

MONTHLY REPORT

January 2023



EUROPEAN
OLYMPIC
COMMITTEES



EU
Office

Interview of the month

Raffaele "Lello" Pagnozzi - Secretary General of the EOC



"The EOC Strategic Agenda 2030 is a critical initiative to help shape the future direction of European Sport, acting as a roadmap for sporting success in an ever-changing environment."

See full interview on page 5

EOC EU Office - new website

Our brand new office website is online!

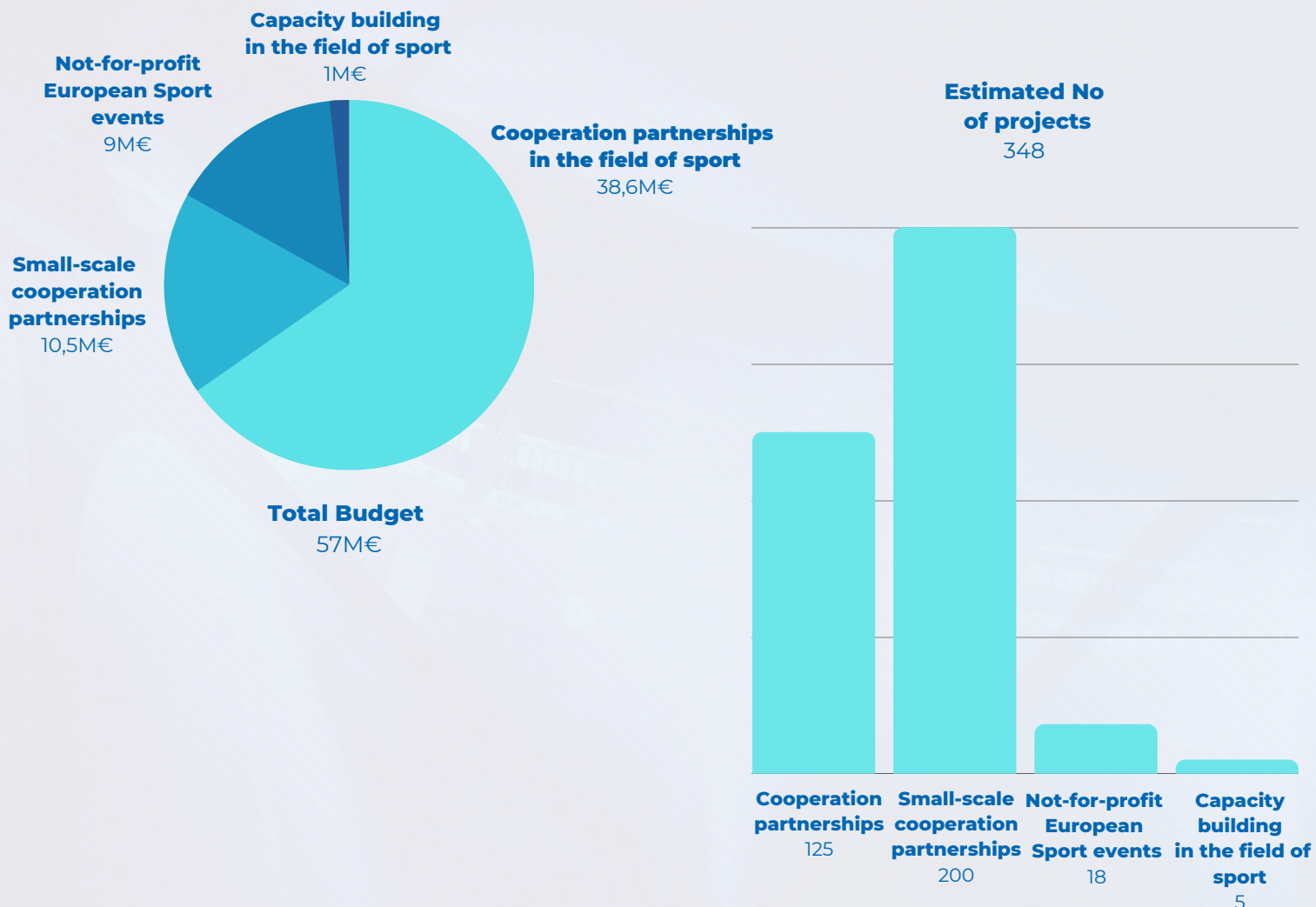
Go and have a look:

