



A RETROSPECTIVE

2017- 2021

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PARTNERS



Softball Europe Members

Austria	Guernsey	Romania
Belgium	Hungary	Russia
Bulgaria	Ireland	San Marino
Croatia	Israel	Serbia
Czech Republic	Italy	Slovakia
Denmark	Jersey	Slovenia
Finland	Lithuania	Spain
France	Malta	Sweden
Germany	Netherlands	Switzerland
Great Britain	Norway	Turkey
Greece	Poland	Ukraine



At the end of an elective mandate, those who have been given the opportunity to serve the National Federations should present the collective work done by those elected. I would like to give you an overview of what we have done for the **past five years**.

Our main goal was to expand the reach of Softball to all corners of our continent and strengthen the brand of Softball. One of our most important initiatives was establishing the **brand Softball Europe**, which turned out to be a great tool for our main objective. Softball Europe is a brand. A brand, which was created to promote the sport of Softball in Europe. You can find more details about the special project in the special chapter. The portfolio of European events – official and nonofficial – has attracted teams and the numbers of the participating teams have increased dramatically.

Upon our election, we entered into a new era which created many challenges, but one, in particular, guided us through this whole period, the union with our **Baseball** friends. The process began immediately after the 2017 elections in a natural process of joining hands and becoming partners. This kind of process is not a one-day decision and needed time. We moved forward, step by step, and I believe the 2021 Extraordinary Congress in Rome will be the final step in creating a New Era for European Softball alongside Baseball.

As the European Championships are slowly becoming non-qualifying events for the WBSC World Cups, the Calendar has become a more important tool for National Federations planning. With the WBSC adding new categories including changes to age categories for Youth World Cups and consequently changing the WBSC Calendar, it affected our European Calendar. Unfortunately, the **pandemic** cancelled all 2020 European competitions. Some events had to be postponed, some cancelled without any possibility for rescheduling. Although this caused a bit of disruption and destabilization of our European events, we were able to manage the situation. The outcome from all of the above was the creation of the long-term plan calendar for competitions 2022 – 2029 which in turn will be the road map that all the National Federations will be able to utilize in their plans and programs for the international activities of their National Teams.

COVID -19 hit our lives very hard and especially our

sport. Acting on the fact that all 2020 International Softball came to a full stop we had to find other avenues of keeping in touch with each other and keep the interest of Softball alive. The Online world found its way into our community with several kinds of activities. We searched for the bridge to the future, which we could utilize and keep our softball community together. We arranged online Live Shows during these difficult times and put forth ideas in from four areas – politics, women Fastpitch, men Fastpitch, and Slowpitch. **Online activities** were a milestone during this time and were aimed at our coaches and umpires. Softball Europe & the European Softball Coaches Association (ESCA) created a new format: the Coaches Panel “Strike Zone”. Our umpires received online webinars which helped them to stay connected, learn, and be reminded that they are an important asset to Softball Europe.

As I mentioned at the beginning of my editorial statement, our focus during the several phases of the pandemic was to get back to playing on the field, nationally and internationally. Our objective to do this, **restore International Softball** throughout Europe was accomplished. It brings me and our all Council members honor in letting you know that we are here for you, our National Federations. Even though we all faced challenges like never before; being as flexible as much as we could, as it was needed to bring players and coaches to International fields, to play and share friendships. Our Softball community came back stronger than ever.

At last, I would like to **thank everyone**, – Players, Coaches, Umpires, Managers, Parents, Fans, Photographers, Journalists, Scorers, Sponsors, Groundskeepers, and Volunteers – for your contribution to Softball Europe. Your work is essential because it allows for all activities to take place for so many players. Special thanks to Softball Europe Council members for your contribution to steering our ship, Softball Europe Ship. Your work is invaluable!

Gabriel Waage
Softball Europe President

Inside Softball Europe

Executive Council



Gabriel Waage
President



Eddy Van Straelen
Treasurer



Yuri Alkalay
1st Vice President



Ami Baran
Secretary General



Petra Arends
Vice President



John Austin
Vice President



Daniela Castellani
Vice President



Mette Nissen Jakobsen
Vice President



Kristian Pälviä
Vice President

Committees Directors

Dennis Duin
Co-chair of the Scorekeepers Committee

Raoul Machalet
Director of Umpires

Gian Paolo Pelosi
Umpire in Chief - Development

Mike Jennings
Competitions and Technical Director

Marco Battistella
Co-chair of the Scorekeepers Committee

Hans Hornstra
Umpire in Chief - Assignments

Elda Ghilardi
Communications Director

The **European Softball Federation** (ESF) is a non-profit sports organization that connects and represents all European National Softball Federations on a European-wide level. The ESF itself is a member of the WBSC Softball Division. The ESF is also known as **Softball Europe** (new brand since 2017).

The European Softball Federation was established in Rome, Italy in **1976** by the representatives of six European National Baseball and Softball Federations (Belgium, France, Italy, Germany, the Netherlands, and Spain), with the objectives of promoting and developing softball in Europe. Today, there are 33 affiliated National Federations.

The ESF is recognized as the regional governing body for fastpitch and slowpitch softball for the whole of Europe in all age and gender categories.

The two main interests of the ESF are **competitions** and **development**.

The **Technical Commission** (TC), chaired by Mike Jennings, has general responsibility for the successful running of Softball Europe tournaments. The Technical Commission prepares all the necessary documents for each competition and members of the TC physically supervise each game of every single SE tournament. Softball Europe Technical Commissioners: Mike Jennings, Anna Di Luca, Conny Chwojka, Anna Battigelli, Gabriele Hardinger, Bob Kessler, Lis Castro, Libby Moss, Goose Gillett, Wout Isbouts, Mario Debono, Brian Connolly, Zsuzsa Balog, Chuck Micallef, Guy Bender, Marcel Kratochvil, and Irene Michielan.

The **Competitions Committee**, Chaired by Cornelia Chwojka, provides ideas for the development of Softball Europe competitions and also creates game schedules.

The **Umpires Committee**, chaired by Raul Machalet, is responsible for umpiring schedules at tournaments and for the organization of umpire clinics. Hans Hornstra is Umpire in Chief responsible for assignments and Gian Paolo Pelosi is responsible for the European umpires development.

Umpires in Chief evaluate umpires at each Softball Europe tournament to give them feedback and improvement advice.

Umpires in Chief: Hans Hornstra, Raoul Machalet, Gian Paolo Pelosi, Stefano Russi, Pavel Vychodsky, Louis Vischschoonmaker, Luis Pardo, Pete Saunders, Chris Moon, Florian Lautenschläger, Jan Hora, Fabio Capitoni, Geri Lindberg, Bert Loggen, Christian Singer, Carolien Stadhouders, Joeri Tobback, and Albert Tolen.

The **Scorekeeper Committee**, Chaired by Dennis Duin and Marco Battistella, is responsible for scorekeeping of all games at Softball Europe competitions and also for scorekeeper clinics.

Softball Europe Scorers in Chiefs: Gabriele Hardinger, Marleen Verbist, Karen Vischschoonmaker, Vladimir Bohacek, Radek Golan, Petra Malá, Lenka Richterova, Alois Seckar, Elisabet Salvador, Daniel Nestke, Marco Battistella, Andrea Maestri, Stefano Pieri, Maurizio Ronchi, Roberto Saletti, Eleonara Tonelli, Fabio Zaccaria, Dennis Duin, Huub Nelissen, Stefan Slinger, Linda Steijger, and Tomas Hires.

Elda Ghilardi, SE Communications Director, is the **media** executive. It's her job, together with the Media Officers, to make European Softball and all Championships and Cups visible, as well as to keep the softball community informed.

Softball Europe Media Officers: Marc Fischer, Elda Ghilardi, Pei-Ching Ko, Romy Marinus, Dominika Měšťanová, Helena Novotná, and Natálie Tauchenová.

All Softball Europe events would not be possible if it were not for the **volunteers**.

we all are Softball Europe

Competitions 2017 - 2021

5-YEAR REVIEW - by the Competitions and Technical Commission Director Mike Jennings

The attached schedule details the Competitions which SE organised over the last five years, including those events planned for the 2020 season that were cancelled or deferred because of the COVID-19 outbreak.

