

# COMPETITIONS COMMISSION MEETING

**Friday, 01 March 2024    Renaissance Wien Hotel**

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**CC:**            Bozidar Djurkovic / Chairman  
                  Jan Kampman / Member Men’s Competitions  
                  Päivi Mitrunen / Member Women’s Competitions  
                  Dragan Nachevski / Member Refereeing (excused)  
                  Gaël Pelletier / Member Men’s Club Competitions  
                  Thomas Hylle / Member Women’s Club Competition

**Office:**        Markus Glaser / EHF CSO  
                  further staff members according to the agenda

## Minutes

### **1.        Welcome**

Chairman Djurkovic and EHF Chief Sports Officer Glaser welcomed the CC members and gave a brief overview about the upcoming meeting.

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

No remarks were made.

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

Djurkovic summarized the most important topics which will be further discussed at various agenda points of the CC meeting. The TD notes will be made available to all CC members for reference.

### **4.        Club Competitions**

#### **4.1.    Report on current Men ´s and Women ´s Club Competitions 2023/2024**

All matches of the Men’s and Women’s Champions League, European League and European Cup have been played according to plan so far and there are currently no ongoing major issues.

#### **4.2.    Regulations and preview 2024/25**

Several motions in view to the new season were presented to the CC by Tækker. Once approved by the CC they will be tabled at the ExeC meeting in April 2024:

Motion #1: Colour of dresses

*The home club must play in the “away dresses” in case its colours of the playing kits cover the two colours of the away team.*

The CC members approved the motion. There was the opinion that teams might reconsider any multicolour kits in order to avoid playing in their away colours at home.

Mitrunen advised to check the regulations for National Team Competitions to be aligned.

Motion #2: Mandatory match recording

*Those matches without a TV-signal must be recorded by the home club with a minimum of one camera and must be uploaded to the EHFfamily. This concerns matches of the EHF European Cup Men and Women and EHF European League Men and Women Qualification only.*

The CC members approved the motion. Possible sanctions in case of not uploading the match video need to be clarified.

Motion #3: Late entry – players NON-European clubs

*Elimination of the restriction for the eligibility of players in the EHF club competition (via late entry) coming from a non-European club.*

This regulation was introduced many years ago due to frequent short term player's transfers to clubs from outside of Europe (mainly for the Super Globe). As those transfers stopped and at the same time regular transfers to clubs outside of Europe became more frequent this particular part of the regulations regulation is proposed to be cancelled in order not to interfere with regular transfers.

The CC members approved the motion.

Motion #4: Limitation of teams from one country in the EHF European League Men

*Limitation of the number of participants from one country. The maximum number of teams from one country should not exceed 4 teams.*

In order to avoid too many teams from one country in the EHF Men's European League it was proposed to limit the total number of teams to four (4).

The CC members voted in favour of the motion.

Motion #5: Qualification path for EC participants in EHF European League MEN

*All participants of the special qualification path from the European Cup must play qualification in the EHF European League Men.*

A total of four places were reserved in the Group Phase of the new Men's European League system as of the 2023/24 season for National Champions from lower ranked Federations. Only three teams registered for this special qualification way instead of the possible eight teams (for four places). Consequently all three teams were directly qualified to the Group Phase. Only one of them (Vojvodina/SRB) proved to be ready for the group phase. Therefore it was proposed that all registering teams of the lower ranked Federations must play the qualification so that direct qualification is not possible anymore. In case there is an odd number of registrations

the best ranked team will be directly qualified and the remaining teams must play the qualification round.

About 95% of the teams in the Men's and Women's Champions League and European League are using the buzzer, Tækker informed. Only a few issues were reported during the current season, mainly in ROU and connected with delivery difficulties. As the 23/24 season was the first one to implement the buzzer there were no real sanctions. This season has been appointed as a trial for all involved clubs to make use of the buzzer.

Starting from the 2024/25 season, sanctions will be handed out in case of not implementing the buzzer.

