

**SELECTION POLICY****EUROPEAN CROSS COUNTRY CHAMPIONSHIPS: Brussels Belgium, December 10 2023****TEAM OBJECTIVES AND SELECTION PHILOSOPHY**

Athletics Ireland philosophy and team objectives for selection to the 2023 European Cross Country Championships are to select teams or individual athletes in any category where the evidence base suggests that we have sufficient quality and depth, coupled with optimal preparation, to confidently predict a successful outcome both in terms of:

- final individual and team standing, which should be reflective of Ireland's strong tradition of success in these championships and in the sport of cross country running generally, and
- making a positive contribution to individual athlete development, particularly at U20 and U23 grades, with the aim of successfully transitioning age-category athletes through the categories and into full senior international status in the coming years.

GENERAL INFORMATION

IMPORTANT DATES		
Date	Event	Notes
17 September 2023 (On/Before)	National Team Declaration Form (NTDF)	Online Declaration of Interest form here
12 November 2023 (On/Before)	Dispensation Request	Online Dispensation Request form Here
19 November 2023	National Cross Country Championships	
20 November 2023	Final selections all events	Names published after selection date on AAI website

1. SELECTION POLICY PERFORMANCE CONDITIONS:

1.1 Performances must be achieved during competitions organised or authorised in conformity with rules set by WA, EA, NCAA, LOC and its Area Associations or its Member Federations.

2. ENTRY RULES:

2.1 **Categories/Distances:** The program comprises of seven categories held over the following distances:

- U20 Women 5km (approximately)
- U20 Men 5km (approximately)
- U23 Women 7km (approximately)
- U23 Men 7km (approximately)
- Senior Women 9km (approximately)
- Senior Men 9km (approximately)
- Senior Mixed Relay (2 Men, 2 Women) 4 x 1500m

2.2 Each of the categories, except the senior mixed relay, will include an Individual Event and a Team Event held concurrently.

Teams/Reserves

2.3 Each Member Federation may enter a maximum of 8 (eight) athletes in each event per category, except Senior Mixed Relay, of which a maximum of 6 may participate.

2.4 Each Member Federation may enter a maximum of 6 (six) athletes in the mixed relay race, of which 4 (2 Men + 2 Women) will compete.

2.5 Each athlete may only be entered in one event at the Championships, and he/she can only compete in the event for which he/she was entered.

2.6 Team Events results, except for the mixed relay, shall be decided by the aggregate of places recorded by scoring the first 3 (three) athletes of each team.

Age Requirements

- 2.7 Only athletes aged at least 16 (sixteen) and not more than 19 (nineteen) years on 31 December of the year of the competition may participate in the U20 events;
- 2.8 Only athletes aged at least 20 (twenty) and not more than 22 (twenty-two) years on 31 December of the year of the competition may participate in the Under 23 events;
- 2.9 Only athletes aged at least twenty (20) years on 31 December of the year of the competition may compete in the senior events.

3. **SELECTION PROCESS:**

Participation Criteria

3.1 Nothing in this Policy obliges Athletics Ireland to select a full contingent of individuals in any particular event regardless of the entry rules set by the local organizing committee (LOC). Athletics Ireland will select Individual(s)/Team(s) according to the criteria set out in this Policy as allowed by entry rules for the event.

Eligibility

3.2 In order to be eligible for selection all athletes must:

- 3.2.1 Fill out a [National Team Declaration Form](#) on AAI website on or before the published date.
- 3.2.2 Satisfy all World Athletics eligibility, nationality and European Cross Country championship participation rules.
- 3.2.3 Be a registered member of Athletics Ireland.
- 3.2.4 Remain in “good standing” with Athletics Ireland and at all times comply with any established code of conduct or athlete agreement and otherwise conduct themselves in a way that does not bring their sport or the National Team into disrepute.
- 3.2.5 Have received certification for having completed the European Athletics Anti-Doping Education Programme – [I Run Clean](#).

General Selection Criteria

3.3 The Selectors may “exercise their sole and overriding discretion” to select any athlete(s) or a team that meets with the eligibility and entry rules of the 2023 European Cross Country Championships.

