

# COMPETITIONS COMMISSION MEETING

**Friday, 27 August 2021 Hotel "Fleming's" Vienna**

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**CC:** Bozidar Djurkovic / Chairman  
Jan Kampman / Member Men's Competitions  
Liudmila Bodnieva / Member Women's Competitions Video Call  
Dragan Nachevski / Member Refereeing  
Gael Pelletier / Member Men's Club Competitions  
Thomas Hylle / Member Women's Club Competition

**Office:** according to the agenda

## **Schedule for Friday**

09.00 – 10.00	Information exchange EHF	Hotel "Fleming's" Vienna
10.00 – 18.00	CC Meeting	Hotel "Fleming's" Vienna

## **Notes:**

### **1. Welcome**

Djurkovic welcomed the CC Members to this meeting which was the first meeting with the complete CC being present. He addressed a special welcome to the two new CC members Liudmila Bodnieva and Gael Pelletier. He also looked back and thanked the CC members as well as the EHF office staff for their contribution during the last 4 years and expressed his pleasant anticipation for the cooperation in the upcoming 4 years. In addition to this Glaser provided a short administrative and organizational introduction to the meeting.

Gael Pelletier offered a short introduction about himself as he is a newcomer to the EHF bodies.

### **2. Minutes and Reports of Meetings and Task Groups**

No issues were raised.

### **3. Information on Meeting of Technical Delegation / CAN**

Djurkovic was the chairman of the meeting and provided a short report about the most important topics. The minutes of this Technical Delegation will be made available to all CC Members and details can be checked there.

## 4. Club Competitions

### 4.1. Review Men's and Women's Club Competitions 2020/2021

Glaser provides a short summary of the final part of last season where all competitions could be finished according to schedule incl. the Final4 events in Men's and Women's European League (Baia Mare/ROU for women and Mannheim/GER for men) as well as in Champions League in Budapest and Cologne. No issues from the past season are open on the level of the CC.

Financial questions regarding the refund of costs were dealt with between EHF and EHFMs resp. the stakeholder bodies.

### 4.2. Preview Men's and Women's Club Competitions 2021/2022

Taekker provides a summary on the registration process which basically worked well and resulted in a higher number of participating teams compared to last season. While there were a total of 177 clubs registered apart from the Champions Leagues last season, there are 222 clubs registered for the 2021/22 season apart from the 32 Champions League clubs. This is a large and significant raise of 45 clubs overall in the Men's and Women's European League and European Cup.

The draws took place according to the calendar and no withdrawal was received until the date of the meeting.

Due to Covid cases in the team of Valur (ISL) their European League Round 1 matches vs. Porec (CRO) were postponed by one week, but are rescheduled to still be played as a double match in Porec within the deadline.

The workshops with the Men's and Women's Champions League clubs will take place from 31 August to 2 September with physical presence in Vienna.

The EHF Hygiene Concept for the 2021/22 season was concluded and approved by the EHF Executive Committee. It was sent out to the European League clubs already, all other clubs, Federations, Referees, Delegates, EHF bodies etc, will follow in the next few days. The concept is based on all persons of a match being either vaccinated, recovered or tested and the clubs were urged to do their utmost to avoid postponings of matches as they happened last season. It is also expected that the vaccinations of players and team officials will help a lot to keep the number of infections on a very low scale.

### 4.3. Further topics on Club Competitions as of 2022/23

At the point of time of the meeting there were no proposals or initiatives pending regarding a change of the playing system. A time line for the analysis of the newly invented playing systems needs to be developed and agreed between the various stakeholders.

The basic calendar for the season 2022/23 was approved by the ExeC in June, was distributed and is available.

## 5. National Team Competitions – Qualifications

Sichelschmidt gave a short overview about the special situation about the pandemic and its influence on the national team competitions especially in the summer 2021. The remarks concerning the qualification pathways to the upcoming events will follow the topics listed in the agenda.

### 5.1. 2021 WWCh ESP

The qualification phase 1 was played in March 2021 in 2 groups of 4 and 3 groups of 3 teams. The first and second ranked teams promoted to phase 2, which was played in April 2021. The qualified 14 teams from Europe: NED (Defending Champion), ESP (Organiser), NOR, FRA, CRO, DEN, RUS, GER, MNE, HUN, SWE, ROU, SRB, AUT, CZE, SLO. In the meantime also POL and SVK received a wild card by the IHF. The final tournament will be played between 1 and 19 December 2021 in Granollers, Torrevieja, Castello and Llíria.

