

ESSF 2026 EUROPEAN OPEN SCHOOL CHAMPIONSHIP U18

FUTSAL

BULLETIN 1

10 – 16 MAY 2026

BANJA LUKA – REPUBLIC OF SRPSKA – BIH





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EVENT GENERAL



➤ INTRODUCTION

The European School Sport Federation (ESSF) continues to grow as a key platform for promoting school sport and education across Europe. With its mission to inspire young athletes and connect schools through sport, ESSF provides opportunities that combine competition, learning, and friendship in an international environment.

The ESSF European Open School Championship – Futsal U18, to be held in Banja Luka, from 10–16 May 2026, marks another important step in this journey. Bringing together school teams from across Europe, the event will highlight the passion, skill, and teamwork that define the spirit of futsal and school sport.

More than a competition, this Championship represents a celebration of youth, diversity, and fair play. It offers young players a chance to test their abilities, share experiences, and build connections that go beyond borders, reflecting the true values of sport and education.

Together, we continue to shape a stronger European school sport community. We look forward to welcoming you to Banja Luka in May 2026, for an unforgettable celebration of futsal, unity, and the ESSF spirit.



➤ WELCOME TO BANJA LUKA

Welcome to Banja Luka – The City of Green and the Vrbas River

Welcome to Banja Luka, the heart of the Republic of Srpska and one of the most beautiful cities. Known as the “City of Green”, Banja Luka combines rich history, breathtaking nature, and a warm, welcoming spirit that every visitor can feel.

Situated on the banks of the Vrbas River, surrounded by gentle hills and forests, the city offers a perfect mix of tradition and modern life. Its streets are filled with charming cafés, parks, and historic landmarks that tell stories of the past, from Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian influences to the vibrant energy of today’s youth.

With its green landscapes, friendly people, and vibrant culture, Banja Luka is not only a place to visit but a city to experience. Whether you’re exploring its riverside trails, tasting local cuisine, or simply enjoying the relaxed atmosphere, Banja Luka will leave you with unforgettable memories.



➤ DISCOVER BANJA LUKA

KASTEL FORTRESS

One of the city's oldest and most recognizable landmarks, the Kastel Fortress stands proudly on the banks of the Vrbas River. Dating back to Roman and Ottoman times, it offers a glimpse into the city's long history and provides stunning views of the river and cityscape. Today, it's a popular gathering spot and venue for cultural events and concerts.



CHRIST THE SAVIOUR ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL

Located in the city center, this magnificent cathedral is one of Banja Luka's most important religious and architectural monuments. Built in the Serbian-Byzantine style, its golden domes and richly decorated interior make it a must-see landmark symbolizing peace and faith.

BANJ BRDO (ŠEHITLUCI)

Rising above the city, Banj Brdo offers the best panoramic view of Banja Luka and the surrounding area. The path to the top is a favorite spot for walking or cycling, leading to a monument dedicated to World War II partisans.



KRUPA NA VRBASU

Just 25 km from the city center lies Krupa na Vrbasu, a stunning natural area known for its waterfalls, old mills, and clear streams. It's an ideal place for a day trip, combining tranquility, tradition, and untouched nature.

➤ EVENT MANAGEMENT

The ESSF 2026 European Open School Championship **Futsal U18** will be organized through the close cooperation of the European School Sport Federation (ESSF) and the Republic of Srpska School Sport Federation, which will serve as the Local Organizing Committee (LOC) in Banja Luka.

To ensure a smooth and professional execution of the Championship, a dedicated event management team will be appointed, covering all operational, technical, and logistical aspects of the competition. Their mission will be to provide the highest level of organization and hospitality for all participating delegations.

Below you can find the official contact information of the Local Organizing Committee and the ESSF headquarters. These contacts will be available to support delegations, resolve logistical matters, and provide any additional information throughout the Championship.



