

EMEA ESPORTS

2023

SEASON REVIEW

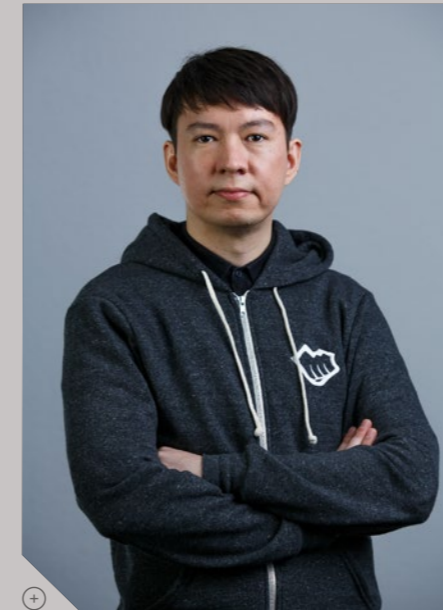


**RIOT
GAMES**

2023 SEASON REVIEW

CONTENTS

① RIOT GAMES / OPENING		④ LEAGUE OF LEGENDS	
— FOREWORD	3	— OVERVIEW OF LOL ESPORTS IN EMEA	46
— INTRODUCTION TO RIOT GAMES	4	— THE NEW LEC FORMAT	48
— → GAMES	5	— INTERVIEW: DENIZ GUNAY	50
— → ENTERTAINMENT	6	— 2023 LEC RESULTS	52
— → ESPORTS	7	— THE 2023 SEASON FINALS	56
— HIGHLIGHTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS 2023	8	— LEC FINALS WEEKEND IN MONTPELLIER	58
— → PLAYER ACHIEVEMENTS	8	— RECAP OF LEC PLAYER MOVEMENT IN 2023	60
— → EMEA ESPORTS ACHIEVEMENTS	10	— EMEA REGIONAL LEAGUES RECAP	64
— RIOT ESPORTS EMEA COMPETITIONS	12	— EMEA MASTERS RESULTS RECAP	71
— → LEAGUE OF LEGENDS ESPORTS	12	— PATH TO PRO: WHY THE ERLS ARE VITAL	74
— → VALORANT ESPORTS	14		
— MAPS OF REGIONAL RIOT ESPORTS COMPETITIONS	16	⑤ VALORANT	
— → THE TIERS OF RIOT ESPORTS COMPETITIONS	18	— OVERVIEW OF THE VCT IN 2023	78
		— INTRODUCING THE VCT EMEA LEAGUE	80
		— THE TEAMS	82
② COMPETITION MANAGEMENT		— VCT EMEA LEAGUE RESULTS	84
— OVERVIEW OF COMPETITION MANAGEMENT TOOLS	22	— EMEA'S INTERNATIONAL VCT PERFORMANCE	86
— MATCH OPS: ONLINE VS LAN CONSIDERATIONS	24	— RECAP OF VCT EMEA PLAYER MOVEMENT IN 2023	88
— PLAYER WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT	26	— VALORANT CHALLENGERS LEAGUES	92
— REFEREE ROLES IN A LIVE ESPORTS MATCH	28	— VCT ASCENSION EMEA 2023	96
— WHAT DOES RIOT PROVIDE ESPORTS PLAYERS?	30	— GAME CHANGERS EMEA	98
		— MATCH OPERATIONS IN VALORANT ESPORTS	100
③ RULES & COMPLIANCE			
— OVERVIEW OF RIOT ESPORTS COMPLIANCE	34	⑥ EMERGING GAMES AND COMPETITIONS	
— MAJOR POLICY UPDATES 2023	36	— 2023 TEAMFIGHT TACTICS RESULTS	104
— FINANCIAL MECHANISMS IN RIOT ESPORTS	38	— → 2023 TFT SETS	105
— MAINTAINING ESPORTS INTEGRITY	40	— VCT OFF//SEASON EMEA EVENTS	106
— COMBATTING MATCH FIXING	42	— THIRD-PARTY COMPETITION HIGHLIGHTS	108
		⑦ PARTNERS	
		— PARTNER TEAM ORGANIZATIONS	112
		— TOURNAMENT ORGANIZER PARTNERS	114
		— COMMERCIAL SPONSORS AND PARTNERS	116
		— CLOSING WORD	119



Marc Schnell
Head of Competitive Operations EMEA

2023 Season Review

FOREWORD

The 2023 season has been a truly exciting one for fans of esports in EMEA with both of our flagship competitions for League of Legends and VALORANT undergoing a significant facelift.

The League of Legends EMEA Championship (LEC), for the first time since its inception under our original EU LCS brand in 2013, has adopted a three split format which culminates with a Season Finals. We have been excited to see that fans received this format exceptionally well, and are looking forward to continually evolving the LEC in future seasons. Furthermore, for the first time EMEA Masters held its final together with the LEC at our roadshow event in Montpellier in France, featuring an unforgettable final between the fierce Movistar Riders and home crowd favorites Karmin Corp.

VCT EMEA fully relaunched in 2023 with 10 newly partnered teams and a revamped format, debuting in a new arena: the Coliseum, at Berlin Messe. Successfully moving to a full-on league has been a big lift for Competitive Operations as well as the participating teams. This made it all the more exciting when the EMEA teams proved to be a force to be reckoned with internationally; with Fnatic securing a 1st place finish at LOCK//IN in São Paulo and Masters Tokyo, as well as a 4th place finish at VALORANT Champions in Los Angeles.

On the policy and governance side we've concluded a number of high impact projects this year. Firstly, we have introduced Sporting Financial Regulations (SFR) in the LEC to support ecosystem sustainability and better competitive balance between teams in the league. SFR will encourage teams to maintain the total sum of salaries paid to the top five highest-paid players in a team within a certain range. SFR represents a key milestone in our long-term goal of financial sustainability for all league stakeholders.

Secondly, we have renewed and improved our integrity and compliance framework for EMEA esports from the ground up. As of the 2023 season, all Riot-operated as well as partner-operated competitions under the EMEA esports umbrella have adopted a new set of compliance guidelines that aim to increase consistency, efficiency, and fairness of decisions to further promote a safe and trusted sporting environment for all participants.

We hope you will find interest in what we have prepared for you in this year's edition of the EMEA Esports Season Review. ☒

THANK YOU



ENTERTAINMENT ROOTED IN GAMING

RIOT COMPANY VALUES

- ① Player Experience First
- ② Dare to Dream
- ③ Thrive Together
- ④ Execute with Excellence
- ⑤ Stay Hungry; Stay Humble

For over a decade, Riot Games titles have evolved closely with our players, with esports and entertainment milestones redefining what it means to be a gamer.

From its humble origins as a start-up developer, Riot Games today operates as an international gaming publisher and entertainment pioneer, with critically acclaimed titles and esports competitions that continue to set benchmarks across the industry. There are over 4,500 fulltime Rioters working in over 20 offices worldwide.

Our games boast millions of players, our esports competitions millions of fans, and our growing library of shows, music videos, and cinematics billions of total views. [x](#)

Riot Games was founded in 2006 by Brandon Beck and Marc Merrill to develop, publish, and support the most player-focused games in the world. Our operations today are focused around three core pillars:

PILLAR_01



PILLAR_02



PILLAR_03



GAMES

ENTERTAINMENT

ESPORTS

GAMES

PILLAR_01

RIOT GAMES TITLES

LEAGUE OF LEGENDS

- A five-versus-five strategy title in the Multiplayer Online Battle Arena (MOBA) genre.
- Each player takes a specific position, and must destroy their enemy base/Nexus.

- Weapons/experience resets with every game, and competitive advantage can't be bought.
- Released in 2009, remains one of the most played PC games worldwide.
- Over 150 champions, all with customizable looks.

VALORANT

- A five-versus-five character-based tactical shooter.
- Players attack and defend their side using sharp gunplay and tactical abilities.

- Over 20 agents, featuring real-world nationalities.
- Released in 2021, it's already one of the most popular games in its genre.

TEAMFIGHT TACTICS

- An auto battler game, featuring chess-like elements
- Originally a game mode in League of Legends, it became a standalone game in 2020.

- One of the most popular strategy video games worldwide.
- Cross-platform: can be played on both PC and mobile devices!

LEAGUE OF LEGENDS WILD RIFT

- A version of League of Legends made specifically for mobile devices.
- The same game experience, but with shorter games and touch-screen controls.

- Has over 40 playable champions, and is available in over 85 countries.

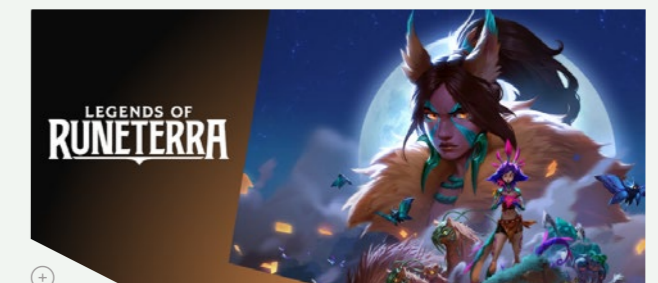
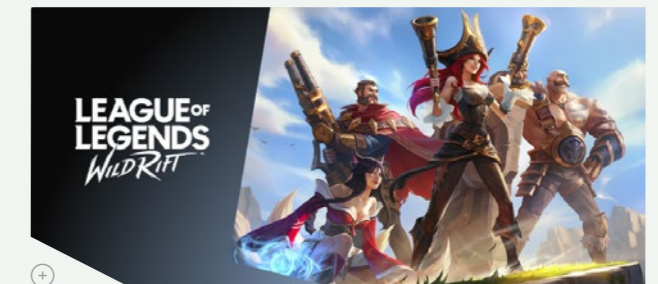
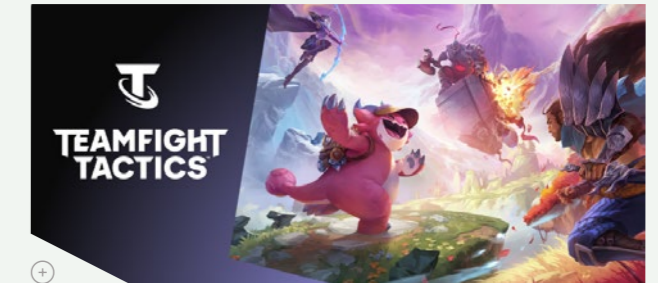
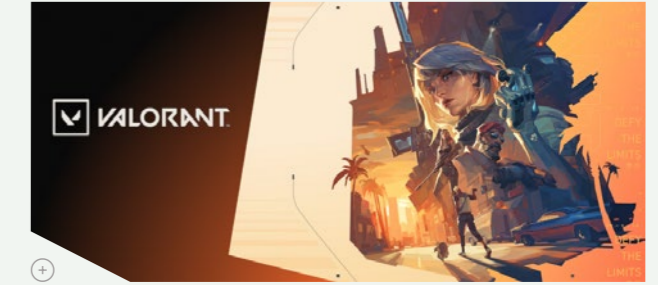
LEGENDS OF RUNETERRA

- A digital collectible card game set in the world of League of Legends
- Released in 2020, with new card sets released throughout each year.

- Won mobile game of the year award at the 2021 Annual D.I.C.E. Awards

Always the root of what Riot does. Rather than divert focus from one game to another, our founders sought to create games that could be supported and developed long term.

Additionally, our titles can be played with no up-front cost, and instead players can choose to purchase additional cosmetic perks. Through this model, Riot Games self-funds and sustains its bold bets, reinvesting our player's money to deliver back to them exceptional fan experiences made to be remembered.



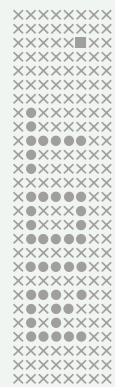
Video games have evolved from a niche hobby to a cultural identity. Riot seeks to blur the line between gaming and more linear forms of entertainment (movies, TV, and music) to deliver acclaimed entertainment experiences accessible to all—but all the more fun if you are a fan of our games!

SOME STANDOUT EXAMPLES INCLUDE



PLAYERS

An esports mockumentary series that follows Fugitive Gaming, a fictional pro League of Legends esports team in North America. The show premiered on Paramount+ and was co-created by Dan Perrault, the creator of American Vandal.



K/DA

One of Riot's virtual music groups, where League of Legends characters are reimagined as a pop-girl group (with real life pop stars providing the vocals). Their debut song, "POP / STARS", was certified platinum by the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA).



ARCANE

A fantasy action-drama set in the League of Legends cities of Piltover and its underworld. Produced by Riot and animated by Fortiche, the nine episode series premiered on Netflix in 2021 as the number one show in 52 countries, and became the first show based on a video game to win a Primetime Emmy Award for Outstanding Animated Program.

All of Riot's core titles are competitive, and it was an early aspiration for the company to follow in the footsteps of other popular esports and establish professional leagues and tournaments for their games.

Today, Riot Esports manages fully professional leagues and tournaments for all our titles, with over 40 multi-tiered competitions to be found around the world.

Our esports offices and dedicated teams manage both global and regional competition, and include in-house broadcast production, content delivery, business development, and competitions operations/integrity teams. All of these work alongside tournament operators and other vendors and partners in each of our core regions.



VALORANT CHAMPIONS TOUR (VCT)

VALORANT Champions Tour is the official global competitive circuit for professional VALORANT, spanning both interregional and international competition across a full calendar year.



LOL ESPORTS

League of Legends esports stands as the most globally popular esports, with more than 100 professional esports teams and over 860 players, with matches accessible on 30+ TV and digital platforms.

The Business of Riot Esports

- ① We extend and deepen the core games experience with esports to inspire fandom.
- ② Esports competitions unlock fan passion, generate revenues, and ultimately build and maintain a thriving, sustainable ecosystem.
- ③ Riot partners with pro teams in long term commitments, who receive stipends, and shares of revenue and/or prize pools.

HIGHLIGHTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS 2023

PLAYER ACHIEVEMENTS

LEAGUE OF LEGENDS

▶ **REKKLES AND ODOAMNE**
– **PLAYED THEIR 500TH LEC GAMES**

Having first competed in what was then called the European League of Legends Championship Series (EU LCS) in 2014 and 2015, respectively, Rekkles and Odoamne are only the 3rd and 4th players to pass the 500 game milestone. ☒



▶ **FNATIC BECOMES FIRST**
– **LEC TEAM ORGANIZATION TO SURPASS 10,000 KILLS**

There is only one team organization that has competed in EMEA's top League of Legends competition from day one until now, and during those ten years over 35 players have worn its signature orange and black colors. Collectively, they all contributed to the team's 10,000th kill, achieved in 2023 for the first time by an LEC team. ☒



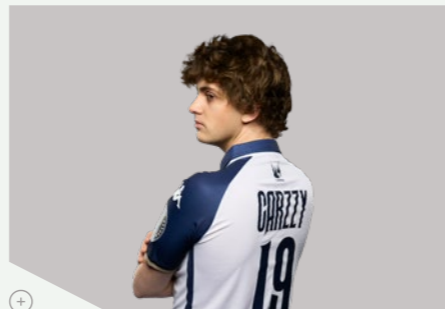
▶ **HYLISSANG IS THE**
– **FIRST PLAYER TO REACH 5,000 ASSISTS**

One of the longest staying Support players in all of professional League of Legends, Hylissang a.k.a. "The Professor" was the first player in the LEC to reach 2,500 assists back in 2019, and now he's continued that hall-of-fame streak by crossing the 5,000 mark. ☒



▶ **CARZZY TAKES THE**
– **MOST KILLS IN A SINGLE LEC GAME (19)**

One of the most accomplished League of Legends players from the Czech Republic, bot laner Carzzy earned 19 kills in MAD Lions' match against Fnatic during the 2023 LEC Spring Groups stages, beating the previous record of 18, held by Rekkles. ☒

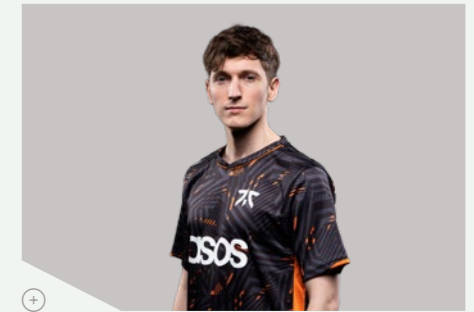


There were a multitude of record-breaking, in-game player achievements last year, and plenty to celebrate when it comes to the running of Riot's leagues and tournaments.

VALORANT

▶ **BOASTER WAS THE**
– **"CLUTCHIEST" PLAYER WITH A 31% SUCCESS RATE**

The Fnatic in-game leader won 31% (16 out of 51) of the clutch situations his team found themselves in during the 2023 VCT season, more than any other VCT player globally.* ☒



▶ **CHRONICLE EARNED THE**
– **HIGHEST ACS PERFORMANCE (441) IN A SINGLE MAP**

Another Fnatic player of 2023, Chronicle, was a consistent performer throughout the year. He earned the highest single map ACS performance of any VCT player, with map three of Fnatic's playoffs victory against FUT in the EMEA league.** ☒



▶ **SAYF ACHIEVED THE MOST**
– **ACES THROUGHOUT THE VCT SEASON 2023**

During his 2023 EMEA championship-winning season with Team Liquid, Sayf notched a number of achievements. Most notably, he achieved the highest number of aces (eliminating all five opponents in a round) out of any VCT player, with six in total. He also narrowly earned the most kills (643) during the International League season, excluding international events. ☒



* A clutch is defined as when the last player alive on a team wins the round. Typically, the odds of winning are lower (such as one on two or more).

** ACS is the Average Combat Score, a rating given to you by VALORANT based on your performance. Factors include kills, assists, damage, multi kills, etc.



EMEA ESPORTS ACHIEVEMENTS

▶ **MINIMUM 400 ESPORTS JOBS ENABLED WITHIN BERLIN**

Our esports rulebooks for our top leagues require a minimum five team roster, as well as a head coach and general manager. With the 10 teams now in VCT as well as the LEC (plus the Prime League and Challenger DACH teams who reside in Berlin), there are hundreds of active team roles for Riot esports competitions every year within the German city state. ☒

▶ **69 PLAYERS HAVE NOW GRADUATED FROM THE ERLS TO THE LEC**

One of the key goals of the ERLs is to create a pathway to the top of the LoL esports pyramid in EMEA, with verifiable careers regardless of country. Each year since their introduction, we've consistently seen rookies move up from an ERL to an LEC team, with over 300 ERL players now also registered in the Global Contract Database. ☒

▶ **OVER 60 ESPORTS COMPETITION TITLES AWARDED IN 2023**

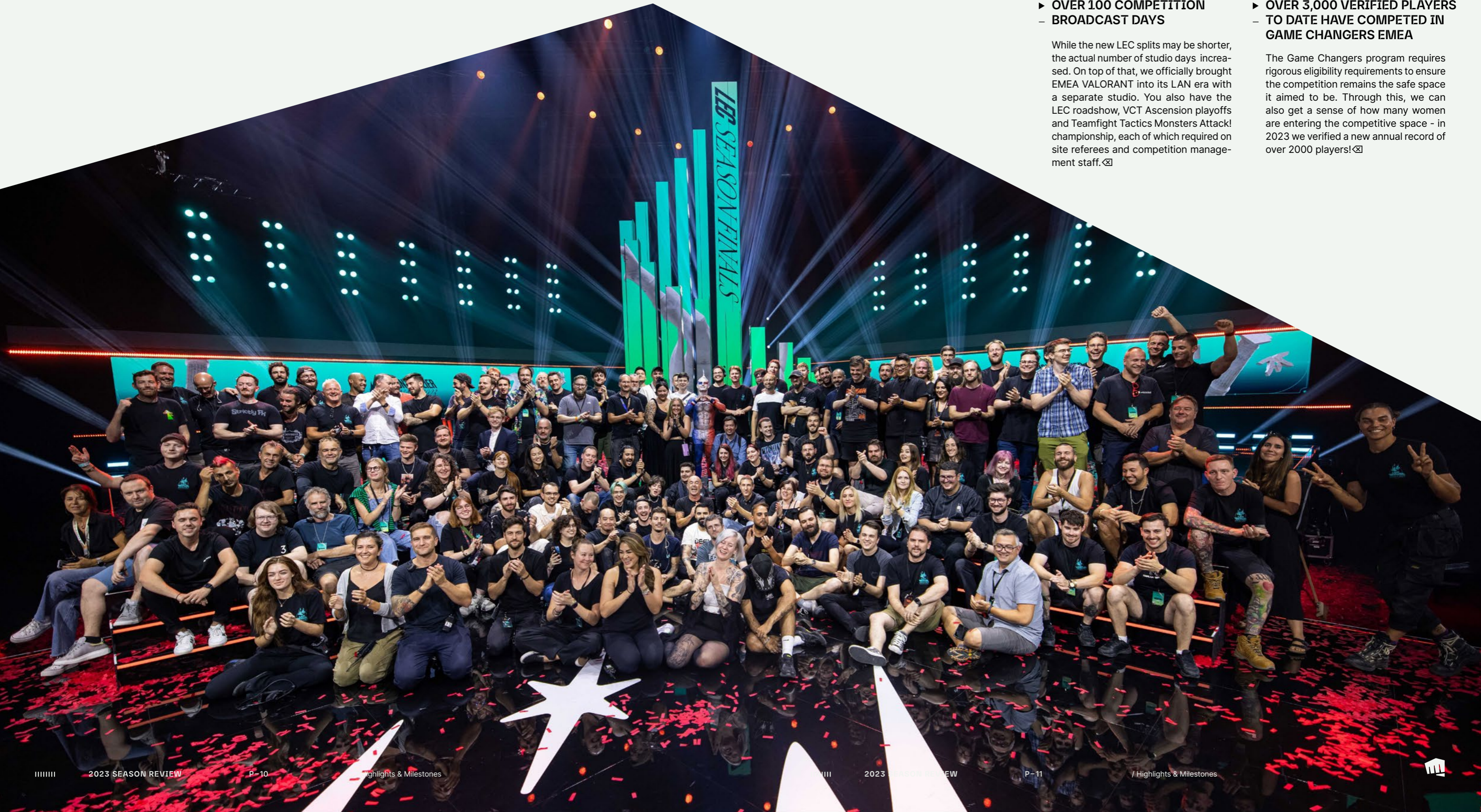
As well as a new, explosive trophy for the VCT EMEA League, 2023 introduced three additional split trophies for LEC. These along with all our esports champion titles at the tier one and two level amount to thousands of administered matches across EMEA, collectively featuring hundreds of competing teams and over 2,000 players. ☒

▶ **OVER 100 COMPETITION BROADCAST DAYS**

While the new LEC splits may be shorter, the actual number of studio days increased. On top of that, we officially brought EMEA VALORANT into its LAN era with a separate studio. You also have the LEC roadshow, VCT Ascension playoffs and Teamfight Tactics Monsters Attack! championship, each of which required on site referees and competition management staff. ☒

▶ **OVER 3,000 VERIFIED PLAYERS TO DATE HAVE COMPETED IN GAME CHANGERS EMEA**

The Game Changers program requires rigorous eligibility requirements to ensure the competition remains the safe space it aimed to be. Through this, we can also get a sense of how many women are entering the competitive space - in 2023 we verified a new annual record of over 2000 players! ☒



RIOT ESPORTS EMEA COMPETITIONS

The EMEA esports region for Riot Games covers multiple levels of competitions, from top tier professional leagues to developmental proving groups. Our aim is to ensure there is an eligible competition for all players regardless of their location.

LEAGUE OF LEGENDS ESPORTS



**LEAGUE OF LEGENDS
EMEA CHAMPIONSHIP
(LEC)**

The highest tier of competition for professional League of Legends players in Europe, the Middle East, and Africa. ☒

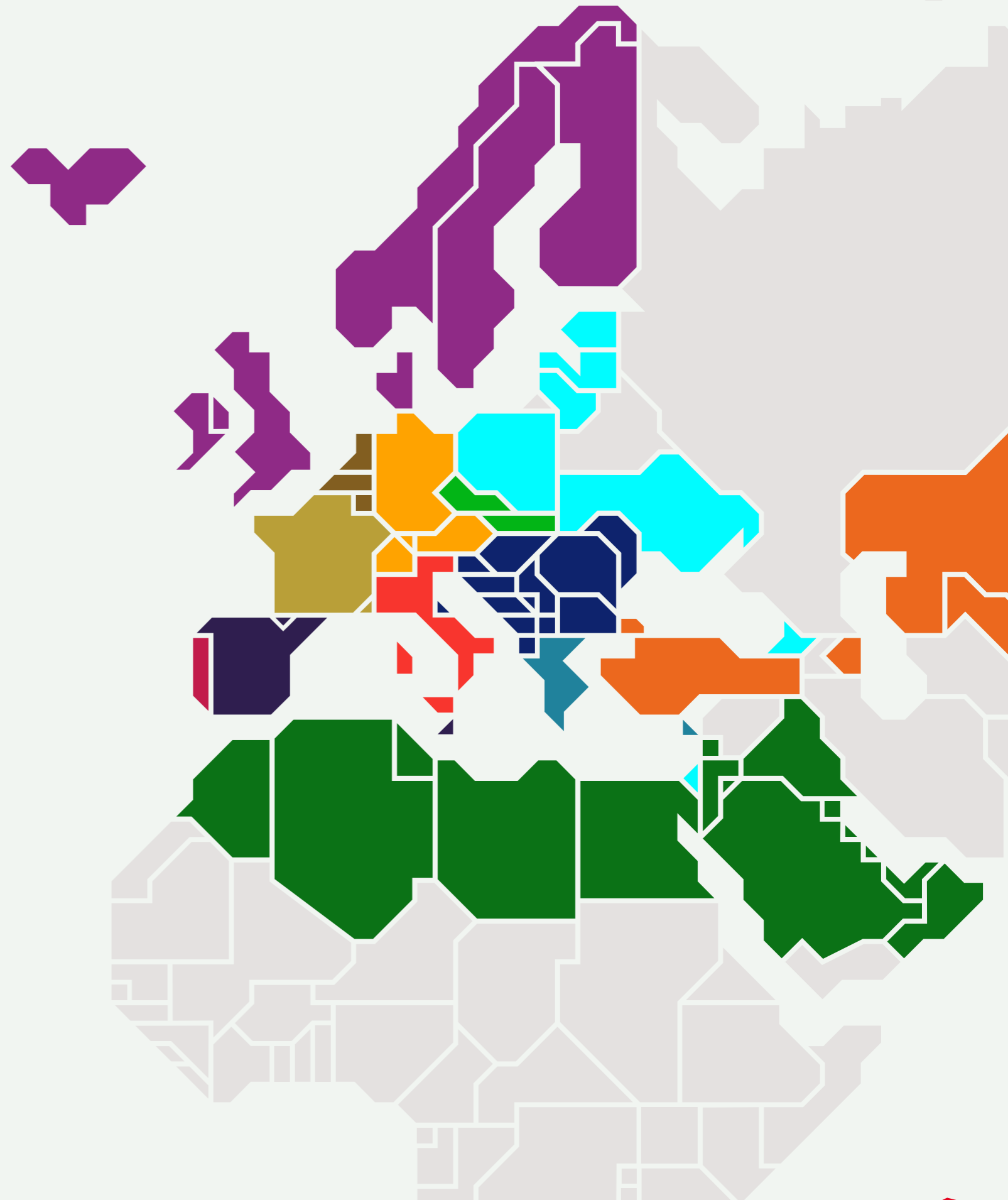


EMEA MASTERS (EM)

The proving ground for the up and coming talent, where the best teams from the EMEA Regional Leagues compete. ☒

EMEA REGIONAL LEAGUES (ERLS)

- Elite Series
- La Ligue Française League Of Legends (LFL)
- Northern League of Legends Championship (NLC)
- LVP Superliga (LVP SL)
- Hitpoint Masters
- Ultraliga
- Liga Portuguesa de League of Legends (LPLOL)
- Greek Legends League (GLL)
- PG Nationals
- Prime League
- Sampiyonluk Ligi (TCL)
- Esports Balkan League (EBL)
- Arabian League



VALORANT ESPORTS



VALORANT CHAMPIONS TOUR (VCT) EMEA INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE

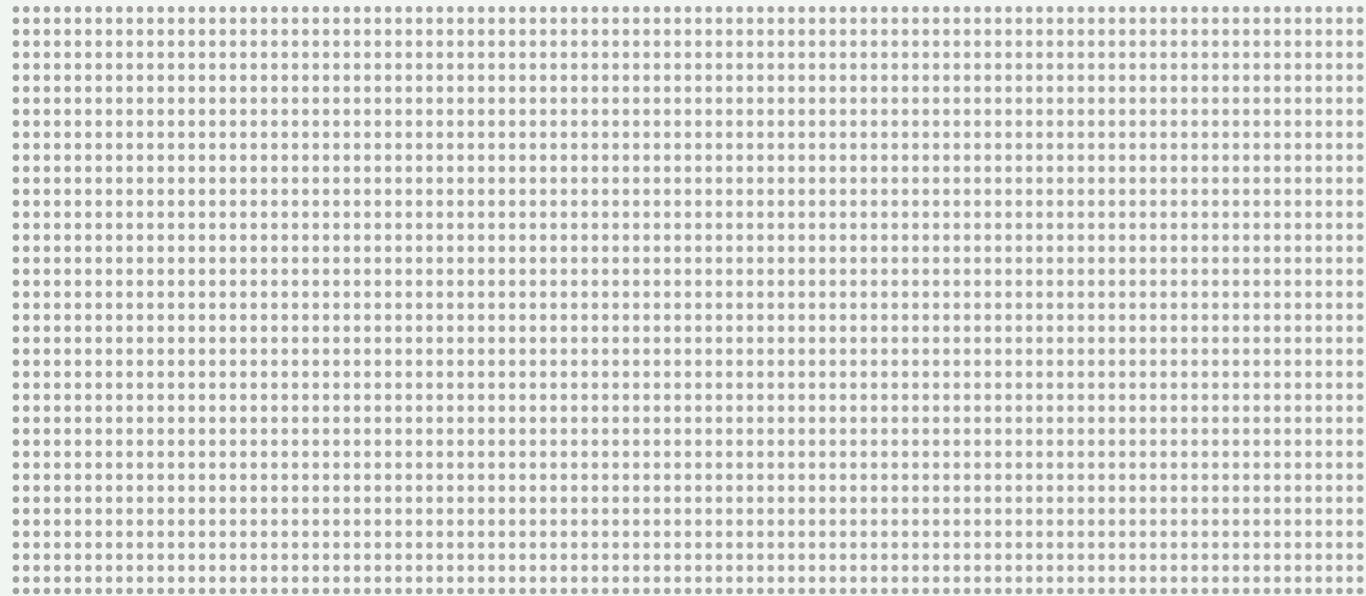
The highest tier of VALORANT esports competition in the EMEA region, that qualifies teams to international events. ☒

VCT ASCENSION EMEA










Every Challenger league team has the opportunity to qualify for and win the Ascension tournament, earning them a two-year promotion to VCT EMEA. ☒

