
MINUTES TO THE 23RD MEETING OF THE WOMEN'S HANDBALL BOARD

Date / Time: Monday, 14 March 2022 / 17:00-19:00
Tuesday, 15 March 2022 / 09:00 – 12:00

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
	Martin Hausleitner	Secretary General

EHF Office:	Alenka Cuderman	Women's Handball Coordinator
	Mario Kovacic	Director NT Competitions
<i>In Part</i>	David Szlezak	Managing Director EHF

PART I: MINUTES TO THE COMMON MEETING OF THE PHB / W/HB

1. Welcome and Introduction

President Wiederer welcomed the participants to the spring session of the stakeholder meetings and a rundown for the two days was given. The importance of the meetings was highlighted as part of the sessions to preparing the upcoming season. As the various topics need coordination, this session follows on the back of the Technical Commission meetings, the EHF board meetings, but are prior to 13th Conference for Secretaries General, as well as the meeting of the EXEC in April where decisions concerning regulations and competitions are to be taken. The EHF information corresponds to the presentation delivered at the common meeting of NCM/NCW/NB/EHLB.

2. EHF Information

2.1. EHF Executive Committee 11/2021 & 01/2022

The minutes were distributed prior to the meeting. With no questions raised, the stakeholders took note of the minutes.

2.2. EHF Marketing GmbH

The Comptrollers have been invited to Vienna in April to undertake the scheduled internal examination of the accounts to conclude the business year with 31 December 2021. EHF completed the business year successfully, under the Covid situation, which had strong impact especially on the Final4s, therefore income was missed, however EHF was able to pay the granted amounts to the participating clubs and the share to the EHF, and completed the year in a rational way. Since then the Advisory Board is working with the I/D contracts, discussions about finances are an ongoing process for 18 months now. Services i.e.: digital marketing are connected to the I/D contract and have to be coordinated with the EHF/EHFM.

2.3. 14th Extraordinary EHF Congress Follow-up 11/2021

The minutes were distributed prior to the meeting. With no questions raised, the stakeholders took note of the minutes. It was mentioned that the EHF was still able to celebrate its Jubilee despite the short notice change of venue due to the pandemic. The awarding of the EUROs, men and women, played and play a relevant role in the EHF business regarding the fulfilment of the contracts and partnerships on the markets, the EHF is dealing with. The partners and potential organisers saw attractive presentations of the EUROs 2026/2028 and see their marketing chances, which is important for the whole system.

2.4. International Handball Federation

During the most recent IHF Council Meeting (online) it was made known that the 32-team IHF YAC WC may see more spaces as some Continental Federations do not have enough teams in the qualifications. Thus, more European teams than usual will have the chance to qualify.

Information was given on the IHF adapted referee recruitment system regarding the age, entering conditions and period allowed to stay; Europe has a major task to produce more referees on all levels male and female, starting at the level of National Federations.

IHF Competitions - Mandatory Vaccination: for the most recent events the vaccination status has been in place and will remain so for the Women's EHF EURO 2022 in November. With regard to the EHF Younger Age Category events, medical expertise will be sought and the vaccination landscape for minors varies by country; when more information becomes available the EHF will return with a suggestion for the participating Member Federations with a tailored hygiene concept. Due to the changeable nature of the situation, the EHF is aware that decisions have to be taken at the right moment to avoid unnecessary burden on the teams and organisers.

IHF Competition System: during the EHF-IHF coordination meeting (online) the plans for the IHF competitions system were questioned in relation to the still open topic of the emerging nations and their options to compete and enter qualifications. Previously, the system was managed in a good way; however, in the past year playing was not possible. It was agreed

that the competition needed to be restarted. The IHF sent information to the Continental Federations; the next IHF Trophy for Men will be organised in October 2022, the winner will gain a place in the Intercontinental Trophy, and the winner of that event will gain a place in the World Championship. No information was provided by the IHF to the women's competitions.

Despite the distribution of information, discussions will have to continue in order to conclude on how to proceed and combine this event with the Qualifiers; looking to the enlargement of the Women's EHF EURO to 24 teams, participation is lower in comparison to the men's competitions, and it will be necessary to have the right number of teams in the 2024 Qualifiers. Though understandable that not all teams can qualify, so the right system has to be found to make it attractive.