Glaser reminded that according to the regulations a max. of 50 tickets out of the 10 % quota are to be made available to the guest club for €1 per ticket. The original idea was to motivate fans to travel to away games of their team during the week and get at least the tickets basically for free. In reality some clubs tried to misuse of this regulation point and "trade" the €1 tickets for VIP tickets or simply rejected to offer the 1€ ticket.

After an exchange of opinions it was agreed to consult with FCH about this topic and then table a motion to the ExeC if considered as necessary.

Hylle advised to check the possibility to assign the same Marketing Supervisor for matches played in the same country/surrounding if the matches are played on consecutive days. Glaser agreed to pass this topic on to the EHF.

## **5. Refereeing topics**

### **5.1. Status of referee pairs in EHF**

Bestilleiro reported that even though 131 EHF referee pairs are currently listed as active, 10 to 15 pairs have not been available due to different reasons (e.g. pregnancy, injury, Long COVID, integrity). Further, three pairs retired (GER, CRO, and CZE), as well after this season three more will retire due to age reasons (CRO, DEN, ITA), and potentially a few more after the Olympics. A total of 110 referee pairs are currently available for nominations. Due to these reasons, two referee courses are planned in 2024. Ideally, 14 new pairs will result out of those.

### **5.2. Men's EHF EURO 2024 – officiating assessment**

The referees' performance during the latest EURO has been exceptionally good. Only three major mistakes have been noted throughout the tournament, whereas two were ascribed to the delegates. All mistakes could have been avoided by the usage of technology, Bebetos summarized.

Besides the usage of video replay during the EURO, the Video Replay Assistant (VRA) was introduced at this year's event. João Capela, an active Video Assistant Referee (VAR) Manager for FIFA and UEFA, has been training, supervising, and assisting the referees throughout the tournament. The position of the VRA is covered by an EHF EURO referee who also serves as a substitute referee during his or her off-court duty. The VRA's objective in relation to the video

replay process is to support and speed up the review process and to ensure good communication between the on-court referees and the video replay operator, as well as between the delegates and the operator. All VR checks throughout the matches went well, though after analysis it was concluded that the time from the moment the 1<sup>st</sup> VR sign was shown by the referee on the court until to the moment the referees checked the situation on the screen could still be shortened.

Prior to the EURO, the appointed referees had two fitness check-ups conducted by FitGood Pro. All pairs performed within the set limits.

Bebetsos further reported that a Camera Innovation Workshop took place during the EURO in GER, where various solutions were tested on-field by the referees. A detailed report from EHF Officiating was submitted after this and all parties involved were informed of the process to further test and approve any solution proposed.

The TRC concluded as a summary of the event, that the Kick-Off seminar prior to the event is crucial for all involved. Keeping the high costs of such an event in mind, in-person seminars are much more efficient and valuable than virtual ones. Further, it was noted that the seating of the substitute referee pair should be together, instead of separately as it is so far. Currently, one referee is seated at the support table and the other one is behind the table, on the grandstands, due to a lack of space. The topic will be evaluated considering all aspects with the aim to find a solution for the Women's EURO in December.

### **5.3. “The Final Whistle 3.0: One More Team on the Court” – Media Campaign**

This was a continuation of the audiovisual project aiming to provide an insightful and engaging perspective on handball refereeing, integrating live audio from referees' microphones during matches. The communication plan outlines key elements and strategies for successful execution, aiming to improve referee image at handball's biggest event. A total of five episodes were produced, with three of them posted already on the various EHF social media channels with huge success: More than 1,200,000 views per episode overall, until this moment. The project will continue at the upcoming Champions League Final4 events.

### **5.4. Women's EHF EURO 2024 - Preparation**

18 referee pairs will be nominated for the Women's EURO in AUT/HUN/SUI in November/December 2024. The pre-selection process is under way, but no final decision has been made yet, Bestilleiro informed. As a Kick-Off seminar is planned in Vienna for the upcoming EURO at the end of September/beginning of October, the nominations have to be finalized on time for these invitations. It is planned to monitor and evaluate some of the preselected pairs during the summer YAC events.