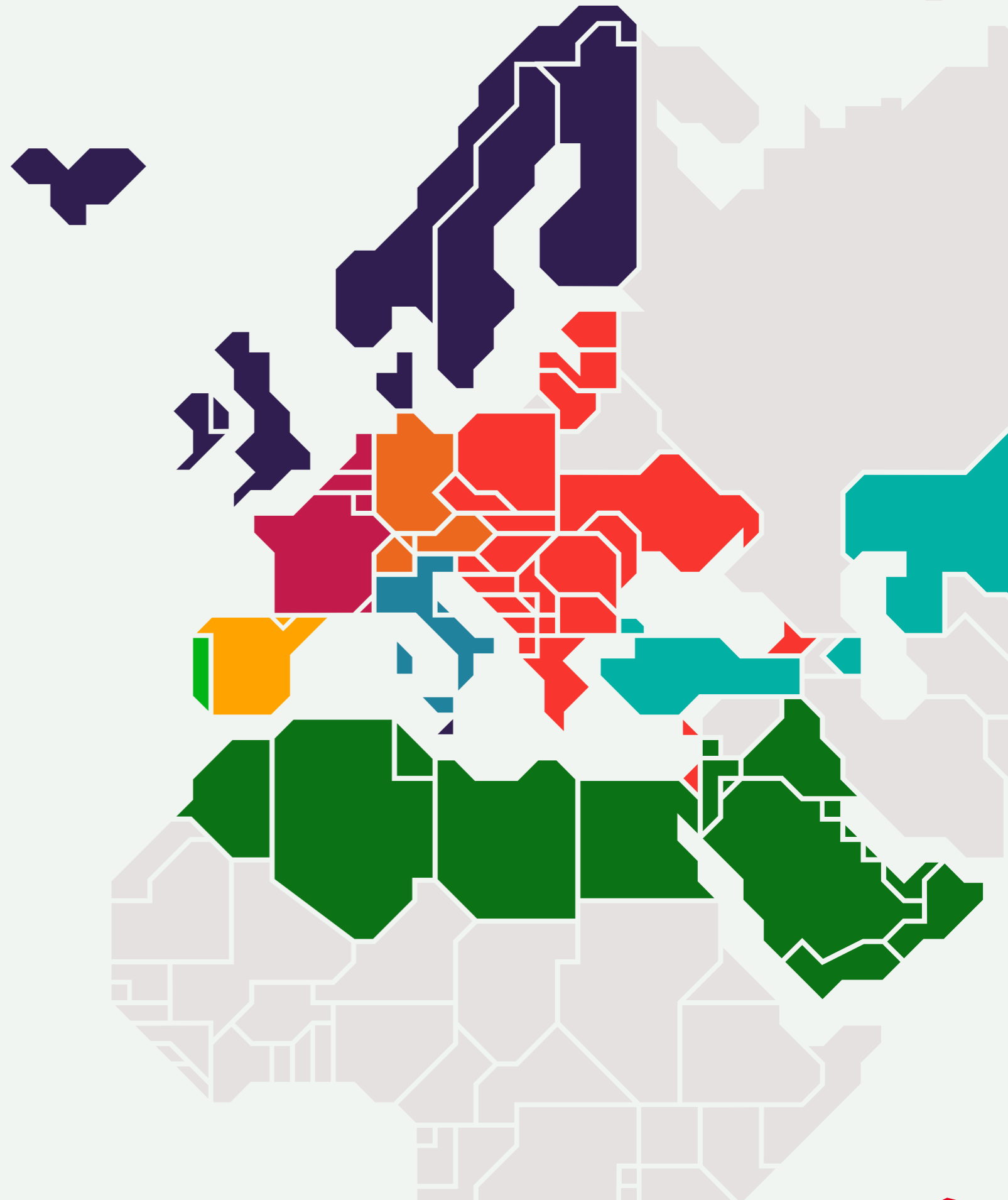
GAME CHANGERS EMEA

A series of regional competitions to highlight the skill and potential of women VALORANT players. ☒



VALORANT CHALLENGERS LEAGUES

-  **Northern Europe**
Polaris
-  **Portugal**
Tempest
-  **East**
Surge
-  **France**
Revolution
-  **Italy**
Rinascimento
-  **Türkiye**
Birlik
-  **Spain**
Rising
-  **DACH**
Evolution
-  **MENA**
Resilience



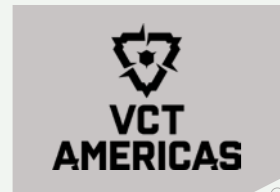
MAPS OF REGIONAL RIOT ESPORTS COMPETITIONS

As well as international tournaments, Riot Games owns and operates numerous regional leagues for our game titles across the world. With some exceptions*, each takes place in a dedicated hub city and esports tailored broadcast studio. ☒



League Championship Series (LCS)

Region North Americas
 Hub City Los Angeles
 Founded 2013
 Teams 10
 Most Titles TSM (7)



VCT America

Region Americas
 Hub City Los Angeles
 Founded 2023
 Teams 10



Liga Latinoamérica (LLA)

Region Latin Americas
 Hub City Mexico City
 Founded 2019
 Teams 8
 Most Titles Isurus (3) / Movistar R7 (3)



Campeonato Brasileiro de League of Legends (CBLOL)

Region Latin Americas
 Hub City São Paulo
 Founded 2012
 Teams 10
 Most Titles INTZ (5)



VCT EMEA

Region EMEA
 Hub City Berlin
 Founded 2023
 Teams 10



League of Legends EMEA Championship (LEC)

Region EMEA
 Hub City Berlin
 Founded 2013
 Teams 10
 Most Titles G2 Esports (12)



VCT Pacific

Region APAC
 Hub City Seoul
 Founded 2023
 Teams 10



League of Legends Pro League (LPL)

Region China
 Hub City Shanghai
 Founded 2013
 Teams 17
 Most Titles TSM (6)



League of Legends Japan League (LJL)

Region Japan
 Hub City Tokyo
 Founded 2014
 Teams 8
 Most Titles DFM (16)



League of Legends Champions Korea (LCK)

Region Korea
 Hub City Seoul
 Founded 2012
 Teams 10
 Most Titles T1 (10)



League of Legends Pacific Championship Series (PCS)

Region SEA
 Hub City (Online)
 Founded 2013
 Teams 10
 Most Titles PSG Talon (6)



League of Legends Circuit Oceania (LCO)**

Region OCE
 Hub City Sydney
 Founded 2013
 Teams 8
 Most Titles Chiefs Esports Club (3)



Vietnam Championship Series (VCS)

Region Vietnam
 Hub City Ho Chi Minh City
 Founded 2013
 Teams 8
 Most Titles GIGABYTE Marines (9)

KEY



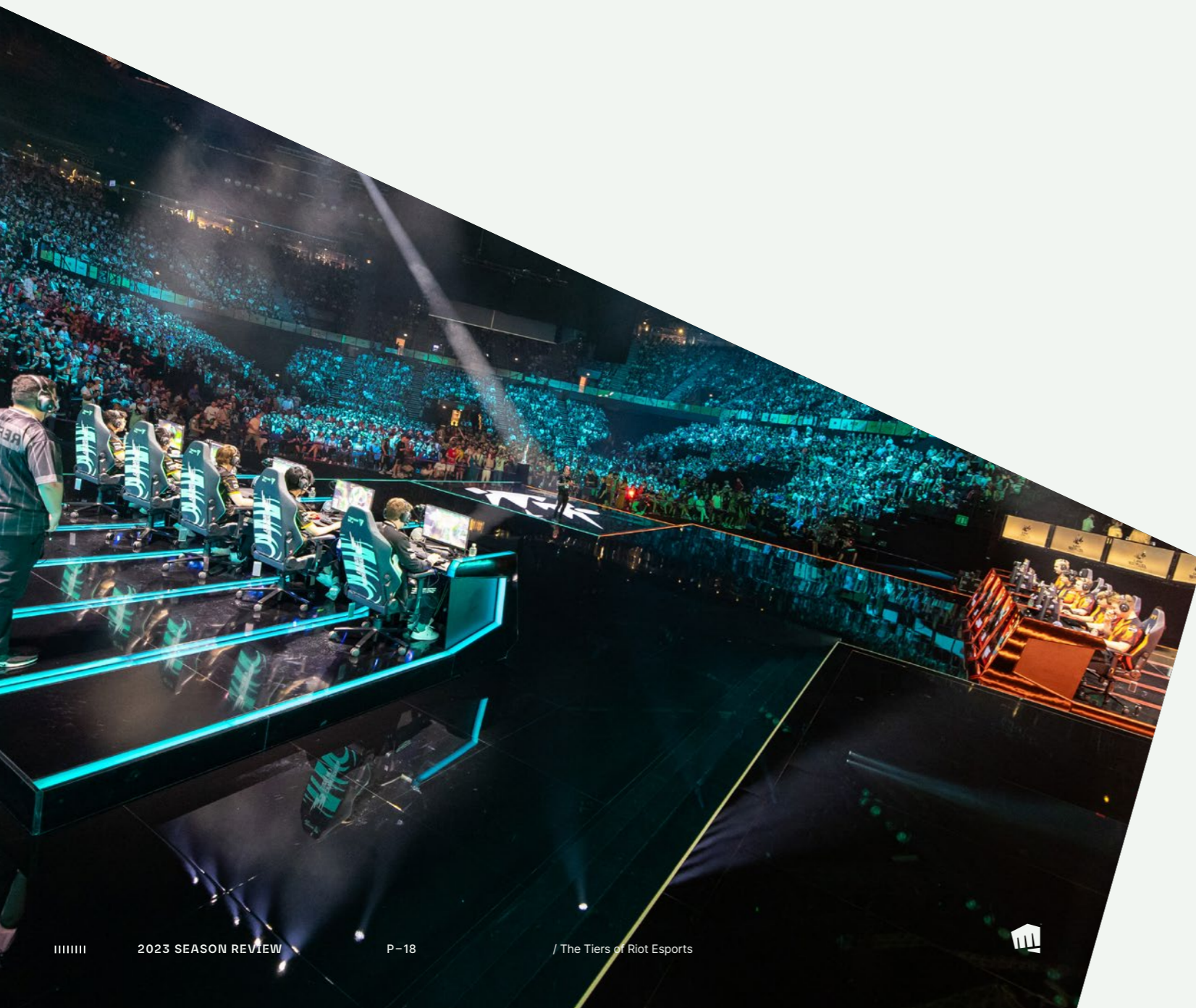
*While the LPL has a central studio in Shanghai, several teams compete from their own home venues in different Chinese cities

**Rather than qualify teams directly to international events, teams in the LCO fight for a spot in the PCS playoffs.



THE TIERS OF RIOT ESPORTS COMPETITIONS

From the first time logging in, to putting your first foot on an arena stage, each competitive environment offers its own demands and skill sets from esports players. Competitive video gaming conjures up a myriad of different images. A lone player grinding long hours in a gaming den. Bootcamping with friends in a college computer room. Lifting a trophy in front of thousands of fans. The reality for each gamer will differ depending on their skill level and aspirations, and at Riot Games, we want to provide the right setting for any player to fulfill their competitive appetite. The competitions around our game titles, whether directly run by Riot or under license, can broadly be categorized under the following levels.



Players can queue up for ranked play either on their own or with friends.

01

RANKED COMPETITIVE PLAY



For virtually every competitive video game on the market, this is the starting point for any future superstar. Players are made aware of their progress through game-specific seasonal rankings, rising and falling from one publicly visible tier to another. Their progression is determined by earning (or losing...) points for each win or loss against similarly ranked players, with the absolute top 0.1% of players (usually just a few hundred per region) making it to the apex tier, where players need to overtake each other's points to gain standing. For League of Legends and VALORANT, players can either undertake this endeavor solo or with friends.

Ranked play is generally not considered esports, since we aren't talking about organized leagues, circuits etc. (plus these matches rarely have spectators!). However, it is a crucial step to mastering a game and moving on to the next level...

02

ONLINE TOURNAMENTS



Once you can find (or even lead) a competitive roster of fellow players ready to take on equally driven opponents, this is when organized online competition comes into play. These might be local community-run events, cash cups organized through a tournament platform, or the qualifying rounds for an eventual offline event. Depending on the size of the event and license, they can award various prizes or be part of a larger competition circuit.

The League of Legends game client has, since 2020, featured its own competitive tournament system called Clash, where players can recruit teammates and compete in seasonal events for in-game items and other rewards. In 2023, VALORANT launched its own organized online tournament mode, Premier, which allows teams to directly qualify from game to the lower divisions of the Challenger esports leagues.

The second tier of Riot Esports, such as the EMEA Regional Leagues in League of Legends or Challengers leagues in VALORANT, are predominantly played online. However, given they are Riot sanctioned, and are directly connected to top tier competitions, the rules and standards for organization of these competitions is considerably high. They have expansive rulesets, dedicated referees, and technical requirements (such as the quality of the internet connection used). We will cover this in more detail in the next chapter.

03

STUDIO LAN PLAY



When we talk about "offline" competitions, we are referring to those run on a Local Area Network (LAN). A local network infrastructure is established at the competition venue, enabling players to connect to each other directly via LAN cables or wireless connections, rather than through a live or public server located elsewhere. This setup reduces lag and latency, providing a smoother gaming experience compared to online play. LAN competitions require most, if not all players, to be physically present in the same location, adding an extra dimension to the nature of competition and the live spectator experience.

LAN events can be organized at various scales by third-party tournament organizers who have acquired the appropriate competition license. For Riot Games, we run our LAN events (typically the highest tier of our esports) in dedicated studio locations across the road. Teams are required to temporarily relocate to the city the studio is based in, attend game days in person, and follow rules regarding on-stage conduct and match processes. It also gives them the chance to meet fans in person, while teams benefit from the additional visibility and value created for sponsors.



Riot esports studios add production elements like stage walk-ons and face cameras.

04

ROADSHOW MEGA EVENTS



Almost unimaginable a decade ago, the biggest Riot Esports LAN events are held in large concert or sports arenas, with thousands of fans in attendance. These full scale productions require hundreds of crew members and tonnes of LEDs and equipment, and are usually reserved for international events or significant regional finals. The sheer number of spectators and grandeur of the stage takes the pressure of competition to a level that only the absolute best players can fare.



Like any traditional sport, an arena can add „home crowds“ among other thrills to the playing experience.



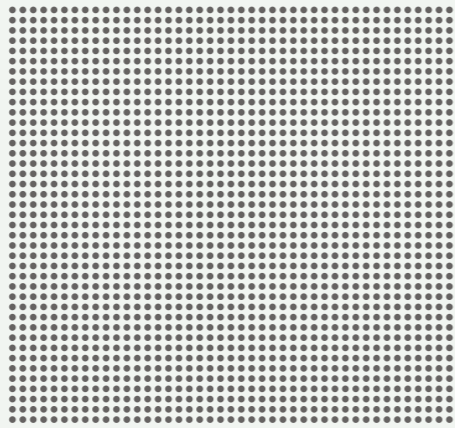
COMPETITION MANAGEMENT

➔ From helping players at events to managing referees and private game servers, here is an overview of Riot's match operation responsibilities.



OVERVIEW OF COMPETITION MANAGEMENT TOOLS

With hundreds of esports players to manage across EMEA, our team uses a plethora of tools to ensure efficiency and stability in our highest level competitions.



PLAYER CONTRACT DATABASES

A competitive environment where players and coaches could abruptly dissolve their contracts mid season introduces an unhealthy level of uncertainty, and undermines the stability of the competitive ecosystem. Esports player contract databases have for years been a key tool to facilitate legitimate communication, and maintain competitive play.

Each contract database lists basic info on a team member (such as the team they are signed to, in-game role, and the end date of their contract). A designated team contact is also listed.

There are currently three main databases in use across EMEA:

LoL Esports Global Contract Database (GCD)

► Each League of Legends (LoL) esports region is given its own section in the GCD. As well as LEC players, since 2019 the accredited EMEA Regional Leagues (ERLs) have also been included.

ERL Player Database (EPD)

► A regional database for non-accredited ERLs. It is mainly for visibility and roster tracking, helping to prevent irregular transfers.

VALORANT Champions Tour Global Contract Database (VCT GCD)

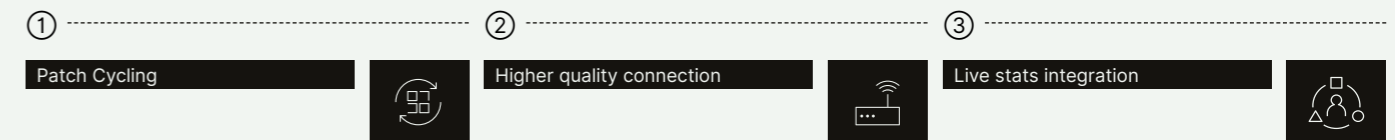
► A new contract database for the three VCT International Leagues was introduced in 2023. It mirrors the structure of the LoL Esports GCD, but governed under its own Roster Construction Rules. A separate Challengers database also monitors participation in the second tier of competition.

TOURNAMENT REALMS

These esports-specific servers facilitate player management and practice at the highest levels, with game accounts given exclusively to the highest level esports players.

Players are provided Tournament Realm Accounts at the beginning of a competition period which they can adjust to their preferences.

They have a number of use cases:



Since esports players can only play on the current patch (version) of a game after a sufficient testing period, tournament realms help leagues cycle through the patches in a scheduled and uniform manner.

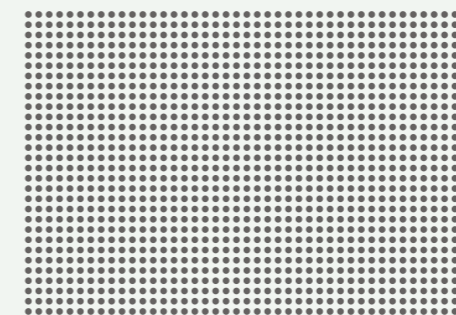
Connection and latency issues must be minimized in esports competitions or practice play. The limited number of players using these servers allows for better ping and virtually uninterrupted play. They also allow our teams to utilize offline, zero-delay game servers in our esports studios.

Having a top player's entire esports career centralized in a single game account, makes it far easier to draw useful statistics. These allow our broadcast and insights teams to compare player/team performances live on air, for all-time record keeping, etc.



TEAM MEMBER VETTING

What does Team Member Vetting include?



Before a team member (e.g. a player or coach) participates in a sanctioned league, they must submit details of all Riot game accounts used in the last six months. The team member vetting process will analyze the player or coach's behavior record on the live servers and determine whether or not they are in line with the standards we expect from players in Riot-sanctioned competitions.

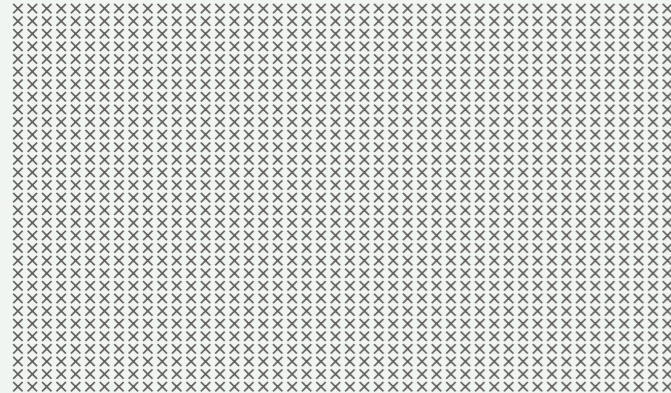
Rank [01] All team members competing in a Riot-sanctioned competition must hold a minimum peak rating (e.g. Diamond III in LoL, Immortal 1 for VALORANT) to compete.

Temporary Suspensions [02] Any verified instance of inappropriate in-game behavior on the live server can result in a temporary suspension. The account vetting process flags any restrictions that might have been placed on the player's accounts.

Toxicity Evaluation [03] Prior to the competition season, team members are evaluated for any inappropriate in-game behavior. Naturally, everyone has days where they can say things or make decisions they may regret. Best judgment and instances of repeated bad behavior are taken into account when making these evaluations.



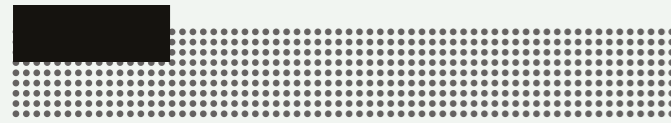
MATCH OPS: ONLINE VS LAN CONSIDERATIONS



Matches should always be officiated under rigorous standards, but there are different protocols for games played online and in-person...

Since it is possible to hold matches or even full tournaments over the internet, online gaming allows for competitive esports ecosystems to thrive across geographical barriers in a way that is largely unseen in traditional sports. As long as there is high prizes and status to be gained from winning, then match protocols must always be maintained regardless of whether the players are face to face or hundreds of miles apart.

WHY HAVE TEAMS PLAY IN PERSON?



Aside from the benefits of having players (and fans!) in a venue from a content, broadcast, and production perspective, there are numerous upsides to conducting match operations with all teams physically present.



Seamless Playing Connection

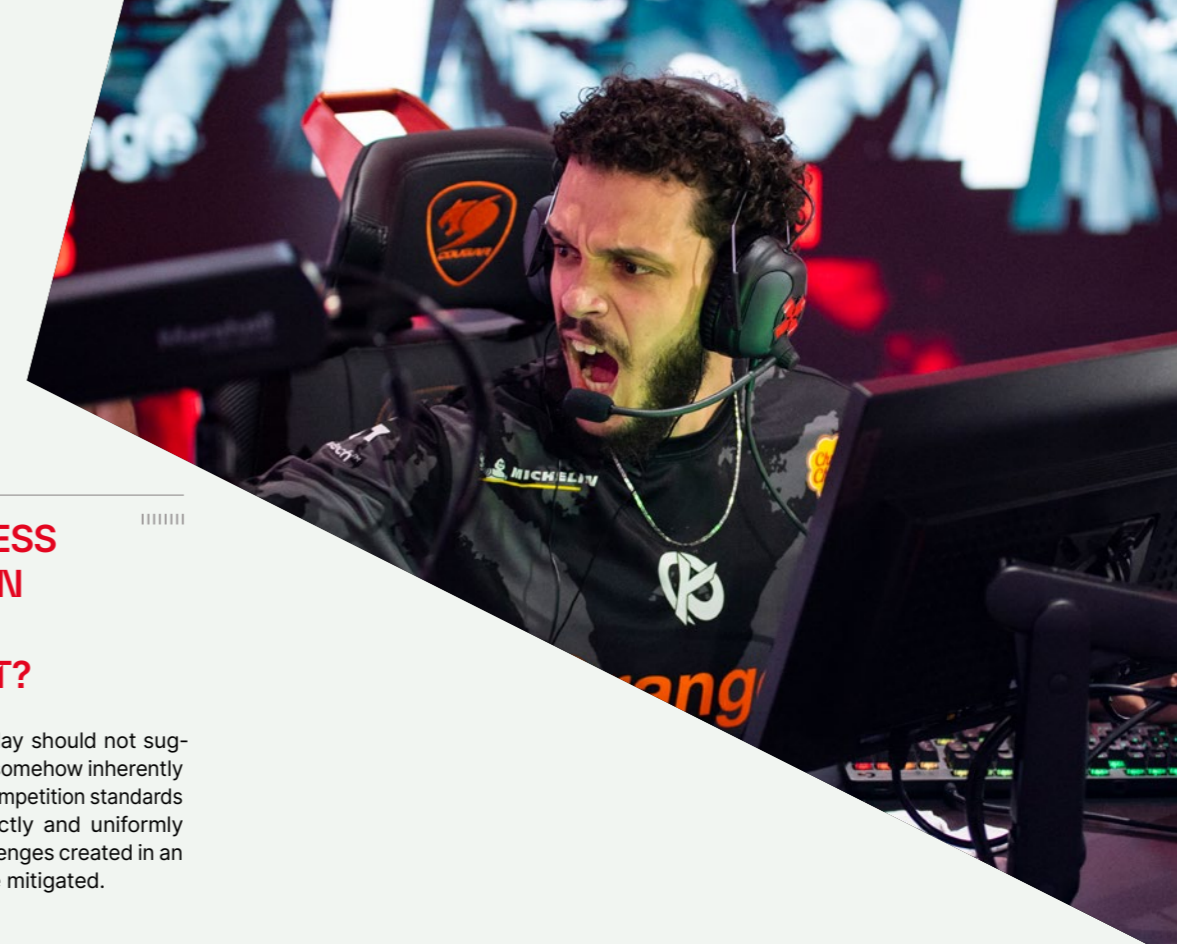
Even though Riot's Tournament Realm esports servers ensure quality connection for online matches, nothing compares to playing on a LAN network where there is virtually zero input delay. It also minimizes the risk of internet outages, server issues, or cyber attacks.

Riot Approved PCs and Monitors

Having every player use optimally calibrated and regularly serviced PCs (or other gaming devices) creates a high degree of standardization, and limits technical faults or performance issues. Backups are also available if needed.

Easier to Implement Match Ops Processes

In Riot esports studios, players supply their own peripherals, which are kept in storage outside of game days and regularly tested (they are also shipped out to different regions for international events). In addition, a metal detector is used before players go on stage to check for unknown electronic/communication devices.



HOW IS FAIRNESS MAINTAINED IN AN ONLINE ENVIRONMENT?

The advantages of LAN play should not suggest that online esports is somehow inherently compromised. As long as competition standards remain clear and are strictly and uniformly upheld, the particular challenges created in an online environment can be mitigated.

RINGING

< Risk > /

< Measures > /

Competing under a false identity or using someone else's gaming account.

A thorough, data law compliant verification process ensures those participating in a league or tournament are who they say they are. Requiring face cams during a match, even if not on broadcast, is also effective.

CHEAT DEVICES AND HACKING

< Risk > /

< Measures > /

Using software specifically designed to give a player or team an unfair advantage (e.g. wallhacks, aimbots) or malware that can compromise a player's computer.

Game developers invest heavily in anti-cheat software that is designed to, at minimum, detect such illicit programs. In esports, tournament admins can conduct spot checks, review individual gameplay footage, or host the game on a private server where such illicit software is harder to employ.

INTERNET OR TECHNICAL PROBLEMS

< Risk > /

< Measures > /

Players and/or teams could cite an unstable connection or peripheral issue as reason to replay a losing game.

Riot's official rulebooks for online esports competition make the stability of a player's hardware and internet connection their responsibility. Playing on Tournament Realms, rather than live servers, also helps mitigate these issues.

PROHIBITED COMMUNICATIONS

< Risk > /

< Measures > /

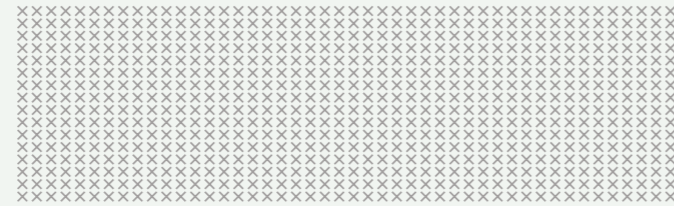
Coaches are essential in esports, but in an online environment they could receive outside communication on player movement, comms, etc.

Rules restrict coaches from communicating with players during a game, and must speculate the game via a live stream in a separate room. In addition, microphones can be set up in the play area, and all team communications monitored by referees.



PLAYER WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT

Victory is never an easy path, especially in top tier esports. To ensure players have successful careers, Riot and its team partners work to support and nurture talent.



SKILL, STRATEGY, AND SACRIFICE

The media often reports that top esports players practice for 10 plus hours per day. This conjures an image of a gamer sitting in a chair, queuing for match after match from sunrise to sunset...which is not accurate at all. Every competitor will approach improvement differently, of course, but the actual day schedule for a pro in League of Legends or VALORANT can include a mix of activities, some of which don't involve playing the game!

No two teams will have the same schedule, but these are some of the more common activities seen in a given practice day:

Team scrims (practice sessions) with other teams.

VOD review, i.e. reviewing footage of previous games.

One-to-one coaching sessions.

Team building and bonding activities.

Physical exercise and check-ups

Solo-queue i.e. a player taking time to practice on the public servers



TAKING CARE OF PLAYERS AT EVENTS

For every esports event, whether it be international or regional, Riot Games ensures that a player's safety and experience is prioritized. As well as working with teams to provide suitable accommodation, transport (including visa support), and catering, we also recruit "player handlers" to ensure every competitor makes it on time to their games, and to address needs both relatively minor (e.g. issues with equipment or stage) to serious (medical or integrity issues).

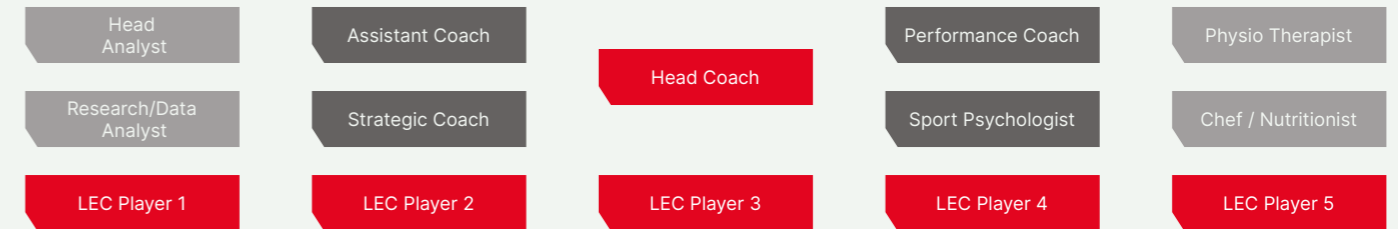
Each event also has its own media responsibilities, such as shooting promo footage or attending press conferences. We work to ensure these don't heavily disrupt player practice schedules. Since we also require teams to arrive in competition locations well before their first game, we also seek to offer adequate training spaces both in their hotels and on-site.



Caps' dad visits all his son's most important games, and is a popular figure in the League of Legends esports community.

A TYPICAL LEC TEAM

(not including wider esports/org staff)



ROLE HIGHLIGHT: PERFORMANCE COACHES

ISMAEL PEDRAZA-RAMIREZ Q&A
LoL Performance Coach for G2 Esports

What kinds of methods and tools do you take to help players meet their performance expectations?

As you can see from the diagram, a working esports team is complex, and requires many individuals whose expertise goes beyond in-game knowledge. The »performance coach,« as it's broadly known, is one role that is becoming ever more crucial. Combining elements of sports science and psychology, this coach aims to positively influence performance and well-being. In some cases, this can include a focus on movement, nutrition, and injury prevention. At a core level, a performance coach will be hands-on with daily tasks related to areas of player improvement, and coordinating and enabling other experts to influence a team members' development.

As we detail in the later chapter »2023 Competition Policy Updates,« starting in the 2024 season we will require teams to offer mental services offered by qualified professionals that can be accessed anonymously. In addition, at least one staff member in the team environment will have to have undergone a certified mental health first aid training program.

»To build the foundations, I implement strategies to facilitate players' engagement in reflective practices to develop self-awareness and influence their development as people and professional players.

We implement various strategies to support our holistic performance perspective, such as daily breathing exercises, physical activity, sleep hygiene practices, conscious balanced nutrition, and monitoring of emotional states, psychophysiological variables, etc.»

How do you approach the topic of career development, and supporting talent at an early stage?

»Even though pro esports players are at the highest level of performance, they are still in the early developmental phases of their psychological, emotional, and cognitive levels. Therefore, it has been important to me to influence them to engage and catch up in developing areas such as life skills, self-discovery, and emotional intelligence.