3.3.1 The Selectors may consider any factor or combination of factors that, in their opinion, are relevant to the selection of an athlete or a team, including, but not necessarily limited to:

- A. Consistency and repeatability of performances during the domestic and international seasons. Repeatability indicates consistency of performance and soundness of athlete preparation necessary to compete at the championships;
- B. Statistical data (ranking/performance list, performance-time curves derived from longitudinal data);
- C. The history and performances at previous championships and competitions, in particular the history of the athlete’s on-demand performances at those championships by reference to the level of performance expected of the athlete at those championships.
- D. The competitive record of each athlete against other athletes under consideration for selection in the same event. Emphasis will be placed on such results achieved in national championship events, as will achievement of performance targets in championship conditions.
- E. The Final Phase Readiness and ability for the athletes to show fitness in the final build-up phase is a fundamental principle for selection.

Individual Selection Criteria

3.4 Athletes seeking selection for the European Cross Country Championships (except those seeking selection in the Senior Mixed Relay) must compete in the corresponding category (i.e. U20, U23, Senior) of competition at the 2023 AAI National Cross Country Championships, **unless dispensation has been requested in writing** ([Online Dispensation Request Form Here](#)), **and subsequently granted**, no later than 12 November 2023, except in the case of genuine exceptional circumstances, illness or injury verified by a medical certificate from a general practitioner or sports medicine specialist and validated by Athletics Ireland medical staff.

3.4.1 Dispensations will be at the sole discretion of the Selectors and will generally only be granted to athletes in exceptional circumstances.

U20 Criteria

3.5 The first three (3) finishing athletes (male & female) in the U20 Category at the National Cross Country Championships will gain automatic selection.

3.5.1 Additional U20 selections up to a maximum of six (6), plus a maximum of two (2) reserves, may be made at the discretion

of the Selectors and will be considered on an individual-by-individual basis with reference to section 3.3, up to a maximum total of six (6) athletes. Selectors are not obligated to add any discretionary selections beyond the three (3) automatic selections and are not obligated to select a full team of six (6) athletes or any reserves.

Under 23 Criteria

3.6 The first three (3) finishing athlete (male & female) in the U23 Category at the National Cross Country Championships will gain automatic selection.

3.6.1 Additional U23 selections up to a maximum of six (6), plus a maximum of two (2) reserves, may be made at the discretion of the Selectors and will be considered on an individual-by-individual basis with reference to section 3.3, up to a maximum total of six (6) athletes. Selectors are not obligated to add any discretionary selections beyond the two (2) automatic selections and are not obligated to select a full team of six (6) athletes or any reserves.

3.6.2 If an U23 athlete finishes in a senior selection position at the National Cross Country Championships they may be considered for selection for the European Cross Country senior category. The final decision on whether or not to select U23 athletes for the senior teams will rest solely with the Selectors.

Senior Criteria

3.7 The first three (3) finishing athletes (male & female) at the National Cross Country Championships will gain automatic selection for the Senior Men's and Senior Women's race.

3.7.1 Additional Senior selections up to a maximum of six (6), plus a maximum of two (2) reserves, may be made at the discretion of the Selectors and will be considered on an individual-by-individual basis with reference to section 3.3, up to a maximum total of six (6) athletes. Selectors are not obligated to add any discretionary selections beyond the three (3) automatic selections and are not obligated to select a full team of six (6) athletes or any reserves.

Senior Mixed Relay Criteria

3.8 Athletics Ireland will consider selecting a team to compete in the Senior Mixed Relay (2 Men + 2 Women) of 4 x 1 lap (approximately 1.5 km per lap) only if:

3.8.1 Selectors believe a top-3 team finish is potentially achievable, and

3.8.2 The strength of the Senior Women's 8k team or Senior Men's 10k team is not significantly weakened by selection of key athletes to a Senior Mixed Relay Team.

