

2026 ICF Canoe Polo World Championships, Duisburg (GER)

Qualification System

I. EVENTS (4)

The competition programme of the 2026 ICF Canoe Polo World Championships (Duisburg - GER) will consist of four events:

M	Men
W	Women
MU21	Men under 21
WU21	Women under 21

II. QUALIFICATION PLACES DISTRIBUTION

A. Number of teams per event

The number of qualification places available in the Qualification Competitions for the 2026 ICF Canoe Polo World Championships will be as follows:

Men	24
Women	20
Men under 21	20
Women under 21	12
Total team	76

B. Distribution of teams through the qualification pathway

The initial distribution of qualification places through the 2024 ICF Canoe Polo World Championships, the 2025 Continental Championships and the “wildcard” places:

EVENTS	2024 ICF CAP World Championships	2025 Continental Championships					Wildcard	TOTAL
		Africa	Americas	Asia	Europe	Oceania		
Men	16	1	1	1	1	1	3	24
Women	14	1	1	1	1	1	1	20
Men under 21	14	1	1	1	1	1	1	20
Women under 21	6	1	1	1	1	1	1	12

III. QUALIFICATION PATHWAY

A. The first qualification stage – 2024 ICF Canoe Polo World Championships, Deqing (CHN)

- The highest placed teams in each event at the 2022 ICF Canoe Polo World Championships (Deqing, CHN) will obtain a qualification place for their National Federation as follows:

Men	16
Women	14
Men under 21	14
Women under 21	6

- Each qualification place allocation is subject to the participation of the concerned National Federation at their respective 2025 Continental Championships in the concerned event.

B. The second qualification stage – 2025 Continental Canoe Polo Championships

- The highest placed team not yet qualified from the first qualification stage (see article III.A) in each event at the respective Continental Canoe Polo Championships competition will obtain qualification places for their National Federation as follows:

	Africa	Americas	Asia	Europe	Oceania
Men	1	1	1	1	1
Women	1	1	1	1	1
Men under 21	1	1	1	1	1
Women under 21	1	1	1	1	1

- If there is no eligible team participating in an event at the continental championships the qualification place reverts to be a wildcard (see article III.D).

C. Exceptional case: no Continental Championships organised without force majeure issue

- Where a continent has not planned to organise a 2025 Continental Championship, the highest ranked in each event from the 2024 ICF Canoe Polo World Championship not yet qualified will be used to determine which National Federation from that continent “provisionally obtain a qualification place” for the 2026 Canoe Polo World Championships.
- A “challenge” to this qualification place may be made by any National Federation from that Continent who advises that they desire to challenge the “provisionally qualified” team/s.
- This “challenge” must be made via the ICF Canoe Polo Committee.
- Where the ICF Canoe Polo Committee receive notice of a “challenge” they will notify the “provisionally qualified” National Federation from that continent that they must host a qualification tournament prior to 1st November 2025.
- This tournament must be held in a fair location, in the country of the “provisionally qualified” team, in which any National Federation from their continent can participate.

- The qualification tournament will be conducted in accordance with ICF Rules, and results must be sent within 7 days to the ICF Canoe Polo Committee.
- The continental qualification place will then be awarded to the best placed National Federation based on their result at the qualification tournament.
- The ICF will determine any issues of disagreement by the challenging National Federation in terms of agreement of location and dates of the qualification tournament.

IV. INVITATION AND CONFIRMATION OF QUALIFICATION PLACES

- An invitation to participate in the 2026 ICF Canoe Polo World Championships will be issued by 12th December 2025 to inform the respective National Federations of their allocated qualification places after the two stages of qualification.
- The National Federations will then have until 10th January 2026 to confirm in writing to the ICF Canoe Polo Technical Chair the acceptance of each qualification place.

V. REALLOCATION OF UNUSED QUALIFICATION PLACES

- Where no confirmation is received by the 10th January 2026, or where a National Federation does not accept a qualification place, this place will become an additional wildcard in that event.

VI. WITHDRAWING AFTER ACCEPTING A QUALIFICATION PLACE

- According to ICF Canoe Polo rules 13.4.5, National Federations withdrawing a team after accepting an entry are not eligible for the 2028 ICF Canoe Polo World Championships in that event.
- This place will become an additional wildcard in that event for the 2026 ICF Canoe Polo World Championships in that event.

