

EDF Scheduling Regulations

VERSION 2.1 – 2025-10-02



1. Competition Formats

a. Premise

These are the official regulations for an EDF Tournament.

They feature both strict requirements to be met and some general guidelines or range of options to help with the scheduling. EDF is responsible for determining the format (number of groups and their composition, how to advance, pairings, knockout and positioning matches...) of every EDF competition, in accordance with the hosts and their venue availability.

EDF can make exceptions and adjustments to a tournament structure in order to best adapt to each event's circumstances such as limited time and courts, especially in shorter competitions like Regional or Junior Championships.

Examples of adjustments to reduce timings include, but are not limited to: changing the number of groups and their progression; proceeding with two tables of 4 teams instead of quarterfinals; having teams play only one match after the quarterfinals based on their group stage performance; reduce positioning matches for lower positions.

b. Number of groups

General EDF rules allow:

- 1 Group, up until 7 teams;
- 2 Groups, only with 8 to 14 teams;
- 3 Groups, only with 9 to 15 teams (to be carefully considered, due to the odd nature of a 3-groups format);
- 4 Groups, only with 12 teams or more, and as mandatory with 16 to 24 teams; -
- 5 Groups, when having 25 teams or more

The format can be adjusted when deemed necessary for specific event circumstances. **c. Group Stage**

In the group phase of a competition, or in any subsequent round robin for positioning, every team plays once against all the opponents in their group. A match always awards 2 points: 2 for the winner and 0 for the loser, or 1-1 in case of a draw. These points determine the ranking of teams in their group.

d. Knockout Phase Formats

After the group stages, a certain number of teams progress to the knockout phase, a phase where all of them are still able to finish in 1st place.

General EDF Rules require to proceed structuring the knockout phase with the following brackets, unless the format needs to be reduced for a tighter schedule:

- Semifinals only, with 8 teams or less;
- 6-teams Playoffs, with 6, 9 or 10 teams;
- Quarterfinals, with 11 to 19 teams (*or as alternative with 8 teams exactly*); -
- Round of 16, with 20 teams or more

e. Knockout Phase Details

1. SEMIFINALS

1.1. 1-Group scenario

Semi-finals are paired based on group stage positions: 1st vs 4th and 2nd vs 3rd. The two losers play for 3rd place, the two winners play for 1st place.

1.2. 2-Groups scenario

Semi-finals are paired based on group stage positions: 1A vs 2B and 1B vs 2A. The two losers play for 3rd place, the two winners play for 1st place.

2. 6-TEAMS PLAYOFFS

2.1. 2-Groups scenario

Playoffs are paired 2A-3B and 3A-2B. The two losers play for 5th place.

Semifinals are: 1A vs the winner of 3A-2B, and 1B vs the winner of 2A-3B. The two losers play for 3rd place, the two winners play for 1st place.

2.2. 3-Groups scenario

After the group stage, the 6 teams involved are paired following rule 2.c. The two playoff losers play for 5th place, the two winners advance to semifinals. The two semifinals losers play for 3rd place, the two winners play for 1st place.

3. QUARTERFINALS

3.1. 2-Groups scenario

Quarterfinals are paired 1A - 4B (Q1), 2A - 3B (Q2), 3A - 2B (Q3), 4A - 1B (Q4). In the semi-finals, quarterfinals winners are paired Q1Q3 and Q2Q4. The two losers play for 3rd, the two winners play for 1st.

The quarterfinals losers are paired as above: Q1Q3 and Q2Q4. The two losers play for 7th, the two winners play for 5th.

3.2. 3-Groups scenario

After the group stage, the 8 teams involved are paired following rule 2.c. In the semifinals, quarterfinals winners are paired Q1Q4 and Q2Q3, where: Q1 = game including the best 1st-place-finisher, Q2 = game including the second-best 1st-place-finisher, Q3 = game including the third-best 1st-place-finisher, Q4 = game including the two 2nd-place finisher. The two losers play for 3rd, the two winners play for 1st.

The quarterfinals losers are paired as above: Q1Q4 and Q2Q3. The two losers play for 7th, the two winners play for 5th.

3.3. 4-Groups scenario

Quarterfinals are paired 1A - 2B (Q1), 1B - 2A (Q2), 1C - 2D (Q3), 1D - 2C (Q4). In the semi-finals, quarterfinals winners are paired Q1Q3 and Q2Q4. The two losers play for 3rd, the two winners play for 1st.

