

EHF Competitions Commission

(Meeting no. 15 of the period 2016 – 2021)

Meeting Friday, 26 February 2021, 10:00 – 16:00 hrs.
(general EHF Info to CC/MC from 09.30 -10.00 hrs.)

Participants:

Bozidar Djurkovic	Chairman CC
Jan Kampman	Men's Competitions
Carmen Manchado Lopez	Women's Competitions
Dragan Nachevski	Refereeing Matters
Emeric Paillason	Men's Club Competitions
Thomas Hylle	Women's Club Competitions
Markus Glaser	Office
Peter Sichelschmidt	Office
Monika Flixeder	Office
Further office staff according to agenda	

Agenda:

1. Welcome

Djurkovic welcomed the CC Members to this meeting which was held as a Video Conference for the third time after April 2020. He underlined that the main task of this CC was to discuss the current issues in EHF Competitions partly as a consequence of the CoVid-19 situation and also to provide input to the ExeC Meeting following later on in March, where decisions regarding the competitions are on the agenda. In addition to this Glaser provided a short administrative and organizational introduction to the meeting.

2. Minutes and Reports of Meetings and Task Groups

No issues were raised.

3. Information on Meeting of Technical Delegation / CAN

Djurkovic mentioned some of the most important issues and referred to the minutes which will be made available to the CC Members.

4. Club Competitions

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

Glaser summarized the most important issues with focus on the difficulties to carry out the matches which was not possible in all cases. The Covid-19 situation put huge pressure on the teams regarding travelling and border crossing, which, in some cases led to the postponing of matches to a later date and in some cases, the matches could not even be played anymore at all.

A match assessment system was installed for those matches that were not played where points were awarded following the principle of the cause of each situation.

Furthermore there was an ExeC decision to qualify all 16 teams of the Men's and Women's Champions League to the Last16 in order to take away some of the pressure on the teams. However, this was not possible in both European Leagues as the playing system there would not allow an additional KO Round.

In the EHF European Cup the clubs were allowed to drop out of the competition if the obstacles for the matches were too demanding and could not be overcome.

It was underlined that this was an extremely challenging and difficult season for all parties which produced a huge workload on all sides.

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

Currently there are no essential changes foreseen to playing systems or calendar issues. When the new playing systems for the 2020/2021 season were decided upon, it was the understanding to evaluate the first season and only then to discuss bigger changes for the future. Naturally, this evaluation will be very difficult because the complete season went very different than expected. The procedure for this evaluation will therefore still have to be discussed.

Paillason as the representative of the Men's clubs proposed a motion to make it possible to award one place in the Men's European League Group Phase to a club from a country that has no guaranteed place in the Group Phase. The idea is to offer this Wild Card to a club that obviously would have the structure to participate in the Group Phase, but would most probably fail to qualify in case of being drawn against a team from one of the strong leagues in Europe. The CC is in favour of this and the Office will work out the respective technical details for the motion to the ExeC.

Additionally Paillasson also mentioned the issue of the Players' Agents which should no longer be paid by the clubs, but by the players themselves actually hiring the agents. He could imagine that this issue would be a part of the Club Competitions Regulations so that it has a prominent place in European handball. Glaser explained the position of the EHF to be hesitating to have this as an official motion as the Club Competitions Regulations seem not to be the fitting place for this. A detailed discussion followed on this very interesting topic and the outcome was the approach is well understood and the EHF will coordinate this topic until the ExeC Meeting and see what the decision is going to be.

5. National Team Competitions – Qualifications

5.1. 2020/2021 OG Tokio/JPN (Details, Qualification pathway men & women)

The Olympic Games in Tokyo/JPN were postponed from 2020 to 2021. Playing period will be 23 July to 8 August 2021.

The OG-QT for Men was postponed to the National Team Week in March: 12 to 14 March 2021 parallel to the qualifier round 3 and 4 for the EURO 2022 in HUN/SVK. Six European participants in the OG-QT (FRA, GER, POR, SLO, NOR and SWE) already played their qualifier matches against their opponents in January 2021 apart from SWE (due to corona cases in the SWE team). CRO - also playing in the OG-QT- and ESP being directly qualified for the OG found an individual solution for their matches in the EURO Cup in January. CRO-ESP could be played, but ESP-CRO had to be postponed to a later date due to the weather conditions in Madrid.

