

# COMPETITIONS COMMISSION MEETING

**Friday, 28 February 2025**

**European Handball House**

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**CC:** Bozidar Djurkovic / Chairman  
Jan Kampman / Member Men's Competitions  
Päivi Mitrunen / Member Women's Competitions (partially)  
Gaël Pelletier / Member Men's Club Competitions  
Thomas Hylle / Member Women's Club Competitions

Excused: Dragan Nachevski / Member Refereeing

**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 for the first meeting in the European Handball House in Vienna. Since the annual commission meetings will be organized in the new EHF office from now on, it is very much appreciated if the commission members provide feedback about hotel, restaurant, catering, meeting rooms etc.

Glaser drew attention to the application process regarding positions that are up for elections at the 17<sup>th</sup> Ordinary EHF Congress 2025 on 19 and 20 September 2025. Instructions and deadlines will be published by the EHF latest on 19 March 2025. Further, he mentioned that the EHF four-year national team rankings that were published at the beginning of February 2025 will be the reference for the Nations Ranking that serves as a basis for elections of the stakeholder positions.

### **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 had been discussed two days prior. 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 2024/25**

The running season is overall going well. The group phases in the Women's competitions are done. There is one more round to play in the Men's Champions League. Glaser pointed out that unfortunately there is still a big gap among the men's and women's competitions, which showed as well the cases Neptunes de Nantes (FRA), Buducnost (MNE) and Vipers Kristiansand (NOR). Neptunes de Nantes withdrew from the Women's European League before the start of the season due to financial issues. Buducnost was in a similar situation but managed on time to receive

support from the city of Podgorica and were therefore able to play the current Champions League season. Vipers Kristiansand announced bankruptcy on 13 January and that they would withdraw from the EHF Champions League Women with immediate effect.

All three cases arose due to a lack of funding and since Vipers Kristiansand stated bankruptcy in the middle of the season, it caused a big impact on the running competition, Glaser explained. As the EHF prefers not to change the outcome of matches that were played under correct circumstances, those matches remained unchanged and Vipers stayed on the position they had at the time of the withdrawal. The league in NOR on the other side declared all already played matches of Vipers invalid. Hylle mentioned that a lot of Scandinavian clubs would have decided differently than the EHF and supported more the Norwegian decision. He encouraged EHF to look into this and see if any regulations would be a support for similar situations in the future.

Tækker explained when registering for the EHF Champions League, clubs and their affiliated national federation must confirm the following concerning their financial situation.

*The registering club confirms that there are no major debts unpaid by the club from the 2023/24 season neither to important service providers and official authorities nor to players and coaches of the club.*

*Furthermore, the registering club confirms that the financial situation of the club regarding the 2024/25 season is stable and that the necessary funds will be available in a way that the participation in the 2024/25 EHF Champions League season is considered as secured.*

In the future the paragraph must be adjusted, however, a new approach in general needs to be evaluated with a bank guarantee as one of the option. Hylle agreed as banks would check the books of a club very closely if they need to provide a certain guarantee, but the overall amount must be chosen wisely. In addition, he stated the players must always be in the focus and if a similar case will occur in the future, their income must be secured by certain regulations. He further added that if a club declares bankruptcy the players should be entitled to leave the club immediately and the players should get an exception from the regulations and should be able to play in the Champions League as well. Currently it is stated in the regulations that a player cannot be transferred from a Champions League club which went bankrupt to another Champions League club during a running competition phase. The highest club competition they can play in during a running season is the European League.

Tækker and Scheder introduced the new EHF Youth Club Trophy to the CC Members. After the EXEC decision in December 2024 to introduce a new youth club tournament, it was decided to organize four qualification tournaments in a Final4 format from 12 to 18 April 2025. The winners of each tournament will qualify for the final tournament, which will be played parallel to the Champions League Final4 in Cologne. Veszprém, Barça, Füchse Berlin and Dinamo București will organize the qualification tournaments. A total of 13 Champions League clubs registered (except Aalborg Håndbold, Fredericia Håndboldklub and Kolstad Håndball), as well as GOG Håndbold, IK Sävehof and Vojvodina from the European League.

The question was brought up if the same tournament should be introduced for girls' teams. Mitrunen was in favour to make a final decision once the boys' tournament is concluded. In

general, the time during the season should be the same as the boys' tournament, as well as the age category (under 18) should be the same, the CC Members agreed.

Taekker informed about the EXEC decision of the minimum hall capacity which was confirmed in the EXEC meeting in 2019. The Men's Champions League should have a minimum capacity of 4000 spectators (instead of 2500) and the Women's Champions League 3000 (instead of 2000). After a transition period, this should have come into force for season 2023/24. In March 2023, the EXEC decided to postpone these changes for 2 seasons the Corona pandemic and to support the full venue initiative to bring back the spectators into the arenas. That means without any further decision, the minimum hall capacity must be changed for season 2025/26.

Pelletier is in favour to follow the same concept and push the clubs towards bigger arenas. He said the sport can only grow accordingly, as well it is a matter of representing the sport. It was proposed by the CC Members to involve the Forum Club Handball in this decision, but it must be done quickly because if no new proposal is put forward towards the EXEC and their meeting in April, the rise of the minimum number of spectators becomes active and would have to be implemented. For the 2025/26 season.

#### **4.2. Regulations and preview 2025/2026**

Several motions concerning the upcoming season were introduced by the Club Competitions department. All motions were approved by the CC and will be forwarded to the EXEC for the April 2025 meeting.