### 5.2. 2022 EHF EURO Men HUN/SVK

After the qualification phase 1 in January 2019, the relegation round in January 2020, the qualifiers for the Men 's EHF EURO 2022 were due to the difficult situation very special. With the great support of all participants all matches of the qualifiers could be finalized on 2 May 2021. For some teams, who had to play e.g. 4 matches in one week, it was a real burden. The draw for the final tournament took place on 6 May in Budapest/HUN and the playing schedule for the final tournament is already available.

### 5.3. 2022 EHF EURO Women SLO/MKD/MNE

Directly qualified for the Final Tournament are SLO-MKD and MNE as organisers as well as NOR, the champion of the EURO 2020. The six 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> ranked teams of the 6 groups in the EURO qualifiers will also take part in the final tournament.

Part 1 of the qualification was played in the new NTW from 31 May to 6 June 2021 in 2 groups of 4 and 1 group of 3 teams in KOS, GRE and FAR. The winners of each group: POR, GRE and FAR qualified for the qualifiers.

### 5.4. 2023 MWCh POL/SWE

Apart from the two organisers POL and SWE and the defending champion DEN, up to three best ranked teams of the Men 's EHF EURO 2022 in HUN/SVK will qualify directly. Europe will have 9 additional places at the final tournament in 2023. The qualification phase 1 was drawn on 19 August 2021 and will be played in 4 groups of 4 teams.

The first and second ranked teams will promote to phase 2 part 1 and join the already directly for part 1 qualified team of SUI (according to the Men 's National Team Ranking List). Phase 2 part1 will be played between 14 and 20 March 2022. The 9 winners will be qualified for phase 2 part 2 to join the 9 best ranked, not already qualified teams of the EURO 2022 in HUN/SVK. Phase 2 part 2 will be played between 11 and 17 April 2022.

#### 5.5. 2023 WWCh DEN/NOR/SWE

Apart from the fact that the WWCh 2023 will be played in DEN/NOR/SWE first details in regard with the qualification procedure can only be announced after the WWCh 2021 in Spain.

#### 5.6. 2024 EHF EURO Men GER (Q 1 / Relegation Round)

Phase 1 was planned to be played in tournament format between BUL, GBR, CYP and GEO in GEO from 8 to 10 January 2021 but after 2 postponements and after having received the withdrawal of GBR and at the same time the postponement of the IHF-Emerging Nations Championship by the IHF-Council the situation was internally evaluated. It was decided to combine the qualification phase 1 with an "IHF-EHF-Men 's Trophy". The trophy was played with six teams in Tbilisi/GEO (14 to 19 June 2021) with the result, that the first 3 teams GEO, CYP and BUL joined LUX (already directly qualified) for the relegation round 2022/2024. They will play against the lowest 4<sup>th</sup> ranked teams of the EURO 2022 qualifiers FIN, BEL, TUR and LAT. The draw took place on 19 August 2021 and the playing dates are foreseen for either November 2021 or January 2022, depending on a probable involvement of some teams in the MWCh 2023 qualification phase 1.

#### 5.7. 2024 EHF EURO Women HUN/SUI/AUT

Apart from the fact that the EURO 2024 in HUN/SUI/AUT will be the first Women 's EURO with 24 teams, no further details are currently in regard with the qualification procedure available.



## 6.2. 2022 EHF EURO Women SLO/MKD/MNE

The organization process for the Women's EHF EURO 2022 SLO/MKD/MNE is ongoing. The CC was informed regarding the difficult arena situation in Podgorica/MNE. After a site visit in April, the playing hall was confirmed as Preliminary Round venue. Due to the difficult arena situation a Main Round is impossible to be played in the Moraca Arena in Podgorica/MNE. Therefore, the following venue concept (according to the original bid) will be implemented for the Women's EHF EURO 2022 SLO/MKD/MNE:

### Preliminary Round:

Group A	Ljubljana / SLO
Group B	Celje / SLO
Group C	Skopje / MKD
Group D	Podgorica / MNE

### Main Round:

Group I	Ljubljana / SLO
Group II	Skopje / MKD

### Final Weekend:

Ljubljana / SLO

The CC was informed that the MKD OC needs provide a detailed spectators' concept to the EHF for the Main Round. The scenario in case the MKD team doesn't qualify for the Main Round needs to be taken into consideration in the spectators' concept.

