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## MINUTES TO THE 5<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF THE EHF NATIONS COMMITTEE MEN (NCM)

<b>Date:</b>	Monday, 17 October 2022	
<b>Time:</b>	14:00 – 16:30	
<b>Venue:</b>	Courtyard by Marriott Wien Messe   Prater 4	
<b>NCM Participants:</b>	Ingo Meckes	Chairman   SUI
	Jari Henttonen	Vice Chairman   FIN
	M. S. Christensen	Member   DEN
	Bertrand Gille	Member   FRA
	Mark Schober	Member   GER
<b>EHF Participants:</b>	Mario Kovacic	Director NT Competitions
	Marsha Brown	Corporate Liaison   Minutes
<b>Excused:</b>	Fintan Lyons	Member   IRL

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### 1. Welcome & Introduction

Opening the meeting, Chairman Meckes mentioned the additional topics to be dealt with under AP3. Miscellaneous.

#### 1.1. NCM Meeting 03/2022 – Minutes and Follow-up

With no addition comment or question, the minutes were adopted.

#### 1.2. Follow-up to Common Meeting

Topics to be discussed under the relevant agenda points.

### 2. Men's National Team Competitions

#### 2.1. 2022 Younger Age Category Events – Review

##### 2.1.1. Men's 18 EHF EURO / Championships

Despite the success of the tournament, the experience and feedback to the event indicated that there are improvements to be made at the organisational level. On the technical side, it was mentioned that to protect the data of the young players from the betting market, data scouts are used, but not the full sport radar system, though the partner does assist when issues occur. The M18 Championships were deemed as a positive learning experience for the organisers; the problems that occurred (ISR) were deemed not unusual in the case of first-time organisers.

The Covid-19 situation was summed up: no mandatory vaccinations; functional pre-testing; no symptomatic persons, no positive tests.

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### **2.1.2. Men's 20 EHF EURO / Championships**

The Business Development & Marketing department of the EHF produced a report covering the media impact of the M20 EURO in POR. It was noted that despite the success of the organisation, POR experienced challenges hosting its first major event on a YAC level in 30 years. With a spacing of a few days to allow for a rest period for the organisers, the Handball Federation of Bulgaria, with additional assistance from the EHF, assumed the responsibility to host two M18 Championship events. It is hoped that a similar TV situation can be recreated in 2023 at the Women's 19 EHF EURO in Romania.

Input NCM: a case of unsportsmanlike conduct at the M20 event was mentioned; as a result, it was questioned if each player should be made to sign a pledged to 'sportsmanlike behaviour'; moreover, it was suggested that at such events, the delegates should do more to 'protect' referees, based on a situation where a referee couple were seeming put under pressure from the coaches of one team.

Input EHF: the NFs sign a 'Code of Conduct'; a player's pledge would result in a significant increase in pre-event administration. As to the referee situation, the incident could be discussed with G. Bebetos from the EHF office.

### **2.1.3. Other Events**

It was reported that referees completed the match reports at the W17 European Open where multiple mistakes (and later corrected) were made; the matter is to be analysed at the EHF level. The EYOF (EOC event) was briefly mentioned.

### **2.1.4. Beach Handball**

The placement of the 2023 Beach Handball EURO is problematic as at the time, the indoor club season is not finished in many countries. It was acknowledged that due to the qualification to the EU Games, there were no other scheduling possibilities. The NCM members provided a brief overview of BH activities in their countries. In the ensuing discussion the NCM raised the following points:

- The events are not attractive enough for potential hosts as there is no chance for a balanced budget or income streams (tickets, advertising).
- The discipline is an important part of the overall sport; however, mainly taking place in southern Europe where there is more support from local/national authorities.
- Certain NFs will not apply for a BH event as they are too costly; a business case (as previously mentioned to the current and previous BC Chairpersons) is to be established.
- The same persons are involved in the sport; the community is not growing.
- BH is a good way to promote the sport, but it is not the handball that is known; this must change if it is to become Olympic. This is a reason to invest in the sport, and to give focus to the performance level; therefore, it would be worth more to invest in beach handball than in other developmental branches of the sport.
- Development must also occur at other levels: best practice database i.e., sharing information and experiences, tailored strategies for regions/countries, etc.
- It is necessary for the development of BH to have events take place in other countries; therefore, a business case/strategy is imperative.