European School Sport Federation

Contact: Gorica Bilak-Moconja, ESSF Sports Director

Email – info@europeanschoolsport.com



Local Organising Committee (LOC)

Contact: Republic of Srpska School Sport Federation

Office - skolskisportsrpske@gmail.com



Operations Coordinator

Contact: Gorica Bilak-Moconja

Phone/WhatsApp: [+387\(0\)65985770](tel:+387065985770)

➤ PROVISIONAL PROGRAM

9 MAY 2026	ARRIVAL (OPTIONAL) ACCREDITATION
10 MAY 2026	ARRIVAL (MANDATORY) ACCREDITATION TECHNICAL MEETING
11 MAY 2026	COMPETITION OPENING CEREMONY
12 MAY 2026	COMPETITION CULTURAL DAY NATIONS NIGHT
13 MAY 2026	COMPETITION CHARITY GALA DINNER
14 MAY 2026	COMPETITION NON-SPORT ACTIVITIES
15 MAY 2026	COMPETITION AWARD CEREMONY / FAREWELL PARTY
16 MAY 2026	 DEPARTURE

Please note that the current daily program is provisional and subject to change. The detailed and updated schedule will be provided in Bulletin 2 and in the Official Handbook of Competition.



➤ NON-SPORT ACTIVITIES

OPENING CEREMONY

Information regarding the Opening Ceremony will be provided in **Bulletin 2**.



CULTURAL DAY

Information regarding the Cultural Day will be provided in **Bulletin 2**.



NATION'S NIGHT

Information regarding the Nations Night will be provided in **Bulletin 2**.



GALA DINNER

Information regarding the Gala Dinner will be provided in **Bulletin 2**.



CLOSING CEREMONY

Information regarding the Closing Ceremony will be provided in **Bulletin 2**.

➤ ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation details will be published in **Bulletin 2**, which will include full information about hotels, room types, and prices. The accommodation standard will be in line with ESSF event requirements, ensuring comfort and quality for all participants. A range of hotels with 3, 4, and 5 stars will be available, allowing each delegation to choose the option that best suits their preferences and budget. All selected hotels will provide convenient access to competition venues and other event facilities.



➤ TRAVELLING AND VISA

PORT OF ENTRY

The official ports of entry for participants arriving by air are **Banja Luka International Airport** and **Sarajevo International Airport**.

Banja Luka Airport is located about 18 km from the accommodation, while Sarajevo Airport is approximately 190 km away.

The Local Organizing Committee (LOC) will organize transportation for all delegations arriving at these airports, providing transfers directly to the official accommodation in Banja Luka.



TRAVELING

Travel to the official port of entry is to be arranged and financed individually by each participating delegation. Delegations are expected to arrive on 10 May 2026 and depart on 16 May 2026. Any extended stay, either before or after the official dates of the event, is the sole responsibility of the delegation concerned and will not be covered or arranged by the Local Organizing Committee (LOC). To ensure smooth logistics, the LOC will provide organized transportation from the official port of entry to the designated accommodation in Banja Luka, as well as return transfers at the end of the event.



VISA

Each participating delegation is required to check whether a visa is needed to enter Bosnia and Herzegovina. Please contact the related Embassy or Consulate to consult the visa application procedure.

More information you can find following next link:

https://www.mvp.gov.ba/konzularne_informacije/vize/default.aspx

For any request for invitation letters or any queries over VISA, please contact: skolskisportsrpske@gmail.com



INSURANCE

Each participating delegation is required to provide insurance for each member of its delegation. At a minimum, the insurance is to cover civil liability, material damage and medical costs.



➤ COMPOSITION OF THE DELEGATION

Each delegation shall consists of:

- 1. Head of delegation - mandatory;**
- 2. Student athletes - mandatory;**
- 3. Team official(s)**
 - a. Coaches - mandatory;**
 - b. Other team officials - optional;**
- 4. Additional adults - optional**

NOTE:

Any other person not specified during registration or exceeding the quotas specified in this document will not be considered part of the official delegation and will not be accredited by the LOC.

HEAD OF DELEGATION

There is a mandatory number of one (1) head of delegation per register delegation.

- The head of delegation shall be the sole intermediary between the delegation and the Local Organising Committee, the ESSF Delegate.
- He/she may not combine the function with any other official role (i.e., coach, referee, etc.).

STUDENT ATHLETES

Each team shall be composed of minimum eight (8) to maximum twelve (12) student athletes.

The following students may take part in the ESSF events as part of the team :

- The students are enrolled as full-time students at a school in the country in which they represent.
- The student-athletes must be attending schools that provide general education and/or vocational education incorporating segments of general education.
- Only the students registered on the team list that was handed in at accreditation are authorized to take part in this competition.

