

European and Mediterranean Major Hazards Agreement (EUR-OPA) BeSafeNet 2024 factsheet

The European and Mediterranean Major Hazards Agreement (EUR-OPA) is a platform for co-operation focusing on major natural and technological disasters. The main objectives of EUR-OPA are to reinforce and promote co-operation between the 22 member States in a multi-disciplinary context to ensure better prevention, protection against risks and better preparation in the event of major natural or technological disasters. In particular, EUR-OPA supports projects on education and disaster risk reduction aimed at promoting a culture of prevention, for example through emergency response drills in school establishments together with annual national campaigns. It also provides information and education on how to mitigate the effects of natural disasters as well as develop a methodology on basic knowledge for schoolteachers on safety activities in emergencies.

BeSafeNet project

The BeSafeNet project was initiated under the auspices of EUR-OPA to achieve three main goals:

1. Promote a culture of safety among youth:
 - Raise awareness on the implications of their actions and their perception of emergencies.
 - Replace fear with a culture of preparedness.
2. Disseminate knowledge to multilingual societies:
 - Create a common knowledge database of best practice.
 - Disseminate information in several languages for the benefit of the wider society.
3. Become an interactive tool:
 - Open the BeSafeNet website to other users and organisations for their benefit and comment.
 - Enrich its content by contributions based on real-life experiences and information provided by experts. The target audience is the general public, especially - school teachers and students.

2024 Olympiad

The Olympiad is an online competition on the theme “Better knowledge against disasters” and is open to secondary schools in the 22 member States of the Agreement¹. The age limit to participate is 11 to 16 years. The competition will give pupils a chance to increase their knowledge on natural and technological hazards that they could face even outside of school. The pupils will learn the adequate behaviour in these situations and how to reduce/prevent as much as possible the potential impact of disasters.



The competition is based on five of the hazards featured on the BeSafeNet website and fifty multiple choice questions (10 for each of the 5 chosen hazards) requiring a single answer. The competition will be held online on **23 February 2024 at 09.00 CET**. Registration of participants is open until 23 February 2024 - at 08.30 CET.

www.besafenet.net
www.coe.int/europa

¹ The EUR-OPA Member States in 2024 are: Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Georgia, Greece, Lebanon, Luxembourg, Malta, Republic of Moldova, Monaco, Morocco, North Macedonia, Portugal, Romania, San Marino, Serbia, Slovak Republic, Ukraine.

RULES OF THE COMPETITION

BeSafeNet SCHOOL OLYMPIAD 2024 - 23 February 2024 at 09:00 CET

BETTER KNOWLEDGE AGAINST DISASTERS

The BeSafeNet initiative, supported by the European and Mediterranean Major Hazards Agreement (EUR-OPA) of the Council of Europe, is pleased to announce the fourth online Olympiad, a competition on the theme “Better knowledge against disasters”. It is open to secondary schools of the member States of the Agreement (participants must be under age 17 on the day of the competition). The competition will offer students a chance to increase their knowledge on natural and technological hazards, vulnerability-related topics and the associated preventive measures that they could face at any given moment, inside or outside of school. They will learn the adequate behaviour in these situations and to reduce as much as possible the potential impact of disasters.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The BeSafeNet Initiative “Protect yourself from hazards” in the context in which this competition is organised, was officially launched in 2019. Its purpose is to diffuse among young people, basic knowledge on hazards, in order to make them aware of the risks that they may face if such events occur. Currently most school curricula generally do not cover disaster risk but focus on traditionally taught subjects. And since technological tools are a preferred way for younger generations to search for information, BeSafeNet has developed an internet-based tool that provides important information on both natural and technological major hazards that can negatively impact our societies.

STRUCTURE

The 2024 ompetition includes two parts:

- A. A **compulsory** multiple choice quiz, based on five hazards, as featured on the BeSafeNet website.
- Climate Crisis
 - Cultural Heritage
 - Pandemics
 - Dam failures
 - Landslides

Fifty questions (10 for each of the 5 chosen hazards) requiring a single answer for each multiple choice question. The Olympiad will be held online on:

23 February 2024 at 09:00 CET.

Students should note that the quiz scoring system will award 2 points for each correct answer, subtract 0.75 points for each incorrect answer and subtract 1 point for no answer.

- B. An **optional** essay: You may submit **within** your team's account, an additional essay (maximum 1000 words) on a natural and/or technological hazard that you may have personally experienced or that has occurred in your country.

The scoring system for the essays is as follows:

Scientific accuracy: 1 to 5 points

The scientific accuracy of information refers to the quality of being true or correct, even in small details.

Comprehensiveness: 1 to 5 points

The essay has to cover all the different aspects of the hazard(s) being addressed.

Actuality: 1 to 5 points

Actuality refers to an event that has really taken place.

