



Minutes of the ECA Board of Directors Meeting
Online Meeting
24th October 2024, 6:00 pm

5/2024

Present members:

- President: Jean Zoungrana
- Vice Presidents: Miroslav Haviar, Andrej Jelenc
- Secretary General: Branko Lovric
- Board Members: Manuela Gawehn, Peter Karai, Geir Kvillum, Jovana Stanojevic
- ECA Communication and Partnership Manager Nina Jelenc
- Ivana Sundov

Absent members:

- Board Members: Ruud Hejiselaa

ITEM 1

OPENING OF THE MEETING

The President greeted the board members, thanked them for their attendance, and provided updates on meetings, progress, and challenges since the last session before introducing the meeting agenda.

PRESENTING THE AGENDA

1	Opening of the Meeting	J ZOUNGRANA
2	ECA Extraordinary Congress	J ZOUNGRANA / B LOVRIC
3	ECA Ordinary Congress 2025 – Agenda	J ZOUNGRANA / B LOVRIC
4	ICF Congress	J ZOUNGRANA
5	Finance report	B LOVRIC
6	BOD per diem	M HAVIAR
7	Partnership	J ZOUNGRANA
8	ECA economic Model – The membership fees – The naming fees	J ZOUNGRANA
9	Jury travel cost payment	M HAVIAR / A JELENC
10	ITO travel cost payment & invoices to NFs	J STANOJEVIC
11	2024 ECA Championships reports	J STANOJEVIC
12	ECA Training camps reports	M GAWEHN / A JELENC /

		J STANOJEVIC
13	Communication report 2024 season	N JELENC / D GOLDSTROM
14	Participation of Neutral Individual Athletes and support personnel at 2025 ECA Championships; additionally neutral ITOs	J STANOJEVIC
15	European championships - Calendar and biddings	J STANOJEVIC
16	2026 European Multisport Championship & 2027 European Games - update	J ZOUNGRANA / J STANOJEVIC
17	Organisational Manual for ECA Championships	M HAVIAR / A JELENC
18	Tender for Race Management, Timing&Scoring – Canoe Sprint, Canoe Marathon 2025-2028	J STANOJEVIC
19	ECA dresses (ITO and BOD)	M HAVIAR
20	Rules changes – Dragon Boat	J STANOJEVIC
21	ECA Sport programme	M HAVIAR
22	Miscellaneous	Board
23	The date of next Board meeting	Board

Without any comments or alterations to the agenda, the President proceeded with the meeting.

ITEM 2

ECA EXTRAORDINARY CONGRESS

President Jean Zoungrana updated the Board on the preparations underway for the upcoming Extraordinary Congress, noting that everything is progressing according to plan in collaboration with the ICF. He reviewed the agenda and highlighted that, following a questionnaire sent to National Federations about translation needs, only the Belgian Federation requested translation into French. Nina Jelenc is coordinating the promotional materials for the Congress, which have already been distributed. Final preparations are still underway with final checks and arrangements being confirmed in coordination with the ICF.

ITEM 3

ECA ORDINARY CONGRESS 2025 – AGENDA

The next discussion point addressed the 2025 ECA Ordinary Congress. The Board noted that a final confirmation is needed from the Hungarian Federation, regarding the Congress date—either March 29 or April 5, 2025. Following the Extraordinary Congress, a call for applications will be sent out to fill positions for committees, TD, Chairman, and other vacant ECA roles. The Board members agreed on a deadline of December 10 to finalize selections, allowing the new appointees to start working on the Congress documentation, which must be submitted by February 12, 2025.

ITEM 4

ICF CONGRESS

The Board members reviewed the agenda for the upcoming ICF Congress. It was suggested that ECA Board members meet on November 6th at 16:00 to discuss preparations for the ECA Extraordinary congress, for those available to attend. A brief overview of the candidates for the ICF elections was also provided.

ITEM 5

FINANCE REPORT

The item was postponed to the next Board meeting.