The following are not eligible to participate:

- Attendees of vocational schools only attend school as a complement to their vocational training and are not full-time students with a segment of general education.
- Students enrolled at schools that provide sports training without any general education.

TEAM OFFICIALS (COACHES AND OTHER TEAM OFFICIALS)

COACHES

- Each team, shall be register a minimum of one (1) and a maximum of two (2) coaches.
- The coach trains and guides the team in the competition.

OTHER TEAM OFFICIALS

- Each team can enter (optional) maximum2 other team officials.
- The function of each other team officials must be specified during the registration process(Doctor, Physiotherapist, Trainer, Statistician, Team manager etc.).

➤ COMPOSITION OF THE DELEGATION

FIELD OF PLAY OFFICIALS

- There is a mandatory of 1 referee per team.
- The Field of play officials cannot combine their position with other positions, such as heads of delegation, team officials, or additional adults. Field of play officials (referees) must accept the possibility they might be in the referee or assistant referee position at the event matches.
- Referees are full members of the delegations and are subject to the same conditions with the other delegation members.
- Referees have to be International licensed or be at the highest National level. Delegations must provide certificates for the field of play officials during the registration process.
- Failure to provide the required number of Field of play officials (referees) will lead to a fine of 600 EUR per referee payable to the organizer (100 EUR per day of event).

ADDITIONAL ADULTS

- Delegations can register unlimited number of additional adults.
- The function of each additional adult must be specified during the registration process (interpreter, security personnel, ministry representative, media, parents, etc.).

PARTICIPANTS OBLIGATIONS

- Each participant is required to be present throughout the whole duration of the event.
- Each participant is obliged to take part also in all of the non-sport activities.
- Each team undertakes to compete against all other participating teams.
- Each participant undertakes to compete against all other participants.
- The absence of any member of a participating team from any part of the entire sport program, opening, prize-giving and closing ceremonies and sociocultural program may result in the team being excluded from the results.



Participants according to number of registered teams						
EXAMPLE						
Head of Delegation	Student Athletes	Team Officials		Referees	Additional Adults	Total
		Coaches	Other team officials			
(min - max)	(min - max)	(min - max)	(min - max)	(min - max)	(example)	(min - max)
1	10-12	1 - 2	0 - 2	1	0 - 2	13-20
1	20-24	2 - 4	0 - 4	2	0 - 2	25-37
1	30-36	3 - 4	0 - 6	3	0 - 4	37-56
1	40-48	4 - 8	0 - 8	4	0 - 4	49-73



➤ ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

CURRENCY

- Convertible Mark (BAM)

Exchange rate: 1 euro (EUR) $\approx$ 1.96 convertible marks (BAM)

TIME ZONE

- Central European Summer Time (CEST), UTC+2

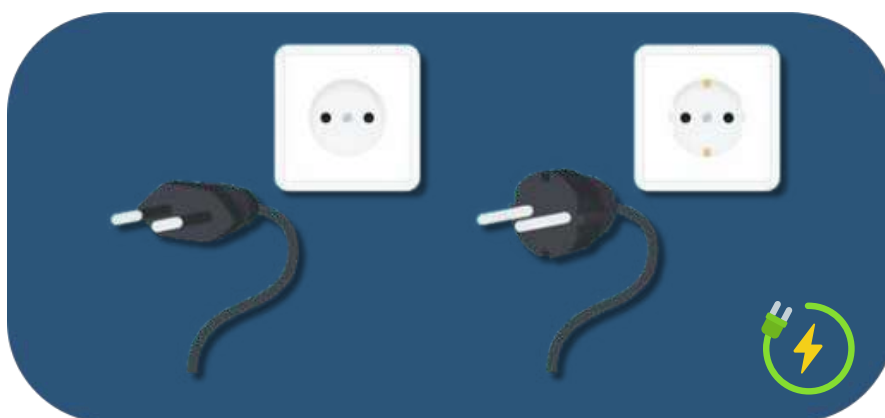
WEATHER IN BANJA LUKA



POWER PLUG

For Banja Luka there are two associated plug types, types C and F.

- Plug type C is the plug which has two round pins, and plug type F is the plug which has two round pins with two earth clips on the side.
- Banja Luka operates on a 230V supply voltage and 50Hz.



➤ ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

CREDIT CARDS

All major credit cards are accepted.

