EUROPEAN AQUATICS®

ELITE COACH CONFERENCE SWIMMING



18 - 19 SEPTEMBER 2026

MAIA, PORTUGAL

MESSAGE FROM ANTONIO SILVA, EUROPEAN AQUATICS' PRESIDENT



As President of European Aquatics, I'd like to welcome you all to the Elite Coach Conference – Swimming 2026.

Education is at the heart of everything we do, and it plays a huge role in the European Aquatics Strategic Plan 2024-2030. Whether you're an athlete, coach, official, or referee, continuous learning helps us all improve, stay sharp, and keep our sport moving forward.

These conferences are more than just training sessions—they're opportunities to grow, connect with experts, and be part of a community dedicated to excellence. By investing in education, we ensure that our sport remains fair, innovative, and always evolving. So, dive in, learn as much as you can, and let's build the future of European Aquatics together!

ANTONIO SILVA

European Aquatics President

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CONFERENCE INFORMATION

WHO SHOULD ATTEND THIS CLINIC

Although this conference is primarily prepared for coaches, it is open to all members of the European Aquatics community, including officials, athletes, managers, and other participants interested in this sport.

Please note that this Conference is important to renew the European Aquatics Coach Certification, as part of the mandatory education units that each certified coach must attend.

LOCATION

Maia, Portugal



Maia, located in the north of Portugal, is a dynamic city that combines quality of life, urban development and a strong connection to the Porto metropolitan area. Situated just a few minutes from Porto—one of the country's main economic and cultural centres—Maia benefits greatly from its proximity to a vibrant urban hub, with access to a metropolitan population of over one million people and excellent infrastructure, including Francisco Sá Carneiro Airport, which is located within its territory.

Despite its recent growth, Maia maintains a distinct identity, characterised by a balance between tradition and modernity. Its urban centre features contemporary and well-planned buildings, while its surrounding parishes preserve historical and rural elements that reflect the region's heritage. The city is also recognised for its organisation and the high quality of its public services.

Being so close to Porto allows residents to easily enjoy a wide range of attractions, such as the historic centre—classified as a UNESCO World Heritage Site—the iconic Ribeira district, Clérigos Tower, and the famous Port wine cellars in Vila Nova de Gaia. Porto is also well known for its rich cultural life, with renowned museums, theatres, art galleries, and a thriving culinary and nightlife scene.

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Maia itself strongly invests in culture and leisure, offering venues such as the Fórum da Maia, which hosts cultural events, exhibitions and performances. Its parks and green spaces, including Maia's Central Park, provide pleasant areas for outdoor activities and contribute to residents' well-being.

With excellent accessibility, including metro connections, a comprehensive road network and direct access to the airport, Maia is a strategic location both to live and to work. Its growing economic dynamism, combined with the proximity to one of Portugal's leading cities, makes it an increasingly attractive destination. In this way, Maia stands out as an example of sustainable development and metropolitan integration, benefiting from everything Porto has to offer while forging its own path.

VENUE OF THE CLINIC

University of Maia
Av. Carlos de Oliveira Campos, 4475-690 Maia. Portugal
https://www.umaia.pt/en

OFFICIAL HOTEL:

Premium Porto Maia
Rua Simão Bolívar 375, Maia. 4470-214 Portugal
https://www.premiumportomaia.com/en/






The Hotel is a four-star facility located at Maia's city centre. From Forum Maia Metro Station, just 100 metres away, one can easily reach the city centre to any visit before and after the Conference. The hotel is an 8-minute drive from the airport. Hotel Premium Porto Maia's 24-hour reception can help arrange trips to Maia's and Porto main attractions. It also offers car rental and free parking nearby.

REGISTRATION AND PARTICIPATION FEE

- Registration must be done directly in the EA Academy platform, until September 11th, 2026: https://www.eaacademy.eu/lms/courses/swimming-elite-coach-conference
- To attend the Clinic in presence with accommodation in Official Hotel – **95 Euros**
- To attend the Clinic online at the EA Academy platform – **195 Euros**
- To attend the Clinic in presence without accommodation in the Official Hotel – **195 Euros**

(Please note that the in-presence option without accommodation in the Official Hotel allows the participants to attend only the Conference sessions and the coffee breaks).

