

# BUSINESS REPORT 2021



**EHF**

EUROPEAN HANDBALL  
FEDERATION



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## 6 GOOD GOVERNANCE

8–9 FROM THE PRESIDENT  
10–11 30 YEARS OF THE EHF  
12–16 EHF CONGRESSES 2021

## 18 COMMERCIAL SUCCESS

20–21 EHF CHAMPIONS LEAGUE AUDIENCE FIGURES  
22–23 DELO GROUP NEW SPONSORSHIP

## 26 FAN APPEAL

28–29 DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT ON THE UP  
30–31 OFFICIAL APP, SONG & TWITCH

## 34 THE GAME

36–41 YOUNGER AGE CATEGORY EVENTS  
42–45 EHF CHAMPIONS LEAGUE  
46–49 EHF EUROPEAN LEAGUE  
50–51 EHF EUROPEAN CUP  
52–55 EHF BEACH HANDBALL EURO  
56–59 EHF EURO QUALIFIERS

## 62 GRASSROOTS GROWTH

64 EHF SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE  
65 EUROPEAN WEEK OF SPORT  
68–69 RESPECT YOUR TALENT

## 70 STRENGTHENING NETWORKS

72–81 REPORTS FROM EHF BOARDS & COMMISSIONS

## 82 INSIDE THE EHF

84–89 MEET THE TEAM

## 90 HIGHLIGHT EVENTS

92–97 EVENTS TO LOOK FORWARD TO IN 2022  
98 FROM THE SECRETARY GENERAL

# CONTENTS





# WELCOME FROM THE EHF PRESIDENT



**Having ridden the tempestuous wave that was 2020, the European Handball Federation moved into 2021, its 30th year, with a galvanised focus. As a governing body, not only were we aware of what was expected of us, but the EHF was also clear on what was demanded of the organisation. Our duty to our Member Federations, our clubs, our leagues, and our players, was to ensure that handball withstood the adverse conditions, the by-product of the ongoing global pandemic, that presented with many different faces.**

In our sporting community, having kept our players on the court and delivering our events with minimal losses, we were all still so eager to 'return to normal' despite it becoming obvious that handball, and the sporting world, had moved into new terrain. So, with an unrivalled tenacity, the EHF and its stakeholders quickly acclimatised to a new way of working. Together, through the unified approach and a determination to achieve common goals, three Younger Age Category EUROs and seven European Championships – as well as two Beach Handball EUROs (YAC 17 and Senior) for men and women – were carried out between 8 July and 22 August 2021. Leading up

to the start of the current season following the two main draw events in July, and drawing from the experiences of 2020, the Hygiene Concept for all competitions was updated and beginning with the EHF European League Men at the end of August, the 2021/2022 club handball season seamlessly commenced.

In the midst of an intense business year, the European Handball Federation also experienced many highlights at administrative level; in April, the people who now serve as guardians of our sport were elected at the 14th Ordinary EHF Congress, and the 2026 and 2028 men's and women's EHF EUROs were awarded at the 15th Extraordinary EHF Congress in November. More on these events, as well as the 30th anniversary celebration reflections can be found on the following pages.

Cautious optimism and resolute perseverance allow me to confidently deliver the message that handball is here to stay! The European Handball Federation now looks forward to 2022; January will see the long-awaited Men's EHF EURO 2022 in Hungary and Slovakia where spectators will be enthusiastically welcomed to the arenas, and the

restart of the club season. Handball has much to offer in the new year, and we hope that you, the reader, will continue to join us on this adventure.

In closing, I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to the array of people who actively engaged in our sport in 2021 and naturally, I extend my appreciation to the professionals within the offices of the EHF and EHF Marketing GmbH. Moreover, I wish to thank all the members of the Executive Committee and all other Commissions, the stakeholder groups, and the technicians who remain staunch defenders of handball and for upholding the integrity of our sport through many difficult times over the past year. Finally, I unequivocally thank the leadership and professionals of the EHF Member Federations, as well as those on working on a club level, for being the heart of handball. Best wishes,

**Michael Wiederer**

President, European Handball Federation

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Wied', which is part of the signature 'Michael Wiederer'.



# BUSINESS REPORT 2021: INSPIRED BY THE EHF MASTER PLAN

Welcome to the EHF Business Report, which – as it does every year – sheds light on the important projects and events involving the European Handball Federation over the past 12 months.

As you will see reading through these 100 pages it has been a busy last year in what is the 30th in the federation's history. You will also notice this year's report has been split into seven sections – each corresponding to the seven pillars in the EHF's Master Plan.

These pillars for the future of European handball – good governance, commercial success, strengthening network, grassroots growth, the game, fan appeal and highlight events – are all represented, alongside an eighth section that introduces the staff within the offices of the EHF and EHF Marketing.

The next step in the delivery of the Master Plan, which was first unveiled in 2020, has begun to leverage the future growth of European handball.

This plan covers all of the federation's many and varied areas of core business from competitions, events and marketing through to education and

grassroots development. It will also provide a set of tools through which the EHF and the European handball family will work to realise the federation's vision to be the "most attractive team sport and grow its community."

Speaking at the 14th Extraordinary Congress in Vienna in November, EHF President Michael Wiederer said that the European Handball Federation will invest 6 million euro through to 2025 as the federation seeks to realise its vision of being the 'most attractive team sport and growing its community'.

"We have to secure the position of handball in the changing world of sports. We have to combine the unique elements of our sport - while keeping the core intact - with the evolution in several areas around us," Michael Wiederer said.

"We have to bring benefit to the life of people, then we will be able to develop our sport further."

Member federations will be supported in their efforts to deliver the Master Plan through a new approach under the banner of 'Embrace Handball', which is clustered into four different programmes. Funding for federations will

be granted for strategies and projects which contribute to the goals of the Master Plan.

The four programmes are: EHF 360°, SMART 2.0, short-term projects and EHF initiatives.

Within EHF 360° an analysis of a federation's current situation and structure is conducted as the basis for a long-term development plan. Support is then given across the different areas of the Master Plan and so is mentoring through EHF and external experts. The first EHF 360° projects are set to begin in 2022.

Through SMART 2.0, an updated version of the existing support programme for national federations, funding will be given for projects that contribute to each federation's long-term strategic plans.

To unfold the full potential of the Master Plan, and based on extensive consultation with the federation's stakeholders and technical commissions, the European Handball Federation is also set to reveal a plethora of new projects in the coming months across all seven fields of development.



Good governance forms the basis for the work of the EHF and its member federations. Through democratic structures and transparent decision-making procedures, the EHF will continue to ensure integrity and maintain high ethical standards. Looking to the future, the issues of sustainability and the creation of CSR programmes will be key topics for the Master Plan.



# GOOD GOVERNANCE





# 30 YEARS OF THE EUROPEAN HANDBALL FEDERATION

The European Handball Federation celebrated its 30th anniversary in November 2021. Over the past three decades the EHF and the sport of handball have grown together, developing a sport that can truly appeal to all across the continent.

The EHF was founded in Berlin on 17 November 1991. Its establishment followed 30 years of discussion about the creation of a continental handball federation, but it was only after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the Iron Curtain in 1989 that the discussions bore fruit.

In 1991, 29 federations became part of the EHF. Sweden's Staffan Holmqvist was elected as the

first EHF President. A year later, the EHF opened its head office in Vienna and named Michael Wiederer as Secretary General.

The first official EHF competitions – the Men's and Women's Youth European Championships in Hungary and Switzerland – were held in September 1992, only weeks after the first Ordinary EHF Congress. In 1994 the first EHF EURO tournaments were played. Sweden's 'Benga Boys' picked up the men's trophy, with Denmark lifting the women's trophy later in the year.

In 1993, the EHF took over organisation of European club competitions from the IHF, and over the next 30 years the scale of participation

by European clubs soared. The EHF FINAL4 for men and women have become marquee sporting events, attended by thousands of devoted fans.

Off the court, the past 30 years has also seen the EHF continue its important work in growing, promoting and protecting handball by educating and coaching the next generations – not just of players but also coaches and officials.

In 2021, digital innovation is helping the development of the game on court as well as fan engagement across Europe. And under the European Handball Master Plan, unveiled in 2020, European handball undoubtedly has a long, bright future.



# EHF CONGRESS 2021



## KEY PERSONNEL RE-ELECTED

**Michael Wiederer was elected to stay at the helm of the European Handball Federation for another four years at the EHF Congress in April.**

Wiederer, whose second term as president runs until 2025, was first elected in 2016 at the EHF Congress in St. Wolfgang, Austria, where he succeeded Jean Brihault from France. Wiederer had been the EHF's Secretary General since 1992.

The elections for the top positions in European handball were the focus on the first day of EHF Congress 2021.

Together with the EHF President, the EHF Executive Committee was elected at the congress.

Predrag Boskovic (MNE), pictured above with former EHF President Jean Brihault, was confirmed as Vice President; Tjark de Lange

(NED) withdrew his candidature shortly before the election.

Henrik La Cour (DEN) was re-elected as Vice President Finances. He was the only the candidate.

Bozidar Djurkovic (SRB) remains the chairperson of the Competition Commission.

Pedro Sequeira (POR) follows Jerzy Elias (POL) as chairperson of the Methods Commission.

Gabriella Horvath (HUN) is the new chairperson of the Beach Handball Commission. She succeeds Ole R. Jorstad.

The three additional members elected to the EXEC are Francisco V. Blazquez Garcia (ESP), Franjo Bobinac (SLO) and Stefan Lövgren (SWE).

Furthermore, Bente Aksnes (NOR) was confirmed as additional representative after a corresponding motion on the election mode for gender representative had been approved by the congress.

The president's short acceptance speech began by quoting from Shakespeare's The Tragedy of Coriolanus, as he touched on the difficulties and solutions found to over the issues caused by Covid-19.

"When the sea was calm, all boats alike; showed mastership in floating," says Wiederer. "The quote says that everything is sometimes easy but here, now, in these complex times that we face, that's a bit different and that's how we are approaching this. Thank you for the support for the upcoming four years."



## EHF ELECTS HONORARY MEMBERS & HANDS OVER AWARDS

**Long-standing members of the European handball family were elected as honorary members to the EHF back at the EHF Congress in April.**

First up was Panos Antoniou, pictured above, the out-going President of the EHF Court of Handball. Antoniou had been working in various functions in the Cypriot as well as the European and International Handball Federation for almost 30 years, since 1993.

The EHF's Senior Manager Legal Management, Monika Flixeder, praised Antoniou's diplomatic skills, his competence and his crucial attributions to the federation's legal framework. With seats at the Court of Appeal and the Court of Handball, Antoniou was part of the EHF's legal system for 20 years.

Out-going Methods Commission chairman Jerzy Elias was lauded by the EHF's Senior Manager and EHF Competence Academy and Network (CAN) Coordinator Helmut Hörtsch who praised Elias's work in the development of the Methods Commission over the past eight years he served as the MC's chairman.

The final membership was awarded to Ole R. Jorstad, the out-going chairman of the Beach Handball Commission.

Special awards of honour went to Viktor Konopliastyi (UKR), Jacques Bettenfeld (FRA) and Janka Stasova (SVK).

'Top nation in European handball' awards went to France for 2018, to Denmark for 2019 and to Norway for 2020. Spain received the 'top nation in European beach handball' award for the years 2018 to 2020.

The Bulgarian Handball Federation, the Montenegrin Handball Federation and the Slovenian Handball Federation were recognised as 'Top Organisers' for having hosted three or more competitive EHF events.

The Dutch Handball Federation was recognised with a Fair Play Award – the first time such an award was handed out – for the way they cooperated and acted when the Netherlands' match at the Women's EHF EURO 2020 against Serbia had to be postponed and the team's championship schedule subsequently changed.

The next Ordinary EHF Congress will take place in the Swiss city of Basel on 23 and 24 June 2023, forming a centre piece in the Swiss federation's activation plan for the Women's EHF EURO 2024 which they will co-host with Hungary and Austria.

The EHF would like to thank the following people for their contributions to the EHF after their time on the various commissions came to an end after the congress:

**Jerzy Elias (POL) – MC chairman, Ole R. Jorstad (NOR) – BC chairman, Anrijs Brencans (LAT) – EXEC member, Gerd Butzeck (GER) – PHB president, Emeric Paillason (FRA) – CC member, Peter Kovacs (HUN) – MC member, Klaus Feldmann (GER) – MC Member, Ivan Sabovic (SVK) – BC member, Juan Carlos Zapardiel (ESP) – BC member, Alain Koubi (FRA) – Comptroller, Henk Lenaerts (NED) – COH vice president, Kristian Johansen (FAR) – COH vice president, Libena Sramkova (CZE) – COH member, Viktor Konoplyastyi (UKR) – COH member, Jens Bertel Rasmussen (DEN) – COA vice president, Maxim Gulevich (RUS) – COA member, Roland Schneider (SUI) – COA member, Francesco Purromuto (ITA) – ECA President, Jacques Bettenfeld (FRA) – ECA vice president, Bogdan Sojkin (POL) – ECA vice president, Wouter Lambrecht (BEL) – ECA vice president, Philippe Bana (FRA) – NB Men vice president, Liudmila Bodnieva (RUS) – WHB member, Georgeta Narcisa Lecusanu (ROU) – WHB member.**



# NEW NATIONS BOARD FORMED

One month after the EHF Congress 2021 the newly elected Nation Committees Men (NCM) and Women (NCW) convened for the first time in May.

The idea to form these two new bodies goes back to the EHF Congress 2018 in Glasgow, Scotland at which a motion was passed to reform the EHF bodies to uphold a balanced and harmonised system for male and female competitions.

The Nation Committees Men and Women elected at the 2021 Congress consist of six members each and deal with all national team matters in men's respectively women's handball.

Three members from each committee are nominated to the new Nations Board (NB).

The NB's chairperson is entitled to represent the body in the EHF Executive Committee.

## Meet the members:

Morten Stig Christensen (DEN), Mark Schober (GER, below) and Ingo Meckes (SUI) have been entrusted by the NCM to represent its matters in the NB.

The NCM as such will be chaired by Ingo Meckes. He will be supported by vice chair Jari Henttonen (FIN).

The NCW has nominated chairperson Nodjialem Myaro (FRA) as well as Leonor Mallozzi (POR) and Pirje Orasson (EST) to the Nations Board.

The nominated representatives of NCM and NCW together have elected as new chair of the Nations Board and therefore also new member in the EHF Executive Committee, Mark Schober (GER). The NB's vice chair is Pirje Orasson (EST).

NCM, NCW and NB met again in the middle of October, for the first time after the EHF Congress when the Women's Handball Board (WHB) and the Professional Handball Board (PHB) gathered

The NCM has nominated Morten Stig Christensen and Mark Schober to the PHB. The NCW has nominated Nodjialem Myaro and Leonor Mallozzi to the Women's Handball Board.



# EHF EXTRAORDINARY CONGRESS

The 14th EHF Extraordinary Congress was held in Vienna in November and coincided with the 30th anniversary celebrations of the EHF.

The biggest pieces of business to take care of during the congress was the awarding of the men's and women's EHF EURO 2026 and 2028 events – news of which you can read on pages 96 and 97.

However, the congress also saw EHF President Michael Wiederer give a summary of the work undertaken since April's Ordinary Congress, including the fact that the EHF Office in Vienna now has staff members from more than 20 nations.

The President also praised the work of everyone in handball during the on-going pandemic and paid tribute to those who made the 12 younger age category events such a huge success over the summer.