Olympic Games Qualification: the IHF is preparing to send proposals to the International Olympic Committee concerning the qualifications; the EHF President expressed the position of the top nations stating that the current qualification process is not wanted by the European National Federations. However, the IOC is in favour of three pathways that will lead to qualification. Further information will be provided as it becomes available.

Taking reference to the issuance of the latest edition of the IHF Rules of the Game (valid as of 1 July 2022), a brief discussion took place to the amendment concerning the size of the middle circle. In the discussion where the reason for the change was mentioned (IHF CCM, definition of the centre line), concerns were also raised about the specific wording that indicates that the Continental Federations can make its own determination about the implementation of the rule, production costs, and other marketing challenges. It was noted that the effect(s) of the amendment will be seen during the competitions. Prior to the meeting of the Executive Committee meeting in April, this matter will be discussed in the planned IHF-EHF coordination meeting.

Clothing Regulations - Beach Handball: input received from National Federations: it was reiterated that the IHF decision taken in September (not the original European proposal) is not wanted by many involved as the new rules do not allow for flexibility.

2.5. Master Plan

The internal platform has been established and the Master Plan Coordinator has been appointed. As presented at the Extraordinary Congress in November, the EHF 360° procedures have been agreed. The National Federations will be requested to send their project applications to masterplan@eurohandball.com. Following the completion of a detailed analysis, a meeting with the Member Federation will be scheduled and the proposal will be evaluated to ensure that they are in line with the vision and objectives of the Masterplan. Project implementation will commence upon approval of the Executive Committee.

Despite delays forced by the pandemic, the next steps are being taken; meetings with representatives from Georgia, Malta, and Latvia are scheduled to take place in March. A status update presentation will be given in Berlin at the 13th Conference for Secretaries General, and this will be followed-up with the release of the National Federation Survey.

In response, it was suggested that a workshop targeted at the emerging nations be considered as an element to move the project forward in a more tailored way that would make these particular Member Federations part of the process. The idea was deemed useful as the benefits of close cooperation were praised, especially during the pandemic.

2.6. *Respect Your Talent (RYT)*

A summary of the 2021 & 2022 RYT events for young male and female players was given; the objective of the programme remains to support the development of young players, both on and off the court. Active players and leading experts are committed to passing on their experience and knowledge to the younger generation at the camps.

A short description of the RYT mobile application created by the EHF and based upon the input of the RYT Ambassadors and field experts, was given and presented as a 'pocketful of micro-learning'. The App is designed to assist the personal development of younger players by providing access to relevant information. By actively using the App, the young talents have the opportunity to earn points which can be used to arrange an online group session (1 hour) with a RYT Ambassador to discuss topics of interest. Further developments are to include a 'Train the Trainer' application that will be opened to the National Federations, as well as a newsletter.

The enthusiastic engagement of former players as well as the activities targeting the integration and involvement from the next generation of players was taken as an encouraging sign to continue working on the programme. The stakeholders were informed on a newly initiated programme for young players in Denmark; this is a cooperation between the Danish Federation and the Danish Players' Union. It was mentioned that the players returning from the RYT events are energised to be better and hoped that in the future that the RYT would create the snowball effect of having participants return to their Member Federation and transmit the information and facilitate action on an internal level.

2.7. *13th Conference for Secretaries General*

The event is scheduled to take place in Berlin on 30-31 March; a range of topics will be presented under the umbrella theme of 'Moving Forward'. Currently, there are over 60 registered representatives of the National Federations as well as guest speakers presenting talks from the areas of the EOC EU Office, Kinexon, and the Special Olympics, as well as beach handball, Respect Your Talent (RYT), as well as the Master Plan. The EHF will use the opportunity to also inform on current business topics such as information on referees and delegates, new IT tools, and the introduction on Younger Age Category (YAC) events in the

future. In addition to the planned social activities, the Men's EHF EURO 2024 Qualifiers draw event, as well as the workshop for the participating Federations on 1 April, will also be held on the fringes of the 13th Conference for Secretaries General.

3. Information Competitions

3.1. Situation UKR / RUS / BLR – Follow-Up, Actual Consequences, Future Competitions, Player Transfers

Due to the expansive discussion, what follows therefore is a summation of the information as well as the input of the stakeholders.

