
MINUTES TO THE 22ND MEETING OF THE WOMEN'S HANDBALL BOARD

Date / Time: Tuesday, 12 October 2021 / 09:00 – 12:30

Venue: Vienna, AUT

Participants

WHB:	Marta Bon	Chairwoman / SLO
	Leonor Mallozzi	Deputy Chairwoman/ Member NCW / POR
	Nodjialem Myaro	Member NCW / FRA
	Deja Ivanovic	Member WFCH / SLO
	Radmila Petrovic	Member WFCH / MNE
	Jelena Eric	Member / SRB
	Elena Borrás Alcaraz	Member / ESP
	Monika Listkiewicz	Member / POL
	Bente Aksnes	Member EXEC / NOR
	F. V. Blazquez Garcia	Member EXEC / ESP
<i>In Part</i>	Michael Wiederer	President
<i>In Part</i>	Martin Hausleitner	Secretary General

EHF Office:

	Alenka Cuderman	Women's Handball Coordinator
<i>In Part</i>	Markus Glaser	Chief Sports Officer

1. Welcome and Introduction

Wiederer warmly welcomed the participants to the meeting noting the updated EHF structure in respect of the stakeholders' platform and changed role of the newly formed Women's Handball Board (further WHB). Whilst the past WHB was targeting the development, the new structure is driven in direction of professional sport. Therefore, as there were no representatives of Leagues and Players to the WHB, the EHF nominations to the WHB were due to competences, experiences and activities in handball. He encouraged a strong representation of the board in the EHF requesting cooperation and provision of the input.

2. EHF Information

Reference to be taken to the minutes of the common PHB/WHB meeting.

3. Minutes of WHB Meeting No. 21 (03/2021)

Without additional comment, the minutes of the previous meeting that took place in March 2021 were adopted.

4. Elections / Nominations

4.1. Election Chairwoman /Deputy Chairwoman

President explained the election procedure and asked if there were any candidates for the position of the Chairperson. Myaro informed that she cannot continue as a chairwoman due to personal and professional reasons. She thanked the board members for their cooperation and full support in the last two years. In her opinion, it is important that the WHB is taking care of the image and to present itself in the best possible way. She proposed Mallozzi for the position, noting her experiences with the work in the Women's Handball Board and knowledge in various sport management areas.

Ivanovic praised the work of Myaro and the work of the WHB in the last election period and proposed Bon for the position of the Chairwoman as a second candidate, noting the new structure and the role of the WHB as well as highlighting the competences of Bon in handball as a professional player and coach at the highest level, scientific expert as well as former WHB and MC Member. Both candidates expressed their interests for the position. The election results concluded with four votes for each candidate and upon proposal of the president the group unanimously agreed that the WHB would be represented by two alternating chairpersons during the elected period, each of them for two years: Bon for the period 2021-2023 and Mallozzi for the period 2023-2025. Both candidates will respectively execute the role of Deputy Chairwoman. Bon thanked everyone for the confidence and stated that she strongly believes in the board and that it is for her very important to work together as a team. Mallozzi thanked everyone for the support and expressed her motivation for the work and contribution to the development of women's handball in Europe.

4.2. Nomination ECA Vice President

Wiederer presented the nomination of Marta Utor, proposed by the interest group of the clubs, for the ECA Vice President position, highlighting her competences in sports law. The WHB unanimously confirmed the nomination.

5. Stakeholder Reports

5.1. EHF NCW / Nations Board

Myaro reported about the discussions of the NCW and their outcomes: With an interest the announced re-evaluation of the EHF YAC competition structure / product in respect of the size of the championships, efficiency of the organisers, relegation/promotion, nations YAC ranking list, etc. is expected. The importance of the continuous strengthening of the EURO Qualifiers product was highlighted and the missing EHF feedback match reports of Women's EHF EURO 2022 Qualifiers were requested. Myaro further noted the importance to focus on the EURO 2024 as this would be the first women's EURO with 24 teams, which will be played in the same structure as men's EURO. It is therefore important to have enough teams registered for the EURO (a minimum of 36) and to ensure that the product standards will be upheld. The respective workshop, specific guidance and mentoring shall be organised for the National Federations which will be involved in the Qualifiers for the first time. Myaro reported about the NCW full support for female referees in their development stages, however nominations to the EURO tournament shall be according to the competences and experiences, important is the quality and not the gender.

