

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR AFL EUROPE RUN EVENTS EURO CUP

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Policy Coverage

This document sets out the criteria for competing at the Euro Cup – 9’s tournament held yearly. For other competitions in which European teams take part in, the rules set out by the organisers will be followed.

Eligibility Criteria

Player eligibility is broken into three key areas – Birth and Heritage, Citizenship and Residency and Representation.

Players are eligible if they demonstrate a permanent (e.g., birth, citizenship, dual citizenship) and/or long-term (e.g. residency of at least three consecutive years) connection to and involvement with the AFL Affiliate Country with which they wish to represent, so long as they also meet the representation criteria

Birth or Heritage

To be considered eligible under the Birth or Heritage ruling, a player must meet at least one of the following criteria:

- Born in the Country they wish to represent
- Parent or Grandparent* born in the Country they wish to represent

Citizenship and Residency**

To be considered eligible under the Citizenship ruling the Player must meet at least one of the following criteria:

- Holds Citizenship of the Country they wish to represent through either Birth and/or Heritage
or
- Holds Citizenship of the Country they wish to represent through Naturalization or Dual-citizenship status.

* In line with the criteria of the country you wish to represent.

** In the case of Northern Ireland this would be UK or Irish citizenship.

To be considered eligible under the Residency ruling the players of the AFL Europe Affiliate must meet at least one of the following criteria:

- Holds permanent residency of the Country they wish to represent
- If they do not hold permanent residency in the Country they wish to represent, they MUST have lived in the Country they wish to represent for a minimum of 3 continuous years prior to the date of upcoming tournament and continue to hold residency while representing the Country.
- Where applicable, the onus on proving any fact or assertion in relation to the above-stated criteria rests with the applicant.

Representation

- Australians
 - Restrictions on the level played for Australian players at senior level, with Australians that have played at state level (VFL, VFLW, WAFL, etc or equivalent) or higher (AFL, AFLW) deemed ineligible to partake in the Euro Cup.
 - All levels below Australian state level as highest level played remain unrestricted.
- All other nationalities
 - Anyone that has played more than 3 years at Australian state level or above and are either still active at state level or have not completed a year's cooling off period, will not be eligible under this rule and will need to apply for an exemption.
- If a player has already represented a country in any of the last three consecutive AFL Europe events, they are eligible for that country moving forward. They are not required to submit an Eligibility Request each year.

Established, Emerging teams and European Crusaders

Team eligibility has been divided into three categories. Please ensure your team list follows the player eligibility criteria within the category applicable to your team. The three categories are as follows:

Established team - as per AFL Europe criteria set out at the AGM.

- Has played in 3 AFL Europe events of the same format, as per AFL Europe criteria set out at the AGM, or;
- Has placed in the top half* of countries in their first or second event

Emerging Team - as per AFL Europe criteria set out at the AGM.

- Not played in 3 AFL Europe events of the same format
- Not placed in the top half* of countries in their first- or second Euro Cup.
- An exemption can be requested to remain as or return to being an Emerging team or country.
- It should be noted that the rule whereby a player who has already represented this country does not need to submit a further Eligibility Request will be restarted once the country qualifies as an Established Team if the player is playing under a permitted

exemption. Meaning that Eligibility Requests will need to be resubmitted and reassessed against the Established Team criteria.

* If an odd number of teams take part in the Euro Cup the top half is rounded down (eg 15 teams – it would be the top 7)

European Crusaders

- This team's sole purpose is to allow players from countries without a team entered (priority will be given to those teams that almost have numbers but aren't fully there yet) into the event to compete.
- No players are allowed from countries already competing.
- Players will be asked to complete a short application when applying to be part of this team – this is to support a selection process should the need arise

Leniency for Countries

- Homegrown talent will always be the focus of the competition. To allow the game to grow across Europe, we understand the need to support affiliated teams and as such those teams **can apply** for leniency using the following criteria:
- Eligible players who have previously represented other countries, so long as they meet Birth/Parent or Resident/Citizen criteria, then become tied to the new country they are representing. Requests to change countries sooner than the 3-year cooling off period will be judges on a case-by-case basis in line with criteria and the formal exemption request process.
- Australians:
 - a. Established teams that finish in the top 4, in the previous Euro Cup competition can apply to have 2 Australians (1 on field at any times), provided all meet all other eligibility criteria
 - b. Established teams finishing outside of the top 4 in the previous Euro Cup competition can apply to have 4 Australians (2 on field at any times), provided all meet all other eligibility criteria
 - c. Emerging teams – Can apply for up to 6 Australians (4 on field at any time), provided they meet Birth/Parent or Resident/Citizen eligibility criteria.
- Restrictions on Playing History in Australia outlined in this document to remain in place.

Exemptions requests

In cases where a player is not eligible based on the above rules, they are able to submit a request to the AFL Europe Commission seeking an exemption to the eligibility rules which, if granted by the AFL Europe Eligibility Special Committee, deems them eligible to play in the relevant tournament.

Provided that a player is a bona fide citizen and/or resident of the relevant country, or the country where the relevant club is registered, the AFL Europe Eligibility Special Committee may, on a case-by-case basis, waive the eligibility requirements stipulated above if it deems that there are “exceptional circumstances” applicable to the player in question. For example, such considerations may include, but are not limited to, the following criteria:

- the player can prove their pivotal and significant contribution to the sport and/or its establishment in the relevant country or for the relevant club.
- the player’s non-participation will have a recognised detrimental impact on the ongoing development or viability of the sport in the relevant country or for the relevant club.
- the player’s non-participation will seriously jeopardise the team’s participation in the relevant tournament.
- the player’s participation is in the best interests of the relevant tournament.
- the player is from an Emerging Country or the player’s club is from an Emerging Country that is dependent on their participation in the relevant tournament.
- Additional leniency will be given to the Emerging Countries.

Where applicable, the onus on proving any fact or assertion in relation to the above-stated criteria rests with the applicant.

Details of how to apply for an exemption will be published with the event information and available on the AFL Europe website.

The number of exemptions allowed for each country will be decided by the AFL Europe Eligibility Special Committee and based on the overall circumstances of the team requesting the exemption.

Should a player wish to change country due to a change in circumstances, there will be a 3-year cooling off period from player last represented previous Country before being considered for eligibility for another Country. Only difference being if an exemption is being requested under the emerging teams’ criteria. If an exemption is granted, the relevant player will not need to apply again unless they are seeking a change in country.

Other information

The Eligibility Committee can, at their discretion, request proof of eligibility of any player on a team list at any time.

The Eligibility committee will as part of the review of these rules sanction any country that fails to meet the requirements laid out above, falsifies evidence for meeting the criteria or knowingly files an incorrect team sheet. Details of the possible sanctions will be dependent on a tribunal hearing following the incident.