

Minutes to the 10th Meeting of the EHF Women's Handball Board (WHB)

Date/Time:	Tuesday, 8 March 2016 / 14:30 – 18:30 Wednesday, 9 March 2016 / 8:30 – 12:30
Venue:	Vienna, AUT
Participants:	Lidija Bojić-Ćaćić (LBC) Chairwoman (CRO) Pirje Orasson (PO) Vice Chairwoman (EST) Nodjialem Myaro (NM) Member (FRA) Narcisa Lecusanu (NL) Member (ROU) Marta Bon (MB) Member (SLO) Ernö Kelescsenyi (EK) Member (HUN) Helga H. Magnusdóttir (HM) EHF Executive Committee Alenka Cuderman (AC) Coordinator Women's Handball Programme
In Part:	Jean Brihault (JB) EHF President Arne Elovssohn (AE) EHF Executive Committee Michael Wiederer (MW) EHF Secretary General

1. Welcome

Chairwoman Lidija Bojić-Ćaćić, warmly welcomed the participants to the meeting, which took place on the international women's day, therefore the group exchanged some sweets as a notable attention to the special day.

LBC used this opportunity to congratulate the strong leadership and respective nominations/awards received by:

- Narcisa Lecusanu, being named by the Prime Minister of Romania as Secretary of State for Youth and Sport and nominated to the IHF MC,
- Marta Bon, being awarded with the highest sport award in Slovenia,
- Helga Magnusdóttir, who received the highest sport award in Iceland two years ago, however the information was communicated only on this date.

2. Minutes of WHB Meeting No. 9 (10/2015) & Follow-up report

Without additional comment, the minutes of the previous meeting were adopted.

As a follow-up report under AP 5 LBC informed the group that as a representative of the Croatian Handball Federation she had visited the women's club HC Grude in Bosnia & Herzegovina (BIH) and had spoken to the President and Secretary General of the BIH Handball Federation, who announced the changes in women's handball in their country and expressed willingness for stronger support of women's handball in BIH. They will start with the junior national team, which is registered for the qualifications of the World Championship WU20 in Russia and 2-3 matches of the national team will be transmitted on the national TV to strengthen the profile of women's handball in the country.

AC referred to AP 6: the WHB initiated the photo presentation W17 EHF EURO 2015 which was set to music, to which the EHF has the rights (EURO anthem) and has been distributed to all participants: national teams, referees, delegates, and representatives as a memento and for promotional purposes.

AP 4 was updated and discussed later in accordance with the agenda.

3. EHF Information

There was 1 EXEC meeting since the last WHB Meeting in October 2015 and no questions or objection was raised. AE informed on the EHF Extraordinary Congress in Bucharest and the negative outcomes for the WHB; two important motions in respect of the age limit and gender equality did not reach two-third majority, what in his opinion means a big loss for the WHB and the EHF as organisation.

AE and JB provided further the information in respect of the IHF issues as follows:

- New IHF (5) rules of the game, which will be introduced from 1 July 2016 and consequently at OG in Rio
- Organisation criteria at the Olympic qualification tournaments

The WHB was provided with the explanation of the moving of the OG qualification tournaments from three different continents to Europe as a first step in decision-taking process and in second step the selection criteria for the organiser: main criteria was performance and second criteria were commercial/marketing, TV situation and spectator issues. The organisers of the women's tournaments are France, Russia and Denmark.

- Compensation at the OG qualification tournaments
Since introduction of the compensation and player insurance at the Women's World Championship in Serbia 2012 that will be followed also at the OG qualification tournaments to the Rio. Women's teams will receive all together 120.000 SFR, thereof for the first place 200 SFR per player/day, for the second place 150 SFR per player/day, for the third place 100 SFR per player/day and for the fourth place 50 SFR per player/day. WHB noted the financial gap between men's and women's handball, however this is according to the respective overall financial situation.
- Reduction of the IHF Council by 3 members since last meeting in December 2015

4. Women's National Team and Club Competitions

4.1 The WHB reviewed the EHF/IHF national team and EHF club competition/events and respective qualifications for European participants for the period 2016-2017.