The EHF has approached the matter in a careful and consistent way facing the challenges; in the initial days, it was deemed not in the interest of the organisation to 'run ahead' and so opted for close coordination. As information was collected, it became clear that the IOC was readying to release a statement, and to that end, the Executive Committee was called to an extraordinary meeting on Monday, 28 February followed by an official statement released to eurohandball.com, suspending the activities of the RUS and BLR clubs and national teams.

The EHF used a very systematic and consistent decision-making process regarding the concerned matches as it could have major consequences for the I/D contract.

It was emphasised that the EHF continues a close cooperation with the Ukrainian Handball Federation. A huge support and respect has been expressed for the players in Ukraine. Contact has been upheld with the Handball Federation of Russia; naturally, there is a logic in the legal steps that the Federation had, and has, to take. The Federations have been and continue to be contacted accordingly.

Looking to past situations faced, it was mentioned that a Member Federation in the nineties needed three years to re-enter the competitions. The ban that currently applies to Russia and Belarus makes it impossible to national teams of those countries to enter competitions in Europe, not even sideways. Consequently, this is not only a problem for Russia and Belarus, but also for other Federations meeting them in future qualifications at an even earlier stage. Therefore, a re-integration into competition in the future will be procedural and properly communicated. The Federations are still partners and eventually the time will come when activities have to be continued. Therefore, relations will be upheld towards handball partners.

In the coming days, the European Handball Federation will decide how to proceed with matches and the determinations have to be made in a balanced way. In previous situations, a careful strategy has been followed to allow for the continuation of the competitions system; the organisation at the same time had to face the reactions, some negative, and also had to find balanced understanding in a complex situation (marketing, financial, legal consequences) where cooperation with partners is also important. It was intoned that headlines and populist statements are 'easy'; though behind them lay many consequences on many levels. It is underlined that the two existing marketing contracts which will expire in June are a result of the work within the handball network and were not concluded at a political level.

The legal framework regarding transfers and the termination of player-club contracts is critical and there is a limited period to resolve the situation. Brief examples of different actions undertaken in different countries (i.e.: DEN, GER,) were given, and it was concurred that (arising) situations have to be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. As support is needed due to IHF transfer regulations, the EHF addressed a brief to the IHF the week prior questioning if permission would be granted to EHF to take relevant decisions or if a statement would be issued by IHF (analogous to FIFA) containing information on further procedure. The IHF response stated that it is in conference with legal expertise and would return in due course. The EHFU received an answer from the IHF and which was discussed, however the wording didn't bring full clarity to the topics.

It was agreed that the discussion (existing contracts, qualifiers, transfers, etc.) would continue at the PHB meeting.

3.2. EURO Events

3.2.1. EHF EURO 2022 HUN/SVK Follow-Up (incl. topics for EHF EURO SLO/MKD/MNE)

The event reached a successful conclusion despite the challenges speaking of the arrival of the Covid-19 Omicron variant at the start of the Championship. Currently under evaluation, it was clear that the event was not 'perfect' and the differences between the event in Denmark to Hungary/Slovakia are evident; however, the current objective is how to avoid difficult situations and keep the teams stable in order to offer a better situation in November for the Women's EHF EURO.

The quality of the venue in Budapest was reiterated, as well as the major improvement on the level of TV picture and production due to the various adaptations including more preparation time for the matches. Also in this area, there was a marked increase in the digital figures i.e.: first information in the presence across 22 channels, over 300 million contacts (40% via content sharing), TikTok (analysis ongoing), as well as 25 minutes of 'behind-the-scenes' footage. Federations also played a role through players sharing now; it is hoped that in the future this potential can be built upon.

Increased market shares also signalled that the cooperation with Infront and DAZN had paid off on this occasion; TV sales reached new heights, 100% partner activation including additional efforts (Gorenje), and the feedback to the 'Partner Day' during the main round was very positive. The onsite Kinexon support proved beneficial for the teams; a number of Federations will use the scientific data to bring improvement to the sport. Despite the host teams leaving the competition early and the ongoing pandemic, the number of spectators was deemed good.

3.2.2. Preview EUROS

The preparation for the Women's EHF EURO 2022 (SMM) is ongoing; this event has a shorter preparation time due to the date in November e.g.: certain elements have to be completed

by July. The 'early' EURO has a minor impact on the calendar as the leagues can continue in December. For clarification, it was also stated that in relation to the information collected by EHF Kinexon project, the data is for EHF use only and EHF permission has to expressly granted for any other use; an agreement is in place and the EHF legal department is aware of the GDPR complexities.