Motion #1: Colour of dresses – goalkeeper

*A club must have a 3<sup>rd</sup> goalkeeper colour in case one of them has the same colour as the field players.*

Motion #2: European League Men: special path – 2<sup>nd</sup> ranked team.

*2<sup>nd</sup> ranked teams are allowed to participate in the special path, but national champions must be prioritized (limit 1 team per national federation)*

Motion #3: the matches of the last round of one group must be played on the same day and the EHF has the right to adapt the throw-off times of those matches at short notice.

*This motion consists of two parts:*

- 1. all matches of the last round of one group of a group phase must be played on the same day.*
- 2. the EHF has the right to adapt the throw-off times of this last round one day after the penultimate round at the latest*

Motion #4: EHF Champions League – training balls for guest team

*Each team receives 20 additional balls for training purposes of the guest team.*

The CC members voted in favour of the motion with the remark that it is not decided yet if the costs for those extra balls will be put on the clubs. If this will be the case a decision of the EHF respective the Club Board will be necessary whether this is feasible or not. Therefore, the financial handling of this topic still needs to be clarified before the motion can be tabled to the EXEC.

Motion #5: Increase the number of photographs.

*The number of photographs for on- and offline publications should be increased.*

Motion #6: EHF Champions League MEN and WOMEN Regulations

*The TV Host broadcaster must have access to use the scoreboard for the TV-graphics free of charge.*

## **5. Refereeing topics**

### **5.1. Status of referee pairs in EHF for the second part of the 2024/25 season**

The current number of active referee pairs is: 125 (105 male + 20 female).

Since the beginning of the season 2024/25 the following pairs ended their EHF path for various reasons:

Christidi/ Papamattheou (GRE)

Mosorinski/ Pandzic (SRB)

Garcia Gil/ Rodriguez Estevez (ESP)

Hansen Hesseldal/ Jensen Kusk (DEN)

Braseth/ Sundet (NOR)

This number of stopped referee pairs is added to the previous nine (9) pairs who completed their EHF referee career shortly before the current competition season, bringing the total number of "lost" referee pairs in the 2024-25 season to 14.

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

The overall performance of referees and delegates at the Women's EHF EURO 2024 was deemed highly satisfactory, reflecting the high standards of officiating maintained throughout the championship. The Technical Refereeing Committee (TRC), participating teams, and media provided positive feedback, recognizing the consistency, and fairness demonstrated by the officiating teams at all stages of the competition.

A well-structured nomination process ensured that only the best-prepared referee pairs officiated key matches. Initially, 18 pairs were selected for the Preliminary Round, with 12 progressing to the Main Round, and finally, six pairs were chosen for the decisive Final Round. This selection process was based on continuous monitoring, evaluation, and performance analysis, ensuring that referees maintained a high level of competence and adapted well to the demands of the tournament.

To ensure transparency and fairness, a ranking system based on evaluation reports was established, categorizing referees into three performance groups. This system provided a structured and objective assessment of referee performance while acknowledging individual strengths and areas for growth.

The TRC closely followed the referees' performances at each venue, offering guidance and constructive feedback to further enhance their decision-making and game management. Daily meetings allowed for open discussions, fostering alignment on officiating standards and reinforcing a unified approach to match control. The cooperation between TRC, the Video Analysis Team, the Video Replay Team and other support staff was highly effective, contributing to a smooth and well-coordinated refereeing process.

No significant controversies or officiating errors were reported, underscoring the referees' ability to handle high-pressure situations with composure and accuracy. The introduction of support systems, including video review (VR), conditioning and mental coaching, further strengthened the overall officiating quality. While some areas for refinement were identified, such as improved communication between the TRC and VR experts, these did not impact the overall positive perception of the referees' and delegates' performances.

With regard to the Men's EHF EURO 2026 it was decided that a kick-off seminar is not necessary due to the high experience level of the referees to be selected, which is in line with the TRC proposal. The officiating line for the next EURO will be once again aligned with IHF, with a focus on bench behaviour.

### **5.3. Candidate course(s) in 2025**

Two candidate referee courses are planned for the upcoming summer to further develop and evaluate emerging referee talents. One course shall take place during the W19 EHF Championships in July in GEO providing a valuable opportunity for referees to gain experience in a competitive international setting. Furthermore, a second course for EHF candidates shall be organised, if possible, with the focus on developing female referees, with the details still to be worked out. The EHF office will ensure that the courses are well-organised and aligned with the current needs.

### **5.4. YRP status and activities in 2025**

The number of pairs currently registered in the program is: 44 (27 male + 17 female). Four YRP courses are planned for the upcoming spring – summer season: In Porec/ CRO (CRO National Championship W17 in April), Gothenburg/ SWE (European Open M19 in June – July), Skopje/ MKD (European Youth Olympic Festival W17 in July), Covilha/ POR (European University Sports Association Champs in August).

More importantly it was decided that the newly established EHF Youth Championships will be officiated solely by badge-holder pairs of the program, therefore eight (8) pairs are appointed already.

One YR course was already held in BIH earlier this year, with the participation of 5 YR pairs.

### **5.5. Conditioning program**

72 referees are currently being trained and monitored by the EHF fitness partner FitGood Pro. In total 153 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 (aging, training guidance compliance, exceeded potential) to make space for younger upcoming ones. Consequently, a number of Polar monitoring devices were purchased to equip the newcomers.

