



5th September, 2017

## **Feedback in regards to a combined U16 & U19 European Championships.**

As mentioned in the IISHF Communication Letter 2017-20 as of June 29, 2017 the Austrian Federation approached the IISHF Presidium and proposed the implementation of U16 European Championships in a combined event with the U19 European Championship. While such a measure strongly affects the U19 Championships, it also opens up opportunities for further developing our sport and makes it easier for smaller NMAs to participate in European Championships. While a decision regarding this matter can only be made by the AGM, the IISHF Presidium wants to evaluate the concept. Therefore, we asked all NMA's for their feedback regarding two aspects **until the 1<sup>st</sup> of August 2017.**

- a) It is of high importance for the IISHF Presidium to make sure, any change in the European Championship concept is sustainable and can be properly maintained long term. Therefore, we ask you for your general interest in participating in an U16 European Championship.
- b) The Austrian Federation and the club Tigers Stegersbach are willing to host a combined Championship in 2018. In order to prepare such an event, we ask you for your feedback, whether you plan to participate with an U19 national team in 2018 and whether you would be interested in participating with an U16 national team. Both feedbacks are not binding.

The following applies currently according to the IISHF Regulations §18.15:

An European Championship can only take place with teams from a minimum of four (4) different nations. From these minimum 4 nations at least two nations had to be placed on place 1 – 4 at the previous European Championship. European Championships should take place September to November (both months included). Exception is only possible after permission given by the IISHF Presidium.

Currently the U19 European Championships takes place as a two day event whereas a combined U16 and U19 European Championships would take place as a three day event including playing on Friday.

Some of the arguments for this suggested change would be the following:

- 1) It is easier to have an U16 national team than an U19 national team as the percentage of players which dropped out is smaller.
- 2) At the current design of four teams playing for two days, teams are required to have large numbers of high quality players to be able physically able to compete. The required density of U19 players is usually not available for smaller NMAs. A change to 8 to 10 teams over 3 days makes it easier to compete as the physical impact on the top players is reduced and smaller teams can therefore be more successful.

We have received the following feedback so far listed for each country:

### **Austria:**

Austria has a general interest in participating in a u16-European Championship. We would also want to participate in the U16-European Championship in 2018.

Kind regards,  
Felix Dellinger

### **Denmark:**

Here is the reply from Denmark in regards to the request in the IISHF Communication Letter 2017-20 with a deadline of August 1, 2017 for feedback on the proposal from Austria to implement a combined U16 & U19 European Championships in skaterhockey.

It's a great initiative when a member country like the Austrian Federation is willing to host an international event especially in order to promote skaterhockey.

Denmark is supportive of such an initiative however it's at the moment very difficult for us to send a national team in those age groups in the months September to November (both months included).

In the past Denmark already paid a fine of 6.000 Euro for our cancellation of participation of the Junior National Team in an U19 European Championship and we can't take this risk again.

The skaterhockey teams in Denmark depends on the use of icehockey players and for us the participation in the European Cups taking place in the off season for icehockey is much more important than the national teams in those age groups. We had 2 teams participating in both the U19 European Cup 2017 and the U16 European Cup 2017 and it's our ambition again to have two teams in those events in 2018.

We would like to again underline that the most important event for the national teams is the Men European Championships and we need to again have this event every year and not every other year. We will again propose that IISHF and the member countries make this change which is much more important for the maintaining and developing the sport of skaterhockey.

Best regards

Erik Sommer  
RULLESPORT Denmark  
Skaterhockey – Chairman

### **Germany:**

You hereby receive the official answer of the German NGB for Inline-Skaterhockey ISHD regarding you request for feedback on the proposal from the Austrian NGB to launch a U16 European Championship series.

We appreciate the intention the Austrian federation expresses with the proposal but we think that the proposal must be put into greater perspective. The IISHF's general duty is to promote, develop and to foster the sport of Inline-Skaterhockey. And it's this context in which the proposal must be seen. Without a clear and distinct longterm development perspective that originates from the proposal, the idea is, in our opinion, wasted money and wasted effort.

The ISHD therefore declares its general consent with the proposal to launch a U16 European Championship series starting in 2018 as a combined event with the U19 European Championship under the following preconditions:

- 1) At least 4 member countries („founding members“) agree to participate (that's a regulation rule and in general not negotiable)
- 2) All founding members agree to participate for at least X years („establishment phase“) in a row (where X is the number of founding members) to allow the U16 European Championship to establish itself as a valuable competition to develop the sport of Inline-Skaterhockey internationally and in the NGBs taking part
- 3) All founding members agree to host the combined U16 & U19 European Championships event once in the X years (where X ist the number of founding members) of the establishment phase
- 4) Failure to comply with (2) or (3) must result in severe consequences for the NGB. The extent of these consequences must be agreed on separately by the founding members, but it could range from high fines up to bans for taking part at international events in other age groups as well.

Taken the following example that'd mean:

- 1) Austria, Switzerland, Great Britain and Germany are the founding members
- 2) Four founding members mean a 4 years establishment phase in which a drop-out must have severe consequences

3) The combined U16 & U19 European Championships Event will take part in Austria (2018), Great Britain (2019), Germany (2020) and Switzerland (2021). Again, failure to host must be punished.

In case other members will jump on the bandwagon during the establishment phase, the regulations have to be adjusted accordingly. This can be worked out in detail once we can agree on launching the U16 European Championship series.