The CC members were informed about the finalized schedule of the Women's EHF EURO CUP 2022. In general, the playing schedule will be played at the same periods as the Qualifiers matches, but the order of the matches can be agreed freely by the participating teams. The EHF EURO CUP will take place as follows:

Round 1	7 October 2021	18:55 NOR-SLO	Bekkestua / NOR
		20:15 MKD-MNE	Skopje / MKD
Round 2	10 October 2021	17:30 SLO-NOR	Ljubljana / SLO
		20:30 MNE-MKD	Podgorica / MNE
Round 3	2/3 March 2022		
Round 4	5/6 March 2022		
Round 5	20/21 April 2022		
Round 6	23/24 April 2022		

The CC members were informed that a Slovenian agency was hired by the organizers regarding marketing, promotional and ticketing purposes. A ticketing strategy (including the prices categories, etc.) shall be provided to the EHF until the end of September 2021. It seems to be very difficult for the three OC's to set-up a category and pricing concept.

An event CI concept including a claim was already published prior to the Qualifiers Draw which took place on 25 March 2021. The detailed CI manual is currently worked out.

The CC was informed that due to the early event period (4-20 November 2022), all preparatory activities have to be moved to an earlier stage in order to ensure a smooth preparatory phase.

### 6.3. 2024 EHF EURO Men GER

The preparation of the event is ongoing. The Men's EHF EURO 2024 venues were announced officially in a venue presentation event, which took place in course of the EHF FINAL4 in Cologne. The following venue concept was announced by the GER OC:

#### Preliminary Round:

- |              |            |                                  |
|--------------|------------|----------------------------------|
| ➤ Group A    | Düsseldorf | Opening Match Day                |
| ➤ Groups A+D | Berlin     | Apart from the Opening Match Day |
| ➤ Groups B+E | Mannheim   |                                  |
| ➤ Groups C+F | Munich     |                                  |

#### Main Round:

- |            |         |
|------------|---------|
| ➤ Group I  | Cologne |
| ➤ Group II | Hamburg |

#### Final Weekend:

- Cologne

The CC members were informed that a first site visit (hotels & arenas) will take between 12 and 17 September 2021.

### 6.4.1. 2024 EHF EURO Women HUN/SUI/AUT

A first meeting between the organizing countries and the EHF took place on 15 June 2021 as a virtual meeting.

It will be the first Women's EHF EURO with 24 participating teams. The event is played altogether in 4 venues (Budapest, Debrecen, Basel and Innsbruck). The following venue concept is foreseen for the event:

#### Preliminary Round:

- 2 Groups in Switzerland
- 2 Groups in Austria
- 2 Groups in Hungary

Main Round:

- 2 Groups in Hungary

Final Weekend:

- 1 Groups in Hungary

On 21<sup>st</sup> September a coordination meeting focusing on the event philosophy and the cooperation process is planned between the EHF and the organizers in order to discuss the vision of the event as well as the marketing and media approach.

A site visit regarding the Women's EHF EURO 2024 will be defined soon between the EHF and the organizing countries.

#### 6.4.2. Situation concerning the application procedures for the EUROs 2026 and 2028

The CC members were informed that the regular evaluation is ongoing. Since the submission of the bids on 10 May 2021 several pre-inspections were carried out by the EHF. In addition, the CC members were informed about the current status of the bids:

- Denmark, Sweden and Norway - (Men's EHF EURO 2026 & 2028 / Women's EHF EURO 2026 & 2028):

As the arenas in Denmark, Sweden and Norway are well known from previous events a pre-inspection took place in the following venues:

- Royal Arena in Copenhagen / DEN
- DNB Arena in Stavanger / NOR

Feedback regarding the application after the pre-inspection was provided to the respective nations on 20 August 2021. Apart from Kolding, all venues were approved for the application process. In addition, the Royal Arena in Copenhagen was approved for the Preliminary Round and the Main Round, but not for a Final Weekend.

- Switzerland (Men's EHF EURO 2026 & 2028):

All venues were pre-inspected by the EHF which are announced in the bid:

- St. Jakobshalle in Basel / SUI
- Palexpo Geneva / SUI
- Vaudoise Arena in Lausanne / SUI
- Hallenstadion in Zurich / SUI
- Swiss Life Arena in Zurich / SUI



Feedback regarding the application after the pre-inspection was provided to Swiss Handball Federation on 20 August 2021. All venues part of the bid were approved by the EHF. Only in the St. Jakobshalle in Basel reconstructions regarding the Dressing Room infrastructure are required by the EHF in order to fulfill the EHF EURO requirements.