One man in particular was singled out by Wiederer. The EHF's Chief Sports Officer Markus Glaser received a Crisis Manager of the Year award for his efforts in ensuring handball matches across club and national team competitions went ahead during the some of the most challenging times of the Covid-19.

On receiving his award, Glaser said: "Last season was a special season, but an unfortunate one we all had to go through. We didn't want it and we didn't like it, but we had to face it. It was challenging for our competitions regardless of country or competition, but these are situations we must always be ready to face.

"It was one of the most challenging times we have faced but face them we did. I have to thank my colleagues in the EHF, Marcus Bestilleiro in the officials' department; Ines Taekker in the club competitions department, my colleagues in the media department and at EHF Marketing for

helping solving the issues and who assisted and supported me. Part of this certificate is for them."

In other news from the congress, Secretary General Martin Hausleitner, explained the latest on the EHF's search for a new office, or as he put it a new 'Home of Handball'.

"We want the new house to be the 'Home of Handball' for all our stakeholders," he said.

It's a long way from the early days when, in 1992, the first office had two members of staff and two telephones. The current office in Hoffingergasse, had nine staff employed on its opening day but is now home to almost 80 in Vienna's 12th district.

The new house is expected to open its doors for the 2024/25 season.





# PHB, WHB CHAIRPERSONS COMPLETE EHF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

In October, former Spanish top handball player Xavier O'Callaghan and the experienced Slovenian coach Marta Bon have been elected by the Professional Handball Board (PHB), respectively the Women's Handball Board (WHB), to represent their bodies in the EHF Executive Committee.

O'Callaghan had already been the PHB's chairman and subsequently part of the EXEC until 2018.

The elections concluded two days during which the European Handball Leagues Board (EHLB), the new Nation Committees Men and

Women and the new Nations Board as well as the PHB and the WHB all met in Vienna.

For the PHB and the WHB it was the first meeting since the EHF's election congress took place in April.

The Nation Committees Men and Women consist of six members each and deal with all national team matters in men's respectively women's handball. Three persons from each committee together form the Nations Board.

The PHB's vice chairman is the EHLB chairman, Nikolas Larsson from Sweden.

In the WHB, Marta Bon assumes the chair for two years, in 2023 Leonor Mallozzi from Portugal will take over. Currently Mallozzi is the vice chairwoman; in two years Bon will have this role.

Furthermore, in a joint move the PHB and the WHB nominated Marta Utor from Spain as vice president and representative of the stakeholder groups to the European Handball Court of Arbitration (ECA) Council.



# IHF ORDINARY CONGRESS 2021

The EHF attended the XXXVIII Ordinary Congress of the IHF in November 2021. The congress was held virtually due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, but still got through a full agenda.

IHF President Dr Hassan Moustafa told delegates in his opening statement that handball was "changing life, bringing joy to millions with our inspiring tournaments".

Congress adopted the IHF financial and auditor's report, which showed a solid financial performance for the federation despite the impact of the pandemic.

Several European representatives were elected to roles on the IHF committee at the congress. These included France's Joël Delplanque as 1st Vice-President, Sweden's Anna Rapp as

Treasurer, while Narcisa Lecusanu (ROU) and Frantisek Taborsky (CZE) joined the executive committee.

European representatives were also elected to six out of seven roles as chairs of various committees.

Moustafa secured his sixth mandate as IHF President after running unopposed.

The IHF Congress also passed two key motions. It adopted a motion enabling any IHF body to hold meetings and make decisions through videoconference or other electronic means.

Meanwhile, Moustafa presented a new four-year plan regarding the future of handball, underlining the new rules and regulations already approved by the IHF Council.

Towards the end of the IHF Congress, the President's Development Award for a developed handball nation was presented to the Czech Handball Federation.

Former EHF head of refereeing Manfred Prause, who passed away in September 2021, and former head coach of the Russian women's national team, Evgeny Trefilov, were honoured in recognition for their commitment to handball at national and international level.







# COMMERCIAL SUCCESS

The result of all our efforts to promote and develop the sport as a top-class entertainment product will be to continuously increase the commercial value of European handball. This will be achieved by optimising traditional revenue streams as well as identifying new and innovative sources of income. Ultimately, the EHF aims to reinvest as much of the revenues as possible back into the European handball system.





# EHF CHAMPIONS LEAGUE GENERATES AUDIENCE OF 530 MILLION IN 2020/21

**The first season of EHF Marketing's partnership with Infront and DAZN Group saw a cumulative audience of 530 million tune in to watch the EHF Champions League.**

In total 12,000 hours of handball were broadcast to handball fans across the globe and, with an increase in broadcasters operating on OTT platforms or online, the EHF Champions League was more accessible than ever.

The newly branded competitions also benefited and were complimented by the EHF Marketing's commitment to enhancing TV production and digital coverage. The past season had a digital reach of 400 million, with 750,000 followers of EHF Champions League channels responsible for 11 million engagement and a combined 60 million video views.

The success did not stop there. The EHF's OTT platform, EHFTV, attracted more than 250,000 global subscribers in its first season after its relaunch in summer 2020. Subscribers were able to access and enjoy matches free of charge, in addition to all highlights and special features.

EHF and EHF's 10-year exclusive media and marketing partnership with Infront and DAZN Group officially started in July 2020. Guided by a shared strategic vision, the long-term partnership works to unlock new commercial opportunities and drive operational excellence for all EHF competitions, across production, digital marketing, media rights and sponsorship sales.

David Szlezak, Managing Director EHF Marketing, said: "These positive figures in the first season of the partnership prove that our club competitions enjoyed a great start. Our thanks go to participating clubs, plus our partners and stakeholders for their support. Now the hard work continues as we aim for an even more successful season in 2021/22."

Sandro Forny, Head of Handball at Infront, said: "A lot of time and effort was put into working towards the 2020/21 season and the results represent a combined effort from all parties to take handball to the next level. We have now set a solid foundation for the future and we look forward to pushing beyond that as this partnership continues to develop in a positive manner."

James Chubb, VP Global Rights Partnerships, DAZN Group, said: "Our digital approach has helped boost audience numbers and make EHF's club competitions more accessible than ever before. Together with Infront, our progressive digital marketing and content strategy is driving commercial growth and helping handball reach new fans worldwide."





# DELO GROUP RENEWS EHF CHAMPIONS LEAGUE SPONSORSHIP

Back in May, the European Handball Federation and its marketing arm, EHF Marketing GmbH, together with its exclusive media and marketing partners, Infront and DAZN Group, announced the extension of the title sponsorship agreement with the Delo Group for the EHF Champions League Women 2021/22 season.

The Russian transportation and logistics company has been the title partner of the DELO EHF Champions League and the corresponding DELO EHF FINAL4 since 2019.

The new agreement, which was signed in the presence of EHF President Michael Wiederer, Delo Group President Sergey Shishkarev and EHF Marketing Managing Director David Szlezak on Saturday in Budapest, includes the naming rights for the EHF Champions League Women in the 2021/22 season as well as for the EHF FINAL4 Women 2022.

Next year's DELO EHF FINAL4 will be the first set to take place in Budapest's new 20,000-capacity arena which was built for the Men's EHF EURO 2022 in January.

Besides extensive broadcast exposure through perimeter and on-court advertising, logo presence on media backdrops and corporate hospitality, the new agreement also includes plenty of off-court activities.

For example, the successful 'DELO Superfan' programme, which gives clubs the opportunity to honour special fans for their support, continues in the DELO EHF Champions League throughout the 2021/22 season.

The contract extension chimes in with a strong performance of the competition in 2020/21, as despite all challenges the DELO EHF Champions League proved to be massive

hit, recording impressive digital engagement and broadcast figures.

Including the quarter-finals, almost 250 million fans were reached on digital platforms; 45 million alone via women's clubs' and players' accounts. The engagement figures were achieved thanks to the 16 competing teams using Socialie, a platform which enabled them to receive and publish high-quality, tailor-made clips to their own social media channels.

The campaigns were driven by DAZN Group and Infront through its media and marketing partnership with the EHF and EHF Marketing to grow handball's competitions worldwide.

Furthermore, the DELO EHF FINAL4 2021 – broadcast by 28 broadcast partners with coverage stretching far beyond Europe as it includes Central & South America as well as

Africa – was the first major European handball event in more than a year to be played with spectators, inside the Papp László Budapest Sportaréna.

Commenting on the agreement, EHF President Michael Wiederer said: "Prolonging the partnership in these special and still challenging times for European handball is a great sign for our sport. It underlines the strong development of women's handball and the attractiveness and the huge potential that companies see in our competitions."

David Szlezak, Managing Director of EHF Marketing, said: "Since 2019 we have been working very closely with the Delo Group in this partnership, and we are happy that the mutual trust which developed has now led to the extension of our agreement. With the Delo Group as title partner, the development of the DELO

EHF Champions League as one of the leading sports competitions on the European market is set to continue."

Igor Yakovenko, Chief Executive Officer of DeloPorts and Member of Delo Group Board of Directors, said: "The Delo Group, as a socially responsible company, has invested in the development of handball in Russia and Europe for over six years now, and is delighted to see the positive growth in the sport's popularity. We welcome the new agreement and are grateful to our partners at the EHF and the EHF Marketing for the collaboration over the past two years. We hope that our partnership helps further promote and develop handball, as well as the professional level of players."

DAZN Group's VP Global Rights Partnerships, James Chubb said: "Continuing to build the EHF Champions League Women in partnership with

Delo Group shows again how DAZN Group and Infront's partnership with EHF is working to elevate the EHF club competitions and further grow and develop the sport."

Julien Ternisien, Senior Vice President Summer Sports at Infront, said: "Delo Group's renewal of this agreement underlines its belief in the future of handball and its expansion into new markets. The sport's growing audience continues to be complemented with fresh and innovative sponsorship activations allowing brands to engage with fans across Europe."





EHF Marketing extended its collaboration with Plan International for a fourth successive season in October – and for the first time the collaboration will work together with both the men's and women's EHF Champions League competitions.

Building on 2020's #freetobeonline, the latest campaign focuses on how misinformation and disinformation online affect the lives, learning and leadership of girls and young women. They are disadvantaged in all aspects of their lives by gender inequality, and the spread of lies and false information online reinforces inequalities and deepens the gender divide. This is a new and growing area of concern in an increasingly digital world.

To throw off the start of this season's charity partnership and to introduce the new campaign, every match in round 4 of the competitions saw special activations, including a pink centre circle and interviews with players and ambassadors of the EHF Champions League, used to promote the 'International Day of the Girl Child' which supports equality and the rights of girls worldwide.

The overall campaign and Plan International's girls' petition calling on governments to educate children in digital literacy will be visibly communicated across the EHF Champions League social media channels.

Following last season's EHF FINAL4 Men, EHF Marketing confirmed its continued support to Plan International by donating €10,000 towards its gender equality related projects and support the charity's campaign in the fight against online harassment of girls. The amount equated to 10 euro per fan that was allowed inside the LANXESS arena to watch the EHF FINAL4 in Cologne.

EHF Marketing also continues to support Lays, a girl who lives in an area of Brazil in which children and adults live in poverty and where schools are either poorly equipped or lacking in teaching staff.

## EHF MARKETING EXTENDS CHARITY PARTNERSHIP WITH PLAN INTERNATIONAL



## HAPPINESS THANKS TO HANDBALL

The term 'happy' got a whole new dimension for children involved in the HappyLeague in December.

Playing their own game ahead of the Match of the Week between Aalborg Håndbold and THW Kiel in the 5,000-capacity Sparekassen Denmark Arena made the boys and girls from the HappyLeague feel like true EHF Champions League stars for one night.

In cooperation with EHF Marketing, hummel, and Aalborg Håndbold, the HappyLeague took centre stage during MOTW in round 8 of the EHF Champions League. Wearing special hummel jerseys with EHF Champions League sleeve badges, the children played their own game, which was all about inclusion instead of winning.

The HappyLeague is an international project, bringing handball to young people with special needs. With former Danish international Rikke Nielsen among its founders, the LykkeLiga – the Danish version of HappyLeague – was the starting point for the project and meanwhile 1,200 children with cognitive disabilities are playing at 80 handball clubs. The feel-good community has spread its wings across Europe, with teams emerging in Germany, France, Sweden, Norway, Faroe Islands, and Greenland.



## EHF CHAMPIONS LEAGUE EXPERIENCE BETTER THAN EVER BEFORE



As 2021 drew to a close, the experiences in the men's and women's EHF Champions League for handball fans across the globe in the first four months since the competitions' start has been a huge hit on and off the court.

One of the biggest accomplishments has been the experience at matches as fans were able to return to arenas to enjoy the entertainment week in, week out. Since throw off in September has been the fact that all 144 matches scheduled in the EHF Champions League have been played despite of the pandemic's continuous challenges to the organisation of pan-European sport.

Meanwhile, those supporters immersed in the games on television from the comfort of their own home have been treated to what has been a dramatic start to the campaign. The competition on court could not be closer with the race to reach both EHF FINAL4s set to go down to the wire.

The action has been seen by millions around the globe thanks to the huge interest in the competition with games being broadcast by 37 official broadcasters in more than 60 territories.

With the media and marketing partnership with Infront and DAZN Group that started last year,

the development of digital keeps evolving. As a result, digital reach is up 75 per cent in comparison with the numbers from 2020/21 with a total reach of 250 million recorded in the first four months of the season.

David Szlezak, Managing Director EHF Marketing, said: "We could not have wished for a better start to this season as we enter 2022 in a hugely exciting point in the competition's history.

"The teams battling it out on the court each week have made it brilliant entertainment for handball fans across the world – a fact strengthened by the levels of digital engagement."

Markus Glaser, EHF Chief Sports Officer, said: "We must also thank all competing clubs and players for their skill, passion and dedication in order to not only produce such a high level of performance but to ensure that every single match has been able to go ahead. In times of Covid-19 this is no mean feat and it is testament to our clubs for ensuring we have played every scheduled match."

**The future looks bright for 2022**

The season to date has also seen several successful special activations, with the Match

of the Week continuing to deliver first class handball to fans across the globe. Every MOTW has seen specially curated content produced, including two digital activations: Breakfast for Champions sponsored by Gorenje in the EHF Champions League Men and the DELO Superfan in DELO EHF Champions League.

With an exciting second half of the season due to restart in the new year, fans can already guarantee themselves a seat courtside for the EHF FINAL4 Men in Cologne.

A limited allocation of tickets remain on sale for what promises to be the most dramatic conclusion of the EHF Champions League in recent history.

**EHF MARKETING**





# FAN APPEAL

A holistic digital strategy will be at the centre of efforts in order to maintain these expectations for existing and new handball fans. This will be done through a variety of channels, including digital marketing – reaching and engaging fans beyond the EHF’s own channels – content creation, and rights distribution to maximise reach further.



# DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT ON THE UP

**EHF Champions League digital platforms recorded increased levels of engagement throughout the 2020/21 season proving the handball community's thirst for content of the top-flight has never been higher.**

With almost 750,000 followers connected to EHF Champions League channels, video content was watched 60 million times while the 11 million interactions that were recorded represented an increase of 54 per cent from the previous season.

Overall reach of EHF Champions League content was up 50 per cent on 2019/20 to over 400 million – 200 million of which came via content shared by clubs and stakeholders, further cementing the competition's global appeal.

Handball fans' interest in European handball's premium competition was further underlined by the numbers watching the EHF FINAL4 Men in Cologne, which saw a 20 per cent market share in Denmark following Aalborg's run the final of the competition in front of their TV screens.

While the EHF FINAL4 was watched by fans in 196 countries on EHFTV, the platform finished the season with more than 200,000 registered fans, who tuned in to watch live handball and highlights.