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ACCOMMODATION AND IMPORTANT DATES

Full package for the Conference attendance

per person, per night, full board included (Accommodation; Breakfast; Lunch; Coffee breaks; Dinner at the hotel/official dinner; Airport transfers - arrival and departure):

Regular Fee (Registration/Payment before August 7th, 2026):

Single room	200 euros
Double room	170 euros

Payment of accommodation and registration fee must be done through the EA Education Platform during the Registration process, until August 7th, 2026.

Late Fee (Registration/Payment between August 7th – August 21st, 2026):

Single room	230 euros
Double room	200 euros

Payment of accommodation and registration fee must be done through the EA Education Platform during the Registration process, until August 21st, 2026.

Please include check-in and check-out dates during the registration process and the person who will share the room with you.

OFFICIAL AIRPORT AND TRANSPORTATION

The Official airport is Porto International Airport - Francisco Sá Carneiro Airport (OPO).
Transportation from and to Official Airport is provided by the organizer and included in the price.
Transportation will be organized only for attendants which will be accommodated in the Official Hotel.

During the registration process, please add the information related to your flight.

FLIGHT DETAILS			
Arrival at Porto International Airport (OPO)			
Arrival date		From	
Flight No		Arrival time	

Departure from Porto International Airport (OPO)			
Departure date		To	
Flight No		Departure Time	

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PROVISIONAL SCHEDULE

The program of the Conference may be changed accordingly.

All times are local (UTC/GMT +01:00) - Europe/Lisbon

DAY 1, 18th September 2026	
Main Conference Room	
09:00	Registration
09:30-10:00	Opening ceremony
10:00-11:15	**Kim Dietrichsen (Denmark)** Making Sport Psychology Part of Every Training Session: A Structured and Practical Approach to World-Class Performance
11:15-11:45	Networking event (Coffee break)
11:45-12:45	Oral Presentations - Research in Swimming
12:45-14:00	Networking event (Lunch)
14:00-15:15	**Ana Sousa (Portugal)** Environmental physiology in performance and recovery
15:30-16:45	EA Innovation Hub session
17:00-20:00	Social and networking events (free time)
20:00	Networking event (Official Dinner)

DAY 2, 19th September 2026	
Main Conference Room	
09:30-10:45	**Aylin Post (The Netherlands)** Demystifying swimming talent
10:45-11:15	Networking event (Coffee break)
11:15-12:45	**Fred Vergnoux** The Architecture of Elite Performance: Building Culture and Resilience to Excel in Olympic Swimming
12:45-13:15	Closing remarks
13:15-14:30	Networking event (Lunch)

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INVITED SPEAKERS (already confirmed):



Kim Dietrichsen (Denmark)

Chair of the EAA coaches' sub-commission - European Aquatics

For more than 25 years, Kim Dietrichsen has worked in elite swimming as a coach, performance leader, and sport psychology consultant. He has supported some of Denmark's most successful swimmers, including Rikke Møller Pedersen, Jeanette Ottesen, and Julie Kepp Jensen. Beyond swimming, he has coached world-class athletes in badminton, triathlon, cycling, equestrian sports, and other individual disciplines.

In this session, Kim challenges the traditional view of sport psychology as something separate from daily training. Drawing on both research and practical experience from the highest levels of sport, he presents a structured and hands-on approach where psychological development is trained with the same intention and consistency as physiological capacities such as VO_2max and VLa. The focus is simple: making sport psychology a practical part of every training session and every performance plan.



Ana Sousa (Portugal)

University of Maia – Research Centre in Sports Sciences, Health Sciences and Human Development

Ana Sousa is an assistant Professor at the University of Maia (UMaia, Portugal), where coordinates the Sports Coaching Master Program. She is also a researcher at the Research Centre in Sports Sciences, Health Sciences and Human Development (CIDESD, Portugal) where conducted her post-doctorate on the topic of altitude training with athletes. Ana bridges the gap between environmental stress and elite athletic output. By shifting environmental physiology away from theoretical science and into the daily training environment, she delivers concrete methods to optimize performance and recovery. This session provides coaches and athletes with a systematic approach to train acclimation and recovery protocols.

