



DPA areas of collaboration:

Policy:

Interoperability, regulatory frameworks, legislation, standards, ethics, values.

Trade:

Facilitating digital trade, principles building on G7 equivalent and WTO e-commerce negotiations, policy dialogues and regulatory cooperation on matters such as Supply Chains Resilience, Digital IDs, e-Invoicing Standards, Paperless Trading, Data Flows, Data Localisation and Privacy.

Emerging Technologies:

Artificial Intelligence (AI), Semiconductors (AI Chips), Automation, IoT, Digital Trust (DFFT), eID, Cybersecurity, Quantum & HPC, Big Data, 5G/6G Telecom, Web 3, Blockchain, SMART Submarine Cables, Digital Platforms.

R&D:

Facilitate the connections between academia, industry, business and startups, digital skills.

On Nov. 14-15 the 2024 edition of The Kunoichi Cyber Games was held in Tokyo, Japan. The EU Delegation in Tokyo and the European Union Agency for Cyber-security (ENISA), with support from the Digital Partnerships in Action (DPA) project under the framework of the EU-Japan Digital Partnership, facilitated the participation of the all-female “Team Europe”, winning this International Cybersecurity Challenge for the third consecutive year.

The Kunoichi Cyber Games in Tokyo is designed to promote and showcase the skills of women in cybersecurity. Inspired by the historical role of "Kunoichi" (female ninjas), the event focuses on addressing gender disparity in the cybersecurity field. It features competitions such as Capture the Flag (CTF) and technical challenges across cryptography, forensics, and web security. This international platform underscores the importance of diversity, skill development, and global collaboration. The event was part of the broader Code Blue Conference and aligned with the EU-Japan Digital Partnership, emphasising collaboration in cybersecurity and digital resilience.

The event featured teams from Japan, the UK, the US, and Europe, each comprising five members under 30, selected through regional preliminaries and specific criteria. With the support of the DPA project and the European Union Agency for Cybersecurity (ENISA), Team Europe, not only showcased their exceptional skills but also emerged victorious, winning first place in this prestigious competition. This success underscores the EU’s commitment to fostering inclusion, innovation, and global cooperation in addressing cybersecurity challenges.

Building on the success of this initiative, the EU aims to expand diversity-focused programs, deepen international partnerships, and continue setting global standards for cybersecurity excellence. The experience at the Kunoichi Cyber Games highlights the transformative impact of collaboration, innovation, and inclusion in addressing the evolving cybersecurity landscape.



<https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/partnerships>



<https://www.linkedin.com/company/digital-partnerships-in-action>



<https://eprd.pl/en/dpa>



<https://x.com/DPAinnovation>

Key Activities:

1. Capture The Flag (CTF) Competition

On the first day, teams engaged in a rigorous CTF competition, tackling challenges across various cybersecurity domains, including cryptography, forensics, reverse engineering, and web security. This segment tested participants' technical prowess and problem-solving abilities in real-time scenarios.

2. Workshops and Panel Discussions

The second day featured workshops and panel discussions centered on themes pertinent to the Kunoichi Cyber Games. These sessions provided a platform for knowledge exchange, professional development, and discussions on current trends and challenges in cybersecurity.

3. Networking Opportunities

Throughout the event, participants had the chance to build connections across borders, strengthening international networks among women in cybersecurity and promoting collaboration and support.

EU-Japan Digital Partnership and the DPA Project

The Digital Partnerships in Action (DPA) project collaborated with ENISA who recruits, trains the team of cybersecurity experts prior to the competition. The team included members from Denmark, Portugal, Poland, Hungary, and Italy, supported by coaches from Greece and Italy.

Event Outcomes and Impact

- **First Place Victory:** Team Europe won the Kunoichi Cyber Games, further cementing their reputation after winning the International Cybersecurity Challenge (ICC) in Santiago, Chile, earlier in 2024.
- **Skill Development:** Participation in real-world simulations enhances the team's technical expertise and preparedness for global cyber threats.
- **Networking and Collaboration:** The event facilitated connections with international experts, promoting a unified approach to tackling cybersecurity challenges.
- **Strengthened EU-Japan Relations:** The games underscores the EU's commitment to collaboration, encouraging Japan to host the ICC in 2025.
- **Encouragement for Future Talent:** The success of Team Europe serves as a model for future initiatives to empower underrepresented groups in cybersecurity.

Recommendations and Lessons Learned

- **Value of Diversity:** Inclusive teams enhance innovation and problem-solving capabilities, justifying further investment in diversity-focused initiatives.
- **Continuous Skills Training:** Regular participation in international competitions is critical to maintaining a competitive edge.
- **Global Collaboration:** Platforms like the Kunoichi Cyber Games are vital for fostering alliances and addressing shared cybersecurity challenges.