The CC agreed to follow TRC's proposal and to align the EHF conditioning levels for the Shuttle Run test with the new IHF standards, with adjustments based on age groups. Younger referees will face more demanding standards while older referees will maintain the current levels.

### **5.6. Activities in referee education**

NFs supported with EHF Experts for their courses in the period September 24 – Feb 25: KOS, SRB.

A referee development seminar for referee pairs from Emerging Nations is planned to provide these referees with essential training, guidance, and practical experience to enhance their officiating skills. The seminar will be organized by the EHF Officiating Unit, staged in Vienna, in cooperation with the TRC and involve Officiating Experts. Through theoretical sessions, video analysis, and on-court practice, the participating referee pairs will receive valuable feedback and mentorship from experienced instructors. This initiative aims to support the development of referees from Emerging Nations, helping them progress toward higher levels of international handball officiating.

### **5.7. Integrity education program**

The CC approved the TRC's suggestion that referees who do not attend or pass the certification test for the Integrity Education Program will be put on a stand-by status until the program is successfully completed. All indoor and beach handball referees will be notified accordingly. The program's second cycle will begin after September 2025, when all candidate courses will be completed. The initiative is organized in collaboration with the EHF Integrity partner Sportradar.

The TRC will draw the official officiating line for the upcoming EHF Men's EURO 2026, in accordance with the IHF, and will create all educational materials (videos and guidelines).

Similarly, teaching materials for the next YAC events' nominated officials will be created and sent to all stakeholders.

### **5.8. Officiating technology**

Successful implementation of the developments planned during the last Women's EURO: Video Referee Assistant, live footage of VR reviews in the arena, referees' training on the use of VR, broadcasting of the VR explanatory video in the EURO arenas prior to each match.

The implementation of Video Review (VR) at the EURO has contributed to more accurate referee decisions while reducing the time taken for each review, minimizing its impact on the flow of the game.

Key findings indicate an increased use of VR per match in both Men's and Women's EURO 2024 tournaments, reflecting growing confidence in the system. Encouraging referees to utilize VR more frequently has enhanced trust among officials, players, and fans while strengthening the overall image of handball. The most common VR-reviewed situations involved penalization and goal/no-goal decisions.

The adoption of Video Replay Assistance (VRA) has streamlined review processes, reducing review times without compromising decision quality. Further, practical training for Video Replay Operators (VROs), referees, and VRAs can enhance the system's efficiency. Additionally, the active communication between referees and VR Table via intercom has proven crucial in ensuring smooth match operations during potential VR reviews.

Future projects to be evaluated: Referee head cam and live announcement of the post-VR review referees' decision in the arena.

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

Increased tendency in the requests for EHF-nominated referee pairs to direct international friendly matches by the National Federations:

2021: 15 matches

2022: 22 matches

2023: 32 matches

2024: 41 matches

2025 (up to Feb): 13 matches

The CC members noted that Office-appointed pairs for international friendlies ensure transparency and fair competition. The implementation of this measure remains to be seen.

### **5.10. "Women in Handball"**

The EHF's Women in Handball project dedicated to increasing female participation in all aspects of the sport, also puts a strong focus on attracting, educating, developing, and retaining female referees and delegates. Recognizing the importance of diversity in officiating, the EHF continues to implement targeted initiatives to support women in these roles, ensuring they have access to the necessary training, mentorship, and career development opportunities.

The CC was informed about the possibility of holding a female-only candidate referee course, where various aspects are still to be clarified.

Furthermore, the CC acknowledges the need for a comprehensive Re-Entry to Action program to assist female referees returning to officiating after childbirth. A holistic approach should be developed to support their reintegration, considering aspects such as physical readiness, mental preparation, and scheduling flexibility. By implementing such measures, the EHF aims to create an inclusive environment that enables female referees to sustain long-term careers in handball officiating.

### **5.11. Media activities in Officiating**

The EHF's media initiatives in officiating have garnered significant attention, with videos featuring mic'd-up referees reaching over 1.5 million views within hours of posting. This project has successfully highlighted the dynamics of referee communication—both between referee pairs and with players and coaches—offering fans and stakeholders valuable insights into the decision-making process. By showcasing a different perspective on referees, the initiative has helped enhance understanding and appreciation of their role in the game.

Given its success, the project will continue in collaboration with the EHF Media Department. Additionally, the feasibility of implementing a referee head camera for the next EURO will be tested, further advancing transparency and fan engagement in handball officiating.

### **5.12. Coach's Challenge**

The Coach's Challenge as a developed concept within the EHF aims at increasing fairness and transparency in officiating decisions. This system would allow team coaches to request a Video Review (VR) in specific game situations, ensuring critical decisions receive an additional layer of assessment. While the initiative is still being evaluated, its potential implementation could enhance the accuracy of officiating while maintaining the flow of the game.

A joint group composed of two (2) refereeing Experts (TRC) and two (2) coaches will be formed to bridge the different approaches to the technical and regulatory implementation, create the final approach/proposal, and feasibility of integrating the Coach's Challenge into EHF competitions.

### **5.13. IHF matters**

The IHF has issued a document outlining modifications and revisions to the Rules of the Game, which has been communicated to all continental federations. These changes will come into effect starting July 2025. In response, the EHF must plan for the adaptation of these rule revisions during its summer events to ensure a smooth transition. Additionally, it is essential to inform all stakeholders—teams, referees, delegates, and officials—well in advance of the 2025/26 competition season. Proper education, training sessions, and workshops will be necessary to guarantee a consistent and effective implementation of the updated rules across all EHF competitions.

