



GENERAL PROGRESS REPORT

2023 SEASON

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WBSC EUROPE PARTNERS



CONGRESS PARTNERS



OFFICIAL SUPPLIERS



WBSC EUROPE MEMBERS

BASEBALL

 AUT	 BEL	 BLR
 BUL	 CRO	 CYP
 CZE	 DEN	 ESP
 EST	 FIN	 FRA
 GBR	 GEO	 GER
 GRE	 HUN	 IRL
 ISR	 ITA	 KOS
 LAT	 LTU	 MDA
 MLT	 NED	 NOR
 POL	 POR	 ROU
 RUS	 SLO	 SMR
 SRB	 SUI	 SVK
 SWE	 TUR	 UKR

PARASPORT

 FRA	 GBR	 GER	 ITA	 NED
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From the WBSC Europe Statutes:

1.4 - WBSC Europe is constituted of the Member Federations, Associations or Organisations, which organise, promote and develop Baseball-Softball in the Region of Europe.

1.5 - WBSC Europe is an association whose Member Federations, Associations or Organisations join WBSC Europe voluntarily; Full Member Federations are recognised in each country or territory as being the sole governing body for Baseball and/or Softball in that particular country or territory. By voluntarily affiliating with WBSC and WBSC Europe, the Member Federation and/or their individual members / organisations / athletes / officials belonging to that Member Federation by participating in WBSC Europe events and/or Tournaments in any capacity whatsoever, implicitly and explicitly agree to adhere to the principles and specific conditions expressed in the Statutes, By-Laws, Rules, Regulations of WBSC and the WBSC Europe Statutes.

SOFTBALL

 AUT	 BEL	 BUL
 CRO	 CYP	 CZE
 DEN	 ESP	 EST
 FIN	 FRA	 GBR
 GEO	 GER	 GGY
 GRE	 HUN	 IRL
 ISR	 ITA	 KOS
 LTU	 MDA	 MLT
 NED	 NOR	 POL
 ROU	 RUS	 SLO
 SMR	 SRB	 SUI
 SVK	 SWE	 TUR
 UKR		



Dear Member Federations,
Dear Guests,
Dear Friends,

I extend a warm and heartfelt greeting to each and every one of you on behalf of the Executive Board. It is a pleasure to witness the unity and passion of our community.

I extend my gratitude to each of you for your dedication and your hard work.

When our Board started its work, the creation of WBSC Europe was not merely about a visual transformation: it encompassed a fundamental shift in paperwork and, most importantly, mindset.

Our goal was to become a singular entity, embracing baseball, softball, and baseball5 as one united community. I can say that we have moved forward on this specific aspect of the goal.

We were shown that together, we are stronger. The collective efforts worldwide have led to the reinstatement of baseball and softball at the Olympics, restoring the Olympic dream for our athletes, youth, and fans. As we look ahead, LA28 stands as a grand stage, and it is on each of us to work diligently to ensure our presence there is stronger than ever.

Reflecting on our journey, I am pleased to acknowledge the goals we have achieved. Working closely with WBSC and other Continental confederations, we have created a strong alliance, thanks to the support and assistance in the merger process.

The number of events in our 2023 calendar is proof of the hard work of all involved: athletes, teams, volunteers, and organizers. Special mention goes to Eurobaseball,

impeccably organized by Czech Baseball.

Additionally, the inclusion of blind baseball as a new discipline in our competition portfolio with a Paralympic dream is a milestone worth celebrating.

Baseball5 has also shown remarkable results, with France becoming the first European nation to achieve the world number-one ranking in any WBSC category.

Lastly, the WBSC Softball World Cups on European soil for two consecutive years have showcased top players and teams, inspiring our youth.

Looking ahead, we must focus on new goals: we aim to expand our event portfolio, nurturing the growth and enhancement of existing events. Besides, increasing financial entries into our confederation will enable us to develop the sport across the continent.

Looking back, however, our journey has not been without its challenges. The Congress serves as a platform to confront these challenges together.

This is a time for collaboration and communication. I invite you to actively participate in our collective efforts and maintain an open line of communication with WBSC Europe.

Elections will also take center stage during the Congress. They are a crucial aspect of the representation of our community, and recognizing this, the Leadership Program which includes the Women's Leadership Forum has been established. You will learn more during the weekend.

Once again, welcome to Malaga to the WBSC Europe 2024 Congress.