2016 IHF/EHF Women's Trophy

It was noted that the event was due to commence on 8-13 March 2016 in Tbilisi, Georgia. The registration for the event was concluded by 15 January 2016 and following eight teams were selected: ALB, ARM, BEL, CYP, FAR, GEO, LAT and MLT, however the Federation of MLT withdrew and it was substituted by EST. ISR, KOS and GRE were not selected. The competition was executed at two venues, in two groups with four teams and with a rest day. The age limit of the players was reduced from 23 yrs. to 18 yrs. Parallel to the competition the coaches' clinic was held. 5 Young Referee couples were nominated, thereof 3 female couples for the event. The IHF financial support was confirmed.

- ❖ The WHB noted that was an extremely short period between the registration closing date/team selection for the event and the start of the competition, which cause logistic and organisational challenges, which could influence the associated costs. The late provision of the competition regulations was not helpful as well. **This requires improvement for future events.**
- ❖ The WHB reviewed the first results and noted a very high result between LAT and ALB 48:1. The group concluded that for the future event min. requirements/criteria for taking participation has to be integrated to be able to evaluate the level of participants. Therefore the WHB proposed once again the following **selection criteria for participation at the WT:**
 - Registration for YAC EURO/WCh qualifications.
 - Numbers of players, teams and competitions in different YAC nationally.
 - Participation of national teams in international competitions in last 2 years.
 - Number of times that they have organised the CT.

The WHB is of the view that for the development of women's handball throughout Europe, the emerging nations' competitions are a very sensitive topic and it is a big challenge to find the right structure. It is deemed necessary to work together with the Federations and develop an increased number of teams at youth level. There are high expectations for the new YAC EURO system, beginning in 2017.

EUROPEAN OPEN 2016 / W18

The event will take place 4 to 8 July 2016 and 18 participating nations are registered.

Women's EHF EURO 2016 Sweden

It was noted that 33 teams are registered for the event and two phases of qualification are required. The preparation process is ongoing. The venues for the preliminary round are defined and have strong spectator base: Stockholm (SWE), Helsingborg (NOR), Kristianstad (POL) and Malmö (DEN); main round will be played in Gothenburg (SWE if qualify) and Helsingborg; finals in Gothenburg. The draw for the final tournament will be in Gothenburg on 10 June 2016. The organiser started the promotional activities: local ambassadors since October 2015, ticket sales since December 2015, a fan village for the final weekend is announced.

- ❖ The WHB will in close coordination with the EHF EURO department and the local organiser, draw up their EURO ambassador project (more details under project) as well as undertake the promotion of the female head coaches and awarding of the All Star Team at Women's EHF EURO 2016.
- ❖ The WHB also discussed that the EURO regulations, in respect of the emerging nations is too strict in relation to the provision of a TV signal in the second qualification phase, particularly when there is no interest in accessing this on the part of the participating teams due to the high level of costs. The WHB recommends that a further review of this particular element of the regulations is undertaken.

W17 EHF EURO 2017

Altogether 36 teams registered for the W17 events in 2017, which means a EURO competition with 16 teams and two Championships with 10 teams participating.

The bidding nations are:

W17 EURO: SVK (Michalovce)

W17 Championships: LTU (Klaipeda) and MKD (Skopje)

The events are to be awarded by the EXEC on 15/16 March 2016.

WHB highlighted the very positive feedback regarding the Young Reporter Project (more details under project), which should possibly be passed on to the future organisers.

W19 EHF EURO 2017

Bidding nations are SLO (Celje) and HUN (Erd and Budaörs).

Based on the bidding documents and the site visit reports the EXEC will make their decision.

IHF Events:

WU18 in Slovakia

11 places are available for Europe and are taken by the top 10 teams from W17 EHF EURO 2015 in Macedonia and the organiser SVK.