The OG-QT group 1 was planned to be played in NOR, but the organizing right was in the meantime awarded to MNE, because foreigners are currently not allowed to enter NOR.

The OG-QT for Women were postponed to the National Team Week in March: 19 to 21 March 2021. In group 2 CHN is replaced by KAZ and group 3 will be played only with 3 teams as the second place of AHF cannot be taken by an Asian federation.

5.2. 2021 MU19 and MU21 (Status qualification)

5.3. 2021 MU19 Q 2022 (In-Between-Competition)

After the IHF Council decided to cancel all IHF-YAC competitions in summer 2021 both WCh-qualification tournaments for MU21 in ISR (12.-14.03.) and MU19 in AUT (30.04.-02.05.) were cancelled by the EHF. The same will apply for the MU19 Q 2022 In-Between Competition (01 to 7 November 2021).

In this content the CC is informed about the planned M19 EHF EURO competition, which is currently coordinated between CRO and the EHF. A positive decision by CRO can be expected. The playing period will be 12 to 22 August 2021.

5.4. 2021 WWCh ESP (Status qualification)

Apart from ESP as organizer and NED as defending champion from the WCh 2019 in JPN, Europe will have 14 places in ESP, as this will be the first WCh for women with 32 teams. The teams ranked 1 to 4 at the EURO 2020 qualified directly for ESP (NOR, FRA, CRO and DEN) and the remaining 10 teams will go directly to phase 2 of the qualification (to be played in April 2021).

The qualification phase 1 was planned to be played in tournament format from 4 to 6 December 2020 in 2 groups of 4 and 3 groups of 3 teams, but had to be postponed to 19 to 21 March 2021. The tournaments were planned to be organized by LUX, MKD, TUR, AUT and BLR. All 1st and 2nd ranked teams will qualify for phase 2. After the withdrawal of FIN, the tournament in TUR was not any longer necessary and TUR as well as POR qualified already for phase 2.

5.5. 2022 EHF EURO Men HUN-SVK (Qualifiers)

The qualifiers for the Men 's EHF EURO 2022 are due to the current situation a very special one. In the playing period in November 2020 only 18 of 32 matches could be played, in January 2021 17 of 21. For March 20 matches are scheduled and for the last period end of April 35. After the withdrawal of BEL group 1 will be continued with 3 teams SRB, FRA and GRE with 3 remaining matches in the last 2 rounds. In the meantime the problems with FAR in group 3 (no flight connections to return to FAR before the match against UKR) could be solve by charter flight. The situation in group 6 with the impossibility for foreigners to enter NOR could also find a solution, because the "home match" NOR-LAT will be played in April together with LAT-NOR in Latvia.

5.6. 2022 EHF EURO Women SLO/MKD/MNE (Q 1 and Qualifiers)

Since there are three organizers directly qualified for the Final Tournament, a motion to the ExeC was approved to have only six qualification groups as well as the champion of the EURO 2020 will also qualify directly. All 4 teams will play the EHF EURO CUP parallel to the qualifier matches. The reason to reduce the number of groups in the qualifiers from 7 to 6 was in order to qualify the six 1st and 2nd ranked teams apart from the EURO CUP participants for the final tournament. Taking into account the high number of 36 registrations as well as possible overlapping with the WWCh 2021 qualification Europe the further procedure of the EURO qualification in phase 1 and in the qualifiers was discussed. After the presentation of 2 different possibilities the CC agreed unanimously on the following procedure:

The composition of the teams and their distribution to the two phases will follow the Nation 's ranking, which is normally used (13 for Q 2 coming from the EURO, next 8 teams via ranking for Q 2, remaining 11 teams play Q 1 in 2 x 4 and 1 x 3 teams in tournament format in the planned playing period: in addition a new NTW after the Women 's F4 from 31 May to 6 June 2021 will be introduced.