As well as maintaining the pattern of biennial Championships for National Teams and annual Cups for Clubs, we introduced new competitions to our calendar and hosted other events here in Europe featuring InterContinental play.

The new competitions added during this period, and now hopefully to be permanent features on our calendar, were designed to provide a range of wider playing opportunities to more teams in Europe:

In 2017, the **U-16 Men's Softball European Championship** was introduced, four teams competing in Prague, Czech Republic. This played again in 2021; as with all competitions leading to WBSC World Cup qualification, we pay due regard to the scheduling of the World event during early planning of our continental programme each year.

In 2018, the **Men's Slowpitch European Championship** was instituted in Chocen, Czech Republic, with seven teams participating. The intended second occasion in 2020 was an early victim of Covid, and this was unfortunately repeated in 2021. The competition will be re-instated in 2022, hosted by Colorno, Italy.

2019 saw the first **European Softball Masters Cups** played, for athletes 35+, in Sant Boi, Spain, to an enthusiastic welcome by many who had previously played Softball and who could now re-make old friendships and return to the diamond in competitive play:

- **Women's European Masters Cup:** 6 teams in both 2019 and 2021. 8% were over 55.
- **Men's European Masters Cup:** 8 teams in 2019, 10 in 2021. 11% were over 55, the oldest 64.

The arrival of Covid of course had a world-wide catastrophic impact. For Softball Europe it prevented any play in 2020, and had a still significant effect on our 2021 activity, when two events were cancelled and some 40 teams dropped out of intended participation because of early concerns over possible infection and / or the increased financial burden of testing and quarantine requirements. In our last four full playing seasons



SE staged 43 events, with 502 teams and 1,617 games. Without Covid, these totals could well have been 59 events, with 700+ teams and 2,300+ games!

Despite these issues, the current year was characterised by a determination of the Softball Europe Board that, despite all the challenges of Covid, our over-riding policy was to return as soon as possible to the field of play. We also took every opportunity to play the biennial 2020 events which were deferred by Covid: **Women's Softball European Championship, Men's Softball European Championship, U-18 Men's Softball European Championship & U-16 Men's Softball European Championship and Coed Slowpitch European Super Cup.**

To this end, our Hosts Federations spent considerable time and effort in close communication with their respective governments to understand the (ever-changing) Regulations covering sporting events, and in particular those protocols and tests they had to institute in order to achieve special exempt status for our athletes travelling to and during our competitions. If our teams had not been granted special dispensations the events could not have proceeded, and we are all indebted to the hosts who made so much extra effort to ensure the games were played.

We also acknowledge and regret that many teams were effectively barred from play because of various Governments' decisions about quarantining requirements, and thank those who did make so much extra effort and expense in travelling regardless of the restrictions.

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Women's Softball European Championship	X		X	X	X*
U-22 Women's Softball European Championship		X			
U-19 / U-18 Women's Softball European Championship		X			X
U-16 / U-15 Women's Softball European Championship	X		X	X	
Men's Softball European Championship		X		X	X*
U-19 / U-18 Men's Softball European Championship	X			X	X*
U-16 Men's Softball European Championship	XX			X	X*
Coed Slowpitch European Championship	X		X		X
Men's Slowpitch European Championship		XX		X	
Coed Slowpitch European Super Cup		X		X	X*
European Massimo Romeo Youth Trophy	X	X	X	X	X
Women's Softball European Premiere Cup	X	X	X	X	X
Women's Softball European Cup	X	X	X	X	X
Women's Softball European Cup Winners Cup	X	X	X	X	X
Women's Softball European Masters Cup			XX	X	X
Men's Softball European Super Cup	X	X	X	X	X
Men's Softball European Masters Cup			XX	X	X
X = played; XX = new event; X* = played one year late; X = not played					

Other significant Competitions 2017 - 2021

2018:

European Super Six, Softball and Baseball: Hoofddorp, Netherlands, showcased the best teams playing in our respective disciplines in a first-class playing environment.

InterContinental Cup: Prague, Czech Republic, hosted this Invitational Men's Softball Challenge competition, with Continental representatives Argentina, Japan, New Zealand and USA: European Champions Denmark and host Chechia completed the line-up. As well as introducing us to the Haka, it laid the foundations for- 2019:

WBSC Men's World Cup: Prague and Havlickuv Brod, Czech Republic. 16 teams competed in the first WBSC Men's Worlds hosted in Europe.

WBSC Europe / Africa Olympic Women's Softball Qualifier for Tokyo 2020, played 2021. Utrecht, Netherlands, hosted the competition for 6 European and 2 African teams: Italy qualified.

WBSC U-18 Men's Softball European Qualifier: four teams contested the event in Gezer, Israel. Final order was Czech Republic, Denmark, Israel, Great Britain.

Softball Europe Competition Officials

Our **Technical Commissioners**, and **Umpires in Chief** and **Scorers in Chief** with their crews, faced similar challenges to teams, but enough were able to fulfil their assignments to ensure that all events were fully staffed.

Over the past 5 years, two Technical Commissioners have left the team and six have joined: there are now 15 available to serve on competitions in 2022 and beyond.

89 Technical Commissioners, **43** Scorers in Chief and **84** Umpires in Chief assignments were covered since 2017. The Umpire group grew from 91 to **118** over the period, bolstered by active online training and assessment games while Covid was active.

We remain confident that the number and experience of our officials have ensured full support for all SE events since 2017, and that they are well placed to continue to serve over the next five years.



Mike Jennings

Softball Europe Competitions and Technical Director



Record of numbers of participants 2017 - 2021

Senior Fastpitch European Championship:

Women's Softball European Championship: 23 teams (Ostrava, CZE - 2019)

Men's Softball European Championship: 12 teams (Havlíčkův Brod, CZE - 2018)

Senior Slowpitch European Championship:

Coed Slowpitch European Championship: 11 teams (Budapest, HUN - 2019)

Men's Slowpitch European Championship: 7 teams (Choceň, CZE - 2018)

Junior Women's Softball European Championship:

U-22 Women's Softball European Championship: 17 teams (Trnava, SVK - 2018)

U-18 Women's Softball European Championship: 17 teams (Staranzano, ITA - 2018)

U-15 Women's Softball European Championship: 13 teams (Zagreb, CRO - 2019)

Junior Men's Softball European Championship:

U-18 Men's Softball European Championship: 5 teams (Prague, CZE - 2017)

U-16 Men's Softball European Championship: 4 teams (Prague, CZE - 2017)

Fastpitch European Cups:

European Massimo Romeo Youth Trophy: 18 teams (Collecchio, ITA - 2018)

Women's Softball European Champions Cup (Premiere Cup and European Cup): 19 teams (2019)

Women's Softball European Cup Winners Cup: 14 teams (Saronno, ITA - 2021)

Men's Softball European Cup (Super Cup and Softball Europe Cup): 18 teams (Prague, CZE - 2018)

Softball European Masters Cup: 15 teams (Barcelona, ESP - 2021)

Slowpitch European Cup:

Coed Slowpitch European Super Cup: 16 teams (Riccione, ITA - 2018)

World Class events in Europe

In order to raise the level and standard of European softball, holding World Class events on the Continent is one asset that can contribute to such an objective.

During the 2018 and 2019 periods, we were able to produce such events either with the assistance of the WBSC or under the WBSC Europe umbrella.

European Pro Series

USSSA Pride, one of the top teams of National Pro Fastpitch made Tour Europe (April 24 – May 6, 2018) thanks to a joint effort by the World Baseball Softball Confederation (WBSC) and the United States Specialty Sports Association (USSSA).

The tour has been named USSSA European Pro Series and USSSA Pride played exhibition games against the National Teams of 3 European powerhouses: Czech Republic, Italy, and Netherlands. The tour ended in France when the clinic in Côte d'Azur took place.

"A U.S. professional softball club competing against Europe's top nations promises to deliver exciting and unique content," said WBSC President Riccardo Fraccari.

"The opportunity to compete in the USSSA European Pro Softball Series presented by WBSC is truly exciting for the Pride," said D.J. Wabick, USSSA International Senior Vice President.