➤ Russia (Women's EHF EURO 2026):

All venues were pre-inspected by the EHF which are announced in the bid:

- Yubileyny Sport Palace in St. Petersburg / RUS
- Sibur Arena in St. Petersburg / RUS
- VTB Park in Moscow / RUS
- Palace of Gymnastics Irina Viner-Uzmanova in Moscow /RUS

Feedback regarding the application after the pre-inspection was provided to the respective nations on 20 August 2021. Apart from the Palace of Gymnastics Irina Viner-Uzmanova in Moscow all venues were approved for the application process. The Russian Handball Federation was requested to announce an alternative venue. In addition, the Russian Handball Federation is requested to come up with a detailed spectators' concept as 2 playing halls are located in for St. Petersburg. Furthermore, a detailed concept regarding the transportation of teams and officials needs to be provided by the Russian Handball Federation.

➤ Spain & Portugal (Men's EHF EURO 2028):

All venues were pre-inspected by the EHF which are announced in the bid:

- Wizink Center in Madrid / ESP
- Pab. Fonteta de Sant Lluís in Valencia /ESP
- Pab. Martín Carpena in Malaga / ESP
- Pazo Dos Deportes Ourense / ESP
- Altice Centre in Lisbon / POR

Feedback regarding the application after the pre-inspection was provided to the respective nations on 20 August 2021. As three arenas in Spain do not comply with the EHF EURO requirements, the Spanish and the Portuguese Handball Federation were requested by the EHF to come up with alternatives in order to ensure a valid bid for the awarding process.

- 6.5. YAC EHF events in 2021: M17 European Open in SWE, W17 EURO in MNE, W17 Championships in GEO and in LTU, W19 EURO in SLO, W19 Championships in ITA and in MKD, M19 (18) EURO CRO, M19 (18) Championship BUL, M19 (18) Championship LAT, M19 (18) Championship MKD, WU20 WCh 2022 SLO (qualification Europe), WU18 WCh 2022 GEO (qualification Europe), W17 & M17 EYOF in SVK (postponed to 2022)

The M17 European Open SWE (Gothenburg) was originally planned from 5 to 9 July 2021 but finally cancelled.

All other EHF YAC competitions took place as scheduled:

W17 EHF EURO MNE (Podgorica) from 5 to 15 August 2021 with 16 participants (Office responsible: Kovacic/Rein)

W17 EHF Championship GEO (Tbilisi) from 7 to 15 August 2021 with 8 participants (Office responsible: Kozłowska). Withdrawals: BIH, GRE, ISR

W17 EHF Championship LTU (Klaipeda) from 7 to 15 August 2021 with 10 participants (Office responsible: Noppe). Withdrawal: GBR

19 EHF EURO SLO (Celje) from 8 to 18 July 2021 with 15 participants (Office responsible: Sypkus/Moritz). Withdrawal: POR

W19 EHF Championship ITA (Chieti and Pescara) from 11 to 18 July 2021 with 7 participants (Office responsible: Lacina). Withdrawal: GEO

W19 EHF Championship MKD (Skopje) from 10 to 18 July 2021 with 9 participants (Office responsible: Gangel). Withdrawal: GBR

M19 (18) EHF EURO CRO (Varazdin/Koprivnica) from 12 to 22 August 2021 with 16 participants (Office responsible: Cuderman/Kozma)

M19 (18) Championship BUL (Varna) from 16 to 22 August 2021 with 7 participants (Office responsible: Gangel). Withdrawal: GBR

M19 (18) Championship LAT (Riga) from 16 to 22 August 2021 with 7 participants (Office responsible: Bebetos). Withdrawal: AZE

M19 (18) Championship MKD (Skopje) from 9 to 13 August 2021 with 7 participants (Office responsible: Bouwer)

All withdrawals were handled without any disciplinary proceedings for the withdrawing teams.

Results of a first debriefing meeting of all W17, W19 and M19 venue managers:

- Simplification necessary (daily bulletin, social media)
- Player lists/Replacements (strict punctuality, quality of check of players lists)
- Download of matches for teams (internet speed and capacity, optimization of live-streamings)
- Unified presentation (brand, marketing, guidelines, team infos, TM-presentation)
- Increase level of delegates (“Young Delegates ‘ Programme”, online education and testing for delegates, clear definition of duties and tasks, online meeting before the competition, technical preparation e.g. for match reports)

#### WU20 WCh 2022 SLO (qualification Europe)

The 12 qualified European teams from the W19 EHF EURO in SLO were in the meantime nominated to the IHF (HUN, RUS, FRA, SWE, ROU, DEN, CRO, GER, NOR, CZE, SUI and SVK). The remaining 2 places will be defined in the new implemented WU20 WCh-Qualification between MNE and AUT (13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> at the W19 EURO) and the winners and second ranked teams of the 2 W19 Championships ITA, LTU, NED and POL. The documents for registration and application as organizer were already distributed to the participants.