5.7. 2024 EHF EURO Men GER (Registration/Announcement/Status Q 1))

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 had to be postponed in a first step to 12 to 14 March and in a second step to 30 April to 2 May. 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. The IHF-ENCh is part of the qualification process for the Men ´s EHF EURO and therefore the conclusion was to combine the qualification phase 1 with an “EHF-Trophy” with a maximum of 9 teams. It is currently planned to play this tournament in GEO after the Men ´s Final4 in Cologne in the period 14 to 20 June 2021. A new registration process will be necessary in order to define the participants.

5.8. 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. National Team Competitions – Final Tournaments

6.1. 2020 EHF EURO Women NOR/DEN

The CC members were informed that the general feedback of the event from all parties involved was excellent. Especially the teams were very satisfied how the tournament was organized under the difficult circumstances of a pandemic. The hygiene protocol which was implemented for the EHF EURO 2020 was highly appreciated by all parties involved and everybody being part of the tournament felt safe within the implemented bubble system and was very satisfied with the work of the OC, the hotel staff, the EHF and EHF partners.

The overall strategy of the hygiene protocol was passed on also to the IHF prior to the WCh 2021 in Egypt. In addition, the hygiene concept was also sent to the upcoming EHF EURO organizers HUN/SVK in order to be on the safe side in case a hygiene protocol is needed for the Men’s EHF EURO 2022 in January.

It was mentioned that the on-site cooperation between the EHF Referees and EHF Delegates worked in an excellent way. In addition, the preparatory courses for the teams as well as for the nominated EHF officials were carried out within an excellent cooperation via online meetings. The only criticism from the side of the CC members was regarding a lack of internal communication between the different bubbles which has to be improved in future EHF EURO events.

In addition, the situation regarding the change of match days of the Main Round playing schedule due to TV requirements, was discussed in the meeting. The situation will be handled differently in upcoming EHF EURO events and in any case, the communication to the teams regarding the playing schedule needs to be improved in order to avoid any discussions on site.

The CC members mentioned in addition that a playing schedule should avoid two matches within two days for some of the teams. However, the CC members are aware that an implementation of such a playing schedule is difficult due to the TV requirements and due to the fact, that this has an influence on the overall event period.

Furthermore, the CC members were informed that the awarding procedure of the fourth ranked team will be discussed EHF internally for the upcoming EHF EURO events. The CC members will receive further information as soon as a concept is available.

During the EHF EURO 2020, teams mentioned problems with the current match ball. The current match ball bounces differently when landing on one specific panel of the ball in comparison to all other panels.

The CC members were informed that after the EHF ball supplier has changed the panels of the match balls the problem occurred in combination with the tracking chip implanted in the ball. A sample of the match ball for the EHF EURO 2022 HUN/SVK including the tracking chip needs to be provided by the EHF ball supplier as soon as possible in order to test the new ball in due time prior to the tournament.

In order to reduce the players' load and the risk of injuries during the EUROs Machado proposed to increase the players contingent of each team for the upcoming EHF EURO events from 16 to 20 players. Teams would be allowed to nominate basically 20 players and then select the 16 players out of this group of 20 players for each match within the given deadline. This way teams would be able to rotate players without taking a replacement. The topic is tabled to the EHF Euro Delegation and the CC agrees on a motion to the EHF ExeC.

6.2. 2022 EHF EURO Men HUN/SVK

The preparation for the Men's EHF EURO 2022 is ongoing. The CC was informed that the ticket sales started in January/February 2021. At the current stage, negotiations concerning data agreements between the EHF, the OC's and the ticket provider are taking place in which open questions related to "Data use" and "Data privacy" will be clarified.

The match schedule for the Men's EHF EURO 2022 HUN/SVK has been defined with all parties involved and provided to the CC members. The CC members were also informed that the match interval of all EHF EURO 2022 matches may be extended to 2h30min.