## **Top-flight handball spreads even further**

The EHF's overall goal of reaching and influencing younger handball was further cemented throughout the season.

EHF Champions League content was a massive hit on the Home of Handball TikTok channel, leading to a figure topping 14 million interactions and attracting over 100,000 followers and 2.2m million likes.

The figures lead to a growth of 600 per cent and a 12.5 per cent engagement rate during the season.

The season also saw the birth of the EHF Champions League Weekly newsletter, which was particularly well-received by readers, with

unique and click-to-open rates in line or above industry standards.

EHF Marketing Managing Director David Szlezak said: "The 2020/21 season was a massive success on and off the court and we are of course delighted that the digital engagement levels and interest in our premium club competition is showing significant and exciting signs of growth.

"To see the enormous interest in the EHF Champions League continuing to reach new audience via new mediums gives us huge encouragement as we strive towards bringing top-class entertainment to more and more handball fans around the world.

"It goes without saying that we are looking forward to next season with the goal of building on this success in 2021/22."



# EHF AND HOUSE OF WEB JOIN FORCES TO LAUNCH HANDBALL APP

The European Handball Federation and Austrian start-up House of Web joined forces to bring European handball to mobile phones around the globe by launching a new app.

The new app, which launched in September, follows the EHF's 'Home of Handball' approach and unites Europe's major handball competitions – from the club as well as from the national team side – under one roof.

The natively programmed app is available on iOS and Android including a dedicated version for tablets. A smooth user experience has been at the heart of the development, allowing for an easy as well as exciting entry into the world of handball with an overview about every single match in the EHF's competitions each season.

The integration of highlights from EHFTV, as well as of live scores, club and player information, are

key ingredients for an enriching user experience. The app features gamification elements and allows for each user to completely individualise his or her experience by selecting their favourite club and/or favourite competition.

It is the EHF's proclaimed aim to offer all users the world of European handball at their fingertips while at the same time create an entry point for new fans to enter the arena and learn about the excitement of handball.

EHF Secretary General Martin Hausleitner said: "With House of Web we have an equally experienced and innovative partner on our side. We have clear goals to offer our fans an individually enriching experience. They shall always be up to date on European handball and be able to check the most recent results of their favourite club – we will give them the opportunity

individualise the app as much as possible. Looking ahead, we will further increase the user experience by implementing tools such as augmented reality."

Hannes Jagerhofer, founder and CEO of House of Web, said: "We see our task in pushing forward digitalisation and to support our customers with using the offerings of the online world and its applications in a smart and meaningful way. Apps do play a central role here, as people's mobility is constantly gaining importance. Together with the European Handball Federation we will show in user-friendly and attractive fashion, what is possible these days in this area."



# OFFICIAL EHF CHAMPIONS LEAGUE SONG RELEASED

In May, EHF Marketing GmbH, the marketing arm of the European Handball Federation, released 'Mesmerize', the official song of the EHF Champions League

The song was first played at the draw for the EHF FINAL4 Men 2021 and was heard at the DELO EHF FINAL4 in Budapest and the EHF FINAL4

also available on all major platforms including Spotify, iTunes and Amazon Music.

Nina Kernmayer, Strategic Business EHF Marketing, said: "The new EHF Champions League song is a great way for us to connect with our fans digitally, as most of them have to follow the EHF FINAL4 events from home.

"Our vision for next season is to have a song at hand that provides our handball community with the right sound to celebrate the return of handball to arenas across Europe."

'Mesmerize' impresses with a catchy synth hook line and raw and massive dancehall power, altogether providing the recipe to become a new in-arena hit and to attract a younger audience.

The song, composed by international producer team JOIN7, is the next spin-off of EHF Marketing's ongoing partnership with German sound agency WESOUND.

It is based on the EHF brand sound, which was introduced in July 2020 to compliment the EHF's new brand ecosystem. At its core is the 'handball sound DNA': a rhythmic interpretation of the sport's most iconic movement, the jump shot.

Sound logos and anthems for the EHF Champions League and the EHF European League as well as opening and closing sequences for TV elements, OTT platforms and social media have already been released.



# EHF BRINGS HANDBALL TO TWITCH

The European Handball Federation made the next step as part of its 360-degree digital strategy in May, announcing the launch of its own 'Home of Handball' channel on Twitch, the interactive live streaming service.

The move complements the federation's latest efforts to grow audiences, engage and entertain them beyond the 60 minutes of the game and lay the foundation for a long term-growth of the sport.

In particular, it chimes in with recent successes to reach new fans within a younger audience which saw the EHF's 'Home Of Handball' TikTok channel growing by 90,000 followers (+600%) since December 2020.



The new Twitch channel joins the 'Home of Handball' digital platform ecosystem, which stretches from the EHF's website to a presence on all major social media platforms including TikTok, and follows the ecosystem's philosophy of being the one-stop shop for the best handball content from the continent.

Thomas Schöneich, EHF Director Media & Communications, said: "Our 'Home of Handball' ecosystem is growing and adding Twitch to it is the right move at the right time in order to grow our fanbase and reach new audiences in the future. We're looking forward to bringing more and exclusive European handball content to our fans via Twitch."

With the launch of the new Twitch channel, the European Handball Federation adds another piece of the puzzle in its quest of becoming the most attractive team in sport in Europe in the next decade.

Within the handball realm, the EHF positions itself at the forefront when it comes to the presence on digital channels and once more underlines its key strategic focus to grow the appeal of the sport, particularly to younger audiences, through an enhanced digital offering.





# DELO SALUTES THE SUPERFANS

One of the biggest success stories during the times of Covid-19 and attendance regulations inside arenas was the introduction of the DELO Superfan campaign.

The new concept sees all 16 clubs in the DELO EHF Champions League take part during the season with particular focus on games selected for the Match of the Week.

With the aim to empower clubs and to thank their supporters, one fan who shows particular passion and loyalty towards their team is named as a DELO Superfan. The superfans then become the face of their club and the DELO EHF Champions League for that particular match giving them money-can't-buy access to their favourite players.

Superfans also receive special treatment on the day of the match, receiving a DELO Superfan

box, including a signed shirt, VIP tickets and a matchball. They are also given a behind-the-scenes look around the arena, visiting the dressing rooms, press room and TV truck. After the game the fan then has the honour of presenting the winning Player of the Match trophy.

At the beginning of 2021 the focus remained on the online activation due to Covid-19 restrictions but as the 2021/22 campaign began to see fans returning to arenas, the engagement levels of the campaign have been impressive.

The DELO Superfan talks – which consist of live interviews – reached more than 200,000 people, creating more than 15,000 interactions. As many as eight different teams from six markets in the first eight rounds took part leading to MOTW content in the DELO EHF Champions League reaching more than 5 million fans.



# THE GAME

Handball is and will always be at the centre of everything we do. We will create the best possible environment for the sport, its players, coaches and officials at all levels in order to achieve the vision of being Europe's most attractive team sport. Work will focus on providing the best conditions for playing the game as well as continued investment in technology to further improve officiating and bring the game even closer to fans.





# M19 EHF EURO CROATIA

**WINNERS:**  
**GERMANY**

**RUNNERS—UP:**  
**CROATIA**

**THIRD PLACE:**  
**SPAIN**



Germany claimed the Men's 19 EHF EURO 2021 title in Croatia with a dominant 34:20 victory over hosts Croatia.

Germany, who were the last remaining unbeaten team in the competition, took control in the last 10 minutes of the first half and raced away from their opponents in the second half.

In the early stages of the M19 EHF EURO 2021 final, it appeared as though the match might be settled through a scoring battle between two right backs: Croatia's David Jurisic and Germany's Renars Uscins.

As the first half developed, Croatia's errors in attack allowed Germany to capitalise through fast breaks. Indeed, a fast break goal from Florian Kranzmann gave Germany their first three-goal lead of the final, 11:8, after 19 minutes.

While Croatia reduced Germany's lead to two goals in the 26th minute, the final moments of the first half provided Croatia with a crushing blow. With Germany leading 18:14 as half-time approached, Justus Fischer's shot was saved but Tim Freihöfer's rebound beat the buzzer.

In the first 15 minutes of the second half, Germany's defence thwarted any comeback attempt from Croatia, who trailed by 10 goals with 15 minutes remaining. With Tim Freihöfer, Nico Schöttle and Robert Krass among the players scoring freely, Germany's lead reached its highest point of 14 goals with 30 seconds remaining.

Meanwhile, in the third place medal match, Spain secured third place with a convincing 37:28 win over Slovenia.

# M19 EHF CHAMPIONSHIP NORTH MACEDONIA



Poland denied North Macedonia the opportunity to claim a Men's 19 EHF Championship title on home court in Skopje. Poland beat the hosts 35:33 in a final that had no shortage of action from start to finish.

When Poland met North Macedonia in group A of the preliminary round, the hosts earned a valuable 30:25 win. A repeat would have been special for North Macedonia's players, but a polished attacking performance from Poland denied the hosts victory in the final.

With three players scoring six goals or more for Poland – Pawel Krawczyk, Dawid Molski and Jakub Bedzikowski – North Macedonia could not stop their opponents often enough. For Poland, who recorded a shot efficiency of more than 70 per cent in both halves, victory was assured

when Molski's goal in the 55th minute gave them a 32:26 lead.

Having won three matches from three played in group B, Switzerland's ambition was to play in the final in Skopje. However, after a narrow loss against North Macedonia, they met Bosnia and Herzegovina in the third place medal match.

Switzerland's loss against North Macedonia featured a total of 67 goals scored, and the third place medal match against Bosnia and Herzegovina also had more than 60 goals. On this occasion, Switzerland came out on the right side of a high-scoring match that was only decided by one goal, despite the team incurring 11 two-minute suspensions.

# M19 EHF CHAMPIONSHIP BULGARIA

**WINNERS:**  
**FAROE ISLANDS**

**RUNNERS—UP:**  
**BELARUS**

**THIRD PLACE:**  
**CZECH REPUBLIC**



The Faroe Islands confirmed their ongoing rise in international handball, winning the Men's 19 EHF Championship 2021 in Varna coming from behind to beat Belarus to win gold.

Elias Ellefsen a Skipagotu was the big man for the Faroe Islands, scoring a decisive 13 times in the final to raise his tally to a tournament-leading 44 for the week and being named MVP of the tournament.

For years handball in the Faroe Islands has been on the rise. Two years ago, their under-17 team beat Sweden to win the M17 European Open so their triumph in the M19 EHF Championship 2021 is not as big as a surprise as some might think.

Skipagotu was top scorer at that event two years ago, and he repeated his achievement in Varna, with the 13 in the final.

Belarus were led by Aliaksandr Piatrovich and Ihar Bialiauski, who each scored seven. His side led for almost the entire first half and were still ahead with 20 minutes ahead. The Faroes got themselves on level terms with nine minutes remaining and then Skipagotu and Janus Dam Djurhuus nosed the Islanders ahead and they never looked back to secure a historic gold.

Czech Republic also had a one-goal win, 27:26, to edge neighbours Slovakia in the battle for third place.

# M19 EHF CHAMPIONSHIP LATVIA

**WINNERS:**  
**MONTENEGRO**

**RUNNERS—UP:**  
**NETHERLANDS**

**THIRD PLACE:**  
**ROMANIA**



Montenegro recorded another close win over the Netherlands to win the Men's 19 EHF Championship in Riga.

The winners came out on top by 30:28 in the final, six days after they had also beaten the Dutch team in the group phase: 31:30.

Beating the team that scored the most goals in the tournament, Montenegro have rewarded themselves with the gold medal.

Montenegro did well to keep the Dutch attack in check. Led by Niko Blaauw, who had already scored eight times in the semi-final against Romania (28:25), the Netherlands built an early lead but Montenegro refused to let them run away with it.

Thanks to their strong second half, Montenegro came out on top, with Luki Vukicevic (eight) and Arsenije Dragasevic (seven) their most productive players.

Hosts Latvia missed out on the third place medal, going down 38:35 in the third-place match against Romania.

Having beating Latvia 40:29 in the group phase, Romania were clear favourites coming into the match – however, it turned out no walk in the park this time.

Led by a stunning 14-goal outing from Endijs Kusners, Latvia kept up with their opponents for the first three quarters – only for Romania to make the difference in the closing 15 minutes.



# W19 EHF EURO SLOVENIA

**WINNERS:**  
**HUNGARY**

**RUNNERS—UP:**  
**RUSSIA**

**THIRD PLACE:**  
**FRANCE**



After winning the gold medal at the W17 EHF EURO in 2019, could this generation of Hungary players follow up with another gold medal at the W19 EHF EURO 2021 in Slovenia? In the final in Celje, they provided an emphatic answer to the question as they took the title with a 31:22 win against Russia.

Having scored 184 goals in six matches prior to the final, Hungary's attack held a clear edge over Russia. Playing in front of some Hungarian fans who were present in the arena, Hungary made a near-perfect start as they took a 5:2 lead.

Russia coach Mikhail Izmailov called for an immediate timeout, but as Anna Kukely and Johanna Farkas continued their goal scoring exploits in the first half, Hungary's advantage

grew to 14:7 in the 23rd minute. By the end of the first half, Hungary's superior depth was apparent as eight players had scored.

If Russia still had a chance at the break, Blanka Kajdon's – who was subsequently named as the MVP of the tournament – influence on the game was about to make it even more difficult.

As the last 10 minutes played out, Hungary's lead remained at between eight and 10 goals. Shortly after Petra Koronczi scored Hungary's 31st and final goal of the match, Hungary's title-winning celebrations could begin.

In the third place medal match, Lena Grandveau's performance inspired France to a 30:29 victory against Sweden to take third place.

# W19 EHF CHAMPIONSHIP NORTH MACEDONIA

**WINNERS:**  
**NETHERLANDS**

**RUNNERS—UP:**  
**POLAND**

**THIRD PLACE:**  
**BELARUS**

After making a powerful start in the Women's 19 EHF Championship in North Macedonia, the Netherlands held on in the second half to take a 26:23 win and the title.

With Sanna Van Galen and Catharina Molenaar both delivering outstanding performances for their team, the Netherlands established a clear lead midway through the first half.

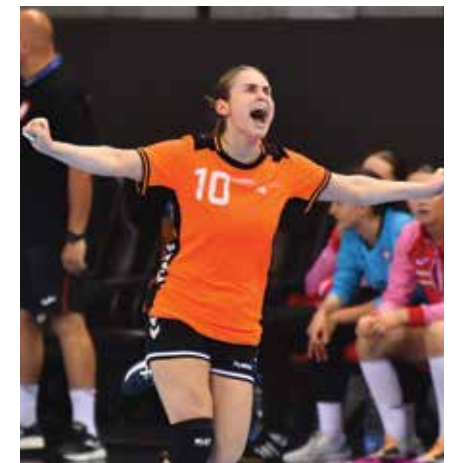
The Netherlands made a slow start in the semi-finals versus Belarus, trailing 7:2 after nine minutes, but they certainly did not repeat that mistake in the final against Poland.

When Molenaar raced away on the fast break in the 24th minute to score her sixth goal of the game, the Netherlands had scored 14 goals from 17 shots and were ahead by nine goals for the first time.

As Poland continued to find it challenging to beat Van Galen at the start of the second half, the Netherlands remained in control after 42 minutes (21:13) and were seemingly cruising to victory.

Poland certainly made the match interesting in the last quarter, as they reduced the difference to 23:20 in the 52nd minute, but a late red card for Julia Niewiadomska did not help their cause. When Jessie de Ruit scored her fourth goal of the match – and her team's 26th goal – with just over two minutes, the Netherlands were assured of their victory.

