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Polish teams are at the forefront of the international ICT security competition

The year 2018 was very special for Polish teams participating in the international ICT security competitions. Two of them, Dragon Sector and p4, were on the podium of the most famous hacker competition ranking (CTFtime). CERT Polska specialists (current and former) play a significant role in both teams.

Members of the teams, already playing individually, also dominated the competition for "white hats" organized by the Polish Ministry of National Defence, representing Poland during the European Cyber Security Challenge competition, organized by the European Union.

Every year more than 150 Capture The Flag competitions are held. They are organized independently by universities, companies and social organizations. More than 18 thousand teams from all over the world have participated in at least one of them. Most of the competitions are held on the Internet and some of the best teams are invited to compete on the spot - e.g. in Paris, Beijing, Las Vegas, Geneva, Taiwan, and Warsaw.

The teams-participants of the biggest competitions compete in the prestigious, collective CTFtime ranking, which tracks the results of each team. The Polish teams - Dragon Sector and p4 - took the 1st and 3rd place in the final ranking for 2018, respectively. Poles from Dragon Sector return to the first place of the ranking, where they were for the last time in 2014. For the p4 team the third place is also the highest in history - so far the record was 5th position in 2016. A significant part of both teams are current and former CERT Polska analysts - a total of 10 people (out of 28 members of both teams).

Poles defeated many other, extremely strong teams from all over the world. The second place was taken by the American PPP team, by the way, the numerous winner of the ranking, associated with the American Carnegie Mellon University. Poles left behind many renowned teams from Russia, Germany, France, USA, Japan, Taiwan, China, and South Korea.

Last year participants of Dragon Sector, p4, and other Polish teams also took part in competitions organized for the first time by the Polish Ministry of National Defence, and in a competition organized by The European Union Agency for Network and Information Security - ENISA.

During the European Cyber Security Challenge competition in London, in which Poland took part for the first time, the national youth team (with players from Polish teams, including Dragon Sector and p4) took a high, fourth place. Qualifications for the Polish national team were conducted by NASK National Research Institute. The Institute also coordinated the Polish participation at competitions.

During the Polish military competition, the participants, who are also members of the p4 and Dragon Sector teams, took first and second place respectively. In addition to the high cash prizes (a total of PLN 60,000), there was a tandem jump with a parachute, a landing boat cruise, a ride on multi-role military vehicle „Rosomak” and participation in a course for war correspondents.

Apart from the leaders, in the first 50 of the CTFtime ranking there were two more promising Polish groups - Made in MIM (36th place) and justCatTheFish (40th place). Both of them come from the best Polish IT departments and are still improving their results.