It is important to consider the natural high pressure of competing in professional esports and the need to perform 'NOW', which could limit the space and time for them to develop such important areas and make the topic of development seem to be contradictory. However, with a gradual and deliberate approach in connection with the support of the organization and support staff, the performance and development of professional players can go hand in hand.»



REFEREE ROLES IN A LIVE ESPORTS MATCH

Every time you watch a Riot Games esports competition, there's a full team working live on the ground or remotely to protect the integrity of the competition.

The Match Operations team are the main points of contact for the players during the matches, and it is imperative that they provide an immediate response to everything on stage. ☒

PRIMARY FUNCTION

Competitive authority over matters:



- 01 Rules, format, bracket and schedule
- 02 Ensure smooth and proper execution of the competition
- 03 Interpret and enforce the letter and spirit of the rules
- 04 Protect the integrity of the league and esports

ADMIN / FIELD / MATCH OPS LEAD

Sits in QC (Quality Control i.e. the match operations room), leads all working referees, and has the final word in all Competitive Operations decisions. Monitors the match, looks for bugs/exploits, communicates with the broadcast, takes care of the side selection (or map veto in VALORANT), issues warnings and penalties, decides on technical pauses and reports to esports management. ☒

HEAD REFEREE

Sits in QC. Monitors the match, takes care of the in-game administration, takes care of pauses, looks for exploits, communicates with the broadcast and is responsible for referees. ☒

REFEREE

Stands on stage behind the players, or sits in a ref-station right next to them. Monitors the players, scans the players and their peripherals, takes care of the audio for the players, looks for exploits, assists with technical problems and contact between QC and the players. ☒

TEAM HANDLERS

Team Handlers are responsible for the communication of all necessary information to the teams outside the match operation. They are also ensuring that the teams are prepared on time. ☒



REFEREE AND ADMIN RESPONSIBILITIES

Provided by Riot Games

PC or device
Monitor
Headset
Desk and Chair

Required Equipment from Players

Keyboard
Mouse & mousepad
In-ear headphones (usually for VALORANT)
All related cables
All backup equipment

WHAT IS A TECH CHECK?

Tech Checks are to test that a player's gear is working, the lighting is right and everything is ready to go for competition. Referees will undertake and sign off this task with Admins. ☒

PAUSE PROTOCOL

If a player encounters any issue in the game (bug or equipment) or has any other problem (e.g. medical), the team immediately informs the referee. The player that requested the pause should go ahead and explain to the referee the reason for the pause, and the referee should relay the information to QC via radio, who will then inform the broadcast team and begin solving the problem.

Players are neither allowed to talk nor leave their chair until the game is unpaused. This rule is in place so the team that has paused does not get a disadvantage in communication. The other team would be talking strategy, while the team that paused would have to troubleshoot.

The players will only be allowed to talk once the Head Referee allows it (i.e. once they have enough information from the team to troubleshoot or investigate the issue on their own). ☒

CHRONOBREAKING

While pause protocols follow a general logic and set of steps regardless of game, there is a particular process in place for League of Legends. In instances where a player encounters a bug that significantly alters the competitive integrity of the game, leads to a significant advantage for one or both players/teams, and cannot be avoided through other in-game means, then a Chronobreak may be initiated.*

Chronobreak is the deterministic disaster recovery tool used in LoL esports competitions, allowing league officials to "rewind" games to a specific point in time.

Every game played on esports game servers records the inputs, match settings, and configurations used to play the game. These recordings can play back the game server to a point in time chosen by esports officials.

Chronobreaking ensures that bugs and other severe technical issues do not overly prolong a match broadcast, but more importantly,

do not create competitive integrity issues. ☒
In the case of a critical bug:

League officials must determine (i) whether Chronobreak can restore the game; and (ii) whether reverting the game to an earlier state will fix the bug or avoid its trigger condition.

If Chronobreaking is not possible in the case of a critical bug, or will not resolve the issue (Terminal Situation):

The game is remade, If a Game of Record** is reached, then no settings (e.g. champion picks/bans) will be retained.

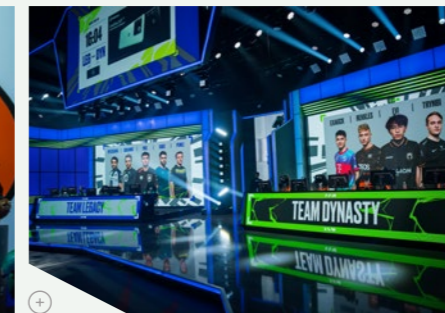
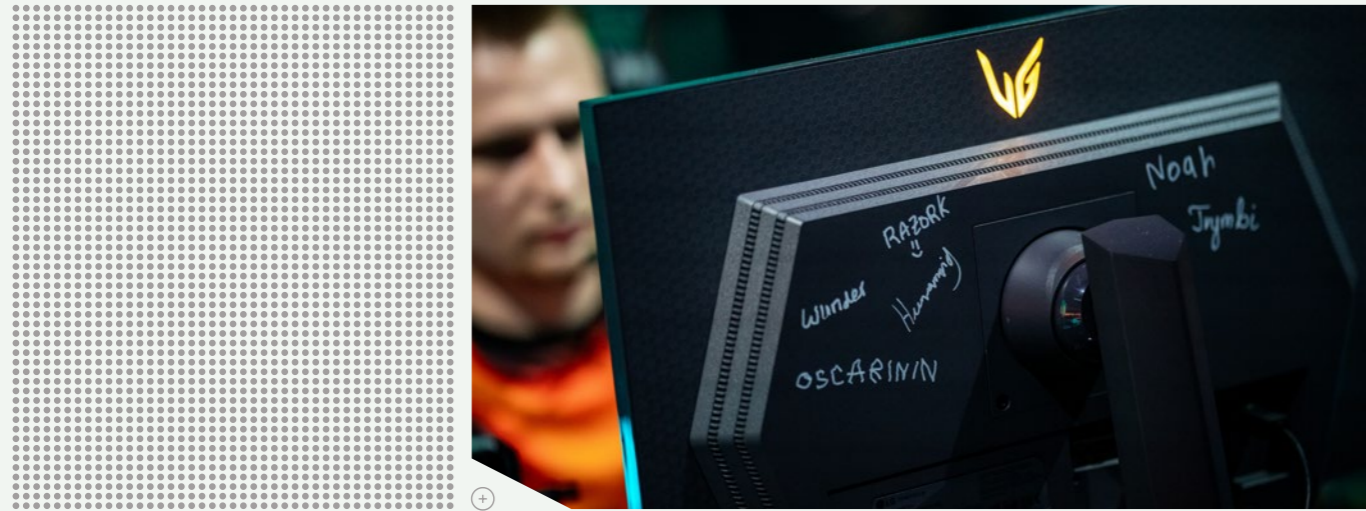
*These are only ever guidelines, and all decisions are at League official's discretion.

**A Game of Record is a game which has progressed to a point of meaningful interaction between opposing teams.



WHAT DOES RIOT PROVIDE ESPORTS PLAYERS?

Competing in a Riot competition is an exciting if not daunting prospect. Thus, we offer the following perks and services to contracted players in our leagues.



VOICE IN PLAYERS COUNCIL

The Player Council was first held in 2020 for LEC players, and has been held once per split since. Pros provide feedback on the various areas of the League that impacts them – such as regulations, scheduling, format, gameplay, etc. Each team is responsible for nominating their representative, who will attend meetings with Riot staff. ☒

NEW PLAYER ORIENTATION

The NPO workshop takes place before the start of the Spring Season. Once rosters are locked, players who have never played in the LEC (or have been absent from the league for a significant period of time) are invited to join. The program itself is co-delivered by members of the Competitive Operations, player support, social media and broadcast teams. The day's program explains team responsibilities (contracts and compensation), the match day process, Chronobreak (and the correct pausing process), information security (keeping game accounts secure), integrity, and player behavior (both on stage and socials). It also gives players advice for interviews and how to build a presence online. ☒

CHAMPIONS QUEUE

Introduced into EMEA in 2023, Champions Queue is an online matchmaking experience designed to create an enhanced and competitive environment for current LEC players and developmental players. This invite-only system provides automatic lobby creation as well as voice communication channels and match reporting, and is open only during specific days and times during the competitive season. It also includes a public leaderboard for fans. ☒

LEAGUE UNLOCKED

League Unlocked is a benefit program for team members to receive all in-game skins, champions, and experience boosts without additional costs for the duration of their participation in the Riot Games League of Legends esports scene. In EMEA, this benefit is available across the LEC, LEC secondary teams, accredited ERLs, and as of 2023, non-accredited ERLs. Team members with active competitive rulings (such as official warnings, suspensions, or bans) in any Riot Games-affiliated ecosystem are not eligible to claim the League Unlocked program benefits. ☒

PRIZE MONEY

Each high level Riot league and tournament offers prize pools of various sizes; with the winner receiving the lion's share, and the rest distributed according to final placement within the playoffs round. At international competitions, these prize pools are considerably higher, with every participating team receiving some share. In addition, the League of Legends World Championships prize pool is boosted by a percentage of in-client sales. ☒



RULES & COMPLIANCE

➔ As esports grows, so do its integrity issues and risks. In this chapter we will highlight key policies and the continued evolution of our integrity safeguards.



OVERVIEW OF RIOT ESPORTS COMPLIANCE

Esports Compliance is a global team within Riot Games dedicated to promoting fair play, integrity, and good sportsmanlike behaviors.

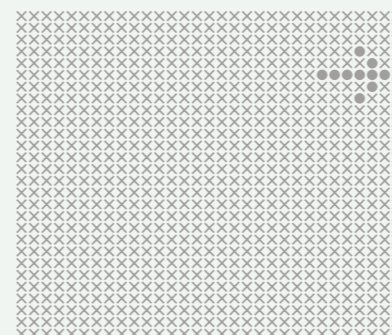
ESPORTS COMPLIANCE PROGRAM

- ① **REGULATIONS AND PROCESSES** Centralizing and drafting regulations that promote fair play and safeguard the integrity of esports.
- ③ **PREVENTION AND EDUCATION** Taking deterrent decisions and creating programs that foster awareness of the Riot's compliance program.

Compliance is a developing craft within Riot esports, with plenty of expansion planned for the next few years. Our current road-map focuses on the following program:

- ② **INVESTIGATIONS AND ENFORCEMENT** Ensuring stakeholders (players, teams, coaches etc.) abide by the regulations (investigations and decisions).
- ④ **TRANSPARENCY AND COMMUNICATION** Communicating openly and regularly about Riot's esports compliance program.
- ⑤ **MONITORING AND AUDITING** Gather data, document cases, publish reports, make data based decisions and create an efficient workflow.

We strive to foster a safe & trustworthy environment by safeguarding the integrity of our competitions, promoting fair play and encouraging ethical conduct.



Esports compliance is a specific game-agnostic unit within Competitive Operations that not only works in tandem with Competition Management, but also with various other esports function teams (production, events, etc.). We promote conducts, for our professional and semi-professional players, that are aligned with Riot's esports values and actively prevent and deter harmful or malicious behaviors, such as match-fixing, in-game toxicity, harassment, denigration etc., which would be defined by the Riot Games Esports Global Code of Conduct.

Esports Compliance aims to foster a respectful and safe environment for our players and stakeholders. A lot of focus is put on esports integrity programs, and strengthening Riot's policy enforcement. One of the main goals is to build trust for Riot's players and stakeholders by communicating transparently and by taking consistent decisions and actions in this area.

KEY FACTS REGARDING ESPORTS COMPLIANCE IN EMEA

Where is Esports Compliance based, and what are their credentials?

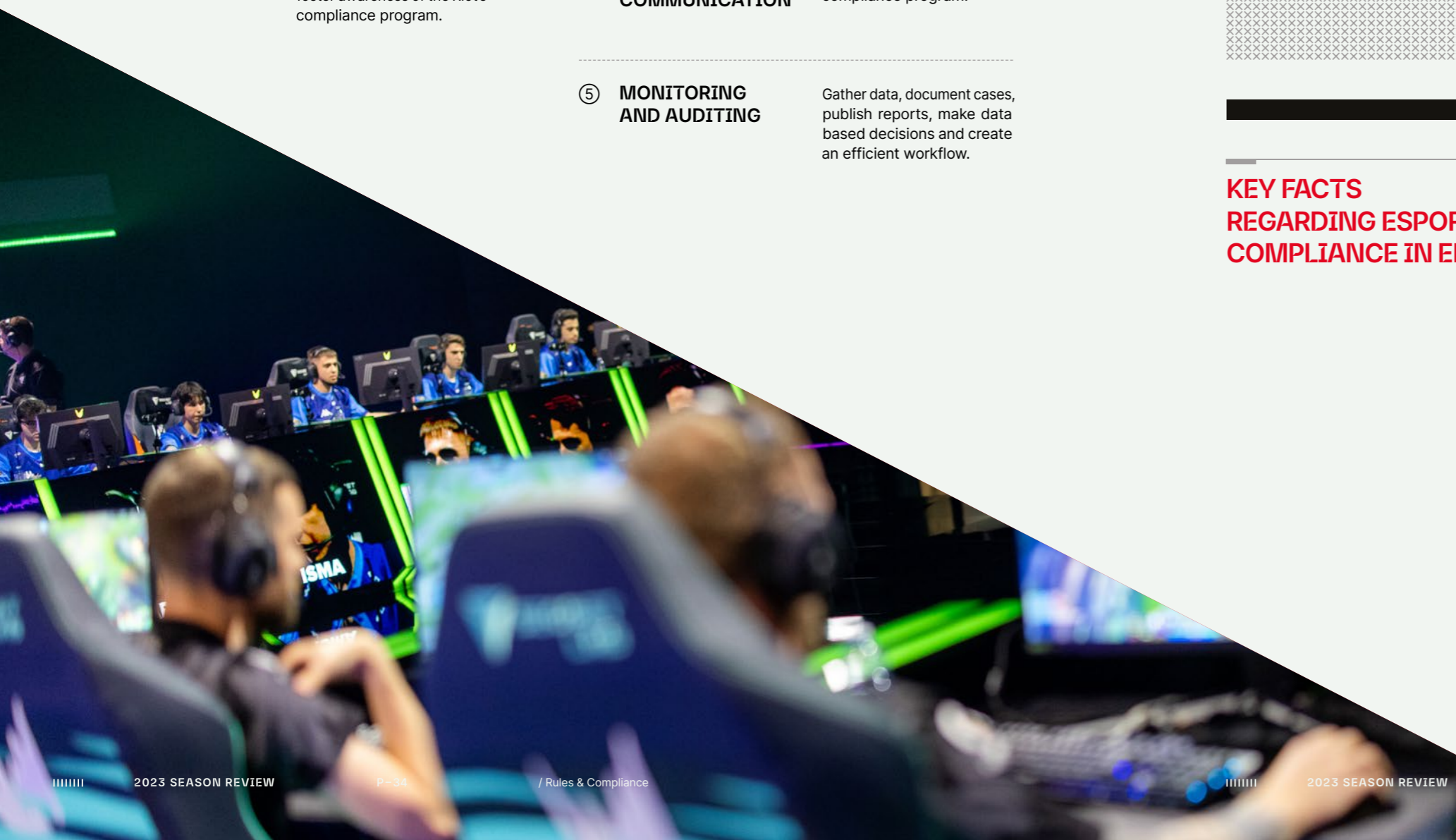
Esports Compliance is a global discipline within Riot Games, with a central team directing international esports policy and regulatory strategy from the company headquarters in Los Angeles, with the goal of having territorial teams implement our programs and policies, while setting and aligning on strategies at the regional level for EMEA, Americas, APAC, and China.

In terms of expertise, those spearheading Esports Compliance bring a wealth of experience drawn predominantly in traditional sports law. Those setting the direction and goals for the unit have collectively spent decades working in and advising international sports federations and governing bodies, private law firms, and law enforcement agencies on sports competition integrity related matters.

Who does Esports Compliance work with, both internally and externally?

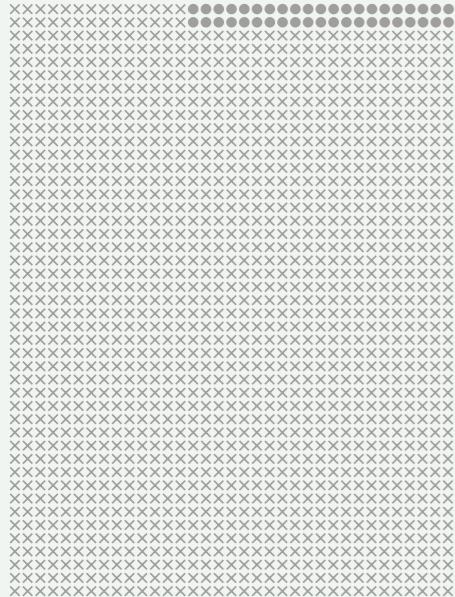
Within Riot Games, our Esports Compliance team works whenever necessary with all parts of our esports pillar, from events and production to product management and legal teams. Primarily, we align with our counterparts in Competition Management in drafting and updating our Rulebooks, dealing with disciplinary issues arising not only in match operations, but also any serious potential instances of team member misconduct. We also have frequent touchpoints with the data and insights team, and our communications leads.

Alongside continuous refinement of rulesets, our work includes fostering best practices among tournament organizers, ensuring consistent enforcement across esports, addressing legal compliance issues, implementing prevention and education initiatives, and engaging with external government bodies and regulators to uphold the integrity and compliance of esports operations.



MAJOR POLICY UPDATES

The most significant new competition policies centered on team operations; with new measures for sustainability surrounding revenues and player careers.



PLAYER LOANS IN THE VCT

Starting in 2024, teams in the VCT International Leagues will be allowed to loan up to two of their players to teams that compete in a Challengers League, Game Changers, or another league outside of the VCT International Leagues. These player loans are specifically designed to promote player development opportunities for the VCT International League Teams. Notably, VCT International League Teams are not allowed to receive player loans from any other team. ☒

LOL PLAYER LOANS

Beginning in the 2024 season, LEC teams and Accredited ERL teams will be able to loan players between the two tiers.

- Same-tier loans will not be allowed (i.e. LEC to LEC, or ERL to ERL)
- International loans will not be allowed (e.g. LEC or Accredited ERLs cannot loan to or from LCS or other leagues)
- LEC organizations, if they are also operating an ERL roster, will not be able to loan players to or from the ERL they are operating in.

Teams will be able to have a total of two players loaned in or out at the same time. Minimum and maximum duration of loans will be heavily regulated in 2024 to ensure loans do not disrupt the competitions. Additional restrictions will be put in place for 2024 to ensure the loans do not overly disrupt the ecosystem. This policy will be reviewed again at the end of 2024, and adjustments will be made as required. ☒

VCT AFFILIATE TEAMS

In order to encourage and promote collaboration between VCT International League teams and Challengers/Game Changers teams, 2024 will introduce the concept of "Affiliate Teams", whereby a VCT International League Team may form an "affiliate relationship" with a Challengers/Game Changers Team.

The guidelines around what may be included in an affiliate relationship agreement are intentionally kept light and flexible to provide teams with the greatest opportunity to form collaborative relationships that will best serve their respective organizations. For example, the affiliate relationships could include player development pipeline mechanics, naming rights deals, collaborative content creation, etc. Affiliate teams will still be allowed to compete in the Ascension Tournaments and ascend into the VCT International Leagues. Forming an affiliate relationship also unlocks the use of "Two-way Players". ☒

LEC MAXIMUM CONTRACT LENGTH TO FOUR YEARS

The LEC teams as well as all professional teams globally will be able to sign four year contracts with their team members starting with the free agency period at the end of 2023. This is a change from the usual three year maximum contract stipulation that was previously implemented. ☒

RAISING LEC MINIMUM AGE

For the last few years, the LEC competition rulebook stated that if players are under the age of 18 they may compete from the age of 17 in the LEC with parental consent. As of August 2023, no player shall be considered eligible to participate in any LEC Match before having lived 18 full years. This amendment was made to increase monetisation and sponsorship opportunities for LEC teams. ☒

MENTAL HEALTH BASELINE

Pro esports players are often under enormous pressure and stress, which can take a toll on their mental health. In many cases, players live far away from home in a foreign country and may have no one to confide in, may not know what kind of help might be available, or may struggle with language barriers.

We believe that the mental well-being of pro-players should be a collective concern that we prioritize as an esports community. Over the past years, our teams in the LEC and VCT EMEA leagues have made extensive efforts in supporting players' mental well-being. For example, many teams employ sports psychologists and performance coaches. As a next step, for the 2024 season, Riot Games will introduce minimum standards that are to be met by all teams participating in the LEC and VCT EMEA Leagues to ensure that all pro-players are covered with a baseline level of care no matter which team they join.

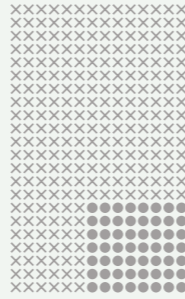
① Each team will be required to offer mental health services offered by qualified professionals that can be accessed anonymously.

② At least one staff member in the team environment will have to have undergone a certified mental health first aid training program, to ensure they can act as first responders in a qualified manner.

We understand that the above points are just a small starting point for the important topic of player mental health wellbeing. We will continue to have an open dialogue with teams and players to discuss how we can further improve in this area. ☒



FINANCIAL MECHANISMS IN RIOT ESPORTS



Riot is committed to supporting the long-term financial stability and balance of our esports competitions, and has introduced various mechanisms to maintain this.



MINIMUM PLAYER SALARY GUARANTEES

Since the 2019 season, the LEC has maintained minimum salary requirements for both players and coaches. In practice, virtually all team members in the LEC are paid above the minimum guarantee.

The specifics of how players and coaches must be compensated (based on their participation in a single season) is detailed in our rulebooks. We would highlight that players who have participated in 18 or more regular season matches for the same team during a single season must earn a total of at least €60,000 gross during that season. A head coach must earn a total of at least €60,000 gross during that season.

While the VCT EMEA league and tier-two competitions do not yet have minimum salary requirements, we are constantly evaluating the needs of teams and players, and the best way to introduce such mechanisms should they be required.

STIPENDS IN VCT EMEA

For the launch of the VCT International Leagues in 2023, we selected partner teams who have a track record of building great esports experiences, developing players, and can meaningfully contribute to the long-term growth of VALORANT esports. To make sure we attract the best teams in the world, we forgone any participation/license fees and instead provide financial stipends to the selected teams in return for their investment in growing the ecosystem.

PRIZE MONEY

All esports competitions run and/or sanctioned by Riot Games award prize money to the top performing teams. The lion's share will always go to the champion, with lesser amounts awarded sequentially (typically to the top four or six teams, depending on the stage of the competition). Our tournament organizer partners are also required to award a set amount of prize money, depending on the tier of their league (e.g. accredited ERLs had a prize pool of €20,000 in 2023, while for non-accredited leagues it was €10,000).

SPORTING FINANCIAL REGULATIONS (SFR)

IN 2023

Announced in 2023, and to be introduced in the 2024 LEC season, SFR marks a notable step forward in creating a financially sustainable environment for pro players, partnered teams, and the league itself.

Sports leagues, the LEC included, are vulnerable to teams overspending on players in order to drive sporting and commercial success. When such expenditure becomes detached from revenues, there is a risk that the teams are acting in an unsustainable manner. This not

only decreases the attractiveness of a league but can also lead to systemic problems if teams and investors drop out. The LEC has not been immune to such market pressures and we have seen expenditures on players increasing significantly over the past years, which has not been matched by an equal increase in revenues from teams.

These developments, if left unchecked, could pose a risk to the LEC ecosystem and all its participants.

The LEC SFR, to be introduced in the 2024 season, will encourage teams to maintain the total sum of its five highest-paid player salaries below a certain threshold, with teams exceeding the threshold having to pay an excess fee (SFR Fee). Similar mechanisms have been introduced in China's League of Legends Pro League (LPL) and the League of Legends Champions Korea (LCK), with support from the partner teams of both these competitions.

THE LEC SFR SYSTEM

SFR will encourage each team to maintain the total sum of salaries (known as SFR Spend) paid to the top five highest-paid players in a team within a certain range. The range includes both an upper spending threshold (SFR Threshold)

and a lower spending threshold (SFR Floor), with the lower spending threshold amounting to 50% of the SFR Threshold.

The SFR Threshold is calculated based on a number of considerations, including LEC

player salaries, League Revenue Pool of the current and forecasted years, team financial data - such as revenue and expenses - and other market indicators.

BASIC STRUCTURE: DETAILS

SFR will encourage each team to maintain the total sum of salaries (known as SFR Spend) paid to the top five highest-paid players in a team within a certain range.

The range includes both an upper spending threshold (SFR Threshold) and a lower spending threshold (SFR Floor), with the lower spending threshold amounting to 50% of the SFR Threshold.

The SFR Threshold is calculated based on a number of considerations, including LEC player salaries, League Revenue Pool of the current and forecasted years, team financial data - such as revenue and expenses - and other market indicators.

SFR FEE	If teams spend above threshold, teams have to pay SFR Fee	SFR Fee is distributed 50/50 between Riot (used with talent development) and teams within the SFR Compliant zone.
> 150 % over the threshold	100%	of the exceeded amount
< 150 % over the threshold	50%	of the exceeded amount

SFR COMPLIANT	How to check teams' compliance with the threshold	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the actual compensation paid to the five highest-paid players (SFR Spend) exceeds the SFR threshold, team has to pay corresponding SFR Fee Five highest-paid players are selected based on actual compensation paid, not contractual
---------------	---	--

BELOW FLOOR	If teams spend below SFR Floor, teams will not be eligible for a share of SFR Fee (if any)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 50% of current year SFR Threshold (2024: EUR 1M) Considers entire team GCD spend (i.e. all team members registered on the GCD actual compensation combined for that season)
-------------	--	--



MAINTAINING ESPORTS INTEGRITY

From cheating and collusion to poor conduct, the most fundamental threats to esports are best tackled with thorough governance, discipline, and prevention.

HONESTY AND FAIR PLAY

Within Riot Games' various global and regional esports rulebooks, there are detailed Codes of Conduct that, in summary, require teams and team members to "avoid any behavior that potentially threatens the actual or perceived integrity of competition or that is otherwise inconsistent with the principles of good sportsmanship, honesty, or fair play."

Riot Games Competitive Operations team has adopted an effective approach towards all forms of manipulation and/or unlawful influencing of its esports competitions.

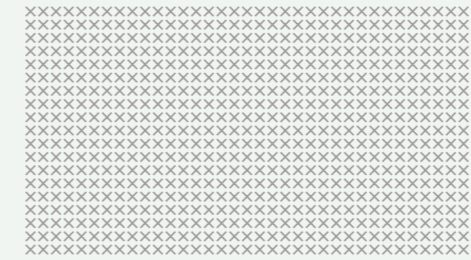



In esports, we can draw a distinction between gameplay-related integrity risks, and those not connected to the game itself (similar to "on-field" and "off field" infractions in traditional sports).

GAMEPLAY INTEGRITY RISKS	COLLUSION INTEGRITY RISKS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Hacking (modification of game client) Exploiting (using an in-game bug to an advantage) ▶ Ringing (secretly using another Player's account) ▶ Elo Boosting (using another Player's account to increase their ranked queue rating in exchange for personal gain) ▶ The use of any cheat device or program ▶ Intentional disconnect or tampering with studio equipment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Soft play (an agreement among Team Members to not play at a reasonable standard) ▶ Pre-arranging to split prize money and/or any other form of compensation. ▶ Sending or receiving signals, electronic or otherwise, from outside sources ▶ Deliberately losing a Game for compensation. ▶ Conspiring to predetermine locations for Free Agents and/or conspiring to fix the salaries of contracts for Team Members and/or potential Team Members.

RESPONSIBLE BEHAVIOR


As well as offenses and infringements to our rules that can compromise fairplay, there are clear expectations on how team members should interact with each other, league officials, and spectators/fans, in a manner expected of a professional esports athlete.






Harassment & Abuse

Systematic, hostile and repeated acts taking place over a considerable period of time, or a singular egregious instance, which is/are intended to isolate or ostracize a person and/or affect the dignity of the person. This includes sexual harassment.



Denigration

Offending the dignity or integrity of a country, private person or group through denigrating words or actions on account of race, skin color, ethnic, national or social origin, gender, language, religion, sexual orientation or any other reason.



Toxicity

Negative, abusive, or disruptive behavior exhibited by team members towards others, and/or creating a hostile or unpleasant environment for players, thus hindering the development of a healthy and supportive community.

POTENTIAL PENALTIES

- ▶ Warning
- ▶ Loss of Side/Map Selection for current or future Game(s)
- ▶ Loss of Ban(s) for Current or Future Game(s)
- ▶ Fine(s) and/or Prize Forfeiture(s)
- ▶ Game and/or Match Forfeiture(s)
- ▶ Suspension(s)
- ▶ Disqualification(s)
- ▶ Sensitivity Training

AWARENESS AND PREVENTION

- ① We are working internally to further develop awareness campaigns, training, and tutorials for esports players and teams.
- ② We currently have multiple methods to contact Riot's Esports Compliance team to report potential integrity breaches.
- ③ For highly sensitive matters, Riot's Esports Compliance team will seek outside legal expertise.



COMBATTING MATCH FIXING

The thrilling heights of esports only exist so long as competition is uncompromised. Any doubt that there is potential match-fixing can leave a mark that can't be patched away.

MATCH MANIPULATION

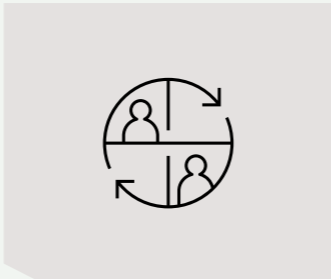
Match manipulation can be defined as: "the unlawful influencing or alteration, directly or by an act or omission, of the course, result or any other aspect" of an esports match or competition. It involves individuals, such as players, coaches, or other stakeholders, conspiring to intentionally pre-determine the result partially or completely, often by losing on purpose or ensuring a specific outcome in exchange for a payoff or other incentives from gamblers.

While the conduct of match-fixing in esports is largely similar to traditional sports, there are additional risk factors posed by organized video game competitions:



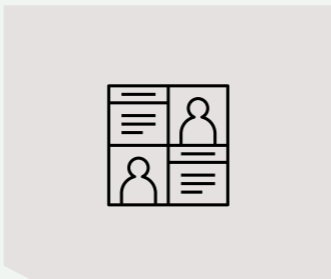
Player Career Length

Most esports player careers are short, with most retiring well before the age of 30. This could enhance the incentive for quick financial gain.



Digital nature

Cheating and hacking in online games is its own issue, but it can be exploited by corrupt actors to obtain illicit betting profits.



Spot fixing

Most esports game titles are objective focused, meaning that even if a player doesn't throw a full game, they can concede certain points (like First Blood).



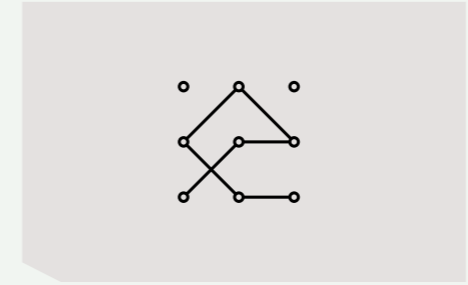
Match-fixing can ruin a sport's reputation, and in turn destroy the fan passion and support that competition is built upon.