VII. WILDCARD ALLOCATION

A. Process

- The ICF Canoe Polo Committee will allocate Wildcards in their sole discretion.
- The ICF Canoe Polo Committee will in the first instance allocate a Wildcard to the host National Federation.
- The ICF Canoe Polo Committee will in the second instance allocate a Wildcard to the next host National Federation of the World Championships, if they have not already obtained a qualification place in the event as long as they have participated in the previous year's continental championships.
- The ICF Canoe Polo Committee will then give consideration to teams who competed but who did not qualify at their continental championships in the year before the relevant world championship.

B. Wildcard invitation

- Initial wildcard invitations will be issued by the 1st February 2026 at the latest **and** entry must be confirmed in writing by the concerned National Federation by the 31st March 2026 at the latest.

VIII. FORCE MAJEURE

A. Issue with the 2024 ICF Canoe Polo World Championships

If the 2024 ICF Canoe Polo World Championships is not held due to force majeure, or if the ICF Executive Committee determines that there is not fair and equitable access to participation for most of the countries with the intention to compete, the highest placed teams in each event at the 2022 ICF Canoe Polo World Championships (Saint Omer, FRA) will qualify **a qualification place for their continent** (the last World Championships) for the 2026 ICF Canoe Polo World Championships according to the figures defined at the article "Qualification Pathway" III.a.

These Continental qualification places will be allocated to the best ranked team(s) from each respective continental championship in 2025.

B. Issue with a 2025 Continental Championships

If a 2025 Continental Championships is not held due to force majeure, or if the ICF Executive Committee determines that there is not fair and equitable access to participation for all countries with the intention to compete, the highest placed teams in each event from the 2024 ICF Canoe Polo World Championships not yet qualified will be used to determine which National Federation from that continent obtains a qualification place according to the figures defined at the article "Qualification Pathway" III.b.

These Continental qualification places cannot be "challenged" by any other National Federation. The article "Qualification Pathway" III.c is not applicable in this particular case.

IX. QUALIFICATION TIMELINE

Date	Milestone
15 th to 20 th October 2024	2024 ICF Canoe Polo World Championships, Deqing, CHN
TBD	2025 African Continental Championships – TBC
TBD	2025 Pan-American Continental Championships – TBC
TBC September 2025	2025 Asian Continental Championships – Putrajaya (MAS)
9 th – 14 th September 2025	2025 European Continental Championships – Kalisz (POL)
17 th – 20 th April 2025	2025 Oceania Continental Championships – Gold Coast (AUS)
12 th December 2025	Invitation sent out by the ICF
10 th January 2026	Deadline for National Federations to confirm the acceptance of the qualification places allocated.
1 st February 2026	Wildcard entry invitation send out by the ICF
31 st March 2026	Deadline for National Federations to confirm the acceptance of the allocated wildcard.
TBC - 2026	Deadline for numerical entries via the ICF online entries system (SDP)
TBC - 2026	Deadline for nominal entries via the ICF online entries system (SDP)
15 th – 20 th September 2026	2026 ICF Canoe Polo World Championships, Duisburg, GER

APPENDIX 1 – PREVIOUS WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS AND KEY FIGURES

A. Number of teams per event

Year	Men	Women	Men under 21	Women under 21	TOTAL
2020	24	20	20	12	76
2022	24	20	20	12	76
2024	24	20	20	12	76
2026	24	20	20	12	76

B. First qualification stage – figures

Year	Men	Women	Men Under 21	Women Under 21
2020	16	14	14	6
2022	16	14	14	6
2024	16	14	14	6

APPENDIX 2 – IMPLEMENTATION AND REVISION NOTES

Date	Milestone
2004	Qualification first implemented for 2004 ICF Canoe Polo Championships – Japan
July 2009	Event Under 21 Women added
May 2011	Date for Acceptance of Qualification point 1 changed to avoid Christmas/New Year period.
March 2014	Increase in qualification numbers; clarity that wildcard preference given to teams who do compete in their continental championships; grammatical improvements.
March 2017	Teams per events and qualifying numbers for 2020 added with 2014 now removed.
March 2019	New format
November 2020	Force majeure definition

June 2022	Teams per events and qualifying numbers for 2024 added with 2016 now removed.
September 2024	Teams per events and qualifying numbers for 2026 added with 2018 now removed – numbers as per previous world championships.