Krunoslav Karin
President
World Baseball Softball Federation Europe

Inside WBSC Europe

EXECUTIVE BOARD



Krunoslav Karin
President



Eddy Van Straelen
Treasurer



Gabriel Waage
VP Softball



François Collet
Member at large Baseball



Kostis Liarommatis
Interim Member at large Softball*
* position up for election



Kristian Pälviä
Member at large Softball



Jorge Balboa
Athlete Representative Baseball



Ami Baran
Secretary General



Petr Ditrich
VP Baseball



Youri Alkalay
Interim VP Baseball5*
* position up for election



Jürgen Elsishans
Member at large Baseball



Mette Nissen Jakobsen
Member at large Softball



Vermidas Neverauskas
Former Member at large Baseball*
* position up for election



Martina Lackner-Keil
Athlete Representative Softball

WBSC Europe Baseball Commission

Vice President Baseball: **Petr Ditrich**

Members: **Oleg Boyko, František Bunta, Darja Grimšic, Jan Kuipers, Stephen Lesfargues, Jorge Miqueleiz Cortes**

WBSC Europe Baseball Competitions and Technical Committee

Chair: **František Bunta** Competition Chief : **Stephen Lesfargues**

WBSC Europe Baseball Umpiring Committee

Director: **Zdeněk Židek** Members: **Serge Makouchetchev, Dirk Biehl**

WBSC Europe Baseball Scoring Committee

Chair: **Linda Steijger** Member: **Stephanie Winkler**

WBSC Europe Softball Commission

Vice President Softball: **Gabriel Waage**

Members: **Daniela Castellani, Petra Čizmić Pokrajac, Mike Jennings, Sophie Khidasheli**

WBSC Europe Softball Competitions and Technical Committee

Chair: **Mike Jennings**

WBSC Europe Softball Umpiring Committee

Director: **Florian Lautenschläger** Members: **Hans Hornstra, Raoul Machalet**

WBSC Europe Softball Scoring Committee

Chair: **Dennis Duin** Member: **Marco Battistella**

WBSC Europe Baseball5 Commission

Interim Vice President Baseball5: **Youri Alkalay**

Members: **Vladislav Belčić, Erik Eilering, Elliot Fleys, Arnoldas Ramanauskas**

WBSC Europe Baseball5 Competitions and Technical Committee

Chair: **Ludovic Meillier**

Members: **Yegal Brownlee, Ivana Dineva, Nathan Ortega, Tony Jones**

Senior Advisor: **Mike Jennings**

WBSC Europe Commissions

WBSC Europe Development Commission

Chair: **Petra Čizmić Pokrajac**

Member: **François Collet**

Senior Advisors: **Krunoslav Karin, Ami Baran, Petr Ditrich, Gabriel Waage**

WBSC Europe Integrity Commission

Chair: **Bjørn Christian Thode**

Members: **Marko Mrdjenović, Dagmar Voith Leemann, Peter Ström**

WBSC Europe Legal Commission

Chair: **Lars Sundin**

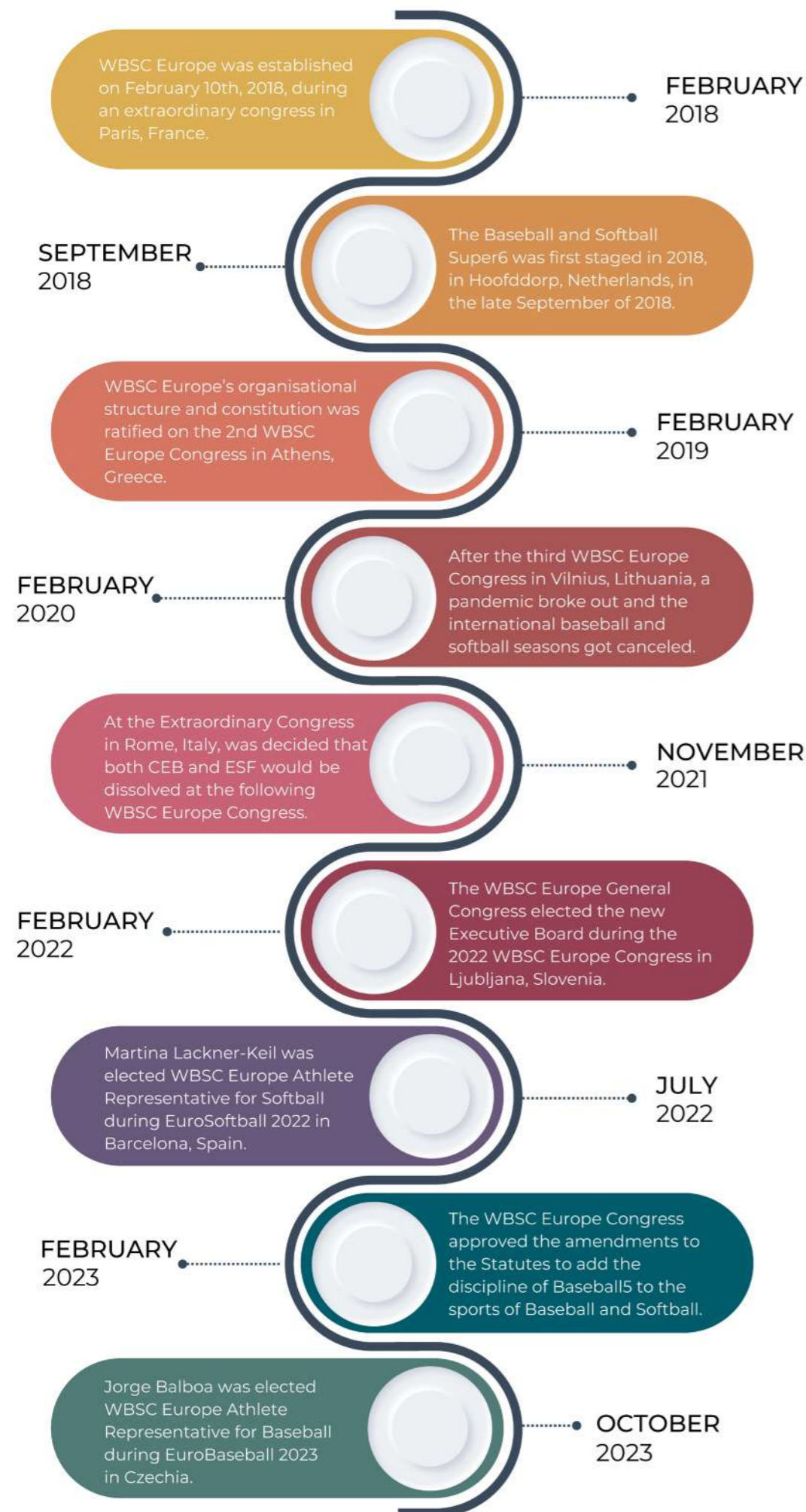
Members: **Ainars Birulis, Brian Aron, Vladimir Richter, Colum Lavery**