PLAYER EDUCATION AND PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

Trust and integrity lie within the core strategy of Riot Esports Compliance's core strategy; to which match-fixing poses a fundamental threat and violation of those values. For all competitions run directly by Riot Games or in partnership with licensed tournament organizers, we strive to ensure fair competition.

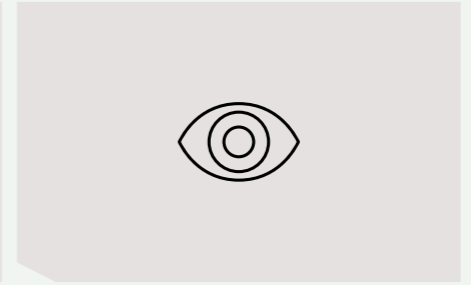
After extensively surveying the increase in betting popularity around esports, Sportradar

signed an industry-first partnership with Riot Games in 2019. The global agreement began with bet monitoring of the major League of Legends international and regional esports competitions, but now includes academy and minor regional leagues, plus the VALORANT Champions Tour.



Monitoring and Detection

Utilizing the Universal Fraud Detection System (UFDS), Sportradar monitors and detects suspicious betting patterns and behaviors in real-time.



Intelligence & Investigations

The global team of Intelligence Analysts and Specialist Investigators conduct investigations into suspected manipulated matches.



Training

Collaboratively, Riot Games and Sportradar are designing and delivering a bespoke investigation training course to raise the awareness of Rioters in handling match-fixing incidents.

INTELLIGENCE AND INVESTIGATIONS

Any attempt to unduly influence or manipulate the outcome of matches is strictly against the Code of Conduct sections of our Rulebooks (which are applicable to team members, team managers and other employees in Riot's professional and semi-professional esports). Offenses and infringements of such rules are punishable, whether or not they were committed intentionally or successfully.

The following is a high-level summary of the current internal processes we typically look to employ, with support from Sportradar, when there has been a suspected case of match-fixing:

1. Riot Esports Compliance receives a report. These could include a player being approached by a fixer, or suspicious match patterns.

2. Suspicious matches are identified and investigated using interviews, witness statement collections and other methods with persons of interest, respecting their right to be heard.

3. Once all evidence and information is collected from the investigations, Riot Esports Compliance notifies its ruling to the accused and publishes it on its esports channels.





2023 SEASON REVIEW

④

LEAGUE OF LEGENDS

LOL ESPORTS EMEA RECAP

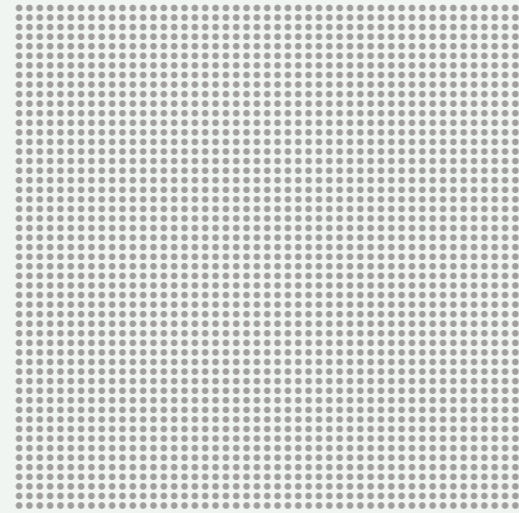
- ➔ An overview of the current EMEA landscape for League of Legends esports, with 2023 results for the LEC, EMEA Masters, and EMEA Regional Leagues.



OVERVIEW OF LOL ESPORTS IN EMEA

As we enter the second decade of League of Legends esports in EMEA, the region expands and seeks future stars in all new territories.

The European continent has held a significant place throughout the history of competitive League of Legends. The first ever Worlds (known then as the Season 1 Championship) was organized in Sweden in 2011, with future editions coming back to Europe in 2015, 2019, and 2021. Domestically, it's home to some of the greatest of all western League of Legends talent. Now that ten years have passed since Europe's first official League of Legends league began, it's time to write the next chapter, and we want to allow more players to call this region their own.



EVOLVING INTO EMEA

To meet the new decade, we've expanded what was the European region into a new pan-continental competitive landscape. Alongside the existing European countries, we've brought Türkiye into the fold, where there has been a dedicated league since 2013, and from which many storied players have emerged. In addition, the Middle East and African market, which Riot Games officially entered in 2019, now boasts its own recognized competition, and now all players from this section of the world share the same competitive residential status as European players.*

*Players from Russia and the CIS are also now part of EMEA, however their dedicated competition, the League of Legends Continental League (LCL), will remain indefinitely suspended, but may be included at a later date.



OUR REGION

Explained

The EMEA LOL Esports ecosystem consists of multiple tiers and an entire region's worth of interconnecting leagues and tournaments. At the upper echelons sit the following competitions:



THE LEAGUE OF LEGENDS EMEA CHAMPIONSHIP

[LEC]

The pinnacle of League of Legends esports in EMEA that sets the bar for excellence in competition and entertainment. It is the region's highest tier league, featuring ten teams and the most skilled players from EMEA.

Key Facts

- The LEC is entirely owned and operated by Riot Games
- Between 2013-2019, the competition ran as the "European League of Legends Championship Series (EU LCS)"
- Today it features 10 Teams, all long term partners of the league
- As of the end of 2023, a total of 24 trophies have been lifted in the competition.
- The LEC features a minimum salary guarantee for players, and revenue share for teams
- The league is currently broadcasted in 13 languages, with English as the main broadcast
- League seasons are played out in a dedicated studio in Berlin, Germany, with a live roadshow arena finals event finishing out the year
- The best performing teams in the LEC qualify for the League of Legends Mid-Season Invitational (MSI) and World Championship.



THE EMEA REGIONAL LEAGUES

[ERLs]

The foundation of the ecosystem, a circuit of 13 leagues that celebrates the diversity of our region and offers teams the opportunity to qualify for EMEA Masters. Each of these multi-divisional leagues represent a single country or, in some cases, multiple.

Key Facts

- Each league is run by a third-party tournament organizer, partnered with Riot Games.
- There are two types of ERL: accredited and non-accredited.
- Matches are played predominantly online, with some also running live finals events.
- The ERLs feature multiple divisions, with promotion and relegation between each.
- The majority of LEC team organizations run academy teams across the ERLs.
- In addition to normal interregional movement policies, ERL players are "locally trained residents," based on various criteria including time spent playing in their respective league.
- Some ERLs, like the Spanish Superliga or the Türkiye Championship League are among the oldest League of Legends competitions in the world.



THE EMEA MASTERS

[EM]

A twice annual, tier-two tournament that brings together the best teams from the ERLs. It acts as a proving ground for the up and coming talent.

Key Facts

- The first "European Masters" was held in 2018.
- The tournament is entirely owned and operated by Riot Games.
- Like the League of Legends World Championship, EM features a play-in stage and main event, allowing for multiple teams from each ERL to qualify.
- Along with its new name of "EMEA Masters" in 2023, the competition underwent a significant rebranding.
- For the first time, in 2023 an EMEA Masters finals was played on stage as part of the LEC Finals weekend.



THE NEW LEC FORMAT

Explained

As we begin decade two of the LEC, the most drastic ever format change has been introduced. Here's a full overview of how it works and its impact on competition.

In 2023, the LEC underwent a significant overhaul on multiple fronts. As well as expanding the competitive pool from Europe to the whole of EMEA, there was a full overhaul of the core rules determining how and when teams compete against each other and advance through the season. This involved setting up three shorter, more dynamic splits, leading to additional trophy lifts, and (for the first time) a single champion for the full season.

WHY CHANGE UP THE FORMAT?

Since its first season in 2013, the LEC (under its various names) has always been divided into a Spring and Summer season, each producing their own champions and runners-up who then compete internationally. There have been miniscule to major changes over the years, from adding and/or removing best-of-threes, to the addition of a double elimination bracket for playoffs. However, the most recent format left a few issues. First, seasons were just too long. In addition, best-of-fives were minimal, despite being widely played in international competitions. It was important to improve competitiveness in the league, while also setting up more games between the top teams.

ONE ULTIMATE SEASON WINNER

Throughout the year, teams accumulate championship points based on their final standings for the Split. The Winter and Spring winners qualify as EMEA's representatives in the Mid-Season Invitational (MSI), while Summer awards slightly more championship points to teams. The Champion from each split will automatically qualify for Season Finals, but the remaining 3-5 seeds will be entirely decided on Championship points.

After the Summer Split has concluded, the six teams that rise above will compete in the Season Finals. This is a double-elimination bracket played entirely in best of fives, with the top four teams starting in the upper bracket, and the lowest two being one loss away from elimination. Winning multiple splits grants a team a higher seed, or even first seed if a team manages to win all three. The goal from here is to be the one and only champion of the LEC, lifting the coveted trophy, and earning one of the few coveted spots at the World Championship.

THREE DYNAMIC NEW SPLITS

The LEC calendar is now split up into four distinct stages: a Winter, Spring, and Summer split, followed by the Season Finals. As a result of these changes, we transitioned to a three day schedule (which was only seen periodically in "Super Weeks".) The three splits are identical in how they are laid out:

Winter / Spring / Summer Split

Season Split Winner
Guaranteed spot in the Season Finals

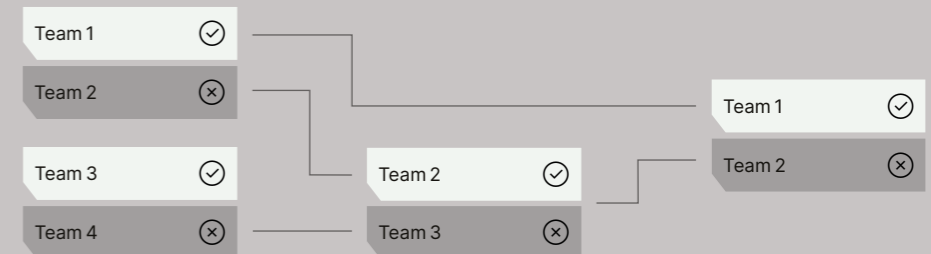
Team 1

Split level 03_

PLAYOFFS

The remaining four teams are divided across a double-elimination bracket, competing in best-of-five series. The Grand Finals winner hoists the Split trophy, and gets a guaranteed spot in the Season Final.

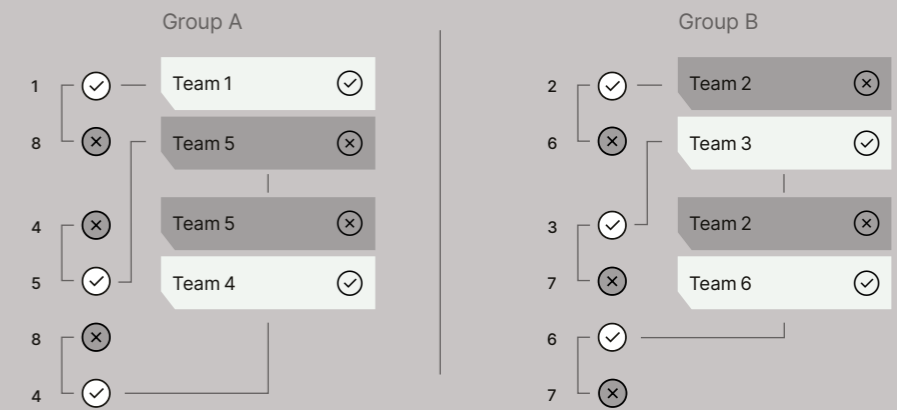
Group Winners



Split level 02_

GROUP STAGE

The eight advancing teams are separated into four seeded pools, before being randomly drawn into two groups of four. Teams in each group play each other in best-of-threes. Win two series and you're through, but lose two and you are out.



Split level 01_

REGULAR SEASON

A best-of-one, round robin format, where all ten teams play each other once. Despite being the opener, it's arguably the most intense portion; the bottom two teams are eliminated, and thus will miss out on the rest of the split.





● Interview

DENİZ GUNAY

COMPETITION MANAGER, EMEA LEAGUE OF LEGENDS

»We want the LEC to be the most competitive and the most entertaining product out there, and format is a big part of that.«

In light of 2023's major changes to the LEC format and region as a whole, EMEA's head of League of Legends competition management gives some context and insight on his role.

→ Can you give us an abridged history of your work in esports, and what led you to your position in Riot Games?

Games were a huge part of who I was growing up. When I was in college, I got the chance to get involved with the collegiate program of Riot Games, and then founded the esports club in my university. From there, as I was graduating I applied for an internship with the Riot Games esports department in the Istanbul office, in 2015. I interned in esports player management/league operations for a while, and then after that I was hired full time. I worked with the team in the Turkish Championship League (TCL) until 2019, then transferred to Berlin as the LEC head referee. I held this role until 2021, and then became the Competition Manager of EMEA League of Legends, and that's what I've been doing since.

→ Walk us through the process of creating the new LEC format?

Every year we look into our competitions and their formats, and see what we can improve. If you look at the history of European League of Legends, especially the time before the LEC (when it was known as the EU LCS), the format would change drastically almost every year. Since the launch of the LEC in 2019, the changes were quite minor in comparison.

We worked closely with our internal teams (product broadcast, shoutcasters), and the majority of the LoL Competitive Operations team was involved, bringing in experience from different points of view. We also worked with the LEC organizations as well as the LEC Player

Council on what would and wouldn't work. This was months of discussions and pages upon pages of notes and feedback on how we can make the competition more exciting, more meaningful, both to compete in and watch. It's fair to say all stakeholders of our ecosystem had a hand in it, one way or another. That's why we think we landed on something pretty unique.

→ What were you looking to resolve within the competition?

We want the LEC to be the most competitive and the most entertaining product out there, and format is a big part of that. Some of the issues we were starting to identify with the previous format (with double round robin regular season into playoffs) was 1) it was too long, and that caused fans to lose interest at times, and 2) especially around the middle of the regular season, the games weren't as meaningful as they could be in a shorter form tournament, which made it less exciting for the players to compete in. Those were the main issues we tried to solve; make it more meaningful to compete, and more meaningful to watch. Every match would have more impact. If you won or lost a game, it wouldn't just be a dent in the grand scheme of things. A single game could be make or break for your team that Split.

→ LoL comp ops has a wide range of responsibilities, from managing referees to working directly with ERL TOs. How do you manage all these as a team?

It's not realistic that everyone is able to do everything at a level that meets our high quality bar. While we of course have some common things everybody needs to be proficient in, like safeguarding the integrity of our competitions, members of our team specialize in different fields. Match operations, for example, need specialization. So does working with ERL tournament organisers, with partner management skills. You don't necessarily need to have excellent partner management skills as the Match Ops Lead, but rather want to use your time to go deeper in running live shows and everything that specific role involves.

Our team focuses on these different specialties, with me having a general overview of

all of these areas. I rely a lot on the team and their specialties. Everyone brings something unique to the table.

→ When it comes to League of Legends esports specifically, what are some of the more unique and challenging match operations issues in the games?

As is common with most esports, anti-cheat measures and integrity is always top of mind. Making sure the games are fair, that nobody is getting an unfair advantage over their opponents.

Most of the challenge in LoL match operations comes from the fact that the game changes frequently, once every few weeks when there is a new patch, a new version of the game. We constantly need to be on the lookout for the issues these new patches bring, communicate with the teams if we need to put restrictions on certain game elements to keep players from abusing certain bugs in the game.

One of the biggest responsibilities of the referee team is when issues happen in game. This isn't only the in-game bugs I mentioned above, but other software or even hardware issues. If there is an issue, players have the opportunity to stop the game, inform a referee, and request an investigation of the situation if they believe any issue puts them at a significant disadvantage. We have a tool called the Chronobreak, which allows us to 'rewind' back to any point in the game.

→ How does your team work with your Global and other regional counterparts? What are some of the key ways you identify and solve issues together?

Global collaboration is one of the key aspects of our work. We are always in touch both with the other regions as well as the folks who are responsible for the Global esports ecosystem. This comes in the form of sharing learnings, cool projects, and issues we are having in our regions. We also discuss where we want to take League of Legends esports and how to evolve it to ensure our sport has a bright future. ☑





THE LEC'S WINTER WONDERLAND

The inaugural Winter Split of the LEC gave players and fans alike their first glimpse of an entirely fresh format. "A three week regular season, and the return of best-of-threes? The cold months will fly by!" And for some teams, things really went too fast. Despite some early promise, Excel's super team finished last in the regular season, while Fnatic's failure to advance was equally shocking. Meanwhile, a jungle heavy meta and highly versatile midlane meant players like Team Vitality's Bo and MAD Lion's Nisqy made standout contributions to their team's placement at the top of the pole.

In the Group Stage, top seed Vitality's momentum ran out as they were eliminated by SK Gaming in their lower bracket. KOI thrived in the Bo3 environment, obliterating their opponents without losing a game, while the only heavy resistance MAD Lions and G2 Esports encountered in their group was each other. In the playoffs, SK Gaming bowed out after a lengthy melee against MAD Lions, who would push on through the lower bracket until their supremely swift defeat by G2 Esports.



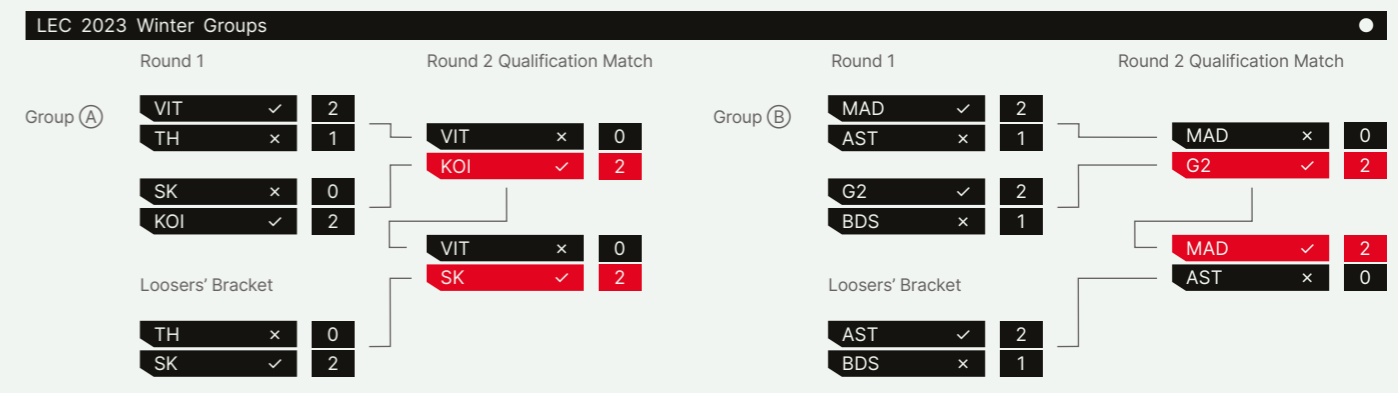
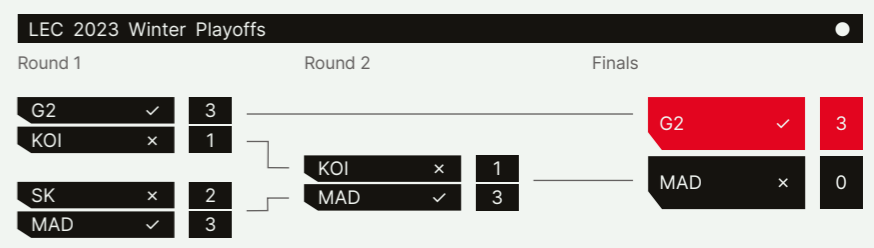
G2 Esports' Winter split victory made them the first team worldwide to qualify for the Mid Season Invitational.

LEAGUE OF LEGENDS

2023 LEC RESULTS

Recap

With more high-stakes games and three new trophies to lift, the LEC 2023 season was a rollercoaster run that flipped plenty of predictions on their heads.



LEC 2023 Winter Season Standings					
N°	Team		Games		Str
1	Team Vitality	VIT	7-2	78%	2W
2	MAD Lions	MAD	7-2	78%	3W
3	SK Gaming	SK	6-3	67%	2W
4	G2 Esports	G2	6-3	67%	1L
5	Team BDS	BDS	5-4	56%	1W
6	Team Heretics	TH	4-5	44%	2L
7	KOI	KOI	4-5	44%	1W
8	Astralis	AST	3-6	33%	1L
9	Fnatic	FNC	2-7	22%	4L
10	Excel	XL	1-8	11%	6L



SPRING'S UNLIKELY HEROES

With teams now used to the whiplash of a shorter split, all returned to the Rift looking for quick and decisive qualifications into groups. After three weeks, it was one of the most equalized standings in LEC history. Since two teams must be eliminated, a tie-breaker between Team Heretics and MAD Lions kept the latter's dreams alive. Astralis narrowly edged into second above G2 Esports with a four-game win streak, while Team BDS silenced critics with a first place finish, followed by an undefeated run in groups.

Team Vitality edged out of groups on their second try, with mid-laner Perkz leading the pack with the highest KDA (Kills Deaths Assists) of the group stage, at 17.0 (22/4/46). MAD Lions had to work their way out of the losers bracket, but in the process Bot Laner Carzzy racked up the highest number of kills (19) for any LEC game of 2023, when they eliminated Fnatic. In the playoffs, Winter champs G2 Esports fell immediately after a prolonged skirmish with MAD Lions, who would also take out Team Vitality in the second round. BDS danced into their first ever LEC Split Final, but determined as they were to secure the trophy and an MSI spot, MAD Lions reverse swept the series and punched their ticket to London. ☒



MAD Lions' triumph in the Spring split was their first title victory since LEC Summer 2021.

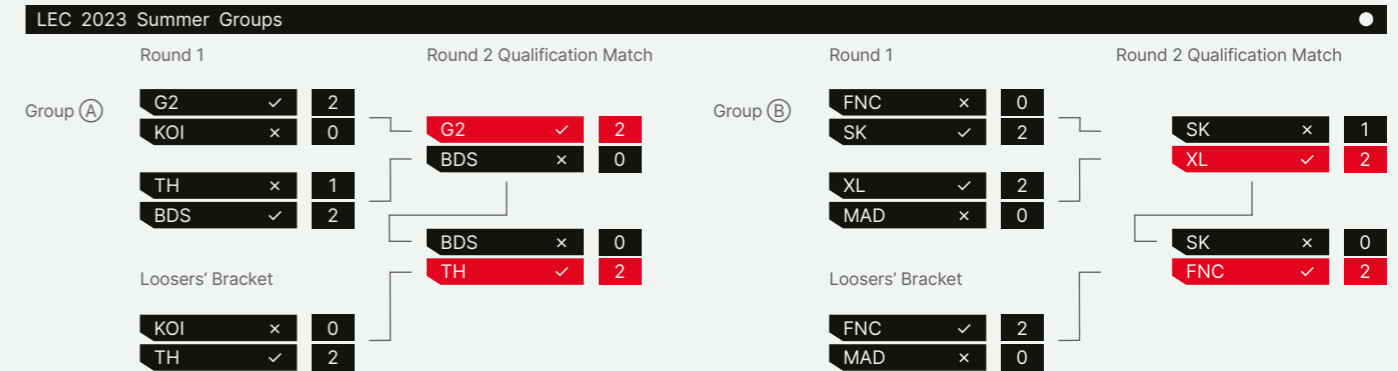
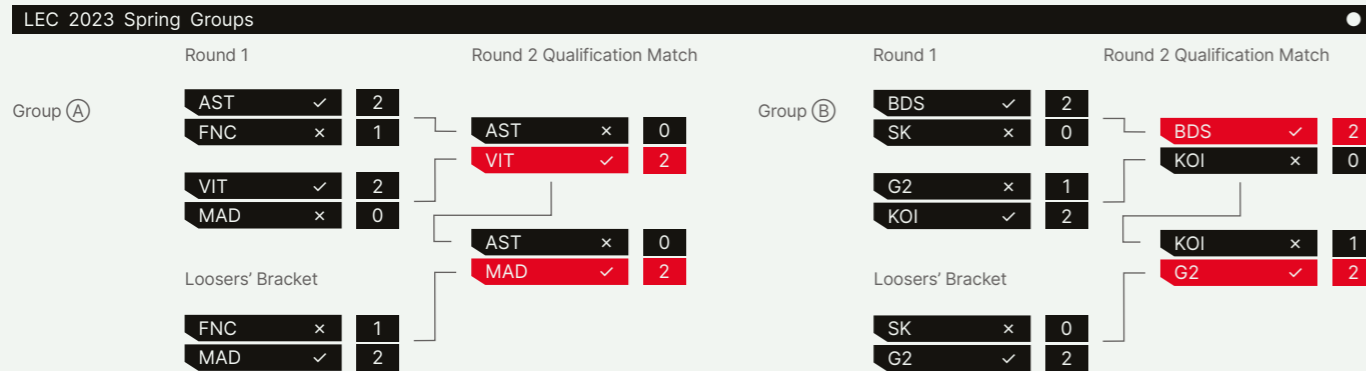
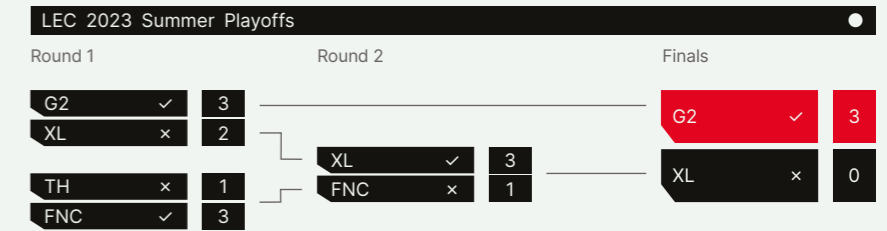
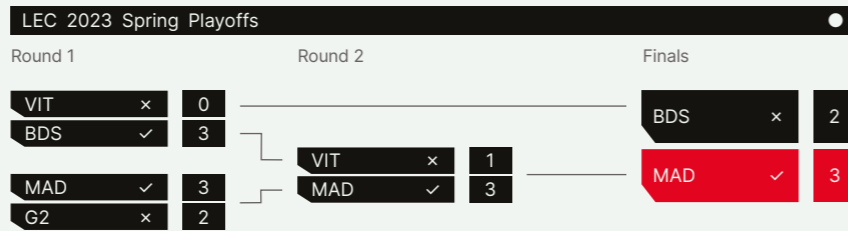
MAKING THE MOST OF SUMMER

One final split to guarantee a spot in the LEC Season Finals, and the championship points are 50% higher than Winter or Spring. For every team not named G2 Esports or MAD Lions, this means every loss increases your chance of an early summer vacation. Despite the added pressure, Team Vitality lost all but one of their regular season games. This might not have doomed them, but in the group stage several teams ranked below Vitality in championship points pulled through, meaning a redemption arc would have to wait for 2024.

The underdog hero of Summer was Excel, who altered their roster and fortunes with an undefeated group stage run, and a surprise playoffs first round victory against G2 Esports. While no doubt happy with their first Split Final appearance, Excel's rematch against "G2 finesse" was over and done in 85 minutes. G2 Esports claimed their second LEC split title of the year, and were the undisputed first seed in the LEC Season Finals. ☒



Summer was G2's most dominant split of 2023; they were undefeated across groups and playoffs.



LEC 2023 Spring Season Standings

N°	Team	Games	Str
1	Team BDS	BDS 7-2 78%	3W
2	Astralis	AST 6-3 67%	4W
3	G2 Esports	G2 6-3 67%	1W
4	Team Vitality	VIT 6-3 67%	2W
5	SK Gaming	SK 4-5 44%	3L
6	Fnatic	FNC 4-5 44%	1L
7	KOI	KOI 4-5 44%	2L
8	MAD Lions	MAD 3-6 33%	1L
9	Team Heretics	TH 3-6 33%	1W
10	Excel	XL 2-7 22%	4L

LEC 2023 Summer Season Standings

N°	Team	Games	Str
1	G2 Esports	G2 8-1 78%	7W
2	Fnatic	FNC 7-2 78%	1L
3	Excel	XL 5-4 56%	2W
4	Team Heretics	TH 5-4 56%	2L
5	Team BDS	BDS 4-5 44%	2W
6	SK Gaming	SK 4-5 44%	2W
7	MAD Lions	MAD 4-5 44%	5L
8	KOI	KOI 4-5 44%	1W
9	Astralis	AST 3-6 33%	2L
10	Team Vitality	VIT 1-8 11%	7L



THE 2023 SEASON FINALS

Recap

After three splits and a year of grueling competition, six teams clashed for a spot in the Montpellier arena finals, to lift the LEC trophy, and claim a spot at the World Championship.

RESULTS



The two lowest seeded teams are immediately sorted into the lower bracket. As SK Gaming learned, playing through a year's worth of games just to lose it all in one match is tough, but Fnatic didn't bow to the pressure; scraping through three 3-2 matches to make it to the Grand Final stage in Montpellier. Exce's loss to Fnatic was particularly harrowing; one more win would have put them in World's contention for the first time.

Now playing in front of thousands in Montpellier's Sud de France arena, MAD Lions weren't going to go out quietly against Fnatic. After a 0-2 setback, they retaliated with back-to-back wins: both under 30 minutes and with 10K gold leads. Ultimately the resistance ended in game five, as Fnatic outmaneuvered the MAD Lions and prepared for their first Grand Final match against G2 Esports in four years. After their live finals meltdown in 2022, G2 Esports sought not to repeat history, sauntering into a 2-0 lead against Fnatic. It was an extremely aggressive series, averaging over a kill per minute. Fnatic managed to wrestle a win, even if it took their whole team to shut down Caps and his unstoppable Yone champion pick. But G2 and their French player Hans Sama were determined not to disappoint their vocal fan club, breezing through 3-1 score with a final kill count of 24-6 and gold lead of over 15K.



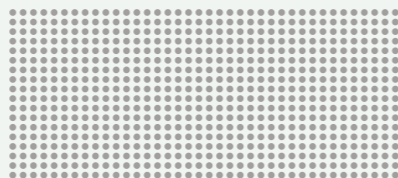


LEAGUE OF LEGENDS

LEC FINALS WEEKEND IN MONTPELLIER

2023's LoL Esports season finale for EMEA was our biggest ever roadshow; three days of climatic competitions and thousands of fans gathered in the South of France.

Recap



WHAT ARE FINALS ROADSHOWS?

Just as in traditional sports, there is an unmatched sensation in watching your favorite team triumph in the presence of thousands of fellow fans. It's all the more tense after a year's long season run, weathering the same highs and lows as every player on stage. That's the experience of Riot Games and everyone working in our esports team wants to bring fans whenever we take our leagues on the road; closing out our regional competitions with a bang. It's the same broadcast, on-stage talent, and intense gameplay, but with a larger venue, spectacle, and stakes - and plenty of side entertainment!

The LEC finals weekend has been a tradition since 2015, but for decade two (and our first as EMEA), we went all out for the 2023 edition. In direct partnership with the city of Montpellier and the region of Occitanie, we added an extra show day by accompanying the LEC Season Finals with the grand finals of EMEA Masters, and a bigger LEC XPO. ☒



EMEA MASTERS ON STAGE

Each year has brought greater attention to EMEA Masters; our proving ground for future talent and the ultimate bragging opportunity for teams across the region. What the tournament has lacked up until now is a huge, home crowd to give the up-and-coming players their first taste of true pressure. The first day of our show in Montpellier delivered just that — a near-sell out Sud de France arena, all to watch the grand showdown between Karmine Corp and Movistar Riders.