VACCINES

There are no mandatory vaccines specifically required for travel to Banja Luka - Republic of Srpska for travelers.

LOCAL SIM CARDS

Major Mobile Operators in Banja Luka:

- m:tel (Telekom Srpske)
- BH Telecom

Price: All operators are in the price range from 5eur to 15eur depending on the plan Where to Buy: Operator stores, airports, kiosks, supermarkets.

WATER

Tap water is drinkable

EXCHANGE OFFICE

Participants arriving for the competition can exchange foreign currency at several official exchange offices located in the city. We recommend using authorized exchange services to ensure fair rates and avoid potential issues.

Most exchange offices are open from 08:00 to 20:00, including weekends. Some banks also offer currency exchange services during their working hours.

SAFETY

Banja Luka is a safe and welcoming destination for visitors. The city enjoys a relaxed atmosphere, and violent crime is extremely rare. Tourists can move freely and comfortably throughout both urban and rural areas. Every year, Banja Luka attracts numerous international visitors who come to enjoy its sports events, rich culture, delicious cuisine, and vibrant entertainment scene. Local residents are known for their hospitality and friendliness, making all guests feel at home.

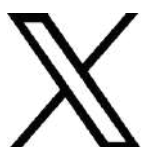
➤ COMMUNICATION

GET IN TOUCH WITH ESSF!

Show us how your country/region and teams are getting ready for the event and send us your teams pictures, preparation, and videos.



@ESSFsports



@ESSFsports



@ESSFsports



@essfsports



/essfsports



@essfsports

Don't forget to tag and follow ESSF social media accounts and use the hashtag of the event:

#essfsports #essfFUTSALU15 #ESSFBanjaLuka2026

Other communication channels

- **European School Sport Federation**

www.europeanschoolsport.com

- **Republic of Srpska School Sport Federation**

<http://www.skolskisportsrpske.com>

*Republic of Srpska
School Sport Federation*

SCAN
ME!



SPORT



➤ COMPETITION VENUE

Below is an overview of the sports halls that will be used for the competition. **Bulletin 2** will provide the confirmed schedule, specifying which halls will host the boys' events and which will host the girls' events.



**SPORTS HALL
BORIK**



**SPORTS HALL
LAKTAŠI**



**SPORTS HALL
CENTAR**



**SPORTS HALL
FARMAPROM**

➤ SPORT SPECIFICS

EVENT FORMAT

Teams Competition

TEAM FORMAT

School Teams

GENDER CATEGORY

Boys / Girls

AGE CATEGORY

U18: Students aged 16, 17, and 18 on the last day of the competition in 2026 (students born in 2010, 2009, 2008, 2007). Students born in 2007 must be 18 years old on the last day of the competition.



TEAM COMPOSITION

School Team: A team formed by student-athletes enrolled in the same school and representing the same country.

MAXIMUM TEAMS PER DELEGATION

Each delegation may enter more than one team per gender category.

PARTICIPATION

This event is open for participation to:

- **ESSF Members:** School sport entities recognized by the ESSF General Assembly and in compliance with their rights and obligations.
- **Non-ESSF Members:** The highest institution responsible for school sport in countries not yet members of ESSF.
- **Directly Applying Schools (DAS):** Schools recognized by their National School Sport Federation or other legal entities. Directly applying schools can either be: a school affiliated and registered through an ESSF member, or a school affiliated and registered through a non-ESSF member

FAIR PLAY

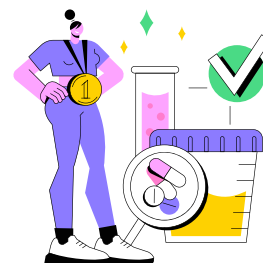
The ESSF promotes fair play as a core value at all its events. Respect for opponents, referees, and the rules of the game is expected from all participants. At the conclusion of the tournament, a Fair Play Trophy will be awarded to the team demonstrating the highest standards of sportsmanship.



ANTI-DOPING

The ESSF strongly promotes clean sport as one of the core values of its events. Doping control may be conducted in accordance with the World Anti-Doping Code and the International Standards for Testing and Investigations (ISTI), taking into consideration the age category and the risk assessment of the sport.

The ESSF also supports preventive education initiatives aimed at raising awareness among young athletes about the risks and consequences of doping, emphasizing fair play and integrity as essential principles of sport.