An update regarding Video Replay (VR) and the use of an electronic team timeout buzzer: The IHF has prepared a document outlining revisions to these regulations, with the EHF Officiating Unit having played an important role in their development.

## **6. Delegates Matters**

### **6.1. Status of delegates for the second part of the 2024/25 season**

The number of active delegates remains stable: 135 (110 male + 25 female).



## **6.2. Women's EHF EURO 2024 – delegate assessment**

The performance of the delegates during the Women's EHF EURO 2024 was assessed with the utmost care and attention to detail, ensuring that all aspects of the competition were effectively monitored and evaluated.

Throughout the tournament, delegates demonstrated performance that contributed to the event's success. Their assessment of both on-court performance and administrative processes prevented any challenges. Their often-proactive approach in communicating with referees, teams, and the EHF Officiating Unit facilitated coordination and a positive atmosphere for all involved. Daily consistent feedback from the TRC facilitated their job. Moving forward, the feedback gathered refines pre-EURO delegate training in enhancing operational procedures.

## **6.3. Delegate licensing**

The CC approved the EHF Competitions Department proposal on creating a 3-level Delegate Licensing System. The EHF Delegate License will be valid for a certain period of time. License holders will be required to undergo periodic reviews or re-certification processes to maintain their status, or to be promoted to the next level. Renewal will involve meeting ongoing eligibility requirements and participation in EHF workshops, demonstrating continued competence, passing tests, and attending refresher and certification courses for particular areas of the tasks of a Delegate. This certification will become critical for maintaining professionalism and fairness in EHF-regulated handball games and tournaments.

The system is being developed by the EHF Competitions Department, after examining the experience of the Methods Commission (MC) with the similar system of coaches' licensing and a respective motion for a general introduction of a Delegates' license in EHF will be tabled to the ExeC in April. If approved, in a first step it will be put in effect starting from the upcoming Delegates Candidates Course in May 2025 with further steps including the already active Delegates later on.

## **6.4. Candidate delegates' course 2025**

The 9th Candidate Delegates' Course, scheduled to take place in Vienna from 8–10 May 2025 will be announced at the beginning of March. The course offers experienced handball professionals the opportunity to become EHF Delegates. Applicants must possess a strong handball background as EHF Delegates are responsible for overseeing matches, enforcing regulations, and supporting the development of the sport. A comprehensive understanding of handball rules, game management, and proficiency in English for international communication are essential. Online applications are open to all eligible candidates, with the announcement shared widely to ensure accessibility.

In line with the EHF's commitment to diversity and leadership within handball, female candidates are strongly encouraged to apply.

## 7. National Team Competitions – Qualifications

### 7.1. 2025 Women’s World Championship Qualification Europe GER/NED

Phase 1 was played in four tournaments with three teams each between 24 to 27 October 2024. The winners, ISR, ITA, KOS and LTU qualified for Phase 2, which will be played in play-off matches from 09 to 13 April 2025, Sypkus reported. 11 out of 22 teams will qualify for the 2025 IHF World Championship final tournament in GER and NED. The matches between ISL and ISR will be played in Reykjavik on 09 and 10 April 2025, while the UKR vs. CZE matches will be played in Jonava (LTU) after the match LTU vs. FAR, Sypkus pointed out.

### 7.2. Men’s EHF EURO Qualifiers 2026 DEN/SWE/NOR and Men’s EHF EURO CUP 2026

Rounds 3 & 4 of Phase 2 will be played on 12/13 and 15/16 March 2025. Rounds 5 & 6 will follow on 07/08 and 11 May 2025. No decision has been made yet about the venues and dates of the ISR vs. POL and ISR vs. POR matches. Also, the match UKR vs. NED has not been fully confirmed yet, but at current state it is planned to be played in SVK.

For the first time National Federations have been fined if they failed to provide requested information within a certain period of time. The fines have been imposed by the EHF Court of Handball.

### 7.3. Women’s EHF EURO Qualifiers 2026 POL/ROU/CZE/SVK/TUR and Women’s EHF EURO Cup 2026

From 07 to 09 March 2025 Phase 1 will be played. It consists of three tournaments with three teams each. The winners will qualify for Phase 2. The registration for Phase 2 and the EURO Cup 2026 has been finalised with the draw taking place in Cluj-Napoca, ROU on 20 March 2025.

Playing dates Phase 2 and EHF EURO Cup 2026:

ROUND	DAY	DATE
ROUND 1	Wednesday – Thursday	15/16 October 2025
ROUND 2	Saturday – Sunday	18/19 October 2025
ROUND 3	Wednesday – Thursday	4/5 March 2026
ROUND 4	Saturday – Sunday	7/8 March 2026
ROUND 5	Wednesday – Thursday	8/9 April 2026
ROUND 6	Sunday	12 April 2026, 18:00 CEST (unified throw-off time*)

\*The last round match of the Women’s EHF EURO 2026 Qualifiers will be played at a unified throw-off time

Sypkus drew attention to the fact that the EHF EURO Cup will be played for the first time with five host nations (POL/ROU/CZE/SVK/TUR) and the three top-seeded nations from the last EHF EURO 2024 (NOR, DEN, HUN). Two groups of four are playing a round-robin tournament (three home, three away games) parallel to the Qualifiers. The group winners and runners-up will qualify for the “EHF EURO Cup Finals” which will be played in a Final4 format in September 2026. More details in this regard will follow.