#### WU18 WCh 2022 GEO (qualification Europe)

The 13 qualified European teams from the W17 EHF EURO in MNE were in the meantime nominated to the IHF (HUN, GER, RUS, DEN, CRO, NOR, ROU, MNE, SUI, POR, FRA, SWE and CZE; substitutes are AUT, SVK and SLO). The remaining 2 places were taken by the winners of the 2 championships in GEO and LTU by NED and MKD.

#### Further qualification for the W17 competitions in summer 2021

Teams ranked 14 to 16 of the W17 EURO in MNE (AUT, SVK and SLO) as well as the second ranked teams of the W17 EHF Championships 2021 in GEO and in LTU (SRB and ISL) are participating in the new implemented “In-Between-Competition”, which will be played in the National Team Week in November (22 to 28 November 2021). This competition does not serve as an additional WCh-qualification. The target is to clarify in a sporting fair competition, which team will promote to the next EUROs or will stay in the EUROs.

#### Further qualification for the M19 (18) competitions in summer 2021

Teams ranked 1 to 13 (GER, CRO, ESP, SLO, DEN, POR, SWE, ISL, HUN, FRA, NOR, ITA and SRB) will promote to the M18 EHF EURO and at the same time to the M20 EHF EURO in 2022 together with the 3 winners of the 3 championships in BUL, LAT and MKD (FAR, MNE and POL). Teams ranked 14 to 16 at the 2021 EURO will be relegated to the M18 and M20 championships in 2022. The originally planned “In-Between-Competition” for the M19 (18) competitions were due to the cancellation of all WChs by the IHF postponed to 2022/2023. The further qualification to the WChs in 2023 in GER/GRE and in CRO will be decided by the Men ´s EHF YAC competitions taking place in summer 2022.

As a final remark Sichelschmidt pointed out, that a so-called “unofficial YAC-Ranking-List” of the summer 2021 with all 10 male and female competitions was published today on [eurohandball.com](http://eurohandball.com).

6.6. YAC EHF events 2022: W16 European Open, M18 EURO and Championships, M20 EURO and Championships, W17 & M17 EYOF in SVK

All YAC competitions in 2022 are currently foreseen to take place as scheduled:

W16 European Open from 27 June to 1 July 2022

M18 EHF EURO from 4 to 14 August 2022

M18 Championships from 8 to 14 August 2022

M20 EHF EURO from 7 to 17 July 2022

M20 Championships from 8 to 17 July 2022

For the M18 events we have 40 registered teams and for the M20 Events we have 37 registered teams (as 16 Teams will be at the EURO a system for the M20 championships with 21 Teams needs to be decided).

Concerning applicants the current status is as follows:

Applicants	Event
MNE	M18 EHF EURO 2022
POR	M20 EHF EURO 2022
ISR	M18 EHF Championship 2022
UKR	M18 EHF Championship 2022
LAT	M18 EHF Championship 2022

As there are no applicants for the necessary two M20 championships the deadline was already prolonged until 6 September 2021. The CC recommends to award the already received applications to the organisers in this regard and will be informed accordingly about further applications.

Concerning the postponed M17 and W17 EYOF tournaments in Banska Bystrica/SVK from 2021 to 2022 (foreseen playing period: 24 to 30 July 2022) due to the overlapping with the Olympic Games the following information is available: the EHF will nominate the teams ranked 1 to 7 from the W17 EHF EURO in MNE and from the M19 (18) EHF EURO in CRO. The age groups will be 2005 and 2006 in 2022.

6.7. IHF Competitions 2021: MU21 WCh in HUN (cancelled), Olympic Games in Tokyo/JPN, MU19 WCh in GRE (cancelled), IHF Super Globe KSA

The MU21 WCh in HUN were cancelled by the IHF as well as the MU19 WCh in GRE.

The Olympic Games were finalized on 8 August 2021. The three medal winners in the women 's competition are FRA, RUS and NOR and in the men 's competition FRA, DEN and ESP.

The IHF Super Globe will be played from 5 to 9 October 2021 in Saudi Arabia. European participants are: FC Barcelona (ESP as reigning champion), Aalborg Handbold (DEN) and SC Magdeburg (GER, wild card by IHF).