Meanwhile, in the third place medal match, Belarus beat the Faroe Islands 27:25 as Darya Vakulich scored seven goals for the winning team.



# W19 EHF CHAMPIONSHIP ITALY



**WINNERS:**  
**ITALY**

**RUNNERS—UP:**  
**LITHUANIA**

**THIRD PLACE:**  
**SERBIA**

Would playing at home in the final of a Women's 19 EHF Championship benefit Italy or prove to be too much of a burden? Italy left it late against Lithuania – but they ultimately claimed the crown courtesy of a 27:25 victory.

Italy certainly made a tentative start in the final that was played on their home court in Chieti. After several of Italy's shots were saved in the first six minutes, Lithuania built the first three-goal lead of the match, 4:1.

Lithuania extended their advantage to four goals (8:4) in the 15th minute. But as Giulia Fabbo and Ramona Manojlovic found the back of the net more frequently in the final 15 minutes of the half, Italy were back within one goal at the break – as Lithuania led 11:10.

As the lead changed hands on several occasions, a close contest continued throughout the second half. With just 10 under minutes remaining, Martyna Ustilaite's equaliser for Lithuania left the match tantalisingly poised at 21:21. Giulia Fabbo's eight goals in the match for Italy came from 15 shots, but her final two goals of the match ensured her team had a three-goal cushion with less than two minutes left on the clock.

Serbia beat Spain (23:22) in a match that was only decided after Spain's last shot of the match, a direct free-throw, went wide.

# W17 EHF EURO MONTENEGRO



**WINNERS:**  
**HUNGARY**

**RUNNERS—UP:**  
**GERMANY**

**THIRD PLACE:**  
**SPAIN**

Hungary recorded yet another gold medal at a Younger Age Category EHF EURO event – this time overcoming a slow start against Germany to record a six-goal win, 25:19, in the Women's 17 EHF EURO 2021 final.

After scoring 12 goals in Germany's thrilling semi-final win against Russia, Viola Leuchter looked as though she wanted to repeat the feat in the final. Leuchter scored three goals in the opening five minutes as Germany took a 4:0 lead – prompting Hungary to call an early timeout.

Unsurprisingly, though, Hungary regrouped and their mission of eliminating Germany's lead was already underway when Germany called a timeout in the 18th minute (8:6). A 5:0 run for Hungary, which included Liliana Csernyanski's fourth goal of the game, put them ahead 11:9 after 26 minutes.

Although Germany struggled to score in the first 10 minutes of the second half, Hungary's lead was only three goals. That changed when Julia Farkas extended her side's advantage to five goals – 19:14 – for the first time in the 47th minute.

Whilst Nieke Kühne and Viola Leuchter did their utmost in attack for Germany, the result was beyond any doubt when Luca Csikos increased Hungary's lead to eight goals, 24:16, in the 58th minute.

In the third place medal match, Russia produced an impressive attacking performance as they beat Denmark by seven goals, 37:30.



**WINNERS:**  
**NORTH MACEDONIA**

**RUNNERS—UP:**  
**ICELAND**

**THIRD PLACE:**  
**SPAIN**

# W17 EHF CHAMPIONSHIP LITHUANIA

An 11-goal performance from Teodora Dukoska inspired North Macedonia to a 27:26 victory against Iceland in the Women's 17 EHF Championship final in Lithuania.

In North Macedonia's semi-final victory against Poland, one player stood out on the court: Iva Mladenovska. Mladenovska opened her account against Iceland in the 13th minute, but as a tight first half developed in Lithuania, other players stepped up in attack for North Macedonia.

In what was perhaps a sign of things to come, Teodora Dukoska scored three consecutive goals for North Macedonia from the 23rd minute to the 26th minute. Although North Macedonia generally held a one-goal lead as half-time approached, Iceland were not overwhelmed and equalised through Embla Steindorsdottir 30 seconds before half-time.

With two strikes from Elin Klara Gustsdottir and a goal from Elisa Eliasdottir, Iceland moved two goals clear, 15:13, early in the second half. But with Dukoska continuing to add to her total, North Macedonia reclaimed the lead in the 51st minute.

While Dukoska deserves credit for her inspirational performance, four goals in the last 10 minutes from Emilijana Rizoska lifted North Macedonia across the finish line.

The third place medal match featured group winners Spain and Poland. After Spain came back from a four-goal deficit in the second half to snatch a 22:22 draw in normal time, they also won the subsequent penalty shoot-out.



# W17 EHF CHAMPIONSHIP GEORGIA



**WINNERS:**  
**NETHERLANDS**

**RUNNERS—UP:**  
**SERBIA**

**THIRD PLACE:**  
**FAROE ISLANDS**

In a final that was only truly decided in the last 10 minutes, the Netherlands clinched the Women's 17 EHF Championship title in Georgia with a 25:19 win against Serbia.

The Netherlands could not have wished for a better start to the final of the W17 EHF Championship. With two goals apiece from Alieke Van Maurik and Jalisha Loy, the Netherlands raced into a 5:0 lead after eight minutes.

The defensive side of the ledger remained healthy for the Netherlands in the first half, as goalkeeper Bianca Schanssema frequently denied Serbia when called upon, but a period of almost nine minutes without a goal for the Netherlands saw Serbia close to the gap to just two goals at half-time.

Aleksandra Vasic, who scored three times for Serbia in the first half, levelled the score at 10:10 in the 36th minute. Although the Netherlands held a four-goal lead in the 46th minute, 18:14, Serbia responded again and only trailed by one goal with seven minutes left.

The Netherlands needed a strong finish to claim the title – and they produced it. Donna Bakker's fast break goal in the 56th minute restored a four-goal cushion, 22:18, and when Alieke Van Maurik converted a penalty that increased the lead to 24:19 with less than two minutes remaining, Dutch celebrations were underway on the bench.

Meanwhile, in the third place medal match, the Faroe Islands won a high-scoring encounter against Ukraine, 35:27.

# W17 EHF BEACH HANDBALL EURO

**WINNERS:**  
**HUNGARY**

**RUNNERS—UP:**  
**NETHERLANDS**

**THIRD PLACE:**  
**SPAIN**



Hungary's women battled through two shoot-outs to win the under-17 EHF Beach Handball EURO in Varna.

Having dispatched Spain in the semi-final on penalties, the Hungarians secured their nation's eighth women's junior title with a shootout win over the Netherlands in the final.

The first set belonged to the Dutch, who were indebted to a series of fine saves from goalkeeper Veerie Meerstad. Those stops enabled the Netherlands to take the first set 25:20.

Hungary began the second set on top and, having opened up a strong lead thanks to some excellent goalkeeping from Dorina Bartok, they maintained a five-point lead to take it to a shoot-out.

The Hungarians took the initiative after the Dutch missed two penalties in a row. With a chance to win the title, a miss-throw from the Hungary goalkeeper handed the Netherlands a lifeline. However, it was left to Kitti Kreuz to find the target with the one point the Hungarians needed with their final penalty to cue the celebrations.

Spain, whose under-17 age group won the gold medal at the 2019 edition, were on the podium once again – this time securing third place with a straight sets win over Norway.

It was the second medal for Spain's women at a Beach Handball EURO, four years after they also took third place at in 2017 - the same year Norway won gold.

# M17 EHF BEACH HANDBALL EURO



**WINNERS:**  
**SWEDEN**

**RUNNERS—UP:**  
**SPAIN**

**THIRD PLACE:**  
**UKRAINE**

Sweden goalkeeper Oscar Johansson was the hero as his two flying saves in a dramatic shootout helped win his nation their first ever EHF Beach Handball EURO title.

The drama began in a second set that looked to be heading Sweden's way when they led by six points. Spain, however, got to within two points with 20 seconds left on the clock and then completed the comeback to level the score when Joaquin Varo Gallardo equalised with just four seconds remaining.

That goal took the second set to a golden goal period and, after Sweden secured the ball from throw-off, that man Paldanius scored the one point required to take the game to a shootout.

What followed was a remarkable fight for the gold medal as both sides traded two-point penalties.

After 16 perfect points for each team, Sweden were the first to miss. However, that was the cue for Johansson to leap out of his goal to deny Spain their shot at the title.

Back at 18 points apiece in the shootout, Johansson then re-enacted his best Superman impression with another brilliant diving save to tip the scales in the Swedes' favour.

It was then left to tournament goal-getter Paldanius to fittingly finish the job, the young Swede holding his nerve to find the target to give Sweden a historic and memorable victory.

In the third place medal match it was Ukraine who took the honours, beating Croatia in straight sets (24:21, 16:12).



# EHF FINAL4 MEN

## BARÇA COMPLETE A PERFECT SEASON BY LIFTING THE EHF CHAMPIONS LEAGUE MEN TROPHY

Five and a half months after losing the EHF FINAL4 2020 final, Barça took their revenge and lifted the EHF Champions League trophy, their ninth in history.

Against Aalborg it took 10 minutes for Barça to warm up before the machine started rolling, heading towards a record win. For the first time, the champions won all their games throughout the season and finished off with the biggest margin ever for an EHF FINAL4 final.

Aleix Gómez led the way for the Spanish side, scoring five goals in the first half alone, and with

a strong defence, Barça were well ahead at the break, 16:11.

Barça kept their foot to the pedal after the break, with Luka Cindric and Gómez continuing to shine. They took their first 10-goal lead at the 45th minute, when goalkeeper Gonzalo Perez de Vargas scored in the empty goal. 15 minutes later their 36:23 win was sealed.

The victory made it 20 wins from 20 matches – no team had ever been able to win all their games, giving the Blaugranas a well-earned status as favourites for the title, enabling them

to banish the memories of losing in Cologne to Kiel in the final in December 2020.

Gómez netted nine times for Barça while Lukas Sandell scored eight times for Aalborg. Gonzalo Perez de Vargas was handed the MVP trophy, presented by the City of Cologne. The top scorer of the EHF Champions League season 2020/21 was HBC Nantes' Valero Rivera with 95 goals.





# DELO EHF FINAL4

## VIPERS KRISTIANSAND WERE CROWNED DELO EHF CHAMPIONS LEAGUE CHAMPIONS IN BUDAPEST

Vipers Kristiansand gave Brest little chance in the final game of the DELO EHF Champions League 2020/21 season as they secured their first trophy in the top flight with a 34:28 win.

Both finalists in the DELO EHF Champions League had the chance to take an historic first trophy in Budapest, and it was Vipers who earned the coveted title as they dominated the 60 minutes against Brest.

Kristiansand's win represents the second in history for a Norwegian club, after Larvik clinched the title in 2010/11. Five Vipers players added to previous titles won in the Champions League with the victory: Nora Mørk, Heidi Løke,

Katrine Lunde, Linn Jorum Sulland and Jana Knedlikova. For Mørk, Lunde and Løke, it is the fifth trophy with a third different club.

The Norwegian side were the worthy winners after completely controlling the trophy match thanks to flawless attack and a stronger defensive game than their rivals. Vipers profited from a far stronger start, scoring three unanswered goals before Brest netted their first and racing ahead to a lead as clear as five goals. Led by their back court and some stylish positional attack, Brest fought back to draw level at 9:9 in the 15th minute, but they could only stay on equal footing for a few minutes before Vipers pulled away again.

Supported by saves from Lunde, Vipers rapidly increased their lead in the second period, hitting a seven-goal advantage at 22:15 in the 35th minute. Their veteran keeper Katrine Lunde became increasingly important as the game progressed, as she racked up eight saves in the first half and made some key stops in the critical final moments.

Henny Reistad was top scorer with 12 goals and earned the tournament's MVP title for the DELO EHF FINAL4 2021. Brest's right back Ana Gros led her team with eight goals in the final and became the season's top scorer with a tally of 135 goals.





# EHF FINALS MEN



## MAGDEBURG BECAME THE FIRST WINNERS OF THE EHF EUROPEAN LEAGUE MEN

SC Magdeburg held off a second half comeback by Füchse Berlin to lift the first ever EHF Finals Men trophy after a 28:25 win in the final in Mannheim.

Bennet Wiegert's side led by eight goals early in the second period but although Füchse rallied to get within two at one point, it was not enough to stop Magdeburg from being crowned EHF European League Men champions.

Victory also gave Magdeburg their first European trophy since winning the second-tier EHF Cup 14 years ago – and their fifth in their history.

A delighted Bennet Wiegert, who was part of the SCM squad that won the EHF Champions League in 2002, said: "To win this first ever European League trophy is a moment for eternity, it is historic. Yesterday the fear of losing and to get eliminated was bigger than the joy of winning, today, we could not get eliminated, we could only win, and this is how we played. "We knew that we would need two almost perfect days to win this title, and we made it."

It was a double celebration for the German side as goalkeeper Jannick Green – who made 17 crucial saves in the final – was awarded MVP of the tournament.

After a brilliant win over Rhein-Neckar Löwen on Saturday, there was heartache for runners-up Füchse.

Füchse coach Jaron Siewert said: "SC Magdeburg did great work this weekend and deserved to win. But despite a seven-goal difference after the break, we kept our heads up, we were close to change the game, but Magdeburg today had their key player in the goal, who saved so many free shots, he was the difference." the decisive point, 7:6.



# EHF FINALS WOMEN

## AN EXCELLENT PERFORMANCE SAW NANTES SECURE THE FIRST EVER EHF EUROPEAN LEAGUE WOMEN TITLE

Nantes Atlantique enjoyed a dominant performance in the final to clinch their first European title beating Siófok KC in the final of the first EHF Finals Women in Baia Mare.

In only their fifth season in European competitions, Nantes Atlantique Handball were unstoppable in the EHF Finals Women. In the final they secured their second win in as many days, 36:31, against Siófok KC, to lift the inaugural EHF European League Women trophy.

After a 17-game unbeaten run in the competition, Siófok KC lost the chance to become only the second team ever to defend the trophy of the second-tier European competition, dropping their first game since 2019 in the final.

Bruna De Paula (Nantes Atlantique Handball) secured the MVP award but did not pass Helene Fauske (Herning-Ikast Handbold) on the overall top scorer standings for the season, leaving the

prize for the Norwegian back, who scored 61 goals for Herning-Ikast.

Nantes wing Nathalie Hagman finished the weekend with 18 goals to be top scorer of the EHF Finals Women.





# EHF EUROPEAN CUP MEN



## AEK ATHENS LIFT FIRST EUROPEAN TROPHY IN THEIR HISTORY

For the first time in the club's history, AEK Athens HC won an EHF competition, after they were too strong for Ystad's IF in the EHF European Cup Men final.

Following a 30:26 win in the first-leg match, AEK successfully defended their advantage and won by four goals again, 24:20.

AEK became just the second Greek winner of a European club competition after Diomidis Argous triumphed in the EHF Challenge Cup in 2012.

Early in the second half, Ystad had some hopes of turning things around. However, they did not last long, as AEK greatly improved their defence and were back on track.

Between minutes 38 and 56, the Swedish team scored only two goals, and as Athens were in a 22:16 lead, all doubts were gone – and the celebrations could start. Similar to the first leg, AEK's goalkeeper Thomas Bauer did a god job, finishing the game with 10 saves for a 37 per cent save rate.

AEK coach Dimitris Dimitroulias said: "How could I not be emotional? That was such a season for us: we lost all our top-class players but we kept on going. With this crowd, with this team, we believed in it so much, we could not lose. It was a very emotional moment for me, I am so happy for everybody. This crowd deserves a European cup, my players are absolutely fantastic."