3.3. YAC Events: Evaluation & Future Outlook

In the light of input concerning previous events e.g.: playing system, preparation time, performance disparity ('easy' matches), and player workload (M20), a 'YAC Think Tank' was held on 21 January 2022 to discuss the topics and formulate possible solutions. A common understanding to enlarge the YAC events from 16 to 24 teams was reached. The EHF continues to work on the development of a playing system covering a 4-year cycle including promotion and relegation; this will be presented to the National Federation representatives in Berlin at the 13th Conference for Secretaries General. Depending on the outcome of the presentation, a formal proposal to adapt the playing system will be put before the Executive Committee either in April (Ljubljana) or June (Cologne). Upon question it was confirmed that should the YAC events be expanded to encompass 24 teams, the incorporated event period would be targeted with a maximum of 11-12 days. The implementation of the system will be as fast as possible, also in order to manage with potential organisers to adapt their plans.

3.4. Initiative – Players Project (Player of the Year)

The initiative started within the Beach Handball Commission (BC) to award a beach handball 'Player of the Year'. The idea was adapted to a general project. Thus, as of next season (2022/23), there will be a broad approach to the topic of 'Best Player'; the project will be developed by the end of the June. It was noted that EHPU had an awarding for the player of the year in the past and for the future EHF plans to introduce a common awarding process together with all stakeholders, fans and experts.

3.5. Club Competitions: actual / future perspectives

Referring to the club competitions evaluation in relation to the media and marketing agreement, it was mentioned that the process is cyclical (three seasons/years = one cycle). The logic behind this was to play in year one, undertake a situational analysis in year two, and any decisions/changes to be made in year three. Due to the challenges of the pandemic, the evaluation has not been easy. It was underlined that there would be no changes in the first cycle, and there are no changes planned regarding financial distribution. As a basis to the current evaluation, a Club Competitions Think Tank was held in December 2021. With many topics under deliberation, it was mentioned that when talking of making changes the issues were complex.

The evaluation of the playing systems was made difficult due to Covid-19, the question of weekdays vs. weekends remains a highly delicate issue touching all of the stakeholders (Federations, Clubs, and Leagues) with regard to planning. In a situation where time for changes to the 23/24 season is a factor, theoretically, any changes could be optimal within

the next few weeks. On the other hand, the organisation is not in the position to make any decisions until all issues have been satisfied i.e.: does the system require major change, financing, doubling matches, partner relations – all impact the outcome of the evaluation and have to be seen in relation. In case of significant changes (e.g.: the competition calendar) the relevant stakeholders have to be involved in the conversation in order to get all the perspectives.

4. Calendar/Meetings

4.1. Competitions Calendar 2022/23, 2023/24

To the previously published information, it was reiterated that the hosting of the Women's EHF EURO 2022 in November will effect the women's club competitions; they will have to continue in December with approx. 2-3 rounds to be played prior to the seasonal break. Currently, the season is proceeding in a normal way. For the benefit of the stakeholders, to allow for an unimpeded preparation, the calendar for season 2023/24 was published well in advance and created in a way that reflected no changes to the playing system. The ongoing evaluation was mentioned, and it emphasised that though there may be changes in the future, there will not be major adaptations.

4.2. Meeting Calendar 2022

With the document at hand, no additional input was given. The document always developed for the forthcoming year serves as personal help to reserve the dates, but as well shows the rundown of the decision-making processes.

4.3. Preview EHF Events

Information to the large number of events between March and November 2022 was given. The next gathering on the National Federation representatives will be the 13th Conference for Secretaries General in Berlin at the end of the month, where on the fringes of the event, the draw for the EHF EURO 2024 Qualifiers will be held. The final tournament draw event for the Women's EHF EURO 2022 will be held in Slovenia at the end of April, and this will be followed by the completion of the 2021/22 club season with the Final4 events in Budapest and Cologne. A total of 9 Younger Age Category EURO and Championship events, including the Beach Handball EURO Qualifiers, will be the summer highlight. In the autumn (23/24 September), the 16th Conference of President will present another opportunity for the Member Federations to gather; the final showcase event of the year will be the Women's EHF EURO 2022 in Slovenia, North Macedonia, and Montenegro in November.