The quarterfinals losers are paired as above: Q1Q3 and Q2Q4. The two losers play for 7th, the two winners play for 5th.

4. ROUND OF 16

4.1. 4-Groups scenario

In the Round of 16, teams are paired:

1A - 4B (R1), 2A - 3B (R2), 2B - 3A (R3), 1B - 4A (R4),
1C - 4D (R5), 2C - 3D (R6), 2D - 3C (R7), 1D - 4C (R8)

In the quarterfinals, Round of 16 winners are paired:

R1R6 (Q1), R2R8 (Q2), R4R7 (Q3), R3R5 (Q4)

In the semi-finals, quarterfinals winners are paired Q1Q3 and Q2Q4

The two losers play for 3rd, the two winners play for 1st

The quarterfinals losers are paired as above: Q1Q3 and Q2Q4

The two losers play for 7th, the two winners play for 5th

The 8 Round of 16 losers are paired in a format which matches the

winners' quarterfinals: R1R6 (Q1), R2R8 (Q2), R4R7 (Q3), R3R5 (Q4)

Winners table with semifinals Q1Q3, Q2Q4; losers play for 11th, winners for 9th

Losers table with semifinals Q1Q3, Q2Q4; losers play for 15th, winners for 13th

f. Positioning games

Positioning games are used to determine the placement of teams who have not progressed to the knockout stage, thus creating a final ranking from first to last. What follows are guidelines on how to structure the positioning games according to the number of teams: they can be combined to create the best format based on how many teams are left out of the knockout stage, with the goal to try and give every team the chance to still play after the group stage, possibly at least two games. This however depends on the competition format and can be reduced if necessary to adjust to a tighter schedule.

How any of the following format works can be desumed by reading the details in point e) along with Rule 2.c on pairing adjustments

Positioning games based on number of teams left out of the knockout stage:

1 Team: No more matches (try to avoid this if possible)

2 Teams: One match between them (if possible, try to make teams advance differently so to have at least 3 teams left out who play two matches each)

3 Teams: Round Robin

4 Teams: Two playoffs, losers final and winners final (*point e.1 + Rule 2.c if needed*)

5 Teams: *Use 2 Teams + 3 Teams*

6 Teams: 6-Teams Playoffs (*point e.2 + Rule 2.c if needed*)

or Use 3 Teams + 3 Teams

or Use 4 Teams + 2 Teams

7 Teams: *Use 4 Teams + 3 Teams*

8 Teams: *Use 4 Teams + 4 Teams*

9 Teams: *Use 6 Teams + 3 Teams*

10 Teams: *Use 6 Teams + 4 Teams*

or Use 4 Teams + 4 Teams + 2 Teams

11 Teams: *Use 4 Teams + 4 Teams + 3 Teams*

or Use 6 Teams + 3 Teams + 2 Teams

2. Additional Rules

a. Comparing teams in the same group

When multiple teams in the same group are tied in points, to determine their ranking they have to be compared following this order:

COMPARING 2 TEAMS	COMPARING 3 OR MORE TEAMS*
1. Head to head	1. Points <i>(in the new ranking)</i>
2. Match wins	2. Match wins <i>(in the new ranking)</i>
3. Set difference	3. Set difference <i>(in the new ranking)</i>
4. Sets won	4. Sets won <i>(in the new ranking)</i>
5. Short playoff game, if time allows it	5. Set difference <i>(overall)</i>
6. Draw	6. Sets won <i>(overall)</i>
	7. Short playoff round robin, if time allows it
	8. Draw

** If more than two teams are tied, a new ranking is to be created first, featuring only the results of the matches involving the teams that needs to be compared*

b. Comparing teams in different groups

Oftentimes it might be necessary to compare teams who finished in the same position in different groups. This happens especially in a 3-groups competition, but also in general anytime a pairing involves a “*best/worst X-placed team*”.

Shall there be groups with a higher number of teams, it is first of all important to compare teams considering an equal number of games: in the bigger groups, the results of the teams involved in the comparison against the last placed team in their group will be deducted.

Once this is done (not necessary if all groups already had the same number of teams), teams have to be compared following this order:

1. Points
2. Match wins
3. Set difference
4. Sets won
5. Short playoff round robin, if time allows it
6. Draw

c. Avoiding repetitions of group stage matches

Most frequently, after the group stage teams are automatically paired for their next matches based on their group and position.