WU20 Russia

31 teams registered. Already qualified RUS, ROU, DEN, SWE and 8 places for Europe are available.

Olympic Games in Rio

The WHB noted the qualification tournaments which will be played on 18-20 March 2016 in

FRA (&NED, JPN, TUN)

DEN (& ROU, URU, MNE)

RUS (&POL, SWE, MEX)

The top two teams of each tournament qualify to the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio. Already qualified for the event are BRA, ESP, ANG, ARG, KOR and NOR.

WWCh 2017 in Germany

The registration deadline is 18 March 2016. GER as organiser and NOR are already qualified and the top three from Women's EHF EURO 2016 in SWE will qualify directly.

2016 EHF FINAL4 Budapest

WHB noted that according to the playing schedule of the quarter-finals one Hungarian team will participate at the F4. According to the report of the LOC the spectators' interest is large enough to use the larger mobile stand in the arena for altogether 12.000 spectators. The ticketing strategy and communication plan are available. The LOC is offering the tickets to the EHF Member Federations and Clubs with a 15% discount and plans to launch a 5% ticket price discount promotion on the milestone dates (25/50/75) before the start of the F4. The presented show concept was approved by EHF. The production of the promotional video, finalization of the VIP concept and the pool of sponsors is planned for March 2016. LOC informed that currently no sponsorship agreement exists for the F4 and they will approach Audi and some Hungarian companies in the near future with the sponsorship offer. The draw event will be held in Budapest on 12 April 2016, the venue is yet to be selected.

2015/16 Women's EHF Champions League

The group expressed concerns about

- the obvious gap in respect of consistency and quality of performance of a small number (8) of the recognized elite teams and the remaining participating teams
- lack of a title sponsor, and general sponsor disinterest for the competition
- limited marketing and promotion at all levels

and noted that the positive steps with the introduction of the new system with the main round of (2x6 teams) & quarter-finals as well as the continuing competition and promotional activities i.e.: PluriScout system and the WCL Magazine, which is produced after each playing round and ensures good promotion and more attractive presentation of women's handball. No news in respect of title sponsor of the WCL, the relation to the top sponsors is a permanent issue on the level of EHF/EHF.

2015/16 EHF Cup Competitions

In the current season everything is running well under the old competition system, and the attention is turned to next season and the merger of the EHF Cup and Cup Winners Cup as of 2016/17, the preparation activities are currently being processed.

4.2 Survey on Women's Club Handball in Europe

AC presented the outcomes of the survey in the following areas (for details, the respective evaluation report will be forwarded to the EXEC):

- Clubs' Player statistics
- Satisfaction with the Club competitions (National, Cross border, and EHF European Cup competitions)
- Clubs' expectations and challenges in the EHF European Cup competitions
- Clubs' satisfaction with the EHF European Cup competitions (organisation, participation costs, ability to fulfil the competition regulations)
- Media coverage of women's handball (specific media channels) and Clubs' Spectator demographics

- Financial support of women's handball
- Promotion and marketing activity (marketing and PR responsible, optimally used advertising space, ability to synchronise the local marketing duties/advertising in respect of the EHF regulations)
- Health insurance of the Players
- Women in Club handball (female non-playing staff and female leadership, clubs' preferences for recruitment of female players for non-playing roles, players' activities in the local Community beyond handball)
- Proposals/feedback from the Clubs to the WHB

❖ The WHB Conclusions:

The Club survey evaluation report shall be forwarded to the EXEC for their information and consideration. The WHB recommended that the respective evaluation report be forwarded to the CC, MC, EHF, WCB, WFCH, EHF MB and EHF Media and a short version of the report to Clubs and Member Federations for their information and consideration. The highlighted areas, which are underlined above, require further steps/action.

5. Women's Handball Programme

5.1 Area of responsibility – Update by Representatives

LBC proposed to have more persons responsible for the Member Federations within the WHB in the future, due to the complexity and support required. Currently, the distribution of the three nations representatives is based on the respective EHF ranking as follows: 1-6, 7-24 and 25-50.