5.2. Women's Forum Club Handball

Ivanovic provided detailed information from the last WFCH meeting and offered the minutes (actual and in the future) of their meetings to be shared with the WHB. She highlighted strong TV audience figures of the DELO EHF Champions League 2020/21, which are even superior in respect to the Men's EHF Champions League. The respective top markets are ROU, HUN and DEN. Ivanovic further informed about the revised and improved ratio of the split of the club income for the season 2023/24 (men's / women's: 70% / 30%) to be proposed to the EHF. Further she provided a clear statement of the clubs in respect of the nomination of female referees - clubs are requesting the nomination of the referees with the acquired competences and experiences on a certain level, and that the gender is not in their focus.

5.3. Situation other interest groups

The WHB agreed that for the next meeting the nominated members will provide the input in the area of their expertise.

The results of the WHB review 2016-2021 in respect of the women's handball objectives and the women's handball strategy will be made available to the WHB members and the respective required update will be discussed at the next meeting.

6. Women's National Team Competitions

6.1. Preview EUROS 2022/2024 and 2026/2028

EHF EURO 2022 SLO/MKD/MNE (4-20 November 2022)

36 teams registered for the EURO. Already qualified are SLO, MKD, MNE and NOR as current champion, who are playing the EHF EURO Cup. Qualification Phase 1 was played in tournament format in May 2021. Currently 24 teams are participating in the Qualifiers (6 groups with 4 teams), and the first two teams in each group will qualify for the final tournament, which will be played with 16 teams in 4 groups. The Venues are: Preliminary Round - Ljubljana, Celje, Skopje and Podgorica, Main Round - Ljubljana and Skopje, Final Weekend - Ljubljana. The draw event for the final tournament is scheduled for 28 April 2022 in Ljubljana.

EHF EURO 2024 HUN/SUI/AUT

The tournament will be played with 24 teams for the first time. The Preliminary Round (3x 2 groups) will be played in Budapest, Debrecen, Basel and Innsbruck, the Main Round (2 groups) and the Final weekend in Hungary.

For the Women's EHF EURO 2024 and further EUROS, there will be 24 teams required for the final tournament, and a minimum of 32 teams for the last qualification phase, which means 8 additional teams will be involved in the Qualifiers than until now. Glaser provided information in respect of the Qualifiers with 32 teams: competition in 8 groups with 4 teams, and qualifiers to the final tournament will be the first two ranked teams of each group and the four best third ranked teams. There is a challenge that the general level of the Qualifiers might be reduced (competition, product presentation).

WHB will discuss this topic further and is ready to contribute via communication/moderation with the respective less experienced federations. Furthermore, the WHB will provide recommendations how to raise the level of national teams of smaller nations and respectively how to motivate them to participate at European Open, Championships and in the next steps to the EURO.

EHF EURO 2026 and 2028

The EHF received the applications for the organisation of the EURO events as follows: RUS for the EURO 2026, DEN/SWE/NOR for the EUROs 2026 and 2028. The respective events will be awarded at the EHF Eo Congress in November 2021.

6.2. EHF YAC Events 2021

A short review of the EHF YAC events 2021 was provided. The EHF, together with the event organisers is very proud that all YAC competitions 2021 have taken place without any serious pandemic issues. 31 teams participated in the W19 EHF EURO/Championships, with 3 federations withdrawing from the competition due to the Covid situation in the team or country, and 34 teams participated in the W17 EHF EURO/Championships with 4 teams withdrawing from the competition due to the Covid situation in the country.

EHF YAC competitions progressed and improved to become a good product with around one million EHFTV audience (live and on demand); the EHF successfully executed two social media campaigns (FOLLOW THE FUTURE, WATCH ME RAISE) during the summer events to promote the event and streaming on the EHFTV.

Glaser informed that the EHF is undertaking a reevaluation of the current YAC competition system and will check the efficiency in various fields.

Cuderman presented the upcoming women's YAC competitions in 2022 and 2023 and the respective qualification pathways.