#### 6.8. IHF Competitions 2022: WU20 WCh in SLO, WU18 WCh in GEO

Apart from the foreseen playing periods for the two WCh final tournaments in SLO (22 June to 3 July 2022) and in GEO (3 to 14 August 2022) no further details are currently available.

## 7. Refereeing Matters

### 7.1. Status of Referee pairs (IHF, EHF, YR, end of career in summer 2021)

A total of 127 EHF referee pairs are currently registered with EHF. The following referees have ended their career after the season 2020/21:

- CZE Frieser/Haramul (professional reasons)
- ESP Raluy/Sabroso (personal reasons)
- ESP Rosendo/Rodriguez (performance-related)
- FIN Leandersson/Lindroos (EHF age limit of 50y)
- GER Geipel/Helbig (health-related)
- GRE Mertinian (removed from GRE)/Syrepisios (emigrated to US)
- ISR Ben-Dan/Faran (EHF age limit of 50y)
- LAT Renars Licis (LAT internal issues)
- POR Freitas/Carvalho (professional reasons)
- ROU Anamaria Stoia (personal reasons)
- ROU Robert Harabagiu (EHF age limit of 50y)
- RUS Evgeny Zotin (personal reasons)
- SWE Bennani/Bennani (SWE internal issues)

It is expected for the season 2021/22 that the increased number of vaccinated referees will lead to fewer replacements than in the previous season. Prior to the new season, all referees were asked to sign a document stating that they will only travel to the match venue with an appropriate valid proof that one has either been tested, vaccinated or recovered. This is then to be checked on site by the match delegate.

## 7.2. Review 2021 YAC Summer events

For the first time, 11 YAC events were held with the use of a total of 65 different EHF referee pairs. In two cases (W17 Championships in LTU & M19 Championships in MKD) candidates were invited to take part in the EHF YAC summer event.

Unfortunately, a lot of younger referees were not available during the summer period (due to different reasons), and thus it was very demanding to cover all events equally with young people/pairs. Moreover, the different COVID rules and travel restrictions had to be considered, which of course meant less flexibility in general when appointing referees. In the case of the Championships (not EUROS) nominations were made to match geographical criteria where possible, in order to avoid organisational challenges/costs for the organiser.

Nachevski noted that with this year's experience and with a view to summer 2022, there is an urgent need to recruit new referee pairs during the season 2021/22.

## 7.3. EHF Candidates Courses in MKD and LTU

A total of 9 (4 + 5) candidate pairs were invited to attend an EHF course in Skopje/MKD and Klaipeda/LTU respectively. In two cases some of the mandatory entry tests were not successfully completed:

- Boasson/Gustafsson (ISL) failed the physical test twice.
- Bregar/Gaber (female couple from SLO) both failed the rules tests and their performance on court was at the limit

All other candidates have successfully completed their tasks and will be awarded with the EHF badge:

- Tadarashka/Nazaruk (BLR)
- Monjo/Soria (ESP)
- Thiyagarajah/Thiyagarajah (GER)
- Altmar/Horvath (HUN)
- Weber/Weinquin (LUX)
- Ilievski/Ilievski (MKD)
- Bocakova/Janosikova (SVK – female)

Normally, and if all seven new EHF pairs will be available, they should all make their first EC-appearance this October.

#### 7.4. Preview 2021/22 season

In general, travel for the EHF officials should be easier compared to last season, but there are still various Covid-19 entry regulations to be observed when entering a country from abroad, with different vaccination requirements & policies and thus there is still little flexibility in the case of some refs, also in terms of geographical freedom of movement.

Nachevski expressed his wish that the kick-off seminar for the EHF EURO 2022 officials can take place with physical presence of the referees. Details regarding a possible on-site course in October still need to be clarified and will be decided in the framework of the Euro Delegation meeting on the first weekend in September.

A total of 18 referee pairs will be nominated for the 2022 EHF EURO in HUN/SVK. The concept foresees to have all 18 pairs available from the start of the competition (two games for each pair in two different groups) and then to reduce it to 12 pairs for the Main Round producing another two matches for each pair. Finally one pair per game would be nominated for the final weekend in Budapest. Nachevski is in favour to not pre-define the referee groups for the MR and FW in advance, but to decide on the spot according to the principle of performance and neutrality.

