



**Rugby World Cup 2023
Qualification Pathway Q/A**
June 2020

What are the main changes compare to previous Rugby World Cups?

For the first time, Asia will have a direct chance of qualifying one representative with the Rugby Asia champion competing in a play-off against the Pacific region (Japan is already qualified through RWC 2019). It reflects the growth of rugby in Asia, a continent that has been inspired by the last Rugby World Cup in Japan and saw a surge in interest for rugby in countries like in Japan and India where men's rugby interest rose to 59 per cent and 30 per cent respectively.

Another change compared to 2019 is Europe will provide two direct qualifiers via the Rugby Europe Championship instead of one as no European union outside of the Six Nations have qualified through a top three finish at RWC 2019.

Is the qualification pathway fair to all member unions?

The pathway has been developed to give all World Rugby full member unions the best possible opportunity to reach rugby's showcase event and after a full review of performance at Rugby World Cup 2019.

We have been working in close collaboration with our member unions and regional associations to develop the fairest model for all, while delivering the top teams in the world to rugby's showcase tournament.

Will the pathway change due to the Covid-19 crisis?

We are monitoring closely COVID-19's impact on the qualification pathway and its competitions. The dates for events in 2021 will be announced in due course and will be subject to an anticipated easing of the COVID-19 situation.

World Rugby has also announced details of a dedicated COVID-19 relief strategy aimed at supporting the global game and mitigating the overall impact of the pandemic on the sport, supported by a relief fund of approximately US\$100 million.

Is the Draw still going ahead as schedule? Are you not considering postponing it due to the current sanitary crisis?

The Draw is a key milestone on the journey towards France 2023 and an important moment in the Rugby World Cup cycle. It marks the moment fans can start to plan based on the match schedule and important organisational steps can be taken to deliver a successful tournament.

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The Draw will be organised on 30 November 2020 in Paris, considering the latest government and health authorities' advice.

What rankings will be used for the Draw knowing very little international rugby has been played this year?

We continue to review a dynamic COVID-19 situation, liaising with the 12 qualified unions. It is too early to outline the process at this stage.

How will France 2023 be impacted by the pandemic?

Like all of society, sport has been significantly impacted by the global pandemic. However, World Rugby and the France 2023 Organising Committee believe that the tournament will be a beacon of solidarity, recovery and celebration.

Will the commercial programme suffer?

Via the hosting model, there is a guarantee that will ensure a strong platform for World Rugby to reinvest in the development, support and growth of the game at all levels.

Is it appropriate to be hosting major events in a post-Covid era given the cost?

Rugby World Cup is a low-investment, high return-on-investment proposition for host nations compared to other major sports events. The economic, social and sporting legacy of the event is well documented and important nationwide in its impact, sustaining tourism, jobs and sporting participation.

Rugby fans love to travel and experience all the host nation has to offer, and they stay on average 17-21 nights.

Hosting a major event brings people together, it unifies and boost national pride and togetherness – this was a cornerstone of the France 2023 bid.

What hygiene measures will be implemented?

We are still three years away, but it is important to state that France 2023 will have the highest standard of recommended social and sustainable hygiene measures in place.

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