



# European Fencing Confederation Confédération Européenne d'Esgrime

## EFC Equality & Diversity Commission

### Commission Members:

Pascal Tesch (President), Patricia Aiyenuro (Head of operations), Varpu Wiens, Meirav Ofri Hershkovich, Annalisa Avancini, Aida Vengale, Vendela Runold

### Overview

In 2025, the EFC Equality & Diversity Commission focused on building strong foundations for a coordinated, visible, and sustainable approach to equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) across European fencing. The year was marked by strategic planning, increased visibility within the EFC, early awareness initiatives, improved data engagement, and the development of long-term frameworks for social impact, women's support, and inclusive fencing.

### Strategic Priorities

Members of the group actively advanced equality themes within their respective countries, undertaking initiatives such as awareness-raising activities, support for female athletes and coaches, and advocacy for balanced representation in decision-making structures

During 2025, the Commission refined three core strategic themes:

#### 1. Raising Awareness of Equality & Diversity

- Planning of coordinated social media and educational campaigns
- Development of a dedicated Equality & Diversity section for the new EFC website
- Design of webinars and online educational content

#### 2. Supporting Women and Girls in Fencing

- Promotion of international development opportunities for women coaches, including IOC-supported programmes
- Initial planning of Women's Leadership Courses and mentorship initiatives
- Receipt of updated FIE statistics on female referees, athletes, and coaches, with plans to publish European insights on the EFC website (subject to approval)



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### 3. Social Impact & Inclusive Fencing

The Commission began identifying and collecting best-practice examples of inclusive fencing initiatives across Europe, including:

- **Breast cancer recovery fencing programmes**, supported by coordinated awareness activities and social media engagement, with plans for earlier and more unified preparation in 2026
- **Autism and neurodiversity initiatives**, highlighted by participation in the “Fencing for All” roundtable in Rome, attended by representatives from 15 national federations and the FIE Secretary General

To support consistency and visibility, the Commission also developed a set of bimonthly unifying campaign themes:

- *You Belong Here*
- *Celebrating Diversity*
- *Your Story Matters*
- *Respect Above All*

### Conclusion

2025 was a foundational year for the EFC Equality & Diversity Commission. The Commission strengthened its structure, clarified its mission, and initiated meaningful actions that position it to deliver measurable and lasting impact. With strong leadership, growing collaboration, and a clear strategic direction, the Commission enters 2026 well prepared to advance inclusive excellence in European fencing.

### Priorities for 2026

- Launch of the full Equality & Diversity Action Plan
- Publication of articles and resources on the EFC Equality & Diversity website section
- Reinforce cooperation with relevant stakeholders, further mainstream equality objectives across its areas of work, and explore the development of monitoring mechanisms to assess progress in a structured and consistent manner.
- Introduction of an EFC Equality & Diversity Ambassador Programme



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