

Today: *Cold* or *Warm*?



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#IPhO2014
#Astana
#Kazakhstan

Our guests are still arriving.

We would like to thank the following teams for arriving among the first:

- 1) **Russia:** considering that Russia is only a few hundred miles from Astana, this is not surprising!
- 2) **South Africa:** the team arrived excited and happy despite the long trip!
- 3) **Colombia:** one of the team members started singing in the airport, which is a typical Kazakh way of showing one is a guest!
- 4) **Austria:** few teams were so lucky to take a direct flight from home!
- 5) **Belgium:** one of the few teams that is all guys! Seriously?
- 6) **The United Kingdom:** the biggest delegation arrived in two parts, perhaps thinking we would not notice there are 12 of them!
- 7) **Part of Canada:** you see, Canada is so large that the teams from different parts of the country had to split. Congratulations, Toronto! You arrived first! Oh, they were also first to like our Facebook page!
- 8) **Iceland:** this team instantly noted the beauty of Kazakh currency in the airport, thus independently confirming recent award of Kazakh Tenge: "the most beautiful currency in the world". Will you keep your savings in Tenge?

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WELCOME TO KAZAKHSTAN

Dear Participants, Team Leaders, Observers and Visitors!



We are pleased to greet participants of the International Physics Olympiad in Kazakhstan. We want to sincerely thank you for your participation in the Olympiad and we hope that you will enjoy your time on the hospitable Kazakh land. We also hope that the world's second coldest capital, Astana, will make your experience here warm and memorable.

We thank the International Board of the Olympiad for providing us with an opportunity to host the 45th IPhO in Astana. Supporting the country's and global initiatives in developing human capital and providing opportunities for advancements in science and technology are key priorities in Kazakhstan's strategy. With this in mind, we have established Nazarbayev University as a leading research and teaching institution in Central Asia.

Prominent scientists from leading universities teach and conduct research in science and engineering, humanities and social sciences at Nazarbayev University, where the chief language of instruction is English. We make sure to invest in our youth and help them to make contributions to the development of science in the world. It is, therefore, an honor to bring together the world's brightest and promising young physicists in Astana.

We will do our best to ensure that Olympiad will be held at the highest scientific level. Please know that people all over Kazakhstan and Astana are supporting you during your stay here and they are genuinely interested in serving any of your needs. It is a unique opportunity for you to exchange ideas and develop your talents. We believe that you are the scientists of the future, who will be tackling the issues that concern our world and that your future theories and experiments will help make our world a better place.

Once again, welcome to Kazakhstan and welcome to Astana. Best of luck in this Olympiad and in all of your future endeavors!

Organizing Committee

About Kazakhstan



Kazakhstan is a contiguous transcontinental country in Central Asia, with its smaller part west of the Ural River in Europe. Kazakhstan is the world's largest landlocked country by land area and the ninth largest country in the world; its territory of 2,727,300 square kilometres (1,053,000 sq mi) is larger than Western Europe. The country has borders with (clockwise from the north) Russia, China, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan, and also adjoins a large part of the Caspian Sea. The terrain of Kazakhstan includes

flatlands, steppe, taiga, rock canyons, hills, deltas, snow-capped mountains, and deserts. Yet, Kazakhstan is well-known for its steppe, which is often associated with freedom and sky full of stars. With 17 million people, Kazakhstan has the 62nd largest population in the world. The capital is Astana, where it was moved from Almaty in 1997.

Kazakhstan declared independence in 1991. The current President, Nursultan Nazarbayev, has been leader of the country since 1991 and has pursued a balanced foreign policy, working to develop the country's economy and making it one of the fastest growing economies in the region. Most of the local people are bilingual, speaking both Kazakh and Russian. Nowadays, the country is making reforms in its educational policy to ensure that majority speaks English as well.