Super 6

Established to become one of WBSC Europe's prime events, the Super 6 Tournament brought together in one venue the best six Men's Baseball and Women's Softball European teams. The first-ever Super 6 event organized by WBSC Europe was held in Hoofddorp, Netherlands.

The top six teams from the 2017 Women's Softball European Championship – Italy, Netherlands, Great Britain, Czech Republic, Greece, and Russia – competed for five days (September 18 – 22, 2018) for the title. In Men's Baseball the teams from the Netherlands, Czech Republic, Italy, Spain, Germany, and Belgium fought for the prestigious title of Super 6 Champions.

This unique event was a great opportunity to showcase the top-class European teams in softball and baseball in one package of promotion, to show everyone in the softball and baseball world that Europe is united.

Olympic Qualifier

The WBSC Softball Europe/Africa Qualifier, the first softball Olympic qualifier, was played in Utrecht, Netherlands, on June 23 – 28, 2019.

The Olympic Qualifier included the top two African countries and the best six European countries battling for the one berth in the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020. Botswana, Czech Republic, France, Great Britain, Italy, Netherlands, South Africa, and Spain played for five days and were divided into two groups and all this with one objective: to make history and be the one to participate in the Tokyo Olympics.

Italy defeated Great Britain 5-0 in the final and got the ticket for Tokyo 2020. Italian pitcher Greta Cecchetti was outstanding, throwing a shutout game with 99 pitches, 13 strikeouts, and allowing only two hits. Italy was the third team to join the Olympic Games, with Japan and the USA already qualified.

WBSC Men's World Cup



The 1st ever Men's Softball World Championship in Europe was played in the Czech Republic on June 13 – 23, 2019. The premiere Men's Softball World Championship held on the European continent had a somewhat different concept than the previous World Championships.

It was our aim to impact a broad spectrum of the public, introduce a world-class softball show to the broadest possible public (sports, political and social), which is why Czech Softball decided to hold the tournament in two locations. This model was similar to events in other collective sports, where various parts of tournaments are sometimes played in different countries. Softball Europe used this model at the WECh 2019 when this event was played in the Czech Republic and Poland.

A total of sixteen teams from all five continents gathered in the Czech Republic for the XVI Men's Softball World Championship. The European continent was represented by the Czech Republic, the Netherlands, and Denmark.

As we all understand, comprehensive media coverage is the cornerstone of success. A 50-head international team led by Helena Novotná, our previous Softball Europe Media Director, provided complete service for journalists and fans all around the world.

It was also the inaugural event for Elda Ghilardi, who stepped into Helena Novotná position of Softball Europe Media Director and continues until today working hard for all of you.



Men's fastpitch promotion

Another one of Softball Europe's main objectives is the promotion of Men's Fastpitch. This has been a focus for our Development for the past several years, and we believe with great success.

This was all done not just to be able to have the 1st ever Men's World Championship in Europe, but also to bring forth the potential in the Men's game.

This was accomplished with the concept of the Men's Super Cup, and when top Men's world teams arrived in Europe to play the best tournaments Europe can hold in order to promote Men's Fastpitch. ●

Intercontinental Cup 2018



Prior to the 2019 Men's World Championship, Men's Fastpitch fans had the opportunity to get "warmed up" with this unique event.

Each Continent had chosen its representative to compete at the Intercontinental Cup 2018.

The tournament consisted of seven teams: New Zealand (no.1) – representative of Oceania, Japan (no.3) – representative of Asia, Argentina (no.4) – representative of South America, USA (no.6) – representative of North America, the Czech Republic (no.7) – host, Denmark (no.11) – representative of Europe and Botswana (no.12) – representative of Africa.

Unfortunately, Botswana didn't show up and the Cup was left with six teams.

The Intercontinental Cup was held in Prague, the Czech Republic, at the same venue where the WBSC Men's World Championship was going to be played in 2019.

This event was a great opportunity for the Czech Federation as they were preparing to organize the World Championships and were able to use this to see if all the aspects of hosting a world-level tournament were in place.

The Intercontinental Cup was an important part of the promotional campaign leading towards the Worlds in 2019.

Team Europe versus Black Sox - exhibition game

One special idea that was conceived by Softball Europe with the intent to grow the attention of Europe and the World about Men's Fast Pitch softball was the creation of Team Europe in 2018.

Team Europe was composed of players from Men's Softball National teams from all over Europe: 20 players representing 12 countries and 4 top Men's Fastpitch Coaches.



The World Champion New Zealand's Black Sox accepted an invitation from Softball Europe to compete against Team Europe in an exhibition game.

This event followed the Black Sox's win at the Intercontinental Cup and was held in Havlickuv Brod, the Czech Republic – one of the ballparks of the WBSC Men's Softball World Cup 2019.

The exhibition game took 10 innings, the spectators saw a total of 21 hits; 5 of those were homeruns. After a tight and attractive ten-inning game, Team Europe won 6:5.

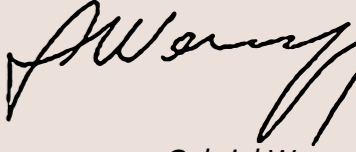
"I knew it was going to be close, I knew we had some good players in Team Europe, and I knew our pitching staff was pretty strong as well," said Kevin Stockford, one of the coaches for Team Europe, "The team was put together only for this event, and we hope the future will bring more interaction between the Continents in such great form."

For the players, it was a great honor, and for some of them, it was also the only chance to face the Black Sox in their careers. *"It was great, I loved it,"* said one of the players, Felix Schwan from Germany.

Note from Gabriel Waage, European Softball Federation President.

As mentioned above, these World Class events have been the pride of the work we have been trying to do, along with all of you who provide us with the inspiration, and assistance in creating formats that will bring us into the future, past all the problems and issues that arise.

For all that, we thank you for your confidence and trust for all these years.


Gabriel Waage
Softball Europe President

Development

To quote Socrates: *“The secret of Change is to focus all of your energy, not on fighting the old, but on building the new”.*

The Development Commission of European Softball has put a lot of effort into building the new era which is with us today. Building our youth, our federations with new concepts that brought us to where we are today.

In the past 5 years, we have tried to implement as many programs and projects that would meet the objectives set out by the Executive Council, the input from our member Federations and others who have lent us a hand in creating a mechanism of development throughout Europe.

Here are just some of the projects and programs that have been embedded into the European Softball culture for a better future for our Sport.

Baltic Open

A tradition now that has set the pace for the development of softball in Men's, Women's, and youth categories. The Northern countries have created a regional competition and all this from two of our members of the EC Mette Nissen-Jakobsen and Krisitain Palvia.

The opportunities are great and even now our hopeful Finish Baseball and Softball Federation will be joining the family very soon and we can say that this will truly turn out to be one of Softball Europe's greatest accomplishments with these incredible people in the Federations.



Co-operation on High-Performance National Conferences

Member Federations such as Germany, Switzerland, Great Britain, Spain, and others, who conduct their coaches conventions on a yearly basis, reached out to the Development commission, feeling the need to be a part of those conventions we assisted in as much as we could, specifically in providing funding for high-level coaches to pass on their knowledge.

Partnerships with the International Sports Group (ISG) during these Conventions/conferences have raised

the level of knowledge throughout Europe and we hope that the future will bring even more Federations to hold these special events in their countries.

Co-operation with Little League and Pony League

In addition to all the various events organized by Softball Europe and our respective National Federations, our international partners Little League and Pony League host each year tournaments in Europe, providing exciting opportunities for youth players to play more games and get experience competing on an international playing field.

Usually, in April each year, Pony hosts the Pony European Zone Tournaments in Prague in the U-14 and U-16 categories, usually with a total of over twenty-five softball teams from over ten countries.

And each year, in July, Little League hosts the World Series Qualifiers for Softball in Moergestel/Breda, Netherlands, with teams in three different age categories. Over the past five years, teams from Czech Republic, Italy, and the Netherlands have advanced from this tournament to the three different Little League Softball World Series tournaments in the United States (Little League, Junior League, and Senior League).