- In-Between Competition W17 (Nov. 2021) – 1 place for W17/W19 EURO 2023
- In Between Competition W19 (Nov. 2021) – 2 places for WU20 WCh. 2022
- W16 European Open 2022
- WU18 World Championship 2022 in GEO – 15 places for Europe plus the Organiser
- WU20 World Championship 2022 in SLO – 14 places for Europe plus the Organiser
- W17 EYOF 2022 in SVK – 7 teams
- W17/W19 EHF EURO/Championships 2023

6.3. Women's IHF World Handball Championships 2021 ESP

This will be the first Women's World Championship with 32 participating teams with Netherlands as defending World Champion, Spain as organiser and an additional 14 teams from Europe: NOR, FRA, CRO, DEN (top 4 teams from EURO 2020), AUT, CZE, GER, HUN, MNE, ROU, RUS, SRB, SLO, and SWE. In addition, two wild cards were provided to European teams by the IHF: SVK and POL. The challenge for the organiser is the Covid situation in respect to the competition and the presentation of the event (TV event, opening and closing ceremony, etc), with the Organising Committee being keen to provide the best standard for women's handball.

7. Club Competitions

7.1. Season 2020/21 – Review

In addition to the information provided at the common meeting and by Ivanovic an overview in respect of the matches that were not played (and respectively decided by administrative decision) in specific competitions due to the Covid issues was given: DELO EHF Champions League 12/112, European League 10/60 and European Cup 17/62. Ivanovic praised the EXEC decision in respect of the updating the playing schedule in the DELO EHF Champions League

qualifying all 16 participating teams to the Play-offs for Quarterfinals, therefore all decisions were taken on the court and that was very much appreciated by all clubs.

7.2. Season 2021/22 – Status Update

112 women's clubs are registered for the season 2021/22, which means 21 more teams than last season, thereof 5 more in European League and 16 more in European Cup. There are no changes in the competition systems. The Hygiene Concept is based on vaccinated /recovered/tested. The interest for the women's club handball is growing (300 Mio. TV audience in the season 2020/21), 26 TV broadcasters in more than 60 territories will transmit the matches of the DELO EHF Champions League. DELO EHF FINAL4 is scheduled for 4/5 June 2022 in Budapest's multifunctional arena with capacity of 20.000.

Hygiene Concept - Query Validity of Vaccinations

Glaser informed that the EHF collected the vaccination status of each team participating in the EHF competitions. There are concerns how to proceed when the validity of vaccination will be overdue, the respective internal discussions and evaluation are ongoing.

8. I/D Partnership – Status Report

Wiederer and Hausleitner informed about the cooperation with Infront and DAZN and the current status of the two contracts, one for the national team and one for the club competitions, both of which are in the ongoing negotiations process regarding financial guarantees. The constraints are planned to be resolved in a constructive way.

9. Calendar / Meetings

Reference to be taken to the minutes of the common PHB/WHB meeting.

10. Follow-up to the Common Meeting

No further topics were discussed.

11. Miscellaneous

11.1. TRC Nominations

Glaser informed about the TRC nominations and presented the role of Jutta Ehrmann-Wolf as responsible for the development of female referees in Europe.

11.2. Referees in the future

The WHB is of the opinion that more female referees in the future, who can be developed to the top level, are required. The key is the encouragement and the work with the female referees in the National Federations, providing them with a good environment and opportunities, so that they can be developed to a certain level. Furthermore, the WHB agree with the EHF providing the support and appropriate opportunities to female referees in the individual matches, allowing them to grow step by step, not to overload them and not to put too much pressure on their shoulders. There is also a support for the nomination of the top female referees to the respective men's matches under the condition that the referees are whistling men's competition on a national level, thus allowing them to take the next development step in their career. However, when it comes to the referee nominations in respect of the EURO tournament they are of the view that first and foremost the level of competence must be upheld/prevail and not the gender, so that the appointed referees are

on the competence/experience level of the players. In their opinion, the nomination of female and male couples at the EURO is contributing to a better working atmosphere that is beneficial for the exchange of the experiences.

Glaser added that female referees require a longer period of preparation for big events and that individual issues (i.e.: double nominations IHF/EHF,..) often have to be considered prior their nominations.

Bon thanked to all participants for their constructive work and contributions.

For the minutes: Alenka Cuderman
Vienna, 14 October 2021

Committees & Boards\Women's Handball Board\2021\21th Meeting WHB_October 2021\Minutes