PO and NM reviewed the status of their communication with the nations ranked 25-50 and 1-6. The respective WHB support programmes are available.

NM mentioned the challenge of the FRA team in the Cup Winners' Cup, who will play in the semi-final and the TV signal from the away match is not ensured, therefore no opportunities for the promotion of the international appearance of the FRA club. In addition she highlighted the high costs of € 1500 for an uplink to international TV signal in respect of the away match in the quarter-final of the same competition. This issue is included in the Club Survey evaluation report.

5.2 Refereeing matters and female non-playing staff & representation

The WHB reviewed the female referee structure for the season 2015/16 and noted that

- ❖ The number of the female EHF YRP couples has dropped the second year in a row.
Therefore the WHB proposed to initiate more opportunities that encourage the Federations to undertake further development of the female referees on a national level via a required clear and transparent strategy as well as the nomination of the young referee couples for international competitions.

It has been noted with great pleasure that the TRC provided very positive opinion in respect of the performance of the female referee couples and that they have the full support of the TRC. In the current season 21 female referee couples were nominated to the international matches within the EHF and all of them have already had 4-5 matches. The performance is relatively stable and D. Nacevski announced that the top female referees will be nominated to all upcoming women's competitions ie: IHF/EHF Women's Trophy (3 female couples out of 5), Women's EHF F4 and Women's EHF EURO SWE with the participation rate up to 50%.

The EHF female non-playing staff structure (delegates, referees, lecturers, master coaches) is stable with the exception of the previously highlighted decrease in the number of the YRP couples (-4) and Beach Referee couples (-5) in comparison to the last season.

The current representation rate of the female elected persons in the EHF commissions and boards is 17%, whereas the respective rate of the elected & nominated person is 19%.

5.3 Gender equality & EHF Election Congress

The WHB discussed the gender equality issue within the EHF structure, considered the EU initiatives and supported/initiated stronger involvement of women in the leadership roles within the EHF by conclusions:

- ❖ The recommendation to the EXEC the principle of support to the female delegates at the EHF Congress (11/2016), which would be in accordance with the EHF Statutes. To avoid any misunderstanding the handball profile of the person supported should be requested.
- ❖ The request for the opportunity to present the status of women's handball in Europe (based on the surveys) as well as the WHB projects at the EHF Conference for Secretaries General. In addition the encouragement of the Member Federations in respect of the nomination of the female delegates to the EHF Congress and especially female candidates for the EHF functions would be provided.
- ❖ The "new" elected WHB team should update the current Women's Handball strategy in respect of the gender equality and create respective motions for the non-electoral Congress 2018 as well as prepare a communication plan to Member Federations aimed at increasing the election of female persons within the EHF structure in the future (for the EHF Congress 2020). The respective communication to the Member Federations should consider also the encouragement of Federations to increase the number of female persons in leadership position within their Federations.

JB mentioned that it may be a good opportunity if the WHB were to ask the FRA handball federation to present at the 2017 EHF Presidents' conference their structure in respect of the gender equality issue, due to the fact that their female/male rate at 2017 will reach 50%/50% ratio.

JB announced that he is ready to sign the "Brighton Declaration Plus Helsinki 2014" within his mandate and explained his respective view. He is taking this issue extremely seriously and will sign the declaration only when the organisation is ready to fulfil the signed commitments. The planned signing in May 2015 was postponed due to the fact that in April 2015 the EXEC rejected the Extraordinary Congress and therefore the changes proposed (also in respect of the gender equality issue). Finally, at the Extraordinary Congress in November 2015 the motions in respect of the gender equality did not reach the required 75% votes according to the Statues, and therefore were rejected by the Congress, however the majority of the Nations (52%) were favourable to the gender equality approach, therefore now is the time that the organisation takes further steps: signing of the declaration and encouraging the Federations to follow the EHF approach and support more women in their leadership structures. JB will present this statement at the upcoming EXEC meeting and the respective communication to the Federations will follow.