The Preliminary Round Groups will take place as follows (the organizers have the right to seed one team in each Preliminary Round group due to spectators' interest):

Group A → Szeged	Croatia seeded by the organizers
Group B → Budapest	Hungary as host team
Group C → Debrecen	Slovenia (if qualified for the EHF EURO 2022)
Group D → Bratislava	Germany (already qualified) seeded by the organizers
Group E → Bratislava	Czech Republic (if qualified for the EHF EURO 2022)
Group F → Kosice	Slovakia as host team

The Main Round will be played as follows:

Main Round Group I → Budapest
Main Round Group II → Bratislava

The Final Weekend will take place in Budapest!

The current status regarding the venues is that the arenas in Budapest and Szeged are under construction. The completion of the construction site is planned in each arena on 15 October 2021, followed by a one month process to handover the arenas. The venue set-up schedule in Budapest might be moved forward as the first official event taking place in the new constructed arena will be the EHF EURO 2022. In addition a test event of the HUN OC is planned to take place at the end of December 2021/beginning of January 2022 in order to test the most important areas in the arena.

In Debrecen currently smaller reconstruction works are ongoing and should be finalized in September 2021 at the latest.

A site visit of the venues in Hungary is planned to take place in April/May 2021.

A site visit for the venues in Slovakia is planned to take place in Bratislava and Kosice on 11/12 March in course of the EHF EURO Cup Matches. Due to the current Covid-19 situation in SVK, a final approval for the site visit is still pending.

The Final Tournament Draw will take place on 6 May in a TV studio (M4 Studio) in Budapest. The draw event will take place without any spectators due to the current situation. The draw procedure was published on 1 March 2021.

The Heads of Delegations Conference is planned to take place as follows:

5 May 2021	Marketing & Promotions Meeting (Virtual Conference)
5 October 2021	HOD Conference – EHF & OC Part (Virtual Conference)
6 October 2021	Individual travels to the respective venues by the participants
7 October 2021	Site Visit of Preliminary Round Venues with the Teams and the responsible Venue Manager

The arrival of the EHF officials for the event is planned on 9 January 2022 in Budapest. Depending on the further development on the Covid-19 situation, an alternative option where all nominated EHF officials will travel directly to their assigned venues will be considered. The Officials Conference is planned to take place on 10/11 January 2022 in Budapest (or alternative as virtual event).

6.3. 2022 EHF EURO Women SLO/MKD/MNE

The preparatory process for the Women's EHF EURO 2022 is ongoing and workshops between the organizers, the EHF and the EHF partners are taking place on a monthly basis. The organization charts of all three organizers have been provided to the EHF.

It will be the last EHF EURO with 16 participating teams and the match schedule has been extended by one match day. Nevertheless, there is still one "double match day" during the Main Round.

The assignment of the teams is planned as follows:

Group A → Ljubljana	HUN (if qualified)
Group B → Celje	SLO as host team
Group C → Skopje	MKD as host team
Group D → Podgorica	MNE as host team

At the current stage, reconstruction works are taking place in the arena in Celje. First drawings of the reconstruction of the arena were provided to the EHF by the SLO OC. Additional drawings including all measurements to be provided by the OC accordingly in order to continue with a detailed venue set-up.

For the reconstruction of the arena in Podgorica drawings have been provided to the EHF. As the base area does not fulfill the requirements for an EHF EURO event, the topic needs to be further discussed between the EHF and the MNE OC.

The Qualifiers Draw will take place on 25 March 2021, 11:00, in a TV studio (Sportradar) in Vienna. Due to the current situation the draw event will take place without any spectators as a TV event only. A motion was provided to the EHF EXEC regarding a change of the Qualifiers playing system due to the high number of registrations in order to finalize the draw procedure for the event.

6.4. 2024 EHF EURO Men GER

The preparation for the Men's EHF EURO 2024 is ongoing between the EHF and the GER OC.

The CC members were provided with match schedule proposals which are currently under coordination also with the Euro Delegation before they can be confirmed by the EHF ExeC. The event venues need to be handled confidentially by all persons until the official release. The release of the match venues is planned for early spring 2021.

The preparation for ticketing implementation has started. Planned ticketing start is December 2021 (further details to be clarified).

6.5. 2024 EHF EURO Women HUN/SUI/AUT

The preparatory process for the Women's EHF EURO 2024 has started. First issues concerning the match schedule are discussed, as the information is needed by Infront for the announcement of TV host broadcasters for the event.