#### **7.4. 2027 Men's World Championship Qualification Europe in GER**

The announcement of the competition is planned for May 2025.

#### **7.5. Men's EHF EURO Qualifiers 2028 ESP/POR/SUI and Men's EHF EURO CUP 2028**

EHF EURO 2028 Qualifiers Phase 1 took place in Varna, BUL from 10 to 12 January 2025. The National Federations of BUL, CYP, GBR and MLT participated in the tournament. CYP and GBR qualified for the Men's EHF EURO 2028 Promotion Round which will be held from 06 to 11 January 2026. BUL can still qualify via the IHF Emerging Nations Championship scheduled to take place in Varna, BUL from 11 to 16 March 2025.

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

Riede gave a brief overview about the upcoming YAC summer events. He further made the CC Members aware that it must be defined how the EHF would handle a case if a team qualified for a W19 / M20 event but ends up not registering for it. The CC Members took note of it.

- **M19 EHF European Open 2025 SWE**

Place - Gothenburg, SWE

Date – 30 June to 04 July 2025

Teams so far registered – 10

EHF Representative – Lövgren & Wiederer

Venue Manager – Riede, Brown

Registration deadline – 12 March 2025

- **W19 EHF EURO 2025 MNE**

Place - Podgorica, MNE

Date – 09 to 20 July 2025, Teams participating – 24

EHF Representative – Boskovic, Sequeira, Aksnes, Hausleitner

Venue Manager – Riede, Reihofer, Teraz

Group A: HUN, CZE, MKD, POL

Group B: DEN, MNE, ISL, LTU

Group C: SRB, SWE, SUI, FIN

Group D: GER, ROU, ESP, FAR

Group E: FRA, NOR, POR, SLO

Group F: CRO, NED, AUT, TUR

- **W19 EHF Championship 2025 GEO**

Place - Telavi, GEO

Date – 12 to 20 July 2025, Teams participating – 10

EHF Representative - Mallozzi

Venue Manager – Bebetos & Bencze

Pool A: SVK, GEO, LUX; BUL, UKR

Pool B: ITA, ISR, KOS, GBR, BEL

- **W17 EHF EURO 2025 MNE**

Place - Podgorica, MNE

Date - 30 July to 10 August 2025, Teams participating – 24

EHF Representative – Boskovic, Djurkovic, Horvath & La Cour

Venue Manager – Racz, Szecsenyi, Tedesco

Group A: DEN, SWE, ESP, TUR

Group B: GER, POR, MKD, SVK

Group C: NED, ISL, SUI, FAR

Group D: HUN, NOR, SRB, SLO

Group E: FRA, MNE, CZE, LTU

Group F: CRO, ROU, AUT, POL

- **W17 EHF Championship 2025 KOS**

Place - Pristina, KOS

Date - 04 to 10 August 2025, Teams participating – 8

EHF Representative - Blazquez

Venue Manager – Turi

Group A: FIN, KOS, LAT, BUL

Group B: ITA, ISR, UKR, GBR

## **8.2. Additional Summer Events**

- **2024 EHF Masters POR / 2025 EHF Masters ESP**

A report about the 2024 EHF Masters in POR has been provided to the CC Members.

The registration for the 2025 EHF Masters in ESP will be open until 28 April 2025. The current registration status looks as follows:

- 7 in +35 Men (ESP, POR, FRA)
- 9 in +45 Men (ESP, SVK, POR, FRA)
- 3 in +50 Men (DEN, POR, CZE)
- 5 in +55 Men (ESP, HUN, UKR, POL)
- 7 in +33 Women (ESP, NOR, SVK, DEN)
- 3 in +43 Women (ESP, DEN)

- **2025 EUSA POR**

Place – Covilha

Date – 22 – 28 July 2025

Team participating – open

EHF Technical Delegate Mitrunen plus an assistant TBD

EHF Office - Lacina

- **W17 EYOF 2025**

Place - Skopje, MKD

Date - 21 to 26 July 2025

Teams participating – 8

EHF Representative – Bobinac & Djurkovic

Venue Manager – Heim & Monteiro

Participating teams: FRA, GER, HUN, ISL, MKD, NED, NOR, SUI

- **M17 EYOF 2025**

Place - Skopje, MKD

Date - 21 to 26 July 2025

Teams participating – 8

EHF Representative – Bobinac & Djurkovic

Venue Manager – Heim & Monteiro

Participating teams: CRO, ESP, GER, HUN, ISL, MKD, NOR, POR

### **8.3. IHF competitions 2025**

- **2025 MU21 World Championship POL**

Date – 18 to 29 June 2025

Teams participating – 32

Qualified teams from the M20 EHF EURO 2024: ESP, POR, DEN, GER, SWE, AUT, ISL, NOR, MKD, FRA, CRO, HUN, SRB, SLO, ROU

Qualified teams as a substitute nation: SUI

Reserve teams Europe: FAR, CZE, ITA, ISR, UKR, GRE, MNE

- **2025 MU19 World Championship EGY**

Date – 6 to 17 August 2025

Teams participating – 32

Qualified teams from the M18 EHF EURO 2024: SWE, DEN, HUN, ISL, GER; SRB, NOR, ESP, SLO, POR, SUI, FRA, CRO, CZE, FAR

Qualified teams as a substitute nation: AUT

Reserve teams Europe: ISR, POL, MKD, GRE, ITA, ROU, MNE, UKR

- **2025 MU17 World Championship TBD**

Teams participating – 12

Qualified teams from Europe: 2 Teams GER and DEN (qualification based on the Men's YAC EHF 4-year ranking 2024). Substitute nations are ESP and POR.