It might however happen (usually because of a 3-groups format, but not only) that this pairing is not automatic, as it previously requires to compare teams who ended in the same position in different groups in order to establish their ranking.

The following rule is therefore applied in this scenario, when in the first round of matches after the group stage two teams from the same group could potentially already play against each other. The goal is in fact to avoid re-playing group matches right out of the group stage, shall that be possible.

NOTE 1: This means that if a group match happens to be re-played in a more subsequent stage of the tournament due to how the competition has developed, this is acceptable and not to be adjusted.

NOTE 2: This does not apply to any Round Robin after the group stage, as all those teams have to play against each other so the pairing cannot be inverted.

Premise

In this scenario, all the involved teams in the specific bracket must be ordered in one single ranking; this is achieved following the rule in Point b) about comparing teams from different groups, always keeping in mind that the most important ranking criteria is their placement in the group (*a team with 5 points who was second in their group is ranked higher than a team with 6 points who was third in another group: this means that the ranking will always feature all first-placed teams above all second-placed teams, all second-placed teams above third-placed teams and so on*).

Then, matches are determined picking the first team in the ranking and pairing it with the worst one, then pairing the second team with the penultimate team, and so on. HOWEVER it is to be avoided that two teams who just played each other in the group stage will play against each other in the first phase after the group stages. Therefore, shall that happen, the pairing will be shifted accordingly, as detailed in these specific cases:

CASE A - Pairing 4 teams coming from 3 groups

This should normally apply to positioning matches in a format for 10, 12 or 15 teams in 3 groups.

After the group stage, having ranked the 4 teams involved as 1-2-3-4, the pairing should be 1-4 and 2-3; HOWEVER, shall teams 1 and 4 come from the same group, the pairing will become 1-3 and 2-4.

CASE B - Pairing 6 teams coming from 3 or 4 groups

This should normally apply to knockout matches in a format for 9 or 10 teams in 3 groups, or to positioning matches in a format for 17, 18 or 22 teams in 4 groups.

After the group stage, having ranked the 6 teams involved as 1-2-3-4-5-6, the pairing for playoffs should be 3-6 and 4-5 (as 1 and 2 are automatically through to the next phase). HOWEVER, shall teams 3 and 6 come from the same group, the pairing will become 3-5 and 4-6.

NOTE: in the following match, pairing will always be 1 vs the winner of the playoff game involving 4, and 2 vs the winner of the playoff game involving 3, even if some of those teams come from the same group.

CASE C - Pairing 8 teams coming from 3 groups

This should normally apply to quarterfinals in a format for 11 to 15 teams in 3 groups.

After the group stage, the two best ranked first-place finishers will play against the two qualified third-place finishers, in such a way that none of these teams will play in the quarterfinals against a team they just faced in the group stage.

Additionally, the worst first-place finisher will play against the worst second-place finisher that was not in their same group. The remaining two second-place finishers will play each other.

3. Scheduling

a. Competitions overlap

In events with both foam and cloth, the tournaments are considered separate and should not involve the same players. Therefore, games of both ball formats can happen at the same time, with no issue if a cloth match and a foam match overlap in different categories and even involving the same nation, regardless of what is stated below.

Within a single ball format (cloth or foam) the goal is to have only one category (mixed/women's/men's) playing in each time slot. Shall this not be achievable, the overlap of different categories at the same time should be limited to the smallest amount of matches necessary to better complete the schedule. In a timeslot with more categories involved, the overlap should, if possible, never feature two teams from the same nation at the same time; if similar cases cannot be avoided, this should not involve mixed games, as the players could also be part of a gendered team. Shall overlaps need to happen, efforts will be made to balance it throughout nations.

Note: should the tournament regulations allow multiple teams from the same nation in the same category, those teams may play at the same time.

b. Breaks

Teams (not nations) must have at least 1 game break between matches.

This does not include referee duties.

c. Games distribution

Games of each competition must happen each day

Games in the group stages should be balanced for each team throughout the days of play (*Example: 5 games in 2 days should be scheduled as 3+2, not 4+1*)

Shall that not be possible, teams should always play at least one match per day during the group stages

d. Finals

Finals must always be played one after the other.

At the European Championships, having other games playing at the same time as the finals on other courts should be avoided, but can be allowed if necessary for the schedule.

In Regional, Junior, or other shorter tournaments, it is always allowed to have matches playing at the same time as the finals.