# EHF EUROPEAN CUP WOMEN



## MALAGA WIN MAIDEN EUROPEAN TITLE AFTER THRILLER IN ZAGREB

Rincon Fertiliad Malaga won their first title and the very first EHF European Cup Women trophy after a thrilling second leg in Zagreb, winning 31:28 and 60:59 on aggregate.

Lokomotiva battled hard but in the end, could not break Malaga's four-goal lead from the first leg.

The Spanish team trailed by six at one point of the match but did not give up and regained control with strong periods at the end of both halves.

The home side took over midway through the first half held on to their desired lead until the final five minutes of the match when they were outmatched by the Spanish team's strength and concentration in a breath-taking affair.

One player, in particular, set the tone for them: left wing Soledad López scored her side's opening four goals on the night and finished as the top scorer with seven, taking her tally for the season to 48.

"We knew it would be more difficult than the first leg but we made it through," said Virginia Fernandez, the victorious Malaga goalkeeper.

"When I saw the scored after 60 minutes, I thought, oh my God and now we are really, really happy.

"Zagreb stayed really close and we lost some important balls but at the final whistle, we made it."



# EHF BEACH HANDBALL EURO

## FOR THE SECOND SUCCESSIVE EHF BEACH HANDBALL EURO, DENMARK'S MEN REIGNED SUPREME

**The night before the men's final at the Beach Handball EURO 2021, Denmark star Martin Vilstrup Andersen was talking in his sleep.**

His roommate told him the next morning what he had been saying: "We will win tomorrow."

It didn't remain a dream: Denmark won the final against Croatia (2:0 – 25:20, 28:22) in Varna, Bulgaria to successfully defend the crown they had earned two years ago.

"We were here, we believed in ourselves," Vilstrup Andersen said right after the final. "To become European champions, undefeated, is nothing I ever dreamed of."

The strength of Denmark showed throughout the whole week. Approaching each match with the same intensity, whether it was in the preliminary round or in the final, they proved too good for anybody.

The confidence showed in both sets of the final. Relying on a strong defence as the base, Denmark got the edge over Croatia thanks to a flawless attacking game, enabling Nikolaj Mogensen to score 24 points, 12 in each set.

The lost final meant at least some consolation for Croatia, after they had sensationally missed out on the semi-finals two years ago.

With Ivan Juric named MVP and Lucian Bura scoring 149 times – only two less than the tournament's top scorer Cemal Kütahya of Turkey, Croatia were once again among the most attractive teams in the field.

**Russia beat Spain 2:1 for third place**

Two-time former champions Russia took third place after an entertaining match against Spain, winning it 2:1 (23:22, 14:16, 7:6) – to secure their first medal since 2017.

The first set ended with a golden goal from Nikita Iltinskiy, the shoot-out with Igor Neklyudov netting the decisive point, 7:6.





# GERMANY DENY DANISH DOUBLE

## GERMANY STORMED TO EHF BEACH HANDBALL EURO GOLD TO LIFT THEIR SECOND TITLE

Victorious Germany coach Alexander Novakovic looked up in the air at the birds high above the Black Sea coast.

"But here are the real eagles," he said, pointing at his players who were celebrating on the court behind him.

Indeed, Germany had been flying all week at the Women's Beach Handball EURO 2021 in Varna.

Their unbeaten run also included the final against Denmark, as they handed the defending champions a 2:0 (24:21, 25:20) defeat.

It marked Germany's second European title, and first since 2006.

Germany had the better start in the first set for a 10:5 lead but found themselves 11:10 behind just two minutes later.

But the team kept going, and after winning the first by three points, made the difference even bigger in the second.

A crucial element to Germany's triumph was Amelie Möllmann, who scored 13 two-pointers.

Möllmann's 26 points and Germany's solid defence, highlighted by the All-star Team awards for defender Isabel Kattner and goalkeeper Katharina Filter, proved too much for Denmark.

Still, the Scandinavian side will leave Varna proud of their strong efforts to defend their first title they had won two years ago.

### Spain beat Norway to take third place

Spain beat Norway 2:0 (21:18, 23:22) in the third place medal match, despite Marielle Martinsen outstanding tally of 20 points for Norway in this game.

It was the second medal for Spain's women at a Beach Handball EURO, four years after they also took third place at in 2017 - the same year Norway won gold.







# MEN'S EHF EURO 2022 QUALIFIERS

**In January 2022 24 teams will line up for the Men's EHF EURO 2022 in Hungary and Slovakia.**

The competing nations came through a gruelling qualification process which concluded in May 2021 and had plenty of drama.

While 22 of the 24 teams reaching the final competition were also present in 2020, the line-up includes two countries less familiar with the EHF EURO. Co-hosts Slovakia have not featured since 2012 but earned a place through their hosting rights.

Lithuania ended a long wait to reach the final tournament again, after playing it once before in 1998. Not only did Lithuania collect two wins

to secure a place among the best third-ranked sides, they presented strong challenges in some lost games as well, such as in their final clash when they led Portugal at half-time.

Two other teams that will play the final tournament are set for their second participation in history after making their debuts in 2020: the Netherlands and Bosnia Herzegovina.

EHF EURO 2016 winners Germany and EHF EURO 2018 finalists Sweden were the only two teams to reach the end of the qualifiers with a perfect record of six wins.

Serbia came close to perfect, with five wins (including two assessed results against Belgium)

and one draw. Their results meant they beat three-time champions France in the standings – and they will get another chance to play Les Bleus in the final tournament with both teams drawn in group C.

Despite some strong performances, several nations must wait for their debut at the EHF EURO. Kosovo, Finland, Turkey, Faroe Islands, Estonia, Greece and Belgium all played strongly in qualification, with highlights including the Faroes' 27:26 victory over the Czech Republic.





# WOMEN'S EHF EURO 2022 QUALIFIERS

**With two rounds played so far in the battle to qualify for the Women's EHF EURO 2022, there is still all to fight for most of the 24 teams in the running.**

The Women's EHF EURO 2022 will be the last played with 16 teams, and there are 12 tickets still available – with co-hosts Slovenia, North Macedonia and Montenegro plus defending champions Norway all pre-qualified.

After the first two rounds, played in October 2021, eight teams remain undefeated: Poland, Russia, Denmark, the Netherlands, France, Hungary, Spain and Sweden.

Switzerland, Lithuania, Faroe Islands, Greece, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Portugal and Turkey

are yet to win a match. Portugal, Greece and the Faroes all came through the qualification phase 1 tournament to earn their places in phase 2.

One of the biggest surprises of the first two rounds was Iceland's stunning 23:21 win against Serbia in round 2. The Icelandic team had lost 30:17 in an away match to Sweden earlier in the week, but bounced back for their home game against the Balkan nation.

Germany produced their biggest-ever win in round 1 to beat Greece 36:10, while France delivered a crushing 38:22 defeat to the Czechs.

There were two draws in the first two rounds, with Germany tying 24:24 with Belarus, and Austria's meeting with Romania ending 33:33.

Qualification resumes in March 2022 and concludes in April. The top two teams in each of the six groups will progress to the final tournament in December 2022.

Among the highlights of round 3 will be a top-of-the-table clash in group 4 between 2020 third place medallists Croatia and reigning Olympic champions and 2020 EHF EURO silver medallists France, with the return game later in the week.

Unbeaten sides Hungary and Spain, as well as Poland and Russia, will also meet when the qualification gets underway again.



# DENMARK RETAIN WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP TITLE

Denmark became world champions for the second time in January 2021, raising the Men's IHF World Championship trophy in Cairo after an intense campaign.

After a hard-earned but well-deserved 26:24 victory in the all-Scandinavian final against Sweden, Denmark took their second gold medal on the global stage. They became only the third country in the last 50 years to successfully defend a world title, after Romania did it in 1974 and France in 2011 and 2017.

Denmark played the final four times in the past 10 years but lost their first two efforts against France (in 2011) and Spain (2013).

They extended their winning streak at World Championships to 19 matches – a record. Winning each match since their Last 16 defeat to Hungary in 2017, Denmark passed the previous best mark of 18 straight wins, set by France between 2015 and 2019.

"We made history," Denmark head coach Nikolaj Jacobsen said.

Denmark's key player was once again Mikkel Hansen, who was named MVP, an honour he also received at the World Championships in 2013 and 2019.

Sweden appeared in their first final since 2001, when they lost to France, and came close to

their fifth title as Denmark could not cast them off easily. Sweden will co-host the next world championship with Poland in 2023.

Two-time EHF EURO champions Spain finished third, beating record the reigning champions France 35:29 in the third place medal match.

The first six positions in the final ranking were occupied by European teams, ahead of hosts Egypt, and Qatar. Qatari left back Frankis Carol was the event's top scorer, with 58 goals.

The All-star Team was also filled with European players, including three Swedes, three Danes, Spain's right wing Ferran Sole and French line player Ludovic Fabregas.



# NORWAY RALLY TO BEAT FRANCE FOR FOURTH WORLD TITLE

**In a repeat of their EHF EURO 2020 final, Norway beat France in the gold medal match at the Women's IHF World Championship 2021. It marked the fourth time Norway had triumphed over France in a major final since 2011.**

The Scandinavian side ended up winning as clear as 29:22, but for the first 29 minutes of the final it had looked like France were in the driving seat on the road to the trophy as the Olympic champions built a healthy-looking 16:10 lead.

But Norway reduced the gap to four (16:12) just before half-time and had an outstanding Silje Solberg between the posts as they turned the match around in a second half that saw France managed to score just twice in 20 minutes.

Alongside the excelling goalkeeper, the players that stood out for the new world champions were Henny Reistad – the MVP of the DELO

EHF FINAL4 2021, when she steered Vipers Kristiansand to the EHF Champions League title – with six goals; Györi Audi ETO KC duo Stine Oftedal and Kari Brattset Dahl as well as Vipers back Nora Mørk all netted five times.

Both Reistad and Mørk were named in the All-star Team, while Brattset Dahl earned the MVP award.

The match resembled Norway's decisive main round game against Netherlands, when they also came back from a six-goal deficit to earn the win they needed.

During the tournament, Norway won seven of their eight matches and only dropped a point in the Scandinavian derby against Sweden in the main round.

The result marked Norway's record-equalling fourth world title, matching Russia's tally of four.

Norway earlier won the trophy in 1999, 2011, and 2015; Katrine Lunde, Camilla Herrem and Stine Oftedal have been part of Norway's gold medal team three times.

In the bronze medal match, Denmark got their first medal at a major event since 2013 by beating hosts Spain 35:28 (16:13). It left Spain without silverware, two years after they had come runners-up to winners Netherlands at Japan 2019.

As Norway are one the three hosts of the World Championship in 2023, alongside Denmark and Sweden, there was little consolation for France, as they are now qualified directly for the final tournament.





# GRASSROOTS GROWTH

Through the development of 'handball for life', the EHF wants to create opportunities for more people to be able to play an active part in the sport irrespective of age, fitness level, location or time commitments. Special efforts need to be taken to attract young people in kindergartens and schools and to retain more people in the sport throughout their lives. More opportunities for officiating and volunteering will also be important in developing grassroots growth.



# EHF SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE GOES DIGITAL

The sixth EHF Scientific Conference, 'Digitalization and Technology in Handball — Natural Sciences/The Game/Humanities', took place in November with 125 participants from 26 countries joining the first online streamed edition of the event.

The English-language Conference saw a number of experts presenting on various aspects of handball, including topics such as new coaching systems and approaches, the impact of Covid-19, injury prevention, refereeing and esports.

**"SCIENCE GIVES KNOWLEDGE TO EVERYBODY WHO IS PARTICIPATING IN OUR GAME"**

Proceedings were opened by Chairman of the Methods Commission Pedro Sequeira, who spoke primarily about the importance of the Conference and the growth of knowledge surrounding handball.

Sequeira said that scientific knowledge is vital to the continued development of the game of handball. All involved, from coaches and players to referees and delegates, benefit from the scientific knowledge surrounding the sport moving forward.

"This is very important for the development of the game," he said. "To develop the game, you also need a lot of knowledge. With our Scientific Conference, there is a possibility that science gives knowledge to everybody who is participating in our game.

"The new elected Methods Commission has the same ambition that Mr Taborsky and Mr Elias had in the past. Today we are in the sixth edition. I hope in 10 years we will be at the 10th edition. This means that scientific persons, [and] scientific knowledge, will continue to be together with handball."

Sequeira also spoke about the contribution of the EHF Competence Academy & Network, which has grown through the years to become a thriving body within the EHF contributing critical knowledge to handball.

"A lot of gratitude from my side to them, not only with the Scientific Conference, but today specific to the Scientific Conference," said Sequeira. "This is only possible because all the European Handball Federation supports us."

Turning to the specific focus of the 2021 edition of the Conference, which has been held every two years since its inception in 2011, Sequeira outlined how technology is a vital tool for sport and that handball must make use of all available resources to continue to move forward.

"Things are really changing in all sectors, specifically in sports and of course in handball. Today, with the digitalization and technology, it is possible to put handball on a new level.

**"WE ALL WANT THAT OUR GAME IS ALL THE TIME BETTER AND BETTER"**

Not only through grassroots, but also through education for our sporting agents — referees, delegates, coaches, club managers. Today this is incontrovertible, that if we want to develop handball, we need to be almost in the 22nd century," added Sequeira.

Sequeira added that another reason the Conference's global topic of 'Digitalization and Technology in Handball — Natural Sciences/The Game/Humanities' is relevant are the European Commission's 2030 Digital Decade objectives, which outlined that digitalisation is a key pillar for the development of the continent. He concluded by outlining how all the Conference content is valuable as researchers and coaches in handball need continually updated information.





# HANDBALL REACHES THE NEXT GENERATION WITH THE EUROPEAN WEEK OF SPORT

2021 marked the seventh consecutive year that the European Handball Federation was an official partner of the #BeActive European Week of Sport on 23-30 September, which strives to help everyone - regardless of age, ability or background - to be active.

With the Covid-19 situation varying greatly throughout Europe, the potential for activities in each nation varied with it, meaning the handball community and wider sporting world needed to be creative once again to spread its message and engage people across the continent.

The week was promoted in 41 European nations with over 30,000 registered events giving millions of people the opportunity to be involved in a variety of physical activities and sports, including handball.

As we see the light at the end of the tunnel of the global health crisis, the importance of the #BeActive European Week of Sport is clear to see.

And despite restrictions on large public gatherings in many countries, millions of people around Europe found ways to get moving wherever they were.

As a partner of the campaign, the EHF took part in a live discussion on a Twitter Space hosted by the European Commission on 22 September, the eve of the week's launch.

## Dynamic Dutch

A number of national handball federations were busy spreading the good handball word during the campaign and no more so than the Dutch.

In the Netherlands, a national week of sports took place on 17 to 26 September with the NHV running a series of activities throughout the country.

Among the activities were 'Gooi jij de bal door?' ('Do you pass the ball?'), an active teaching program for primary school youth, where children learn the principles of handball, Week of the referee and six introduction clinics for youth in den Bosch and Nieuwegein.

But the standout campaign was NK curbs, a nationwide competition with 100 events, over 30 of which were hosted by handball associations.

In the final, children from more than 100 places competed for the title of 'Champion Stoepranden 2021'.

HandbalNL organised side events in three different places during the event. You could follow a clinic of top handball players, play Goalcha, test how hard you can throw or how well you can aim a shot.

Ambassadors for the campaign, Noah van Wieringen and Zoe Sprengers filmed live from one of the events.

## Mini handball in Latvia

The Latvian Handball Federation held a mini handball tournament, an opportunity for children to compete with their peers, promote physical activity and education on maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

This tournament was on 26 September with 32 teams participating (288 players and coaches) and there were almost 70 games played in a single day.

