

European Table Tennis Union a.s.b.l.



Minutes of the

ETTU Congress 2023

**Wednesday 13th September 2023
1000 CEST**

**Malmö Arena
Hyllie Stationstorg 2
215 32 Malmö, Sweden**

MINUTES OF THE ETTU CONGRESS 2023

Present: Pedro MOURA (POR), (ETTU Acting President),
Heike AHLERT (GER), (ETTU Acting Deputy President)
Sandra DEATON (ENG), (ETTU Vice-President for Finances)
Sonja GREFBERG (FIN), Ina JOZEPSONE (LAT),
Miguel VICENS (FRA) (ETTU Vice-Presidents);
Chiara COLANTONI (ITA) (EB Member and Athletes Commission Chair);
Pierre KASS (ETTU Secretary General);
Galia DVORAK (ETTU Deputy Secretary General)

Stefano BOSI, Dorte DARFELT, Ronald KRAMER, Rudolf SPORRER
(Honorary Members);
Camille GONDERINGER (Honorary Member, present as Delegate)
Thomas BUZA (Youth Committee Chair, present as Delegate)
Goran TILOVSKI (Audit Commission Member, present as Delegate)

Arne MADSEN (Club Competition Official), Øivind ERIKSEN (Technical
Committee Chair), Igor HELLER (Ranking Committee Chair), Zdenko KRIŽ
(Veterans Committee Chair), Jarek KOLODZIEJCZYK (Coaching Committee
Chair), Ines LOURO (Gender Equality Committee Chair), Beatrice ROMANESCU
(Marketing and Events Presentation Manager), Milica NIKOLIĆ (Press Manager),
Alen IVANČIN (Competition Manager), Ana IVOŠEVIĆ (Administration Officer),
Andrea BJURSTRÖM (Club Competitions Manager), Leonie HARTBRICH
(Social Media Coordinator)

Petra SÖRLING (ITTF President)
Roland NATRAN (ITTF Vice-President)
Aleksandar KARAKAŠEVIĆ (ITTF Board of Directors, present as Delegate)
Katrín STJÄRNFELDT JAMMEH (Mayor of the city of Malmö)

Alexandru BRATU, Adrian-Dan DUMITRESCU, Alexandra NICULA (Marketing
activity team)
Jan POMMER (Sportradar)
Johannes RANKE (antesi media)

Sirje LUBI, Michael GEIGER (Badge of Honour)
Stefan FEGERL, Elisabeth SCHRENK, Carola GEIGER, Christophe PORTE
(guests)

Delegates of the following Member Associations (41) attended the Congress:
Albania, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus (online), Belgium, Bosnia-Herzegovina
(online), Bulgaria, Croatia, Czechia, Cyprus (online), Denmark, England, Estonia,
Faroe Islands, Finland, France, Germany (online), Hungary (online), Iceland,
Israel, Italy, Kosovo, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, North Macedonia,
Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia (online), San Marino,

Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland (online), Ukraine and Wales.

The Associations (17) of: Andorra, Armenia, Georgia, Gibraltar, Greece, Greenland, Guernsey, Ireland, Isle of Man, Jersey, Liechtenstein, Malta, Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Scotland and Türkiye were absent.

a. Acting President's Welcome and Opening Address

ETTU Acting President Pedro Moura inaugurated the Congress with a welcome to ITTF President, the Mayor of Malmö, the President of the Swedish Table Tennis Association, all the Delegates, Executive Board members, Honorary Members and Committee Chairs, Officials and Staff, marking the occasion as a pivotal moment during the European Team Championships in the city of Malmö.

Mr Moura commenced by expressing gratitude towards the Swedish Table Tennis Association for their organization of the 2023 European Table Tennis Championships, applauding their efforts in promoting Table Tennis. Following the decisions made at the 2022 Congress in Munich to shape the future of ETTU while safeguarding its present, he highlighted the pride in overcoming the challenges of 2022 and looked forward to the promising journey ahead in 2023 and beyond.

Reflecting on the past year, the Acting President recounted the trials faced by the community, notably the global pandemic and the war in Europe, which tested the ETTU's resilience. Despite these adversities, the organization remained committed to the sport and its athletes, successfully executing the full 2022 calendar and development program and introducing its first Strategic Plan followed by an Implementation Plan to delineate the future of ETTU. Collaborative efforts with ITTF and its professional structure were emphasised as key to forging a brighter future for table tennis.

