



European Squash Federation report to the WSF AGM 2023

Overview

The European Squash Federation celebrated its 50th Anniversary in 2023. ESF has 46 Member National Federations of 56 possible.

The European Think Tank

All Member National Federations were invited to participate in the ESF organised Think Tank, held in Bucharest, Romania, at the end of January 2023, with great help of the Romania Squash Federation. The theme was How to get Squash popular again! More than 50 individuals with representatives from about 30 MNFs participated in the 2,5-day co-creation and design thinking workshop, which was 100% funded by ESF. Six main challenges were established:

How can we make squash inclusive?

How can we ensure access to squash to all kinds of people (economic & social class, geographies, gender, etc)



How can we get more people to play squash?

How do we improve recruitment, engagement and retention of leisure players in today's context?



How can we grow the number of courts?

How can we improve the infrastructure of squash?



How can we help squash coaches?

How can we grow and retain the coaching base?



How can we grow future champions of squash?

How do we improve the recruitment and engagement of junior and future performance players at all levels?



How can we grow the visibility of squash?

How can we make squash more visible in the world so that squash can grow into popularity?



The common and overall challenge for squash was agreed to be visibility!

Efforts has been made to develop a new web platform for better communication, internally and externally. That includes allocating resources to increase social media activity, engaging journalists for content creation, exploring an ESF streaming platform, increasing the visibility and promotion of the ESF Championships and the different circuit events.

The challenge of growing the number of courts has evolved into a working group called “The Squash Facility Network” – with the aim of helping Club owners and investors with advice on planning and running venues/clubs.

2023 AGM

The 2023 Annual General Meeting was held on 29th April, alongside the European Team Squash Championships, Division 1 &2, in Helsinki, Finland.

24 Member National Federations (MNF) were represented. WSF President Zena Wooldridge OBE, Honorary Member and together with William Louis-Marie, WSF CEO, were present.

ESF President Thomas Troedsson conducted the meeting, where several motions were debated and voted on.

The AGM voted to introduce a Nomination Committee, to ensure more quality to the Board nomination process and to increase nominations for the Board.

A change of the memorandum to be able to establish the Company's Registered Office to be situated in a nation of the founders (Belgium, England, Finland, Greece, Ireland, Monaco, Netherlands, Scotland, Sweden and Wales). The idea of ESF is to establish the office in the Netherlands, which is within the European Union.

It was decided to do a review of the Championship regulations to accommodate the current situation with more teams and more equal standard.

Finally, it was decided, to have more parity, to change the composition of the U15 Teams to 2 boys and 2 girls from 2025 onwards, followed by the U17 in 2026 and the U19 in 2027.

The Board

Rosie Barry (Ireland) reached the end of her term and was thanked for her service to ESF for the last 5 years as Vice President. She will still be active within the ESF organisation as responsible for the Gender equality, inclusivity & diversity committee.

Peter Derek was stepping down as the ESF Treasurer after 17 years of service. He was duly thanked and was voted in as an honorary ESF Member. New Treasurer, Paul Gardner, was appointed and presented to the membership.

The ESF Board from April 30th, 2023, onwards comprises President Thomas Troedsson (Sweden), and Vice-presidents; Catherine Ezvan (France), Otto Kalvo (Norway) and Luis Ferreira (Portugal), supported by Paul Gardner appointed as the ESF Treasurer and Company Secretary.

The Office

Marcel Borst is the ESF Operations Manager and Joanne Collins is the part-time Office Administrator. Laura Valencia is the social media coordinator.

The ESF has no longer a physical office, as the staff will work remotely in a virtual office.

Portfolios

- Championships Committee including Juniors & Masters: Thomas Troedsson
- Marketing & Communication Committee: Luis Ferreira
- Referees Committee: Catherine Ezvan
- Coaching Committee: Thomas Troedsson
- Equality Committee: Rosie Barry, Catherine Ezvan
- Business Development: Otto Kalvo

Status of Squash in Europe

COVID 19 has still affected many nations in Europe, with difficulties to restart squash. Also, the high inflation and increased energy cost have caused huge problems for squash facilities. Some facilities have closed and in many cases been lost to real estate developments.

The participation in the European Junior Circuit has almost got back to what it was before covid, however, the Masters Circuit events are still struggling. Most tournaments are back on the calendar again and in 2023 ESF calendar includes 18 ESF Master circuit events and 30 ESF Junior circuit events across Europe.

Administration / Communications

The board has met mainly via online board meetings using Zoom. Four physical meetings have been conducted, including a longer strategy meeting during the summer.

ESF have been attending all meetings and EXCO with World Squash Federation during the period, represented by Thomas Troedsson.

Visits

ESF President visited several Member Nations, events and organisations during 2022-2023, amongst those were the European Olympic Committee in Rome, Italy; the Croatian Olympic Committee and the Sport University of Zagreb and Malta for the Games of the Small States of Europe (GSSE).

Finance

Financially in 2023, ESF expects to be near break-even. The business model is based on membership fees covering the annual fixed costs. The overall financial situation for ESF is sound.

Championships 2023

1-4 April ESF European Individual u19 Squash Championships in Zürich, Switzerland

6-9 April ESF European Mixed Team u19 Squash Championships in Zürich, Switzerland

12-15 April ESF European Team Division 3 Squash Championships in Gibraltar

26-29 April ESF European Team Division 1 & 2 Squash Championships in Helsinki, Finland

11-14 May ESF European Mixed Team u15 & u17 Squash Championships in Prague, Czech Republic

22-25 August ESF European Individual Closed Squash Championships in Wroclaw, Poland

6 – 9 September ESF Master's Individual Squash Championships in Hamburg, Germany

13 – 16 September ESF European Club Squash Championships in Paderborn, Germany

Championships 2024

- 23 - 26 April ESF European Individual u19 Squash Championships, Bucharest Romania
- 28 - 31 April ESF European Mixed Team u19 Squash Championships, Bucharest Romania
- 17 - 20 April ESF European Team Division 3 Squash Championships, Bucharest Romania
- 1 - 4 May ESF European Team Division 1 & 2 Championships, Zürich Switzerland
- 8 - 11 May ESF European Mixed Team u15 & u17 Squash Championships, Portugal
- 23 - 26 Augustus ESF European Individual Closed Squash Championships, Cuenca Spain
- 3 - 7 September ESF European Club Squash Championships, London England

October 10th, 2023