ITEM 6

BOD PER DIEM

The discussion focused on establishing a per diem for Board meetings. Concerns were raised about tax implications, as members noted differing regulations in various countries regarding per diem taxation. It was suggested to consult with ICF to clarify the rules and ensure compliance with local laws. A final decision will be made at the next Board meeting.

ITEM 7

PARTNERSHIP

The next topic of discussion was the partnership with Peisheng Boat Co. President Jean Zoungrana presented the details of the sponsorship agreement to the Board. This partnership is seen as a significant step for ECA, establishing a new sponsorship and aligning with ECA's focus on international collaborations.

Manuela Gawehn, a member of the Board, conveyed concerns regarding the partnership. While she shared the perspective of the Wildwater Committee, the Board expressed a desire to be informed about such agreements prior to the signing of contracts.

The board also confirms its desire, within the framework of a globalized economy, to develop partnerships with companies from all continents as other continental federations can do.

ITEM 8

ECA ECONOMIC MODEL – THE MEMBERSHIP FEES – THE NAMING FEES

The board discussed the ECA Economic Model, focusing on membership fees and naming fees. It was emphasized that decisions regarding the amount of fees need to be made before the upcoming Ordinary Congress.

Key Points:

- Current membership fees within the ECA are €250 per year, with proposals for three membership categories: low, medium, and full.
- A survey indicated that 58% of federations support an increase in membership fees, and there is a consensus on adjusting fees based on the size of the national federations.
- Discussions centered on whether to maintain the current categories or introduce new ones, potentially based on economic indicators or the number of athletes.

In the latter part of the discussion, the focus shifted to naming fees. It was proposed that:

- All disciplines should have opportunities for sponsorship, differentiating the naming fee amount for Olympic and non-Olympic disciplines
- Establishing a minimum six-month deadline for organizers to secure sponsors before events to facilitate negotiations.

The board agreed to continue exploring options regarding membership and naming fees, considering feedback from the ICF and the unique characteristics of different disciplines.

ITEM 9

JURY TRAVEL COST PAYMENT

Although all the 2024 Host Agreements clearly state that Jury travel costs are the responsibility of the Host Organizing Committee, it has been proposed to simplify the process by having the ECA issue invoices directly for these costs. This segment underscores the need for an organizational manual to be developed after the Extraordinary Congress, which will detail all procedures related to event organization, including Jury travel costs.

ITEM 10

ITO TRAVEL COST PAYMENT & INVOICES TO NFS

According to the Board's decision on January 13 in Belgrade, travel costs for ITOs, which previously applied only to Olympic disciplines, from 2024 also include non-Olympic disciplines. In this discussion, it was clarified that these costs will be allocated based on the number of athletes from each participating country, ensuring a fair distribution of expenses.

ITEM 11

2024 ECA CHAMPIONSHIPS REPORTS

Jovana Stanojević presented an update on the ECA Championships reports for 2024. Despite some delays, all reports have been uploaded to the shared folder on Teams for Board access. Participation numbers by national federation are included, though the marathon report is still pending.

Future steps include completing a comprehensive SWOT analysis of the 2024 championships, followed by individual meetings with technical delegates to finalize host agreements, ITO nominations, and necessary publications. These meetings aim to synchronize event preparations, establish clear expectations for organizing committees, and ensure that all technical delegates are well-informed.

There is also a planned meeting for the Sport Commission and new technical delegates, potentially in December, to establish guidelines. A document will be developed, detailing the roles, expectations, and procedural guidelines to support delegates in fulfilling their responsibilities. Additionally, Jovana suggested preparing an official letter to thank technical delegates for their contributions over the past four years, acknowledging their commitment.

ITEM 12

ECA TRAINING CAMPS REPORTS

The Board reviewed two training camp reports, one for Slalom and the other for Wildwater. Feedback on both camps was positive, with participants and organizers satisfied with the overall structure and execution. It was suggested to consider adding educational components to future development camps to enhance the program's impact.