6. Strengthening women's handball / WHB action plan 2015/16

Education projects (6):

2015 Top Coaches' and EHF License Renewal Seminar

WHB initiative to the above mentioned seminar resulted in 4 female participants, for them the participation fee was covered by the EHF

2015/16 EHF "Rinck" Convention (RC) Open Master Coach and Licensing Course

WHB initiative to the above mentioned course resulted in 3 female participants, for them the course participation fee will be covered by the EHF (all three modules)

2016 EHF Club Manager Seminar in Cologne

- ➔ WHB initiative to the above mentioned seminar for 5 female participants, for them 75% of the associated course cost will be covered by the EHF

2016 Certificate Programme European Handball Manger in Cologne (English language)

- WHB initiative to the above mentioned programme for 5 female participants, for them 80% of the course fee will be covered by the EHF. All 5 candidates are already registered.
The candidates will have to sign the "Education Support and Funding Agreement" which clearly states that the candidate will agree to repay to the EHF any financial award issued if she fails to obtain the certification. Promotional activities will accompany the signing of the agreement.

2016 Youth Coaches workshop in Hungary

- WHB initiative to the above mentioned workshop for 7 female participants aged under 28 years, for them 100% of the associated costs will be covered by the EHF

2016 EHF Course for Beach Handball Referees, Delegates, Coaches

- WHB proposed to support up to 20 candidates at the above mentioned course (similar programme as in 2014)

WHB concluded that all financially supported participants at educational courses are required to submit a report to the EHF/WHB.

Development projects (5):

Players Survey at Women's EHF EURO 2014

AC presented the outcomes of the survey above in the following areas (for details, please see the respective evaluation report and the comparison of the data 2012 & 2014 will be forwarded to the EXEC):

- Players demographics (fostering!)
- Satisfaction with condition at national competitions (daily allowances, sport achievement award!)
- Players' support from their clubs and personal spheres
- Satisfaction with clothing
- Satisfaction with media coverage & general promotion of the sport
- Players' insurance income
- Player activity following their active career (female leadership, recruitment & education!)
- Reason for terminating active career
- Satisfaction with female coaches (female leadership, recruitment & education!)
- Ambassadors
- Players' proposals to the WHB

❖ The WHB Conclusions:

The Players survey evaluation report along with the respective comparison 2012 & 2014 shall be forwarded to the EXEC for their information and consideration.

The WHB recommended that the respective evaluation report be forwarded to the MC, WCB, WFCH, EHF MB and EHF Media for their consideration and a short version of the report to Member Federations and Clubs for their information.

The highlighted areas, which are underlined above, require attention or further steps/action.

It is proposed that the outcomes are presented to the Member Federations also at the EHF Workshop for Strengthening of WH/EHF Conference for Secretaries General in Dubrovnik.

Survey on Women's Club Handball in Europe

The evaluation report is available in attachment. The details were presented under the point 4.2

Ball Size 1.5

The outcome of the research on the impact of the ball sizes 1/1.5/2 on the velocity of the ball, which was undertaken by Marta Bon is listed:

- Scientific measurements: the results indicate that there is no significant difference in velocity using different ball sizes 1/ 1.5 /2.
- Subjective opinions: the smaller ball size 1.5 vs. 2 has been a little easier to handle and to catch, however the players would not prefer to use the smaller ball size 1.5 without glue.

→ Carmen Manchado will provide further scientific measurements in respect of the ball coverage index.

❖ The WLB will provide their feedback to the EHF CAN Coordinator Helmut Hörtsch regarding:

- Ball size for female senior and YAC players
- Use or non-use of glue

after receiving the feedback from Carmen Manchado.