In any case where other matches take place during a 1st place final, those other games must not feature another 1st place final.

e. Host nation matches

The host nation is invited to play a match in the first slot of a tournament.

f. Streamed matches

The host nations must coordinate with EDF Media Department about how many courts will be streamed and which ones, as well as which matches.

ADDENDUM: Tournament formats summary

(in brackets the total number of matches per format)

6 TEAMS

Option A: One single group. Knockout phase with 6-teams playoffs (22 matches)

Option B: One single group. Knockout phase with semifinals + 5th place finals (20 matches)

7 TEAMS

One single group. Knockout phase with semifinals + round robin for 5th to 7th (28 matches)

8 TEAMS

Option A: Two groups. Knockout phase with quarterfinals (24 matches)

Option B: Two groups. Knockout phase with semifinals + semifinals for 5th to 8th (20 matches)

9 TEAMS

Option A: Two groups. Knockout phase with 6-teams playoffs + round robin for 7th to 9th (26 matches)

Option B: Three groups. Knockout phase with 6-teams playoffs + round robin for 7th to 9th (19 matches)

10 TEAMS

Option A: Two groups. Knockout phase with 6-teams playoffs + semifinals for 7th to 10th (31 matches)

Option B: Three groups. Knockout phase with 6-teams playoffs + semifinals for 7th to 10th (23 matches)

11 TEAMS

Option A: Two groups. Knockout phase with quarterfinals + round robin for 9th to 11th (40 matches)

Option B: Three groups. Knockout phase with quarterfinals + round robin for 9th to 11th (30 matches)

12 TEAMS

Option A: Two groups. Knockout phase with quarterfinals + semifinals for 9th to 12th (46 matches)

Option B: Three groups. Knockout phase with quarterfinals + semifinals for 9th to 12th (34 matches)

Option C: Four groups. Knockout phase with quarterfinals + semifinals for 9th to 12th (28 matches)

13 TEAMS

Option A: Two groups. Knockout phase with quarterfinals + round robin for 9th to 11th + final for 12th (52)

Option B: Three groups. Knockout phase with quarterfinals + round robin for 9th to 11th + final for 12th (38)

Option C: Four groups. Knockout phase with quarterfinals + round robin for 9th to 11th + final for 12th (31)

14 TEAMS

Option A: Two groups. Knockout phase with quarterfinals + round robin for 9th to 11th + round robin for 12th to 14th (60 matches)

Option B: Three groups. Knockout phase with quarterfinals + round robin for 9th to 11th + round robin for 12th to 14th (44 matches)

Option C: Four groups. Knockout phase with quarterfinals + round robin for 9th to 11th + round robin for 12th to 14th (36 matches)

15 TEAMS

Option A: Three groups. Knockout phase with quarterfinals + semifinals for 9th to 12th + round robin for 13th to 15th (49 matches)

Option B: Four groups. Knockout phase with quarterfinals + semifinals for 9th to 12th + round robin for 13th to 15th (40 matches)

16 TEAMS

Four groups. Knockout phase with quarterfinals + semifinals for 9th to 12th + semifinals for 13th to 16th (44)

17 TEAMS

Four groups. Knockout phase with quarterfinals + 6-teams playoffs for 9th to 14th + round robin for 15th to 17th (50 matches)

18 TEAMS

Four groups. Knockout phase with quarterfinals + 6-teams playoffs for 9th to 14th + semifinals for 15th to 18th (55 matches)

19 TEAMS

Four groups. Knockout phase with quarterfinals + semifinals for 9th to 12th + semifinals for 13th to 16th round robin for 17th to 19th (59 matches)

20 TEAMS

Four groups. Knockout phase with round of 16 + semifinals for 17th to 20th (76 matches)

21 TEAMS

Four groups. Knockout phase with round of 16 + round robin for 17th to 19th + final for 20th (81 matches)

22 TEAMS

Four groups. Knockout phase with round of 16 + 6-teams playoffs for 17th to 22nd (89 matches)

23 TEAMS

Four groups. Knockout phase with round of 16 + semifinals for 17th to 20th + round robin for 21st to 23rd (94 matches)

24 TEAMS

Four groups. Knockout phase with round of 16 + semifinals for 17th to 20th + semifinals for 21st to 24th (100 matches)

25 TEAMS

Five groups. Knockout phase with round of 16 + 6-teams playoffs for 17th to 22nd + round robin for 23rd to 25th (92 matches)

EDF can always make exceptions and adjustments to a tournament format in order to best adapt to each event's circumstances such as limited time and courts, especially in shorter competitions.