To: National Federations

Ref: EWPC 2028 – MEN - Competition Format and Qualification Process

Dear Colleagues,

The Technical Water Polo Committee (TWPC) has started preparations for the next European Water Polo Championships for senior national teams, which will take place in 2028.

The new Regulations for European Championships, updated on 4 May 2026, introduce a revised competition system.

One of the main objectives of the new format is to provide national teams that have not regularly participated in the European Championships with more opportunities to play competitive international matches during the two-year period between two European Championships.

According to EC – WP 1.2, the Championships shall comprise the following Divisions:

- Qualification for Division I
- Division I
- Elite Division

The TWPC would therefore like to provide National Federations with the following preliminary information regarding the first stages of the qualification process for EWPC 2028.

9, rue de la Morâche
CH 1260 Nyon
SWITZERLAND
Tel +41 22 552 99 99
Fax+41 22 552 99 89

1. Qualification for Division I Men

According to the current Regulations, the Qualification for Division I Men will take place from 19 to 21 February 2027.

The relevant provisions of the Regulations are as follows:

EC – WP 3.2.1 Participating Teams are:

- The four teams placed from 13th to 16th place from the previous European Championships
- Teams that apply to play Qualifications for Division I Men

The teams participating in the Qualifications of Division I shall be seeded into four (4) groups. Division I Qualifications shall consist of an open number of teams.

EC – WP 3.2.2 Each of the four (4) groups shall be played as a tournament at different venues.

EC – WP 3.2.3 Within each group, each team shall play against each of the other teams on a round-robin system. Each team shall play only one match per day. Exceptions may be accepted.

EC – WP 3.2.4 All matches shall be played according to the World Aquatics Water Polo Rules.

EC – WP 3.2.5 Hosting rights shall be allocated among teams that meet all organizational, financial, and infrastructural requirements, comply with all applicable regulations, and confirm their willingness to host within the prescribed deadlines, with priority given to the highest-ranked teams according to the valid Men National Team Ranking.

EC – WP 3.2.6 The composition of the groups shall be determined by draw using seeding batches based on the European Aquatics Men National Team Ranking.

EC – WP 3.2.7 If fewer than sixteen (16) teams are entered for the Qualifications for Division I, the TWPC reserves the right to determine an alternative competition format.

EC – WP 3.2.8 The three (3) highest-ranked teams in each group, twelve (12) teams in total, shall qualify for Group Stage I of Division I.

Participation

Based on these Regulations, the national teams that finished in 13th to 16th place at EWPC 2026 are entitled to participate in the Qualification for Division I Men:

- Malta
- Slovakia
- Slovenia
- Israel

They will be joined by all other national teams that enter the Qualification for Division I Men.

The deadline for entries will be 30 September 2026.

National Federations will also have the opportunity to apply to host one of the Qualification for Division I Men tournaments, subject to the requirements set out in the Regulations.

Should fewer than sixteen (16) teams enter the competition, the TWPC reserves the right, in accordance with EC – WP 3.2.7, to determine an alternative competition format, including a different number or composition of qualification groups.

2. Division I Men

Division I Men will take place from 13-20 June 2027.

A total of sixteen (16) national teams will participate in Division I:

1. Four (4) teams that finished from 9th to 12th place at EWPC 2026:
    - France
    - Georgia
    - Netherlands
    - Türkiye

2. Twelve (12) teams qualifying through the Qualification for Division I Men.

These will be the three (3) highest-ranked teams from each qualification group, subject to any alternative competition format determined by the TWPC in accordance with EC – WP 3.2.7.

In attachment you can find the official invitation and relevant documentation regarding:

- approval of participation in the Senior Qualification Tournaments in February 2027, EWPC Division 1 in June 2027 or European Water Polo National Championships (EWPC) in 2028 (depending on the result of the qualifications or the placement from the last EWPC 2026)
- approval of organization of Qualification Tournament (February 2027)
- the applicable entry deadline is 30 September 2026
- the procedure and requirements for National Federations wishing to apply to host a qualification tournament.

Please note that the entry form has to be completed by all Federations, including those already qualified.

We kindly ask all National Federations to take note of the above dates and the new competition structure when planning their national team programmes for the 2027–2028 cycle.

The TWPC looks forward to working together with all National Federations to successfully implement the new competition format and to provide more national teams with meaningful and competitive international matches on their pathway towards the European Water Polo Championships 2028.

Best regards,

Matjaž Rakovec

TWPC Secretary

European Aquatics