



ESSF 2026 EUROPEAN OPEN SCHOOL CHAMPIONSHIP U15 VOLLEYBALL MEN & WOMEN

BULLETIN 1

20 - 26 APRIL 2026

NORTH MACEDONIA - SKOPJE





TABLE OF CONTENT



PART 1

• EVENT GENERAL

- INTRODUCTION
- WELCOME TO SKOPJE
- ABOUT SKOPJE
- EVENT MANAGEMENT
- PROVISIONAL PROGRAM
- NON-SPORT ACTIVITIES
- ACCOMODATION
- TRAVELING & VISA
- COMPOSITION OF THE DELEGATION
- ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
- COMMUNICATION

PART 2

• SPORT

- COMPETITION VENUE
- SPORT SPECIFICS
- TECHNICAL RULES
- DISCIPLINARY MANAGEMENT

PART 3

• REGISTRATION & PAYMENT

- REGISTRATION
- FINANCIAL CONDITIONS



EVENT GENERAL



➤ INTRODUCTION

The European School Sport Federation (ESSF) has, over the past years, established itself as a strong and reliable platform for school sport across Europe. With a clear vision and growing network, ESSF continues to connect young athletes, schools, and teachers through high-level competitions that celebrate both sporting excellence and educational values.

The ESSF European Open School Championship – Volleyball U15, to be held in Skopje, North Macedonia, from 20–26 April 2026, stands as another milestone in this mission. Gathering school teams from all over Europe, the Championship will showcase the next generation of volleyball talents, while at the same time promoting fair play, inclusivity, and cultural exchange.

More than just a tournament, this event is an opportunity for young athletes to challenge themselves, to learn, and to create friendships that cross borders. It is also a stage where schools and communities proudly represent their countries, contributing to the growth of European school sport.

Together, we continue to build a movement that strengthens the bond between sport and education. We look forward to welcoming you to Skopje in April 2026, for a unique celebration of volleyball, teamwork, and unity in the spirit of ESSF.

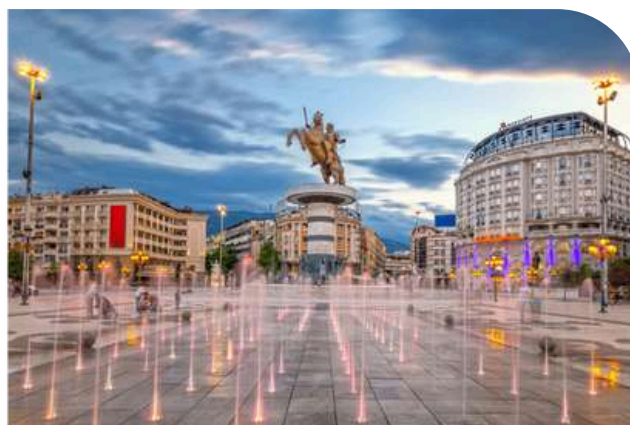


➤ WELCOME TO SKOPJE



Discover Skopje – Where Tradition Meets Modern Life

Skopje, the vibrant capital of North Macedonia, is a city of contrasts that will surprise every visitor. Nestled in the scenic Vardar Valley and surrounded by mountains, it combines rich history with a lively modern spirit. Wander through the narrow cobbled streets of the Old Bazaar, one of the oldest marketplaces in the Balkans, where centuries of Ottoman heritage come alive. Cross the iconic Stone Bridge and find yourself in the bustling city center, filled with grand squares, lively cafés, and striking monuments. From the impressive Kale Fortress overlooking the city, to the tranquil Matka Canyon just a short drive away, Skopje offers culture, adventure, and relaxation in one unique destination. With warm hospitality, delicious local cuisine, and a dynamic blend of East and West, Skopje is a city that will leave lasting memories.



➤ ABOUT SKOPJE



THE FORTRESS KALE

The Skopje fort, or Kale, is located on a strategic point of the Balkans. In the millennia of its existence, it has under-gone many changes much was built, conquered and then destroyed. The old fort dominates over the valley and it offers the best view of the new part of the city that stretches out on the right bank of the Vardar River.



