

MINUTES TO THE 3rd MEETING OF THE EHF NATIONS BOARD

Date Monday, 14 March 2022
Time 11:00 – 19:00
Venue Hotel Renaissance Wien | Room Strasbourg I

Participants NB

Mark Schober	Chairman / GER
Pirje Orasson	Vice Chairwoman / EST
Nodjialem Myaro	Member / FRA
Leonor Mallozzi	Member / POR
Morten Stig Christensen	Member / DEN
Ingo Meckes	Member / SUI

Participants EHF

Martin Hausleitner	Secretary General
Mario Kovacic	Director National Team Competitions
Marsha Brown	Corporate Liaison / Minutes

1. Welcome and Introduction

Chairman Schober welcomed the members to the meeting. It is noted that the general information was received during the common meeting.

2. Input NCW

War in Ukraine: concern voiced for the situation as well as the handball communities in these countries. Though unpredictable, it was questioned what would be remaining impact in Ukraine, Russia, Belarus, and the surrounding countries, as this was also important for neighbouring countries i.e.: EST, POL, etc. Though it was recognised that each country will take their own respective decisions in matters, the protection of players from aggression was also a focus and subscribed to the idea that children under 16 should be embraced into the sport.

YAC Events (incl. 24 teams): consideration for exam periods of YAC players, dates of competitions to be pushed back where necessary; the dates of the junior World Championship were deemed problematic and agreed that it should be evaluated – examples of solutions e.g.: tutors were given.

Emerging Nations: see NCM Input below.

EHF EURO 2024 incl. Qualifiers: NCW raised concern on the number of teams registering for the event. The proposal of a ‘Women’s Handball Day’ as a promotional tool to encourage interest. The women’s EURO needs ‘real’ not ‘symbolic’ investment. Examples of differences in engagement between men’s and women’s events were highlighted (DEN, GER, SUI). It was suggested that the idea be integrated into the handball survey and also put before the Conference of Presidents in September.

Grassroots: handball to be promoted to parents as an extracurricular activity when considering putting children in a fitness class.

3. Input NCM

War in Ukraine: NCM concurs that expedited support is needed for players under the top leagues as Federations want to be able to give players the right to play. It was remarked that players from RUS/BLR are blocked from playing in the 1st and 2nd divisions in FRA and DEN; the migration of persons to neighbouring countries was also mentioned i.e.: RUS to FIN.

EHF EURO 2024 incl. Qualifiers: it is confirmed that BLR/RUS cannot register for the event and therefore will not be part of the competition.

YAC Events in the Future: it is reiterated that the qualification to the event be held as close as possible to the respective final tournament (January, March). The Federations are looking for a compromise in order not to select the players too early. When discussing the possibility of a ‘C-Group’, the NCM believed that such an action has to be sustainable with the option of being Master Plan project with the final tournament being the end goal. Training courses led by field experts could be part of the framework. It is requested that as part of the presentation at the 13th Conference for Secretaries General that the objectives of the proposed changes are made clear.

Emerging Nations: NCM and NCW both discussed the possibility of a tailored workshop. It was envisaged that such an action could be part of the EHF Master Plan project that would target development, training for athletes, sustainable infrastructure, strengthening bases, as well as organisational skills. The idea of the workshop in within the environment of the Master Plan on the fringes of the upcoming EHF EURO was mentioned.

IHF Rules of the Game as per 1 July 2022: the new rules concern the top-level competitions, and it was underlined that a 4-metre centre circle would be costly and complicated; the EHF would decide concerning its competitions.

4. Input EHF

War in Ukraine: the EHF expects the IHF to issue a statement concerning the further procedure pertaining to transfer matters; at this time, there are a number of individual cases of which the EHF is aware. However, to avoid undue influence on the competitions, it is necessary to adhere to the regulations. Following the statement issued by the IOC and following the guidance of the EOC EU Office, it is clear that in some situations it is the remit of the Club/Federation to make decisions; nonetheless, the EHF will attempt to handle all the issues that have arisen/will arise i.e.: transfer fees.

YAC Events in the Future: in addition to the previous input, the plan in development offers a strategic approach based on a 4-year cycle. Upon registration, whether as participant or organiser, the exact plan will be known.

Leagues: a discussion between the EHLB and EHF has been initiated with the aim of establishing contact to women's handball leagues (approx.: 11 independent leagues) with a view of integration into the current structure.

Officiating: the EHF will host a seminar for National Federation Referee Responsibles on 20/21 & 27/28 May 2022 in Vienna. The objective revolves around exchanging new materials and establishing better contacts.

5. Summary and Follow-up Discussion

YAC Events in the Future (see previous comments): following the brief presentation from the EHF, it was noted that the 'Group' idea is aimed at developing good players and, in turn, good clubs. The topic is still as work in progress to be discussed fully at the 13th Conference for Secretaries General.

EHF EURO 2022 HUN/SVK: the final accounting is ongoing; support payments (case-by-case basis) have been made to the participants.

EURO Qualifiers: the scheduling of the draw is to be considered as it was deemed too late for 2022 and negatively impacted the participants.

National Ranking: the EHF took note of the comment and will treat the matter on an internal level.

Stakeholder Meetings: the NB agreed that the new format allows more time for discussion; however, more work is needed on the agenda, as some topics (e.g.: YAC) are not relevant to all stakeholder groups. The EHF responded that an increase of activities resulted in more content and topics to be treated; it is important to the EHF that all stakeholder groups receive information and feel included in the process with the right to contribute on matters. The input will be considered for future meetings.

6. Preparation PHB and WHB

The NB expect to see the topics of international transfers and the IHF Rules of the Game discussed in the sessions.

Looking to the consequences impacting the club competition following the suspension of RUS/BLR, and the non-participation of UKR, club teams as well as the evaluation of playing systems, the NB contemplated a possible enlargement - potential new format of the Champions League, the playing days – weekends vs. weekdays, marketing/TV, and spectators who are slowly coming back to the arenas. The NB agreed that all the elements mentioned are a ‘piece of the puzzle’ and took note that sometimes common opinion does not mean alignment in certain issues.

With no additional topics raised, Chairman Schober officially closed the meeting thanking the members for their contribution.

Vienna, 25 March 2022

For the Minutes: M Brown