The partnership with Pony and Little League is something that Softball Europe is proud to have, as it gives our European athletes more possibilities to play international games and get the necessary playing experience to take them to the next level.

Clinics around Europe

Providing clinicians to our Member Federations was one of our top priorities during these 4-5 years.

Countries from all over Europe received special assistance from Softball Europe with top names from countries such as Italy, Netherlands, Great Britain, Spain, and the Czech Republic who travelled the Continent in order to provide guidance, support, and, at times, an open ear to hear how difficult it is to grow the sport in some of these Federations.

The satisfied reactions we have received over the years have proven that this is a true concept in the development of Softball throughout Europe.

Equipment for Europe

Softball equipment in Europe has always been an issue and was usually taken care of by private individuals in different countries.

We were able to find a small niche and Vice President Mette Nissen Jakobsen was able to secure a cooperation agreement with the Organization, Pitch in For Baseball and Softball out of Pennsylvania.

First Vice President Yuri Alkalay was able to secure all the shipments through the years including distribution of the equipment throughout Europe with his networking capabilities.

Euroleague and the “Petra Cizmic Pokrajac” Projects

Ideas are born from the minds of dreamers.

Petra Cizmic Pokrajac is one of our Development members' big dreamers. Initiating different projects



throughout the years and one that stands out is the Central Europe Women's Euroleague. The creation of this mini Euroleague brought countries together, putting them on the field and jump-starting a trend that we believe will catch on in the future.

The Softball Euroleague was played in Central Europe for six years in a row from 2014 to 2019. Softball Euroleague is a fastpitch competition for women and juniors played on cross border regional level. The Euroleague aims to build competition with an international impact and prestige.

It is a competition for teams:

- that are looking for games because of the low number of teams/games in their national competitions;
- that are looking for an extended schedule thanks to the high number of players;
- with limited budgets;
- that desire to play and grow;
- that wish to step over country borders to give players more opportunities;
- that wish to enjoy and leverage the European spirit;
- that want to play international games with minimal costs.

Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Serbia, and Slovakia seized the great opportunity to play international games in Central Europe.

"The pandemic outbreak did not allow continuing Softball Euroleague during the past two years, but we will be back in 2022", said Petra Cizmic Pokrajac who leads this project with great enthusiasm.

Petra also has created initiatives through Erasmus+ Sports in a few instances and one that received great recognition was the Inclusion & Gender Equality Through Softball (IGETS).

European Softball Coaches Association (ESCA)

ESCA started out as a "wish". A "wish" that all our Coaches throughout Europe would find a way to be connected, to create a forum where everyone could share ideas, concepts, drills, and much more. From the "wish" it grew into the ESCA Training Camps where players, Coaches joined the ESCA staff and literally joined hands and formed the future for our Sport.

ESCA grew and also joined forces with the USA National Fast Pitch Coaches Association (NFCA) so that our coaches not only enjoyed the benefits of being part of ESCA but also the NFCA and all the benefits of being a part of that incredible Organization.

There is still so much to do, so many coaches that need to join the organization, and players need their coaches to be at the top of their game in order to be the best that they can be.

We will continue to build the Organization and, hopefully, we will be able to provide an even larger range of benefits for everyone.

During the pandemic, the ESCA staff and supportive group created virtual lectures, events including interviews with coaches like USA Head Coach Mike Candrea, Cindy Bristow, Kirk Walker, and many more, providing incredible insight to all-out coaches and players.

During the years ESCA came up with a 4 tier Coaching Certification program which was firstly implemented in Denmark. More countries have been included and we look forward to more and more becoming a part of the ESCA Family in the years to come.

European Massimo Romeo Youth Trophy

For years now, the European Massimo Romeo Trophy - European Cup for U-13 players - has been a trademark for Youth development in European Softball. The founder of the event, Massimo Romeo, a gentle and soft-



spoken man, put much effort into creating this special project, which is played yearly in August in Collecchio, Italy.

This tournament, a major development tool, allows even the youngest players from around Europe to get the chance to experience a European championship- like tournament. Over the past few years, the participation in this event has been increasing: since its establishment in 2012, a total of 13 countries showed up and participated through all eight editions.

In 2017, because of the above increase in numbers, we divided the tournament into two Divisions, Sport and Future. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic outbreak, we were unable to play this incredible event in 2020 and 2021, but EMRYT will be back in 2022 and are ready to welcome the 9th edition.

Sadly, our dear friend Massimo Romeo passed away in 2021. Massimo will always be with us, in our hearts, and on the field forever, as his legacy will live on at EMRYT. The Massimo Romeo Youth Trophy in Europe is dedicated to his effort in youth and softball development.



European Masters Cup

The Softball European Masters Cup was introduced in 2019 in Barcelona with great success.

The vision of the tournament is to bring +35-year-old players back to the field in a competitive fastpitch environment. At the same time, a great emphasis has been put on the social part of our sport, meeting old friends of the European Softball family.

The tournament is designed to host both a Women's and a Men's fastpitch tournament at the same venue. The tournament is condensed compared to our other official tournaments in the Softball Europe calendar: games have a time limit and the event takes place in four days. The schedule allows players to have time to interact with each other and watch games at the venue.

Softball Europe very much appreciates the 3-year agreement with the Spanish Baseball and Softball Federation and Softball Catalunya to host this tournament.



The 2019 Women's Softball European Masters Cup could count on six teams: Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Italy, Spain, and Sweden. Eight teams took part in the 2019 Men's Softball European Masters Cup: three Spanish teams, Czech Republic, Denmark, Israel, Italy, and Sweden. Because of the Covid pandemic, the Softball European Masters Cups were canceled in 2020.

In 2021, six teams played the Women's Softball European Masters Cup: Denmark, Hungary, Italy, Netherlands, Spain, Sweden. Ten teams participated in the Men's Softball European Masters Cup: two Spanish teams, two Czech teams, Belgium, Denmark, France, Israel, Italy, and Sweden.



Triple Ball

The Triple Ball (Balkan or Southeast European) Championship had its second edition in Sofia in 2018 after a successful inaugural event in 2015.

The Balkan Games are one of the oldest international sports events in Europe, established in 1929. Since 1995, the Balkan Baseball and Softball Federations organises regional tournaments in baseball and softball, and, since 2009, also in coed slowpitch.

The 2018 event was the second edition of Balkan Baseball, Softball, and Coed Slowpitch Championship (Triple Ball Balkan Championship). The Championship was played in Sofia, Bulgaria, from April 26 - 29, 2018, with the support of the World Baseball Softball Confederation (WBSC).

"The idea is after the first two and a half days to bring boys and girls, men and women, together for the coed slowpitch event and there, in a more relaxed atmosphere, to give them chance to have more fun but still competing," said Youri Alkalay, President of the Bulgarian Federation.



Note from Ami Baran, European Softball Federation Secretary General.

The list goes on, but the work is never done. There is so much more to be done.

The European Softball Federation has tried to provide you with the best we could and we hope that if we have missed any opportunity to assist you in growing Softball in your country, that you forgive us and we would like to leave you with a promise that, wherever we are, we will always be there to push Development throughout Europe.

We would like to thank you for being part of this incredible Family and look forward to seeing you on the Field in the years to come.

Ami Baran
Softball Europe Secretary General

Rankings 2021

In 2016, the European Softball Federation introduced the European Softball Rankings for Women’s Softball and Men’s Softball and Slowpitch.

The ESF ranking system evaluates countries according to their Senior National Team results, but also takes into account Youth National Team attendance at European Championships, producing rankings that reflect a combination of competition achievement and softball development. Rankings are based on points (multiplied by 100) given according to final standings at European Championships in all categories, with the following weighting: Senior European Championship – 100%; Junior European Championship – 50%; All others (U-22 and U-16) – 25%. The ranking system takes into account the two most recent European Championships in each category.

A total of all the points awarded will determine the placement of each country in each ranking.

Women’s Softball 2021

The 2021 rankings are affected by the absence of several National Teams to the 2021 European Championships. Compared to 2019, the Women’s Softball top-3 has not changed: Italy at the top, followed by the Netherlands and the Czech Republic. France recorded a big improvement, moving from the 7th to the 4th position. Israel went from position 15th to 8th.