The TRC remarked to reduce the number of pairs from preliminary to main round from 18 to 12 pairs, and not to 10 as it has been done in GER. With just 10 pairs being present it was sometimes difficult conducting the nominations.

The officiating line which shall be followed at the EURO has been set in collaboration with the IHF and will already be in use at the Paris Olympics. The TRC will produce the instructional video clips that will be available to all referees, delegates, and competing teams by September.

#### **5.5. EHF Referee candidate courses in 2024**

The first course is planned for April with six pairs (venue tbd) while the second course will be held during the M20 Championship in KOS from 13 to 21 July with 8 pairs.

#### **5.6. YRP status and activities in 2024**

Two Young Referee Project courses took place in BIH (Lokomotiva Cup in Brcko, 14-17 December 2023) and HUN (Stiga Balaton Cup in Veszprem, 20-25 January 2024). In CZE another course is planned with 6 pairs during the Prague Handball Cup, in late April, and another two activities are planned for the YAC events this summer (EUSA Games and European Open).

#### **5.7. Conditioning program**

52 referees are currently being trained and monitored by the EH fitness partner FitGood Pro. In total 122 EHF referees are being trained and monitored, but the additional ones are under the IHF, as they are working with the same company. As the contract with the company has a limited number of pairs that can be included, some pairs were removed (criteria: aging, training guidance compliance, exceeded potential) to make space for younger upcoming ones. Consequently, a number of Polar monitoring devices will be purchased to equip the newcomers.

#### **5.8. National Federations' support**

The EHF is supporting National Federations with different courses, Bebetos highlighted. Officiating technology courses were granted to POR, ITA, CYP and TUR, whereas KOS received a refereeing development support course and GBR was supported with referee appointments for their National Finals. Officiating BU examines every application and grants approval to the Federations that submit a structured proposal, maintaining also a fair distribution of the available funds.

#### **5.9. Education programs**

The Integrity education program will be coming to an end towards the end of this season. The program, which is compulsory for all EHF indoor and beach handball referees, will see its participants being tested and (if successful) certified at the beginning of June. An extension of this program is currently being evaluated on the side of the EHF.

A new initiative is the possibility of having active referees as participants of the European Handball Manager which is held in a cooperation with the Sports University of Cologne. Arguments and reasons were exchanged at the TRC meeting, where this initiative was basically welcomed. High level requirements would have to be fulfilled by the candidates, details are to be clarified before a final proposal will be put together.

### 5.10. Officiating technology

The system XPS Sideline is the new handball analysis software solution used in EHF refereeing. The system was used for video analysis at the EURO, to improve the referees' performance on the court. The system provided lots of assets, but it is WiFi-based and requires a perfect internet connection to work efficiently, which is not always the case in the arenas. It is recommended that the issue be tabled with the IT and EURO Department ahead of the planning of the upcoming Women's EURO.

The past Men's EURO saw several innovations in the area of Officiating Technology, namely in the Video Replay (VR):

- a. New Video Replay (VR) system provider
- b. New Video Replay technology
- c. Appointment of a FIFA VAR Manager
- d. Handball-specific training of the VR Operators (VRO)
- e. Establishment of the role of Video Referee Assistant (VRA)
- f. Revised tactical approach of the VR during the games
- g. Introduction of the *EHF Video Replay Users' Manual*
- h. Appointment of a VAR Data Analyst

The incurring results proved the successful implementation of all of the above-mentioned developments, as reported by the Officiating BU after closely examining the available VR review data, the opinion survey of the EURO referees, and the results of the VR reviews, and can be summarized as follows:

- The average time allocated to the video replay suggests that the Video Replay hardly affects the game.
- The most frequent situations reviewed are: Penalization and Goal/No goal check.
- There is an increase in the use of Video Replay throughout the EURO events of the period studied (2018 – 2024).
- One third of the VR reviews are checked by the goal cameras.
- The successful implementation of the role of the Video Referee Assistant has resulted in a reduction in VR review time while maintaining quality.
- The training and education of the VR operators, the referees, and VR Assistants can be further improved by providing more practical training.
- The referees feel very confident in making decisions with the use of VR, they appreciated the training they received before the EURO as well as the introduction of the new system, the role of the VR Assitant, and the transfer of knowledge for the FIFA VAR Manager.