Mr Moura also outlined the transformative agenda for 2023, emphasising the creation of stronger alliances, using technology to connect with table tennis enthusiasts across Europe and the launch of the European U13 Championships, Europe Youth Series and ETTU ranking. He concluded his speech by thanking ETTU Executive Board and Staff for the work done and stating ETTU's objectives for 2024: to grow the sport within its associations, organise high-quality events, and support the growth of young players.

The Mayor of Malmö, Katrin Stjärnfeldt Jammeh, extended a warm welcome to all attendees. In her address, she praised the city's growth, youthfulness, and diversity expressing pride in hosting the European Championships and upcoming Eurovision. Mayor Stjärnfeldt Jammeh also highlighted the city's commitment to sustainability and supporting young people's activity and acknowledged ETTU's support for Ukrainian athletes.

ITTF President Petra Sörling greeted everyone, expressing her personal connection to the host city as her hometown. She reflected on last year's ETTU

Congress, thanking the ETTU members for their support and participation at the World Championships in Chengdu. She commended the members' engagement in the ITTF Annual General Meeting and the ITTF Summit. Ms Sörling noted the ITTF efforts to ensure a comprehensive schedule for 2024 and to stabilise finances during challenging times.

Swedish Table Tennis Association's President, Dennis Lindahl, expressed his satisfaction in welcoming the ETTU Congress to Sweden's third-largest city and hosting the European Championships. He thanked the Executive Board for their trust, the Municipality of Malmö, and partners for their support, and showed deep appreciation for the volunteers.

b. Roll Call of the Associations present

Secretary General Pierre Kass confirmed 41 registered Member Associations with voting credentials.

17 Member Associations were absent.

c. Appointment of scrutineers

The Secretary General proposed to the Congress to appoint the following delegates as scrutineers: Adriana Zamfir (ROU), Ivica Hatalova (SVK), Mathias Neuwirth (AUT)

The Scrutineers were appointed by the Congress.

d. Appointment of a Chair

The Acting Deputy President Heike Ahlert proposed Pedro Moura as a Chair of the Congress. The Congress appointed Mr Moura as Congress Chair.

e. Approval of the Agenda

The Congress agenda was approved.

f. Adoption of the late entered propositions

There were no late entered propositions.

g. Minutes of the previous Congress (Munich, 20th August 2022) and Extraordinary Congress (Amman, 6th December 2022)

The minutes of the previous Congress (Munich, 20th August 2022) and Extraordinary Congress (Amman, 6th December 2022) were adopted.

h. Consideration of applications for Membership

There were no new membership applications received.

i. Consideration of the Annual General Report, including the Reports from the Executive Board Members, the Committee Chairs, the Officials and the Secretary General update on new ETTU activities

The Gender Equality Committee Chair Ines Louro addressed the Congress, noting the absence of a report from her committee due to a lack of quorum, which has led to inactivity. Mr Moura responded, acknowledging the situation, and assured that the matter would be deliberated by the Executive Board to implement corrective measures.

All Reports were approved by Congress.

The Deputy Secretary General Galia Dvorak provided an update on 2023 activities and plans for 2024 emphasising the Europe Youth Series and Under 13 European Championships, the forthcoming Virtual Table Tennis Challenge, and the Men's Champions League Final 4. Ms Dvorak reported on the media coverage of ETTU's events and elaborated on development efforts such as the Umpire and Referee's Committees, and initiatives for gender equality. On the subject of Governance, she highlighted sustainability and international auditing of ETTU accounts.

j. Consideration of the Financial Statements 2022

The Vice-President for Finances Sandra Deaton, summarised the 2022 Financial Statements, which were comprehensively presented during the Finance Webinar on 11th August 2024. She reiterated the Congress approval for an International Standard Audit (ISA) and the appointment of PKF Audit & Conseil Sàrl to execute this audit, with findings also shared in the mentioned webinar.

The 2022 Financial Statements were unanimously approved by the Congress.