THE OLD SKOPJE BAZAAR

Its treasures end with the bustle of the Bit-Pazar. It has been like this for nine centuries - a sea of market stalls and merchandise that passes from hand to hand, face to face. The market place has changed, but it still remains a source of inspiration for many artists and a major tourist attraction.

THE STONE BRIDGE

Is one of the oldest bridges in our country. There is evidence showing the bridge was built in the 6th century, and that the present Stone Bridge was built on its foundations in the first half of 15th century, during Sultan Murat. The bridge is built of well-done stone blocks and its massive construction rests on firm piers supporting arching spans.



➤ EVENT MANAGEMENT

The ESSF 2026 European Open School Championship **Volleyball U15** will be organized through the close cooperation of the European School Sport Federation (ESSF) and the Macedonian School Sport Federation, which will serve as the Local Organizing Committee (LOC) in Skopje, North Macedonia.

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: Macedonian School Sport Federation

Office - contact@fusmak.org.mk



Operations Coordinator

Contact: Gligor Hristov

Email: gligor.hristov@fusmak.org.mk

➤ PROVISIONAL PROGRAM

19 APRIL 2026	ARRIVAL (OPTIONAL) ACCREDITATION
20 APRIL 2026	ARRIVAL (MANDATORY) ACCREDITATION TECHNICAL MEETING
21 APRIL 2026	COMPETITION OPENING CEREMONY
22 APRIL 2026	COMPETITION NON SPORT ACTIVITIES
23 APRIL 2026	COMPETITION NON SPORT ACTIVITIES
24 APRIL 2026	COMPETITION NON SPORT ACTIVITIES
25 APRIL 2026	CULTURAL DAY NATIONS NIGHT AWARD CEREMONY / FAREWELL PARTY
26 APRIL 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 the **Bulletin 2**.
Accommodation standard will be up to level for ESSF events.



➤ TRAVELLING AND VISA

PORT OF ENTRY

The official port of entry for the European Open School Championship Volleyball U15 2026 is [Skopje International Airport \(SKP\)](#), the main international airport of North Macedonia. Located about 23 kilometers from the center of Skopje, the airport serves as the country's primary international gateway and offers direct connections with several major European destinations.



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 20 April 2026 and depart on 25 April 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 Skopje, 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 North Macedonia. Please contact the related Embassy or Consulate to consult the visa application procedure.

More information you can find following next link:

<https://mfa.gov.mk/en-GB/konzularni-uslugi/stranski-drzavjani>

For any request for invitation letters or any queries over VISA, please contact: contact@fusmak.org.mk



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 persone 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 FIVB 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 organiser (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 programme, opening, prize-giving and closing ceremonies and sociocultural programme 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

Macedonian denars (MKD)

- Exchange rate: 1 euro (EUR) $\approx$ 61.75 Macedonian denars (MKD)

TIME ZONE

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

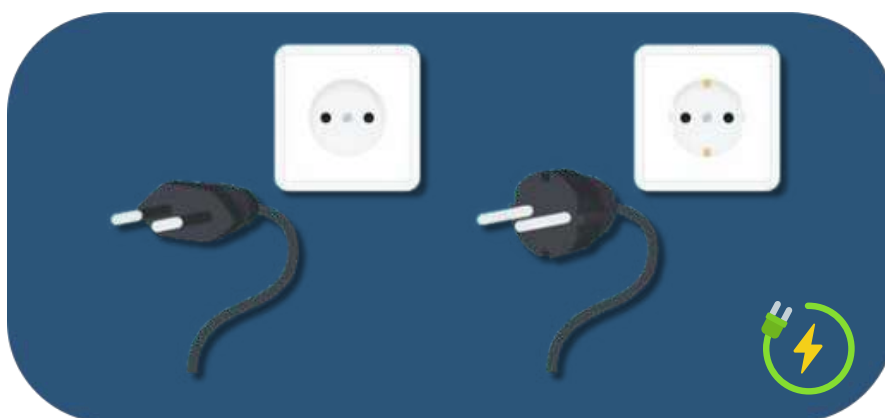
WEATHER IN NORTH MACEDONIA - SKOPJE



POWER PLUG

For North Macedonia 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.
- North Macedonia 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 North Macedonia for travelers.