The total number of countries in the rankings remains the same as 2019 - 25.

EUROPEAN RANKINGS 2021

Women's Softball

1	ITALY		4600 pts	14	AUSTRIA		1375 pts
2	NETHERLANDS		4450 pts	15 ▼	BELGIUM		1175 pts
3	CZECH REPUBLIC		4187,5 pts	16 ▲	SLOVAKIA		1100 pts
4 ▲	FRANCE		2912,5 pts	17 ▼	GREECE		1087,5 pts
5 ▲	SPAIN		2850 pts	18 ▲	DENMARK		750 pts
6 ▲	GERMANY		2787,5 pts	19 ▼	SWEDEN		550 pts
7 ▼	RUSSIA		2600 pts	20 ▼	SWITZERLAND		525 pts
8 ▲	ISRAEL		2300 pts	21 ▲	HUNGARY		400 pts
9 ▲	POLAND		2187,5 pts	22 ▲	BULGARIA		325 pts
10 ▲	UKRAINE		1800 pts	23 ▼	LITHUANIA		262,5 pts
11 ▼	GREAT BRITAIN		1775 pts	24	SERBIA		100 pts
12 ▲	CROATIA		1575 pts	24	TURKEY		100 pts
13 ▼	IRELAND		1550 pts				



Rankings goal

ESF hopes for rankings to help National Federations to be more effective at finding funding sources and establishing partnerships. At the same time, they can be a tool to promote softball national teams in all the European Countries.

ESF President Gabriel Waage commented: “We’re hoping that because this system takes softball development into account, it will encourage all European countries to work on including more categories in their national team programmes. A simple attendance at any Championship can move a softball nation higher in the rankings.”

Men’s Softball 2021

While the Czech Republic and Denmark keep leading the Men’s Softball European rankings like in 2019, the third position of the ranking has changed: Croatia managed to overtake the Netherlands, moving from 7th to 3rd. France, new on the board, ranked 6th thanks to the excellent performance at the 2021 Men’s Softball European Championship. Great Britain, Belgium, Germany, and Italy dropped positions due to their absence in the 2021 European Championships.

The total number of countries in the rankings remains the same as 2019 - 13 - as Poland left the board and France filled in the gap.

EUROPEAN RANKINGS 2021					
Men’s Softball					
1	CZECH REPUBLIC		1950 pts		
2	DENMARK		1600 pts		
3 ▲	CROATIA		1112,5 pts		
4 ▼	NETHERLANDS		1050 pts		
5	ISRAEL		1012,5 pts		
6 ▲	FRANCE		600 pts		
7 ▼	GREAT BRITAIN		475 pts		
8 ▲	SLOVAKIA		450 pts		
9 ▼	BELGIUM		400 pts		
10	SWEDEN		300 pts		
11 ▼	GERMANY		250 pts		
12 ▼	ITALY		200 pts		
13 ▼	LITHUANIA		150 pts		

Slowpitch 2021

As there was no Slowpitch European Championship this season, Slowpitch rankings positions remain the same as 2019 with Great Britain leading with 2050 points.

EUROPEAN RANKINGS 2021

Slowpitch

1	GREAT BRITAIN		2050 pts
2	GERMANY		1900 pts
3	CZECH REPUBLIC		1300 pts
4	NETHERLANDS		1200 pts
5	IRELAND		1150 pts
6	BELGIUM		800 pts
7	ITALY		600 pts
8	AUSTRIA		500 pts
9	BULGARIA		450 pts
10	SERBIA		200 pts
10	SLOVENIA		200 pts
12	HUNGARY		100 pts

Planning 2022 - 2029

The pandemic era of the past 18 months had consequences to the international softball calendar, modifying the announced planning and the two-year cycle frequency for European Championships. The pandemic also strongly modified the WBSC Calendar 2021 – 2029, and at the beginning of 2021 WBSC announced the changing of World Cups frequency to a four-year cycle.

Softball Europe President Gabriel Waage said: "We all are hoping that the situation will be stabilised and the Softball Europe calendar for European Championships will look as follows".

Women's Softball

	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
Women's Softball European Championship	X*			X*		X		X*
U-22 Women's Softball European Championship	X		X		X		X	
U-18 Women's Softball European Championship		X*		X		X*		X
U-15 Women's Softball European Championship	X*		X		X*		X	

Men's Softball

	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
Men's Softball European Championship		X*		X		X*		X
U-23 Men's Softball European Championship	X*			X*		X		X*
U-18 Men's Softball European Championship		X*			X*		X	
U-16 Men's Softball European Championship		X			X		X	

Slowpitch

	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
Coed Slowpitch European Championship	X*		X		X*		X	
Men's Slowpitch European Championship	X		X		X		X	
Coed Slowpitch European Cup		X		X		X		X

* European Championship is Qualifier for next expected WBSC World Cup

Softball Europe branding

At the Women's Softball European Championship 2017, a new softball brand was launched. This strong campaign is starting a new era of softball in Europe. The new brand **Softball Europe** is being developed as a way to promote the sport of softball rather than the organizations that administer and run the game in Europe.

Softball Europe is not just a logo. Softball Europe is a brand. A brand that was created to promote the sport of softball in Europe.

Players. Coaches. Umpires. Managers. Parents. Fans. Photographers. Journalists. Scorers. Groundskeepers. Volunteers. Whoever you are, you are Softball Europe. **We are all Softball Europe.**

For all occasions of promotion of softball, Softball Europe is here. Tournaments, clinics, highlights, videos, photos, articles, news, all about players, results, stats, social media. Softball Europe is here for you.

The logo represents the most typical thing for softball - a yellow ball. It is always in motion; everyone notices it at a first glance.

No other sport has a bright yellow color, which contrasts with a blue sky, orange clay, and green grass. The yellow circle represents not only the ball but the "family circle" symbol because softball players are one big family. That's why "Softball Europe" is inside the circle. Red stitches symbolize ball movement, as well as the advancement of European Softball.

The campaign is based on strong graphics, which help people understand the major aspect of our game.

The campaign is also using **#lovesoftball** as its tool. We encourage everyone to use the #lovesoftball in their communication on social media.

Let the world know where you belong and what you love. The website www.lovesoftball.org is dedicated to this new tool, which interconnects all of us.

#lovesoftball

#lovesoftball is primarily used for social networking purposes, to help increase the visibility of softball.

The hashtag can be used not only for tagging photos on the internet but can be used on all printed marketing items - flags, banners, prints, clothes, etc.

The **Women's Softball European Championship** and **Men's Softball European Championship** logos were designed linked to the Softball Europe logo.



Merge WBSC Europe

On February 10, **2018**, the Regional Baseball Softball Confederation for Europe – WBSC Europe was established in Paris, France.

Delegates of 38 baseball, softball, and combined National European Federations unanimously approved the creation of the WBSC Europe at the occasion of annual congresses of the two merging organizations – European Softball Federation (ESF) and Confederation of European Baseball (CEB).

Since the previous ESF and CEB Congress, representatives of the two federations have been intensively working together on the creation of the new joint continental confederation. The working group consisted of both presidents: Gabriel Waage (ESF) and Didier Seminet (CEB), as well as three representatives from each body. This group met multiple times during 2017 and lead the two organizations to this agreement.

“We finally made the decision. It’s been a long time since we started to work together. We’ve been sharing various matters and projects, and now it’s official. We are together,” said Didier Seminet, president of the CEB.

“Everybody needs to realize that we are a part of a big family. In the WBSC family, everyone has their own place. Every regional federation, and every national federation. We are here to spread the knowledge of our sport to every corner of our continent. That’s our goal. That’s why we’re here. That’s why WBSC Europe,” said Gabriel Waage, president of the ESF.

In September **2018**, WBSC Europe organised its first event: the Super 6.

The best six teams from the Women’s Softball European Championship 2017 and the Men’s Baseball European Championship competed for five days in Hoofddorp, Netherlands.

On February 2, **2019**, during its inaugural Congress in Athens, Greece, WBSC Europe entered a new phase with the approval of the constitution and the election of an interim Executive Committee to oversee the development of this new continental body until 2021 when CEB and ESF are set to dissolve.