EHF EURO Events 2026 & 2028

Following the receipt of the letter of interests the bidding documents were provided to the National Federations concerned. As the bidding documents were provided to the National Federations with some delay, the deadline for sending the bids to the EHF has been extended to 10 May 2021. Altogether 14 nations are interested in hosting an EHF EURO event in 2026 or 2028.

Individual communication with the organizers concerning their bids are taking place. A template for host city agreements is currently worked out.

Please find below an overview regarding the nations interested in hosting an EHF EURO:

Men's EHF EURO 2026

- BLR/LTU/POL
- CRO
- FRA
- NOR/DEN
- SUI
- SWE

Women's EHF EURO 2026

- NOR/DEN
- RUS
- SWE

Men's EHF EURO 2028

- BEL
- CRO
- EST
- NOR/DEN
- POR/ESP
- SUI
- SWE

Women's EHF EURO 2028

- NOR/DEN
- SWE

After the deadline, the evaluation process starts and all site visits are supposed to take place during summer.

6.6. YAC EHF Events in 2020/2021: M18 Championships in BUL, LAT and MKD

After cancellation of the W16 EO in SWE all three M20 competitions were in a first step postponed from July to August and should take place parallel to the M18 events. In a second step all M18 and M20 events were again postponed to January 2021. Finally all M20 Championships and both M18 and M20 EUROS were cancelled.

The M18 championships will take place in BUL and LAT (16 to 22 August) and in MKD (9 to 15 August on request of GRE, which were at almost the same time organizer of the MU19 WCh). The request of MKD to have the W19 championship and the M18 championship more or less in a row and to have the EHF officials for both events was neglected by the CC due to the overlapping period with the Olympic Games and due to the long period for the officials being involved in both championships.

Taking into consideration the decision of the IHF Council to cancel all YAC events in the summer (details see agenda point 6.7) the EHF decided to re-implement a “M19 (former M18) EHF EURO” and contacted CRO to be the organizer of this EURO. The playing period is foreseen from 12 to 22 August 2021. This has still to be confirmed by the Croatian Federation and it will also be necessary to have a new registration procedure in order to have the confirmation of all 16 participants, which already were qualified for the M18 EURO in 2020.

6.7. IHF Competitions 2021: WU20 WCh in ROU (Status), WU18 WCh in CRO (Status), Super Globe Women and Men, IHF Emerging Nations Championship for Men, MU21 WCh in HUN (Status), Olympic Games in Tokyo/JPN, MU19 WCh in GRE (Status)

According to the decision of the IHF-Council to cancel all YAC events in the summer the following statements had to be taken:

The twice postponed WU20 WCh in ROU is cancelled.

The twice postponed WU18 WCh first in CHN then in CRO is cancelled.

A decision for the IHF Super Globe Men is currently not taken, but not cancelled yet.

The IHF Men´s ENCh is “postponed until further notice” and will not be played in the foreseen period 26 April to 2 May 2021. The EHF is planning an “IHF/EHF-Trophy” in the period of 14 to 20 June 2021 in GEO in order to combine the 2 pathways to the relegation round: M EURO 2024 qualification phase 1 and the EHF-Trophy replacing the IHF-ENCh.

The MU21 WCh in HUN is cancelled.

The MU19 WCh in GRE is cancelled.

The Olympic Games qualification tournaments were as well postponed from 2020 to 2021 as the Olympic Games in Tokyo/JPN (playing period will be 23 July to 8 August 2021).

For the Men´s tournament are already qualified from the continental qualification competitions: JPN (as organizer), DEN (as World Champion), ARG (Champion PANAM-Games), BRN (winner of the OG-Qualification of Asia), ESP (as European Champion) and EGY (as winner of the OG-Qualification of Africa).

For the Women´s tournament are already qualified from the continental qualification competitions: JPN (as organizer), NED (as World Champion), BRA (Champion PANAM-Games), KOR (winner of the OG-Qualification of Asia), FRA (as European Champion) and ANG (as winner of the OG-Qualification of Africa).