#### 7.5. Activities and tools in Referee and Delegate education and preparation

For the first time, online tests were conducted at the various YAC events during the summer in order to test the theoretical knowledge of the nominated EHF officials. 100% of the referees and 93% of the delegates successfully completed the online test. No technical problems were reported. The idea is to use more technology throughout the curriculum and evaluation and make technical skills a standard for daily learning & testing. The online referee and delegate knowledge assessment material is already prepared and a familiarization period with the system is foreseen for all. The system provides individualized and summary results, thus assisting in the detection of the weak spots in individuals' knowledge and the creation of specific education content targeting those areas in precise. The ILIAS LMS will be used as the respective platform. Furthermore, the platform will be used for uploading all the material, tools, lists and forms necessary for the operational part of the EHF competitions by the technical officials.

According to Kampman it would be desirable for the delegate's online test to include more questions regarding regulation-specific topics rather than playing rules. Furthermore, Nachevski pointed out that, in addition to the examinations, it would be advisable to hold workshops on currently relevant delegate issues, also in order to discuss specific situations in the group. He would be available to help and provide video content with delegate-relevant situations, as for him the visual component is more important to properly train & prepare the delegates for a championship than taking written online tests.

The physical demands on referees have greatly increased in recent years due to the trend towards higher speed in handball. Therefore, a group of physical conditioning, injury & rehabilitation, mental training and nutrition specialists, which is already responsible for the preparation of the IHF referees, has been contacted to help monitoring and develop the performance and wellbeing of a defined number of referee pairs. The idea is to work with the 37 referee pairs already included in the IHF project, as well as an additional number of selected pairs, all candidates for officiating at the upcoming EUROS in 2022.

An exchange of concrete ideas for the cooperation with the company based in Spain has taken place and a corresponding offer has been received accordingly, which must be further processed by the EHF Finance Delegation and then the EHF EXEC. The aim is for the professional fitness team to be able to participate in person and work with the referees at the 2022 Men's EHF EURO in HUN/SVK. Nachevski noted that it would be important to ensure that a trainer can be present at each venue, which was not the case at the last IHF WC in EGY.

#### 7.6. 'Integrity' Project, media campaigns and scientific work

Bebetsos informed on a new education project on the prevention of match fixing and competition manipulation as well as the use of the social media. The program's title is 'Integrity', is developed in cooperation with Sportradar's Education Department. and will involve all EHF referees (indoor and beach). The referees will attend webinars, e-learning tools and live workshops. The program's duration is planned for two years and will lead to referee certification. Besides the educational core, the program includes a CSR campaign (e.g. media promotion, referee card sets & uniforms).

Apart from this, a close cooperation with the EHF's Media Dept. has commenced aiming on the promotion of not only the EHF referee-related activities and programs, but also in showcasing to the public the 'other face' of the referees in indoor and beach handball. The content includes referee audio feed clips, photos and quotes, VAR clips, education material, rule explanation, nominations, etc. Also, a more frequent use of EHF's social media channels is sought to show the different facets of the referee life and shall be promoted on a regular basis under the hashtags #RefereeMonday and #partofthegame.

Currently all the data sets of the different referee groups (EHF, Candidates and Young Referees) are being collected in order to create a profile data to be used for purposes such as statistical analysis & overview.

It is planned to contribute with at least one referee-related topic to EHF's Scientific Congress each year. At this year's congress current topics such as "The effect of COVID-19 on the EHF handball referees" and "The use of technology in handball referee communication" could be provided. Last, the physical profile and the referee physical demands during their officiating work on the court will be drawn using the data provided by Kinexon, in cooperation with Carmen Machado (EHF MC) and the University of Alicante.



#### 7.7. Referee Headsets

EHF's communication systems that have been distributed some years ago to the various referees over Europe are at the end of its product lifecycle which prevents the EHF office from receiving updates (new parts, services etc.) for the old product.

Consequently, new headset models have been tested over the past few months with the goal to find the most efficient system to fit the current needs for an optimal game management. Vokkero's system, which is also used by UEFA, FIFA and IHF for their referees, has been able to achieve the best results and thus two parallel requests for purchasing proposals will be forwarded to the EHF Finance Delegation for further processing.

#### 7.8. Referee nomination friendly matches

There was no significant activity in the area of friendly matches.

#### 7.9. Situation TRC

Glaser explained that the Technical Referee Committee (TRC) is a sub-committee of the EHF CC and that the last mandate ended with the 2021 EHF Congress. The EHF EXEC has agreed to the establishment of a new TRC and therefore the EHF is looking for new members for the coming mandate period for them to contribute their expertise to the various fields of EHF refereeing. Consequently, experts can apply via their national federation for a specified position within the TRC (e.g. grassroots & development, education, female refs etc.). The final appointments to the new TRC shall be confirmed by the EHF EXEC in September.