The Executive Committee is composed of 10 members, five from CEB and five from ESF and is led by CEB & ESF Presidents Didier Seminet and Gabriel Waage who serve as co-presidents of WBSC Europe until 2021.

The composition of the Executive Committee: co-Presidents Didier Seminet and Gabriel Waage, Secretary General Krunoslav Karin, Treasurer Eddy van Straelen, Vice-Presidents Mette Nissen-Jakobsen, Youri Alkalay, Kristian Pälviä, Petr Ditrich, Roderick Balk and Marco Mannucci.



Didier Seminet, WBSC Europe co-president: *“It’s a historical day for Baseball and Softball in Europe. I’m very proud that CEB and ESF were able to work together and demonstrate the unity of our sport by forming WBSC Europe. We are all looking forward to continuing to work on the future of our sport in Europe.”*

Gabriel Waage, WBSC Europe co-president: *“WBSC Europe is a great opportunity to make us stronger and we have to make all the best to create space, where everybody will find own field and will feel comfortable.”*

On June 18, **2021**, proudly launched its website that gathers information about the organization, members federations, official and historical documentation, events and development programs.

WBSC Europe’s co-presidents Gabriel Waage and Didier Seminet: *“It’s a new step forward for European Baseball and Softball. We would like to thank the WBSC for making its technology available for WBSC Europe and its events.”*

About WBSC Europe:

The World Baseball Softball Confederation Europe is the new governing body for baseball and softball in Europe. WBSC Europe has 43 National Federations. Since 2018, together with the European Softball Federation (ESF) and the Confederation of European Baseball (CEB), it governs European competitions involving official National Teams.

Mission & Vision

As the continental governing body, WBSC Europe, is in charge of promoting the increase, development and expansion of the practice of Baseball and Softball in Europe, organising, supervising and enforcing the technical standards and regulations established for tournaments and regional and continental championships, as well as promoting mutual respect in the relationships of all affiliated and represented National Federations in WBSC Europe, coordinating their actions and assisting in their planning, training and technical-educational management programs, to guarantee the integral development of their athletes.

That of being a model of sports organisation at a continental level supported and enhanced by the use and optimisation of technical-academic, financial and communication resources to obtain sporting results at the highest level, placing European Baseball and Softball at the top of the concert of the nations that practice it in the five continents and be recognised as the world power continent



Online World

Streaming

The ESF has been working on the streaming aspect together with each tournament organizing committee.

In the 2021 season, most of the games at the European Championships and Cups have been streamed, either through a fixed camera or through multiple cameras.

Organizers cannot always afford to live-stream the event through one of our partners, but, thanks to the technology moving forward, bringing the games live to the fans becomes easier.



baseballsoftball.tv Platform

Europe's new platform for videos on-demand and live-streams of baseball and softball launched in April 2018. As a first great event, the USSSA European Pro Series presented by WBSC featuring USSSA Pride of the National Pro Fastpitch League will face national teams of Italy, the Czech Republic, and the Netherlands. The first baseball competition was broadcasted in June 2018, featuring the European Cups and National Team events alike.

ESF and CEB reached a deal with Sportradar during the Joint Congress in Paris, France. The WBSC Europe Media Group finalized the setup of the newly launched video platform, Baseball Softball Europe TV. As the first joint project, the OverTheTop Platform brought together baseball and softball fans alike.

Helena Novotná, ESF's Previous Communications Director said: *"Live-streaming has been one of our major topics over the last few years. We've come a long way since we seriously live-streamed for the first time in 2013. The creation of a joint softball and baseball video platform is another huge step which, I believe, will help us strengthen and expand our fan-base."*

In four seasons, baseballsoftball.tv transmitted over twenty events with over 370 games, reaching almost 300.000 visitors, counting over 2 million visits.

ESCA lives

ESCA launched a series of lives on its Facebook page starring guests from all over the World.

During the pandemic, the ESCA staff and supportive group created virtual lectures, events including interviews with coaches like USA Head Coach Mike Candrea, Cindy Bristow, Kirk Walker, and many more, providing incredible insight to all-out coaches and players.

The eight online shows are all available on the Softball Europe Facebook page and YouTube channel.

ESCA Team: Craig Montvidas, Ami Baran, Petra Cizmic Pokrajac, Elda Ghilardi, and Tom Gavish.

Online umpires webinars and clinics

In May 2020, for the first time, the European Softball Federation organized a **virtual training** meeting for all the ESF umpires. Thanks to the work of Geri Lindberg, Carolien Stadhouders, Raoul Machalet, Gian Paolo Pelosi, and Chris Moon, the umpires met online for two **webinars**, one for fastpitch and one for slowpitch. The webinars had the final goal to discuss and examine in-depth technical topics correlated to the game during a unique situation in history without games.

"The initiative was a success! It was good to virtually see everybody" commented Carolien, former Director of Umpires for the ESF *"we plan to keep working on the web in the future"*

After the success of the umpires webinars in May, a second session for umpires was organised in June about the mechanics of the game.



In **2021**, the European Softball Federation organised an **online-based certification clinic** for Umpires, then finalised with the on-field evaluation during an official Softball Europe tournament.

After the online sessions covering the rules and the basic mechanic, a written exam and a field examination, Softball Europe can now count on 12 new certified umpires for fastpitch and 5 new certified umpires for slowpitch.

Gian Paolo Pelosi, Softball Europe Umpire in Chief responsible for the European umpires development commented: *“it was a good experience. In fact, we are thinking for next year to have still some online sessions combined with a couple of days of classroom lessons, to solve doubts and questions.”*

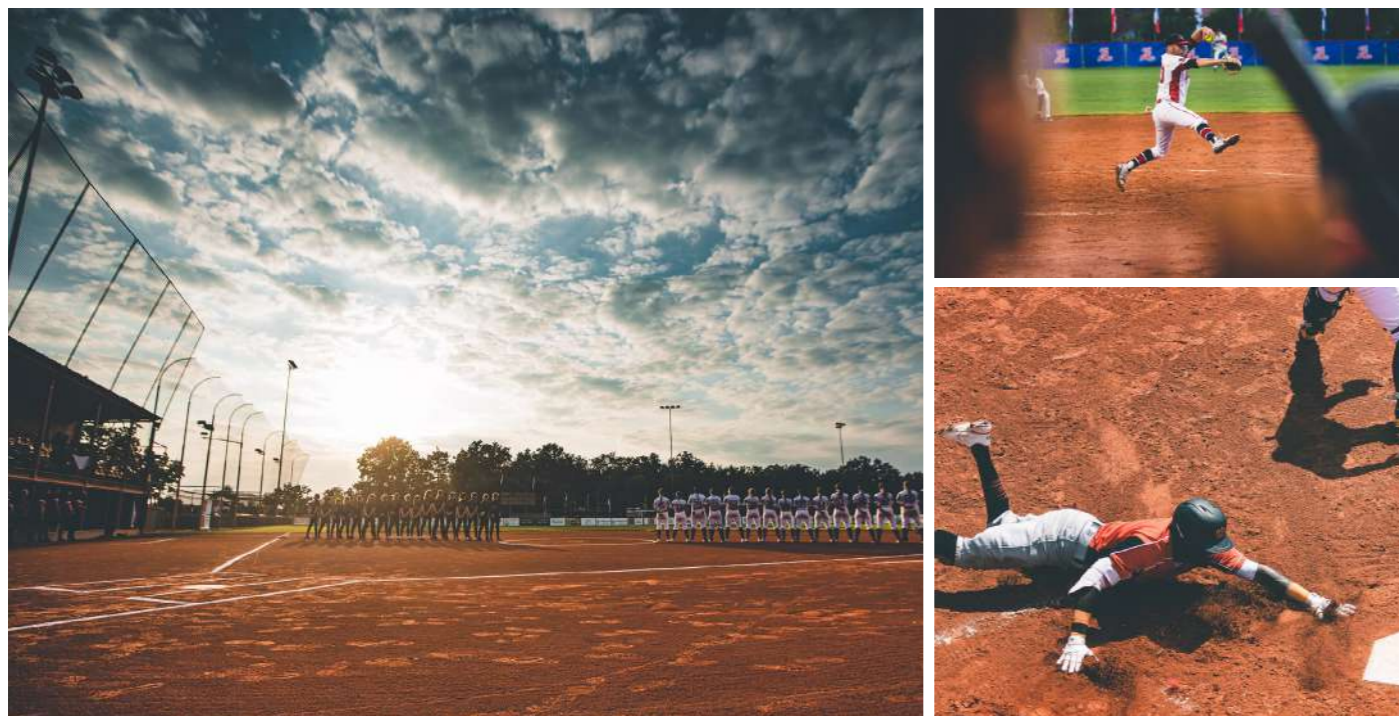
Media Coverage

Media coverage of all the official competitions has become a must for Softball Europe throughout the season. Not only, but our media team also produces content such as stories, posts, photo galleries, updates, articles, press releases, and interviews all year long.