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

The overall Event Report is available and has been shared with the CC Members prior to the meeting. Müller made them aware that the TV figures are so far not included in the report as the agency who is providing the report will deliver the details until the end of March 2025 at the latest. The CC Members were briefed on the different topics and areas that are an integrated part of the event report as

- The IHF Report (Frantisek Taborsky)
- Teams' Feedback
- Officials' Feedback
- Officiating Report
- Video Replay Report
- Ticketing Report
- Digital Report (most figures increased; Camilla Herrem, viral video 70m views on EHF channels)
- Anti-Doping Controls
- Media Report
- Business Development & Marketing Report

In addition, the CC members were informed about certain competition topics mentioned in the feedback of the teams and the EHF officials. Please find below a short summary of the topics:

- A team complained about the floor sticker in the 6m Area, which in the opinion of the team is located too close to the goalkeeper and the surface is more slippery than the surface of the Gerflor. As this was the only complaint and as the floor stickers were provided by the same company as for many previous EHF EURO Events no further steps are required in that topic.
- Teams requested to share further information regarding the technical specifications of the floors in the training halls. For upcoming EHF EURO events the technical specifications will be made available to the participating teams prior to the tournament.
- Some of the teams complained about the Team Analyst position and the respective workspace. Clear communication of the team analyst positions during the Heads of Delegations Conference is required with the responsible team delegation members.
- The topic of the non-alignment of the match time displayed on TV and the match time displayed on the screens/cube in the arena was discussed with the CC members. The match time displayed on TV shows the time 0-30 minutes during the first half and 30-60 minutes during the second half. Currently the time displayed on the screens/cube in the arena is according to the EHF EURO regulations 0-30 minutes during the first half and 0-30 minutes during the second half. In the opinion of the CC members the time shall be aligned to 0-30 minutes during the first half and 30-60 minutes during the second half. This will also ease the work from delegates' perspective as the delegates must enter the times from 30-60 during the second half into the match operation system. A motion will be forwarded to the EXEC in this regard to amend the EHF EURO regulations accordingly.

It was discussed if for future EHF Events the match time shall be displayed reversed from 60 to 0 as this is the case in other sports (e.g. basketball).

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

The CC Members were informed about the venues for the Men's EHF EURO 2026 in DEN/SWE/NOR:

#### Preliminary Round:

- Group A: Herning, Jyske Bank Boxen
- Group B: Herning, Jyske Bank Boxen
- Group C: Oslo/Baerum, Unity Arena
- Group D: Oslo/Baerum, Unity Arena
- Group E: Malmö, Malmö Arena
- Group F: Kristianstad, Kristianstad Arena

#### Main Round:

- Main Round I: Herning
- Main Round II: Malmö

#### Final Weekend:

- Herning

#### Arena Set-up:

The arena in Kristianstad will be renovated during summer 2025 and new chairs will be installed in the arena. However, no major problems concerning the set-up are expected. Also, the set-up in Malmö Arena is expected to go smoothly as it is already well known from previous EHF EURO events.

The biggest challenge regarding arena set-up is the Unity Arena in Oslo/Baerum as a football stadium will be converted to a handball arena. Therefore, an additional stand will be constructed to reach an arena appearance in the stadium. The set-up of the additional stand will be similar to the IHF World Championship (WCh) in January 2025. As there is a huge empty space behind the stands, this space will be used as a fan area.

In Herning the situation is also challenging due to the fact that on one short side of the arena a tribune with standing places will be installed. As Herning is also the final weekend venue, this leads to a difficult situation concerning the TV studio positions. At the current stage six studio positions need to be calculated for the final weekend. The DEN OC will provide updated drawings of the additional stand, also considering the TV studio positions until end of May 2025.

During the IHF WCh, a site visit took place in Herning and Oslo/Baerum. Even though the EHF EURO 2026 set-up will be slightly different, it was a good opportunity to inspect the arenas when fully operating. The next site visit is scheduled for May/June 2025, after the Final Tournament Draw.

The hotel situation is still very challenging in Herning because the required room capacities in the officials' hotels cannot be guaranteed by the DEN OC at the current stage. The topic will be further discussed between the EHF and the DEN OC. In addition, the CC Members have been

informed that the conditions for the teams in the team hotels will not be the same. The 4 teams of Preliminary Round (PR) Group B will be accommodated in the hotel “Scandic Regina” where some of the team meeting rooms are rather small, but the hotel is located quite close to the arena. The 4 teams of PR Group A will be accommodated in the Radisson Blue, Silkeborg which offers in general a higher standard and a better meeting room infrastructure. However, as the hotel is located in Silkeborg, the transport to the arena takes approximately 35 minutes. As Officials’ hotel the DGI huset is currently foreseen. Additionally, the hotel Eyde is planned as guest hotel for the final weekend.

#### Site Visits:

Due to the planned reconstruction of the arena a site visit will take place separately in Kristianstad on 20/21 May. For all other venues a site visit is foreseen to take place between 24 and 26 June 2025. A Venue Dressing site visit is planned for June/July 2025 and the TV and Partner Tour is scheduled between 01 and 05 September 2025.