WBSC Europe Medical Commission

Chair: **Melanie Lavery**

WBSC Europe Disciplinary Commission

Chair: **Jürgen Elsishans**



The **World Baseball Softball Confederation Europe** (WBSC Europe) is the European governing body of Baseball, Softball and all National Team & Club competitions.

Walking in the footsteps of the World Baseball Softball Confederation, Europe became the first continent to merge its baseball and softball organizations into one single entity. WBSC Europe was established on **February 10th, 2018**.

The following entities are established to govern and administer WBSC Europe:

- the **Congress**;
- the **Executive Board**;
- such **Commissions** as the Executive Board may deem appropriate.

Five Departments operate under the WBSC Europe Executive Board:

- the **Corporate Activities Department**, led by Mr. François Collet and Ms. Kristina Uroić;
- the **Governance Department**, led by Ms. Mette Nissen Jakobsen, Mr. John Boyd, Mr. Elliot Fleys, and Mr. Bjørn Christian Thode;
- the **Marketing Department**, led by Mr. Jukka Ropponen and Ms. Elda Ghilardi;
- the **Communications Department**, led by Mr. Kristian Pälviä and Ms. Elda Ghilardi;
- the **Events Department**, led by Mr. Jürgen Elsishans and Mr. Kristian Pälviä.

The competitions are run by the Baseball, Softball and Baseball5 Commissions, whose **Technical Commissions** are responsible for the successful running of the WBSC Europe tournaments. The Technical Commissions prepare all the necessary documents for each competition and members of the TC physically supervise the WBSC Europe tournaments.

The **Umpires Committees** are responsible for umpiring schedules at tournaments and for the organization of umpire clinics.

The **Scoring Committees** are responsible for scorekeeping of all games at the WBSC Europe competitions and also for scorekeeper clinics.

The **WBSC Europe Office**, led by Kristina Uroić, take care of all the operations that make the events possible.

The **WBSC Europe Communications Department**, together with the events Media Officers, make European Championships and Cups visible, keeping the community informed.

All WBSC Europe events would not be possible if it were not for the events' **Local Organising Committees** and all the **Volunteers**.



COMPETITIONS 2023

The 2023 WBSC Europe season unfolded with a total of **twenty-nine** European Championships and Cups across baseball, softball, baseball5, and blind baseball.

The season started with the European Baseball Cups:

- **Baseball European Champions Cup** (June 6-10, Bussum & Amsterdam, NED). HCAW made history with an 11-4 victory over ASD Parma in the final. Amsterdam Pirates secured third place with a 12-6 win against the Bonn Capitals.



- **Baseball European Confederation Cup** (June 7-11, Karlovac, CRO). Tenerife Marlins claimed victory in Karlovac, Croatia, defeating Savigny Lions. Astros Valencia secured third place, outperforming Hoboken Pioneers.

- **Baseball European Federation Cup** (June 19-24, Bratislava, SVK). Dornbirn Indians won gold by topping Deurne Spartans in the final. CNTU-OSDYSSOR-Gorn finished third.

- **Baseball Federation Cup Qualifiers:**
 - Pool POL (June 19-24, Rybnik, POL): London Mets emerged victorious, with Silesia Rybnik claiming silver and Athletic Sofia securing third place.
 - Pool SWE (June 20-24, Sundbyberg, SWE): Mariners Baseball Ireland achieved a remarkable victory.
 - Pool HUN (June 21-25, Budapest, HUN): BK Zagreb triumphed over Sofia Blues in a 3-5 final.

- **U-12 Baseball European Championship Qualifier** (July 3-8, Sofia, BUL). Ukraine dominated, going undefeated and securing a spot in the U-12 Baseball European Championship by defeating Belgium 13-2 in the final. Poland won the bronze medal.

- **U-16 and U-18 Men's Softball European Championships** (July 3-8, Sezimovo Ústí, CZE). Czechia secured both titles, with the U-16 team defeating Denmark and the U-18 team topping Israel.



