

Strategic Events and Calendar Re-assessment (SECR)

The objective of the project is to carry out a full and extensive review of the World Rowing events, with the aim of setting up a model to re-shape existing events or create new ones to ensure World Rowing events stay relevant, attractive, sustainable and, ideally, profitable.

The main focus of the process is on classic rowing events, however the review should address the full range of events World Rowing offers including Coastal and Indoor Rowing.

The review needs to be ambitious, and open to new and creative ideas. However, it is critical that the right balance of keeping with World Rowing's key values and principles are preserved and considered when exploring ways to improve World Rowing events.

Decisions are expected to be made at the 2025 World Rowing Quadrennial Congress and the 2025 Ordinary Congress.

The three main deliverables of the SECR:

1. A review of the World Rowing Championship event programmes - Rule 25 - for approval at the 2025 Quadrennial Congress. The new rule shall apply to the 2025 (details of implementation are subject to further consultations with OCs), 2026, 2027 and 2028 WRCH, WRU23CH and WRU19CH.

The project is led by the Competitive Commission / Rosie Mayglothling and overseen by Eva Szanto & the Executive Committee

2. World Rowing Cup Incentive Scheme and World Ranking
 - a. Introduce an incentive scheme to enhance participation in World Rowing Cups
 - b. Develop a World Rowing ranking system

The ranking system is to be presented at the 2025 World Rowing Congress in Shanghai and tested at the 2027 and 2028 World Cups.

The project is led by the Competitive Rowing Commission / Henk-Jan Zwolle & Peter Cookson and overseen by Eva Szanto & the Executive Committee.

3. A reshaped WR calendar from 2029 onwards for approval at the 2025 Congress in Shanghai, finetuning until 2027 to include it in the 2029-2032 SEAP cycle

The project is led by Eva Szanto and overseen by the Executive Committee.

An active consultation process has been undertaken since the SECR project was introduced at the World Rowing Congress in Belgrade, 2023.

- Core Group online calls
- Key Stakeholder Group (KSG) meetings in Belgrade (2023), Lucerne and Poznan (2024)
- Workshop with the Organising Committees in Varese (2024)
- Meeting with the boat builders and service providers in Lucerne (2024)

1. World Championships programme / Rule 25

1.1. Objectives of the review of Rule 25

The objectives are to propose a more attractive, streamlined, less complex and shorter programme for the WR championships where finals are spread over more days, races are interesting in each round and space is created for fan engagement. The WRU19CH and WRU23CH are taken up in the project to offer pathways for development.

1.2. Process

- Analysis of the participation data
- Meetings of the Competitive Rowing, Youth Rowing and Events Commission representatives
- Consultation with the Para Rowing Commission
- Consultation meetings with the project KSG – (in person and virtual) took place in 2024 in Lucerne, Poznan.
- Consider the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic programme proposals by World Rowing
- Modelling the World Rowing Championship programmes incorporating other factors, such as a new progression system and provisions for doubling up

1.2.1. Proposed changes

Taking into account the elements put forward by the stakeholders and the assessment of participation, the following events would be deleted

- Lightweight 2- (Senior M/W, BM/BW)
- Lightweight 4x (Senior M/W, BM/BW)
- BM/BW and JM/JW 4+
- PR2 M1x, PR2 W1x, PR3 M2-, PR3 W2-

The addition of a mixed gender event to the programme is being considered.

	1x	2x	2-	4x	4-	4+	8+
Senior Men (M)	M1x	M2x	M2-	M4x	M4-		M8+
Senior Women (W)	W1x	W2x	W2-	W4x	W4-		W8+
Senior Lightweight Men (LM)	LM1x	LM2x	LM2-	LM4x			
Senior Lightweight Women (LW)	LW1x	LW2x	LW2-	LW4x			
Senior Mixed (Mix)		Mix2x?		Mix4x?	Mix4-?		Mix8+?
Under 23 Men (BM)	BM1x	BM2x	BM2-	BM4x	BM4-	BM4+	BM8+
Under 23 Women (BW)	BW1x	BW2x	BW2-	BW4x	BW4-	BW4+	BW8+
Under 23 Lightweight Men (BLM)	BLM1x	BLM2x	BLM2-	BLM4x			
Under 23 Lightweight Women (BLW)	BLW1x	BLW2x	BLW2-	BLW4x			
Under 23 Mixed (BMix)		BMix2x?		BMix4x?	BMix4-?		BMix8+?
Under 19 Men (JM)	JM1x	JM2x	JM2-	JM4x	JM4-	JM4+	JM8+
Under 19 Women (JW)	JW1x	JW2x	JW2-	JW4x	JW4-	JW4+	JW8+
Under 19 Mixed (JMix)		JMix2x?		JMix4x?	JMix4-?		JMix8+?