For the Congress reference, Ms Deaton also presented the estimated result for 2023. Mr Moura remarked that while ETTU aims for a break-even outcome, the organization is leveraging the favorable results from previous years to invest in the sport and presenting a proposition to enhance the ETTU reserves, ensuring its future stability.

k. Consideration of the Audit Report 2022

The 2022 Audit Report (together with the 2022 Financial Statements) has been unanimously approved by Congress.

l. Consideration of the report of the Audit Commission 2022

The Vice-President for Finances informed that the Audit Commission was not able to present their report to Congress due to logistics in not being able to meet however they have had the audit report and analysed it and will send it in the following weeks.

m. Consideration of the propositions F1 (reserves) and F2 (membership fees) and of the Budget 2024

Proposition F1 Financial reserves - To increase the reserves by 50.000 EUR to a new total of 450.000 EUR with validation immediate effect (to reflect in the 2023 accounts) was unanimously approved by Congress.

Proposition F2 Annual membership subscription - To increase the annual membership subscription to a total of 500 EUR with validation effective 1.1.2024 (starting for the 2024 subscriptions) was unanimously approved by Congress.

The Vice-President for Finances presented the 2024 Budget.

The Delegate from North Macedonia inquired why, following notably positive outcomes in 2021 and 2022, the ETTU is projecting a deficit in the 2024 budget, questioning the lack of ambition to maintain profitability.

The Vice-President for Finances responded, explaining that while the ETTU continues to be optimistic and ambitious, the financial successes of 2021 and 2022 were significantly boosted by sponsorship income. As a non-profit organization, ETTU is reinvesting the surplus from previous years. She highlighted ongoing efforts to secure new sponsorships, but mentioned a cautious approach to budgeting, preferring not to include potential sponsorships until they are fully confirmed. The Acting President emphasized that the anticipated negative result stems from the decision to reinvest the surplus accumulated in the previous years.

The Delegate from Azerbaijan inquired whether ETTU's profits are subject to taxation and requested that, if so, the amount of tax be included in the expense report.

The Secretary General responded to the inquiry, explaining that the ETTU is not VAT registered and, as a non-profit organization, is exempt from taxes.

The delegate from North Macedonia queried about the budget in the development area seeking a comparison between the funds allocated in 2023 and those budgeted for 2024, and inquired whether there was an increase, stability, or decline in percentage terms.

The Acting President replied, indicating that the budget assumes ITTF will maintain the same level of support in Development area as in previous years which was not exactly the same amount as the ETTU expenditure in 2022. Only in September ETTU was informed about the reduced financial support from ITTF and so ETTU immediately reduced activities where possible and followed up with positive discussions with ITTF to cover what was not wanted to be financially supported. Mr Moura informed that in the last meeting, the Continental Council confirmed that the same amount for 2024 will be received as for 2023.

The delegate from Luxembourg made a suggestion and posed an additional

question. He suggested that future budgets be presented alongside the results from the previous year for comparison. His question inquired whether the ETTU anticipates presenting a positive or at least a balanced budget in 2025, following the successful acquisition of the sponsorships Ms. Deaton referenced earlier.

The delegate from Switzerland agreed to the comment made by Mr Gonderinger (delegate from Luxembourg).

The Acting President replied that ETTU is working on a better 2025 financial result.

The Vice-President for Finances responded to the suggestion, clarifying that during the finance webinar in August, ETTU had indeed presented a comparison between the results of 2023 and 2024.

The Vice-President for Finances concluded her intervention by expressing her gratitude to all the Executive Board members and staff, with a special acknowledgement to the Secretary General for his significant contribution to ETTU's accounting and finances.

The 2024 budget was unanimously approved.

n. Consideration of propositions and resolutions

The Acting President reflected on the propositions webinar organized in August and passed over to the Secretary General for the Constitution proposition 1-A.

The delegate from Luxembourg indicated their agreement with all proposed changes in the constitution text, with the exception of clause 5.1.11.5. highlighting concerns over the proposed text allowing the Congress chair to determine the voting process, arguing that such decisions should be made by the Congress as a whole.

The Congress voted in favor to amend Proposition 1-A by withdrawing the new proposed text under clause 5.1.11.5. with 34 votes in favour, 1 against and 2 abstentions.

All 14 below propositions' implementation date of all changes are effective immediate once approved except proposition 4-CT being effective 18th September 2023.

The Congress approved Proposition 1-A with 34 votes in favour and 1 abstention.

The Acting Deputy President provided a summary of all the propositions related to the regulations that had been presented during the webinar.

Proposition 2-B was unanimously approved.

Proposition 3-CI was unanimously approved.

Proposition 4-CT was unanimously approved.

The Acting Deputy President informed the Congress that the entries for the 2025 European Team Championships will open as soon as possible and ETTU will ask for bids to host Stage 1 of the 2025 European Team Championships and liaise with ITTF to secure a proper date to avoid clashes.