- 6.8. 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, W17 & M17 EYOF in SVK (postponed to 2022)

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

M17 European Open SWE (Gothenburg) from 5 to 9 July 2021

W17 EHF EURO MNE (Podgorica) from 5 to 15 August 2021 with 16 participants

W17 EHF Championship GEO (Tbilisi) from 7 to 15 August 2021 with 11 participants

W17 EHF Championship LTU (Klaipeda) from 7 to 15 August 2021 with 11 participants

W19 EHF EURO SLO (Celje) from 8 to 18 July 2021 with 16 participants

W19 EHF Championship ITA (Chieti and Pescara) from 11 to 18 July 2021 with 8 participants

W19 EHF Championship MKD (Skopje) from 10 to 18 July 2021 with 10 participants.

Further details were presented and discussed during the YAC workshop, which took place virtually in Vienna with all participants on 9 February 2021. One day later on 10 February the draw for all 6 YAC competitions took place in Vienna/EHF Headquarter and was live streamed.

The nominations of the responsible office staff is quite difficult (11 events) and will be finalized in due time.

Concerning the postponed M17 and W17 EYOF tournaments in SVK from 2021 to 2022 (foreseen playing period: 24 to 30 July 2022) due to the overlapping with the Olympic Games the EHF received a request in regard to the age groups in 2022.

In order not to have too many conflicts with the WU18 WCh 2 to 14 August 2022 (age group 2004 and younger) and the M18 EURO and Championships 4 to 14 August 2022 (same age group 2004 and younger) it was recommended to choose for EYOF the age groups 2005 and 2006. The qualification for both events can be done via the W17 EURO 2021 MNE and the M19 (former M18) EURO 2020/2021 in CRO.

In this content also 3 further issues related to YAC competitions were discussed and as follows confirmed:

1. The increase of the official squad list from 28 to 35 players as already in use for all senior competitions shall also apply for YAC competitions.
2. The current maximum daily for a YAC EURO of 130€ and for a YAC Championship of 100€ shall remain.
3. According to the YAC regulations the draw event for a YAC EURO shall take place in the host country. As this is an event, which serves as a very good promotion opportunity, this shall in general remain unchanged. According to the current situation (e.g. Corona pandemic) exceptions must be possible.

7. Refereeing Matters

7.1. Issues of the season 2020/2021 (IHF, EHF, YR, end of career)

- Currently there are 133 referee pairs on the EHF list. At the end of the season no referees will need to end their career due to the age limit of 50y.
4 pairs reached that limit at the end of last season, and 3 of them (ISR, FIN & ROU) decided to use the opportunity to extend their career until 30 June 2021. However, no chance to appoint ISR or FIN at the moment (both received 2 nominations, but 0 matches).
- Moreover, Fremstad/Pedersen (NOR) decided to end their career during the 2020/21 season. Other couples such as Geipel/Helbig (GER), Bennani/Bennani (SWE) and Weijmans/Wolbertus (NED) were not available this season due to personal reasons.
- The distribution of nominations during this season is unbalanced due to fact that travel restrictions limit the mobility of various referees (for example no way for the NOR refs to leave their country right now).
- In some cases, the referees could not travel to mid-week matches due to professional reasons, while others do not have the permission from their employer to travel abroad, which is further limiting the availability of referees.
- Rancik finished his working period at the EHF Office at the end of 2020. Bebetos is now responsible for the field of referee education at EHF Office with the main goal to improve the structure and the organization of the refereeing education.

7.2. Preview YAC Events July/August 2021

- 7 EHF YAC events to be held during summer. Due to the fact that the IHF cancelled its YAC events more referees should be available for the EHF competitions.

7.3. Young Referees Program

- No Prague Handball Cup during Easter due to the worsening of the COVID-19 situation in CZE.
- At the moment only 2 YR-events are scheduled to be conducted: European Open in SWE from 5-9 July and EUSA Games in Belgrade/SRB which should take place in July too.
- Other organizers of YR-tournaments prefer to “wait and see” before confirming anything (for example Costa Doiro tournament in Lagos/POR, German International Youth Championships in Düsseldorf/GER).

