To: National Federations

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

Dear Colleagues,

The Technical Water Polo Committee (TWPC) has started preparations for the next European Water Polo Championships for Women, 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 Women.

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1. Qualification for Division I Women

According to the current Regulations, the Qualification for Division I Women will be the first stage of the qualification pathway towards EWPC 2028. The Qualification for Division I Women will take place from 19 to 21 February 2027.

EC – WP 5.2.1 The participating teams will include:

- the four (4) teams placed from 13th to 16th place at the previous European Championships; and
- all other national teams that apply to participate in the Qualification for Division I Women.

Based on the final classification of the 2026 European Water Polo Championships Women in Funchal, the following four national teams are therefore entitled to participate in the Qualification for Division I Women:

- Türkiye – 13th place
- Switzerland – 14th place
- Slovakia – 15th place
- Romania – 16th place

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

The teams participating in the Qualification for Division I will be seeded into qualification groups, with the composition of the groups determined by draw and seeding based on the valid European Aquatics Women National Team Ranking.

EC – WP 5.2.2 Each of the four (4) groups shall be played as a tournament at different venues.

EC – WP 5.2.3 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 5.2.4 All matches shall be played according to the World Aquatics Water Polo Rules.

EC – WP 5.2.5 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 Women National Team Ranking.

EC – WP 5.2.6 The composition of the groups shall be determined by draw using seeding batches based on the European Aquatics Women National Team Ranking.

EC – WP 5.2.7 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 5.2.8 The three (3) highest-ranked teams in each group, twelve (12) teams in total, shall qualify for Group Stage I of Division I.

The deadline for entries will be 30 September 2026.

Should the number of entered teams be lower than the number foreseen for the standard qualification format, the TWPC reserves the right, in accordance with the Regulations, to determine an alternative competition format, including a different number and/or composition of qualification groups.

The highest-ranked teams from the Qualification for Division I Women, in accordance with the applicable competition format, will qualify for Division I Women.

2. Division I Women

Division I Women will take place from 04 -11 June 2027.

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

The first four places are allocated to the teams that finished from 9th to 12th place at EWPC Women 2026.

These national teams are:

1. Great Britain – 9th place
2. Serbia – 10th place
3. Germany – 11th place
4. Portugal – 12th place

They will be joined by twelve (12) teams qualifying through the Qualification for Division I Women, subject to any alternative competition format determined by the TWPC in accordance with the Regulations.

The purpose of this new competition structure is not only to determine qualification for the next stage of the European Championships but also to provide a greater number of European national teams with regular and meaningful international competition.

In particular, the new system will allow developing national teams and teams that have not regularly participated in the European Championships to play more competitive matches during the two-year period between European Championships.

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 ask all National Federations to take note of the new competition structure and the relevant deadlines when planning their women's national team programmes for the 2027–2028 cycle.

The TWPC believes that the new competition system represents an important step in the further development of women's water polo in Europe by providing more National Federations with opportunities to participate in meaningful and competitive international matches.

We look forward to working together with all National Federations to successfully implement the new competition format and to continue strengthening women's water polo across Europe on the pathway towards the European Water Polo Championships 2028.

Best regards,

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TWPC Secretary

European Aquatics