If you're not aware, KCorp was founded in 2020 by popular streamers Kameto and Kotei, and has grown into one of the powerhouses of French esports. They are the only team to win three EM titles (a hat-trick, no less), and after surviving some tough opponents and a silver scrapes semi-finals match, the "Blue Wall" came to Montpellier with one of the loudest, loyal, frankly, absurdly one sided crowds we've ever seen in esports. The other finalists, Spain's Movistar Riders, didn't let their opponent's homefield advantage deter them, evening out the score after two decisive losses.

In the end, KCorp's fans got the dream ending they hoped for. French mid-laner Saken lifted his fourth EM trophy to such thunderous applause, it's probably still ringing through his ears as you're reading this! It was a super first live outing for EMEA Masters, and certainly won't be its last. ☒

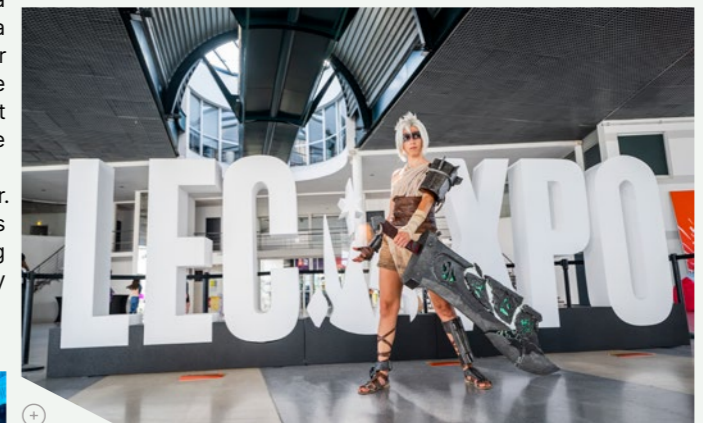


THE LEC SEASON FINALS

After a grand warm up, the Lower Final of the LEC's 2023 season was underway! For MAD Lions, this was their first ever LEC roadshow appearance, whereas their opponent, Fnatic, narrowly missed out on a Grand Finals game in Malmö in 2022. Both had clashed in the LEC Summer Final in 2021, with the MAD Lions looking to even up the score from that last clash. The crowd were treated to another down-to-the-wire five game series, with Fnatic still standing and reaching their first Grand Final since 2021.

The match-up for Sunday in Montpellier was nothing short of historic. G2 Esports and Fnatic have won more LEC titles than all other teams combined, and their rivalry in League of Legends is a contender for the fiercest in esports. Fan groups for both finalists had been on the ground the whole weekend, dueling in good mannered sports chanting as the final rehearsals were underway. When the players stepped on stage, it was G2 Esports' French player Hans Sama that drew the biggest cheers from the crowd, which roared to their limit when his team took a fairly decisive victory.

Both days of the LEC Finals weekend sold out all 7,000 seats in the Sud de France arena. Around 400 people (including staff from Riot Games and our production partners) are required to make such an event happen. Like any major production of this scale, the prep work takes more than twice as long as the show itself; with work starting on site five days beforehand, including setup of stage and networking, testing everything technical (screens, lighting, stage graphics) before running through lengthy rehearsals. This says nothing about the overall project planning, which takes over six months from inception to execution. ☒



THE LEC XPO

Back for its second year in a row, the beloved LEC XPO is a fan-centered exhibition gives LoL Esports fans the ability to fully immerse themselves, the opportunity to meet LEC teams, experience plenty of partner activations, connect with regional exhibitors, and say hello to some of the LEC's favorite content creators and influencers. This year's program included a 10,000 EUR cosplay contest, career panel from Riot Games, and a special appearance by Fortiche, the French animation studio (based in Montpellier) who's work on the League of legends Netflix series Arcane still astounds audiences. ☒



RECAP OF LEC PLAYER MOVEMENT IN 2023

The revamped LEC format brought new dynamics and trends to player movement last year. Alongside expected heavy roster rebuilding in the offseason, there was an increase in mid-year player movement between LEC teams (as opposed to the normal trend of new players coming in from the ERLs or other regions).



WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT LEC MOVEMENT

The LEC has established limited periods of time during which new team members or Free Agents can be signed. Signings of any kind outside of these specified dates are strictly prohibited, though contract extensions are always allowed.

Team Members who have participated in any aspect of the LEC or an accredited ERL in the most recent season cannot enter into a contractual obligation (written or verbal) with another team after the signing deadlines. There are some exceptions, such as coaches, who can be signed immediately after the end of the LoL World Championship.

GLOBAL CONTRACT OPENING WINDOW

[00:00:00 UTC]
November 22nd, 2022

LEC CONTRACT WINDOW CLOSING

[18:00:00 CEST]
August 16th, 2023

Teams can register up to 20 Team Members across their LEC & ERL rosters. A player cannot be part of both rosters at the same time, except non-veteran ERL players.



EXCEL

With 2022's Summer MVP Odoamne and their longtime Bot Lane Patrick in tow, Excel hoped to solidify their position as a playoffs worthy team. The result? After crashing out of Winter and Spring with just three wins in total, Abbedagge was flown in from North America, and a new Jungler was found: the former DRX Academy player Peach. Excel silenced the critics with their first ever finals appearance in Summer, scraping into fifth in the Season Finals.

Player Team Member Name	Team →	Summer _22 Position / Role	Winter _23 Position / Role	Spring _23 Position / Role	Summer _23 Position / Role
Odoamne		Rogue Top Lane	Excel Top Lane		
Xerxe		Excel Jungle			Giants Jungle
Peach			Free Agent		Excel Jungle
Vetheo		Excel Mid Lane		Excel Mid Lane (Sub)	Team Heretics Mid Lane
Abbedagge		100 Thieves Mid Lane	Excel Mid Lane (Sub)	Excel Mid Lane	
Patrik		Excel Bot Lane			
Targamas		G2 Esports Support	Excel Support		Karmine Corp Support
LIMIT			Team BDS Support	Excel Support	



FNATIC

The return of LEC icon Rekkles to Fnatic was one of the most dramatic developments of the offseason, even if he would ultimately not participate beyond the Spring Split. The team recovered from their early Winter Split dropout, signing the Korean upstart Noah and 2022 Summer championship-winning Support Trymbi to reach the LEC Grand Final and to represent EMEA as second seed in Worlds.

Player Team Member Name	Team →	Summer _22 Position / Role	Winter _23 Position / Role	Spring _23 Position / Role	Summer _23 Position / Role
Wunder		Fnatic Top Lane		Fnatic Inactive	Free Agent
Razork		Fnatic Jungle			
Humanoid		Fnatic Mid Lane			
Rekkles		Karmine Corp Bot Lane	Fnatic Bot Lane		Fnatic Inactive
Noah		KT Challengers Bot Lane	Zero Tenacity Bot Lane		Fnatic Bot Lane
Rhuckz		Fnatic Support (Sub)	Fnatic Support	Fnatic TQ Support	
Advienne			Fnatic TQ Support	Fnatic Support	KOI Support



ASTRALIS

Astralis improved on their back-to-back bottom-two finishes last year, thanks in part to the introduction of Finn (for his third LEC season) and the Turkish rookie 113. In Spring, the return of LIDER after a year in North America helped push Astralis to a second place finish in the regular season and narrowly missing out on the Playoffs; their best result since 2019 (as Origen).

Player Team Member Name	Team →	Summer _22 Position / Role	Winter _23 Position / Role	Spring _23 Position / Role	Summer _23 Position / Role
Finn		Excel Top Lane	Astralis Top Lane		
113		Karmine Corp Jungle	Astralis Jungler		
Dajor		Astralis Mid Lane		Astralis Mid Lane (Sub)	Rebels Gaming Mid Lane
LIDER		GGA* Mid Lane	Free Agent	Astralis Mid Lane	Astralis Jungle
Kobbe		Astralis Support			

*Golden Guardians Academy



G2 ESPORTS

Seemingly a permanent fixture of this 10x title winning team, Caps once again helped G2 Esports qualify for both of last year's international competitions. He was reunited with his old teammate Mikyx, while playing for the first time with Hans Sama (returning to EMEA after a season in the LCS), and rookie Jungler Yike. This roster remained consistent from the start of Winter all the way to their LEC trophy lift in Montpellier.

Player Team Member Name	Team →	Summer _22 Position / Role	Winter _23 Position / Role	Spring _23 Position / Role	Summer _23 Position / Role
Broken Blade		G2 Esports Top Lane			
Yike		LDLC OL Jungle	G2 Esports Jungle		
Caps		G2 Esports Mid Lane			
Hans Sama		Team Liquid Bot Lane	G2 Esports Bot Lane		
Mikyx		Excel Support	G2 Esports Support		





Player Team Member Name	Team →	Summer _22 Position / Role	Winter _23 Position / Role	Spring _23 Position / Role	Summer _23 Position / Role
Szygander	Team Vitality	Top Lane	KOI Top Lane		
Malrang	KOI	Jungle			
Larssen	Rogue	Mid Lane	KOI Mid Lane		
Comp	Rogue	Bot Lane	KOI Bot Lane		
Trymbi	Rogue	Support	KOI Support	Fnatic Support	

KOI* *KOI competed as Rogue in 2022

After their spectacular Summer finals win in 2022, the newly rebranded KOI made minimal changes to their roster in 2023; retaining Larssen for his fifth year in a row. Not an unsurprising move, given the team's history of talent retention and its fairly impressive showing in Winter. However, this roster's final iteration fell at the first hurdle in the Summer Groups, thus falling short on the needed championship points for a Season Finals run. ☒



TEAM BDS

Stuck in the bottom of the league table throughout their debut LEC season, Team BDS turned their fortunes around with a Grand Finals finish in Spring, accomplished through some heavy roster reshuffling. While Adam and nuc retained their roles for another full year, it was time to shine for BDS Academy players Sheo and Crownie (the latter had played in the LEC before, for Team Vitality in 2021). ☒

Player Team Member Name	Team →	Summer _22 Position / Role	Winter _23 Position / Role	Spring _23 Position / Role	Summer _23 Position / Role
Adam	Team BDS	Top Lane			
Agresivoo	Team BDS.Academy	Top Lane			Team BDS Top Lane (Sub)
Sheo	Team BDS.A.	Mid Lane	Team BDS Jungle		
nuc	Team BDS	Top Lane			
Crownie	Team BDS.A.	Bot Lane	Team BDS Bot Lane		
Labrov	Team Vitality	Support	Team BDS Support		



Player Team Member Name	Team →	Summer _22 Position / Role	Winter _23 Position / Role	Spring _23 Position / Role	Summer _23 Position / Role
Chasy	X7 Esports	Top Lane	MAD Lions Top Lane		
Elyoya	MAD Lions	Jungle			
Nisqy	MAD Lions	Mid Lane			
Carzzy	Team Vitality	Bot Lane	MAD Lions Bot Lane		
Carzzy	Fnatic	Support	MAD Lions Support		

MAD LIONS

After an early World Championships exit in 2022, MAD Lions were looking for a comeback. Armed with Elyoya and Nisqy for another year, the Spanish organization welcomed back Carzzy to their Bot Lane, while also scouting Chasy, who competed in the Korean challengers league and the NLC. MAD Lions would stick to these guns throughout the year, ultimately earning them a semi-final finish in Montpellier and attendances at both MSI and Worlds. ☒



TEAM HERETICS

In their debut LEC season, Team Heretics opted for the reliable veteran Jankos and one of their own players from last year's Superliga season, Jackspektra. The Spanish org also threw in a unique choice with Evi — the LEC's first ever player from Japan. After collapsing in the Spring regular season, Heretics implemented several line-up changes that carried them all the way to the Summer Playoffs, though no further. ☒

Player Team Member Name	Team →	Summer _22 Position / Role	Winter _23 Position / Role	Spring _23 Position / Role	Summer _23 Position / Role
Evi	D. FocusMe	Mid Lane	Team Heretics Top Lane		
Jankos	G2 Esports	Jungle	Team Heretics Jungle		
Ruby	UoL Sexy Edition	Mid Lane	Team Heretics Mid Lane		TSM Mid Lane
Jackspektra	Team Heretics	Bot Lane			Los Heretics Bot Lane
Flakked	G2 Esports	Bot Lane	Los Heretics Bot Lane		Team Heretics Bot Lane
Mersa	Misfits Gaming	Support	Team Heretics Support		



Player Team Member Name	Team →	Summer _22 Position / Role	Winter _23 Position / Role	Spring _23 Position / Role	Summer _23 Position / Role
Irrelevant	Misfits Gaming	Top Lane	SK Gaming Top Lane		
Markoon	Excel	Jungle	SK Gaming Jungle		
Sertuss	SK Gaming	Mid Lane			
Exakick	LDLC OL	Bot Lane	SK Gaming Bot Lane		
Doss	LDLC OL	Support	SK Gaming Support		

SK GAMING

A team that regularly readjusts their roster, SK Gaming went for a full rebuild this year, sans their Mid Laner Sertuss. Exakick and Doss, a LFL 2022 winning Bot Lane duo from LDLC OL were brought over for their debut LEC appearances, while Markoon and Irrelevant played their respective second years in the league. It was another roster that stuck together through the splits, up until their elimination in the first round of the Season Finals. ☒



TEAM VITALITY

Once again, French organization Team Vitality pulled together a stacked roster, bringing Bo off the bench, adding in Photon from the LCK academy, as well as the German veteran, Kaiser. After a top regular season finish in Winter and first seed playoffs position in Spring, Vitality swapped out Neon for Upset (who has played in the LEC since 2017). The result was a cataclysmic, last place finish in the Summer regular season, with Vitality's super team falling short of Season Finals contention. ☒

Player Team Member Name	Team →	Summer _22 Position / Role	Winter _23 Position / Role	Spring _23 Position / Role	Summer _23 Position / Role
Photon	T1 Challengers	Top Lane	Team Vitality Top Lane		
Bo	T1 Challengers	Jungle (Sub)	Team Vitality Jungle		
Perkz	Team Vitality	Mid Lane			
Flakked	Misfits Gaming	Bot Lane	Team Vitality Bot Lane		Vitality.Bee Bot Lane
Upset	Fnatic	Bot Lane	Team Vitality Bot Lane		
Kaiser	MAD Lions	Support	Team Vitality Support		



EMEA REGIONAL LEAGUES

With new countries and competitions in the mix, the winners of the 13 EMEA Regional Leagues (ERLs) this year included longtime fan favorites and highly promising newcomers. Here is a full list of all league results across Spring and Summer.



LVP SUPERLIGA

Spain, Andorra



It was a golden year for Spanish esports organization Movistar Riders, with repeat victories raising their historic trophy count to three. Their Spring victory saw them, as the 5th seeded team, fight their way through four matches. Summer was their most dominant season, with a 2nd place regular season finish and undefeated upper bracket run in front of a live crowd in Barcelona. ☒

2023 RESULTS

Spring Winner 1st

Movistar Riders

2nd 3rd

Los Heretics Rebels Gaming

Summer Winner 1st

Movistar Riders

2nd 3rd

BISON ECLUB Finetwork KOI

ULTRALIGA

Estonia, Georgia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Ukraine, Israel



Since their move to the Ultraliga in 2021, Zero Tenacity have now established themselves as one of the region's leading teams. A roster featuring many former LCK talents helped them repeat their Season 8 victory from 2022, though for Season 10 the gold went to Orbit Anonymo, A Polish organization that only entered League of Legends in 2023. ☒

2023 RESULTS

Spring Winner 1st

Zero Tenacity

2nd 3rd

Orbit Anonymo Grypciocraft

Summer Winner 1st

Orbit Anonymo

2nd 3rd

AliorBank Team Zero Tenacity

TCL

Türkiye, Azerbaijan, Mongolia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan



The first year for the Turkish Championship League (TCL) as an ERL provided a pivotal opportunity to see the region at its strongest. Istanbul Wildcats came in the favorites, and ultimately added more trophies in their cabinet (with their two from 2022). Newcomer FUT also performed well, giving Istanbul Wildcats their only playoff game loss this year. ☒

2023 RESULTS

Spring Winner 1st

Istanbul Wildcats

2nd 3rd

FUT Esports Papara Supermassive

Summer Winner 1st

Istanbul Wildcats

2nd 3rd

NASR ESPORTS NASR Turkey FUT Esports



LFL



France, Monaco

LDLC OL won both seasons of the Ligue Française de League of Legends in 2022, but were only able to lift the trophy in Spring this year. Their fortunes were reversed by two-time champion Karmine Corp, who, while failing to make the LFL playoffs in the first half of the year, triumphantly returned in Summer with a top regular season and undefeated upper bracket run. ☒

2023 RESULTS

Spring Winner 1st

LDLC OL

2nd Team GO

3rd Aegis

Summer Winner 1st

Karmine Corp

2nd BK ROG Esports

3rd Team GO

PRIME LEAGUE



Germany, Austria, Liechtenstein, Switzerland

Unicorns of Love, a staple of the German League of Legends scene, claimed their second ever Prime League title thanks to a diverse roster that included both local talent and South Korean players. Their attempt at a back-to-back victory was undercut in summer by SK Gaming's academy team, who triumphed in a fast-paced 3-0 clean sweep. ☒

2023 RESULTS

Spring Winner 1st

UOL Sexy Edition

2nd SK Gaming Prime

3rd BIG

Summer Winner 1st

SK Gaming Prime

2nd UOL Sexy Edition

3rd Eintracht Spandau

ELITE SERIES



Belgium, Netherlands, Luxembourg, (incl. Caribbean Dutch Islands, Aruba, Curacao)

The second year of the combined Benelux ERL was a game of tug-and-war between the esports division of Belgium's K.R.C. Genk football club, and Team 7AM. While KRC repeated their Spring victory from 2022, their second time in a grand finals with 7AM didn't quite go their way. ☒

2023 RESULTS

Spring Winner 1st

KRC Genk Esports

2nd Team 7AM

3rd The Agency

Summer Winner 1st

Team 7AM

2nd KRC Genk Esports

3rd ZennIT

GREEK LEGENDS LEAGUE



Greece, Cyprus

We Love Gaming also love GLL trophies, as their Spring season victory in 2023 brought their total league titles to five. Their push for a sixth was stopped by one of their top rivals in the league: the esports division of Cypriot sports team Anorthosis Famagusta, who bested WLG 3-2 in the Summer grand finals to also claim their fifth title to date. ☒

2023 RESULTS

Spring Winner 1st

We Love Gaming

2nd Anorthosis Famagusta

3rd Team Phantasma

Summer Winner 1st

Anorthosis Famagusta

2nd We Love Gaming

3rd Gamespace MCE

HITPOINT MASTERS



Czech Republic, Slovakia

Since their founding in 2021, Entropiq's mission was to be the undisputed best team of the Czech Republic. You can't argue with the results from this year: top of the regular season in Spring and Summer (undefeated, 14-0 in the latter), and two undefeated upper bracket runs. eSuba did almost cut their winning streak short, pushing Entropiq to a game five in the Spring grand finals. ☒

2023 RESULTS

Spring Winner 1st

Entropiq

2nd eSuba

3rd Dynamo Eclot

Summer Winner 1st

Entropiq

2nd BRUTE

3rd eSuba

LPLOL



Portugal

Following their back to back victories in the 2022 Portuguese league season, For the Win came up short this year. Instead, the true rivalry was between GTZ Esports and White Dragons. In Spring, GTZ followed up a 12-2 regular season win with a flawless playoffs run. Summer went much the same way, though White Dragons were able to offer a little more resistance in the first round of playoffs, pushing GTZ to a game five. ☒

2023 RESULTS

Spring Winner 1st

GTZ Esports

2nd White Dragons

3rd For the Win

Summer Winner 1st

GTZ Esports

2nd White Dragons

3rd Odivelas Sports Club



NLC



UK, Ireland, Sweden, Finland, Denmark, Norway, Malta, Iceland

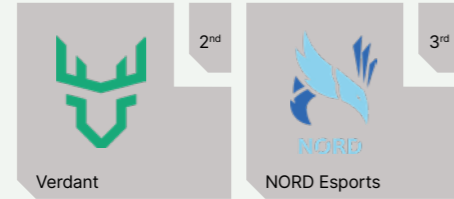
A number of newcomers joined the Northern Europe League of Legends Championship this year, though it was longtime competitor Riddle Esports which finally earned its first league title after several close runs over the last two years. Irish esports organization Nativz (the winner of both 2022 competitions) managed to not only qualify for Summer playoffs, but crushed the bracket. ☒

2023 RESULTS

Spring Winner



1st



2nd

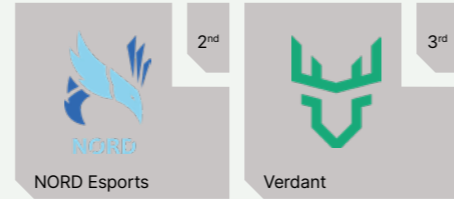


3rd

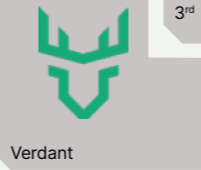
Summer Winner



1st



2nd



3rd

PG NATIONALS

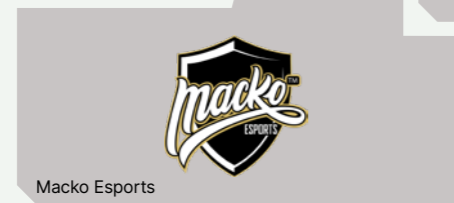


Italy: Holy See (the), San Marino

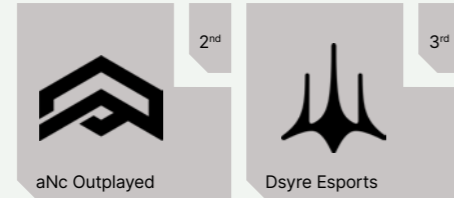
The sixth season of Italy's national League of Legends league followed most fan's predictions, with three time winner Macko Esports claiming both Spring and Summer titles. After topping both regular season standings, Macko found their toughest challenger in Dsyre Esports and aNc Outplayed, the latter of whom were close to winner Spring before Macko reverse swept the grand finals. ☒

2023 RESULTS

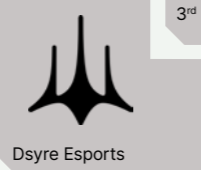
Spring Winner



1st



2nd

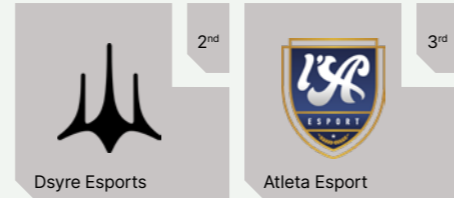


3rd

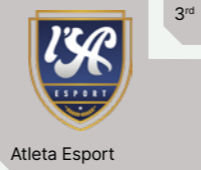
Summer Winner



1st



2nd



3rd

ARABIAN LEAGUE



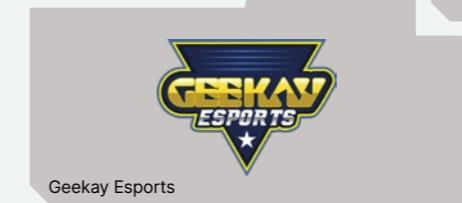
Arabian League

Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates

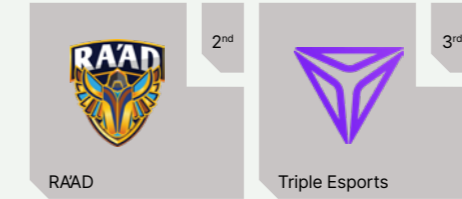
In the Arabian League's debut year as an ERL, Geekay Esports bolstered its roster with European talent, looking to secure its legacy as MENA's current strongest League of Legends team. While that paid off in Spring, they were eliminated early in Summer playoffs. After multiple run-ins in the double bracket, Anubis Gaming outplayed Nigma Galaxy in a thrilling 3-2 grand finals. ☒

2023 RESULTS

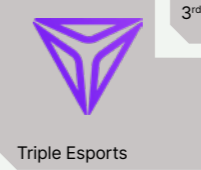
Spring Winner



1st

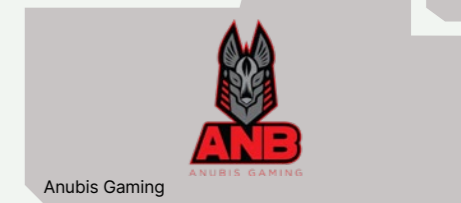


2nd



3rd

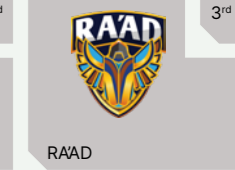
Summer Winner



1st



2nd



3rd

EBL



Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Hungary, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, Kosovo, Moldova

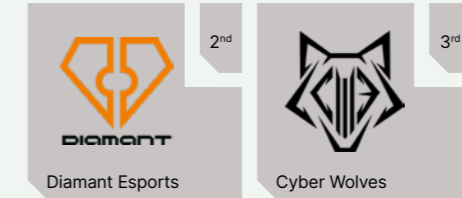
In the Spring season of the Esports Balkan League, Diamant Esports gave their best effort to take the title that eluded them last year, but were bested by the esports division of Serbian sports club Partizan Belgrade (their first ever 1st place finish). Diamant's ambitions were ultimately met in Summer, however, with an undefeated upper bracket run. ☒

2023 RESULTS

Spring Winner



1st

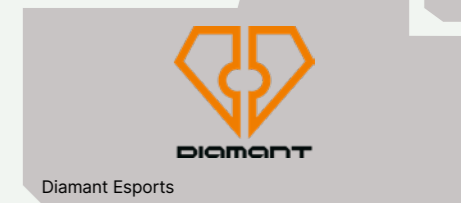


2nd



3rd

Summer Winner



1st



2nd



3rd





EMEA MASTERS RESULTS RECAP

The ultimate proving ground for EMEA LoL Esports talent, EMEA Masters brought back all new and returning champions, finishing with an epic debut arena finale.

Since 2018, the top performing regional League of Legends teams have competed twice-annually in a region wide tournament that, to this day, continues to highlight future superstars. Originally covering mainland Europe, the newly rebranded EMEA Masters now includes qualifying teams from the Turkish Championship League (TCL) and Arabian League (AL). ☒

A summary of the EMEA Masters format

- ▶ **The tournament features a play-in stage and main event**
- ▶ **The play-in features 16 teams** Lower seeded teams from the accredited ERLs, and certain non-accredited leagues

The season champions and runner ups from certain non-accredited leagues
- ▶ **By the end of play-ins, four teams advance to the main event.** The top two teams from accredited leagues, and the champions from certain non-accredited leagues.

The four winners from play-ins.
- ▶ **The main event features 16 teams**
- ▶ **Teams are divided into groups of four, with the top two advancing to a single elimination playoffs bracket.**



EM SPRING RESULTS

2023



Türkiye and France boast some of the most passionate esports fans. It was fitting that teams representing these regions won both EMEA Masters trophies!

Legends team emerged triumphant. By the end, IW's Bao was the finals MVP, while Kofte had the highest KD/A ratio of any mid laner at the tournament.

The group stage for the first EMEA Masters tournament of 2023 saw the elimination of all four play-ins teams, ending an otherwise impressive first outing for Arabian League champion Geekay Esports. Of all the teams to qualify for playoffs, two were previous title holders: last year's Summer winners Team Heretics, and LDLC OL. The latter ended up seeded against Istanbul Wildcats, who while a first time competitor was also tournament favorite, and proceeded to eliminate LDLC as well as the academy team of SK Gaming.

Meanwhile, reigning champions Team Heretics (now also an academy team) took down the second seed of the LFL, Team GO, after a close 3-2 matchup. Now they were against the first seed of the Prime League, Unicorns of Love: Sexy Edition. This roster was a mix of experienced DACH region and Korean talent, plus the support player Lekcyc, who had previously played on Unicorns of Love's five time winning League of Legends Continental League (LCL) team. This strong collective of players eliminated Heretics, setting up a grand final against Istanbul Wildcats. Although UoL took the first map, both teams swapped wins until finally Türkiye's current top League of

EM SUMMER RESULTS

2023



Saken (left) first played for Karmine Corp in 2021. He has lifted four EM trophies with the team, and earned the finals MVP award in Montpellier.

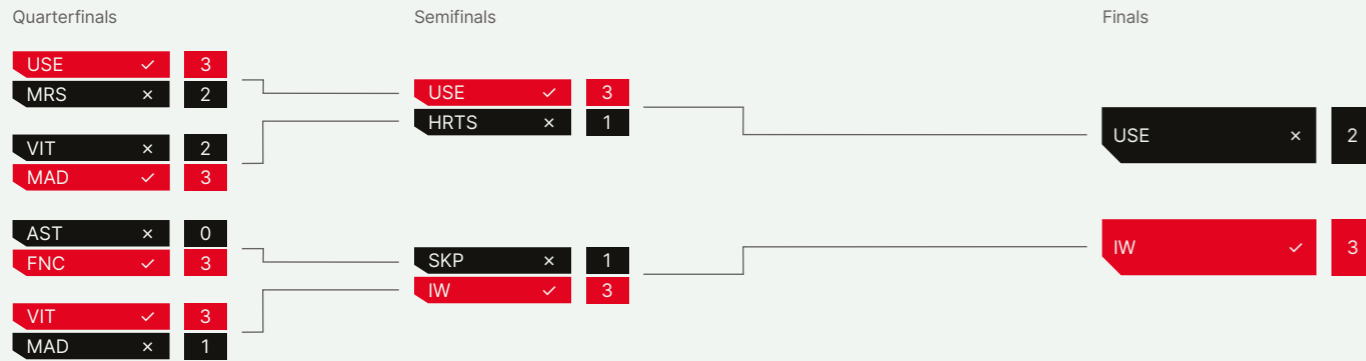
With the prospect of a live arena finals on the line, the stakes were some of the highest for this EM tournament. Unlike Spring, several play-ins winners also progressed to the playoffs. For the LFL's Team GO this was unsurprising (not only did they reach the quarterfinals last time, but individually their players were some of the best performing), but so did GTZ Esports in a standout achievement for the Portuguese league. Although GTZ was subsequently knocked out, their opponent, Macko Esports, were widely lauded on social media for their semi-finals run, which ranks as the all-time best performance by an Italian organization.

Three time EM winner Karmine Corp, who had failed to qualify for the last two tournaments, was back and in fine form; eliminating Istanbul Wildcats in three astoundingly short games. Their next opponent was Team GO, and with the prospect of playing in front of a local French crowd, neither of these LFL teams were going to give up any ground. After a prolonged five-game match, Karmine Corp's fan group the Blue Wall were ready to welcome them in the Sud de France arena.

It was a first time grand finals appearance for KC's opponent, Movistar Riders. Their players

Fresskowy and Isma would end up being the top two highest rated players of the tournament by K/DA, and although the cheers and jeers of the French crowd were overwhelming, Movistar Riders pushed back against their initial two losses to equalize the series. To the delight of the thousands packing out the stands, the last EM game of the year ended with KC claiming their fourth trophy.