After initial tests the group of TV Referee Observers is completed and consists of the TRC Members together with two active EHF Delegates and a former EHF Delegate. Their task is to assess the referee performance of games in EHF Competitions via the TV transmission resp. the broadcast available via streaming. Technical issues were identified and corrected, an enlargement of the group is expected in view to the new season. The use of a TV Referee Observer is also foreseen for the Champions League Quarterfinals where normally two Delegates are present at the match as these games are considered as very demanding on site.

### **5.11. Referee nominations for friendly matches**

Bebetsos informed that National Federations (NF) can approach the EHF to nominate referees for friendly matches. It is considered as training for the referee pairs and support for the hosting federation. The compensation for the referees is low, rather symbolic. Over the years the NFs realized the advantage of the program as a significant increase of nominations has been noticed. The question arose if it shall become mandatory for NFs to have neutral EHF referee pairs for friendly matches via the EHF, as even for friendly matches it can be very important to have neutral referees. The reason for this new approach are frequent comments about an unbalanced performance of the referees together with the growing interest in some of the friendly matches spectator and TV wise together with the presence of these games on betting platforms. Kampman advised that for senior matches it will be advisable to have neutral EHF referees, but for YAC matches it should not become mandatory. Glaser summarized the topic by emphasizing the benefits of having referees nominated by the EHF resulting in an improvement of the overall image of handball as well as topics related to integrity, while also acknowledging the increased workload for the EHF as well as the costs incurring for some of the National Federations as a result of such a change, and that further consultation is required before a final proposal can be presented to the ExeC for approval.

### **5.12. 3<sup>rd</sup> EHF National Heads of Refereeing Convention (Vienna, 19 – 20 Apr)**

On 15 February the invitation for the EHF Heads of Refereeing Convention was sent to all EHF Member Federations. 25 members of EHF NFs have registered as of 01 March. The deadline for registering is 15 March. The detailed program with the topics and presenters is finalized and shall be distributed in the next few days.

### **5.13. IHF-related matters**

The Video Replay Regulations have been jointly put together by the IHF and EHF back in 2021. Due to a more intense use, technology development, and Rule changes these regulations will have to be assessed and adapted. Alignment with the IHF and their Rules of the Game will be necessary as well.

The summer YAC nominations will be done after coordinating with the IHF in terms of referee and delegate appointments, in respect to their events (Junior WChs and Olympic Games) as well as EHF's needs.

## **6. Delegates Matters**

### **6.1. Status of delegates for the 2023/24 season**

A total of 147 delegates are currently listed as active. Among those, there are 119 men and 28 women. A total of 4 delegates from BLR (1) and RUS (3) are still not active. Considering those delegates reaching the age limit in summer as well as others ending their active career for different reasons there will be around 10-15 delegates less who will be available for the 2024/25 season.



Glaser informed that there is no EHF Candidate Delegates' Course planned for 2024, but is an option again for 2025.

### 6.2. Men's EHF EURO 2024 – Delegate assessment

Kampman summarized that the collaboration of delegates and coaches was very good during the past EURO. In any case and considering that delegates need to be very attentive while on duty and in order to perform at the top level, more focus will be put on their evaluation, assessment, and further education.

Bearing in mind the intensity of EURO matches and the increased overall exploitation Kampman proposed to look into the possibility of leaving away the duty of the data entry to the DMR during the EURO matches. The issue will be evaluated EHF internally.

Ahead of the EURO, nominated delegates were informed about who will leave the event after the preliminary round and who will continue for the second part of the tournament. The understanding is that delegates were in favour of this procedure as it supports their planning of activities outside of the EURO.