3.9 Acknowledging that September to November is critical to the aerobic development and conditioning required for middle distance performance on the track, selection policy intends not to undermine optimal medium- to long-term preparation of our middle-distance athletes and, therefore, there will not be a specific trial race scheduled for the Senior Mixed Relay. Athletics Ireland do aim to facilitate opportunities for middle-distance athletes to demonstrate form during the cross-country season prior to selection of the Mixed Relay Team. For further information in relation to opportunities to show form please contact [Athletics Ireland Performance Director](#) by 1 October 2023

3.9.1 When considering a Senior Mixed Relay Team, selectors will use discretion (as outlined in section 3.3) to consider two (2) men and two (2) women, plus one (1) male and one (1) female reserve, from our pool of leading middle-distance athletes, who have proved current form and fitness up to and including 19 November 2023.

3.9.2 Athletes seeking selection in the Senior Mixed Relay are not obligated to compete at the national Cross Country Championships but may use that opportunity to demonstrate current form.

3.9.3 Athletes wishing to be considered for selection for the senior mixed relay should contact [Athletics Ireland Performance Director](#) and provide a detailed performance plan for the qualifying period by 1 October 2023.

After Selection

3.10 All athletes selected may be required to prove their fitness to compete in the 2023 European Cross Country Championships by attaining a fitness standard, or some other appropriate performance as agreed with the athlete and their coach, and the Management Team **prior to the championships**.

3.10.1 Failure by a selected athlete to meet the pre-European XC Championship proof of fitness will, at the discretion of the Management Team, result in an athlete who has been initially selected to the team being withdrawn from the 2023 European Cross Country Championships competition.

3.10.2 For the purposes of clarity, it is the intended operation of this Policy that **all selections remain conditional**

until the athlete has achieved the pre-Championships proof of fitness.

3.11 An athlete who enters the Athletics Ireland Team Camp and/or the European Cross Country Championship village will be subject to an injury evaluation/assessment by the championship Team Management staff. The injury evaluation/assessment will be carried out by Athletics Ireland's Physio (or appointed Team Physio) in consultation (if appropriate) with Athletics Ireland's Team Doctor.

3.11.1 If as a result of such injury evaluation/assessment the Team Doctor, Team Management staff, and Team Leader/Manager consider an athlete does not have the standard of fitness or is otherwise not in condition to compete due to injury at a level appropriate to the event(s) for which they have been selected, the Team Leader/Manager will withdraw the athlete from the competition.

3.12 Selected athletes who train and compete outside of Ireland must arrive back in Ireland, if required to do so by team management, within an agreed date prior to the European Cross Country Championships.

Selectors Meetings

3.13 The selectors are scheduled to meet and select athletes on 20 November 2023 for all events.

3.14 See the following link for [Selection Panel and the Terms of Reference](#).

Selection Queries

3.15 Athletes can seek clarification regarding selection policy from [Athletics Ireland Performance Director](#).

Non-Selection Appeals Process

3.16 The publishing of the Final Selection Announcement on Athletics Ireland website will be **deemed to be the commencement of the 24 hour period to lodge non-Selection Appeals** in accord with this Selection Policy.

3.17 Any athlete who is not selected in accordance with this Selection Policy may appeal their non-selection to Athletics Ireland providing they:

3.17.1 Have submitted an NTFD in accordance with timelines contained in this Selection Policy and;

3.17.2 Submit their non-selection appeal via online Notice of Appeals Form ([Notice of Appeal form is here](#)) within 24 hours of the selection decision published on the Athletics Ireland website (i.e. the Selection Announcement). The Notice of Appeal Form is submitted to the Chair of the Appeals Panel and the CEO of Athletics Ireland

3.18 The Grounds upon which a Selection decision may be appealed are limited to the following:

3.18.1 There has been an alleged failure by Selection Panel to follow or apply the relevant Selection Procedure and/or criteria set out in the Selection Policy, and/or

3.18.2 The decision for selection for the championship has been reached on the basis of an error of fact.

4. **GENERAL INFORMATION:**

4.1 The criteria may be amended at any time by the Directors of Athletics Ireland, if Athletics Ireland is of the opinion that such amendment is necessary in the best interests of Athletics Ireland or as a result of any change in participation rules and/or guidelines. Any amendment to the criteria will be published on the Athletics Ireland website.