EM 2023 Spring Playoffs



Group A

N°	Team	Games	Str
1	DenizBank Istanbul Wildcats	5-1 83%	5W
2	Los Heretics	4-2 67%	1L
3	Geekay Esports	2-4 33%	3L
4	Zero Tenacity	1-5 17%	1W

Group B

N°	Team	Games	Str
1	Macko Esports	5-1 83%	3W
2	Movistar Riders	3-3 50%	2L
3	Aegis	2-4 33%	2W
4	FUT Esports	2-4 33%	3L

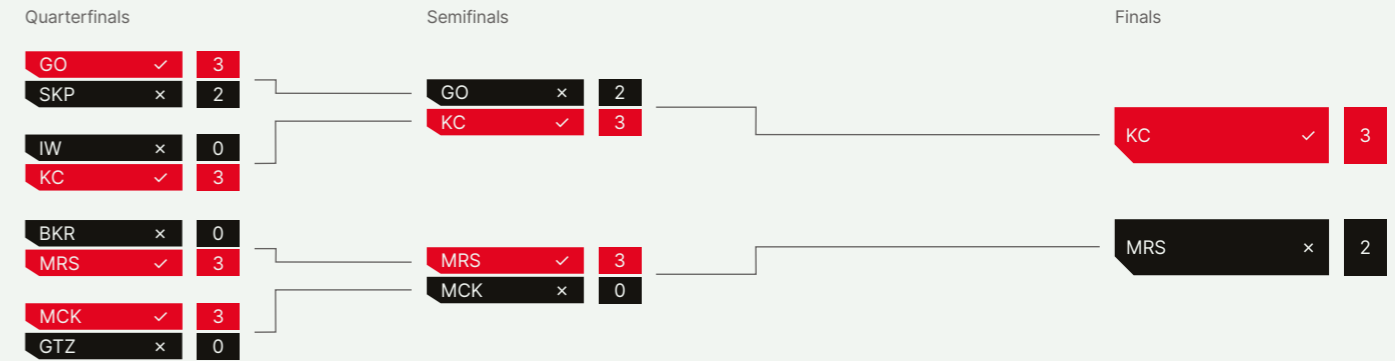
Group C

N°	Team	Games	Str
1	Unicorns of Love Sexy Edition	5-1 83%	5W
2	LDLC OL	5-1 83%	2W
3	Orbit Anonymo Esports	2-4 33%	2L
4	eSuba	0-6 0%	6L

Group D

N°	Team	Games	Str
1	Team GO	5-1 83%	1W
2	SK Gaming Prime	3-3 50%	2W
3	Riddle Esports	2-4 33%	2L
4	Anorthosis Famagusta Esports	2-4 33%	1L

EM 2023 Summer Playoffs



Group A

N°	Team	Games	Str
1	DenizBank Istanbul Wildcats	6-0 100%	6W
2	GTZ Esports	3-3 50%	1L
3	BISONS ECLUB	2-4 33%	1W
4	Orbit Anonymo Esports	1-5 17%	3L

Group B

N°	Team	Games	Str
1	BK ROG Esports	5-1 83%	2W
2	SK Gaming Prime	5-1 83%	5W
3	Dsyre Esports	2-4 33%	2L
4	AliorBank Team	0-6 0%	6L

Group C

N°	Team	Games	Str
1	Macko Esports	6-0 100%	6W
2	Karmine Corp	3-3 50%	1L
3	Nativz	3-3 50%	1W
4	Anorthosis Famagusta Esports	0-6 0%	6L

Group D

N°	Team	Games	Str
1	Team GO	4-2 67%	2W
2	Movistar Riders	3-3 50%	1W
3	Unicorns of Love Sexy Edition	3-3 50%	1L
4	NASR eSports Turkey	2-4 33%	2L



PATH TO PRO: WHY THE ERLS ARE VITAL

The EMEA Regional Leagues are a unique system within competitive League of Legends — a collective of tournament organizers aligned with Riot on providing a pathway for all aspiring talent.

In order for an esports region to remain competitive on the global stage, there needs to be a reliable pathway to pro and a clear ladder for players to ascend through. Top LoL Esports like China and Korea remain at the top thanks in part to their advanced gaming culture, one that prides itself on scouting talent early on. The ERLs are our region's answer to this; utilizing the diversity of EMEA to unify it, and ensure potential for player growth regardless of country or level of experience. ☒

ORIGINS OF THE ERLS

Even without the ERL label, the 13 leagues that together represent regional League of Legends in EMEA are each able to stand on their own. Before consolidating and standardizing the region, these competitions acted as beacons for talent within the European continent. Some, such as the LVP Superliga and Turkish Champions League, are among the oldest ongoing League of Legends competitions in the world. Many of the all time LEC greats earned their early accolades through various national competitions across Europe. Even players in the Middle East and North Africa, before getting their own dedicated regional servers, would still grit their teeth through high ping play to one day compete across continents.

The European Masters (the earlier version of EMEA Masters) was one of the first major Riot initiatives to unify the various competitions in the region. The first edition, in 2018, featured a mix of teams qualified from national leagues and tournaments, open qualifiers, as well as some teams for the European Challenger league (the continent's second tier league, which EM ultimately took the place of). It offered a chance to crown a true champion across the continent, and several of the top four players, such as Carzzy, Selfmade, and Crownie, would end up on LEC teams next year.

This built the proof of concept for a means of building and showcasing players, and in 2018 the ERL standard was established. Organizers behind the longest running and more successful League of Legends tournaments were approached about being officially part of Riot's ecosystem. It's worth mentioning that the ERLs has allowed veteran players, such as Soaz, yellowstar, and Diamondprox, to continue their careers even after leaving the LEC. ☒

BENEFITS OF ERL STATUS

The consolidation of these competitions continues today, with the EMEA Regional Leagues as they are now known highlighting various levels of standardization:

- ▶ All ERLs are aligned on schedules, formats, and match processes. Importantly, this includes a multi-divisional structure that creates a pathway for players to go from online to organized competitive play.
- ▶ As well as their own competition rules, all ERLs are bound to a single central rulebook, which outlines player eligibility requirements and account vetting.
- ▶ All leagues are aligned when it comes to rules on roster modifications and use of coaches and substitutes, plus third-party event participation.
- ▶ Regionality, a core part of the ERLs, is maintained through a Locally Trained Resident player policy, as well as a provision for live finals and content in local languages.
- ▶ Players in the accredited ERLs are registered in the Global Contract Database just like those in the LEC and other top leagues. Players in non-accredited leagues are registered in their own ERL Player Database.
- ▶ Riot provides a number of tools to its ERL partners, including server and account infrastructure, and support in major disciplinary investigations.



VALORANT

VCT RECAP

→ A guide to the VALORANT Champions Tour in EMEA, with results and recaps for the International League, Challengers leagues, Ascension tournament, and Game Changers.



OVERVIEW OF THE VCT IN 2023

The VALORANT Champions Tour (VCT) opened up a new frontier this year, with three new international leagues, a revamped path-to-pro, and astounding global tournaments.

WHAT IS THE VCT?

Bringing together the most accomplished of VALORANT players, the VCT aspires to deliver the absolute best moments in FPS esports. What began as a small set of tournaments in 2020 has manifested into a multi-tier, multi-continental competitive ecosystem that makes it possible for any player skilled enough to qualify from in-game to the professional level.

At the peak of the pyramid is Champions; the world championship and biggest annual celebration of the VALORANT community. Teams qualify either by accumulating the most championship points during the course of a season, or by snagging one of the few places in the Last Chance Qualifier (LCQ).

Masters events are international tournaments that offer direct qualification to Champions, and similarly combine spectacle with top-tier competition. New to 2023 are the International Leagues: three competitions dedicated to players in specific territories with their own hub-city: EMEA (Berlin), the Americas (Los Angeles), and the Pacific (Seoul). We will detail more on these in the following pages.



CHALLENGERS AND ASCENSION

No competitive ecosystem can stay afloat without a dedicated place for the next generation of talent to showcase themselves. Enter Challengers: regional leagues that act as a bridge between the game and amateur rung of competition, through to the International Leagues. There were 23 Challenger leagues in 2023 (nine in EMEA), each covering specific countries or country-groups. For every competitor at this level, the ultimate goal is Ascension: an annual tournament that brings together the most consistent Challenger teams. The top prize is a two-year promotion to that team's respective International League.



NEW ERA FOR GAME CHANGERS

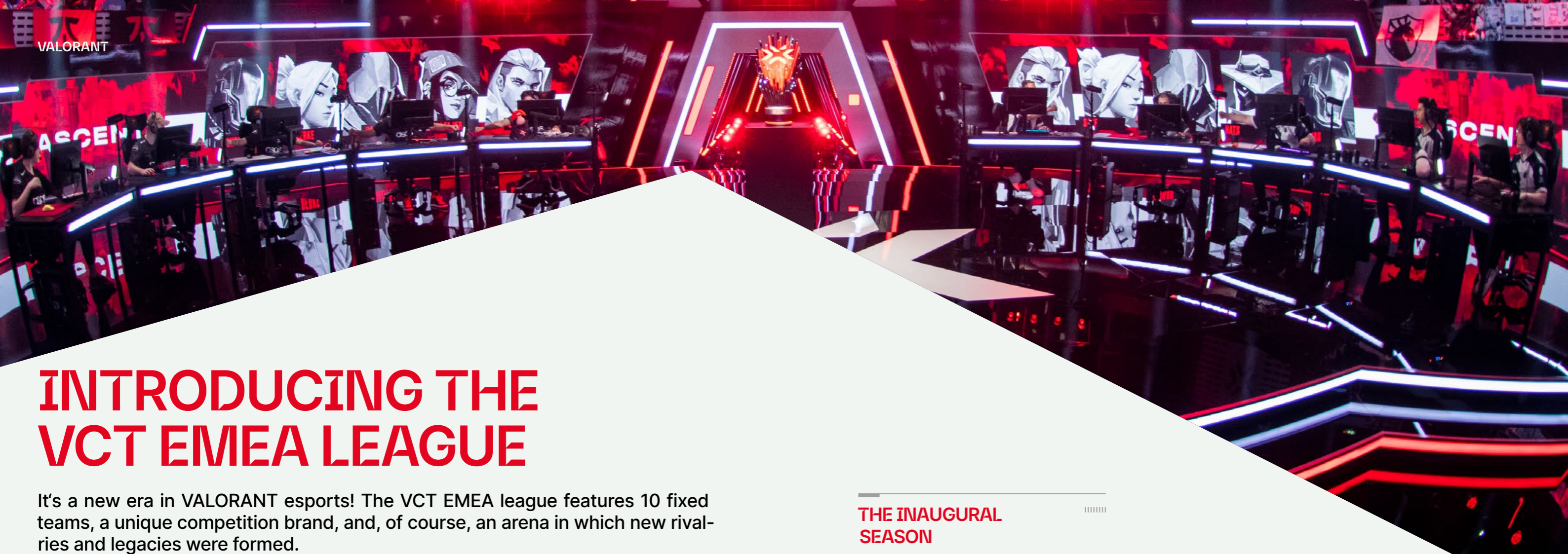
VALORANT Game Changers is a series of domestic competitions, as well as a global championship dedicated to highlighting the game's top female players, with the ultimate goal of giving women a platform from which they can enter the VCT. Its second year of play saw some notable format changes, particularly for EMEA. The circuit is now split into distinct layers: 1) the returning top league, which expanded to 16 teams, 2) the Contenders series, where teams compete for a spot in the main GC league, and 3) Emergents, an in-house competitive Discord community (complete with a leaderboard and rewards) for aspiring players.



OFF//SEASON

Taking place after Champions and lasting through January, the official VALORANT OFF//SEASON is a space for our tournament partners to test new events and formats, tailored to the regional and national communities of our esports fans. In 2023, over 40 events were organized, spanning show matches, open qualifier events, and LANs.





INTRODUCING THE VCT EMEA LEAGUE

It's a new era in VALORANT esports! The VCT EMEA league features 10 fixed teams, a unique competition brand, and, of course, an arena in which new rivalries and legacies were formed.

After two years of warm up tournaments, qualifying leagues and international events, the International Leagues (ILs) mark the next chapter of the VCT. As one of these three competitions, the VCT EMEA league's first season gathered 10 of the top esports names, collectively representing the best of competitive gaming culture across our region. ☒



THE BUILD UP

The VCT EMEA league, along with the other two ILs Americas and Pacific, mark the first time VALORANT esports has welcomed professional teams as partners; all focused on fostering an ecosystem that favors sustainability alongside competitive excellence.

Similar to when League of Legends underwent its own partner process, Riot Games opened up applications from all interested esports teams in early 2022. No upfront fee would be required from those selected to join. Instead, these organizations are required to establish a new base in their hub city, build up their team infrastructure (support staff, training space, etc.) and, most importantly, grow the sport with us through each VCT season. As part of their agreement, Riot will in turn provide stipends, prize money, and revenue share of various in-game digital items. ☒

For the VCT EMEA League, we received over 60 written applications from esports organizations across the world. The selection spanned months, including a written application, in-depth interviews, and financial reviews. Ultimately, we looked for three things in our new VCT partners:

- Organizations who share our values of always putting fans first, celebrate our diverse community, and are committed to supporting pros.
- Organizations who have created a strong connection with fans through engaging content, a compelling brand, and an exciting roster.
- Organizations who build for the long-term, with a focus on sustainability.

While we respect and celebrate past competitive performance, it was not a primary consideration in our decision - as we instead focused on an organization's ability to create the most compelling VCT for fans in the future. ☒

THE INAUGURAL SEASON

Following their debut outing in the LOCK//IN tournament, the 10 VCT EMEA teams returned to Berlin to begin their regular season. Future seasons will feature multiple splits, but with only one Masters tournament to qualify for in 2023, this allowed for one single season of continuous play. All teams would play each other in a double round robin during the group stage, with the top six moving on to a double

elimination playoffs. Four teams would qualify for Masters, but only one can take the explosive VCT EMEA league trophy.

Following Masters Tokyo, all teams not currently qualified for Champions would head to the Coliseum one more time in our Last Chance Qualifier (LCQ) and journey to Los Angeles as EMEA's final seeded team. ☒

THE COLISEUM

Until 2023, all VCT competitions in EMEA had taken place online. It was time to give the best players in the region a dedicated corner of Berlin to congregate and clash in front of live fans. For the inaugural season, the aptly named Coliseum was hosted in the Berlin Messe. ☒



SOME FUN FACTS ABOUT THE COLISEUM:

The studio was built to allow us to broadcast in three languages simultaneously.

The name was chosen by fans through an online poll.

During 2023, nearly 5,000 tickets were sold for match days at the Coliseum.

The VCT studios are Riot's first to feature dedicated booths for co-streamers.

As well as a rotating selection of street food, the first week featured a Bubble Tea truck themed around the VALORANT agent Gecko



THE TEAMS

Let's have a rundown of the 10 VCT EMEA competitors, with a look at some of their VALORANT esports accomplishments prior to the inaugural season.



TEAM VITALITY

Established in 2013, Vitality is undoubtedly one of the biggest French esports organizations of all time, and we are excited to welcome them to the International League! On the domestic level, they won the final stage of the VALORANT Regional League: France Revolution in 2022. ☒



BBL ESPORTS

Founded only in July 2020, BBL has quickly made themselves a serious contender. They showed what they were made of back in 2020 by claiming the First Strike Türkiye trophy. In 2021 they won two titles in the VCT Türkiye Challengers competition, and are looking to translate their success at a domestic level in the International League! ☒



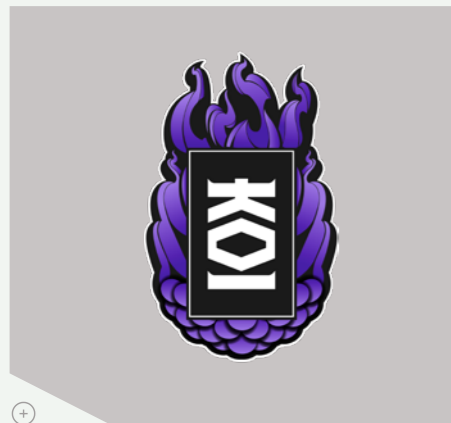
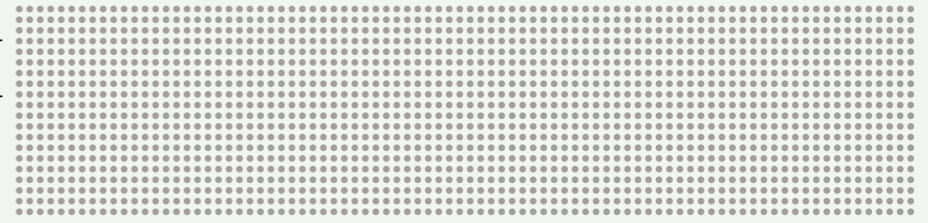
KARMINE CORP

Despite only entering VALORANT in late 2022, KCorp have already made their mark in the VALORANT Regional League: France Revolution Stage 2. Established in 2020, KCorp has quickly gathered an immense following of fans at a ridiculous scale, who will undoubtedly bring a fascinating fervor to any stadium that they fill! ☒



FUT ESPORTS

First stepping into esports in 2017, FUT Esports has gone from strength to strength as an organization. In the VALORANT Regional League 2022 Finals, they reverse-swept fellow International League 2023 members Vitality to take the trophy home. This established FUT Esports as the Türkiye team to beat (unless BBL can find a way to rival their recent success)! ☒



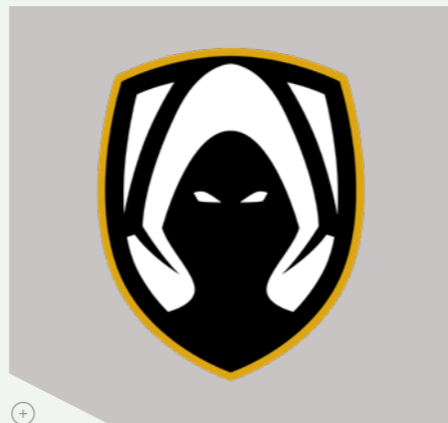
KOI

After being founded last year by Spanish caster and streamer Ibai "Ibai" Llanos Garatea and professional footballer Gerard Piqué, KOI have quickly made their mark. Ibai and Heretics' TheGrefg have regularly faced off in challenges on their streams, but how will their teams fare in challenging each other? KOI's roster currently consists of young talents and experienced minds who will be hoping to make an immediate impact on their jump to the International League! ☒



GIANTS

Established in 2008, Giants are a colossus of esports! Being the most decorated Spanish organization of all time, success is second nature to Giants. The team came close to international success in 2021 before being taken down 3-1 by Team Liquid in the VCT Europe Stage 3 Challengers 2. ☒



HERETICS

After recently joining the LEC, we are delighted to also welcome Heretics to the International League! Founded in 2016. They are one of the most popular organizations in Spain, and a renowned name in the tactical shooter space. In 2020, Heretics had a miracle run at First Strike Europe, beating G2 and Liquid on their way to the trophy. ☒



NATUS VINCERE

Formed in 2009, NAVI is a household name in esports, particularly in the FPS scene across continental Europe. First entering VALORANT just over a year ago, we know NAVI are here to succeed (their name is Latin for "Born to Win" for a reason). ☒



FNATIC

An esports organization for nearly two decades, Fnatic are instantly recognizable. They won the inaugural League of Legends World Championship back in 2013, and have experienced a plethora of success across their teams. They claimed victory at VCT 2022 EMEA Stage 2 Challengers, and entered the International League 2023 with a goal to build on those results! ☒



TEAM LIQUID

Founded all the way back in 2000, Team Liquid has become synonymous with every esports title it has competed in, and the same holds true for VALORANT. Winning VCT 2021 Europe Stage 3 Challengers 2 but failing to find success the following year, Liquid came into the league looking to make 2023 their year. ☒



VCT EMEA LEAGUE RESULTS

For two solid months in 2023, the 10 VCT EMEA teams hunkered down in Berlin's Coliseum to determine not only who would compete internationally, but be first to take home the domestic trophy.

REGULAR SEASON: ALL ABOUT FNATIC

High off their victory in the São Paulo LOCK//IN tournament, Fnatic left nothing to chance when it came to punching their ticket to the Masters tournament. Despite having kamyk sub in for star player Alfajer early on in the season, the boys in black and orange (several of whom have played together for over a year) didn't lose a single game, and more stunningly, dropped just one map (to BBL, during week one).

Natus Vincere weren't far behind by any means. The squad, many of whom lifted the trophy together at Masters Copenhagen in 2022, were bested only by Fnatic and (surprisingly, in the early stages of the season) KOI. Team Liquid were bolstered into third place by Sayf's high kill/death ratio (second highest only to Alfajer), while Giants and FUT Esports were the only two other teams to have a positive win-to-loss ratio by the time playoffs arrived.



Fnatic have had a long and successful history in the First-person shooter video game genre; a legacy they continued with their 2023 VALORANT esports run.

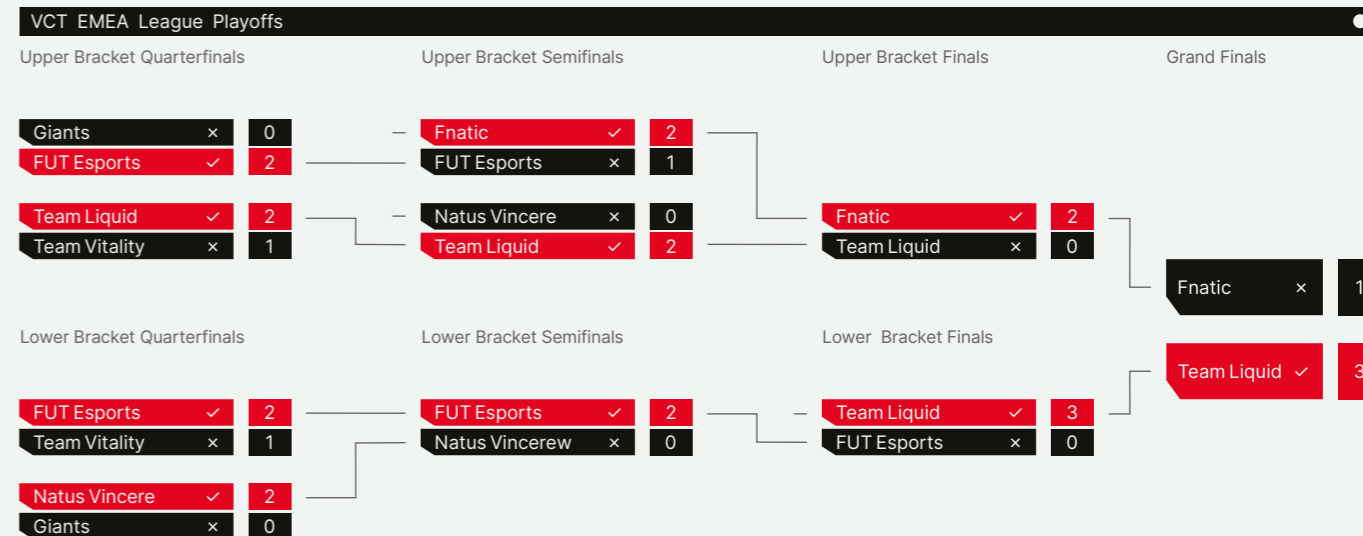
TEAM LIQUID STRIKE BACK

Despite the chants of their fan group the Golden Hornets echoing off the walls of the Coliseum, Team Vitality were out in the playoffs after losing two successive games. Such was the fate of Giants too; dropped from the upper bracket by FUT Esports, and eliminated by Natus Vincere. As Türkiye's final representing team in the competition, FUT served up a surprising performance that would end up being the trend for 2023. Their 2-0, fairly one-sided elimination of Navi was certainly not what the pundits predicted, and although they failed to take a map against Team Liquid in the lower bracket finals, their Masters qualification was victory enough.

For Fnatic, the playoffs were a breeze up until the Grand Final. Throughout their run, the squad were leading in the stats; with Chronicle, Leo, and Derke respectively each in the top three for Kill/Death ratio and overall performance. Yet, somehow Team Liquid's 3-0 against FUT gave them the momentum they needed to deny Fnatic even a second map on the scoreboard. It was Fnatic's first defeat in an official match since the 2-1 loss to DRX at Valorant Champions 2022, and Team Liquid's first domestic title in the VCT since 2021.



Team Liquid stunned pundits with a 3-1 victory in the Grand Finals against Fnatic, denying their opponent's their perfect season run.



VCT EMEA League Season Standings			
N°	Team	Games	
1	Fnatic	9-0	18-1
2	Natus Vincere	7-2	14-6
3	Team Liquid	6-3	13-10
4	Giants	5-4	12-9
5	FUT Esports	5-4	11-8
6	Team Vitality	4-5	9-11
7	BBL Esports	3-6	8-14
8	Team Heretics	2-7	7-14
9	KOI	2-7	7-15
10	Karmine Corp	2-7	4-15





VALORANT

EMEA'S INTERNATIONAL VCT PERFORMANCE

By the end of the VCT 2023 season, Fnatic's dominance in the game was undeniable, even if the EMEA region as a whole will need to up its game next year.

LOCK//IN SÃO PAULO

This one-time tournament was a celebratory kick-off of the next stage of the VCT. A showcase of sorts, all 30 International League teams, plus two invitees from China (the first directly representing the region) would clash in a two group, single elimination bracket. The goal is to show who won the offseason, but also give the regions bragging rights by taking an extra Masters qualification spot.

Natus Vincere's ANGE1 came alive during NAVI's run, helping propel the team to decisive victories. As one of oldest top level players globally, the Ukrainian firecracker has thrown caution to the wind, recementing his place as one the game's greats. Fnatic's Derke also stood out this tournament, picking up three out of five MVP awards for the squad, and dropping a high 1.9 K/D twice throughout the tournament. Ultimately these two EMEA teams were all that remained, and Fnatic had the unfortunate task of eliminating Navi. They didn't waste their victory; dispatching last year's world champions, Brazil's LOUD, in the Grand Finals (it was also Fnatic's only game in the tournament where they lost a map).



Among 32 of the world's best VALORANT teams, Fnatic overcame every opponent to take their first international title.



Boaster is renowned not only for his exceptional in-game leadership, but also for his...comical stage antics.

MASTERS TOKYO

This was the first ever international Riot Games esports event in Japan, a region that has time and again showcased an intense passion for VALORANT. Our four EMEA representatives were keen to put on a show for the local crowd, especially Fnatic's Boaster, who is somewhat of a superstar in the country. Whereas Fnatic and Team Liquid moved to playoffs automatically, as third and fourth seed FUT Esports and Natus Vincere would need to fight their way out of groups. Unfortunately, both fell surprisingly short; Navi were overwhelmed by the emerging Chinese talent in EDward Gaming, and FUT Esports fell to Korea's finest squad, DRX.

Although Fnatic's loss to Team Liquid in the VCT EMEA league meant that a grand slam (winning a domestic and all international titles in a single year) was no longer possible, it's clear they came to Masters with no intention other than total victory. While Team Liquid were taken down by Americas runner-up NRG, Fnatic sauntered through the upper bracket before outsmarting Evil Geniuses in a swift 3-0 grand finals. Two international trophies won, one to go...

VCT CHAMPIONS LOS ANGELES

By winning Masters, Fnatic had unlocked another qualification spot for Champions, through the EMEA Last Chance Qualifier. After the Coliseum had closed its doors one last time, it was now Fnatic, Team Liquid, FUT Esports, and Giants who would head to the biggest VALORANT tournament of the year. Navi and Team Liquid had the displeasure of being seeded together in one of the groups, and unfortunately neither were able to press on into the playoffs.

FUT Esports were keen to validate Turkish VALORANT on the international stage, and made it through their group. Bad luck put them in a lower bracket elimination match against Fnatic, who won and soldiered on as EMEA's last representative. Though the boys stopped Korean favorites DRX in their tracks, their final game of the tournament was the lower bracket semi-final against LOUD, who waltzed through the first map, Split, and soon eliminated Fnatic 3-1.



Fnatic was the only EMEA team to make it to the top four of VALORANT Champions and play at the Kia Forum.



RECAP OF VCT EMEA PLAYER MOVEMENT IN 2023

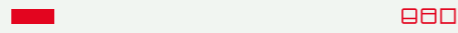
The FPS genre requires heavy coordination and communication between players, thus it's not uncommon to see rosters remain unchanged across multiple seasons. This was largely the case for the inaugural year of VCT EMEA, with many players carrying over from 2022's Challengers series, and only minor adjustments made through the highs and lows of the regular season.



WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT VCT EMEA TRANSFERS

A Team may complete trades involving players on other teams, sign new players or free agents or otherwise change the players on its roster during any time outside of the Roster Lock Periods.

The addition or removal of a player from the Team's roster at any time during the Roster Lock Periods is a violation of these rules and the Global Policy.



THE KEY DATES FOR THE 2023 VCT SEASON

Pre-Season Transfer Window Open
September 26, 2022

Pre-Season Transfer Window Close
February 1, 2023

Season Start
February 14, 2023

Mid-Season Transfer Window Open
March 6, 2023

Mid-Season Transfer Window Close
March 25, 2023

End of Season
September 11, 2023



FNATIC

Fnatic assembled what could go down as one of the strongest VALORANT rosters for years to come. After a number of top finishes but no international titles, Boaster and two of his teammates from the 2022 season, Derke and Alfajer, rallied the seasoned Leo and Masters 2021 Berlin champion Chronicle for one (ultimately successful) shot at glory.

Player Team Member Name	Team →	VCT 2022 EMEA Stage 2 Team	LOCK//IN São Paulo Team	VCT 2023 EMEA Team	VCT 2023 LCQ Team
Boaster (IGL)		Fnatic			
Derke		Fnatic			
Alfajer		Fnatic			
Leo		Guild Esports	→	Fnatic	
Chronicle		M3 Champions	→	Fnatic	



FUT ESPORTS

FUT's unexpected, runaway success in the play-offs of VCT Champions last year is owed in part to the faith placed in its players. They were the only VCT EMEA team to remain largely unchanged from last year's season, sans ATA KAPTAN who joined from fellow Turkish organization, Thunderbolts Gaming.

Player Team Member Name	Team →	VCT 2022 EMEA Stage 2 Team	LOCK//IN São Paulo Team	VCT 2023 EMEA Team	VCT 2023 LCQ Team
mojj		FUT Esports			
qRaxs		FUT Esports			
qw1		FUT Esports			
MrFaiN (IGL)		FUT Esports			
ATA KAPTAN		Thunderbolts Gaming	→	FUT Esports	



BBL ESPORTS

This Turkish esports organization, despite not claiming any major victories in 2022, was a consistent competitor in VCT events. Thus it seemed a natural choice to keep a trio of their longtime players, adding in Brave and SouhcN as their Ingame Leader to round out an Turkish roster.

Player Team Member Name	Team →	VCT 2022 EMEA Stage 2 Team	LOCK//IN São Paulo Team	VCT 2023 EMEA Team	VCT 2023 LCQ Team
AsLanM4shadoW		BBL Esports			
QutionerX		BBL Esports			
Turko		BBL Esports			
Brave		Super Massive Blaze	→	BBL Esports	
SouhcNi (IGL)		Fire Flux Esports	→	BBL Esports	



GIANTS

After a quiet run through the VRL Spain season in 2022, Giants returned to the top stage with a brand new team, retaining the only Spanish player for this year, Fit1nho. They took some of the players formerly of G2 Esports EMEA-based team, as well as rhyme, who competed in North America during 2022.