## Danish Day of Handball

The Danish Handball Federation had an open house event 'The Day of Handball' in 70 clubs all over Denmark on 2 October.

The Danish Day of Handball is an initiative that showed handball to those who are interested in a fun, cosy and informal environment, where everyone can participate.

And on the back of a long shutdown, this year had an even stronger focus on getting everyone back into the community - this applies to players, coaches, parents and volunteers.

70 clubs participated with 397 volunteers and 5460 participants, including an estimated 353 new members recruited.

**#BEACTIVE**  
EUROPEAN WEEK OF SPORT



# SEVENTH EDITION OF EUROPEAN HANDBALL MANAGER IN FULL FLOW

The seventh edition of European Handball Manager started in November, with 18 participants completing the first two modules of the certificate programme in Cologne. Among them are four (former) players from the German Bundesliga.

European Handball Manager is a joint project of the EHF and German Sports University Cologne, which started in 2015. The throw-off to the latest course year has come less than two months after 11 participants from all over Europe successfully completed the sixth edition of the education programme in September - despite largely relying on online teaching.

Among the 18 participants of the current course are Michael Allendorf (MT Melsungen), Benjamin Meschke (TVB Stuttgart), Max Ramota (Bergischer HC) and Michael Spatz (TV Großwallstadt), who want to use the certificate programme to prepare for their second careers after once retired from actively playing the game.

"MT Melsungen offer me an interesting perspective in the management area," Allendorf says.

"The part-time training at the Sport University Cologne to become a European Handball Manager is an ideal preparation for this. Beyond the transfer of expert knowledge and the strong practical relevance, I find the exchange of experiences with the other participants and the resulting networking opportunities valuable."

The content of the European Handball Manager programme has been further developed with the integration of the important topic of leadership in sport.

Former world-class handball players Carlos Prieto and Raul Alonso, sporting director at HC Erlangen, raised awareness of the topic of leadership from their perspective and demonstrated its importance for sporting and economic success.

Based on this, Jacqueline Mueller from Loughborough University has analysed the participants' individual leadership profiles in order to identify strengths and weaknesses. The analysis provides approaches for the further development of the participants' leadership qualities.

"The coronavirus pandemic posed a major challenge to the continuation of the European Handball Manager programme," says Helmut Hörtsch, Senior Director of the EHF Competence Academy & Network.

"We at the European Handball Federation are even more pleased that we have been able to further improve and continue this offer together with the German Sports University Cologne."





# HOW THE NEXT GENERATION OF DATA ANALYSIS IS IMPROVING HANDBALL

**There is a revolution under way in how handball data analysis is used and – thanks to a team appointed by the EHF Methods Commission – it is helping national federations and handball improve standards.**

EHF Methods Commission member Carmen Manchado from the University of Alicante and her team have created a Handball Analysis Tool which interprets raw data produced by Kinexon that foresees the covered distances, velocities, accelerations, changes of direction, impacts and jumps of players on the court.

The scientific analysis was already used at the Women's and Men's EHF EURO 2020. At the

Men's competition over 7 million data points from the 65 matches were collected and, with around 110,000 data points collected in each match, approximately 5 million were collected at the Women's event.

"The Kinexon data was firstly introduced for information for the spectators watching at home the height of a jump or speed of a throw to make them feel part of the show," Manchado says. "Our data can also be used to provide research to learn more about sport and improve players' performance."

"The reason behind why we try to produce the information coming from Kinexon is to give

coaches as much valid and constructive data as possible. We receive the raw data – a players' position for example and here in Alicante we use our tool to turn it something that can be translated in a coaches' language.

"The mission for all of us involved in handball is that we define the development of the players and the game that will result in an attractive product: a highly-skilled match."

**EHF**  
**COMPETENCE**  
**ACADEMY &**  
**NETWORK**



## EHF MASTER COACH COURSE AND RINCK CONVENTION SEMINAR

**The 30 participants of the EHF Master Coach Course defended their master theses as the curtain came down on the third and final module of the course in February.**

Injury prevention was then one of the main focuses of the EHF RINCK Convention seminar that took place over three days in June.

The online seminar welcomed 43 participants from 39 EHF federations who took part in a busy programme of lectures, while also having the chance to exchange their own experience and knowledge in working groups.

The first day was reserved for a basic information about the RINCK Convention while the following day saw attention turn to the seminar's key theme – The Big Six of Injury Prevention – How coaches can make a difference.

Each of the 'big six' – pre-injury screening, training, load management, recovery management, return to competition and injury monitoring – were presented by Patrick Luig, Leonard Achenbach, Claude Karcher, Thorsten Ribbecke, Hendrik Block and Lior Laver.

On the final day of the seminar, the participants were involved in seminars that covered grassroots handball, an insight into iCoachKids and new tools for coaches.

The latest development regarding the RINCK Convention as 2021 came to a close was that the Ukrainian and Georgian federations signed up to become the newest to join the convention after agreeing terms at the Extraordinary Congress in November.

# SEVEN NEW ACADEMIC EHF MASTER COACHES HONOURED



**In May, seven EHF Master Coaches from six countries defended their academic master thesis online in front of an EHF and University Las Palmas academic panel.**

Diego Soto García (ESP), Vanja Kralj (SLO), Marco Antonio Mexia Arraya, Murat Bilge (TUR), Oskar Dawo (GER), Aleydin Fikretov Aliev (BUL) and Hugo Daniel Santos (POR) defended their work.

This year the thesis defence allowed the EHF Master Coaches to enter the final stage of receiving a post-graduate master degree called Master of Science, EHF Master Coach.

The academic panel was composed of Professor Miguel Betancor, academic director of the programme, Pedro Sequiera, EHF Methods

Commission Chairman, and EHF Methods Commission member Carmen Manchado.

Responsibility for coordination of the project lies with Helmut Hörtsch (below), the coordinator for the EHF Competence Academy & Network (CAN).



## E-TRANSFERS & PLAYER DATABASES



**The EHF Transfers Department has enjoyed a busy 2021 as it continues to be a crucial point of reference in terms of legal framework to players, clubs and national federations.**

The EHFfamily e-transfers platform, which was launched in July 2020, has continued to show improvements of data correctness and accuracy. This has meant transfer procedures are settled and managed in real time which makes transfers and releasing players even more efficient.

Meanwhile the Professional Players Lists – an online tool – is able to give a generic overview of players, offering accurate and transparent information in real time facilitating the communication between the interested stakeholders.

An additional tool that was launched at the end of November 2021 was the Official Squad Lists – which enables EHF member federations to actively work on the information concerned by observing and respecting the foreseen deadlines and adjusting the correct informational flow.

The EHF's own Players' Database also received maintenance to help the 24/7 tool work efficiently as it continuously provides updates of players' evidence and their movements through transfers and changing of their status from and between amateur and professional.



# EUROPE'S FUTURE HANDBALL STARS IN GOOD HANDS WITH RESPECT YOUR TALENT



**It was a busy and successful summer for the Respect Your Talent programme with more than 450 players joining the project.**

Launched in 2019, the programme promotes the holistic development of talented handball players' careers on and off the handball court, using some of the sports' top athletes to give advice and support in topics such as dual career, anti-doping, mental performance, media and sports law.

With 10 younger age category events taking place over the summer months involving hundreds of male and female athletes, it was the perfect opportunity for the EHF to introduce the Respect Your Talent programme to next generation of handball stars.

The project was originally designed to encourage the personal development of talented young female handball players but was expanded to include young male players in 2020. However, with the younger age category events scheduled for that summer postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic, it was this summer that saw 450 players – including over 150 male athletes – join the project, adding to the 200-plus women who had already been introduced to the project.

Players at the events were selected to join the Respect Your Talent project by either winning a Player of the Match award or being named in an

All-star Team. Once selected, the players had the opportunity to participate in an activity day held during the respective events. The All-star Team players will participate in a Respect Your Talent camp later in 2021.

#### **Stars align to back campaign**

In 2021, five top former players – Vid Kavtčnik (Slovenia), Stefan Lövgren (Sweden), Carlos Prieto (Spain), Laszlo Nagy (Hungary) and Victor Tomas (Spain) – joined the men's side of the Respect Your Talent project and participated in the activity days held on the fringe of the summer's younger age category events.

Kavtčnik and Lövgren attended the activity day held during the Men's Under-19 EHF EURO 2021 in Croatia, while the Men's Under-19 EHF Championships were attended by Prieto in North Macedonia, Nagy in Bulgaria and Tomas in Latvia.

Former THW Kiel and Sweden international Lövgren said: "As an ambassador in the Respect Your Talent programme, I think we have the task to encourage those talents, to support and help them in any way they want, with information, answering questions or just being there for them.

"That is our responsibility and I like to do that as a former player, to somehow give back to the next generation of handball players."

At the women's events, young talents had a chance to meet and talk to the project ambassadors Ana Gros (Slovenia), Anja Althaus (Germany), Andrea Lekic (Slovenia), Katarina Bulatovic (Montenegro) and Jelena Grubisic (Croatia).

The Respect Your Talent activity days took place during Women's Under-19 EHF EURO in Slovenia and Championships in North Macedonia and Italy and continued during women's Under-17 events in Montenegro, Georgia and Lithuania.

Around 150 players who received a Player of the Match award participated in Respect Your Talent Activity day across three competitions.

A RYT Camp for Women's Under-17 All-Star team players in Vienna took place in December, while the Men's Under-19 All-Star team players will meet in Bratislava during the Men's EURO, 20-22 January 2022.

To support the players in their development stage a RYT Toolkit app is set to be introduced to provide virtual training sessions in the areas of dual career, mental performance, interview training, social media, anti-doping and sports law.



# STRENGTHENING NETWORKS

The success of European handball strongly depends on its administrators, officials and volunteers – their continuous education and the transfer of knowledge within clubs and federations and to external partners will result in the increased professionalism of all stakeholders. Education as well as cooperation and partnerships with external institutions and organisations are also vital.



**EHF**  
EUROPEAN HANDBALL  
FEDERATION



# BOARDS & COMMISSIONS

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Delegated by the EHF Congress to operate the European Handball Federation, the Executive Committee (EXEC) is primarily charged with the implementation of the resolutions passed by the Congress. Additionally, as custodians, it is authorised to assemble temporary working groups to handle special topics, and also engage in activities and enact business practices that serve the sport of handball, its Member Federations, and its stakeholders.

The Executive Committee is structured to convene at regular intervals, in personal and virtual settings, and in 2021, the group met on six occasions. In April, the 2016 mandate was concluded and the face of the Executive Committee changed following the elections at the 15th Ordinary Congress in Vienna and the current constellation of the EXEC consists of 13 persons. The full Congress report can be found on page 12.

Over the course of the year, the Executive Committee ratified various motions coming from the technical and legal commissions; some matters were settled at the meetings and other were taken as circular decisions. Despite the ongoing challenges, the members of the Executive Committee fulfilled their obligations in terms of representation at various meetings – the Ordinary and Extraordinary EHF Congresses, as well as the Finals of the men's and women's club and national team competitions, specifically, the 11 younger age category European Championships and EUROS.

In 2022, the Executive Committee will continue to oversee various major long and short-term projects such as the development of the new EHF office building, the organisation of the 16th EHF Conference of Presidents, and the ongoing implementation of the EHF Master Plan and digital strategy. The first EXEC meeting of the new year will be held on the fringes of the Men's EHF EURO in Budapest at the final weekend.

## FINANCE DELEGATION

The Finance Delegation (FD) acts as a supervisory body appointed by the Executive Committee and supported by CFO Bernhard Binder and his team based at the EHF headquarters. The members of the Finance Delegation evaluate and summarise the current and impending fiscal activities of the organisation prior to delivering the outline and, when deemed necessary, recommendations to the Executive Committee at the scheduled meetings.

The Finance Delegation met on five occasions in 2021 and, in response to the ongoing pandemic, it was clear that the focus of the group had to be the sustainability of the EHF to ensure that the organisation could fulfil its operational and contractual obligations, an element of this included ensuring that competitions are executed, and Member Federations receive their apportioned provisions.

At the 15th Ordinary EHF Congress in April, the adapted budgets were presented and ratified by the Congress; the approval of the Member Federations reinforce the recommendations of the Finance Delegation to proceed with caution during precarious junctures. In 2022, the first meeting of the year will be held in Bratislava during the Men's EHF EURO.

## TECHNICAL DELEGATION

The serving Chairpersons of the Competitions, Methods, and Beach Handball Commissions constitute the Technical Delegation (TD). As a coordinative platform, the members have treated a range of topics that included, but not limited to game administration, technological developments, and education.



MICHAEL WIEDERER (AUT)  
President



BOŽIDAR DJURKOVIĆ (SRB)  
CC, Chairman



STEFAN LÖVGREN (SWE)  
Member



BENTE AKSNES (NOR)  
Member



PREDRAG BOŠKOVIĆ (MNE)  
First Vice President



PEDRO SEQUEIRA (POR)  
MC, Chairman



FRANCISCO V. BLAZQUEZ  
GARCIA (ESP) Member



MARK SCHOBER (GER)  
Chairman NB



HENRIK LA COUR (DEN)  
Vice President, Finances



GABRIELLA HORVATH (HUN)  
BC, Chairwoman



FRANC BOBINAC (SLO)  
Member



XAVIER O'CALLAGHAN (ESP)  
Chairman PHB



MARTA BON (SLO)  
Chairwoman WHB

## COMPETITIONS COMMISSION

The endeavours of the Competitions Commission (CC) have centred on keeping the sport in the public arena. The members of the Competitions Commission have dealt with a multitude of topics over the past year that has included referee equipment and education i.e., a candidate course; additionally, many recommendations were submitted to the Executive Committee that covered adaptation of regulations, match schedules, and media rights. With the various events at the forefront of all activities, through concerted efforts, the EHF positively concluded the 2020/21 club season with all Final events taking place in Germany, Hungary, and Romania and two of the events were enjoyed with a limited number of spectators. Currently in the winter hiatus, the 2021/22 club handball season started well and no major unresolvable issues have been raised. At the national team level, EHF EURO Qualifiers, beach handball events, as well as 11 younger age category European Championships were all successfully executed. To start the new year on a high note, the Men's EHF EURO 2022 will throw off in January in Hungary and Slovakia; the CC looks forward to all the upcoming events.

## TECHNICAL REFEREEING COMMITTEE

In June, the Executive Committee approved the recommendation of the Competitions Commission on the composition of the TRC and its members that will serve until the end of the 2022/23 season (incl. 2023 summer events). The members are as follows: Denis Reibel (FRA) for grassroots, Jutta Ehrmann-Wolf (GER) for female referees, Oyvind Tøgstad (NOR) for elite referees, Zigmaris Sondors (LAT) for development; the area of 'Special Tasks' is assigned to the EHF Office. The current priority of the TRC is the continuation of online education and testing aimed at familiarising EHF delegates with the procedures and software.

## EHF ANTI-DOPING UNIT

Due to changes in international protocol issued by WADA, the EHF had to cease anti-doping testing in January 2021 and all testing activities reverted back to the International Handball Federation (IHF). Thus, the EHF focused on educational activities and conducted such activities during the YAC summer events. In July, a new agreement was signed with the IHF, and approved by WADA, giving the EHF anti-doping unit (EAU) full access to the ADAMS system, which allowed for testing by the EAU to be reinstated with immediate effect.