It may seem a little bit tough what we're proposing here but to be clear: we want this thing to become a success story and not a damp squib. The ISHD is willing to spend a lot of money on this project but, I'll repeat myself here, only under the precondition that every member country taking part (or expressing its interest) is taking the idea just as serious as we do regarding the clear and distinct longterm development perspective that we might get from the proposal. We do not want one-time thing where members spend a lot of money to travel to Stegersbach next year just to have the event being killed a year later due to the lack of hosts and/or participants. Under no circumstance whatsoever can we sacrifice the U19 European Championship to a half-baked implementation of a U16 European Championship - and that's the big sword of Damocles that's dangling above the whole idea.

With best regards  
On behalf of the Board of Directors  
ISHD - Inline-Skaterhockey Deutschland

Stefan Gehrig

### **Great Britain:**

Apologies, I thought I had responded to this. BISHA are agreed in principle to the proposition and would be prepared to enter both an U16 and U19 team providing the tournament date does not conflict with exam times etc.

Regards  
Liz

### **Israel:**

Please accept my apologies for not having answered you earlier. One of the reasons is that despite rereading your message I can't understand what they mean. Will the U16 teams play on the same days as U19? Will the U16 players play also in the U19 teams? Or will the U16 and U19 teams play parallelly?

Yours,  
Eli.A

### **Netherlands:**

Due to summer holiday break we weren't able to respond earlier. The Netherlands do not have a U16 and U19 team due to financial reasons. So we do not have a very strong opinion. However we can imagine that countries who send only one of both teams might not find it appealing (although from a sportive point of view it is) because they will now have to send the team three instead of two days.

Best regards  
ISHN

### **Russia:**

We want to inform you that we are very interested in development of U16 Championship and hope to take part in this event in future. But concerning U16 and U19 Championships 2018 we can't provide any information now.

### **Spain:**

We are so sorry we have not been able to answer sooner but lots of our staff were on holiday.

We are in favour of any changes that benefit the competition, so we think joining both championships is a good idea.

We would like to send a u16 group. Even though logistically it might be a bit difficult.

We would like to know what championships will be organised in 2016 apart from the u16 and u19 championship and whether there are any clubchampionships in 2018.

Looking forward to hearing from you in due course,

## Switzerland:

# COMBINED U16 & U19 EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS

## OFFICIAL POSITION OF THE ISHF

### 1. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to present the official position of the SIHF (Swiss Inline Hockey Federation) concerning the proposal made by the IISHF to organize common EC U16 & U19 from 2018.

The ISHF is represented here by :

- M. Ueli Strueby (President)
- M. Marco Eicher (ISHF delegate to the IISHF)
- Franck Mülhauser (head youth and education manager)
- Daniel Biétry (head of Swiss Teams and communication manager)

### 2. ISHF position

The ISHF is in favor of the common organization of the EC U16 & U19.

However, the following conditions must be filled in order to guarantee an organization organization of quality and perennial :

- Each country wishing to take part at this new competition (EC u16) must undertake in writing and without any reserve to organize in turn the European Championship or, if not, to significantly finance its organization by another country
- Each country signing the agreement must commit for a duration equivalent to the number of teams participating in the 1st EC U16; the ISHF requests that at least **five countries** take part at each U16 EC
- The duration of the CE U19 / U16 shall not exceed 3 days

## Ukraine:

Thank you very much for requesting our opinion on these IISHF matters. It is an interesting proposal and we appreciate its discussion. I will answer your two questions in brief:

1. Ukraine, so far, does not yet have U16 and U19 national championships. U19 players currently play with our men teams, but are yet few in numbers. As such, in 2018 Ukraine will not yet participate in U16 and U19 European Championships. Our focus currently rests with facilitating the emergence of relevant sport infrastructure in Ukraine. We expect a need of 1-2 years for 5-8 skater hockey rinks to appear. At the same time we work towards the emergence of skater hockey clubs and teams. Thereafter we aim to participate at U16 and U19 European Championships with Ukrainian national teams. So, it is likely to take at least 2-3 years for Ukraine to participate in U19 and U16 European Championships. Our goal is still to apply for hosting the U19 European Championships in 2019 in Ukraine.
2. It is my understanding that in the past few years IISHF U16 European Championships have not been conducted. The argumentation of the Austrian Federation with regards to physical impact for each team at an event with only few teams is one we evidence in Ukraine as well. Hence, the question arises of how many teams would participate in the U16 Championships? We consider it preferable that more nations & teams participate rather than two high-level events of different age categories are being combined. If combining two events, it appears preferable to combine male and female events of one age category such as U19 Women and U19 Men into one event. Meaning, for the introduction of the U16 European Championships (short term period) the Austrian proposal may be useful, but in the long term separate events for U16 and U19 national teams

seem preferable to us. Our arguments are the following. The IISHF focuses on attracting more nations as members, thereby effectively working to increase the number of participating teams at all events. With more teams participating, the time span between games of any one team increases, thereby lowering the physical impact. Additionally the economics of the Austrian proposal need be considered: It detrimentally affects the finances for the participating national teams through an increase in the costs of accommodation and food, but it is likely to have a strong positive impact on the finances of the host. As Ukraine lacks experience with hosting international IISHF events we see ourselves not yet qualified to provide a full evaluation of the proposal's economic implications.

With best regards,  
André Poddubny  
President

On behalf of the IISHF Presidium  
Erik Sommer (*President*)