



# SWISS CYBER STORM

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## Media Release

### Cyber Security Challenge continues to grow: 15 countries are hacking for the championship title

Europe's largest coordinated cyber talent search is moving into the next round. This afternoon, the Swiss qualification phase for the European Cyber Security Challenge of 2017 will begin. There are 50% more competitors than last year. And in the coming months, a total of 15 nations will be hunting down their best young talent in the field of IT security. The national teams will then compete in early November in the European Finals in the Spanish city of Málaga. This international initiative has the goal of recruiting young people to become urgently needed IT experts.

Monday, 1. Mai 2017 – Starting today at 12:00 noon, Switzerland will be seeking out its best IT talents once again. In the national qualification round, young male and female hackers will compete at performing the most varied assignments in the field of Cyber Security. The object is to get into in the European Finals in Málaga (Spain). Toward this end, the young competitors born in 1992 and later must prove their abilities in such subjects as web security, cryptography, and reverse engineering.

#### Switzerland with pioneering role

The European Cyber Security Challenge is coordinated by the European Agency for Network and Information Security (ENISA). Compared to last year, the number of participants rose another 50% so this Fall, for the first time, 15 nations will be represented in the Finals.

Switzerland has played a pioneering role in this «Hacker Competition»: It was only four years ago that Switzerland started on its search for badly needed young IT talent in this game-like format. The idea of a European competition started with Switzerland and Austria getting together and that seemed so successful that additional countries steadily joined in. «Naturally, we are pleased that others found our concept persuasive and that the Cyber Security Challenge was able to grow to this size», says Bernhard Tellenbach, President of Swiss Cyber Storm, the club responsible for the Swiss team.

#### Focussing stronger on younger generation

The increasing interest in the Challenge can also be felt inside Switzerland. Last year, more than 150 young people fought for a spot on the Swiss team. One thing did not turn out so well: «Because the age limit was 30, confessed IT professionals were to be found increasingly among the candidates; filtering them out of the field of participants took a lot of effort and their proficiency scared away younger participants. That is why this year, we want to concentrate more clearly on the promotion of young talent», Tellenbach explained. For this reason, the upper age limit was lowered and for the Junior category (participants born in 1997 and later), qualification assignments were designed at correspondingly lower degrees of difficulty.



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The Swiss qualification runs until July 30. From September 1 to 3, the 10 best male and female participants in each of the two categories Junior and Senior will compete against one another at the Swiss Finals in Sursee. They will form the 10-person team that will compete from October 30 until November 3 in the European Finals in Málaga. The Swiss commitment will be supported on the official side by the Reporting and Analysis Center for Information Assurance (MELANI). The participating countries are:

Denmark	Italy	Switzerland
Germany	Liechtenstein	Spain
Estonia	Norway	Czech Republic
Greece	Austria	United Kingdom
Ireland	Rumania	Cypres

#### **Link to participate in the Cyber Security Challenge:**

<https://www.swisscyberstorm.com/challenges/>

#### **Further Information and photographic materials:**

<https://www.swisscyberstorm.com/press/articles/>

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#### **European Cyber Security Challenge**

The European Cyber Security Challenge (ECSC) is a competition coordinated throughout Europe on the subject of IT Security. National organizations seek out their best young cyber talent and send a team of 10 to the European Finals that take place in a different country every year and are carried out by the corresponding national organization. The competition is coordinated by the European Agency for Network and Information Security (ENISA).

The goal of the ECSC is the advancement of youth in the area of IT security. As a result of today's fast-paced technological development, skilled IT professionals are in increasingly short supply. That is why this initiative is supported in most participating countries, both on the governmental side as well as by private industry.

#### **Swiss Cyber Storm**

Swiss Cyber Storm is a non-profit organization founded in 2012. The club sponsors the Swiss qualification for the ECSC and is responsible for the support of the Swiss team. In addition, the club holds the annual IT Security Conference "Swiss Cyber Storm" in Lucerne. The association consists of members who represent the interests of both business and the public sector as well as teaching and research.