More content is produced during our top events, such as the Men’s Softball European Championship and the Women’s Softball European Championship. During the top European Softball events, our numbers -reach, followers and engagement - increase.

Softball Europe Communications Director Elda Ghilardi commented on the 2021 season: *“I am very thankful for the Media Officers involved in the European softball competitions. They did an outstanding job in keeping softball fans involved all over the World.”*

“Also, I would like to thank our photographers. It is easier to get the job done with so many amazing shots,” also added Ghilardi.



Social Media

Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter are the social media channels used by Softball Europe.

On Softball Europe Instagram, it is the intention to get closer to our community through posts and stories. During the past couple of years, Softball Europe Instagram has been taken over multiple times. Our Stories

featured the everyday lives of various players and softball personalities from all corners of Europe.

On the other hand, our Facebook page and our Twitter profile convey the information and share the articles of our website.

europeansoftball.org & wbsceurope.org websites

From 2017 to 2021, over 600 pieces have been published on our websites to keep fans engaged and updated.

Launched in June 2021, the WBSC Europe website gathered all the information regarding the 2021 season, including rosters, schedules, results, and stats.

National Federations

Since its establishment in 1976, the European Softball Federation (ESF) has kept growing.

It all started with six members. Forty-five years later, the ESF counts 33 member National Federations.

Austria

The Austrian Baseball and Softball Federation enrolled its National Teams for the 2017 Women's Softball European Championship, 2018 U-22 Women's Softball European Championship, 2019 Coed Slowpitch European Championship, 2021 Women's Softball European Championship, and 2021 U-18 Women's Softball European Championship.



Belgium

The Belgian Baseball and Softball Federation enrolled its National Teams for the 2017 U-16 Women's Softball European Championship, 2017 Women's Softball European Championship, 2018 U-22 Women's Softball European Championship, 2018 U-19 Women's Softball European Championship, 2018 Men's Slowpitch European Championship, 2018 Men's Softball European Championship, 2019 U-16 Women's Softball European Championship, 2019 Coed Slowpitch European Championship.

Bulgaria

The Bulgarian Baseball and Softball Federation enrolled its National Teams for the 2017 Coed Slowpitch European Championship, 2017 Women's Softball European Championship, 2018 U-19 Women's Softball European Championship, 2019 Coed Slowpitch European Championship, 2021 Women's Softball European Championship.

Croatia

The Croatian Softball Federation enrolled its National Teams for the 2017 U-16 Men's Softball European Championship, 2017 U-19 Men's Softball European Championship, 2017 Women's Softball European Championship, 2018 U-19 Women's Softball European Championship, 2018 Men's Softball European Championship, 2019 U-16 Women's Softball European Championship, 2019 Women's Softball European Championship, 2021 U-18 Women's Softball European Championship, 2021 U-18 Men's Softball European Championship, 2021 Women's Softball European Championship, 2021 Men's Softball European Championship.



Czech Republic

The Czech Softball Federation enrolled its National Teams for the 2017 U-16 Men's Softball European Championship, 2017 U-19 Men's Softball European Championship, 2017 Coed Slowpitch European Championship, 2017 U-16 Women's Softball European Championship, 2017 Women's Softball European Championship, 2018 U-22 Women's Softball European Championship, 2018 U-19 Women's Softball European Championship, 2018 Men's Softball European Championship, 2018 Men's Slowpitch European Championship, 2019 U-16 Women's Softball European Championship, 2019 Coed Slowpitch European Championship, 2019 Women's Softball European Championship, 2021 U-18 Women's Softball European Championship, 2021 U-18 Men's Softball European Championship, 2021 U-16 Men's Softball European Championship, 2021 Women's Softball European Championship, 2021 Men's Softball European Championship.

Denmark

The Danish Softball Federation enrolled its National Teams for the 2017 U-16 Men's Softball European Championship, 2017 U-19 Men's Softball European Championship, 2017 Women's Softball European

Championship, 2018 U-19 Women's Softball European Championship, 2018 Men's Softball European Championship, 2019 Women's Softball European Championship, 2021 U-18 Men's Softball European Championship, 2021 U-16 Men's Softball European Championship, 2021 Women's Softball European Championship, 2021 Men's Softball European Championship.

Finland

The Finnish Baseball and Softball Federation could recently celebrate on September 25, 2021, the return of softball to Finland, thanks to the first official game in over a decade.

France

The French Softball Federation enrolled its National Teams for the 2017 Women's Softball European Championship, 2017 U-16 Women's Softball European Championship, 2018 U-19 Women's Softball European Championship, 2019 Women's Softball European Championship, 2019 U-16 Women's Softball European Championship, 2021 Men's Softball European Championship, 2021 Women's Softball European Championship, 2021 U-18 Women's Softball European Championship.

Germany

The German Softball Federation enrolled its National Teams for the 2017 Women's Softball European Championship, 2017 U-16 Women's Softball European Championship, 2017 Coed Slowpitch en's European Championship, 2018 Men's Slowpitch European Championship, 2018 Men's Softball European Championship, 2018 U-19 Women's Softball European Championship, 2019 Women's Softball European Championship, 2019 Coed Slowpitch European Championship, 2019 U-16 Women's Softball European Championship, 2021 Women's Softball European Championship, 2021 U-18 Women's Softball European Championship.



Great Britain

The British Softball Federation enrolled its National Teams for the 2017 Women's Softball European

Championship, 2017 U-16 Women's Softball European Championship, 2017 Coed Slowpitch en's European Championship, 2017 U-18 Men's Softball European Championship, 2018 Men's Slowpitch European Championship, 2018 Men's Softball European Championship, 2018 U-19 Women's Softball European Championship, 2018 U-22 Women's Softball European Championship, 2019 Women's Softball European Championship, 2019 Coed Slowpitch European Championship.

Greece

The Greek Softball Federation enrolled its National Teams for the 2017 Women's Softball European Championship, 2018 U-22 Women's Softball European Championship, 2019 Women's Softball European Championship.

Guernsey

The Guernsey Softball Association is active in the Bailiwick of Guernsey.

Hungary

The Hungarian Baseball and Softball Federation enrolled its National Teams for the 2017 Women's Softball European Championship, 2018 U-22 Women's Softball European Championship, 2019 Women's Softball European Championship, 2019 Coed Slowpitch European Championship, 2019 U-16 Women's Softball European Championship, 2021 Women's Softball European Championship.



Ireland

Softball Ireland enrolled its National Teams for the 2017 Women's Softball European Championship, 2017 Coed Slowpitch en's European Championship, 2017 U-18 Men's Softball European Championship, 2018 Men's Slowpitch European Championship, 2018 U-19 Women's Softball European Championship, 2018 U-22 Women's Softball European Championship, 2019 Women's Softball European Championship, 2019 Coed Slowpitch European Championship.

Israel

The Israel Softball Association enrolled its National Teams for the 2017 Women's Softball European Championship, 2017 U-16 Men's Softball European Championship, 2018 Men's Softball European Championship, 2018 U-19 Women's Softball European Championship, 2018 U-22 Women's Softball European Championship, 2019 Women's Softball European Championship, 2021 Men's Softball European Championship, 2021 Women's Softball European Championship, 2021 U-16 Men's Softball European Championship, 2021 U-18 Men's Softball European Championship.



