



EUROPEAN SOFTBALL FEDERATION PRESS RELEASE

11 European Teams to Compete at Women's World Softball Championship

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The 15th WBSC Women's Fastpitch World Championships will be held in Surrey, British Columbia, Canada, from July 15-24, and with the competition being held as an open tournament for the first time since 1994, 11 European teams are preparing to take part. Round robin pools have been announced.

 None of the top three teams from last year's European Women's Championship will miss this year's event, and in fact the **Dutch National Team** has not missed a single World Championship in the last 30 years.

 After an outstanding performance in Rosmalen last year, winning the European Championships for the first time since 2007, the **Italian National Team** will travel to Canada with the whole Europe closely watching the effort to improve their best-ever World result – sixth place in 1998 and 2006.

 The **Czech National Team** will play at the Worlds for the seventh time, hoping to make the top eight. The roster is not yet final, but the new Head Coach, Pavel Křivák, has decided to invite a number of younger prospects, including three players who will also participate this year in the European Junior Women's Championships.

 **Great Britain** has also started its preparations under a new Head Coach, Rachael Watkeys, who has been Head Coach of the GB Under-19 Women's Team for the past three years.

 The only time the Austrian and **French National Teams** attended the World Championship was in 1994, and after 22 years they are seizing the opportunity again. The French squad, with a number of talented young players, is planning to include as many high-quality games as possible in their preparation.

 Meanwhile, National Team players from **Austria** are very excited to have this opportunity. Cornelia Chwojka, National Team pitcher and a former Assistant Coach, said: *"It is a boost for everyone! Everyone is excited to have the chance to participate at the Worlds. From the Federation's point of view, it is a great honor. After 22 years it is also a*

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great way to show the world the development of softball in our country. We have a different goal this time and want to see where we are standing. It is always special to represent your country, especially at the Worlds.”



Photo by Dirk Steffen: <http://dirksteffen.zenfolio.com/>

 The **Greek National Team** is returning to the World Championships after 10 years, and Kostis Liarommatis, Greek Softball Federation President, said: *“The World Championship is probably the most competitive tournament, and it will be a great honor to participate. A whole new generation of players has been raised since the last time Greece participated. Attending the World Championship is a part of softball development in our country.”*

Ireland, Israel, Serbia and Switzerland will be playing in the Women’s World Championship for the first time ever.

 Softball Ireland President Colum Lavery said: “Ireland will attend its first World Championship in July 2016. We see this as an opportunity for Ireland to showcase our abilities at the highest level of the game and provide inspiration to a next generation of players. We are 100% self-funded, and we bring a highly-motivated team eager to learn. Our Federation sees this as an opportunity to highlight and grow the game within Ireland.”

 Another European team shares the Irish enthusiasm – Switzerland: *“The Swiss team will travel to Vancouver to participate in the World Championships purely for their love of the game. Players ranging from ages 18-36 will do their best to promote Swiss softball, proudly representing their country, while gaining an unforgettable experience in the process,”* said Monique Schmitt, Swiss Baseball and Softball Federation Secretary.

 The Serbian Softball Federation will send their team overseas as well. *“For Serbian softball it is an honor to play at the biggest softball competition that exists. The girls’ dreams are coming true!”* said Slobodan Djuric, the president of Serbian Softball Federation.

 The Israeli Softball Association is sending their national teams to both World Championships this year. In addition, the Israeli Junior Men will take part in this category’s pinnacle of 2016 - the World Championship in Midland, MI (USA).



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Here is a complete list of the participating national teams:

Australia, Austria, Brazil, Canada, Cuba, Czech Republic, China, Chinese Taipei, Ecuador, France, Great Britain, Guatemala, Greece, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Puerto Rico, Serbia, Switzerland, Uganda, United States, Venezuela

Round robin pools:

Section 1: Japan, Venezuela, France;
Section 2: USA, Brazil, Austria, Israel;
Section 3: Australia, Mexico, Switzerland, Serbia;
Section 4: Canada, Great Britain, Ireland, Uganda;
Section 5: Chinese Taipei, Puerto Rico, India, Ecuador;
Section 6: Netherlands, Czech Republic, Philippines, Pakistan;
Section 7: China, Cuba, Guatemala, Greece;
Section 8: New Zealand, Italy, Kenya, Peru.

The full text is available [here](#).

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