For the upcoming Ordinary Congress, it was agreed that one or two slides should be prepared to summarize the achievements and progress made over the past two years within the development program.

ITEM 13

COMMUNICATION REPORT 2024 SEASON

ECA Communication and Partnership Manager, Nina Jelenc, presented a comprehensive report on communication activities, providing an overview of media coverage at ECA events, challenges encountered, and areas for improvement. The report emphasized the need for enhanced promotion, more streamlined digital content access, and better coordination with event organizers. Below is a summary of the key points discussed.

Website and Event Presence:

- A modernized website with improved media access is needed, as current limitations affect file uploads and promotional efforts, particularly for disciplines not attended in person.

Event Promotion:

- Encountered technical issues in streaming and organizing promotion for some disciplines (e.g., live streaming obstacles for canoe polo).
- Recommends close collaboration with technical delegates and organizers to ensure promotional materials are pre-secured.

Event Density:

- Overlapping European Championships present scheduling challenges for media coverage, making a coordinated media strategy essential.

Geoblocking and Streaming Platforms:

- Geoblocking on YouTube and platform shifts disrupted event streaming. Jelenc recommends a unified platform, such as Eurovision Sport, and suggests investigating satellite options for uninterrupted streams.

Improving Relations with National Federations and Contact Updates:

- Distribution through Brevo newsletter platform has started, though engaging federations for feedback remains difficult, limiting promotion effectiveness.

Website Content Updates:

- Many outdated sections require updates, working closely with technical delegates to ensure information relevance.

Proposed Next Steps:

- Prepare a pop-up banner for newsletter sign-up.
- Review potential costs of upgrading to a paid version of the newsletter platform if subscriber numbers increase.

The communications report identifies specific areas for improvement in ECA's digital and promotional strategy, with actionable suggestions to enhance website functionality, streamline event streaming, and strengthen connections with federations. The proposed updates aim to create a more cohesive and engaging platform for promoting European canoe sports while making content easily accessible to a broader audience.

ITEM 14

PARTICIPATION OF NEUTRAL INDIVIDUAL ATHLETES AND SUPPORT PERSONNEL AT 2025 ECA CHAMPIONSHIPS; ADDITIONALLY NEUTRAL ITOS

As previously decided, the ECA will follow the ICF's processes and procedures regarding the participation of neutral athletes, while respecting the decisions of individual organizing committees. On October 16, a request was sent to NFs hosting 2025 events to gather their stance on accepting neutral athletes. However, responses from France, Italy, Poland, and Romania are still pending. Officials from these countries, however, remain subject to IOC sanctions.

ITEM 15

EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS - CALENDAR AND BIDDINGS

For the 2025 competition calendar, all locations and dates are confirmed. The European Junior and U23 Championships in Slalom will now take place from July 30 to August 3, allowing team's better access to accommodations. The original dates conflicted with other cultural events as Nova Gorica will be the European City of Culture in 2025.

Additionally, three European Championships will be held during the first week of June: Wildwater and Dragon Boat in Italy, and the Marathon in Portugal. Managing these simultaneous events will present some challenges.

For 2026, invitations have been sent to potential organizers for vacant positions. We have received interest, and bidding documents are expected by November 30.

ITEM 16

2026 EUROPEAN MULTISPORT CHAMPIONSHIP & 2027 EUROPEAN GAMES – UPDATE

Jovana Stanojević updated the Board on the Multisport European Championships and European Games preparations. For the Multisport European Championships in 2026, the Canoe Sprint event is set for Hanover, Germany, with the venue confirmed at Maschsee Lake. While details await final approval, a site inspection is planned for 29th of October, and the German government's budget decision is expected by November 9, which will enable promotion to begin. To ensure full involvement and support, a formal letter will be sent to the German Federation regarding their role in the event's organization.