- **U-12 Baseball European Championship** (July 5-9, Valenciennes, FRA). Germany secured their third title in the age category, defeating the Netherlands in the Gold Medal Game (3-2). Italy won the Bronze Medal Game against Czechia (7-11).



- **U-18 Baseball European Qualifier - Pool SUI** (July 10-15, Zürich, SUI). Sweden dominated the U-18 Baseball European Qualifier, securing a spot in the 2024 U-18 Baseball European Championship by defeating Lithuania 18-0 in the final. Hungary finished third.

- **U-15 Baseball European Championship** (July 18-22, Trnava, SVK). The Netherlands clinched the Gold Medal, defeating Italy 14-4 in the finals. Czechia secured the Bronze Medal with a 20-6 win over France.

- **Men's Softball European Championship** (July 24-29, Hørsholm, DEN). Czechia triumphed over Denmark in the championship game (6-0). Both Czechia and Denmark, along with the Dutch bronze medalists, qualified for the WBSC Men's Softball World Cup.



- **U-18 Baseball Championship Qualifier - Pool IRL** (July 27-30, Ashbourne, IRL). Croatia secured victory, beating Poland 5-2 in the final. Slovakia finished third.

- **U-18 Women's Softball European Championship** (Jul 30 to Aug 5, Prague, CZE). Czechia won the Gold Medal, defeating Italy in the championship game. Ireland claimed the Bronze Medal, prevailing over the Netherlands. All four teams secured a spot in the WBSC World Cup.



- **Coed Slowpitch European Super Cup** (August 7-12, Sofia, BUL).
H20 (GBR) secured the gold medal by defeating Eastpro (GER) 10-8. UCE Travellers from Germany claimed the bronze.

- **U-23 Baseball European Championship** (August 8-12, Wiener Neustadt, AUT).
The Netherlands won the Gold Medal Game against Great Britain and both teams qualified for the 2024 WBSC U23 Baseball World Cup. France secured the bronze medal with a 5-0 shutout over Germany.



- **European Massimo Romeo Youth Trophy** (August 16-19, Collecchio, ITA).
- In the Future Division, SK Sever Brno won gold, Piranhas Beroun secured silver, and Softball Club Princ from Croatia claimed bronze.
- In the Sports Division, the Italian national squad secured a 9-1 victory over Israel in the gold medal game. Joudrs Praha (CZE) won bronze.

- **Women's Softball European Premier Cup** (August 21-26, Saronno, ITA).
Olympia Haarlem triumphed for the second consecutive time. The Dutch topped home team Saronno in the gold medal game. Bonn Capitals clinched victory against Rivas in the bronze medal game.



- **Women's Softball European Cup** (August 23-26, Zagreb, CRO).
The Mix (GBR) secured the gold medal. The host team, Princ Zagreb (CRO), secured the silver medal. The Warsaw Diamonds (POL) earned the bronze medal.

- **Women's Softball European Cup Winners Cup A** (August 21-26, Caronno Pertusella, ITA).
Sparks Haarlem secured gold. Caronno (ITA) clinched silver, and Sant Boi (ESP) secured bronze.

- **Women's Softball European Cup Winners Cup B** (August 21-26, Moergestel, NED).
Dutch Roef! secured gold in the Final, topping the Crazy Chicklets from Austria (7-0 in 6 innings). The

Zurich Challengers from Switzerland won the Bronze Medal.

- **Men's Softball European Super Cup** (Aug 28 to Sept 2, Haarlem, NED).
Locos Breclav secured their first title, topping Magos Tenerife (ESP) in a final characterized by stellar pitching performances. Montpellier Barracudas (FRA) won the bronze medal.

- **Men's Softball Europe Cup** (Aug 28 to Sept 2, Haarlem, NED).
In the final, Spectrum Praha (CZE) clinched the gold medal with a 10-2 victory over DVH Amstelveen (NED). Deurne Spartans (BEL) won the bronze medal.

- **Baseball European Championship** (Sept 24 to Oct 3, Czechia).
Spain defeated Great Britain 11-2 in the Gold Medal Game in Brno, Czechia, becoming Baseball European Champion for the second time after 1955. The Netherlands prevailed 5-4 over Germany, winning the bronze medal. This event marked the biggest Baseball European Championship in the history of European baseball with record-breaking spectators and media interest.



- **Blind Baseball European Championship** (October 7 & 8, Bologna, ITA).
Italy won the first-ever Blind Baseball European Championship, defeating the Netherlands 6-0 in the Gold Medal Game. Great Britain secured the Bronze Medal with a 9-0 victory over France.

- **Softball European Masters Cups** (October 25 to 28, Sant Boi & Viladecans, ESP).
- Cechie Carrots from the Czech Republic secured their second consecutive championship in the Women's Softball European Masters Cup, defeating Joudrs Praha in the final with a score of 7-9.
- Prague United (CZE) won the Men's Softball European Masters Cup, defeating the Denmark Old Stars with a decisive score of 6-0. The Mambas Sant Adria won the bronze medal.