### 6.3. Activities and tools in delegate education

The EHF Officiating BU initiated talks about a system of licensing the EHF Delegates in order to have a better structure within the group of delegates and to better meet the growing requirements to this position which are very different across the many EHF competitions. The topic will have a follow-up within the EHF to identify benefits and challenges.

### 6.4. Status e-learning and testing

Several issues have been detected with the testing platform, but they have been solved and additional testing shall be conducted at the start of the summer, Bebetsos briefed the members. Also, English language testing will be conducted. The CC members underlined the importance of delegate assessment mirroring their game-by-game performance and the testing performance.

## 7. National Team Competitions – Qualifications

### 7.1. 2024 Women's EHF EURO AUT/HUN/SUI and EURO Cup

31 teams are participating in the Women's EHF EURO 2024 Qualifiers phase 2 round (7 groups of 4 teams + 1 group of 3 teams). 4 teams (AUT, HUN, SUI, NOR) are already qualified and therefore playing the EURO Cup. A total of 24 teams will be participating in the final tournament, Heim informed.

#### MATCH SCHEDULE

ROUND	PLAYING DATES
ROUND 4	2/3 March 2024
ROUND 5	3/4 April 2024
ROUND 6	7 April 2024 (18:00 CEST)



The matches concerning the group including UKR and ISR will all be played in SVK (March) and GER (April) due to the ongoing issues in their countries, Glaser reported. Financial support for the respective Federations is currently being evaluated.

### **7.2. 2025 MWCh DEN/CRO/NOR**

The 2025 Men’s World Championship Qualification Europe Phase 2 – Part 1 play-off matches will be played in a knockout system with first and second leg matches during the National Team Week parallel to the Olympic Games Qualification tournaments between 13 and 17 March 2024.

22 teams will then play the Men’s World Championship Qualification Europe Phase 2 Part 2 play-off matches in a knockout system with first and second leg matches between 8 and 12 May 2024.

The 11 winners will qualify for the 2025 World Championship, joining DEN, NOR, CRO, FRA, GER and SWE for the event played in DEN, CRO and NOR in January 2025.

### **7.3. 2025 WWCh GER/NED**

The announcement is planned to be published in April 2024.

Mitrunen added that federations prefer playing a tournament instead of individual matches due to higher costs and more time investment. Heim commented that playing a tournament depends on the number of registered teams and therefore a decision cannot be made yet.

### **7.4. 2026 Men’s EHF EURO DEN/SWE/NOR and EURO Cup**

Registration deadline for the 2026 Men’s EHF EURO Qualifiers was on 1 March. The draw will take place on 21 March in Copenhagen on the fringes of the Secretary General Conference. The winners of the Promotion Round (LUX, KOS, BEL) play-off matches and LAT (best ranked team taking a place that was left open for RUS resp. BLR) qualified for the Men’s EHF EURO 2026 Qualifiers starting with round 1 in November 2024 and finalizing with round 6 in May 2025.

32 teams will be participating in the 2026 Men’s EHF EURO Qualifiers (Phase 2). A total of 20 teams will eventually qualify for the final tournament joining the four teams DEN, SWE, NOR and FRA that are qualified already.

#### **MATCH SCHEDULE**

<b>ROUND</b>	<b>DATE</b>
ROUND 1	6/7 November 2024
ROUND 2	9/10 November 2024
ROUND 3	12/13 March 2025
ROUND 4	15/16 March 2025
ROUND 5	7/8 May 2025
ROUND 6	11 May 2025, 18:00 CEST (unified throw-off time*)

## **7.5. 2028 Men's EHF EURO ESP/POR/SUI Phase 1**

It is planned to send the announcement in May 2024. The existing regulations have been divided in two parts where the part for the qualification phase 1 and the promotion round have slightly reduced requirements which are easier to meet by the participating teams.