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Frédéric Vergnoux (France)

Director and Head Coach of the elite and international groups at Cercle des Nageurs d'Antibes (CN Antibes)

Frédéric "Fred" Vergnoux is an elite French swimming coach widely recognized as one of the most successful international swimming mentors. Born in Valence, France, Vergnoux holds a Master of Sciences in Physiology, a degree in mental preparation, a background heavily influencing his data-driven, conditioning-focused training regimens. Over a storied multi-decade career, his swimmers have broken over 530 individual records (including world, continental, and national benchmarks) and captured over 75 Olympic, World and European Championship medals. 6 times Olympic coach, he was named the World Coach of the Year in 2014, and the European coach of the year in 2025. This session provides coaches and athletes with an approach of his training methods and principles.



Aylin Post (The Netherlands)

Talent Development Expert for the Royal Dutch Volleyball Federation

Aylin Post (PhD) is an expert in talent development and elite performance pathways with nine years of applied experience in high-performance sport. From 2017 to 2023, she worked as a sport scientist for the Dutch national swimming team (KNZB), while completing her PhD research on the pathway to swimming expertise. In this dual role, she bridged scientific evidence and daily high-performance coaching practice. She currently works as a Talent Development Expert for the Royal Dutch Volleyball Federation, focusing on the development of athlete-centred, evidence-informed talent systems.

Why do some talented swimmers reach the world stage while others do not? Drawing on longitudinal research tracking physical, mental, technical, tactical, and performance development, this talk reveals the characteristics and developmental patterns of (Dutch) swimmers who stay on track for elite success. Coaches will gain evidence-based insights to better identify potential and guide athletes throughout their development journey.

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ORAL PRESENTATIONS:

Research in Swimming

European Aquatics warmly invites universities, research institutions, National Federations, and educational bodies to explore cooperation opportunities and consider establishing partnership agreements in aquatic education and professional development — reinforcing a shared European vision for excellence in the sector.

In this context, we are pleased to invite you to contribute to the European Aquatics Elite Coach Conference – Swimming - with an oral presentation. The call for abstracts is now open for contributions in both scientific research and applied practice related to Swimming and Aquatics in different scientific fields. Authors are encouraged to highlight how their work contributes to advancing knowledge and practice in the field.

Submission Guidelines:

- Abstracts in English, submitted in *.docx format using the official template (please see attached file).
- Email submissions to: education@europeanaquatics.org
- Deadline for submission: August 14th, 2026.
- Peer-review: abstracts will be reviewed by the Scientific Board of the Conference, and the evaluation/acceptance letter will be sent to authors.
- Registration: presenting authors must be registered at the Conference until September 15th (**special fee: 60 Euros**; applied only to the presenting author – please ask for this voucher when receiving the final acceptance letter).
- All accepted abstracts will be published in Motricidade journal*, as a special edition dedicated to this Conference.
- We warmly encourage you and your institution to submit abstracts and to share this opportunity within your networks. Your contributions will play an important role in strengthening knowledge and best practices in aquatic education and research across Europe and beyond.
- We look forward to receiving your abstracts and to welcoming you in Portugal.

* https://revistas.rcaap.pt/motricidade
Motricidade journal is currently included in some of the most important international databases of indexation and abstracts, such as Scielo Citation Index (Clarivate Analytics), ELSEVIER (SCOPUS, EMCare), SCImago (SJR: Medicine, Health Professions), PsycINFO, IndexCopernicus, Scielo, CABI (CAB Abstracts, Global Health, Leisure, Recreation and Tourism Abstracts, Nutrition Abstracts and Reviews Series A), Qualis, SPORTDiscus, EBSCO (CINAHL Plus with Full Text, Academic Search Complete, Fonte Acadêmica, Fuente Academica, Fuente Academica Premier), Proquest (CSA Physical Education Index, ProQuest Psychology Journals, Summon by Serial Solutions, Ulrich's Periodicals Directory), DOAJ, Open J-Gate, Latindex, Gale/Cengage Learning (InfoTrac, Academic OneFile, Informe), Google Scholar, SIIC Databases (siicsalud), BVS ePORTUGUESe, SHERPA/RoMEO, e-Revistas, OCLC, Hinari/WHO, Swets Information Services, ScienceCentral, Genamics JournalSeek, Cabell's Directories, SafetyLit, NLM Catalog, SCIRUS, BASE Bielefeld, Academic Journals Database, Índex Online RMP, Saúde em Movimento.

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