Best fostering concept/Best school project 2015/16

The WLB initiated the fostering project with the Member Federations and Clubs within the EHF European Cup competitions to tender their fostering/school concepts and structure of cooperation (Member Federation - Governmental Authorities - Independent Education providers throughout Europe - Clubs) and their proactive approach in respect of development and promotion of handball to school children (two categories: girls aged 5-10 years and female players aged 11-20 years). 8 applications were received and on the proposal of the WLB the EXEC decided for the best two projects in each category, which were financially awarded EUR 5.000 each by the EHF. The awarded amounts will be disbursed in two tranches, based on the provided project drawing plan and respective interim reports. The awarded fostering concepts were presented & promoted on the EHF and awarded clubs' websites as well as introduced to the Member Federations at the EHF Workshop for Strengthening of WH. The feedback has been very positive and the project will continue next year.

Workshop for strengthening of women's handball networks with responsible persons for women's handball in Member Federations will be held on 10 March 2016, see the EXEC summary report and ppt presentation for the details.

Promotion projects (4):

Award for the top female leadership

→ Aiming to encourage and promote female leadership the WLB proposed to undertake the initiative to award

- the female national team head coaches and their Federations
- All Star Team

at the Women's EHF EURO 2016 in Sweden

Award for the Federation with the greatest development of women's handball (only in the Congress year)

- ❖ The WLB proposes to encourage the Member Federations to apply for the above award (method objective criteria on applicants)
- ❖ The award will be given in a form as monetary award for development activities along with a diploma
- ❖ The presentation of the award will be at the EHF Congress 2016.

This proposal requires the EXEC approval.

Brighton Plus Helsinki 2014 Declaration on Women and Sport (see the comment under the point 5.3/signing is planned for 2016)

EURO Ambassador project (March 2016)

→ In coordination with the local organiser of the Women's EHF EURO 2016 in Sweden and the EHF EURO management the respective ambassador project will be created. The marketing plan of the organiser is available, providing the first information about the planned activities. For the EURO in Sweden only 1 or 2

ambassadors should be nominated and should be involved in several pre-event activities, to become recognised by the handball family and the fans.

- WHB would insist on cross promotion of the EURO event via WCL matches and national team matches, like last year via LED/LCD animation.

7. Other issues

- ❖ Discrimination in women's handball – Letter from EK as a President of the WFCH to the IOC President

AE informed the group that he had spoken with the IHF President Mustafa regarding this issue. The IHF has no system for education or nomination of the delegates, therefore no control. There is no reason to say why one delegate is better than the other. There are a lot of qualified delegates available and there are no set criteria or guarantee for nomination. However the nominations are proposed by the IHF President and confirmed by the Council. JB highlighted that they object any act of discrimination and that there is no doubt that the nominated delegates to the WWCh in Denmark were competent.

As an example, a specific case that occurred at the Men's EHF EURO 2016 in Poland was highlighted, where the Captain of Sweden wanted to wear the armband in rainbow colors, however that was not accepted by the tournament management, as the EHF statutes strictly prohibit any issue/action which could be seen as political. Ideological statements are not allowed on the court.

LBC asked EK why the WFCH, as the group responsible for the clubs in the EHF competitions, discussed the issue of the international delegates at the WWCh as that is the issue of the IHF and why he as a member of the EHF WFCH and WHB had not initially contacted the EHF President, Vice-President or Secretary General before sending a letter to IOC, doing disservice to handball & women's handball.

EK noted that the answer of the IOC President was very political. He signed the letter as a President of the WFCH being of the view that there is no place in women's handball for discrimination, and he would like more transparency of the system.

- ❖ Women's beach handball photos
WHB noted that whilst the photos of the women's beach handball are in general very attractive and presenting athletic movements, there are however also photos in circulation, which are not focused on the sport but only on a part of the body. The WHB is of the view, that the EHF is using high standard photographers for their events and that complete control in this respect is not possible, therefore for the moment no respective measures can be taken.

The next meetings of the WHB are scheduled for 11/12 October 2016 (Vienna).

The Chairwoman closed the meeting with thanks to the participants for their contributions and expressed that she was looking forward to the EHF Workshop for Strengthening of Women's Handball Network and the respective outcomes.

Copies: WHB, EXEC
For the minutes: A. Cuderman
14 March 2016