## **8. National Team Competitions – Final Tournaments**

### **8.1. YAC EHF events in 2024**

Heim presented a proposed motion which shall be presented to the EXEC in April. The proposal is to cancel the compulsory 1-match suspension after a direct red card during a match at the YAC EHF EUROS & Championships.

According to the current regulations a player shall automatically be suspended for one match after a direct disqualification. This rule has been established in the past, as hard fouls among young players were meant to be punished accordingly. Over the years this rule has become redundant due to the change of the game, therefore it was requested to eliminate the rule and instead adapt to the handling of the Men's and Women's EURO to have every red card reviewed before a legal procedure is initiated.

The CC members voted in favour of the motion. The implementation incl. the legal procedure will still need to be clarified EHF-internally before the motion is tabled at the Exec.

- **W16 EHF European Open 2024 SWE**

Qualification is open via registration until 10 April 2024. The tournament will be played in Gothenburg, SWE, from 01 to 05 July 2024.

- **M20 EHF EURO 2024 SLO**

Participation is based on the final results of the M18 EHF YAC Events 2022. The final tournament will be played in Celje, SLO from 10 to 21 July 2024 for the first time with 24 teams.

Participating nations: AUT, CRO, CZE, DEN, ESP, FAR, FRA, GER, GRE, HUN, ISL, ISR, ITA, MKD, MNE, NOR, POL, POR, ROU, SLO, SRB, SUI, SWE, UKR

- **M20 EHF Championship 2024 KOS**

Participation is based on the final results of the M18 EHF YAC Events 2022. The final tournament will be played in Pristina, KOS, from 13 to 21 July 2024 with 12 teams.

Participating nations: BEL, BUL, EST, FIN, GBR, GEO, KOS, LAT, LUX, LTU, SVK, TUR

- **M18 EHF EURO 2024 MNE**

A total of 14 teams incl. MNE as the hosting nation were directly qualified for the final tournament. Ten additionally teams secured their place via the qualification tournaments in January 2024. The final tournament will take place in Podgorica, MNE, from 07 to 18 August 2024 for the first time with 24 teams.

Participating nations: AUT, CRO, CZE, DEN, ESP, FAR, FRA, GER, GRE, HUN, ISL, ISR, ITA, MKD, MNE, NOR, POL, POR, ROU, SLO, SRB, SUI, SWE, UKR

- **M18 EHF Championship I 2024 SVK**

Qualification for the M18 EHF Championship I 2024 in SVK was only possible via the M18 EHF EURO 2024 Qualification Tournaments from where 8 teams qualified for the final tournament that will take place in Humenné, SVK, from 12 to 18 August 2024 with eight teams.

Participating nations: BIH, EST, FIN, LAT, LTU, NED, SVK, TUR

- **M18 EHF Championship II 2024 KOS**

Qualification for the M18 EHF Championship II 2024 in KOS resulted from the M18 EHF EURO 2024 Qualification Tournaments in January 2024. The final tournament will be played in Pristina, KOS, from 12 to 18 August 2024 with seven teams.

Participating nations: AZE, BEL, BUL, GBR, GEO, KOS, LUX

The draw of the groups of the final tournaments of all five M18 and M20 events was carried out at the EHF Office by CC Chairman Djurkovic two days prior to the CC meeting.

## **8.2. Preview about additional EHF summer events 2024**

- **EHF Masters POR**

The European Masters will be staged in Paredes, PRO from 20 to 23 June 2024. The following categories will be playing: +33, +43, +35, +45, +55.

Actual status of registrations (deadline is 15 April 2024)

+33 2 teams

+43 4 teams

+35 2 teams

+45 4 teams

+55 5 teams

- **EUSA Games HUN**

The Champions of the national university tournaments participate at the EUSA Games. Mitrunen will participate as Technical Delegate plus one additional delegate who has not been nominated yet. Bestilleiro informed that Young Referees will be nominated for the named tournament. The number of referee pairs depends on the number of qualified teams.

