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## MINUTES TO THE 10<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF THE EHF NATIONS COMMITTEES MEN

**Date:** Monday, 3 March 2025

**Time:** 14:00 – 15:40

**Venue:** EHF Office | The Game

**Participants:** Jari Henttonen Chair | FIN  
Mark Schober Member | GER  
Fintan Lyons Member | IRL

**EHF Office:** Marsha Brown Corporate Liaison  
Markus Glaser Club Competitions

**Excused:** Bertrand Gille Member | FRA

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### 1. Welcome & Introduction

#### 1.1. NCM Meeting 10/2024 | Minutes and Follow-Up

Chair Jari Henttonen welcomed the members to the meeting; without additional comment, the minutes were approved.

#### 1.2. Common Meeting | Follow-Up

**IHF Rules of the Game for Indoor Handball - Amendments:** the group exchanged their thoughts and questions to the information on the amendments delivered per email to the Continental and Member Federations on 28 February 2025 (and valid as per 1 July 2025); CSO provided further clarification where it was possible for him to do so and underlined that further information was needed.

**EHF EURO Regulations:** the NCM asked for further details to the proposed changes to the EHF EURO Regulations; CSO Glaser made a note of the request.

**EHF Youth Club Championship(s):** the NCM requested that the topic be also raised at the PHB due to the relation to both youth club competitions in the National Federations. In the ensuing discussing, it was also question as to why the age category was decided for 1 July, and not calendar based. The NCM also questioned the financial affordability (esp. for women's teams), as well as the ultimate objective of the project. CSO Glaser briefly explained that it was mentioned that youth players up to now only had the opportunity to play at the national team level, but not an international club level; though the approach is not new, he noted the positive feedback to the idea from some stakeholders. The NCM mentioned the difficulty of having to change the calendar mid-season, as well as other complexities that should have been discussed prior to the decision being taken in December 2024.

**Beach Handball Think Tank:** reflecting on previous meetings of the NCM/NB, it was made clear that the group wanted to be part of the dialogue, as it is a topic that should also be discussed at the level of the Federations. CSO Glaser stated that the Think Tank spoke of the topics coming from the technical level and believed that the main discussion was yet to come and briefly noted the topics that were on the agenda of the BH Think Tank, and those that were not. Other points arising from the discourse underlined the importance of fixing the international beach handball calendar. For the NCM, the topic remains open.

**National Team/Federation Ranking:** the NCM requested that a clarification of the scoring system be transmitted to the National Federations to ensure clarity on the actions/activities to be undertaken to gain more points. Also, it was queried if the ranking after the annual update could be visible for public.

## **2. Men's National Team Competitions**

### ***2.1. 2025 Younger Age Category Events / Status Update & Preview***

No additional comment.

### ***2.2. Beach Handball***

Please refer to the minutes of the common meeting as well as AP1.2.

#### **2.2.1. 2025 Activities | 2025 & Beyond | Commentary to BH Think Tank**

Considering the upcoming beach handball events in Türkiye, the NCM were informed on the visit of a delegation from the TUR Federation; there were meetings with the respective internal department incl. Business Development. It was reiterated that the entire leadership of the Schober has been nominated as the official representative and will use the opportunity to see the infrastructure as well as how the TUR Federation are handling event organisation.

### ***2.3. EHF EURO Events 2025 – 2028***

#### **2.3.1. EHF EURO Qualifiers 2026 DNS | Status Update**

CSO Glaser informed the NCM that the competitions department continues to work with the national teams where there are challenges in organising matches in May. For the upcoming matches of UKR and ISR, playing venues have been found.

#### **2.3.2. EHF EUROS 2026 & Beyond | Information Exchange**

No additional input.

### ***2.4. Other Events & IHF Activities***

The NCM briefly reiterated a few topics, some of which were mentioned earlier, and in the common meeting, but at this point did not enter an in-depth discussion.

### 3. Miscellaneous

#### *3.1. 2025 Men's Competitions Conference*

The NCM Members will be attending the Conference in April; the group members discussed potential topics that they would like to bring to the forum. It was noted that the confirmed participants come from all stakeholder and expert groups.

#### *3.2. Emerging Nations Issues*

NCM Member Lyons updated the group on the continuing development of handball in Ireland specifically, the professionalisation of the business aspect of Olympic Handball Ireland (OHI); the activities are reflected in the 63-page business report. Moreover, OHI continues to look to other sport institutions in Ireland, giving the example of CEV which has moved from a volunteer-led to a core funded and employee-led organisation. Therefore, concerning the Masterplan agreement, OHI is looking to fund a CEO/Secretary General (this person is still being sought) to push the development of the organisation. Moving toward a more professional model, he noted that challenges will arise, but nonetheless underlined the importance of volunteers. Lyons also mentioned that the different stakeholders require different performance indicators, SportIreland in terms of reporting, are looking for numbers whereas the EHF has showed more interest in the quality of players, and while OHI is seeking comparative statistical information. OHI can also report an expansion in the cooperation with SHA (Celtic Cup with its Final Four event for men and women with alternating venues in IRL and SCO). With reference to the competitions, Lyons spoke on the quality of the referees, particularly, a negative experience; this led to a discussion and a clear offer of cooperation between federations on this matter, and others.

Turning to the upcoming Emerging Nations Conference, and thinking about a possible theme for the event, ideas were floated on making the Masterplan a focus point and adding performance factors that will lead to success such as having criteria – minimum 2 to 3 full-time professional staff members to focus on the daily business and targeted areas i.e. office administration, event organization. Closing his report, Lyons voiced his intention to coordinate with the EHF Office on the agenda for the Emerging Nations Conference.

#### *3.3. International Calendar / National Team Week*

No additional comment.

#### *3.4. EHF EURO Qualifiers Phase 1 / General Development in the Future / Status Update*

CSO Glaser briefly noted that the process of the men's qualifiers is, at this point, standardised; the first women's qualifiers events will commence in March 2025; naturally, following Phase 1 there will be the corresponding evaluation.

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#### 4. Any Other Business

##### *4.1. Catalogue of Administrative Sanctions*

The NCM are informed that at the EHF internal level, input was sought from the different departments and the feedback has been collated and is being treated within the legal department. In turn, a motion will be formulated for submission to the Executive Committee. Due to the nature of the topic, the NCM advised that as the Catalogue touches upon many areas, the implementation should be steadily paced to allow for an acclimatisation by the National Federations.

##### *4.2. International Transfer Certificates for players under 16 and/or adolescents with refugee status*

NCM Member Schober raised the point of how to bring about a better process for Federations/Clubs/young payers dealing with such an issue; giving the example of a young player born in one country but holding birthright citizenship of another due to the nationality held by the parents, and of refugees who are reluctant to submit their passports due to understandable safety concerns. It was agreed that the matter should remain open to see if it can be handled in a better way; thus, a formal letter will be sent to the IHF.

With the agenda complete, Chair Henttonen thanks the participants for their contribution and closed the meeting.

Vienna, 7 March 2025

For the Minutes| M. Brown