MEDICAL SERVICES

At all ESSF events, medical services will be present in each hall where matches are played. The Local Organizing Committee will provide full support in this regard and, if necessary, will also assist teams in connecting with medical services outside the venues.



➤ TECHNICAL RULES

GAME RULES



All matches are played in accordance with FIFA Futsal Laws of the Game and ESSF regulations.

- Match duration: 2 × 20 minutes of effective play, with a 10-minute halftime break.
- Timeouts: Each team may request one 1-minute timeout per half.
- Team composition: 5 players on the field (including the goalkeeper), and up to 12 players in total per team.
- Substitutions: Unlimited flying substitutions are allowed during the match.
- Ball: Size 4 futsal ball (FIFA Quality Pro, FIFA Quality, or IMS standard).
- Accumulated fouls: From the 5th team foul in each half, a direct free kick is awarded to the opponent.
- Points system: Win = 3 points, Draw = 1 point, Loss = 0 points (during group stage).
- Extra time: In knockout matches ending in a draw, two extra periods of 3 minutes are played.
- Penalty shootout: If still tied after extra time, penalty kicks decide the winner.
- Equipment: Players must wear shin guards and numbered shirts (1–99).
- Late arrival: Teams arriving more than 15 minutes after the scheduled start automatically lose 0–3.



SPECIAL REGULATIONS

- Uniforms: Each team must wear matching uniforms with clearly visible numbers on both the front and back.
- Bench & Coaching Staff: Each team is allowed up to 12 players, with a maximum of 3 coaching staff members on the bench.
- Protests & Disputes: Any protest must be submitted in writing within 30 minutes after the match to the competition committee.
- Any serious unsportsmanlike behavior (such as offensive language or aggression) results in an immediate ejection and possible suspension from the next match.

➤ DISCIPLINARY MANAGEMENT

EVENT DISCIPLINARY COMMISSION



The ESSF Event Disciplinary Commission shall deal with all incidents and all violations of the ESSF Statutes, Sports Policy, ESSF Handbook, Rules, and any other ESSF document linked to the ESSF events, as well as with misbehavior not directly related to the sports technical regulations during an ESSF event.

The Event Disciplinary Commission is composed of the ESSF Delegate, the National Federation Delegate and the LOC President.

APPEAL JURY



The ESSF Appeal Jury shall deal with all protests of a technical sporting nature during the competition.

The Appeal Jury is composed of the President of the Technical Commission, one representative of the Local Organising Committee, and the Head of the Field of Play Officials.

In each sports hall where matches are played, an official appeal form will be available at the scorer's table. Any team wishing to file a protest concerning refereeing or technical matters must complete the form, which shall be signed either by the coach or the Head of Delegation and submitted to the scorer's table. The protest will then be forwarded to the Appeal Jury for review.

A protest fee of 50 EUR is to be paid to the Local Organising Committee at the moment of submission. In case the protest is accepted, the fee will be refunded.

REGISTRATION & PAYMENT



➤ REGISTRATION

HOW TO REGISTER

All members/schools who intend to participate in the event should fill in a registration form, which can be found enclosed to Bulletin 1. All application to be sent to the email: info@europeanschoolsport.com

The registration process is divided into 2 phases:

November 05. 2025, Opening of registration phase 1

February 05. 2026, Closing of sign up Phase 1

February 05. 2026, Payment of deposit deadline

February 05. 2026, Opening of registration phase 2

March 05. 2026, Closing of registration Phase 2

April 05. 2026, Payment of final balance deadline

- *It is also possible to make the payment upon arrival, provided that it is agreed in advance and approved by the LOC*

PHASE 1

November 05, 2025 - February 05, 2026

During registration phase 1 registering delegations shall indicate their intention of participating, the number of teams per category that they wish to enter, and an exact number of participants per team. All ESSF members and Non – ESSF members are expected to pay the deposits for their teams or reach an agreement with the ESSF by February 05, 2026.

PHASE 2

February 05, 2026 - March 05 2026

During registration phase 2, countries are expected to enter the exact detailed information for each participant (name, date of birth, gender, photo, dietary requirements). In addition, submitting the travel plan is required. Registration form 2 will be sent on delegation e-mail.