Player Team Member Name	Team →	VCT 2022 EMEA Stage 2 Team	LOCK//IN São Paulo Team	VCT 2023 EMEA Team	VCT 2023 LCQ Team
Fit1nho		Giants			
hoody		G2 Esports	→	Giants	
nukkye		G2 Esports	→	Giants	
rhyme		Gen.G Esports	→	Giants	
Cloud		Natus Vincere	→	Giants	





KARMINE CORP

With a roster entirely of French and Benelux players, communication was a key priority for Karmine Corp in their inaugural VCT season. After their round two exit from the LOCK//IN tournament, longtime coach ZE1SH joined the active roster for the remainder of the season. ☒

Player Team Member Name	Team →	VCT 2022 EMEA Stage 2 Team	LOCK//IN São Paulo Team	VCT 2023 EMEA Team	VCT 2023 LCQ Team
Shin		Karmine Corp			
Newzera		Karmine Corp		Karmine Corp (Sub)	
Scream		Team Liquid	Karmine Corp		
Nivera		Team Liquid	Karmine Corp		
xms		MAD Lions	Karmine Corp		
ZE1SH		Karmine Corp (Coach)		Karmine Corp	



TEAM HERETICS

A team organization that has had some fair success within its home Spanish region, Team Heretics went into their 2023 season by bringing three players back together from last year's G2 Esports roster. They were the only VCT EMEA team to make a mid-year roster switch, signing benjyfishy for their LCQ run. ☒

Player Team Member Name	Team →	VCT 2022 EMEA Stage 2 Team	LOCK//IN São Paulo Team	VCT 2023 EMEA Team	VCT 2023 LCQ Team
keloqz		G2 Esports	Team Heretics		
mixwell		G2 Esports	Team Heretics		
zeek		Acend	Team Heretics	Team Heretics (Inactive)	
Boo		OG LDN UTD	Team Heretics		
Avova		G2 Esports	Team Heretics		
weber		MOUZ	Team Heretics (Coach)	Team Heretics	
benjyfishy		NRG	Enterprise Esports	Team Heretics	



KOI*

*KOI competed as Rogue in 2022

Having only entered VALORANT esports in 2022, KOI opted for a full roster rebuild for 2023. A mix of VCT Challenger and VRL players, Ingame Leader koldamenta had competed in two international events, while starxo had been part of Acend's inaugural Champions winning roster in 2021. ☒

Player Team Member Name	Team →	VCT 2022 EMEA Stage 2 Team	LOCK//IN São Paulo Team	VCT 2023 EMEA Team	VCT 2023 LCQ Team
koldamenta (IGL)		Guild Esports	KOI		
Sheydos		M3 Champions	KOI		
trexx		Guild Esports	KOI		
Wolfen		Case Esports	KOI		
starxo		Acend	KOI		



TEAM LIQUID

For their victorious VCT EMEA run in 2023, Team Liquid stuck with two players who had brought them to Champions in 2022, soulcas and Jamppi. Sayf also had international experience after his run at Masters Copenhagen, while Redgar and nAts lifted a Masters trophy in Berlin back in 2021. ☒

Player Team Member Name	Team →	VCT 2022 EMEA Stage 2 Team	LOCK//IN São Paulo Team	VCT 2023 EMEA Team	VCT 2023 LCQ Team
soulcas		Team Liquid			
Jamppi		Team Liquid			
Redgar		M3 Champions	Team Liquid		
nAts		M3 Champions	Team Liquid		
Sayf		Guild Esports	Team Liquid		



NATUS VINCERE

One of the most legendary FPS esports organizations, Natus Vincere saw the writing on the wall when it came to building its roster. At the end of 2022, FunPlus Phoenix released its EMEA team, one with several accolades behind them, including a Masters trophy. Naturally, four of them were reunited under the Navi brand, with cNed to complete the troupe. ☒

Player Team Member Name	Team →	VCT 2022 EMEA Stage 2 Team	LOCK//IN São Paulo Team	VCT 2023 EMEA Team	VCT 2023 LCQ Team
ANGE1 (IGL)		FunPlus Phoenix	Natus Vincere		
Shao		FunPlus Phoenix	Natus Vincere		
Zyppan		FunPlus Phoenix	Natus Vincere		
SUYGETSU		FunPlus Phoenix	Natus Vincere		
cNed		Acend	Natus Vincere		



TEAM VITALITY

Despite the lack of French names on their roster, Team Vitality found five players who's exploits certainly resonated with their fanbase. ceNder and BONECOLD were kept on after their victorious VRL Finals run in 2022, with MOLSI, Destrian, and Twisten forming a surprisingly effective roster that managed to make their way to the VCT EMEA playoffs. ☒

Player Team Member Name	Team →	VCT 2022 EMEA Stage 2 Team	LOCK//IN São Paulo Team	VCT 2023 EMEA Team	VCT 2023 LCQ Team
ceNder		Team Vitality			
BONECOLD		Team Vitality			
MOLSI		OG LDN UTD	Team Vitality		
Destrian		OG LDN UTD	Team Vitality		
Twisten		BIG	Team Vitality		



VALORANT CHALLENGERS LEAGUES

Tier-two VALORANT in EMEA consists of a sprawling set of interconnected leagues across the region; assembled to showcase future talent and allow one team to punch into the top league.

CLs 2023

- For the majority of Challengers in 2023, Split 1 teams were either invited, or joined from qualifiers. These teams carried over to Split 2.
- Most of the Challengers in 2023 were played out online remotely. All featured 8-10 teams, a group stage, and double-elimination playoffs.
- Season winners of the Challengers leagues qualified for the VCT EMEA Ascension tournament, while runners up qualified for the play-ins stage.

POLARIS Challengers Northern Europe



UK, Ireland, Sweden, Denmark, Norway
Finland, Iceland, Malta

Norway-based esports organization Apeks set out to become the undisputed champions of Polaris. They handily accomplished this goal with an upper bracket run in Split 1, and an entirely undefeated Split 2—losing just one map to their biggest contender, Fokus, in the grand finals. ☒

2023 RESULTS

Split 1 Winners



Runners-Up



Split 2 Winners



Runners-Up



RISING Challengers Spain

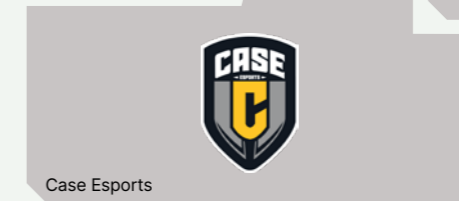


Spain, Andorra

For the first Split of Spain's top VALORANT competition, Team Queso beat out Case Esports by one win in the regular season, but would ultimately be outdone 3-1 in the Grand Final. This contest repeated in Split 2; although UCAM Esports finished a slither behind Case, they were eliminated in an astonishingly one-sided 3-0 by Team Queso, who would again lose out in a severely close finale. ☒

2023 RESULTS

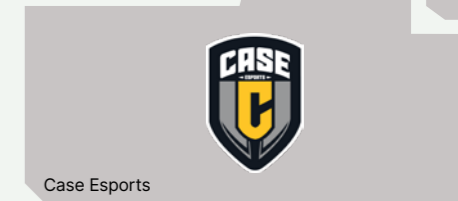
Split 1 Winners



Runners-Up



Split 2 Winners



Runners-Up



REVOLUTION Challengers France

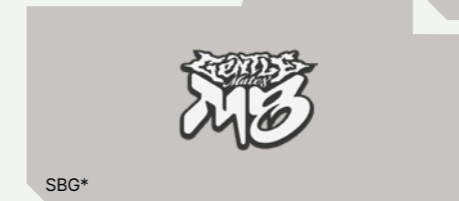


France, Benelux, Monaco

One of the most widely viewed Challengers Leagues globally, no team in France or the Benelux could stop Gentle Mates, who finished first in both regular seasons; each followed by undefeated playoffs runs. Their roster included nataNK, who helped push Team Vitality to the grand-finals of last year's VRL Finals. ☒

2023 RESULTS

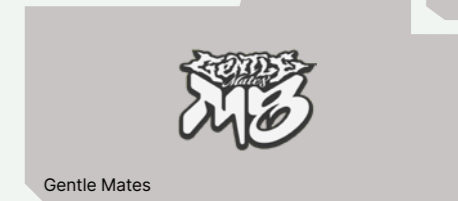
Split 1 Winners



Runners-Up



Split 2 Winners



Runners-Up



*SBG renamed to Gentle Mates before Split 2



EVOLUTION
Challengers
DACH



Germany, Austria, Switzerland,
Liechtenstein

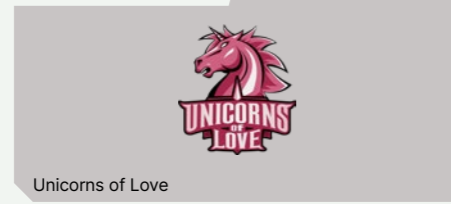
In the DACH competition, CGN (Cologne Gaming Network) Esports swept up both splits, though not without stiff competition. Unicorns of Love, a familiar brand to League of Legends fans, knocked CGN down to the lower bracket in Split 1, but were soundly defeated in the grand finals. MOUZ, one of Germany's oldest FPS competitors, won both Evolution regular seasons, and pushed CGN to a game five in Split 2. ☒

2023 RESULTS

Split 1 Winners



Runners-Up



Split 2 Winners



Runners-Up



BIRLIK
Challengers
Türkiye

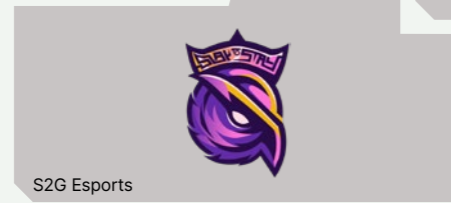


Türkiye, Azerbaijan, Mongolia, Tajikistan
Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan

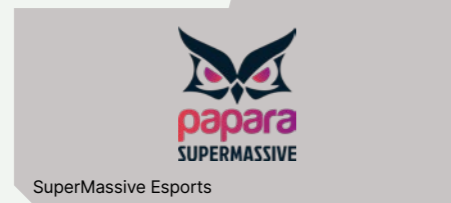
The Turkish Challengers league followed a slightly different format to others; with both the champion and runner-up of Split 2 qualifying directly to Ascension. Despite not making playoffs in Stage 1, and barely doing so in Stage 2, Digital Athletics made an underdog lower bracket run in June, eventually taking down Split 1 winners S2G Esports in a swift 3-0 grand finals. ☒

2023 RESULTS

Split 1 Winners



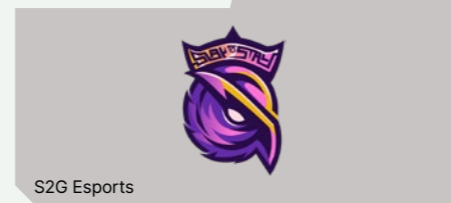
Runners-Up



Split 2 Winners



Runners-Up



SURGE
Challengers
East



Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina,
Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic,
Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Israel, Kosovo,
Latvia, Lithuania, Montenegro, North
Macedonia, Poland, Romania, Serbia,
Slovakia

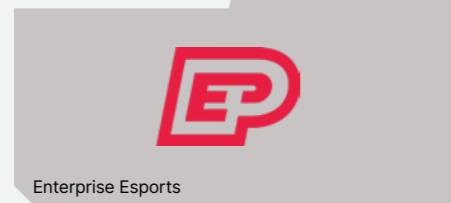
Among the Eastern European teams, Acend reminded us why they were VALORANT's first ever world champions. In Split 1, they took the top spot in the regular season, and dropped just one map in their upper bracket run. Split 2 featured a variation on the playoffs format: teams placing 2nd-4th play through a double elimination bracket, with the two winners joining the 1st and 2nd team in Phase 2. That first round bye proved fortuitous for Acend, who again ran through the top bracket, defeating Enterprise Esports for a second time, 3-0. ☒

2023 RESULTS

Split 1 Winners



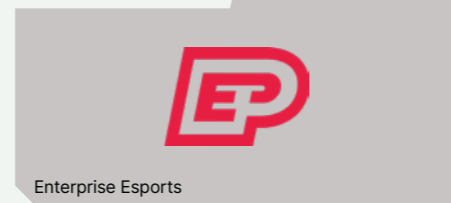
Runners-Up



Split 2 Winners



Runners-Up



RESILIENCE
Challengers
Mena



Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, United Arab
Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain, Oman, Egypt,
Lebanon, Iraq, Palestine, Jordan, Algeria,
Libya, Morocco, Tunisia

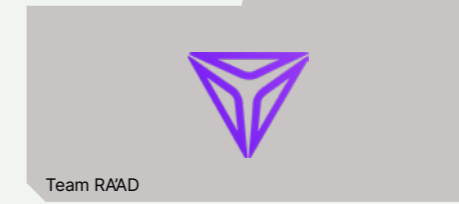
Like last year, MENA featured a unique multi-country system, splitting the region into two separate competitions: one for GCC and Iraq, and another for the Levant and North Africa. The two top circuit point earners from each met at a LAN finals, with a double elimination bracket. Team Falcons lifted the trophy just as they did in 2022, going undefeated in the upper bracket. ☒

2023 RESULTS

LAN Finals Winners



Runners-Up



RINASCIMENTO
Challengers
Italy



Italy, San Marino, Vatican City

Newly introduced for 2023, this dedicated Italian competition (aptly titled Renaissance) was a tit-for-tat across both splits. GMT Esports, an organization based in Azerbaijan, finished third in the regular season for Split 1, before knocking out two teams in the lower bracket to finally beat out Dsyre 3-1 in the grand finals. In their first playoff rematch in Split 2, GMT ousted Dsyre 3-0 to the lower bracket, but the tables turned on them with a 0-3 loss in the grand finals. ☒

2023 RESULTS

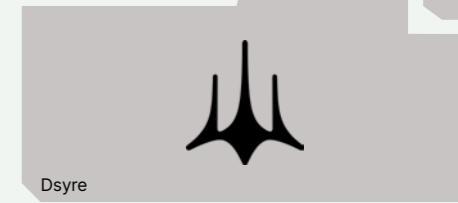
Split 1 Winners



Runners-Up



Split 2 Winners



Runners-Up



TEMPEST
Challengers
Portugal



Portugal

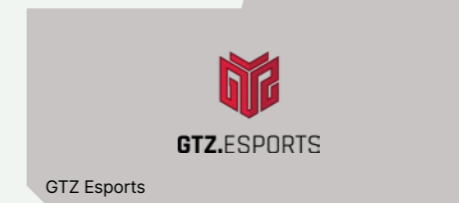
Another addition to 2023, the Portuguese VCL was contested predominantly by two of the country's top teams. SAW splintered through Split 1, losing one game in the regular season, and just one map in each of their playoff encounters with GTZ Esports. By just one match, GTZ managed to oust SAW from the top of Split 2's regular season, before an exact repeat of their last playoffs run saw SAW emerge as this VCL's clear winner for 2023. ☒

2023 RESULTS

Split 1 Winners



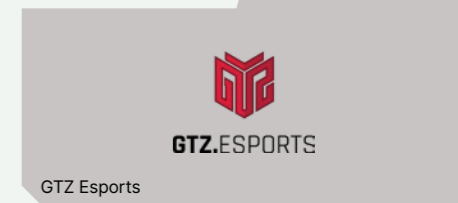
Runners-Up



Split 2 Winners



Runners-Up



VCT ASCENSION EMEA 2023

RESULTS RECAP

Offering just one team a shot to the top of VALORANT esports, the Ascension tournament was a clash of familiar faces and entirely new teams. The line between frontrunner and underdog blurred in this superb celebration of EMEA's future VCT talent.



ONE LONG ROAD TO THE TOP

Although the VCT International leagues have fixed teams, with so much potential talent waiting on the wings, it seemed only natural to allow the strongest competitors in tier two a chance to take the spotlight. As the annual culmination of the VALORANT Challengers Leagues, the Ascension tournament brings together the year's best performing teams into one tournament, awarding the winner with a two-year entry into the VCT EMEA International League. During that period, they will be able to qualify for all international VCT events, and will earn similar financial benefits to the other 10 teams. ☒

THE FORMAT FOR ASCENSION 2023

Throughout the year, all Challengers Leagues teams would accumulate championship points based on their final placement in both split 1 and split 2, with the second split awarding more points for top six finishes. At the end of a grueling year of competition, the team with the most points would qualify for Ascension, while the runner-up would go to the play-ins stage. Two exceptions to this were the MENA and Turkish Challengers Leagues, where the finalist and runner-up of their final tournament would qualify for Ascension and play-ins, respectively.

In the play-ins, nine teams would compete online for just one more chance to move forward. In the main event, the ten teams would play a standard tournament format, with two groups of five in a round-robin, with the top two teams moving to a double elimination playoffs. All matches are best-of-three, aside from the lower bracket and grand finals, which are best-of-five. ☒



ALL TO PLAY FOR, AND IT'S ANYONE'S GAME

All four of the final teams to make the Ascension playoffs had each won both splits for their respective Challengers Leagues, signaling we were in for an incredibly high bar of competition. The Northern Europe team Apeks were largely considered the front runners, going undefeated in the group stage (much as they had in: Polaris split 2). The VCT Champions of 2021, Acend, narrowly topped their group, with a highly diverse and experienced roster. Gentle Mates, despite their great success in the CL: Revolution, had only formed at the beginning of 2023! Lastly, SAW were somewhat of an underdog, but nevertheless represented the Portuguese Challengers League wonderfully for its inaugural season.

Compared to some of the Challengers Leagues playoffs in 2023, there were no flawless bracket runs. Gentle Mates and SAW both lost their initial game 2-0, after which SAW was the first to bow out. After Apeks dropped Acend to the lower bracket, Gentle Mates decisively stopped Acend from ascending further (a pun made at least a couple of times by our casters...), setting up our grand final. ☒



GENTLE MATES PUNCH THEIR TICKET

During the Grand Final, the VCT Coliseum in Berlin had never been louder, with Gentle Mates' squad of supporters giving us a preview of next year's fan passion. Despite a couple of close maps, Gentle Mates swept their way into the VCT EMEA league. Overall it was an incredible achievement for an org that did not exist this time last year. Even more impressive, all three of Gentle Mates' French streamer co-founders, Gotaga, Brawks, and Squeezeie, streamed the match live from the venue, helping to bring the match to a peak viewership of 225,000, the highest of any Ascension tournament globally. After the victory, he and his co-founders Squeezeie and Brawks mobbed the stage in a celebratory moment that will go down in VALORANT esports history. ☒



GAME CHANGERS EMEA

2023 Recap

With an expanded format and new pathways for women players, last year's Game Changers EMEA season saw dramatic shake-ups to its competitive status quo.

Game Changers features regional competitions and a global championship all designed to highlight the high skill gameplay and potential of VALORANT's women players. In many ways, the goal of the circuit is to negate its own necessity, with women players graduating from Game Changers into the VCT.

In 2022, the circuit effectively brought prominent players into the spotlight, built a dedicated following among the VALORANT esports community, and delivered standout events. Most notably, the inaugural Global Championship, held live in Berlin, reached a peak viewership of 230,000, and was overall one of the most watched women's esports tournaments of all time.

VISION AND FORMAT

For_2023

After EMEA team G2 Gozen lifted their first global trophy, it was a chance to build on the momentum and introduce big changes to our regional format. To provide an experience that better suits the variety of skill levels within the community, we split the Game Changers circuit into distinct layers, with two different overarching themes and goals.

The foundational level includes Emergents; an in-house competitive Discord community complete with a leaderboard and rewards. Meanwhile, the Game Changers Academy provides educational content from community personalities, allowing prospective talent to learn more about careers within the VALORANT ecosystem.

The core layer of the competition is the Game Changers EMEA league, which has now expanded to 16 teams. New to the circuit is the Contenders series, which qualifies teams to the top league through a relegation-promotion system, with its own open qualifiers. Both competitions are split into three Stages throughout the year, with the top league awarding points that can qualify teams to the world championship.

There are also six regional women's tournaments that promote teams into Contenders. These include PROJECT Queens in the DACH market, and Our Party in Spain.

EMEA RECAP: G2'S CROWN CHALLENGED



Results	Stage_1	1st Place	Results	Stage_2	1st Place	Results	Stage_3	1st Place
		G2 GOZEN			G2 GOZEN			BBL QUEENS



After winning all but one of the the three EMEA series, G2 Esports' women's VALORANT roster emerged undefeated in the global championship, with a trio of its star players ultimately remaining with the squad throughout 2023. But talent has grown strong across the region, and now every organization is ready to seize Gozen's crown.

In the first Stage of 2023...that didn't happen, but the seeds of a takeover were planted. Turkish roster BBL Queens became prime rival potential, going undefeated in their group while giving G2 their only loss in the table. In the other group, Ascend Rising also achieved a perfect 7-0 score. These three teams owned the playoffs bracket, with BBL almost unstoppable in the upper bracket before G2 Gozen bested them 3-2 in a tense silver scrapes clash.

For Stage 2, BBL Queens once again were flawless in their group run, but were shockingly eliminated by fellow Turkish team FUT Female (who had only just promoted their way up through Contenders). Similarly, Spanish KPI Shine topped the other group, but were unable to claim even a single map in the next round. This paved the way for another unstoppable galavant for G2 Gozen, who cut FUT's underdog run short with their second EMEA league victory of the year.

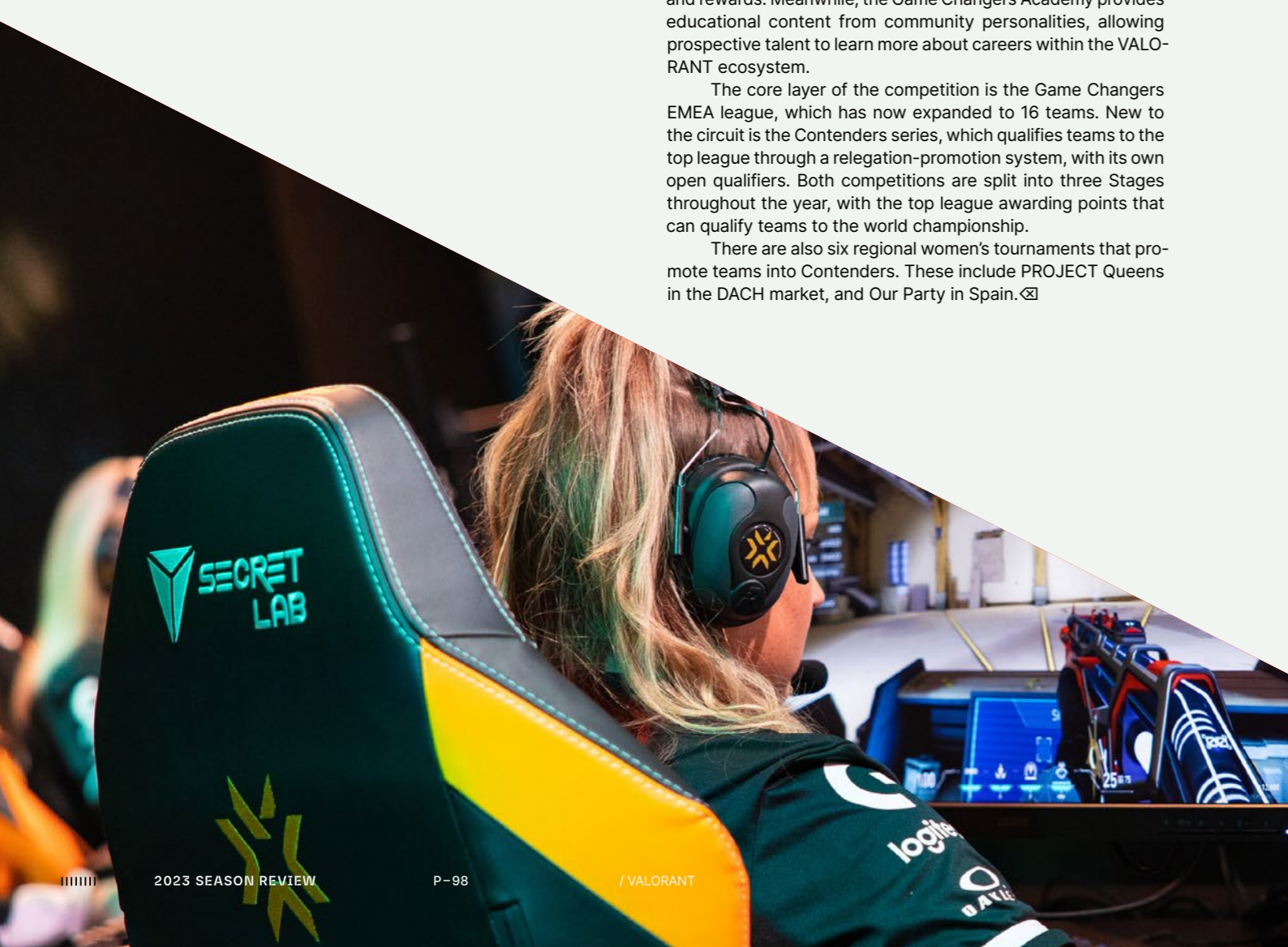
After winning all but one of the the three EMEA series, G2 Esports' women's VALORANT roster emerged undefeated in the global championship, with a trio of its star players ultimately remaining with the squad throughout 2023. But talent has grown strong across the region, and now every organization is ready to seize Gozen's crown.

In the first Stage of 2023...that didn't happen, but the seeds of a takeover were planted. Turkish roster BBL Queens became prime rival potential, going undefeated in their group while giving G2 their only loss in the table. In the other group, Ascend Rising also achieved a perfect 7-0 score. These three teams owned the playoffs bracket, with BBL almost unstoppable in the upper bracket before G2 Gozen bested them 3-2 in a tense silver scrapes clash.

For Stage 2, BBL Queens once again were flawless in their group run, but were shockingly eliminated by fellow Turkish team FUT Female (who had only just promoted their way up through Contenders). Similarly, Spanish KPI Shine topped the other group, but were unable to claim even a single map in the next round. This paved the way for another unstoppable galavant for G2 Gozen, who cut FUT's underdog run short with their second EMEA league victory of the year.

While their qualification to the global championship* was mostly assured, G2 Gozen ended up falling short of a hattrick for the second year running—ending fourth in their group and bowing out immediately in the lower bracket. BBL Queens saw it was their moment; having achieved yet another perfect group stage run, they waltzed through the upper bracket, beating two MENA-based teams recently promoted out of Contenders: NASR Ignite, and Falcons Vega. Having avoided each other all of Stage 3, the eventual rematch between BBL and Acend ended up with a strong 3-1 to the Turkish Queens.

*The Game Changers Global Championship concludes December 3rd 2023, unfortunately too late to be included in this publication. We will recap its results in the EMEA Esports Season Review 2024.



MATCH OPERATIONS IN VALORANT ESPORTS



There are many shared best practices to running an esports competition, but the FPS genre and VALORANT in particular bring a plethora of unique considerations.

PROCESSES AND STANDARDS

The most notable aspect of the evolution of VAL esports competitive ops has been Riot's ability to leverage existing processes and standards from LoL, and adapt them for VAL. This has given us a head start, allowing us to be agile and capitalize on VAL's success and enabling its continued growth.

Through each stage of VAL esports development, the diligent work from the LoL Esports EMEA team has been invaluable. The earliest online competitions, like First Strike, used processes originally developed to support the ERLs, and when the VCT itself launched it too was heavily influenced by LEC rules and LoL global policies - with the aim of expediting the professionalization of the sport.

The VRLs (which later evolved into the VCT Challenger leagues) were naturally based on the successful ERL model, driving development of regional talent and acting as a proof of concept. As we move into 2024, and as the VCT/LoL studios merge, we have begun collaborating to identify and improve processes and standards across games. It is also at this point we will be able to branch out and drive innovation of our own.

CHALLENGE SYSTEM FOR BUGS/EXPLOITS

The challenge system was implemented at the start of the 2023 season, enabling head coaches to request the review of any major bugs, exploits or high impact issues that affected the outcome of a round. This is unique to VAL and only possible due to the round based nature of the game.

IN-GAME AUDIO & SETUP

For our offline events, VALORANT requires a different audio setup to League of Legends (LoL) to ensure that players are able to hear in-game sounds fundamental to the game (e.g. footsteps and abilities). While LoL sees all audio routed through the same headset, VAL players use a combination of over-ear headphones (white-noise) and in-ear headphones (in-game and comms). Riot invests heavily in the audio equipment used at our events, providing all players and coaches with studio grade headphones to maintain audio integrity.

GAME CHANGERS VERIFICATION PROCESS

Alongside the launch of VCT Game Changers in late 2021, the participant verification process was developed to ensure that those competing met the unique eligibility requirements and that the competition was truly the safe space it aimed to be. The system is strict but GDPR compliant, respectful of the privacy of all women, and operated by our partner DivE which is composed of diverse profiles of admins.

COACHES IN MATCH AREA

VAL coaches play a more active role in a match than in LoL. The head coach is directly integrated into the match area, in some cases behind players on stage. They are equipped with multiple screens providing a view of the player POV and facecams, as well as the ability to speak directly to their players by calling tactical timeouts. Recently (mid-2023) this integration was extended to assistant coaches, providing them with the ability to speak directly to the head coach, and add an additional layer of strategy.

MEET THE EMEA VALORANT COMPETITION MANAGEMENT TEAM!

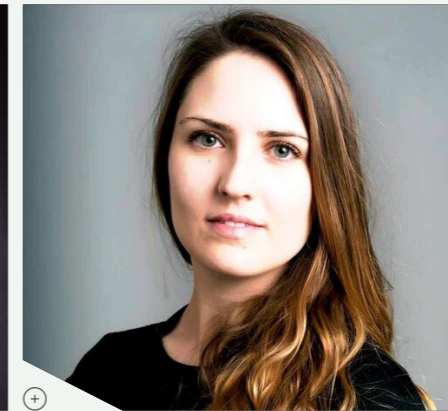


ELLIS PARKER

Competition Manager, VAL

I started my esports career in 2014, providing tournament support for a variety of online and LAN events, primarily for CS:GO. In 2017 I joined Riot, starting out as the Head Referee for the then EU LCS. I later transitioned to lead Comp Ops for ERLs and product lead for EU Masters. When VAL launched in 2020, my FPS background made it a no brainer move and I made the switch shortly after. These days I manage the VAL Comp Ops team, responsible for operating the VCT and supporting our third party circuits in CL, GC and the OFF//SEASON.

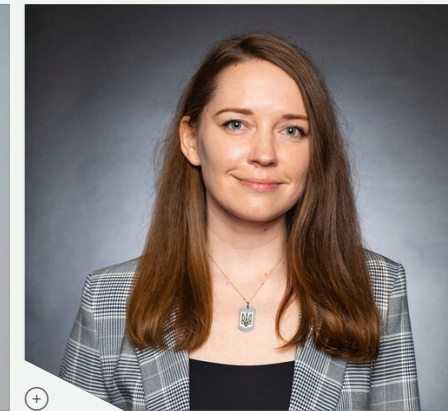
The most challenging and interesting aspect of working on the VAL esports has definitely been the constant evolution since its inception. Each year has seen the ecosystem and our competitions take dramatically different forms, which have each required a different approach, both operationally and structurally. The VCT has gone from effectively amateur to professional in the span of three years, now mirroring the LEC in setup, with teams operating out of Berlin. It's not every day you get to be involved in building something like that.



