

# INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION

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## **ISU European Figure Skating Championships 2015** **Preview**

The 2015 ISU European Figure Skating Championships will open in Stockholm, Sweden, on January 28. The ISU European Figure Skating Championships return to Stockholm for the second time in history after 1912. 156 skaters from 32 ISU members have been entered for the Championships. Skaters/couples need to have obtained a minimum total technical score in Short Program and Free Skating in order to compete at the European Championships. Two reigning European Champions are back and hope to defend their title.

### **Overview of the top contenders**

In the Men's event reigning European Champion Javier Fernandez (ESP), 23, is aiming at a third consecutive title but he has to deal with strong competition. Fernandez took the silver medal at the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final last month and comes with a season best of 265.01 points to Sweden. The challenge should come from the Russian, Czech and French skaters. European silver medalist Sergei Voronov (RUS), 27, earned the bronze at the Grand Prix Final and has a seasons best of 252.00 points. Russian Champion Maxim Kovtun, 19, won his two Grand Prix events and was fourth at the Final (seasons best 243.35 points). 2011 European Champion Florent Amodio (FRA/season best 215.71 points) and 2013 European bronze medalist Michal Brezina (CZE/seasons best 241.23), both 24, are in the medal hunt as well. 2014 World Junior silver medalist Adian Pitkeev (RUS), 16, debuts at the ISU European Figure Skating Championships.

Three Russian Ladies headline the Ladies event: 2013 European bronze medalist Elizaveta Tutkamyshva, 18, has celebrated a stellar comeback this season and is the reigning ISU Grand Prix Final Champion and scored a seasons best of 203.58 points in Barcelona. Her teammate and two-time World Junior Champion Elena Radionova, 16, has her eyes set on the podium as well in her debut at the European Championship. Radionova took the silver medal at the Grand Prix Final (seasons best 203.92 points). ISU Grand Prix Finalist Anna Pogorilaya, 16, competes in her first European Championships, but was ranked fourth at the 2014 ISU World Figure Skating Championships already (seasons best 191.81 points). 2012 European silver medalist Kiira Korpi (FIN), 26, who missed the past season completely due to injury, is making a comeback and hopes to break through the Russian phalanx (seasons best 167.81 points). Mae-Berenice Meite (FRA/seasons best 169.46 points), 20, and two-time European bronze medalist Elene Gedevanishvili (GEO/seasons best 158.10 points), 25, want to get as close to the top as possible as well. Defending European Champion Julia Lipnitskaia (RUS) did not qualify for the Russian team for Stockholm.

Olympic and World silver medalists Ksenia Stolbova/Fedor Klimov (RUS) are the top favorites in the Pairs event. They won their two Grand Prix events and skated to the silver medal in the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final (seasons best 213.72 points). Competition should come from 2010 European Champions Yuko Kavaguti/Alexander Smirnov (RUS) who are back in business after sitting out the past season due to injury (seasons best 209.16 points) as well as from World Junior silver medalists Evgenia Tarasova/Vladimir Morozov (RUS/seasons best 178.98 points). Other contenders are Vanessa James/Morgan Cipres (FRA/seasons best 167.88 points) and the new team of Valentina Marchei/Ondrej Hotarek (ITA/seasons best 167.18 points). 2014 European Champions Tatiana Volosozhar/Maxim Trankov (RUS) are not competing as he is recovering from a shoulder injury.

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Reigning World and European Champions Anna Cappellini/Luca Lanotte (ITA) are leading the Ice Dance event. However, the Italians missed their second Grand Prix event and did not qualify for the Final. They scored a seasons best of 149.58 points at the Cup of China. The Italians will be challenged by ISU Grand Prix Final bronze medalists Gabriella Papadakis/Guillaume Cizeron (FRA), who won their two Grand Prix events (and beat among others Cappellini/Lanotte). The French team comes with a seasons best of 166.66 points to Stockholm. 2014 European bronze medalists Penny Coomes/Nicholas Buckland (GBR/seasons best 158.02 points) and newly crowned Russian Champions Elena Ilinykh/Ruslan Zhiganshin (seasons best 160.43 points) are eying the podium as well. Ilinykh won the silver medal at the 2014 European Championships with former partner Nikita Katsalapov while Zhiganshin had placed fourth a year ago with Victoria Sinitsina. Others to watch include 2013 World Junior Champions Alexandra Stepanova/Ivan Bukin (RUS), 2011 World Junior Champions Ksenia Monko/Kirill Khaliavin (RUS) and Nelli Zhiganshina/Alexander Gazsi (GER) – she is Zhiganshin's older sister.

Please note that for the seasonal best total scores only the ISU Grand Prix competitions (senior and junior) and ISU Challenger Series events have been taken into consideration, no other international competitions or National Championships.

## Prize money

The ISU awards a global prize money of US\$ 350,000 at the ISU European Figure Skating Championships to skaters/couples placed 1st to 12th. The prize money is awarded as follows:

### *Men and Ladies*

1st place	US\$ 20,000
2nd place	US\$ 13,000
3rd place	US\$ 8,000
4th place	US\$ 6,500
5th place	US\$ 5,000
6th place	US\$ 4,000
7th place	US\$ 3,500
8th place	US\$ 3,000
9th place	US\$ 2,500
10th place	US\$ 2,000
11th place	US\$ 1,500
12th place	US\$ 1,000

### *Pairs and Dance (per couple)*

1st place	US\$ 30,000
2nd place	US\$ 19,500
3rd place	US\$ 12,000
4th place	US\$ 9,750
5th place	US\$ 7,500
6th place	US\$ 6,000
7th place	US\$ 5,250
8th place	US\$ 4,500
9th place	US\$ 3,750
10th place	US\$ 3,000
11th place	US\$ 2,250
12th place	US\$ 1,500

## The schedule of the ISU European Figure Skating Championships 2015 is as follows:

Wednesday, January 28:	Men Short Program, Short Dance
Thursday, January 29:	Ladies Short Program, Free Dance
Friday, January 30:	Pairs Short Program, Men Free Skating
Saturday, January 31:	Ladies Free Skating
Sunday, February 1:	Pairs Free Skating, Exhibition Gala

For more information, full entry lists and results please see: [www.isu.org](http://www.isu.org) and the official event website <http://skatesweden.se/en/ec2015/>

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