lemma 2.9]. \square

Corollary 3.2. *Let \mathbb{L} be a complex algebraic number field with $\bar{\mathbb{L}} = \mathbb{L}$ and let $\mathcal{O}_{\mathbb{L}}$ be the ring of integers in \mathbb{L} . Let Λ be a translate of \mathbb{L} or a translate of $\mathcal{O}_{\mathbb{L}}$. Further, let $m \geq 8$ be an even number. Denoting the maximal real subfield of \mathbb{L} by \mathbb{l} , the following statements are equivalent:*

- (i) *There is a U -polygon of class $c \geq 4$ in Λ with m edges.*
- (ii) *There is an affinely regular U -polygon of class $c \geq 4$ with m edges for a set U of Λ -directions.*
- (iii) $\mathbb{k}_{m/2} \subset \mathbb{l}$.
- (iv) *There is an affinely regular polygon in Λ with $\text{lcm}(m/2, 2)$ edges.*

Additionally, the above assertions only hold for finitely many values of m .

Proof. This follows immediately from Theorem 3.1 in conjunction with the fact that Λ has properties (Aff) and (Alg) with $\mathbb{K}_\Lambda = \mathbb{L}$; cf. [19, Section 3]. \square

Remark 3.3. In particular, Corollary 3.2 applies to translates of complex cyclotomic fields and their rings of integers, respectively, with $\mathbb{l} = \mathbb{k}_n$ for a suitable $n \geq 3$; cf. Fact 2.2 and also compare the equivalences of Corollary 4.1 below.

4. APPLICATION TO CYCLOTOMIC MODEL SETS

Delone subsets of the plane satisfying properties (Alg) and (Hom) were introduced as *algebraic Delone sets* in [18, Definition 4.1]. Note that algebraic Delone sets are always non-degenerate, since this is true for all relatively dense subsets of the plane. Examples of algebraic Delone sets are the so-called *cyclotomic model sets* Λ ; cf. [18, Proposition 4.31]. By definition, any cyclotomic model set Λ is contained in a translate of \mathcal{O}_n , where $n \geq 3$, in

which case the \mathbb{Z} -module \mathcal{O}_n is called the *underlying \mathbb{Z} -module* of Λ . More precisely, for $n \geq 3$, let $.*: \mathcal{O}_n \rightarrow (\mathbb{R}^2)^{\phi(n)/2-1}$ be any map of the form

$$z \mapsto (\sigma_2(z), \dots, \sigma_{\phi(n)/2}(z)),$$

where the set $\{\sigma_2, \dots, \sigma_{\phi(n)/2}\}$ arises from $G(\mathbb{K}_n/\mathbb{Q}) \setminus \{\text{id}, \bar{\cdot}\}$ by choosing exactly one automorphism from each pair of complex conjugate ones; cf. Fact 2.2. Then, for any such choice, each translate of the set $\{z \in \mathcal{O}_n \mid z^* \in W\}$, where $W \subset (\mathbb{R}^2)^{\phi(n)/2-1}$ is a sufficiently ‘nice’ set with non-empty interior and compact closure, is a cyclotomic model set with underlying \mathbb{Z} -module \mathcal{O}_n ; cf. [16, 17, 18, 19] for more details and properties of (cyclotomic) model sets. Since $\mathcal{O}_n = \mathcal{O}_{2n}$ for odd n , we might restrict ourselves to values $n \not\equiv 2 \pmod{4}$ when dealing with cyclotomic model sets with underlying \mathbb{Z} -module \mathcal{O}_n . With the exception of the crystallographic cases of translates of the square lattice \mathcal{O}_4 and translates of the triangular lattice \mathcal{O}_3 , cyclotomic model sets are aperiodic (they have no non-zero translational symmetries) and have long-range order; cf. [18, Remark 4.23]. Well-known examples of cyclotomic model sets with underlying \mathbb{Z} -module \mathcal{O}_n are the vertex sets of aperiodic tilings of the plane like the Ammann-Beenker tiling [1, 4, 14] ($n = 8$), the Tübingen triangle tiling [5, 6] ($n = 5$) and the shield tiling [14] ($n = 12$); cf. Figure 1 for an illustration. For definitions of the above vertex sets of aperiodic tilings of the plane in algebraic terms, we refer the reader to [17, Section 1.2.3.2] or [16]. As an immediate consequence of Theorem 3.1 in conjunction with [19, Corollary 4.1] and the identity $\mathbb{k}_{m/2} = \mathbb{k}_{\text{lcm}(m/2, 2)}$, one obtains the following