#### Final Tournament Draw:

The draw is scheduled to take place in Herning at the “Teatersaalen” at 19:00 hrs. on 15 May 2025. On 16 May between 09:00 – 12:00 hrs. the National Federation Workshop (HDC part 1) will be organized. Once the last matches of the Qualifiers matches have been played, the technical draw procedure will be finalised. As the organizers have the right to seed one team in each preliminary group, the following seeding is planned at the current stage:

- Group A (Herning): GER (if qualified)
- Group B (Herning): DEN
- Group C (Oslo): NOR
- Group D (Oslo): FAR (if qualified)
- Group E (Malmö): SWE
- Group F (Kristianstad): ISL (if qualified)

#### Match Schedule:

The match schedule with the basic throw-off times was provided to the CC Members prior to the meeting. The basic throw-off times are as follows: 18:00 and 20:30 for the preliminary round and 15:30, 18:00 and 20:30 for the main round. As a match interval of 2h 45min is required for the final weekend due to possible overtime, the throw-off times for the semi-final day are 15:00 for the placement match 5/6, 17:45 for the first semi-final and 20:30 for the second semi-final. The throw-off times for the final day are 15:15 for the bronze medal match and 18.00 for the final. The specific order of the preliminary round matches will be defined accordingly, after the Final Tournament Draw when the groups are known.

#### Heads of Delegations Conference:

The first part of the Heads of Delegations Conference (National Federations Workshop) will take place in course of the final tournament draw in Herning/DEN on 16 May 2025. The second part of the Heads of Delegations Conference will take place between 07 and 09 September 2025. It will



start with an online conference on 07 September 2025. On 08 September the team delegation members will travel to their respective preliminary round venue where the site visit for the teams will take place on 09 September.

#### Officials:

Due to the accessibility of Malmö compared to Herning, the Officials' Conference will be taking place in Malmö, Müller explained. Therefore, Malmö will also be the arrival venue of the EHF Officials. However, as the first match day in Malmö will only be on 17 January, a solution for a test match where EHF Officials can test the match operation system must be found. Besides the Officials' Conference being organized in Malmö, Herning is considered as the main venue of the tournament. The EHF Officials will travel to their assigned venue on 13/14 January 2025. The CC Members have been informed that no Officials' Preparatory Meeting will be organized in physical presence prior to the Men's EHF EURO 2026 in DEN/SWE/NOR. The nominations for the upcoming EURO will be finalized until mid-October 2025 at the latest.

#### Important upcoming dates:

- 15 May 2025, 19:00 – Final Tournament Draw in Herning/DEN
- 16 May 2025, 09:00–12:00 – National Federations Workshop (HDC – Part 1) in Herning/DEN
- 20/21 May 2025 – Site visit in Kristianstad/SWE
- 05 June 2025 – Partner Workshop in Vienna
- 24-26 June 2025 – Site Visit (all venues except Kristianstad)
- June/July 2025 – Venue Dressing Site visit
- 01 to 05 September 2025 – TV & Partner Tour
- 07 to 09 October 2025 – Heads of Delegations Conference – Part 2
- 11 January 2026 – Arrival EHF Officials
- 11-13 January 2026 – Officials' Conference in Malmö
- 13/14 January 2026 – Officials' travel to their assigned venues.
- 13 January 2025, 21:00 – Test Match in Herning (Groups A+B)
- 14 January 2025, 10:00 – Key Personnel Meeting in Herning & Oslo
- 14 January 2025, 11:00 – TV & Security Briefing in Herning & Oslo
- 14 January 2025, 14:00 – Technical Meeting I in Herning & Oslo (Groups A+C)
- 14 January 2025, 21:00 – Test Match in Herning & Oslo (Groups A,B,C,D)
- 15 January 2025, 10:00 – Key Personnel Meeting in Kristianstad
- 15 January 2025, 11:00 – TV & Security Briefing in Kristianstad
- 15 January 2025, 14:00 – Technical Meeting I in Herning, Oslo & Kristianstad (Groups B,D,F)
- 15 January 2025, 21:00 – Test Match in Kristianstad (Group F)
- 16 January 2025, 10:00 – Key Personnel Meeting in Malmö
- 16 January 2025, 11:00 – TV & Security Briefing in Malmö
- 16 January 2025, 14:00 – Technical Meeting I in Malmö (Group E)
- 16 January 2025, 21:00 – Test Match in Malmö (Groups E)
- 21 January 2025, 14:00 – Technical Meeting II in Herning MR I
- 22 January 2025, 14:00 – Technical Meeting II in Malmö MR II
- 29 January 2025, 18:00 – Technical Meeting III in Herning FW

## **8.6. Women's EHF EURO 2026 POL/ROU/CZE/SVK/TUR**

### Venues:

The playing venues have been defined as follows:

### Preliminary Round:

- Group A: Oradea, ROU
- Group B: Cluj-Napoca, ROU
- Group C: Antalya, TUR
- Group D: Brno, CZE
- Group E: Katowice, POL
- Group F: Bratislava, SVK

### Main Round:

- Main Round I: Cluj-Napoca, ROU
- Main Round II: Katowice, POL

### Final Weekend:

- Katowice, POL

### Arena Set-up:

The arena in Katowice still provides a challenging situation regarding the TV studio positions. As it will be the final weekend venue currently 4 to 6 TV studios have to be calculated.

A site visit in Bratislava/SVK and Katowice/POL took place between 24 and 26 February 2025. In Antalya/TUR, Oradea and Cluj-Napoca/ROU a site visit took place between 03 to 07 March.