7.4. Female Referees Program

- Out of the 19 female referee pairs, 3 were not available for nominations this season (GER & SRB2 due to pregnancy and SWE due to personal issues with their federation)
- Unfortunately AUT & BIH tested positive prior to the EHF Women's EURO and could not travel to DEN. LTU & POL replaced them.
- It was the first Women's EURO with only female pairs. Nachevski stressed that the strategy of having 100% female referees at last year's Women's EURO worked out well. Considering that the best pairs (currently mostly male) are directly appointed to the either the men's EURO or WC, choosing from the rest of referees a good chance to get used to the dynamics of a big tournament too. However, and according to Nachevski, this is an opportunity that particularly female referees would never have if only the current best 20 pairs are undertaking all the nominations at the big events, and therefore supports the idea to keep giving chances to the female collective, so that at some point there will be plenty of both female & male pairs able to perform at top level. Manchado mentioned that she would agree with the WHB and Women's referee programme responsible that EHF's decision to only appoint female pairs to an event is opposite of gender equality. Hylle was of the same opinion in this respect.

7.5. EHF Candidates Courses

- The TRC asked to look into possibilities to organize courses for Candidates until the end of this season and to evaluate the possibility of having such courses at the European Open or the YAC summer events. Furthermore, the possibility of having a course at the NEKA Academy in HUN should be evaluated too.

7.6. Referee nomination friendly matches

- No such request is available at the moment. As a matter of fact the NFs prefer to use their own couples at the moment due to the COVID-situation.

7.7. IHF Refereeing Matters

- Nachevski provided a summary of the Men's WC 2021 held in EGY, pointing out the high-performance level with the highlight-match EGY-DEN, which was good promotion for handball in general. Regarding the Covid-19 situation among the Officials there were three referee pairs as well as two delegates tested positive in EGY which led to daily referee meetings being held as online-courses.
- According to Nachevski, the new IHF rules were scheduled to be implemented in September 2021, but he is not certain that this will be possible due to the current COVID-situation and considering that the proposed changes need to be tested properly before being added to any rule book.

8. Delegates Matters

8.1 Issues of the season 2020/2021

The season went very unusual for the EHF Delegates as nominations were done with Delegates from the home country in most of the matches in order to avoid difficulties with travelling and border crossing. This led to the fact that Delegates from some countries had many more nominations than Delegates from other countries. However, this approach made it possible to have a Delegate in each game and there were hardly any troubles based on the fact that the Delegate was not from a neutral country.

8.2. Preview YAC Events July/August 2021

The summer 2021 will be a very busy period due to the large number of YAC events. Nominations are supposed to be done soon, so that the Delegates can plan their presence earlier on. An advantage in this respect is that there will be no World Championships in the summer, so that enough Delegates should be available for the EHF events.

8.3. EHF Delegates Courses

It is still difficult to plan a Delegates Course with the physical presence of Delegates Candidates, this is therefore not a priority for the time being. On the other hand it is the aim to develop more and update online education tools, which is going to be part of the activities of George Bebetos in the Office. Even though his key area is the education activities for referees, he will also start to set up ways and structures for the education and further education of the Delegates.

9. Additional Matters

9.1. International Calendar 2020/2021, 2021/2022, 2022/2023

All calendars are permanently updated.

The calendars for the 2020/2021 and 2021/2022 seasons were already distributed and published. Further changes are of course possible and will be implemented following the ExeC decisions in this regard.

The calendar for the 2022/23 season is in the moment elaborated but due to the current situation with all club and national team activities only a first draft could be presented. As soon as there are more details available, the CC will for sure immediately be informed.

9.2. EHF Anti-Doping Unit

The EHF EAU is currently on standby with its activities as the status of the EHF EAU is subject of discussions between the EHF and the IHF. The reason for this is a part of the WADA Code which is valid since 1 January 2021. Communication is ongoing and a final outcome is expected soon.

10. Miscellaneous

As there were no further inputs, Djurkovic thanked all Members as well the Office staff for their contribution and closed the meeting.

Sichelschmidt / Glaser / Flixeder
18 March 2021