Senior Para	PR1 M1x	PR1 W1x	PR2 M1x	PR2 W1x	PR2 Mi2x	PR3 M2-	PR3 W2-	PR3 Mix2	PR3 Mix4+
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1.2.2. Mixed events and doubling up

The addition of a mixed event is being considered. The World Rowing Council is supportive of the addition of a mixed gender event to the programme. The rationale to include a mixed gender event is based on consultations with the KSG, Organising Committees and built on positive experiences at various multi-sport events.

- Attractive addition to the programme
- In line with the IOC trends
- Additional medal opportunity for MFs without the need to include additional athletes on a team as doubling up would be mandatory

In case the mixed gender event is added to the programme the following elements are still to be decided:

- the boat class for the mixed event: Mix8+, Mix4-, Mix4x or Mix2x
- one or two events
- How to accommodate the mixed events in the programme to include it?
- How to apply the doubling up rule? What percentage of the crew should it apply to?
- Whether mixed events should be mandatory or optional at the world championships?
- How to ensure that MFs will participate?

Further considerations include the link to the 2028 Olympic programme. Initial discussions with the LA28 OG have started and the inclusion of a mixed event in the OG programme could also be considered; if such is the case, the programme at the WRCH should be the same as for the games. The number of athletes for LA 28 will be known in Q1 2025. Adding a mixed event could represent an additional medal opportunity which is valued by the MFs for whom the number of medals is important.

The decision at the 2025 Quadrennial Congress is essential to give MFs an overview of the whole Olympic cycle.

1.3. Para-rowing

In a wider context the WRCH para-rowing events should be determined with a strategic view of the Paralympic Games programme. The current recommendation is based on the participation statistics and a survey conducted with the MFs' para rowing coordinators.

For the development of para-rowing it is essential to provide appropriate pathway opportunities.

Additional racing opportunities at established Para Rowing regattas providing excellent facilities for para rowers, such as Gavirate or Paris should be included in the calendar. The events currently not proposed as part of the World Rowing Championship event programme should also be part of these regattas.

1.4. Progression system

1.4.1. Principles

The new progression system should enshrine the following principles:

- Ensure that performance is rewarded
- Final ranking provided for all crews at World Rowing Championships
- One progression system for World Rowing classic events (World Championships U19, U23, Senior and World Cups)
- Full Field racing

- Crews, where possible, get a minimum of two race opportunities
- Create a sustainable and exciting event

1.5. Next steps and timeline

- Develop concrete examples to see the consequences on the programme of the new progression system and the events.
- Decisions on
 - boat class for the mixed event: Mix8+, Mix4x, Mix4- or Mix 2x
 - programme
 - doubling up
 - mandatory or optional mixed events
- Calendar of meetings and governance deadlines until Quadrennial Congress and 2025 Ordinary Congress in Shanghai
- Presentation at the 2024 Ordinary Congress

2. World Cups incentive scheme and world ranking system

2.1. Objective

The objective is to reshape the World Cups by incentivising participation and possibly use the World Rowing Cups as a pathway to WRCH.

The introduction of a point system is being explored to create a fair, sustainable and equitable system that will induce the elevation of continental events.

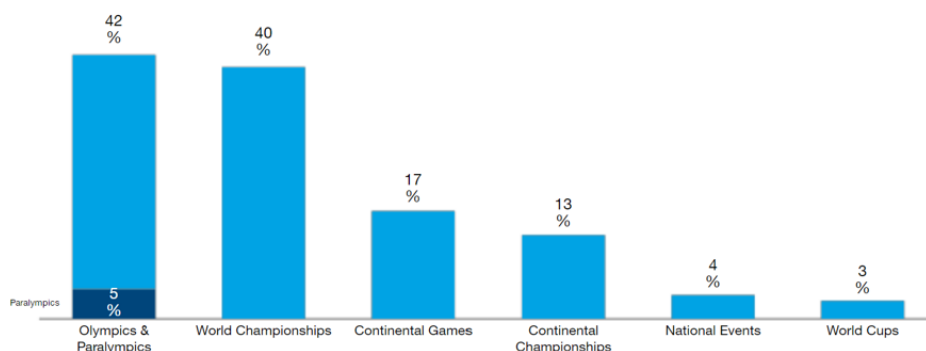
2.2. World Cups incentive scheme

2.2.1. Context

The World Cups, as organised at the moment, do not attract the expected number of teams. To understand the reasons, a survey was sent to the MFs in 2023 and from the responses it is clear what the main reasons are.