## **8.3. IHF competitions 2024**

- **Olympic Games FRA**

The following European nations have already qualified for the Olympic Games:

Women: FRA, DEN, NOR

Men: FRA, DEN, SWE

Three qualification tournaments shall be played as listed below. The first and second ranked teams from each qualification tournament will qualify directly for the Olympics. These tournaments are IHF events without the involvement of the EHF.

Men (14 to 17 March 2024):

Tournament 1: Spain (ESP), Slovenia (SLO), Bahrain (BRN), Brazil (BRA)

Tournament 2: Germany (GER), Croatia (CRO), Algeria (ALG), Austria (AUT)

Tournament 3: Norway (NOR), Hungary (HUN), Portugal (POR), Tunisia (TUN)

Women (11 to 14 April 2024):

Tournament 1: Sweden (SWE), Hungary (HUN), Cameroon (CMR), Japan (JPN)

Tournament 2: Netherlands (NED), Czechia (CZE), Argentina (ARG), Spain (ESP)

Tournament 3: Germany (GER), Montenegro (MNE), Slovenia (SLO), Paraguay (PAR)

- **WU18 World Championship CHN**

From 14 to 25 August the 10<sup>th</sup> IHF Women's U18 WCh will be played in Chuzhou, CHN.

- **WU20 World Championship MKD**

From 19 to 30 June 2024 the 24<sup>th</sup> IHF U20 WCh will be played in North Macedonia.

#### **8.4. 2024 Men's EHF EURO GER review**

The Men's EHF EURO has reached a remarkable ticketing achievement, especially because travelling as well as local fans watched the games of foreign teams in high numbers. The matches of the afternoon slot of 15:30 hrs., which is usually a problematic slot in terms of attendance, have been well visited as well. The evaluation of the tournament is still ongoing with figures, numbers, etc. Among others teams, partners, EHF Officials etc. shall deliver their feedback which will be summarized in the event report. Overall the EURO was a highly successful event with 97% sold match tickets, Müller highlighted.

Kozma mentioned the issue of particular ranking situations which are influenced by matches in the same group not taking place at the same time, but following each other. During the EURO even the issue of the qualification to the 2024 Paris Olympics Qualification Tournaments had its influence and produced some discussions within the framework of the EURO.

Further, he informed that the French goalkeeper coach went behind the goal for coaching the goalkeeper, even though he was informed that it was against the rules.

According to the IHF Rules of the Game four team officials are entitled to sit on the bench. During the EURO additional team officials have been placed behind the goals in different arenas. Kampman

informed that even though the rule states that only four officials are entitled to sit on the bench, during IHF competitions five officials are obviously accepted there. Additionally he added that he had been approached by officials from SUI, GER, FRA and ISL to clarify this issue as there is obviously an interest of adding another official to the match report also during EURO events. Glaser commented that the topic needs to be analysed in different aspects before a decision can be taken.

After a first feedback provided by the teams, several inquired to visit the main round hotels, too, during the Heads of Delegation Conference.

Additionally, the issue of the playing kits was discussed and identified as necessary to be clarified for the Women's EURO in December.

Also the travel times in between venues need to be kept at a minimum. The training schedules need to be handled in a fair way and after a round change all teams must have appropriate training times. The various issues will be taken into consideration for the planning of the next EUROs.

Kozma further informed that some teams commented on the allocation of the team seats. All team members are requested to be seated safely and in a reasonable position within the arena from a team delegation point of view (as close to the bench as possible, on the long side).

EHF Officials remarked that referee nominations should be done earlier after the preliminary round and to also have a better time schedule around the Officials' Conference and the departure to the various venues.

#### **8.5. 2024 Women's EHF EURO AUT/HUN/SUI**

Müller reported that the Officials' Conference is planned from 24 to 26 November 2024 in Vienna, even though Vienna will only be a venue during the Main Round and Final Weekend. This means a decision will have to be made concerning how the briefing and testing of the match operation system will take place.

Travels among the different venues is mainly planned to be done by train. Charter flights will be booked for the venue changes Basel-Debrecen and Innsbruck-Debrecen. Travels between the venues have to be planned carefully due to the travel distances.