SERVANE FISCHER

Competitive Operations, VAL

I have a player background on Counter-Strike 1.6, competing in tournaments from the age of 13 until 22. With a legal degree, I was counseling esports-oriented entities when I joined Ubisoft International as their Esports Legal Counsel in 2018. In parallel, I drove programs for women and marginalized genders. I fell in love with VALORANT during the beta, and started as a caster for community tournaments. In 2021, I created DivE to operate the Game Changers in EMEA, built a robust verification process for all women and hired a very diverse team of admins. I joined Riot in January 2023, bringing the skills and knowledge I've been developing so far. This is definitely the challenging place where I can give the best of myself, while doing what I like the most: helping players.



OLESIA POTOTSKA

Competitive Operations, VAL

I came to Riot two and a half years ago after eight years in Blizzard Entertainment, working on the development of Hearthstone esports across all tiers of competition. In my current role I'm responsible for the competitive operations of the Challengers Leagues across all of EMEA, as well as the VCT Game Changers, and helping out with VCT where needed.

One thing that I'm most appreciative of when working on VALORANT esports is the collaborative working environment we have with the VCT teams, as well as the multitude of Tournament Organizers and external vendors we get to work with and share the same goal of making VALORANT esports the best it could be for the players and the audience.





2023 SEASON REVIEW

⑥

EMERGING GAMES AND COMPETITIONS

➔ Highlighting the competitive experience around Riot's other game titles, as well as some of the growing third-party esports circuits.



2023 TEAMFIGHT TACTICS RESULTS

The League of Legends spin-off has successfully rolled into a staple of strategy esports, with last year's sets inspiring the highest stakes competition to date.

WHAT IS TEAMFIGHT TACTICS?

Originally released in mid-2019, Teamfight Tactics (TFT) is part of the auto-battler sub-genre. If you like card games, miniature wargaming, chess, or mahjong, TFT combines elements of all of these with League of Legends characters and settings (sometimes with unique twists on the universe and lore!).

Each match of TFT follows the following basic format:

- ▶ Eight players spend round-after-round selecting units to place on a hexagon-laden battlefield. Different units synergize with each other, and can be equipped with items and upgrades (known as "augments").
- ▶ Each round, the units of one board automatically fight against those on another. The player with troops left on the battlefield inflicts damage on their opponent, with players being eliminated when their health reaches zero.

Riot Games periodically releases and rotates out new "sets." These switch up the selectable units, add new synergies, and introduce various novel mechanics. ☒

THE 2023 TFT COMPETITION FORMAT

Each TFT set features its own coinciding esports regional qualifiers and international championships. The global events feature 32 participants split across nine regions, with four coming from EMEA.

The winner of the Rising Legends Finals takes home over €10,000 from the prize pool, while the top four finishing players qualify directly to the global event.

Rising Legends is the official TFT Tournament Circuit for EMEA. From across the region, 32 players can qualify for Rising Legends Finals by...

*TRCs are official third-party tournaments held across the following EMEA territories: DACH, France, Eastern Europe, Poland, Türkiye, Romania, Northern Europe, Spain, MENA, and Italy.



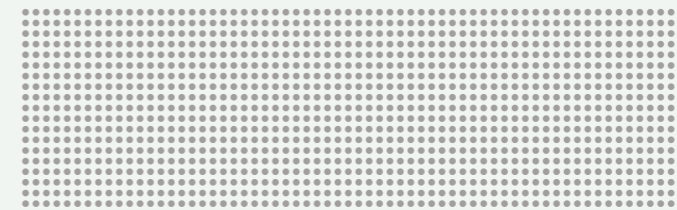
The first TFT global championship of 2023 brought EMEA players to, for the first time, play from our Berlin studios.

- 1 GOLDEN SPATULA CUPS**
 Winning one of three Golden Spatula Cups (GSC): These 128 player tournaments feature a mix of players from open qualifiers, winners of the TFT Regional Competitions (TRC)*, and top players on the game's ranked ladders.
- 2 GSC POINTS**
 Earning enough GSC Points: Even if a player doesn't win a GSC, they accrue points based on their final placement.
- 3 LADDER SNAPSHOTS**
 Place consistently at the top of the ladder on EMEA's four servers and you can earn a direct invite to the Rising Legends Finals!

2023 TFT SETS



In TFT players control a „Tactician“ with a customizable appearance.



RUNETERRA REFORGED

#9 RUNETERRA REFORGED

JUN 14, 2023 – NOV 21, 2023

Recap

Featuring champions from across all Runeterra, players can equip a "Legend" prior to a game that influences the augments they receive.

For the second TFT set of 2023, the prize pool for the Rising Legends circuit jumped from 90,000€ to 117,750€. There would also be no LCQ event this time, adding extra pressure on those who make it to the final rung of the competition.

The top four of the Rising Legends: Runeterra Reforged Finals included Voltariux from team Solary (runner up in 2022's Gizmos and Gadgets finals), and ZyK0o (who placed 2nd in 2021's Fates Global Championship). DarkHydra emerged as champion, 33 points neck-and-neck with ZyK0o, narrowly edging ahead in the final game of the tournament.

EMEA fared far better in this global championship. Playing out in front of a passionate local crowd at Berlin's LVL World of Gaming, both Voltariux and German player Wet Jungler made it to the final eight. Although it was the Japanese competitor Title who won the coveted Golden Spatula trophy, Wet Jungler earned EMEA its third ever silver global finish. ☒

MONSTERS ATTACK!

#8 MONSTERS ATTACK!

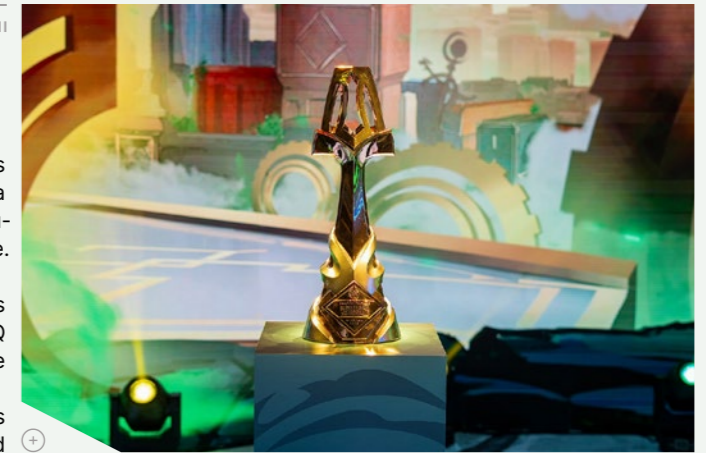
DEZ 7, 2022 – JUN 14, 2023

Recap

A superhero vs. monster themed set, which included hero augments semi-tailored to a player's current board and units.

The Rising Legends final uses a standard tournament format for TFT, where all 32 players play 12 Games across two days, each playing six games each day. The top scoring eight players move onto the finals. In the Monster's Attack! edition of the event, Karmine Corp's player Canbizz was the clear winner; being the only finalist to win more than one out of their six games played. The 5th and 6th player joined the western Last-Chance-Qualifier, which ended up being won by EMEA player Kurfuzzled.

TFT is a turn-based game, meaning that players around the world can compete simultaneously in one game (so long as they are OK with odd time zones!). While some choose to compete in the Monsters Attack! Global Championship from home, in EMEA the qualified players competed from the LEC studio for the first time ever. That extra prestige sadly did not conjure up an EMEA victory, with only France's Enzosx making it to the final eight, finishing in fifth place. ☒



An EMEA player won the inaugural TFT global championship in 2020, but the region has yet to lift a second coveted »Golden Spatula« trophy.



VCT OFF//SEASON

EMERGING GAMES & COMPETITIONS

VCT OFF//SEASON EMEA EVENTS

The VALORANT Champions Tour (VCT) OFF//SEASON is our window for third party tournaments between seasons. From after the final round concludes in Champions all through to January, a series of Riot supported events allow both pro teams and amateur rosters a chance to keep their fingers warm.

In 2023, we partnered with operators around the world to organize more than 40 events spanning show matches, open qualifier events, and LANs across our competitive regions. Here is a rundown of some of the official OFF//SEASON events for EMEA:

The 2023 VALORANT OFF//SEASON saw the return of several long running regional skirmishes, as well as an expanded nations based competition.



CROSSFIRE CUP

Organizer: LVP

This was the second edition of Crossfire, returning with a revamped format. Giants, KOI, and Team Heretics - the three Spanish teams from the VCT EMEA League - competed alongside five teams qualified from the Contenders stage (itself mixing invited teams from the VCT Challenger leagues for Spain, Italy, and Portugal with open qualifier teams). At the live conclusion at the Ubeat Barcelona festival, Giants reaffirmed their position as Spain's strongest VALORANT team with their grand finals victory over UCAM Esports Club.



LIONESS CUP

Organizer: Women in Esports

Returning for its second year, this women's tournament is run by British Esports as part of its Women in Esports initiative, who's stated aim is to create a more equitable and inclusive future for esports. Featuring 32 teams, the Lioness Cup is entirely open for any team to sign up for, with Open Qualifiers determining the top 8 teams who will progress to a double elimination bracket.



SPIKE NATIONS

Organizer: GG TECH

After several successful nation based VALORANT cups, the 2023 Spike Nations event is its most intense iteration yet, featuring teams representing Spain, Italy, Germany, the United Kingdom, Türkiye, and France. Each participating country appoints an ambassador to lead their team. The rosters include pro players from the VCT, but also competitors from VALORANT Challengers Leagues, amateur circuits, and rising stars from the Game Changers program. In the group stage, all six teams will play in a round robin, with the top four moving to playoffs, leading to a live finals at the Gamergy festival in Madrid.



CHALLENGERS DACH ARCADE

Organizer: Freaks 4U Gaming

This tournament features all eight teams from the Challengers league for Germany, Austria, and Switzerland, and as the name implies it adds an arcade inspired twist on the familiar VALORANT format. Every team will start the Tournament with five lives and lose one life for each lost series, plus, the winners of each series get to pick their next opponent.



THE POKAL

Organizer: Project V

The tournament is the definitive clash between the best VALORANT competitors in the DACH region. All eight teams in the VCT Challengers DACH league and the top 16 teams of the amateur Project V division are invited, with eight additional open qualifiers added to the mix. The grand finale was played offline at the Xperion gaming center in Cologne, where the last four remaining teams of the tournament fought. In the end, one of Germany's oldest and most storied esports orgs, MOUZ, took the inaugural POKAL trophy.



SUPERDOME

Organizer: BME

An international esports championship born in Egypt, Superdome was elevated by the MENA gaming and esports community with its inaugural edition in 2022. Backed by the Egyptian Ministry of Youth and Sports, this competition unites top esports teams from both the international and MENA regions, with the latter stage of the tournament taking place at the Cairo International Stadium.

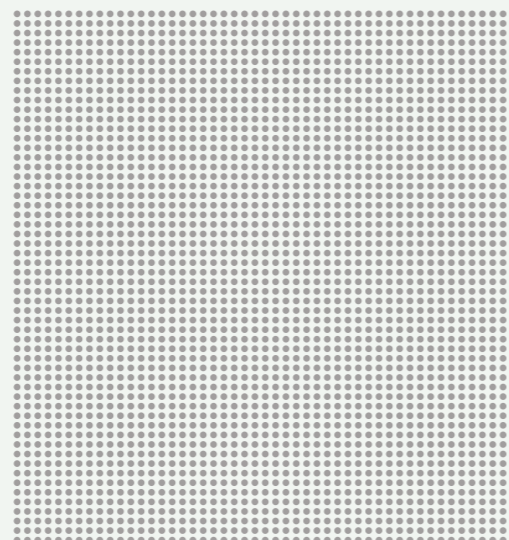




EMERGING GAMES & COMPETITIONS

THIRD-PARTY COMPETITION HIGHLIGHTS

League of Legends is part of a broad ecosystem of amateur and grassroots esports competitions, while Riot's newer titles also boast their own dedicated tournaments.



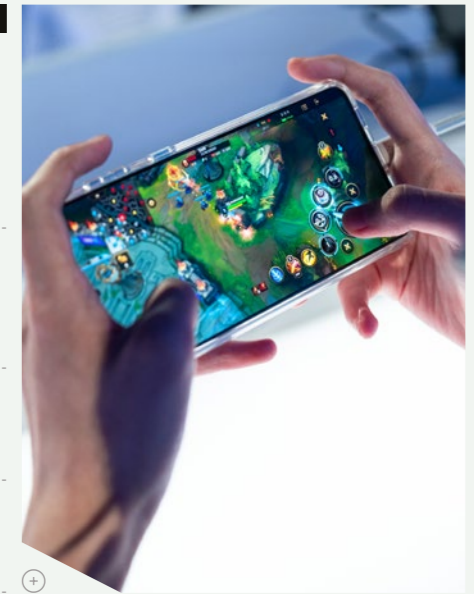
WILD CIRCUIT: RIFT LEGENDS 2023

League of Legends: Wild Rift is a version of the original game created specifically for mobile devices. It takes the familiar gameplay of the PC version, but adapts it to touchscreen controls, with a reduced map size and shorter match times of around 15 minutes — ideal for gaming on the go!

For 2023, we launched "Wild Circuit Rift Legends," a regional circuit for EMEA organized by Riot Games and Purge Tournament. Three seasons are played out across the year, starting in April, July, and November, respectively. Each season features 12 teams competing in a single round robin, best-of-three group stage, with the top four teams moving on to playoffs. ☒

The qualified teams for each Rift Legends season comprised the following:

- Winner of Le Choc de la Faille
A national league for France
organized by Purge Tournament
- Winner of the Spanish competitions Liga Salvaje (Seasons 1 & 2) and the Copa Salvaje (Season 3)
organized by GG TECH
- Winner of the Circuito Tormenta Italia (Season 1 & 2)
organized by QLASH Italia
- Winner of the Pyramids Cup (Season 3)
organized by MENA Region WR Community.
- Nine teams from Open Qualifiers



Wild Rift has been tailor made for handheld gaming.



Caption

LEGENDS OF RUNETERRA WORLD QUALIFIER OPEN

Legends of Runeterra (LoR) is a digital card game based around the League of Legends universe and lore. It takes gameplay concepts familiar to the genre, but with a few twists. Each card belongs to a specific Runeterra region, which have their own playstyles. LoR has a distinct combat pacing, with players using their cards to attack or defend, rather than just taking turns.

LoR has its own annual World Championship, and for 2023 the pathway for EMEA players to compete in this event were the "Runeterra Opens". These are large monthly tournaments with no entry fee that everybody can participate in. Every second Runeterra Open was a World Qualifier event, where the first place player automatically qualified for the World Championship, while top placing competitors earned Runeterra Points. Unlike previous years, which featured regional qualifiers, all World Qualifier Opens are global from the get go, with multiple seasonal events and a Last Chance Qualifier. ☒

UNIVERSITY ESPORTS MASTERS 2023

Since 2016, GG TECH has run the largest continental inter-university championship for League of Legends. This league consists of teams from 16 countries (and over 900 universities) that have qualified through their national championships. Any player who is studying at one of the universities associated with the leagues can register, with 2023 introducing a separate dedicated competition for the MENA region.

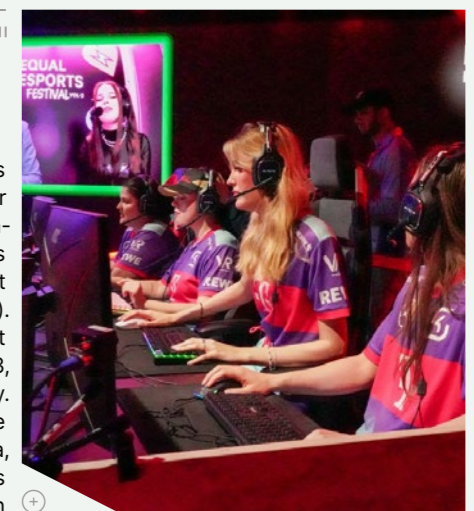
In the eighth and most recent edition of the event, the grand finals saw team Dr. Buhmann Akademie of Hannover facing a fellow German student team AIX Schwer from Aachen. All of Dr. Buhmann Akademie's players are part of Prime League 2nd Division team HNVR Esports, a level of experience that helped them take the trophy, giving Germany its third victory in the competition's history. ☒



EQUAL ESPORTS CUP

The Equal Esports Cup is a League of Legends tournament hosted by Deutsche Telekom for all women and non-binary players. The competition is supported by SK Gaming as well as the Esports Player Foundation (a not-for-profit institution that supports top performing talents).

The final phase of the 2023 tournament was played at the Equal eSports Festival Vol. 3, for a prize pool of € 10,000 in Cologne, Germany. The final four qualified teams included three LEC team organizations: G2 Hel, SK Avarosa, and Team BDS Valkyries, plus German esports squad BIG Chroma. In the grand final, SK's own squad bested BIG in a 3-0 finale. ☒





PARTNERS



From commercial sponsors to partnered teams and tournament organizers, we shine the spotlight on the companies supporting Riot Esports in EMEA.



PARTNER TEAM ORGANIZATIONS

LEC TEAMS

IN 2023



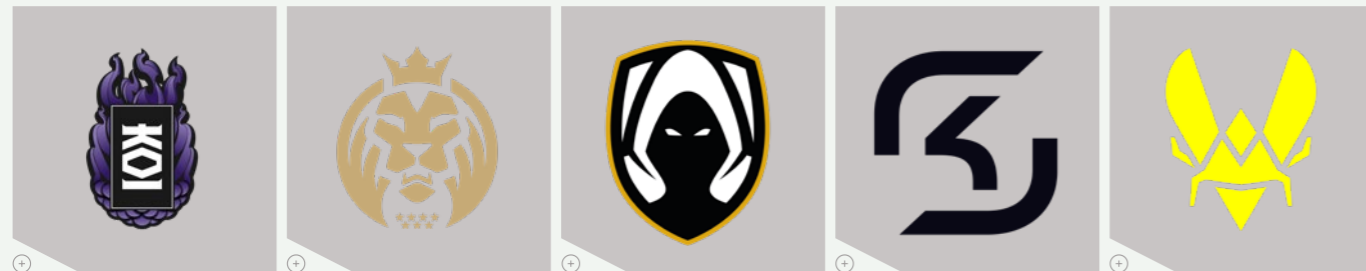
Each team organization participating in the League of Legends EMEA Championship (LEC) is a long-term partner, with a fixed spot in each season of the competition.

In return for their financial commitment to the LEC, teams receive shares of league revenue, and minimum guarantees regarding content and presence in broadcast.

Team organizations may sell their spot, with the league retaining the right to veto applicants, based on internal evaluations of various aspects (including business plan and values).



ASTRALIS Team BDS Fnatic G2 Esports Excel



KOI MAD Lions Team Heretics SK Gaming Team Vitality

For several years now, Riot Games has partnered with some of the biggest esports team organizations operating within EMEA. We endeavor to run leagues and tournaments at the highest quality, and as part of their participation agreements we offer various incentives and benefits to competing teams.

VCT INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE TEAMS

IN 2023



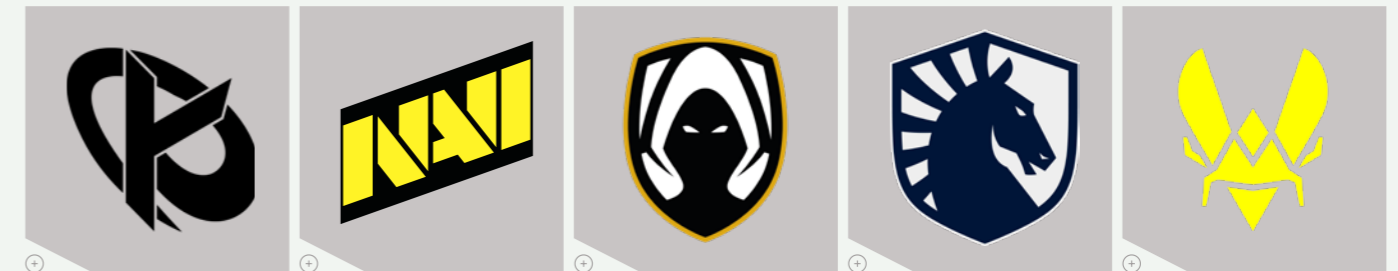
VCT International Leagues incorporate a long-term partnership model with a select number of teams in each league (ensuring representation of all regions).

There is no participation or franchise fee. The league provides financial stipends to partner teams in return for their investment in growing the ecosystem.

Spots in the VCT International Leagues cannot be sold. If a team exits, Riot Games is solely responsible for filling the now vacated league spot.



BBL Esports Fnatic FUT Esports Giants KOI

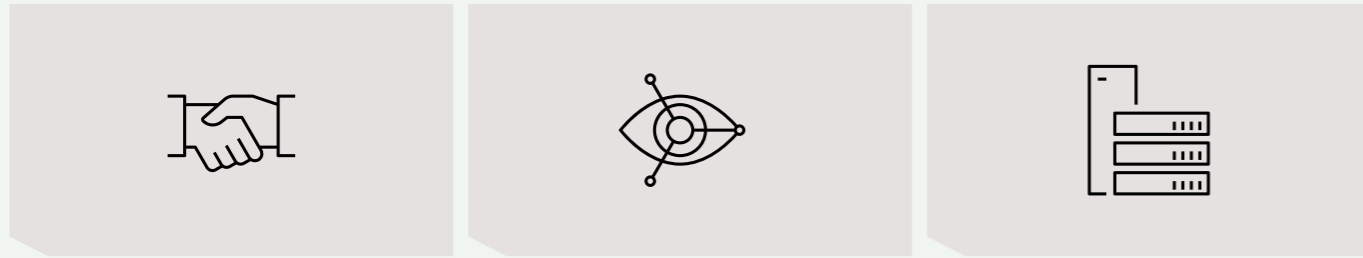


Karmine Corp Natus Vincere Team Heretics Team Liquid Team Vitality



TOURNAMENT ORGANIZER PARTNERS

ABOUT RIOT GAMES PARTNERSHIPS WITH TOS



Riot Games signs a long term tournament and broadcasting license with tournament organizers to allow long term planning for both partners. ☒

Riot's esports product teams oversee the entire EMEA esports ecosystem, working closely with partners to help grow competition products. ☒

Tournament organizer partners gain access to tech support from Riot Games, including use of tournament realms, and league unlocked accounts for players. ☒



Riot's commercial partnerships team also works with TOS to explore new revenue streams, such as region wide partnerships or sharing of game/league data. ☒

Riot's competition management teams work closely with TOs across all their competitive divisions, from open qualifiers to admin and referee support. ☒

For integrity matters, Riot's Esports Compliance team can support investigations, and will ultimately deliver sanctions on players within partner TO competitions. ☒

In order to build a robust competition ecosystem for EMEA, Riot Games works closely with tournament organizers (TOs) across the region. Bringing knowledge of their local markets and experience in managing competitions of scale, our partnerships with TOs continue to develop year after year in regards to commercial collaboration and cooperation on competition management and integrity matters.

PARTNER TOURNAMENT ORGANIZERS

in_2023

<p>Ninja Turkish Championship League</p>	<p>Calyx Arabian League Challengers MENA: Resilience</p>
<p>ESA Challengers Türkiye: Birlik</p>	<p>Webedia Ligue Française de League of Legends</p>
<p>Fortuna Esports Balkan League</p>	<p>Freabs 4U Gaming Prime League, NLC Challengers DACH: Evolution</p>
<p>Frenzy Esports Ultraliga</p>	<p>GGTECH TFT Rising Championship</p>
<p>Hitpoint Hitpoint Masters</p>	<p>Inygon LPLOL Challengers Portugal: Tempest</p>
<p>Leagues.gg NLC*</p>	<p>Polska Liga Esportowa Challengers East: Surge</p>
<p>Unlocked Elite Series</p>	<p>Pixel Perfect Greek Legends League</p>
<p>LVP LVP Superliga Challengers Spain: Rising</p>	<p>Promod Esports Challengers Northern Europe: Polaris</p>
<p>PG Nationals PG Nationals Challengers Italy: Rinascimento</p>	<p>* Leagues.gg operated the NLC and its lower division during 2023 under the license holder Freabs 4U Gaming.</p>

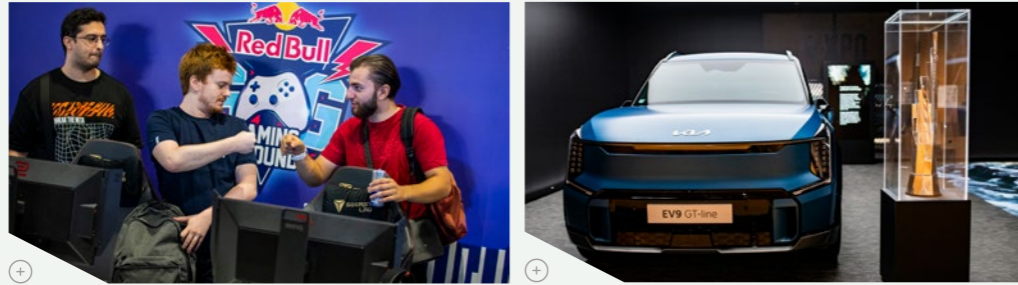


COMMERCIAL SPONSORS AND PARTNERS

Riot Games would like to thank the various commercial partners who support our EMEA esports competitions and fans in 2023!

LEC PARTNERS

2023



MAIN PARTNERS



OFFICIAL PARTNERS



LICENCE PARTNERS

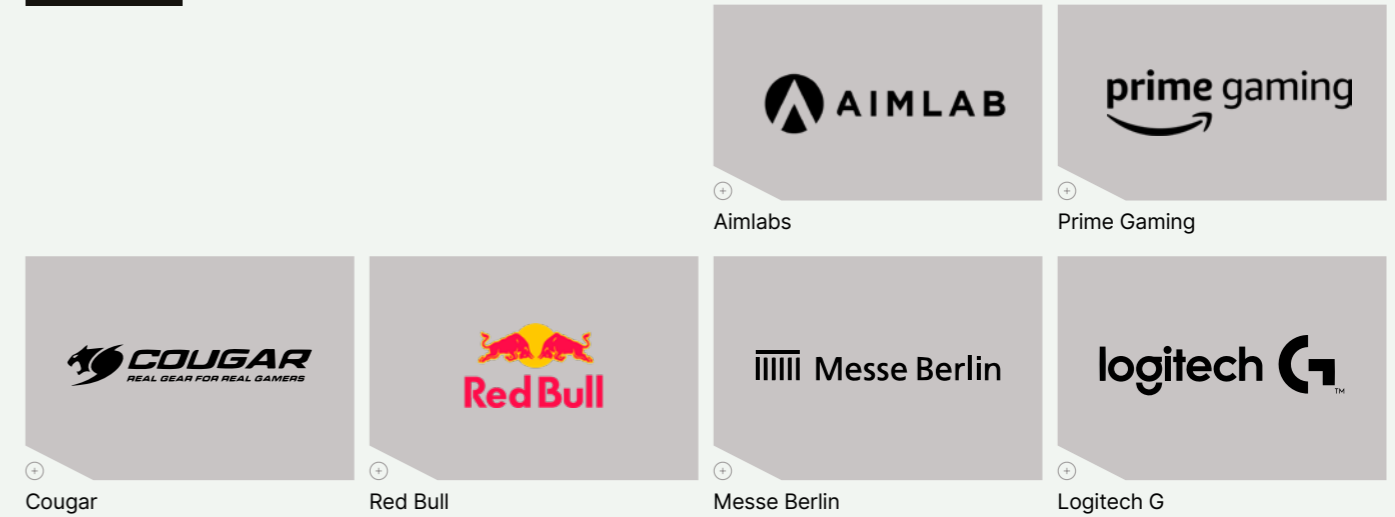


LEC FINALS PARTNERS



VCT EMEA PARTNERS

2023



WORKING WITH ESPORTS HOST CITIES

2023



For the LEC Finals and other roadshow EMEA esports events, Riot Games establishes partnerships with host destinations. There is an established bidding and vetting process for potential host cities, the result of which has Riot Games work directly with regional government authorities to elevate the event by aligning with city strategies, generating a bigger impact to communities together.

Since 2019, we've partnered with the relevant authorities for cities including Rotterdam, Athens, Malmö, and Montpellier-Occitanie to deliver our shows. The support from these cities ranges from venues and logistics support, to city marketing and use of iconic locations for content and side events.

Our esports roadshows have a demonstrable economic impact. For example, the 2022 LEC Finals in Malmö generated an estimated €4.5m, with 57% of event attendees being international visitors.





Alberto Guerrero
Head of Esports, EMEA, Riot Games
Co-Chairman, Video Games Europe Esports

2023 Season Review

CLOSING WORD

The esports industry has experienced some turbulence in post-pandemic times, and for Riot Games, we want our esports strategy to remain focused on sustainability and stability. We want teams and players in our ecosystem to be confident that there will be opportunities for them to compete year after year, and for that continuity to be present in all layers of the competitive pyramid.

After 10 incredible years of League of Legends esports in Europe, we expanded all competitions to now cover EMEA, while at the same time introducing a radical and exciting new format to the League of Legends EMEA Championship (LEC). Concurrently, the VALORANT Champions Tour (VCT) debuted an entirely new professional EMEA league within the walls of an entirely separate studio.

While these shifts brought trials and tribulations, the end result was some of the most exciting esports clashes our region has ever seen. Viewership across the LEC, EMEA Masters, and VCT has trended positively, with each remaining among the most popular and prestigious esports competitions in the west.

As we close out 2023, we are embarking on another bold bet. Back in 2019, we relaunched the "European League of Legends Championship Series" (EU LCS) with the now firmly established LEC brand and team partnership structure, and at that time we also revamped our esports studio in Adlershof, Berlin, which had been in operation since 2013. Next year will mark the completion of our most significant studio upgrade to date; as we open the doors of the newly renamed "Riot Games Arena".

Thanks to a complete second studio space, and with support from our Stryker Remote Broadcasting Center in Dublin, this redesigned venue will host both LEC and VCT EMEA league games, as well as various tier two competitions, with an emphasis on co-streaming, fan engagement, and a heightened spectator experience for audiences watching both on-site and online. This represents not just a doubling down of our investment in Berlin, but in EMEA esports and its growth overall.

Next year, the League of Legends World Championship returns to EMEA for its first multi-city tour in five years. Back then, we hosted the early stages of the tournament in a then-new LEC studio, and in 2024 EMEA will fittingly be the center of esports again as we welcome some of the best teams in the world to our enhanced centrestage. ☒

SEASON REVIEW 2023 CREDITS:

EDITORIAL AND WORDS

Graham Ashtion
Riot Games Esports External Affairs Manager EMEA

DESIGN AND LAYOUT

ffine Design

© 2017-2024 Riot Games, Inc. RIOT GAMES, LEAGUE OF LEGENDS, TEAMFIGHT TACTICS, LEAGUE OF LEGENDS: WILD RIFT, LEGENDS OF RUNETERRA, VALORANT, and any associated logos are trademarks, service marks, and/or registered trademarks of Riot Games, Inc.





**RIOT
GAMES**