- **Baseball5 European Championship** (November 7-11, Druskininkai, LTU).
Lithuania won the final, securing the gold medal by defeating France in a closely contested battle. Both finalists earned a spot in the WBSC Baseball5 World Cup 2024. Spain secured the third-place finish.



WBSC EUROPE CALENDAR 2023

Tournament	Sport	Dates	Venue
Baseball European Champions Cup	Baseball	June 6 to 10	Bussum & Amsterdam (NED)
Baseball European Confederation Cup	Baseball	June 7 to 11	Karlovac (CRO)
Baseball European Federation Cup	Baseball	June 19 to 24	Bratislava (SVK)
Baseball Federation Cup Qualifier - Pool POL	Baseball	June 19 to 24	Rybnik (POL)
Baseball Federation Cup Qualifier - Pool SWE	Baseball	June 20 to 24	Sundbyberg (SWE)
Baseball Federation Cup Qualifier - Pool HUN	Baseball	June 21 to 25	Budapest (HUN)
U-12 Baseball European Championship Qualifier	Baseball	July 3 to 8	Sofia (BUL)
U-16 Men's Softball European Championship	Softball	July 3 to 8	Sezimovo Ústi (CZE)
U-18 Men's Softball European Championship	Softball	July 3 to 8	Sezimovo Ústi (CZE)
U-12 Baseball European Championship	Baseball	July 5 to 9	Valenciennes (FRA)
U-18 Baseball European Qualifier - Pool SUI	Baseball	July 10 to 15	Zürich (SUI)
U-15 Baseball European Championship	Baseball	July 18 to 22	Trnava (SVK)
Men's Softball European Championship	Softball	July 24 to 29	Hørsholm (DEN)
U-18 Baseball Championship Qualifier - Pool IRL	Baseball	July 27 to 30	Ashbourne (IRL)
U-18 Women's Softball European Championship	Softball	Jul 30 to Aug 5	Prague (CZE)
Coed Slowpitch European Super Cup	Slowpitch	August 7 to 12	Sofia (BUL)
U-23 Baseball European Championship	Baseball	August 8 to 12	Wiener Neustadt (AUT)
European Massimo Romeo Youth Trophy	Softball	August 16 to 19	Collecchio (ITA)
Women's Softball European Premier Cup	Softball	August 21 to 26	Saronno (ITA)
Women's Softball European Cup	Softball	August 23 to 26	Zagreb (CRO)
Women's Softball European Cup Winners Cup A	Softball	August 21 to 26	Caronno Pertusella (ITA)
Women's Softball European Cup Winners Cup B	Softball	August 21 to 26	Moergestel (NED)
Men's Softball European Super Cup	Softball	Aug 28 to Sept 2	Haarlem (NED)
Baseball European Championship	Baseball	Sept 24 to Oct 3	Czechia
Blind Baseball European Championship	Parasport	October 7 & 8	Bologna (ITA)
Softball European Masters Cups	Softball	October 25 to 28	Sant Boi & Viladecans (ESP)
Baseball5 European Championship	Baseball5	November 7 to 11	Druskininkai (LTU)

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EVENTS

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1 BASEBALL5
1 PARASPORT

WBSC EUROPE CALENDAR 2024

WBSC Europe announced the 2024 Baseball, Softball, and Baseball5 planning.

BASEBALL

Baseball European Champions Cup	League format TBA	
Baseball European Cup	June 4 to 9	Valencia (ESP)
Baseball Federation Cup - Group CRO	June 3 to 9 (TBD)	Varaždin (CRO)
Baseball Federation Cup - Group SUI	June 3 to 8	Zürich (SUI)
Baseball Federation Cup Qualifier - Group SWE	June 11 to 15	Stockholm (SWE)
Baseball Federation Cup Qualifier - Group SLO	June 10 to 15	Ljubljana (SLO)
U-18 Baseball European Championship	July 8 to 14	Regensburg (GER)
U-12 Baseball European Championship	July 2 to 6	Paderborn (GER)

Baseball European Championship B Pool - Group POL	July 22 to 27	Kutno (POL)
Baseball European Championship B Pool - Group SRB	July 22 to 27	Belgrade (SRB)
Baseball European Championship B Pool - Group IRL	July 24 to 27	Ashbourne (IRL)
U-23 Baseball European Championship B Pool - Group HUN	August 7 to 11	Budapest (HUN)
U-23 Baseball European Championship B Pool - Group SUI	August 5 to 10	Zürich (SUI)
U-15 Baseball European Championship B Pool - Group LTU	July 15 to 20	Kaunas (LTU)
U-15 Baseball European Championship B Pool - Group CRO	July 15 to 20	Sisak (CRO)
U-12 Baseball European Championship B Pool - Group SVK	July 3 to 7	Trnava (SVK)

SOFTBALL

Women's Softball European Championship	September 1 to 7	Utrecht (NED)
U-22 Women's Softball European Championship	August 5 to 10	Kutno (POL)
U-15 Women's Softball European Championship	July 1 to 6	Prague (CZE)
Coed Slowpitch European Championship	July 15 to 20	Pardubice (CZE)
Men's Slowpitch European Championship	TBD	*CANCELED*