Corollary 4.1. *Let $m, n \in \mathbb{N}$ with $m \geq 8$ an even number and $n \geq 3$. Further, let Λ be a cyclotomic model set with underlying \mathbb{Z} -module \mathcal{O}_n . The following statements are equivalent:*

- (i) *There is a U -polygon of class $c \geq 4$ in Λ with m edges.*
- (ii) *There is an affinely regular U -polygon of class $c \geq 4$ with m edges for a set U of Λ -directions.*
- (iii) $\mathbb{k}_{m/2} \subset \mathbb{k}_\Lambda$.
- (iv) *There is an affinely regular polygon in Λ with $\text{lcm}(m/2, 2)$ edges.*
- (v) $\mathbb{k}_{m/2} \subset \mathbb{k}_n$.
- (vi) $m \in \{8, 12\}$, or $\mathbb{K}_{m/2} \subset \mathbb{K}_n$.
- (vii) $m \in \{8, 12\}$, or $m|2n$, or $m = 4d$ with d an odd divisor of n .
- (viii) $m \in \{8, 12\}$, or $\mathcal{O}_{m/2} \subset \mathcal{O}_n$.
- (ix) $\mathcal{O}_{m/2} \subset \mathcal{O}_n$.

Remark 4.2. Combining Corollary 4.1 and Fact 2.7, one sees that the cross ratios of slopes of directions of edges of U -polygons of class $c \geq 4$ in cyclotomic model sets Λ , say arranged in order of increasing angle with the positive real axis, easily follow from a direct computation with a finite number of regular polygons; cf. [12, 8] for deep insights into this in the case of planar lattices.

The following consequence follows immediately from Corollary 4.1 in conjunction with [19, Corollary 4.2]. Restricted to values $n \not\equiv 2 \pmod{4}$, it deals with the two cases where the degree $\phi(n)/2$ of \mathbb{k}_n over \mathbb{Q} is either 1 or a prime number $p \in \mathcal{P}$; cf. [19, Lemma 2.10].

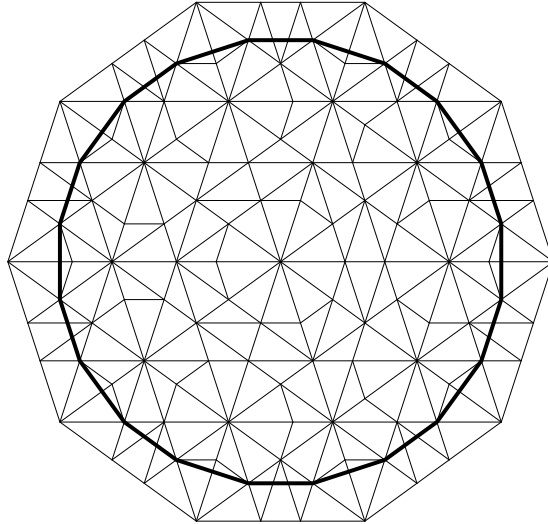


FIGURE 1. An U -icosagon of class $c = \text{card}(U) = 10$ in the vertex set Λ_{TTT} of the Tübingen triangle tiling with respect to the set U of Λ_{TTT} -directions given by the edges and diagonals of the central regular decagon.

Corollary 4.3. *Let $m, n \in \mathbb{N}$ with $m \geq 8$ an even number and $n \geq 3$. Further, let Λ be a cyclotomic model set with underlying \mathbb{Z} -module \mathcal{O}_n . Then, one has:*

- (a) *If $n \in \{3, 4\}$, there is a U -polygon of class $c \geq 4$ in Λ with m edges if and only if $m \in \{8, 12\}$.*
- (b) *If $n \in \{8, 9, 12\} \cup \{2p + 1 \mid p \in \mathcal{P}_{\text{SG}}\}$, there is a U -polygon of class $c \geq 4$ in Λ with m edges if and only if*

$$\begin{cases} m \in \{8, 12, 2n\}, & \text{if } n = 8 \text{ or } n = 12, \\ m \in \{8, 12, 2n, 4n\}, & \text{otherwise.} \end{cases}$$

Example 4.4. As mentioned above, the vertex set Λ_{TTT} of the Tübingen triangle tiling is a cyclotomic model set with underlying \mathbb{Z} -module \mathcal{O}_5 . By Corollary 4.3 there is a U -polygon of class $c \geq 4$ in Λ_{TTT} with m edges if and only if $m \in \{8, 10, 12, 20\}$; see Figure 1 for an U -icosagon of class $c = 10$ in Λ_{TTT} .

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