## METHODS COMMISSION

The Methods Commission (MC) remains committed to the technical development of the game and this responsibility covers many facets. In 2021, the MC gave focus to the area of material and knowledge transfer in its endeavours to update the current system. The year was very active for the Methods Commission, which is supported in the office by the professionals of the Sport & Game Services; this new business unit is a result from the merging of the Methods & Development and Additional Activities departments. From the various activities undertaken throughout the year, the MC have nurtured the handball network by hosting various handball webinars, updating coaching manuals, working with match data through the KINEXON project, and even enfolded more signatories into the RINCK Convention.

A highpoint of the year was the transmission of the EHF Scientific Conference that was held in a virtual forum. Moving into the new year, the Methods Commission is pleased to announce that, moving past the unavoidable postponement because of the pandemic and to a possible Paralympic participation in the future, the IHF/EHF World Wheelchair Handball Championship will take place in November 2022. The next edition of the Master Coach course will be held on the fringes of the Men's EHF EURO.



BOŽIDAR DJURKOVIĆ (SRB)  
CC, Chairman



DRAGAN NACHEVSKI (MKD)  
Member, Refereeing



JAN KAMPMAN (DEN)  
Member, Men's Competitions



Gael PELLETIER (FRA)  
Member, Men's Club Competitions



PÄIVI MITRUNEN (FIN)  
Member, Women's Competitions



THOMAS HYLLE (DEN)  
Member, Women's Club Competitions



PEDRO SEQUEIRA (POR)  
MC Chairman



LIDIJA BOJIC-CACIC (CRO)  
Member, Youth School & Non-Competitive Sport



MONIQUE TIJSTERMAN (NED)  
Member, Methods and coaching



CARMEN MANCHADO (ESP)  
Member, Development



PATRICK LUIG (GER)  
Member, Education and Training



### BEACH HANDBALL COMMISSION

The Beach Handball Commission (BC) engaged in a range of topics and over the past 12 months and this specific branch of the sport celebrated many positive experiences, and conversely, also had to endure negative scrutiny concerning clothing regulations. Due to the established relationship between the EHF and IHF, the BC was able to define and submit a proposal which led the IHF to an expedited resolution of the matter. The transition into the new electoral period saw the BC strategic plan reviewed and updated; a key point of the plan is the improvement of the digital, technological, and media services around the competitions. The 2021 EHF Beach Handball EUROs in Varna, Bulgaria for senior and youth players were a resounding success in terms of TV transmission and media figures. Following this event and in view of the 2023 edition of the European Games in Krakow, Poland, the BC has implemented steps to amend and develop the qualification process at both the YAC and senior level. Moving away from the court, the ‘EHF Beach Handball Forum’ introduced in 2020 continues to provide an information exchange platform, and in the coming year, the BC will finalise the topic of transfer and licensing procedures.



GABRIELLA HORVATH (HUN)  
BC Chairman



MARCO TRESPIDI (ITA)  
Member, Game Design & Coaching



MAREK GORALCZYK (POL)  
Member, Events and Competitions



MARIO BERNARDES (POR)  
Member, Development & Promotion



JIRI OPAVA (CZE)  
Member, Officiating

### EHF COMPTROLLERS

The Comptrollers and the Comptrollers’ Council hold the sole purpose of upholding the financial integrity of the European Handball Federation and its subsidiary, EHF Marketing GmbH (EHFM). The financial accounting for the EHF business years 2019 and 2020 was discharged by the EHF Comptrollers in April. Respectively, the results of the EHFM 2020/2021 business year were announced and cleared before the General Assembly of the EHF Marketing GmbH in November 2021. The Comptrollers and the Comptrollers Council conducted their tasks of inspecting all financial transactions and the reliability of the work was verified by external auditing services. In spite of the challenges of the previous year, the findings of the Comptrollers and the Comptrollers Council underpinned the conscientious workings of both organisations. The review of the EHF and EHFM financial activities were undertaken with the full cooperation and support of the EHF finance department and the Executive Committee.



ROBERT PRETTENTHALER (AUT)  
Member



THOMAS LUDEWIG (GER)  
Member



JANKA STASOVA (SVK)  
Substitute

### EHF COURT OF HANDBALL

The 2016-2021 electoral term of office for the members of the EHF Court of Handball (CoH) ended with a number of 200 cases settled in the first instance, 17 of which were resolved in the 2020/21 season; the cases mainly concerned direct disqualifications, withdrawals, and breaches of regulations. At the 2021 EHF Congress, a new president was elected to serve the CoH; with six newly elected and two re-elected members, the EHF Court of Handball is composed of nine people who have already dealt with some 15 cases since its election, none of which have yet been appealed.



IOANNIS KARANASOS (GRE)  
President



SHLOMO COHEN (ISR)  
Member



ANDRÉ HOMMEN (NED)  
Member



ANDREAS THIEL (GER)  
Vice President



URMO SITSI (EST)  
Member



YVONNE LEUTHOLD (SUI)  
Member



SORIN-LAURENTIN DINU (ROU)  
Vice President



MATEA HORVAT (CRO)  
Member



ALAN GRIMA (MLT)  
Member

### EHF COURT OF APPEAL

In total, 20 cases were brought to the second instance during the four-year term of the EHF Court of Appeal (CoA) members. Last season, the CoA dealt with an appeal against an EHF Administrative decision towards a club’s non-participation in a competition due to Covid-19 Regulations. The decision has been published in the seventh edition of the EHF Legal Journal. Among others, the seven members of the CoA, including two newly elected members, have also dealt with transfer issues.



MILAN PETRONIJEVIC (SRB)  
Member



MARKUS PLAZER (AUT)  
President



ILONA TORDAI (HUN)  
Member



NICOLAE VIZITIU (MDA)  
Vice President



ROBERT CZAPLICKI (POL)  
Member



KETEVAN KOBERIDZE (GEO)  
Member



IZET GJINOZVI (KOS)  
Member

### EUROPEAN HANDBALL COURT OF ARBITRATION

As of April 2021, the EHF Court of Arbitration is now renamed European Handball Court of Arbitration, but its acronym, ECA, remains unchanged. The ECA Council is composed of three new members, a President and a Vice President elected at the 2021 EHF Congress and a second Vice-President jointly appointed by the EHF stakeholders’ representatives. The development of the ECA can be reflected by an increased number of submissions concerning contractual matters for which ECA has jurisdiction through an arbitration clause in contracts between the stakeholders in the handball world, i.e. players, clubs, agencies. Indeed, the ECA dealt with three cases of this type in the past year, all of which contained an arbitration clause recognising the ECA as the competent body to handle the disputes arising between the parties.



GIORGIO TEDESCO / ITA  
President



REMY LEVY (FRA)  
Vice President



MARTA UTOR (ESP)  
Vice President

### INITIATOR OF PROCEEDINGS

Within the EHF ‘Whistleblower’ system, the Initiator of Proceedings and the newly instituted substitute (two honorary members with comprehensive experience from their former legal functions) are the direct link to anonymous persons submit a complaint or information of concern.



RUI COELHO (POR)  
Initiator of Proceedings



PANOS ANTONIOU (CYP)  
Substitute

### LEGAL DELEGATION

The Legal Delegation is an administrative body established by the Executive Committee to function as an oversight committee. Comprised of the Presidents from the Court of Handball, Court of Appeal, and the European Handball Court of Arbitration Council, the group meets to consider various legal issues across the internal frameworks.

### EHF NATIONS BOARD

The reconstituted Nations Board (NB) combines the Nations Committee Men and the Nations Committee Women with three members from each committee nominated to the Board. The chairperson of the Nations Board represents the body in the EHF Executive Committee. The purpose of the board is to represent the interests of the National Federations from the perspective of national team activities. In addition to dealing with the topics treated in the NCM and NCW meetings, the NB also looked at topics that included, but were not limited to, wheelchair handball, marketing and personality rights, as well as education compensation and player agents. Over the course of the year, the NB received and gave feedback to the comprehensive information on current and upcoming national team event on both the senior and youth level.



MARK SCHOBER (GER)  
Chairman



NODJALEM MYARO (FRA)  
Member (WHB)



PIRJE ORASSON (EST)  
Vice Chairwoman



LEONOR MALLOZZI (POR)  
Member



MORTEN STIG CHRISTENSEN (DEN)  
Member



INGO MECKES (SUI)  
Member



EHF NATIONS COMMITTEE MEN

The Nations Committee Men (NCM) is a newly created body that will treat matters pertaining to men’s national team activities. In 2021 following its creation the members met on three occasions. At all meetings, the EHF representatives (non-members) imparted pertinent information. The topics discussed covered the M19 EHF EURO, 2022 YAC events, IHF/ EHF Trophy, the Covid-19 situation and the respective Hygiene Concepts and other measures, the scheduling of matches, as well as issues that affect the emerging nations. The next meeting of the NCM is scheduled for March 2022.



INGO MECKES (SUI)  
Member



BERTRAND GILLE (FRA)  
Member



NODJIALEM MYARO (FRA)  
Chairwoman



PIRJE ORASSON (EST)  
Member



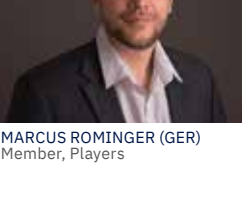
XAVIER O'CALLAGHAN (ESP)  
Chairman



MARK SCHOBER (GER)  
Member, National Teams



GREGOR PLANTEU (SLO)  
Member, Clubs



PREDRAG BOŠKOVIĆ (MNE)  
Member, EXEC



MARCUS ROMINGER (GER)  
Member, Players



MORTEN STIG CHRISTENSEN (DEN)  
Member, National Teams



FRANK BOHMANN (GER)  
Member, Leagues



MARTIN HAUSLEITNER (AUT)  
Member | EHF Secretary General



JANOS SZABO (HUN)  
Member | MFCH Representative



XAVIER O'CALLAGHAN (ESP),  
Member | MFCH President



ZSOLT AKOS JENEY (HUN),  
Member | WFCH President



GERD BUTZECK (GER),  
Member | FCH Managing Director



MICHAEL WIEDERER (AUT),  
Chairman | EHF President



PREDRAG BOSKOVIC (MNE),  
Member | EHF First Vice President



HENRIK LA COUR (DEN),  
Member | EHF Vice President Finances



MARTIN HAUSLEITNER (AUT),  
Member | EHF Secretary General



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Member | Deputy Board member MFCH



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THORSTEN STORM (GER),  
Member | Deputy Board member MFCH



# INSIDE THE EHF

**EHF**

**EUROPEAN HANDBALL  
FEDERATION**





# STRATEGIC BUSINESS



From left to right:

Michael Wiederer (President & CEO),  
Vesna Lazic (PA to the President),  
Marsha Brown (Corporate Liaison),  
Alenka Cuderman (Women's Handball Coordinator),  
Martin Hausleitner (Secretary General & COO).

# EHF MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS



Back row (left to right):

Clemens Martinek (Digital Campaigning  
& Content Strategy),  
Andrew Barringer (PR & Corporate Communications),  
Vladislav Brindzak (Club & National Team Competitions),  
Xavi Vegas (Social Media),  
Richard Turner (Corporate Design).

Front row (left to right):

Joseph Banholzer (Social Media),  
Jelena Bagaric (Media & Project Management),  
Thomas Schöneich (Director Media & Communications),  
Ioana Patachi (Content & Influencer Marketing),  
Luu Cornet (Digital Content).



# EHF EURO EVENTS & LEGAL MANAGEMENT



Left to right:

Philipp Moritz (Event Infrastructure),  
Sophia Touiker (In-house Lawyer),  
Mate Kozma (Event Organisation),  
Monika Flixeder (Senior Director EHF EURO  
Events & Legal Management),  
Maike Bouwer (Event Management),  
Mihaly Kovacs (In-house Lawyer).

Missing from the picture:



Johannes Müller  
(Event Infrastructure)

# SPORT & GAME SERVICES



Left to right:

Nicole Rabenseifner (Development Programmes & Special Projects),  
Beata Kozłowska (Education & Grassroots),  
Claudia Brantl (International Transfers & Players Database Maintenance),  
Helmut Hörtsch (Senior Director Competence Academy & Network),  
Vincent Schweiger (Technical Development),  
Joao Pedro Monteiro (Intern),  
Doru Simion (Senior Director Sport & Game Services).



# COMPETITIONS



## Back row (left to right):

George Bebetos (Referee Programme),  
Nadezhda Lacina (Anti-doping Unit),  
Rima Sytkus (National Team Competitions),  
Ines Taekker (Club Competitions Management),  
Markus Glaser (Chief Sports Officer).

## Sitting (from left to right):

Mario Kovacic (National Team Competition Management),  
Annika Siller (Competitions Department Coordination),  
Nancy Johnson (Beach Handball),  
Tobia Pisani (Beach Handball Management).

## Missing from the picture:



Ines Rein  
(Club Competitions)



Marcus Bestilleiro  
(Referee Programme)



Thomas Gangel  
(Venue Management)  
– Retired 2021



Peter Sichelschmidt  
(Senior Director, National  
Team Competitions) –  
Retired 2021

# INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

## Left to right:

Charly Music (Recurring Operation & Support),  
Andreas Krywult (Application Management  
– Competition & Business Processes),  
Christoph Gamper (Senior Director  
Information Technology),  
Monica Antal (Project Management Office),  
Jerry Nicolas (Application Management  
– Online Experience & Fan Data),  
Michael Hell (Facility Management),  
Peter Großschmidt (Implementation & Support),  
Lars Erichsen (Documentation & eLearning).



# FINANCE & OPERATIONS

## Left to right:

Danuta Kluz (Front Office),  
Katharina Kogler (Finances EHF),  
Hasija Dizdarevic (Facility Management),  
Bernard Binder (Chief Finance Officer),  
Andrea Moser (Finance Projects),  
Natalya Bellan (Finances EHF Marketing).





# BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT



Left to right:  
Gerian Terry (Digital Marketing),  
Joy Noppe (National Team Competitions),  
Mette Sibrall (Intern),  
JJ Rowland (Director Business Development & Marketing),  
Lena Sperger (Brand Management),  
Christoph Makovec (Marketing & Ticketing).

Missing from the picture:



Eleonora D'Este  
(CRM Projects)


# EHF MARKETING



Back row (left to right):  
Jana Leukel (Events),  
Stefanie Beinhofer (Events),  
Miguel Mateo (Director Media Operations),  
Nina Laczika (Media Operations),  
Dennis Kemmerling (Events),  
Luca Friedel (Partner & Brand),  
Ergo Rohi (Implementation),  
Nina Kernmayer (Clubs & Administration),  
Viktoria Slynchuk (Graphic Design),  
Matthias Mayrhofer (Director Partner & Brand),  
Maja Bukovnik (Partner & Brand),  
Tomas Eitutis (Implementation),  
Oliver Laaber (Media Operations),  
Georg Rieck (Director Implementation).

Front row (left to right):  
Celia Samuel (Intern),  
Nadine Zuzman (Clubs & Administration),  
David Szlezak (Managing Director),  
Judith Zentai (PA to Managing Director),  
Clara Kreutz (Communications & PR)

Missing from the picture:



Katharina Hacker  
(Partner & Brand)



Lisa Wiederer  
(Director Events)





# HIGHLIGHT EVENTS

Top club and national team competitions provide a shop window for the sport and offer the opportunity to showcase handball, its teams and its players at their very best. High-profile events including the EHF EURO and the club final tournaments such as the EHF FINAL4 provide a high point to the season. They attract millions of TV viewers and fans in arenas across Europe and are an attractive platform for partners and sponsors. The EHF and EHF Marketing will work together with Infront and DAZN as well as with organisers to further promote, develop and professionalise the approach to its benchmark events to ensure the best possible fan experience.