EVENTS IMPORTANCE

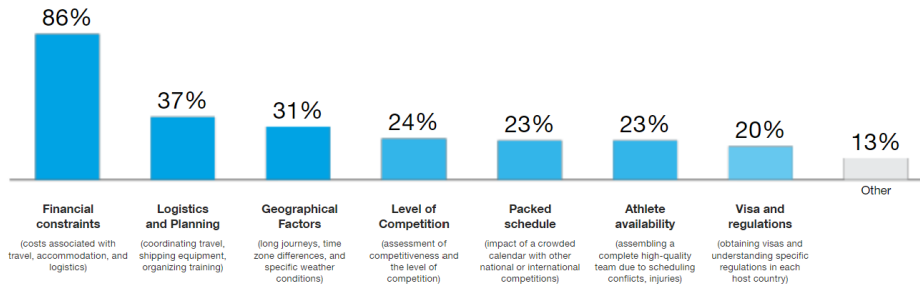
What is the most important rowing event for your national team?



Q2. What is the most important rowing event for your national team?
 Type: Open-ended
 Sample: N=104

WORLD CUP MAIN CHALLENGES

What are the main challenges your federation is facing with respect to World Cup participation?



Q10. What are the main challenges your federation is facing with respect to World Cup participation? (3 answers max)
Type: Multiple choice
Sample: N=86

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2.3. World Cups Incentive Scheme

At the moment World Cups are the least important for MFs, mostly used as preparation for the World Rowing Championships as public funding is often only available for World Championships. As shown in the graphic above, and further to the financial constraints which are the main challenges for the MFs, logistical issues, geographical factors, both the level of competition and the proposed programme as well as the athlete availability are limiting factors for MFs to participate in World Cups.

Reshaping the World Cups would include elements that were discussed with the Organising Committees on how to make the events more attractive (more compact programme, enhanced fan engagement and sport presentation, innovative approach to Victory Ceremonies and athlete introduction) as well as enabling better logistics for teams (shorter intervals between legs of the World Cups) and service providers (geographically conveniently located venues). Some of these elements have been fully or partially implemented or tested in 2024.

The other important part of the incentive scheme is potentially using the World Cups as a pathway towards the World Rowing Championships, i.e. participation would be required to be eligible to enter crews in the WRCH. The inclusion of the continental events into this incentive scheme is also being considered.

2.4. World Rowing Ranking System

Further to the commercial interest, the introduction of a World Rowing ranking system would maximise the interest throughout the Olympic Cycle by creating a connection between World Rowing Cups, World Rowing Championships and Olympic Games. Elements currently being discussed include among others,

- how to develop the best algorithm with all aspects considered (crew boats vs single sculls; differentiation of various regattas; selecting the regattas (sanctioned events), where ranking points can be collected, etc.)
- whether it might be used as a qualification system for WRCH and Olympic Games,
- how it could create content and raise the public interest,
- whether it might be used for seeding.

Using the incentive/ranking system with the present World Cups would already make a difference for media interest and help secure the participation of the best teams. However, the development requires an algorithm developed by a commercial enterprise to have decent results.

2.5. Next steps

- RFP to be finalised
- Select provider
- Path of implementation: Define the test in 2027 and 2028 World Cups for full implementation in 2029
- Calendar of meetings until Congress in Shanghai
- Presentation to the Congress in Shanghai in 2025

3. New calendar and events from 2029 onwards

World Rowing will put in place a revamped SEAP process from 2029 onwards; it will take a holistic approach looking at events of all three disciplines throughout the year, with a possible overlap.

3.1. Next steps

- Continue consultations and adjust event plans adequately to the sporting needs and the media landscape. Involve MFs through MF calls and consultations
- Explore the possibilities of new events, or events with a different approach to the commercial model, participation etc.
- Presentation of plans at the 2025 Ordinary Congress in Shanghai.