Presentation (photos, pictures, maps and graphs): 1 to 5 points

The essay has to contain some images related to the described hazards

The essay should be an original work, i.e., the student's personal work, and must be submitted in English. The essay will be used to decide on the winner in case the competition ends in a tie. The essays will be integrated in a special page of the BeSafeNet website*.

* The participant transfers to the Organising Committee the worldwide rights to reproduce and publish the essays submitted for this competition by any means and in all media, including multimedia (CD-ROM, CD-I, etc.) and networks (internet, intranet), in all languages and all participating countries.

The author of the essays are the students participating the Olympiads and not the BeSafeNet Editorial Board. Essays that are not in a tie might not be evaluated.

The Organising Committee reserves the right to decide whether or not to reproduce, publish and display these essays. Unless otherwise agreed, the publication will contain the participant's name. The participant shall guarantee that reproduction and/or publication of texts/images by the Organising Committee will not result in any infringement of third-party rights. However, in cases where the liability of the Organising Committee would become involved as a result of such violation, the participant would indemnify the Organising Committee for any consequential damage.

REFERENCE MATERIAL

The competition will be based on the material available on the English version of the BeSafeNet website: <https://www.besafenet.org>

Other versions are also available in French, Greek, Italian, Russian and can be useful for preparation for the competition.

The answers to the quiz questions will be based only on the first level material, namely the Introduction and Sections 1 to 12 for each hazard: all sub-sections entitled "More information on ..." (labelled 1.1, 5.3, 12.2, etc.) on the website will not be used for the competition but can help students to better understand the subject.

REGISTRATION

The registration of participants will be open from 22 November 2024 until 23 February 2024 at 09:00 CET and done online by filling the registration form accessible at the following link:

<https://olympiad.besafenet.net/olympiad>

Participants from secondary schools (participants must be under age 17 on the day of the competition) must be organised in teams of minimum 3 students and maximum of 4 and be endorsed by a teacher who should provide all the required information on the composition of the team.

A teacher may endorse/register more than one team using a different email account for each team. After registration, a specific account will be generated for each team, allowing them to confirm their participation in the Olympiad, provide the team composition and submit any additional information.

Previous competition accounts created for Olympiad 2019-2021, remain valid. Due to security reasons since the development of our new website, all the passwords were reset.

Teachers just need to:

1. Click "Sign in"
2. Click on "I forgot my password"
3. Fill in your account email
4. Follow the instructions on the email received to set a new password. (Do not forget to check your Junk/Spam email if you do not receive the reset email)
5. Then register a new team to the Olympiad 2024 competition.

Previous competition accounts created/competed for Olympiad 2022-23, are working normally.

For any help, contact the organisers on olympiad@besafenet.net

Further details and/or updates will be sent to the registered teams as necessary.

COMPETITION PHASE

The optional essay (maximum 1000 words) will only be used in the case of a tie between teams. It must be uploaded before 23 February 2024 at 09:00 CET through the specific team account.

On the Olympiad day, 23 February 2024, from 09:00 CET, registered teams should log into their team account in order to access the quiz. Each team will have 1 hour to complete the answer form: for a successful completion of the quiz, the "Finish Competition" button must be clicked. In all cases, the page will automatically close at 10:00 a.m. CET and answers submitted.

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

As this is an online competition, each team is required to:

- have access to the internet in order to complete the various steps (registration, access to BeSafeNet content, fill in the answers form, essay etc);
- have an email address for each team, to allow the Organising Committee to liaise with them.

Any questions about the competition, should be sent by email to the Organisation Committee through the BeSafeNet website contact form.

RESULTS

The results will be announced on the BeSafeNet website and Facebook page within a month of the competition.

AWARDS

After verifying the authenticity of data provided in the registration form, the three best teams will be awarded prizes. In case of a draw between teams in the quiz part, marks awarded for the essays submitted will serve as the tie-breaker.

The three best teams will be awarded respectively the following gifts:

- A Gold certificate for the winning team, as well as a range of attractive prizes for the teacher and students;
- A Silver certificate for the team in second place, as well as a range of attractive prizes for the teacher and students;
- A Bronze certificate for the team in third place, as well as a range of attractive prizes for the teacher and students.

Depending on the sanitary situation, the teachers and the students from the top three teams will be invited to attend an award ceremony at the Council of Europe in Strasbourg. In this case, no cash prizes will be awarded to the school.

If the sanitary situation prevents the organisation of an award ceremony in Strasbourg, an online award ceremony will be held instead. In addition, the top team will receive a prize of 1750 euros, the team in second place 1500 euros and the team in third place 1250 euros. The money will be used to fund a specific activity in each team's school.

Note that the same student cannot win the first three prizes in more than one competition. The teams ranked fourth to tenth will receive consolation prizes and printed certificates of participation

All other participating teams can generate a digital certificate of participation, after the results, from their team profile.