5. Other Topics

No further topics.

With no other topics raised, the common meeting was closed.

PART II: MINUTES TO THE 23RD MEETING OF THE WHB

Bon warmly welcomed the participants to the meeting noting a long agenda ahead and encouraged all for a proactive cooperation.

1. Minutes of WHB Meeting No. 22 (10/2021)

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

2. Stakeholder Reports

2.1. EHF NCW / Nations Board

Myaro reported about the discussions of the NCW and their outcomes:

NCW expressed their concerns regarding the war situation in Ukraine and consequent conditions for handball communities in UKR, RUS and BLR, as well as in neighbouring countries EST, POL, etc., where players from RUS are playing. She highlighted the professional contracts of the players and the challenging international transfer situation. Each federation will take their own respective decisions in matters, to protect the players from aggression and to integrate the children under 16 into the sport.

YAC Events (incl. 24 teams): consideration for exam periods of W19/M20 players, dates of the competitions in July should be pushed back where possible, to allow the players to concentrate on handball and the education.

EHF EURO 2024 incl. Qualifiers : NCW raised concern on the number of teams registering for the event and proposed the introduction of a “Women’s Handball Day” as a promotional tool to encourage the interest for event participation and at the same time strengthen the position of women’s handball and women in handball in every federation. The necessity of a special workshop for the federations participating in Qualifiers for the first time was noted.

Hausleitner appreciated the comments of the NCW and highlighted that the EHF has already 2018 in their development strategy of women’s handball noted that for the EURO 2024 with 8 more teams participating in the final tournament also more teams for the qualifications will be required, therefore it will be necessary to develop more teams to take part in the qualifications.

2.2. Women’s Forum Club Handball

Ivanovic shared the minutes of the last WFCH meeting and highlighted following information: the results of the WFCH elections, the agreed revised and improved ratio of the split of the club revenues for the season 2023/24 (men/women: 70%/30%), the increased number of the participating clubs in EHF competitions 2021/22 in respect of the last season (+45), results of the club survey regarding the preferences in respect of the number and the time of the matches to be played (no changes were requested by women’s clubs), the prolongation of the cooperation agreement MFCH/WFCH until 06/2026, the status of the cooperation with the IHF and the consequences of the war in Ukraine for the current competitions following the EHF suspension of the activities of RUS/BLR clubs – all matches are decided on an administrative way (0:2 points, 0:10 goals).

Hausleitner explained that based on the media and marketing agreement with I/D 2020+ the standards were agreed for 3 years and an evaluation will follow on various levels (clubs, TV, marketing, I/D, EHF). Currently, the EHF delivers to the market 5 days of handball, which is an excellent result and following an evaluation no major changes are to be expected.

2.3. Situation other interest groups

Listkiewicz provided a quick review of the current women's handball strategy and highlighted "the safety of players in women's handball" and presented two important aspects: "maternity leave policy" and "injury leave policy" based on the experiences with the POL Handball Federation. Similar situations in various countries were discussed and an important role of the player agents regarding the players contracts and insurance was discussed. Hausleitner stated that the EHF is responsible for organisation of the competitions and development of the sport, however it cannot interfere in the local environment of the players or insurance system. To raise awareness the best practice examples of players contracts can be given. The WHB concluded that the most important task is the education of young female players in respect of safety, living from the sport, the necessary protection in case of injury or in case of pregnancy and to raise awareness of these respective contract standards have to be highlighted at the respective platforms.

3. Women's National Team Competitions

3.1. Preview EUROS 2022/2024 and 2026/2028

3.2. EURO 2022 Qualifiers

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

36 teams registered for the EURO. Already qualified are the organisers 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 and FAR, POR and GRE qualified to Phase 2. Due to the war situation in Ukraine the EHF EXEC based on the IOC position and confirmed by the IHF suspended RUS and BLR from the competition, which will have an impact on the final tournament. Consequently 21 teams are participating in the Qualifiers (3 groups with 4 teams and 3 groups with 3 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 promotion of the EURO in SLO with a special focus on sustainability and a lot of networking options for women in business, sport and society was noted. 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 will be played in Budapest, Debrecen, Basel and Innsbruck, the Main Round (2 groups) and the Final weekend in Hungary.