The next site visits are planned from 22 to 26 April 2024 (all venues).

Müller further explained that the Pullman Basel Europe hotel had to be changed to the Dorint hotel in Basel due to planned construction in front of the hotel. Also the team meeting room infrastructure in the Alp Hotel in Innsbruck has to be further discussed between the EHF and the AUT OC (sizes and number of available meeting rooms)

The Final Tournament Draw is planned for 18 April 2024 in Vienna, followed by a NF Workshop (Heads of Delegations Conference – Part 1) on 19 April between 09:00 – 12:00 hrs. Part 2 of the Heads of Delegations Conference will take place between 10-12 September 2024.

Throw-off times in the period of the Preliminary Round will stay the same as during the EURO in GER at 18:00 and 20:30 hrs. for weekday matches during the Preliminary Round. The SUI OC requested to start the weekend matches on 30 November and 1 December at 15:30 and 18:00 hrs. to allow families to attend the matches. A final decision in this regard will be made after the Final

Tournament Draw, taking the TV interests into consideration. The matches on the Final Weekend shall be as follows:

15:00 hrs. 5/6 Placement match  
17:45 hrs. Semi-Final I  
20:30 hrs. Semi-final II  
15:15 hrs. 3/4 Placement match  
18:00 hrs. Final

#### **8.6. 2026 Men's EHF EURO DEN/SWE/NOR**

The DEN OC requested to play both Preliminary Round Groups in Herning, however, as Copenhagen is more accessible for the fans than other cities like Herning, where there is also a limited hotel capacity, the EHF had a discussion regarding this topic with the DEN OC. Due to the difficult situation regarding the ticketing (the Royal Arena in Copenhagen has Ticketmaster as a partner) and due to the difficult situation regarding the VIP areas and the skyboxes, the DEN OC is still of the opinion that hosting a second group in Herning is the best option. A next site visit of the venues is planned between 2-6 September 2024.

#### **8.7. 2026 Women's EHF EURO**

A new host has not been appointed yet, after the organisation right was returned to the EHF from RUS. The bidding process resulted in a joint bid from CZE/POL, a joint bid from ROU/SVK and a single bid from TUR. Considering all relevant aspects and in an attempt to unify the bidders, it is planned to play the Preliminary Round in all five countries as follows:

POL -Katowice	ROU – Cluj-Napoca and Oradea
CZE – Brno	SVK – Bratislava
TUR - Antalya	

### **9. Additional Matters**

#### **9.1. International Calendar 2023/2024, 2024/2025; 2025/2026**

Hylle asked to check future calendars for the scheduled National Team Week in September in years with Olympic Games. Glaser explained this week has been included in the calendar 2025 due to a longer break from the last National Team Week to the Qualifiers round played in October. Upcoming Olympic years shall be checked.

Glaser further mentioned that the period of the W17 EURO (30 July to 10 August) and W17 Championship(s) (02 to 10 August) has been moved by one week to earlier in August following an input to the draft of the calendar. The aim is to allow players either have a one week of a break or they can return to their clubs one week earlier.

## **9.2. EHF Anti-Doping Unit**

All Anti-Doping tests from the 2024 Men's EHF EURO in GER were negative.

Testing during the running competitions is going as planned. In addition to this the Anti-Doping Unit is working on educational topics for the upcoming YAC events in summer 2024.

## **10. Miscellaneous**

During the TD meeting the use of technology on the bench during EHF competitions has been discussed, and the Methods Commission (MC) put it on their agenda to further analyse the topic. It needs to be decided which electronic devices shall be allowed to be used at the bench and to which extent. Further, these rules must concern all EHF competitions, as there should not be a difference among club and national team competitions.

The CC agreed that comprehensive rules need to be put together, as well the IHF rules in this regard must be considered.

Djurkovic expressed his thanks to all CC Members for their participation and inputs and closed the meeting.

Vienna, 13 March 2024