# FAMILIAR RIVALRIES TO REIGNITE AT EHF EURO 2022

The 24 teams that will vie for the EHF EURO 2022 title learned who they will face in the first stage of the event when the draw took place in May.

The draw was held in Budapest, where the Men's EHF EURO champions will be crowned after the final on 30 January 2022.

Plenty of top-class matches can be expected in the opening stage of the EHF EURO, with defending champions Spain set to take on World Championship 2021 and EHF EURO 2018 silver medallists Sweden as a highlight match in group E.

EHF EURO 2020 runners-up Croatia were drawn into group C, where they will meet familiar rivals France and Serbia, along with Ukraine. Bronze medallists from the 2020 edition, Norway, will meet Russia, Slovakia and Lithuania in group F.

Group A not only features several regional derbies but sees almost an exact repeat of what was a thrilling preliminary round at the EHF EURO 2018, with EHF EURO 2020 semi-finalists Slovenia, North Macedonia and Montenegro all drawn into that group. Rounding out the group are none other than back-to-back world champions Denmark.

The draw was conducted by four players – Spain's Rodrigo Corrales, Hungary's Bence Banhidi, Croatia Luka Stepancic and Slovakia's Marian Zernovic – alongside EHF President Michael Wiederer and EHF Secretary General Martin Hausleitner.

From the preliminary round groups, the top two squads in each will progress to the main round.

The six playing groups for the preliminary round at the final tournament are as follows:

Each of the host countries will be home to three preliminary round groups. In Hungary, group A will play in Debrecen, group B will be in Budapest and group C will be in Szeged. In Slovakia, group D and E will be based in Bratislava, and group F will play in Kosice.

The two main round groups will be hosted in Bratislava and Budapest, before the top six teams converge in Budapest for the final weekend that will determine the winners through to sixth position on the ranking.

# BALL DESIGN REVEALED FOR MEN'S EHF EURO 2022

For the sixth consecutive EHF EURO event since the Women's EHF EURO 2016, the final tournament's match ball will be presented by the EHF's premium partner, Danish ball manufacturer SELECT Sport.

The 'Ultimate iBall' saw the light of day at the draw event and will eventually star in all 65 matches at the Men's EHF EURO 2022, played in Hungary and Slovakia from 13 to 30 January.

The ball has been exclusively designed for the championship. With elements in dark and light blue as well as in green and red it features the European Handball Federation's primary colour as well as those which are dominant in the host nations' flags.

With the EHF's ongoing partnership with KINEXON for the EHF EURO events, this SELECT Ultimate iBall has a built-in chip that tracks and distributes data in real-time: Shot detection, exact ball speed and position of the shot is captured, used and displayed on the EHF's owned and operated channels as well as on TV and brings fans and spectators closer to the game.

On EHF EURO level, the SELECT Ultimate iBall premiered at the final weekend of the Women's EHF EURO 2018 and has since been used at the Men's and Women's EHF EURO 2020.

The ball is made of extremely hardwearing synthetic leather material. A zero-wing bladder inside the ball ensures optimal roundness.

The specially developed 'shark skin foam' gives the ball an extremely soft feel and excellent grip. The ball is light and lively, but above all its constant balance ensures that there are no random bounces.

CEO of SELECT Sport, Peter Knap, said: "This is a fantastic ball with excellent qualities proven in play at numerous European Championships and in top handball leagues. The official match ball incorporates the colours of the Men's EHF EURO 2022 logo, which is inspired by the national colours of Hungary and Slovakia. We have been developing handballs for more than 70 years, so we are able to ensure top quality when it comes to material and innovative solutions – just like with this Ultimate iBall."

## MEN'S EHF EURO 2022

HUNGARY • SLOVAKIA  
13-30 JANUARY

# FINAL TOURNAMENT DRAW RESULTS

### GROUP A

Debrecen / Hungary

Slovenia

Denmark

North Macedonia

Montenegro

### GROUP B

Budapest / Hungary

Portugal

Hungary

Iceland

Netherlands

### GROUP C

Szeged / Hungary

Croatia

Serbia

France

Ukraine

### GROUP D

Bratislava / Slovakia

Germany

Austria

Belarus

Poland

### GROUP E

Bratislava / Slovakia

Spain

Sweden

Czech Republic

Bosnia-Herzegovina

### GROUP F

Kosice / Slovakia

Norway

Russia

Slovakia

Lithuania

#EHFEURO2022





# WOMEN'S EHF EURO 2022 LOGO AND BRAND IDENTITY UNVEILED



**WOMEN'S EHF EURO 2022**  
SLOVENIA • NORTH MACEDONIA • MONTENEGRO  
4-20 NOVEMBER

When the draw was made for the Women's EHF EURO 2022 Qualifiers in March, the competition's logo and brand identity were launched.

The colours in the tournament logo and branding take inspiration from various elements connected to host cities in nations, Slovenia, North Macedonia and Montenegro.

At its core, the brand identity's palette takes colours linked to landscape and landmarks associated with Ljubljana, Celje, Skopje and Podgorica as well as the national flags of the three nations.

The tournament logo has these colours implemented and, at its core is, a heart – which was borne out of the team unity and spirit in handball and the respect of the competition.

The additional elements of the logo, which was developed by Roy Wedema – who was also responsible for the Men's and Women's EHF EURO 2020 logos – are linked to the motion, dynamics and celebrations associated with handball.



# SIX VENUES REVEALED FOR MEN'S EHF EURO 2024

In June the European Handball Federation and the German Handball Federation revealed the six venues that will host Men's EHF EURO 2024.

Düsseldorf, Berlin, Mannheim, Munich, Hamburg and Cologne will welcome Europe's handball elite for a month of spectacular action from 10-28 January 2024.

For the opening match of the competition in Düsseldorf, the German Handball Federation is attempting to break the world record for the number of fans at a handball match. The curtain-raiser will be played inside the city's 50,000-seater stadium usually used to host football matches and concerts.

Among the venues for the preliminary round matches are Berlin, Mannheim and Munich, while main round matches will head to Cologne and Hamburg. The LANXESS arena in Cologne – arguably Europe's most well-known arena for men's handball – will then host the final round where the winners will be crowned.

The German national handball team will begin its path in Düsseldorf, before contesting the preliminary round in Berlin and then, if successful in Cologne in the main round.

EHF President Michael Wiederer said: "The EHF EURO 2024 will not only be a massively important event for the status of handball but also for the future of the sport."

"Some of the best handball halls are in Germany and the German fans are known as among the most enthusiastic and knowledgeable in the world."

Andreas Michelmann, President of the German Handball Federation, said: "This tournament will be a beacon in the handball decade. We are already looking forward to it."

"We have succeeded in distributing the locations of the Men's EHF EURO 2024 almost across Germany so that we can offer handball a platform everywhere. At this point I would like to thank the other venues, who invested a lot of energy

and applied, but unfortunately did not get a chance this time."

Mark Schober, Chairman of the Board of the German Handball Federation, said: "We are planning the opening game in a football stadium. With 50,000 fans and a successful world record attempt, Düsseldorf should set the framework for a fantastic men's EHF EURO 2024."

"All arenas hold more than 10,000 spectators. We want to build a great stage for the participating teams and their fans and for all those interested in handball."

Martin Hausleitner, EHF General Secretary, added: "The Men's EHF EURO is the undisputed flagship of our national team competitions. It inspires hundreds of thousands in the halls and millions in front of the television screens, and it is the platform for our sponsors and partners. The EHF EURO 2024 in Germany has all the prerequisites to set new standards and records in these areas. We are very much looking forward to working with the DHB."

## ARENAS AT-A-GLANCE

### DÜSSELDORF

MERKUR SPIEL-ARENA. CAPACITY: 50,000.  
PROGRAMME 2024: OPENING MATCH DAY.

### MANNHEIM

SAP ARENA. CAPACITY: 13,200.  
PROGRAMME 2024: TWO PRELIMINARY ROUND GROUPS

### MUNICH

SAP GARDEN. CAPACITY: 11,500.  
PROGRAMME 2024: TWO PRELIMINARY ROUND GROUPS

### BERLIN

MERCEDES-BENZ ARENA. CAPACITY: 14,800.  
PROGRAMME 2024: TWO PRELIMINARY ROUND GROUPS WITH GERMAN PARTICIPATION

### HAMBURG

BARCLAYCARD ARENA. CAPACITY: 13,300.  
PROGRAMME 2024: MAIN ROUND

### COLOGNE

LANXESS ARENA. CAPACITY: 19,250.  
PROGRAMME 2024: MAIN ROUND AND FINAL WEEKEND



# EHF EURO HOSTS FOR 2026 & 2028 CONFIRMED



EHF  
EXTRAORDINARY  
CONGRESS



The hosts for the Men's and Women's EHF EUROs in 2026 and 2028 were officially awarded at the 14th EHF Extraordinary Congress in November.

Each of the four applicants to host the competitions showcased their bid before their fellow federations at the congress in Vienna, Austria.

## INNOVATIVE SCANDINAVIAN CONNECTION AT MEN'S EHF EURO 2026

**Denmark, Sweden & Norway**  
**15 January – 1 February 2026**

The pinnacle championship in European men's international handball will return to Scandinavia in five years, with the joint-bid of Denmark, Sweden and Norway given the green light for Men's EHF EURO 2026.

The trio have come together to bid for the EHF EURO collectively for the first time, with the

main concept 'Scandinavia connect'. The project will see Denmark, Sweden and Norway deliver an EHF EURO with innovation at its core. By connecting to new ways of exchanging best practices, new ways of reaching untapped audiences and new ways of hosting more sustainable events, Scandinavia will ultimately connect European handball to a stronger future.

Denmark, Sweden and Norway have proposed nine venues in nine different cities – Copenhagen, Herning and Aarhus in Denmark; Kristianstad and Malmö in Sweden; and Stavanger, Trondheim, Bergen and Oslo in Norway.

The final weekend would be held at Jyske Bank Boxen in Herning, where numerous major handball titles have been decided – the Men's EHF EURO 2014, Women's EHF EURO 2020 and 2010, Men's World Championship 2019 and Women's World Championship 2015.

## RUSSIANS READY TO MAKE HOSTING DEBUT AT WOMEN'S EHF EURO 2026

**Russia**

**3-20 December 2026**

Russia have been among the top powers in women's handball, both at club and international level, and in 2026 it will be the home for Europe's premier women's championship.

The bid is built on a simple yet powerful slogan – WE CAN. Its letters represent five important areas the Russian application is focusing on: Women's handball, experience, culture, atmosphere and a new audience.

For the 2026 bid, Russia has proposed three venues in two cities, St. Petersburg and Moscow, with the 12,000-capacity VTB Arena in Moscow to host the final weekend.

## BACK TO THE ROOTS AT MEN'S EHF EURO 2028

**Portugal, Spain & Switzerland**  
**13-30 January 2028**

In 1994, the very first Men's EHF EURO took place in Portugal with the following edition taking place in Spain, two years later. Over three decades later, the neighbours have joined forces with Switzerland to take the championship back to its foundations.

2006 hosts Switzerland originally planned to bid for the event on their own but have since decided to work together with the Iberian duo to emulate the three-host approach implemented by Austria, Norway and Sweden in 2020.

Seven cities across the three countries have been proposed with Lisbon set to be Portugal's hub, Basel, Lausanne and Zürich to host matches in Switzerland, while Valencia, Barcelona and Madrid have been put forward from Spain.

Barcelona's Palau St. Jordi, Madrid's Wanda Stadium and the home of Real Madrid, Santiago Bernabéu, are touted as potential venues for the final weekend.

## INNOVATION AT THE CORE OF WOMEN'S EHF EURO 2028

**Norway, Denmark & Sweden**  
**30 November – 17 December 2028**

To fully explore the advances in technologies, Denmark, Norway and Sweden have joined forces to deliver a Women's EHF EURO that has innovation at its core, offering a first-class player and fan experience in a happy atmosphere.

In addition, the hosts promise to showcase innovative new approaches to sustainability. In a region that is easy to get to and get around in, we will connect European Handball to new sustainability standards and provide innovative solutions for future events.

2028 will also be the first time the three Scandinavian nations will join forces to welcome Europe's top women's teams.

Norway, Denmark and Sweden have proposed nine venues in nine different cities: Stavanger, Trondheim, Bergen and Oslo in Norway; Copenhagen, Herning and Aarhus in Denmark; while Sweden will provide venues in Helsingborg and Gothenburg.

The final weekend would be held at the Nye Fornebu in Oslo, which is the planned transformation of Telenor Arena, which would mean the women's final will be played in Norway for the first time.





# LOOKOUT TO 2022

2021 was a year of transition at the office level for various reasons and across several areas. The professionals in the Sonnergasse field office were relocated to the headquarters in Hoffergasse and the entire EHF Marketing GmbH team, led by Managing Director David Szlezak, transitioned to the Europlaza field office as an interim solution.

The number of employees at the European Handball Federation and our daughter company EHF Marketing GmbH continues to grow in relation to the many additional tasks and obligations that have become manifest in response to the ongoing development of our sport. Upon the scheduled completion of the new office in a few years, we look forward to relocating, as a family, to our new home. The progress has reached the internal architectural design phase; ground was broken at the new location and construction has begun.

Away from the spotlight and away from the TV cameras, much activity continues behind the scenes as our many departments work in close collaboration with all of our internal and external stakeholders. As seen on the previous pages of this publication, the EHF has moved forward with its master plan, and has seen tremendous gains in the digital sphere this has been supported by our expanded and dedicated social media team. We also experienced a harmonious merger of the department of Additional Activities with the

Education and Development business group to present the Sport & Game Services division.

The European handball community continues to benefit from the delivery competitions, events, and services. The efforts undertaken to uphold the integrity of the sport paid off tremendously as the EHF and EHF were able to organise and execute four FINAL4 events on the back of a season where over 98 per cent of all matches were decided on the court.

During a very challenging summer, the EHF was able to see 11 younger age category events take place and, at a senior level, the preparatory measures for the EHF EURO 2022 ramped up and, at the time of publication, are nearing conclusion. The professionals in the office were also responsible for the organisation of two notable Congresses – the elections in April and the awarding of the 2026 and 2028 EHF EURO events in November, as well as the 30-year EHF anniversary celebration. This success attained in 2021 can also be attributed to the implementation and strict adherence to the tailored hygiene concepts developed for all competitive and administrative events.

The number of professional staff stabilised at 77 towards the end of the year. Our internal structure was amended as necessary as we bade farewell to three experienced members of our team due to retirement and more adaptations

and process implementations will be undertaken in 2022 to improve internal operations and improve our service delivery.

Looking forward, it will remain essential for the European Handball Federation to have the voices at the heart of this sport heard on a consistent basis and, to this end, over 40 meetings are already scheduled to take place in 2022. The 13th Conference for Secretaries General will take place at the end of March, and September will be another month of significance as the 16th Conference of Presidents will be held in Luxembourg. The conferences remain a strong information exchange platform, as well as a forum of discussion where the expectations of the member federations concerning ongoing and future projects are articulated and further developed, as necessary.

In the coming year, we are eager to drive our sport forward together with the leaders and representatives of European handball, and I take this opportunity to thank you for the trust and unwavering support that you have placed in us.

Yours in sport,

**Martin Hausleitner**  
EHF Secretary General

# EHF



## OFFICIAL APP OF THE EHF

It's here at last: introducing your new Home of Handball app. The only dedicated handball app that allows you to personalise your experience. From giving you live updates of games to news, video highlights and interviews, you can dive deeper into a world of handball. With every competition covered – from the EHF Champions League to the EHF EURO – it's a must download for any fan.

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**Google Play**



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