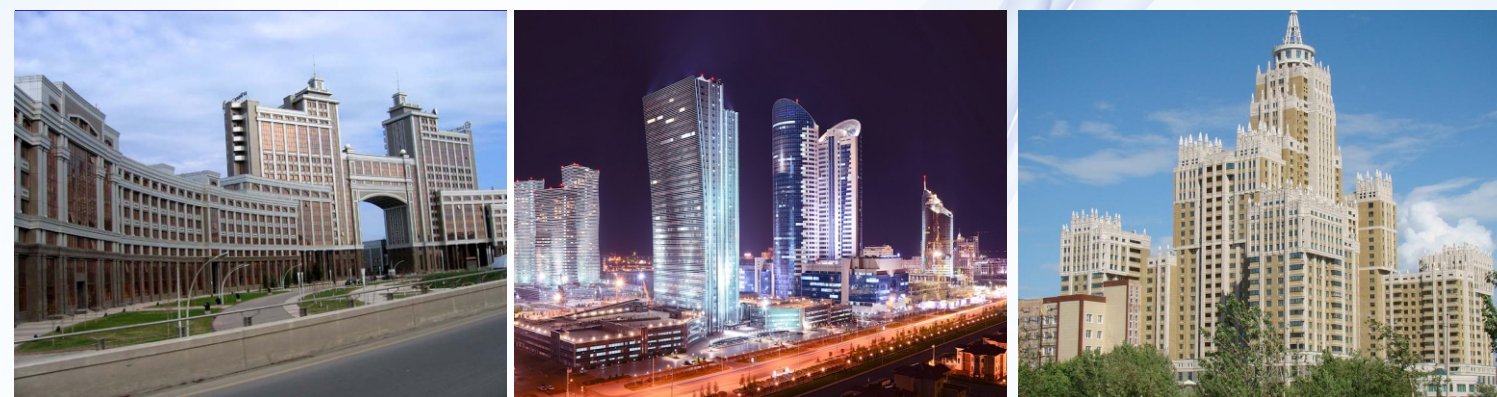


About Astana

Astana has been the capital of Kazakhstan since 1997. The city's population is around 800 000. It is located in the north portion of Kazakhstan, within Akmola Province, though administrated separately from the province as a federal city area. The current mayor of Astana is Imangali Tasmagambetov.

The word Astana in Kazakh literally means Capital. Astana is the second coldest capital city in the world after Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, a position formerly held by Canada's capital, Ottawa, until Astana attained capital city status. Astana has an extreme continental climate with warm summers (featuring occasional brief rain showers) and long, very cold, dry winters. Summer temperatures occasionally reach 35 °C (95 °F) while -30 to -35 °C (-22 to -31 °F) is not unusual between mid-December and early March. The city also holds the record for the lowest air temperature ever recorded in Kazakhstan (-51 °C).

Politics and government are the main economic activities in the capital, which also forms a Special Economic Zone. During the last decade, Astana has seen one of the world's greatest building projects to make the city the center not only of Kazakhstan but of all Central Asia. Tourists enjoy visiting Green Water Boulevard, Tower of Bayterek, Palace of Peace and Reconciliation (Pyramid of Peace), Kazakhstan Central Concert Hall, Ak Orda Presidential Palace, Khan Shatyr and Astana Opera, among many others.



Palace of Peace and Reconciliation

The IPhO 2014 opening ceremony will be held at the Palace of Peace and Reconciliation, also known as the Pyramid. The pyramid has been conceived and designed by architect Sir Norman Foster and inaugurated in September 2006. It contains accommodations for different religions: Judaism, Islam, Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, Daoism and other faiths. It also houses a 1500-seat opera house, a national museum of culture, a new "university of civilization", a library and a research center for Kazakhstan's ethnic and geographical groups. The building is conceived as a global center for religious understanding, the renunciation of violence and the promotion of faith and human equality. The Pyramid of Peace expresses the spirit of Kazakhstan, where cultures, traditions and representatives of various nationalities coexist in peace, harmony and accord.