European Massimo Romeo Youth Trophy	August 14 to 17	Collecchio (ITA)
Women's Softball European Premier Cup	August 19 to 24	Buttrio (ITA)
Women's Softball European Cup	August 19 to 24	Novara (ITA)
Women's Softball European Cup Winners Cup A	August 19 to 24	Haarlem (NED)
Women's Softball European Cup Winners Cup B	August 19 to 24	Mont-Saint-Guibert (BEL)
Men's Softball European Super Cup	August 26 to 31	Prague (CZE)
Softball European Masters Cups	October 23 to 26	Barcelona (ESP)

BASEBALL5

Youth Baseball5 European Championship	TBA	Clermont-Ferrand (FRA)
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The dates may be subject to change based on the decisions of WBSC Europe, the Local Organizing Committees and the number of teams.

INTERNATIONAL SPOTLIGHT

LOS ANGELES OLYMPIC GAMES

At the International Olympic Committee (IOC) Session held in Mumbai, India, in October 2023, baseball and softball were reinstated into the sports program for the Olympic Games Los Angeles 2028. This announcement was met with enthusiasm, and WBSC Europe President Kruno Karin expressed gratitude to the World Baseball Softball Confederation (WBSC), highlighting their efforts with the IOC and LA28.

WBSC President Riccardo Fraccari emphasized that the return of these sports to the Olympic stage would excite athletes and fans worldwide, potentially inspiring a new generation of aspiring Olympians.

WORLD BASEBALL CLASSIC

All the European participants - Italy, the Netherlands, Israel, Czechia, and Great Britain - were able to win at least one game in the first round of the 2023 World Baseball Classic to ensure qualification for the 2026 edition. Italy survived a crazy five-team tie to earn a spot in the quarterfinals and the top eight.

MLB LONDON SERIES

In June 2023, the MLB London Series returned to Europe, featuring the Chicago Cubs and St. Louis Cardinals in a two-game series at London Stadium. Drawing a combined audience of over 109,000 fans, the event also included the Home Run Derby X on Trafalgar Square.

In 2024, the New York Mets and the Philadelphia Phillies will play at London Stadium on Saturday 8 and Sunday 9 June.

WBSC SOFTBALL WORLD CUP

After nine years, the WBSC Women's Softball World Cup were back in Europe: Ireland, Spain, and Italy hosted the three group stages.

The British and Irish national squads played in Dublin in Group A. Spain and the Netherlands played in Valencia in Group B. Home team Italy was the only European team in Group C.



Italy and the Netherlands will be the European teams among six others -Australia, Canada, China, Japan, Puerto Rico, and the USA - at the WBSC Women's Softball World Cup Finals, which will take place in Castions di Strada, Italy from 15 to 21 July, 2024.

WORLD GAMES

In May 2023, it was announced that both men's and women's softball have been officially confirmed as medal disciplines for The World Games 2025. Eight teams will compete in each of the two disciplines in Chengdu, China.

The top six teams in the WBSC Women's and Men's Softball World Rankings at the end of 2024 will earn automatic berths, alongside hosts China, with the final wild-card spot to be awarded by WBSC.

BASEBALL5 IN EUROPE

Ankara, Türkiye, hosted the inaugural Youth Baseball5 World Cup in October 2023, featuring 12 teams from around the world. Cuba emerged victorious, securing gold and leaving France with their first-ever WBSC World Cup medal. France's results propelled them to the top of the WBSC KONAMI Baseball5 World Ranking at the end of 2023.



France will host the Youth Baseball5 European Championship in 2024, providing teams with a chance to qualify for the WBSC Youth Baseball5 World Cup in 2025. The World Cup will be the qualifier for the Youth Olympic Games in 2026.

DEVELOPMENT

The WBSC Europe Development Commission, led by Ms. **Petra Čizmić Pokrajac**, made significant strides in 2023. The commission's focus on three main priorities — development of coaches and players, support for National Federations, and fostering international participation—resulted in several initiatives and accomplishments.

CHAIR APPOINTMENT:

Petra Čizmić Pokrajac assumed the role of Chair of the WBSC Europe Development Commission in June 2023. Her wealth of experience and passion for baseball and softball set the tone for an ambitious agenda defined by the following priorities:

PRIORITY #1: DEVELOPMENT OF COACHES & PLAYERS

- EBSCA Training Camp:

Held in Diessen, the Netherlands, the EBSCA Training Camp from October 18th to 22nd emerged as a center for European baseball and softball excellence. Over 100 participants, including 30+ coaches and 70+ players, witnessed a unique experience, featuring a blend of 27 returnees and newcomers. The camp showcased a commitment to elevating the skills of coaches and players alike under the motto of #GettingBetterTogether.



- Merger of European Coaches Associations:

The European Baseball Coaches Association (EBCA) and the European Softball Coaches Association (ESCA) have joined forces, birthing the European Baseball and Softball Coaches Association (EBSCA) under the umbrella of WBSC Europe. Initiated in 2023, the merger gained momentum during the EBSCA Training Camp, brining together players and coaches from both disciplines in a camp traditionally reserved for softball. The merger is slated for completion over the course of 2024.