#### 7.10. IHF Refereeing Matters

The IHF offered four referee candidates the opportunity to take part in a GRTP course that was held in the framework of the IHF/EHF Trophy in Tbilisi/GEO from 15 to 19 June 2021 and the following EHF participants successfully passed the course and can now call themselves IHF referees:

- Rauchs/Linster (LUX)
- Vujacic/Kazanegra (MNE)
- Braseth/Sundet (NOR)
- Ershov/Pavliukov (RUS)

All those officials who took part in the Olympic Games in Tokyo this summer found little room to maneuver and freedom of movement. The top priority was the safety of everyone involved due to the Corona pandemic. Nachevski pointed out that this year's Olympics were demanding due to the complexities of Covid, state of emergency, and no spectators allowed, which in many ways was an adjustment.

## **8. Delegates Matters**

### **8.1 Status of Delegates and preview 2021/2022**

A total of seven EHF Delegates ended their career due to age reason at the end of last season (Lang/AUT, Maric/BIH, Savvides/CYP, Dubedout/FRA, Hart/ISR, Donven/LUX and Berndtsson/SWE). Antoniou/CYP ended his career due to the end of his election mandate. Berthold tragically passed away during the season while a small number of further delegates ended their career on their own initiative due to different reasons.

This leads to a total of 139 EHF Delegates being available for the 2021/22 season.

A Course for new EHF Delegates is not planned for the time being as it would only make sense if physical presence of all Candidates could be guaranteed. Should the overall Covid-19 situation improve and physical presence could be somehow guaranteed, a Course might be held in winter/spring 2021/22.

### **8.2 Review YAC Summer events 2021**

The large number of events also required the nomination of a large number of Delegates. A first analysis of the events identified a number of areas where the preparation of the Delegates needs to be improved and a more specific instruction would bring more benefits to all parties involved. On the other side, the involvement of Delegates from Federations with less handball activities proved to be a good investment in knowledge transportation and experience.

### **8.3 Activities and tools in Delegates Education**

The expressed need for the upgrading of the competence level of the EHF Delegates includes the assessment of their knowledge level on rules and regulations. To that extent, it was decided that online tools would be developed and EHF Officiating is implementing online testing as the assessment tool in indoor handball events and functions as well. The key benefits of doing so can be summarized as follows:

- Reduced administrative burden
- Quicker to mark and issue results
- Automated test assembly tools
- On-screen marking tools
- More environmentally friendly
- Scalable with Europewide reach
- Increased security
- Flexibility to take exams anywhere
- Assessment reporting
- Assessments that are accessible to all
- Cost effectiveness.

The developed tool allows for not only on-the-spot assessment, but also a focus on the areas of identified weaknesses and, as a result, a greater emphasis on education in those areas. Aside from online education tools, the importance of creating job-specific video clips of Delegates' work (like the ones created for the referee education) was emphasized. The focus of the delegates' education in areas towards game and event management must be strengthened.

#### 8.4. Status e-learning and testing

The online assessment tool on the ILIAS platform was created and administered to all the Delegates nominated for this past summer's YAC events. A pool of more than 170 test questions covering all areas of the Delegates' work was created and the Delegates' completed an online test (consisted of 30 randomly selected questions in a restricted time period) at the venue of their event assignment. The results were encouraging not only in the sense of success rate (97%), but also in the area of system competence and the individuals' capacity to complete online testing. The next steps include:

- Three test familiarization sessions for all the EHF Delegates
- Implementation of the test on a regular basis of 3 times per year
- Test results and delegates' assessment
- Creation of specific education content based on the analysis of the test results and identification of the areas of weaknesses.

## **9. Additional Matters**

### 9.1. International Calendar 2021/2022, 2022/2023, 2023/2024

Small amendments needed to be done on the calendar of the 2021/22 season in the area of National Team Competitions. All stakeholders were permanently informed about these issues as soon as they became approved.

The calendar for the 2022/2023 season was already distributed and published.

The calendar for the 2023/2024 season is currently elaborated and as soon as there are more details available, the CC will immediately be informed in order to have a final proposal to be tabled at the respective EHF Executive Committee meeting.

### 9.2. EHF Anti-Doping Unit

Contacts between the IHF and the EHF were ongoing and an agreement about the duties of the EHF Anti-Doping Unit was signed just recently. The activities of the EAU will therefore resume with details still to be clarified.

## **10. Miscellaneous**

As this was his last CC meeting Sichelschmidt thanked all members and participants in the CC meetings since 2011 for their support and for the excellent cooperation over the last 10 years and wished the best for the coming years to all Members.

Vienna, 10 September 2021