Registration Deadlines Summary

November 05, 2025	Opening of registration phase 1
February 05, 2026 (23:59 CET) *deposit payment	Closing of registration phase 1
February 05, 2026	Opening of registration phase 2
March 05, 2026 (23:59 CET)	Closing of registration phase 2
April 05, 2026 (23:59 CET)	Payment of final balance deadline



➤ FINANCIAL CONDITIONS

To participate, each Delegation is required to make two (2) payments:

1. Deposit payment
2. Balance fee payment

DEPOSIT PAYMENT

Along with the entry and in order to have access to registration phase 2, participating country will need to pay a deposit of **100€** per participant entered in Phase 1.

Please note that the participation to the event is granted only by the deposit payment.

Deadline of deposit payment: February 05, 2026 (23:59 CET)

The sum will be deducted from the total participation cost.

The deposit must be sent as a single payment for the whole delegation by the organisation responsible for school sport (federation, trust, ministry...).

- The deposit is non-refundable in the event of non-participation.
- Waivers to the payment of the deposit, for whatever reasons, are to be discussed with the ESSF office and to be agreed upon before the deposit payment deadlines.

The deposit for the registered teams per category shall be paid by February 05, 2026 (23:59 CET)

If the deposit is not paid within the given deadline, the registrations will not be considered valid and the team will be automatically deleted.

Deposit shall be paid by bank transfer to the to the following account (all bank charges are to be met by the participating country):

Name of the bank: ATOS BANK AD BANJA LUKA

Address of the bank: Jevrejska 71, Banja Luka,
REPUBLIC OF SRPSKA/BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

BIC (Swift Code) : SABRBA2B, ATOS BANK AD BANJA LUKA

Payee/holder: SAVEZ ZA ŠKOLSKI SPORT REPUBLIKE SRPSKE, Mladena
Stojanovića bb, 78 000 Banja Luka, Republic of Srpska, Bosnia and Herzegovina

IBAN: BA395672410001057260

Reference: ESSF Futsal 2026 registration fee + name of participating country-team



BALANCE FEE PAYMENT

The balance fee payment is the participation fee minus the deposit which has already been paid. The balance fee payment is to be paid before **April 05, 2026 (23:59 CET)**, or upon arrival if agreed in advance and approved by the LOC.

PARTICIPATION FEE

The participation fee covers full board accommodation for the duration of the event plus competition, cultural program activities and all local transport from the arrival to the official port of entry to the departure of the team.

The participation fee is composed of:

Accommodation Rates by night:

- 3* hotel - 60€ night/delegation member
- 4* hotel - 80€ night/delegation member
- 5* hotel - 100€ night/delegation member



ESSF levy:

- 40€ per delegation member (ESSF member)
- 100€ per delegation member (non ESSF member)

RATES BY NIGHT

Team member	Occupancy	3* hotel	4* hotel	5* hotel
Head of Delegation	Single occupancy	60€	80€	100€
Coach	Double occupancy	60€	80€	100€
	Single occupancy	120€	160€	200€
Athlete	2-4 bedded rooms	60€	80€	100€
Additional adult	Double occupancy	60€	80€	100€
	Single occupancy	120€	160€	200€
Other Team official	Double occupancy	60€	80€	100€
	Single occupancy	120€	160€	200€
Field of Play official	Double occupancy	60€	80€	100€
	Single occupancy	120€	160€	200€

The table below shows an overview of the minimum participation fee per participant in 3* hotel

No. Nights		Rate by night (min)		ESSF levy	Total (minimum/participant)
6	x	60€	+	40€	400€

The table below shows an overview of the minimum participation fee per participant in 4* hotel

No. Nights		Rate by night (min)		ESSF levy	Total (minimum/participant)
6	x	80€	+	40€	520 €

The table below shows an overview of the minimum participation fee per participant in 5* hotel

No. Nights		Rate by night (min)		ESSF levy	Total (minimum/participant)
5	x	100€	+	40€	640 €

CHARITY GALA DINNER

More information on the Gala dinner will be given in Bulletin 2. The participation to the gala dinner will be declared over the registration process Phase 2. The balance fee payment is to be paid before the start of the event to the following LOC account (all bank charges are to be met by the participating country).



ГРАД БАЊА ЛУКА
CITY OF BANJA LUKA



SEE YOU IN BANJA LUKA

FOR A ONCE IN A LIFETIME EXPERIENCE



10 – 16 MAY 2026