Italy

The Italian Baseball and Softball Federation enrolled its National Teams for the 2017 Women's Softball European Championship, 2017 U-16 Women's Softball European Championship, 2018 Men's Slowpitch European Championship, 2018 Men's Softball European Championship, 2018 U-19 Women's Softball European Championship, 2018 U-22 Women's Softball European Championship, 2019 Women's Softball European Championship, 2019 Coed Slowpitch European Championship, 2019 U-16 Women's Softball European Championship, 2021 Women's Softball European Championship, 2021 U-18 Women's Softball European Championship.

Jersey

The Guernsey Softball Association is active in the Bailiwick of Jersey.

Lithuania

The Lithuanian Softball Federation enrolled its National Teams for the 2017 Women's Softball European Championship, 2018 Men's Softball European Championship, 2018 U-22 Women's Softball European Championship, 2019 Women's Softball European Championship, 2021 Men's Softball European Championship, 2021 Women's Softball European Championship.



Malta

The Malta Baseball and Softball Association is active on the Island of Malta.

Netherlands

The Dutch Baseball and Softball Federation enrolled its National Teams for the 2017 Women's Softball European Championship, 2017 U-16 Women's Softball European Championship, 2018 Men's Slowpitch European Championship, 2018 Men's Softball European Championship, 2018 U-19 Women's Softball European Championship, 2018 U-22 Women's Softball European Championship, 2019 Women's Softball European Championship, 2019 Coed Slowpitch European Championship, 2019 U-16 Women's Softball European Championship, 2021 Men's Softball European Championship, 2021 Women's Softball European Championship, 2021 U-18 Women's Softball European Championship.

Norway

The Norwegian Baseball and Softball Association is active in Norway.

Poland

The Polish Baseball and Softball Association enrolled its National Teams for the 2017 Women's Softball European Championship, 2017 U-16 Women's Softball European Championship, 2018 U-19 Women's Softball

European Championship, 2018 U-22 Women's Softball European Championship, 2019 Women's Softball European Championship, 2019 U-16 Women's Softball European Championship, 2021 Women's Softball European Championship, 2021 U-18 Women's Softball European Championship.

Romania

The Romanian Baseball and Softball Federation is active in Romania.

Russia

The Russian Softball Federation enrolled its National Teams for the 2017 Women's Softball European Championship, 2017 U-16 Women's Softball European Championship, 2018 U-19 Women's Softball European Championship, 2018 U-22 Women's Softball European Championship, 2019 Women's Softball European Championship, 2019 U-16 Women's Softball European Championship, 2021 Women's Softball European Championship.

San Marino

The San Marino Baseball and Softball Federation is active in the Republic of San Marino and Italy.

Serbia

The Serbian Softball Association enrolled its National Teams for the 2017 U-16 Women's Softball European Championship, 2018 U-19 Women's Softball European Championship, 2019 Coed Slowpitch European Championship.

Slovakia

The Slovak Softball Association enrolled its National Teams for the 2017 Women's Softball European Championship, 2017 U-16 Women's Softball European Championship, 2018 Men's Softball European Championship, 2018 U-22 Women's Softball European Championship, 2019 Women's Softball European Championship, 2019 U-16 Women's Softball European Championship, 2021 Men's Softball European Championship, 2021 Women's Softball European Championship.



Slovenia

The Slovenian Baseball and Softball Association enrolled its National Teams for the 2017 Coed Slowpitch en's European Championship.

Spain

The Spanish Baseball and Softball Federation enrolled its National Teams for the 2017 Women's Softball European Championship, 2018 U-19 Women's Softball European Championship, 2019 Women's Softball European Championship, 2021 Women's Softball European Championship, 2021 U-18 Women's Softball European Championship.

Sweden

The Swedish Baseball and Softball Federation enrolled its National Teams for the 2017 Women's Softball European Championship, 2018 Men's Softball European Championship, 2019 Women's Softball European Championship, 2021 Men's Softball European Championship, 2021 U-18 Women's Softball European Championship.

Switzerland

The Swiss Baseball and Softball Federation enrolled its National Teams for the 2017 Women's Softball European Championship, 2018 U-22 Women's Softball European Championship, 2019 Women's Softball European Championship,

Turkey

The Turkish Baseball and Softball Federation enrolled its National Teams for the 2018 U-22 Women's Softball European Championship, 2019 Women's Softball European Championship, 2019 U-16 Women's Softball European Championship.

Ukraine

The Baseball & Softball Federation of Ukraine enrolled its National Teams for the 2017 Women's Softball European Championship, 2017 U-16 Women's Softball European Championship, 2018 U-19 Women's Softball European Championship, 2018 U-22 Women's Softball European Championship, 2019 Women's Softball European Championship, 2019 U-16 Women's Softball European Championship, 2021 Women's Softball European Championship, 2021 U-18 Women's Softball European Championship.

In Memoriam

Sorrowfully, many great people and softball leaders left us over these past few years.



Andre Van Overbeek

André Van Overbeek passed away at the beginning of May, 2021, at the age of 72. The passing of Van Overbeek, former ESF President and former Vice-President Europe of the International Softball Federation, left the European Softball community heartbroken.



Anton Kops

Anton Kops passed away on January 2, 2020. Kops grew the games of softball in his home country, the Netherlands, and internationally, always being there when needed to give his time and energy in promoting the sport he loved so much.



Don Porter

Donald Emmett Porter, known as Don Porter, passed away on June 7th, 2020, at the age of 90. Porter tirelessly fought for softball's inclusion in the Olympic Games and succeeded when softball was first elected to be part of the Olympic program for the Atlanta 1996 Olympics.



Enrico Obletter

Obletter passed away on 22 February, 2021, in Italy due to complications resulting from COVID-19. Obletter, head coach of the Italian National Softball Team, sadly could not lead his squad to the Tokyo Olympics, after earning the Olympic pass at the WBSC Softball Europe/Africa Olympic Qualifier in 2019.



Massimo Lepri

Massimo Lepri passed away on September 30, 2021. Massimo Lepri was an Umpire and co-founded the Wicklow Wolves Softball Club. Lepri served as the Irish Softball Federation Treasurer.



Massimo Romeo

ESF Hall of Famer Massimo Romeo passed away on September 5, 2021. Massimo dedicated his life to softball and its development, through many initiatives, as evidenced by the establishment of the “European Massimo Romeo Youth Trophy”, named after him.



Pero Čizmić

Pero Čizmić passed away at his home in Zagreb, Croatia, on June 16, 2021. Pero served as the Croatian Softball Association's long-time President, and for five years as the ESF First Vice President. For more than 25 years, Čizmić was the driving force behind the inception and growth of softball in Croatia.



Ramaz Goglidze

Georgian sports leader Ramaz Goglidze passed away at the beginning of December 2020. Goglidze was the International Softball Federation (ISF) Vice President for Europe from 2001 to 2005. Goglidze was the director of Georgia's State Sports Committee from 1982 to 1986, and also an Executive Member of the National Olympic Committee (NOC). He was the first and only President of the USSR Baseball-Softball Federation from 1987 to 1991.

Well, dear friends,

that wraps up the 2017-2021 final term of this Executive Council of the European Softball Federation. It has been a pleasure serving all of you and trying to build and expand the game of Softball throughout Europe.

It has been a challenging 4.5 years as we also lost 1.5 years to the world pandemic, but we were able to move forward and really never cease our efforts in providing you with as many possibilities that were at our disposal.

The future looks bright for our Sport as we begin a new journey, a journey whose final destination is unknown to us but the road that we have embarked on is full of wonders, expectations, and surprises.

In the famous words of Henry Ford: "Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is a success."

This should be the motto of the next generation of leaders in our Sports.

On behalf of all of us from the Executive Council, the Directors of our Commissions, Director of Media and Communications, Umpires, Technical Commissioners, and all our wonderful volunteers, we thank you and we will always be there for you in the future.

This is not the end but just a new beginning!



Gabriel Waage
Softball Europe President



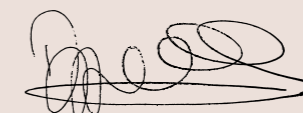
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