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#### **2.1.5. Future Outlook – Input & Feedback**

In view of the 2024 YAC events with 24 teams, information is being prepared for distribution in December; moreover, the MU18 Qualifiers are in the updated version of calendar. Input NCM: the step to 24 teams was deemed positive; in the future there could be the possibility of a joint host situation.

### **2.2. EHF EURO Events 2022 – 2028**

#### **2.2.1. EHF EURO 2022 SMM – Organisation**

To the upcoming event, the NCM briefly touched upon the Covid-19, Hygiene Concept / testing regime, and it was emphasised that there would be no ‘bubble’ for those involved in the event, thus the testing regime would not have the optimal effect in safeguarding the players, resp. the event. The other side of the discussion concerned sleeve advertising.

#### **2.2.2. EHF EURO 2024 GER – Organisation**

In addition to the presentation at the Conference of Presidents, as well as the information supplied during the common meeting, no further input was given to the agenda point.

#### **2.2.3. EHF EUROs 2026 / 2028**

- Men’s EHF EURO 2026: Four nations will play Qualification Phase 1; the current situation continues to be monitored as a decision is to be taken as to whether the National Teams from BLR & RUS would be allowed to register for the qualification.
- Women’s EHF EURO 2026: it was questioned when the last possible date would be to select an alternative host, and when will the final decision be taken. Input EHF: the next evaluation of the situation will take place in the first half of 2023.

#### **2.2.4. EHF EURO 2030**

No additional information; refer to the minutes of the common meeting.

### **2.3. EHF EURO Qualifiers**

#### **2.3.1. EHF EURO 2024**

The first two rounds have been played; the problems with the on-screen graphics are to be analysed by the EHF.

### **2.4. Other Competitions / IHF Competitions**

The IHF/EHF Wheelchair World Handball Championship taking place with seven European participants; all matches will be streamed on EHF TV; the event will also serve as an evaluation event for referee candidates. The NCM discussed the wheelchair handball situation in their respective countries; the expense, the lack of funding, as well as the competition with other established para-sports (basketball, rugby) was highlighted.

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### 3. Miscellaneous

- **Masterplan - Status Update:** no further information
- **Ranking National /Club Teams:** the completion, resp. update, and subsequent distribution of the NT ranking lists was discussed. The ranking lists are comprised from the culmination of three events; the optimal publication date is to be considered. The separation of the MCL and MEL ranking lists was discussed in the common meeting.
- **Energy crisis:** looking to the current global situation, it was opined that at some point the handball community “will suffer”. The stakeholders shared experiences about some relevant challenges being faced (i.e., halls) and the endeavours undertaken to combat them; a major problem currently faced is the significant increase in costs (hall rentals). At the top level, these issues are not pressing yet.
- **Players’ Agents:** to be discussed in the Nations Board.
- **Resin-free ball:** out of the brief discussion, it was agreed that a resin-free ball should not be implemented at the professional level; there was no dissent about having a resin-free ball used for children and at the amateur level.
- **Referee selection – regional matches:** due to a recent decision where referees were not selected to officiate matches of neighbouring countries, the situation regarding the regulations was questioned. The matter was referred to the NB.
- **Referee selection for international friendly matches (input from B. Rabenseifner, AUT):** the regulations surrounding friendly matches was questioned. The matter was referred to the NB.
- **Professionalisation of Referees:** A short discussion took place on the professionalisation of the referees; the situation in France was given as an example – currently exploring the matter in a controlled manner with one referee couple, and the project is jointly funded by the clubs and leagues.

With no additional topics raised, Chairman Meckes officially concluded the meeting.

Vienna, 24 October 2022