EHF EURO 2026 and 2028

The EURO events were awarded by the EHF Eo Congress in November 2021 as follows: EURO 2026 to RUS and EURO 2028 to DEN/SWE/NOR.

3.3. EURO 2024 Qualifiers and WHB initiatives

The importance of further development of the EURO product was discussed. On the one hand, it is important to strengthen the competition and get more teams involved in the qualifications. To be able to play the Qualifiers Phase 1 more than 32 teams need to register for the event. It will be important to encourage the emerging nations for participation and to provide them with the required support (special preparation workshops, etc). On the other hand, there is an interest to level up the competition, to have a standard level of all EHF competitions for both genders. The support of the federations is needed, to use arenas which fulfill the requirements and present unified venues, to bring back the spectators, to attract media and sponsors and to raise the visibility and reach outside audience. To strengthen the presentation and exposure of the Qualifiers, the focus will be given to the highlight matches within each round.

It is necessary to separately address the emerging nations not yet taking part in the competition, middle rank nations with some experience and the top nations, and, to organize a separate pre-event preparation workshop for every group.

The WHB created the initiatives for federations to push the EURO product forward:

A **Women's Handball Network** workshop should be organized during the final weekend of the Women's EHF EURO 2022 as a special workshop for the teams, which do not regularly take part at the EURO and for emerging nations, with a focus on the sportive part – how to develop and train the team, how to grow the players, importance of developing a sustainable players' pathway for grassroots and elite level, and on organisational part – presentation of the game, event preparation and organisation of events, creating spectators, marketing and media. At the same time the federations will be encouraged for EURO participation.

The introduction of a "**Women's Handball Day**" can be an excellent promotion tool to initiate/highlight EURO qualifications for 2024. In the first week of the EURO qualifications the Women's Handball Day can be fixed for Monday, where players shall be available for interviews, special press conference, or injured player to go to the schools, etc. All platforms can be used for promotion of women's handball: matches on TV /streaming, content on social media channels, involvement of role models, ambassadors to contribute to Women's Handball Day and to strengthen the status of women's handball and women in handball. Further EURO promotional activities will follow: draw events, campaigns with I/D, etc.

3.4. EHF YAC Events 2022 - W16 European Open, EYOF (W17)

The registration for the European Open is still open until 4 April 2022, currently 12 teams have registered. It is not yet decided if the competition will be a qualification for EYOF 2023. The low number of the teams has been noted and there is an appeal to NCW to encourage and motivate federations for this competition, which is very important as a first step into international national team competition system for the players.

8 Teams will participate at the EYOF 2022 in Banska Bistrica/SVK and an EOC decision is expected regarding the substitution of RUS.

3.5. WU18 and WU20 IHF World Championship 2022

The WU18 IHF WCh will take place in Georgia from 3-14 August 2022, there are 15 places for Europe plus the Organiser available. The first 13 teams from the W17 EHF EURO 2021 and NED and MKD as winners of the W17 Championships qualified for the event; IHF will take the decision in respect of the suspended team of RUS; the substitutes are AUT, SVK, SLO.

WU20 IHF WCh. will take place in Slovenia from 22 July-3 July 2022, there are 14 places for Europe plus the Organiser. The first 12 teams from the W19 EHF EURO 2021 and POL and NED as winners of the qualification tournaments qualified for the event; IHF will take the decision in respect of the suspended team of RUS; the substitutes are MNE, AUT, ITA, LTU.

4. Club Competitions

4.1. Season 2021/22 – Status Update

The EHF Managing Director Szlezak informed about the status of the UKR/RUS/BLR situation. EHF is following the EHF EXEC decision. In the Champions League CSKA and Rostov-Don were excluded from the competitions, consequently less matches will be delivered and the procedures with I/D have started. He further provided information on the naming rights and the partner DELO agreement, which is running until Summer 2022 and put on hold; the competitions are renamed as EHF Champions League Women 2021/22 and EHF FINAL4 Women 2022, and the logos are adapted.