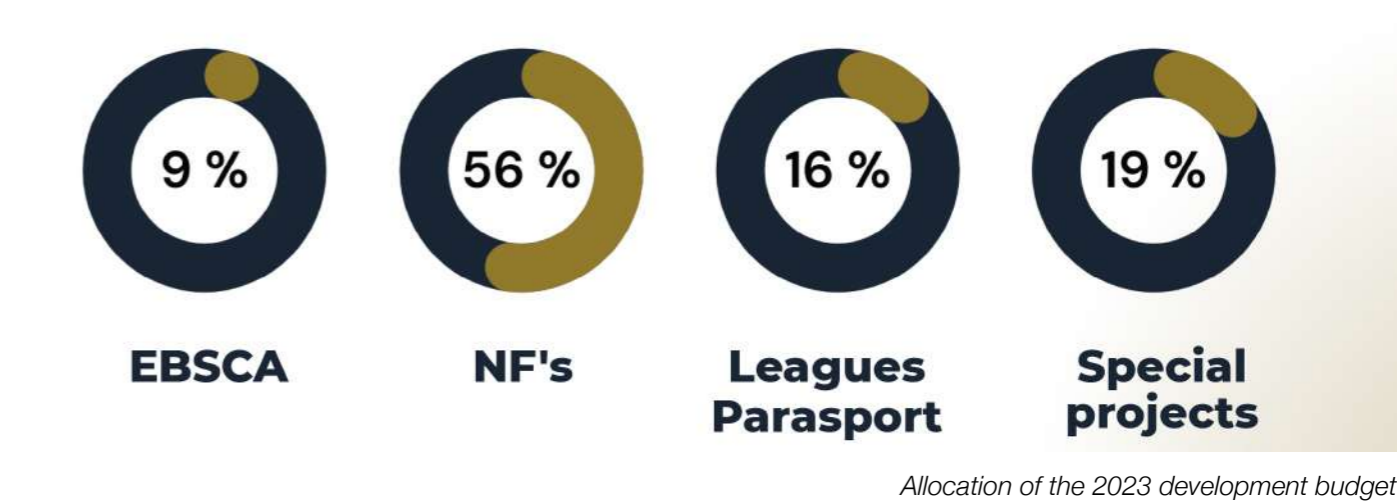
- Collaboration with American Stakeholders:

EBSCA's strategic collaboration with the NFCA (National Fastpitch Coaches Association) and ongoing efforts to engage with the ABCA (American Baseball Coaches Association) underscored the commission's commitment to fostering global connections. The collaboration focuses on education projects for European coaches and the promotion of exchange programs.

PRIORITY #2: SUPPORT DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONAL FEDERATIONS

- Launch of Development Requests Procedures:

WBSC Europe implemented a comprehensive development procedure for National Federations to submit funding requests. This system prioritizes fairness, transparency, and efficiency in evaluating and allocating development funds.



In 2023, 15 requests totaling 413,000 euros were received from 11 member Federations. Nine National Federations received funding, with priorities given to those submitting applications by the deadline. Allocations ranged from 1,500 to 4,500 euros, totaling 33,000 euros.



PRIORITY #3: FOSTER INTERNATIONAL PARTICIPATION THROUGH LEAGUES AND TOURNAMENTS

- European Massimo Romeo Youth Trophy (EMRYT):

The 10th edition of EMRYT, a U-13 softball tournament, featured 13 teams divided into Future and Sport divisions. At the beginning of 2023, WBSC Europe agreed with the Collecchio Baseball and Softball Club and the Italian Baseball and Softball Federation (FIBS) to host the European Massimo Romeo Softball Youth Trophy until 2025.



- Central Europe Women's Softball Euroleague:

The Softball Euroleague is a fastpitch competition for women and juniors played at cross border regional level. The 8th edition featured seven clubs from Croatia, Hungary, and Slovakia. Spanning four weekends, the league comprised over thirty games, culminating in Princ Zagreb (CRO) securing the championship in Trnava, Slovakia, on September 16 and 17, 2023.

- Baseball for Blinds:

Blind Baseball was introduced as the first WBSC Europe parasport discipline. The Blind Baseball European Championship in 2023 saw the participation of five national teams. Such events represent a step towards the goal of having the discipline recognized by the International Paralympic Committee. The Commission invites all WBSC Europe National Federations to actively develop this discipline.



- Euro Baseball Winter League:

Organized in collaboration with the Royal Spanish Baseball and Softball Federation and the Canary Islands Baseball and Softball Federation, the third Euro Baseball Winter League took place in Tenerife, Spain, from November 18th to 26th, 2023, and featured sixty-two European players in three teams. The Red Bulls emerged as champions for the second consecutive year.



- Agreement with Little League:

A five-year agreement was signed between Little League and WBSC Europe. This partnership focuses on growing baseball and softball in Europe through funding initiatives supporting field development, promotional activities, league retention, and player engagement. A webinar hosted by WBSC Europe provided insights into Little League initiatives, with the recording available on YouTube.

