PRESS RELEASE

Arenas Europe Joins the Sports World Congress Advisory Board to Shape the Future of Arenas Ahead of a New Era of Live Entertainment and Major Events

Barcelona, Spain – July 6, 2026

The Sports World Congress (SWC), organized by HUB23, has announced a strategic collaboration with Arenas Europe, the leading association representing the European arena industry, reinforcing the congress's position as one of Europe's fastest-growing international forums dedicated to sports and entertainment venues, major event infrastructure, and innovation.

As part of the agreement, Arenas Europe will join the SWC Advisory Board and actively contribute to the development of the congress programme, bringing the expertise and vision of its network of 48 arenas across 20 European countries.

The partnership comes at a pivotal moment for the venue industry. According to Deloitte, more than 300 sports venues worldwide were expected to have undergone renovation or new construction projects by 2025, with nearly 50% of these investments taking place in North America and Europe. This unprecedented wave of investment is being driven by the need to attract new generations of fans and create diversified revenue streams beyond traditional event operations.

At the same time, industry forecasts indicate that more than €60 billion* will be invested in new stadiums, arenas, and sports precincts over the next 15 years, including approximately €48 billion across the top five European football leagues. These investments are transforming venues into year-round destinations for sports, entertainment, culture, business, and community engagement.
* *Source: McKinsey & Company "Turning sports infrastructure into a competitive advantage".*

"This strategic collaboration will represent a qualitative and quantitative leap forward for the venue industry," said **Josep M. Monti**, President of HUB23. "Partnerships like this are essential to creating value for the sector. Together, we can help lead Europe towards the next generation of arena innovation, particularly in the build-up to EuroBasket 2029, IHF 2027, EHF 2028 or NBA Europe. Arenas are becoming the new social and entertainment hubs of our cities, and collaboration between industry leaders will be key to shaping their future."

Robert Fitzpatrick, President of Arenas Europe, commented: “Arenas sit at the intersection of live entertainment, sport, culture and civic life. Across Europe, they are becoming more strategically important than ever: as economic drivers, cultural platforms, community assets and places where major shared experiences are created.

“Arenas Europe exists to connect the leaders shaping this sector and to strengthen the collective voice of the arena industry. Joining the Sports World Congress Advisory Board gives us an important opportunity to contribute our members’ insight to a wider international conversation about the future of venues, from technology, sustainability and security to audience experience, operational resilience and long-term investment.”

“This partnership reflects our ambition to work with organisations that understand the scale and significance of the arena sector. The next decade will demand new thinking, deeper collaboration and stronger leadership. We look forward to helping shape that discussion in Barcelona.”

Through this collaboration, HUB23 and Arenas Europe will create new opportunities for knowledge sharing, international networking, industry benchmarking, innovation showcases, and strategic dialogue among arena operators, sports organizations, entertainment promoters, tech companies, investors, and public institutions.

The next edition of the Sports World Congress will take place in Barcelona on 1–2 February 2027, bringing together the leading voices shaping the future of sports and entertainment venues, fan experience, venue operations, sustainability, technology, premium hospitality, and major events.

As Europe prepares for a decade of unprecedented investment in sports and entertainment infrastructure, arenas are increasingly becoming engines of economic activity, cultural vitality, urban regeneration, and social connection. The opportunities ahead are enormous and the industry will need shared intelligence, sharper strategic thinking and stronger cross-sector collaboration to meet them.

The future of venues will be shaped by the organisations willing to work across markets, disciplines and borders. On 1–2 February 2027 in Barcelona, leading arena operators, venue owners, sports organisations, promoters, brands, investors and innovators will come together at the Sports World Congress to help define the next chapter for sports and entertainment venues.

NOTES TO EDITORS:

About Arenas Europe

Arenas Europe is the new name of the European Arenas Association. For 35 years, the association has brought together leaders from across the arena sector to share expertise, support professional development, encourage collaboration and strengthen standards across Europe’s live entertainment industry.

Arenas Europe represents 48 arenas across 20 European countries, operating some of Europe’s leading venues and staging outstanding programmes of music, family shows, comedy, sport and corporate events. Together, its members help shape the future of live entertainment across the continent.

Website: https://arenas-europe.com/