Furthermore, the arena in Brno is currently under construction, therefore a separate site visit is foreseen to take place in March/April 2025 which includes also a meeting with the architect.

### Hotels:

In addition, the POL OC proposed a new EHF Officials' hotel as the previous EHF hotel was denied by the EHF due to the limited meeting room infrastructure. However, in the meantime the new proposed was inspected during a site visit and confirmed by the EHF. The CZE OC also proposed a new team hotel and a new officials hotel as the federation has a new partnership with a hotel chain. The hotels will be inspected during the upcoming site visit.

### Match Schedule:

The match schedule was distributed to the CC members prior to the meeting via Email. The basic throw-off times are currently foreseen as follows 18:00 and 20:30 for the preliminary round and 15:30, 18:00 and 20:30 for the main round. As a match interval of 2h45min is required for the final weekend due to possible extra time, the throw-off times for the semi-final day are 15:00 for the placement match 5/6, 17:45 for the first semi-final and 20:30 for the second semi-final. The throw-off times for the final day are 15:15 for the bronze medal match and 18.00 for the final.

However, it needs to be taken into consideration that this will be the first EHF EURO being organized in three different time zones and the throw-off the times mentioned in the match schedule refer to the local times.

### EHF EURO Regulations:

The different time zones also reflect to the EHF EURO Regulations, as all deadlines need to be defined either as local time or as Central European Time (CET).

### Draw Events:

The preparations for the Qualifiers Draw are ongoing. The event will take place on 20 March, 17:00 local time (18:00 CET) at Wonderland in Cluj Napoca. Due to the rather difficult travel logistics, it is not mandatory for the National Federations to attend the draw event.

The final tournament draw will take place in Poland in April/May 2026. As the organizers have the right to seed one team in each preliminary group, the following seeding is planned at the current stage:

- Group A (Oradea): HUN
- Group B (Cluj-Napoca): ROU
- Group C (Antalya): TUR
- Group D (Brno): CZE
- Group E (Katowice): POL
- Group F (Bratislava): SVK

### Important upcoming dates:

- 20 March 2025 – Qualifiers Draw
- April / May 2026 – Final Tournament Draw
- April / May 2026 – HDC Part 1 – National Federations Workshop
- April / May 2026 – Partner Workshop
- 8-10 September 2026 – HDC Part 2
- 29 November 2026 – Arrival Day EHF Officials
- 30 Nov-1Dec 2026 – Officials’ Conference, Katowice, POL
- 2 December 2026 – Travel Day Officials

## **8.7. Men’s EHF EURO 2028 ESP/POR/SUI**

The CC members were informed that a Kick-off meeting between the EHF and the organisers took place in June 2024. In addition, the first coordination took place between the EHF and the organisers on 25 February 2025. The most important topic at this stage is to finalize the venue concept together with the organising countries. Especially for Spain there are currently many open questions. Please find the current information concerning the venues below:

### Preliminary Round :

- 2 Preliminary Round Groups in ESP (tbd)
- 2 Preliminary Round Groups in POR (Lisbon / Altice Arena)
- 2 Preliminary Round Groups in SUI (tbd)
- Possibility of an Opening Match Day. In case an opening match day will be organised it will be organised as a stand alone event.

### Main Round:

- 1 Main Round Group in ESP (tbd)
- 1 Main Round Group in POR (Lisbon / Altice Arena)

Final Weekend:

- ESP (tbd)

**8.8. Women's EHF EURO 2028 NOR/DEN/SWE**

**8.9. EHF EURO Events 2030 & 2032**

The events have been awarded accordingly:

- Men's EHF EURO 2030: CZE/POL/DEN
- Men's EHF EURO 2032: GER/FRA
- Women's EHF EURO 2030: first internal discussions; potentially alternative playing schedule
- Women's EHF EURO 2032: GER/DEN/POL

**9. Additional Matters**

**9.1. International Calendar 2025/2026; 2026/2027**

The 2025/26 was published already more than one year ago and was adapted with only small amendments. The 2026/27 version was published at the end of 2024. The Men's and Women's Competitions Conferences in April and May 2025 will bring further input for the 2027/28 calendar, Glaser assumed. Therefore no calendar issues were to deal with for the time being.

**9.2. EHF Anti-Doping Unit**

The Anti-Doping testing is going according to plan in the running competitions.

The situation of the POR player Miguel Martins was briefly touched as it was a very prominent case in the media. In the meantime his provisional suspension was lifted. Further clarifications regarding procedures will have to follow.

**10. Miscellaneous**

Glaser informed the CC Members about an issue which mainly concerns the Men's competitions at the start of each calendar year. Certain national federations have requested that players are to be released by their club outside of the scheduled National Team Week beginning of January. This procedure, however, brings along issues concerning the payment and the insurance of the players. As well in an Olympic year it results in even less holidays for the players, Hylle remarked. Further, it puts players in a bad position if they must decide between their club or national federation. It therefore is considered to be in the interest of all parties that situations like this do not happen again. Initiatives are set on the level of the club representatives and will be discussed at a stakeholder level.

Djurkovic expressed his thanks to all CC Members for their participation and inputs and drew attention to the next meeting on 29 August 2025. As well it was confirmed that one last CC meeting will be held the day prior to the 17<sup>th</sup> Ordinary EHF Congress 2025. He closed the meeting.

Vienna, 12 March 2025

Minutes by: Competitions and EURO Department