OTHER DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

- Baseball Umpiring Certification Clinic:

The WBSC Europe Baseball Umpiring Committee organized its first Baseball Certification Clinic from November 16th to 19th, 2023, in Toulouse, France.

The clinic drew participation from 44 candidates from Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, France, Great Britain, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, and Switzerland.

Following evaluation, 32 individuals successfully passed the certification requirements while 2 participants were granted conditional approval.

- Softball Blue Convention & WBSC Umpiring Certification in Italy:

From March 10 to 12, 2023, Barcelona (Spain) hosted the WBSC Europe Softball Blue Convention.

Led by the WBSC Europe Softball Umpiring Committee, the Convention focused on advancing the skills and knowledge of umpires. It was attended by members of the European softball umpiring community, as well as guest speaker José Chaparro, WBSC Umpire of the Year 2015.

Featuring a range of workshops and interactive sessions, the Blue Convention covered topics such as game management, rule interpretations, and communication with coaches and players.

The WBSC Umpire Certification Seminar was held from August 17th to 24th during the Women's Softball European Premier Cup in Saronno, Italy. The Seminar saw the successful certification of six new European umpires, now eligible for World Championship nominations.

- Baseball5 Officials:

In preparation for the Baseball5 European Championship 2023 in November, WBSC Europe organized a Game Officials Clinic in Druskininkai, Lithuania.

The WBSC Europe Game Officials Clinic brought together a diverse group of seventeen participants, including eight newcomers to the world of Baseball5 officiating, representing a wide array of countries, the participants hailed from Belgium, Bulgaria, Czechia, Estonia, Finland, France, Great Britain, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Netherlands, Romania, Spain, and Türkiye.



MEDIA

WEBSITE

In 2023, the www.wbsceurope.org website exhibited a robust online performance, attracting a total of 259,000 users who collectively viewed 3.7 million pages through 901,000 sessions. The WBSC Europe website boasted an impressive average session duration of 6 minutes and 33 seconds.

Since its launch in June 2021, the platform has grown substantially, featuring 874 articles, 445 documents distributed across 136 pages.

STREAMING

Another significant achievement was the streaming of 27 out of 29 official events on the WBSC Europe channels. The exceptions were the U-12 Baseball European Championship Qualifier and the Coed Slowpitch European Super Cup. The 93% coverage of the WBSC Europe events ensured widespread access for audiences across the world.

The exclusive streaming rights for EuroBaseball were sold, leading to the entire Baseball European Championship being available on the OTT platform powered by Staylive at www.baseballeurope.tv.

The remaining 26 events were streamed for free on the WBSC Europe YouTube channel. The WBSC Europe YouTube Channel played a significant role in delivering content to a broader audience. Key statistics include:

- The channel garnered 818K views in 2023.
- Viewers contributed 200K hours of watch time.
- The channel experienced growth, gaining 5,500 subscribers during the season, reaching a total of over 12,200 subscribers.
- Viewers showed sustained interest, with an average view duration of 15:00.
- The channel achieved 9.2M impressions.

PHOTOS & SOCIAL MEDIA

In addition to video content, WBSC Europe ensured a comprehensive visual documentation of the 2023 season. Photo albums for all events were made available on the WBSC Europe Flickr profile, which currently hosts over 60,000 photos, providing a rich visual archive.

Besides, WBSC Europe actively engaged with its audience across various social media platforms, including Facebook, Instagram, X (formerly known as Twitter) and TikTok.



EVENTS SANCTIONING

In April 2023, WBSC Europe introduced a sanctioning process aimed at regulating international competitions within the European region involving one or more National Teams governed by their respective National Federations.

This system, which has been in effect since its launch, marks a significant stride in fostering the development of baseball and softball in Europe while maintaining the integrity of the sport.

The events subject to the sanctioning process include matchups between National Teams and those between National Teams and Clubs. This regulatory framework is established to ensure that all international competitions held in Europe adhere to the standards set forth by both the global WBSC body and its regional counterpart, WBSC Europe. This approach is designed to create a level playing field for all participating teams, thereby elevating the overall standard of competitions across the continent.

One pivotal aspect of the implemented process is the opportunity it affords National Federations to accrue World Rankings points in the categories outlined in the official Ranking Methodology.

For National Federations intending to host or participate in such events, compliance with the sanctioning process is imperative. An application must be submitted in advance of the event, and a report is required upon the conclusion of the sanctioned games.

The rationale behind implementing this sanctioning process is multifold. It aims:

- To ensure adherence to the statutes and by-laws of both WBSC and WBSC Europe, thereby avoiding infractions and potential fines.
- To safeguard the rights of each National Federation participating in the international competition.
- To guarantee the enforcement of rules and safety measures, fostering a fair environment for participants.
- To enable National Federations to accumulate points for the categories in the WBSC Ranking.
- To provide National Federations with a platform for media exposure through WBSC Europe and WBSC channels.

For further details, National Federations are encouraged to refer to the official documentation provided by WBSC Europe or contact sanctioning@wbsceurope.org.



In 2023, France became the first European programme to hold the top position of a WBSC World Ranking.

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