Regarding the 2027 European Games in Istanbul, a site visit for the Canoe Sprint venue is scheduled for November 11. The EOC policy is that no sport will be part of the program of the European Games 2027 if it is not an Olympic Qualifier. Further updates will follow after the November visit and discussions with the Organizing committee.

ITEM 17

ORGANISATIONAL MANUAL FOR ECA CHAMPIONSHIPS

In item 9, the Board established the need for an organizational manual to be developed after the Extraordinary Congress. This manual will outline all procedures related to event organization.

ITEM 18

TENDER FOR RACE MANAGEMENT, TIMING&SCORING –

CANOE SPRINT, CANOE MARATHON 2025-2028

Currently, ECA has the official service provider under a three-year contract established in 2021, which was shortened from the usual four-year term. Although a tender was conducted for the Marathon, a contract was not signed due to follow-up issues.

A proposal was presented for a unified service provider across all European Championships, aiming to ensure consistent service levels, better pricing, and improved integration of timing, scoring, and broadcast needs. The initiative is envisioned as a long-term plan, potentially taking three to four years to implement and aligning with Olympic cycles.

To maintain continuity, a proposal was made to renew the current contract for Sprint for the next period, although it will be limited due to other events and their existing providers. Concerns were raised regarding the 2028 contracts, emphasizing the need for flexibility to accommodate hosting fees and other commitments.

ITEM 19

ECA DRESSES (ITO AND BOD)

During the discussion on ECA uniforms, it was agreed that a formal specification for uniforms should be established. There was consensus on the need for a unified dress code to enhance professionalism across events.

Key points:

- Identifying different categories of personnel, including officials, board members, technical delegates, referees, and volunteers, to determine appropriate attire for each.
- The possibility of creating a distinct uniform for volunteers featuring the ECA logo and the logo of the organizing committee.
- A proposal was made to allow organizing committees to order clothing items for their volunteers from a centralized source, streamlining the process.
- There was a call for consistency in colors and styles across all disciplines, favoring colors aligned with the ECA's branding.
- Additionally, it was suggested that the first uniform kit for International Technical Officials (ITOs) would be provided for free, while subsequent items would need to be purchased by the ITOs. The importance of distinguishing official uniforms from merchandise was also highlighted to prevent confusion at events.

Feedback will be incorporated into future proposals for ECA uniforms, which will be developed by the office based on these discussions.

ITEM 20

RULES CHANGES – DRAGON BOAT

During the discussion on Dragon Boat rule changes, the following changes were proposed and unanimously approved by the Board:

- Open Crews: Changing terminology from "men crews" to "open crews."
- Junior National Teams: Allowing more than one junior national team per country
- 2000m Rules: Aligning the rules for the 2000m distance with ICF standards

ITEM 21

ECA SPORT PROGRAMME

Jovana Stanojević updated the Board that all submissions for the Sport programme are progressing and will be reviewed by the new technical committees. The four-year medical plan is on track for completion by January, ahead of February's document distribution.

Discussions emphasized the need to simplify the program and avoid redundancy across disciplines. There were also proposals to document the sport's history collaboratively. The Board agreed to hold focused discussions on the Sport Programme in future meetings.

ITEM 22

MISCELLANEOUS

Under this agenda item, no additional topics were raised for discussion.

ITEM 23

THE DATE OF NEXT BOARD MEETING

The ECA Board confirmed its next online meeting for December 12, with a focus on approving technical committee and delegate compositions, following the December 10 candidate submission deadline. If needed, an additional meeting may be held after the Extraordinary Congress in Antalya to address any immediate issues.

The Board also proposed a tentative in-person meeting in January, likely on the 18th-19th, with final details to be confirmed in Antalya. This timeline ensures key decisions and preparations are in place for the 2025 season and upcoming Ordinary Congress.

The President concluded the meeting emphasizing that the extended discussions reflect the significant amount of work and planning still needed for ECA's progress. With no further business on the agenda, the meeting was adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

Branko Lovric
ECA Secretary General



Jean Zoungrana
ECA President