LOCAL SIM CARDS

Major Mobile Operators in North Macedonia:

- Macedonian Telekom (T-Mobile)
- A1 Macedonia
- MTEL
- Lycamobile

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

North Macedonia is generally a safe country for travelers. Violent crime is rare, and tourists can move freely in cities and rural areas. However, as in any destination, it's good to stay cautious and aware of your surroundings.

➤ 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 #ESSFESCVOLLEYBALLU15 #ESSFSKOPJE2026

Other communication channels

ESSF Website: www.europeanschoolsport.com



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.



➤ SPORT SPECIFICS

EVENT FORMAT

Teams Competition

TEAM FORMAT

School Teams

GENDER CATEGORY

Boys / Girls



AGE CATEGORY

U15: Students aged 13, 14, and 15 on the last day of the competition in 2026 (students born in 2013, 2012, 2011, 2010). Students born in 2010 must be 15 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

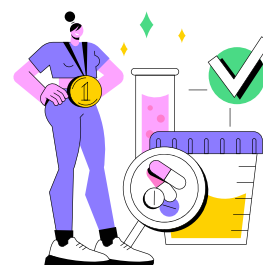
The ESSF promotes fair play as a core value at all its events. Respect for opponents, referees, and the rules of the game is expected from all participants. At the conclusion of the tournament, a Fair Play Trophy will be awarded to the team demonstrating the highest standards of sportsmanship.



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 Organising 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



- Each match is played in a best-of-three sets format.
- Set scoring: The first two sets are played to 25 points, with a minimum two-point advantage required to win. If the score is tied at 24-24, play continues until a team achieves a two-point lead.
- Decisive set: If the match reaches a third set, it is played to 15 points, with the same two-point advantage rule.
- Warm-up time: 15 minutes before the start of the match.
- Substitutions: Each team is allowed six substitutions per set. Players may re-enter only once per set.
- Timeouts: Each team is allowed two timeouts per set.
- Rotation & Service: Teams must follow a rotational order, and a fault will be called if a player serves out of turn.
- Net violations: Contact with the net during play is a fault, except if incidental and does not affect the play.
- Libero player: Each team may designate a libero, who can only play in the back row and cannot serve, attack, or block.

SPECIAL REGULATIONS



- Uniforms: Each team must wear matching uniforms with clearly visible numbers on both the front and back. The libero must wear a contrasting jersey color.
- 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.
- Disciplinary Actions: Two yellow cards in a match result in a red card, meaning loss of a point for the team.
- A red card without a prior yellow results in a player being sent off for the set but not the match.
- 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:

October 20, 2025 Opening of registration phase 1

January 20, 2026 Closing of sign up Phase 1

January 20, 2026 Payment of deposit deadline

January 20, 2026 Opening of registration phase 2

February 20 2026 Closing of registration Phase 2

March 20, 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

October 20, 2025 - January 20, 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 January 20, 2026.

PHASE 2

January 20, 2026 - February 20 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

October 20, 2025	Opening of registration phase 1
January 20, 2026 (23:59 CET) *deposit payment	Closing of registration phase 1
January 20, 2026	Opening of registration phase 2
February 20, 2026 (23:59 CET)	Closing of registration phase 2



➤ 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: **January 20, 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.

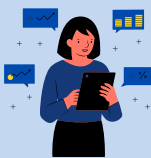
The deposit for the registered teams per category shall be paid by **January 20, 2026 (23:59 CET)**

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: Komercijalna banka AD Skopje

Address of the bank: Vasil Iljoski br. 3, 1000 Skopje N. Macedonia



BIC (Swift Code) : KOBSMK2X

Payee/holder: FUSM SKOPJE

IBAN: MK07 3007 0100 2126 207

Reference: ESSF ESC Volleyball 2026 (Name of country - delegation)

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 **March 20, 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).

SEE YOU IN SKOPJE

FOR A ONCE IN A LIFETIME EXPERIENCE



20 - 26 APRIL 2026