Szlezak provided a status update of the current season and highlighted a positive development of the women's EHF competitions, on a handball and media and marketing level. Despite the challenging Omicron Covid time there was an excellent cooperation with the clubs and EHF/EHF, no administrative decision was required (111/112 CL matches, 47/48 EL matches, all pairings incl. Quarter-finals of EHF Cup were played). EHF provided the clubs with the match feedback and the briefings were followed. The TV coverage at a mid-season overview is good, the figures are a bit lower than last year as there is only 1 team from ROU, which is one of the top markets along with HUN and RUS. The huge opportunity for women's handball in respect of the EHF FINAL4 Women 2022, which will take place in the new Budapest arena with capacity of 20.000 and motivated and experienced organiser was noted. It is still open how to use the hospitality areas, the ticketing has started together with the Men's EHF EURO 2022, 5000 tickets have already been sold and good numbers of spectators are expected. The venue of the EHF European League FINALS Women 2022 is not yet defined, the bidding documents were published, all marketing rights are with I/D. The positive development of the competitions (men & women) was noted also in social media figures based on the EHF Media activities (CL Newsletter, informative, storytelling and entertaining content as well as CL and EL digital campaigns).

4.2. Season 2022/23 – Preview

The Run down for the season 2022/23 was presented with all required meetings, publication of club competitions regulations, deadline for club registrations, draw events and competitions start dates.

5. WHB Initiatives

5.1. European Handball Manager Programme for female participants

Three places provided are used.

5.2. RYT Programme

See the common minutes PHB/WHB AP 2.6. No further discussion took place.

5.3. Women's EHF EURO 2022 promotion

The WHB discussed the possibility for the cross promotion of the women's EURO via Champions League (LED boards – an answer about media and marketing rights can be provided in August), EURO ambassador activities during the half time of the Champions League matches or nomination of one EURO ambassador to promote EURO; targeted social media campaigns with the slogan #playwithheart and focus to activate school children.

5.4. Cooperation Leagues and Players

Two fields, Leagues and Player are not covered yet on the women's side and in the first step the contacts of responsible persons of women's top leagues will be approached and an integration into work with EHLB is considered (men and women separate or together). In the next step Player Unions will be approached.

5.5. Women's National Handball Network workshop 2022

The topic was presented under the AP 3.3.

6. Women's Handball Strategy – Update

Cuderman presented the objectives of the Women's Handball Strategy 2017-2021: enhancing brand & image of women's handball, improving women's handball top products (EURO, Champions League & FINAL4, European League & Final4), give focus to youth handball, enhancing the status of women in handball, work closely with emerging nations. Further on, the important initiated projects since 2013 were highlighted:

Education: 56 young coaches, 11 Master coaches, 33 club managers, 11 EHM

Development: Surveys (Federation, Players, Clubs), Best fostering concept, Women's Handball Network workshops, mentoring of coaches in women's youth handball, Respect Your Talent Programme

Promotion: gender equality, Brighton Declaration, photo and mobile reporter projects, female leadership awards, EURO promotion, role models – Handball inspires campaign.

It was noted that the development of women's handball is also one of the objectives of the EHF Master Plan. Therefore, the general objectives will be retained, however put in line with the Master Plan. Whilst in the past the focus was on the development of young talented players, in the future it will be extended - to grow the game, to develop more players and to strengthen the game and promote sustainable grassroots and elite players' pathways; activate community awareness and participation (family and friends), development of the national teams and active participation at EHF competitions. Furthermore to promote life-long handball and encourage retention of former handball players in the sport, strengthening representation in all spheres of handball, social role of athletes. After the completion and EHF internal approval the strategy will be shared with the federations and clubs with encouragement to follow it.

Bon provided an extensive overview of the ongoing initiatives for the athletes' development on European level. The WHB will have a further discussion in respect of the strategy via an online meeting.

7. I/D Partnership – Status Report

Hausleitner informed about the cooperation with Infront and DAZN and the current disagreement regarding the number of delivered matches due to Covid reasons. I/D are claiming the reduced number of delivered matches and highlighting the respective consequences on their contracts. The EHF has the position that there is no breach and that all matches were delivered according to the contract.

8. Follow-up to the Common Meeting

Myaro asked regarding the status of the international transfers in respect of the UKR/RUS/BLR situation. Hausleitner explained that the EHF has followed the IOC and IHF decisions; on professional level the EHF legally cannot influence the players contracts and will to stick to the rules, however there is currently a clarification with the IHF taking place.

9. Miscellaneous

No further topics were raised.

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

For the minutes: Alenka Cuderman
Vienna, 25 March 2022

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