Proposition 5-D was unanimously approved.

ETTU Honorary Member Mr Rudolf Sporrer addressed a concern regarding Proposition 6-DA, specifically point 1.3, which states, "The Ranking Committee may give additional points to players or pairs with good results in singles or doubles during the current season." He noted that in today's digital age, this approach seems out of place and could be perceived as a lack of confidence in the existing ranking system.

ETTU Ranking Committee Chair Mr Igor Heller responded to this concern by clarifying that this provision is intended for exceptional circumstances. This would address situations where seeding positions are objectively incorrect. He provided examples, particularly in the U13 category, where players may have high rankings in the ITTF World ranking but are not seeded at all in ETTU competitions.

Proposition 6-DA was approved by majority of the votes (1 abstention)

The Acting Deputy President gave an additional clarification on the eligibility wording to be included for the proposition 7-E.

Proposition 7-E was unanimously approved.

Proposition 8-G was unanimously approved.

The ETTU Acting President announced to the Congress that the upcoming edition of the Europe Cup top 16 will again serve as a qualification event for the ITTF World Cup. He extended gratitude to the ITTF for their collaboration in this endeavour.

Proposition 9-H was unanimously approved.

Proposition 10-I was unanimously approved.

Proposition 11-J was unanimously approved.

Proposition 12-K was unanimously approved.

Proposition 13-S was unanimously approved.

Proposition 14-U was unanimously approved.

o. Ratification of the work done by the Executive Board since the last Congress

The Congress, by applauding granted release to the Executive Board for the work done by them since the 2022 Congress.

p. Appointment of Honorary Members

Thomas WEIKERT (GER) has been appointed as ETTU Honorary Member.

q. Presentation of Badge of Honour

ETTU Badges of Honour were awarded to: Bruno ABRAHAM (FRA), Tamara BOROŠ (CRO), Michael GEIGER (GER), Sirje LUBI (EST), Zoran PRIMORAC (CRO), Egils PURINŠ (LAT), Martin OSTERMANN (LUX), Danijel ŠARLAH (SLO), Žbynek ŠPAČEK (CZE) and Dariusz SZUMACHER (POL).

r. Place and date of the next Congress

The 2024 ETTU Congress will be held in Linz, Austria on 17th October 2024.

s. Consideration of any other Business

The Secretary General of the Swedish TTA addressed the Congress, expressing the STTA's honor in hosting both the ETTU European Team Championships and the ETTU Congress in Malmö. He extended an invitation to all Congress delegates to attend the ITTF Foundation Cup at 1700 in the Championship's training hall.

The delegate from Ukraine thanked ETTU Acting President Pedro Moura for ETTU support, the ETTU Deputy Secretary General Galia Dvorak for the close cooperation and the Member Associations of Poland, Georgia, Spain, France, Romania, Hungary, Belgium, Croatia, Moldavia, Italy and many others for their support during challenging times. He also thanked Mr Stefano Bosi for offering his home to Ukrainian athletes. He highlighted the devastation caused by the ongoing war, including damage to facilities and loss of lives within the table tennis community. Mr Pelenkin urged the ETTU to prohibit Russian athletes from participating in ETTU competitions and called on all Member Associations and WTT Contenders to follow. He also appealed to the ITTF to remain attentive to the ongoing conflict.

The Acting President thanked the delegate from Ukraine and pointed out that ETTU is committed to continue supporting the Ukraine athletes to enable their participation in ETTU events.

The delegate from Belgium addressed the Congress to congratulate ETTU Executive Board members on their job and to Table Tennis England as host of the 2026 World Championships.

The Acting President thanked the delegate from Belgium and added his congratulations to Table Tennis England, saying the return of the World Championships being also a victory for Europe.

Honorary Member Mr Stefano Bosi extended congratulations to the ETTU President and his team for the work done. He also congratulated the ITTF President on her appointment as an IOC Member. Additionally, Mr Bosi provided an update on the entries and the organisation of the upcoming World Masters Championships in Rome.

The Acting President thanked the speakers and followed the words of Mr Bosi to congratulate the ITTF President on her appointment as an IOC Member. Mr Moura addressed with a special thank you to the ETTU staff and the marketing team.

In closing, the Acting President thanked all delegates, the Honorary Members, the LOC and guests and wished all success in the European Championships.