<https://www.euoffice.eurolympic.org/>



Available budget for Erasmus+ projects in 2023

Source: European Commission Erasmus+ Info Day



- **Editorial** **4**



INTERVIEW OF THE MONTH

- **Raffaele "Lello" Pagnozzi - Secretary General of the EOC** **5**



EU SPORT POLICY AND FUNDING NEWS

- **Special page on RINGS project tools** **8**
- **OCEAN Project - EOC EU Office launches new Erasmus+ project focused on the reduction of NOCs carbon footprint** **9**
- **Transnational Project Meeting - GAMES consortium continues working to strengthen gender equality in leadership positions** **10**
- **Sweden takes over the Presidency of the Council of the EU with focus on security, sustainability and competitiveness** **12**
- **Erasmus+ Sport: Coordinators Meeting and Info-day 2023** **13**
- **LaLiga and Concurrences organise events in Brussels to discuss the future of sports governance in the EU** **15**
- **ECHA receives a PFASs restriction proposal that potentially impact sport equipment** **18**
- **REACT-EU / ERDF: 30 million EUR for the digitalisation of non-profit sports organisations in North Rhine-Westphalia** **19**
- **European Commission Expert Groups advance in their work** **20**



PARTNERS' CORNER

- **DOSB organises Erasmus+ workshop to support clubs and federations in the application process** **21**
- **Upcoming events** **22**



EDITORIAL

Dear Readers,

In the first issue of the Monthly Report, I would first like to wish you a good, peaceful and successful 2023.

We wish peace in particular to all Ukrainians who have now been facing Russian attacks for almost a year. There is still no end in sight. Politicians and sports alike have not managed yet to find adequate sanctions that could help end the war. The now intensifying discussion about the admission of Russian and Belarusian athletes to the qualification competitions for the Olympic Games in Paris makes the dilemma clear. The international sports world is divided and a majority of the International Federations, NOCs and IOC members seem to agree to the participation of Russian and Belarusian athletes under strict conditions. In Europe, and especially in the countries neighbouring Ukraine, the resistance is stronger and it is not excluded that boycotts could occur. Regardless how the final decision will look like, one outcome of the Russian aggression is already visible, the division of international sport.

February sees the launch of the EOC EU Office's most extensive EU project to date. 18 NOCs are taking part in the OCEAN project, which aims to train "Climate Change Officers" in each of them. In addition, the carbon footprint of the participating NOCs will be measured and reduction plans defined. We will report regularly on the progress of the project and publish results that could be interesting for all NOCs and sports federations.

The pre-Olympic year is dominated by events of the European Olympic Committees (EOC). The winter edition of the EYOF has just finished in Friuli Venezia Giulia. This will be followed in June by the European Games, which will be held for the first time on EU territory, in the Krakow-Malopolska Region of Poland. These Games will definitely take place without the participation of Russian and Belarusian athletes. At the end of July, the summer edition of the EYOF will take place in Maribor/Slovenia. Reasons enough, then, to look ahead to the year in this month's interview with EOC Secretary General Raffaele Pagnozzi.

The Erasmus+ Infoday of the EU Commission again brought many participants to Brussels at the end of January and an even larger number followed the event online. The new Key Action for Mobility of sport staff, which will be introduced for the first time in 2023, offers many representatives of clubs and federations the opportunity to do a job shadowing in another member state. Since the applications are not submitted and decided centrally in Brussels but in the respective EU Member States and Erasmus programme countries, the bureaucratic effort should be manageable. We hope that as many actors in organised sport as possible will take advantage of this new option.

With kind regards,



Folker Hellmund
Director EOC EU Office



INTERVIEW OF THE MONTH



Combining education and sports career, Raffaele Pagnozzi graduated in political science and became vice world sailing champion in the J24 class. He began his professional career as a journalist and then joined CONI becoming Secretary General in 1993. He served as head of mission for the national teams of athletes competing in the summer and winter Olympic Games starting in 1994 and retained the role for eight years. He has served as the European Olympic Committees' Secretary General since 2006, position in which he was reappointed in 2013 and 2021. During the four-year period 2009 –2013, he also served on the International Committee of the Mediterranean Games Executive Committee.

1. Dear Secretary General, 2023 is an important year for the European Olympic Committees. The 3rd European Games will take place in the European Union for the first time, in the Region of Krakow-Malopolska in Poland. How advanced are the Polish hosts with the preparation?

With the Opening Ceremony of the European Games 2023 just over four months away, the anticipation and excitement is building. The Organising Committee in Poland has been working tirelessly to ensure preparations for the Games are on track. The host city contract was signed only last year so much work needed to be done in a short period of time.

However, the regional approach to the Games allows the use of high-quality facilities that already exist to ensure the best athlete and spectator experience possible and keep sustainability at the core of the Games.

I have no doubt the organisation of the Games will be first class. The over 7,000 athletes will be offered an unrivalled platform so they can deliver their best performances.

2. Compared with the previous European Games in Baku and Minsk, what do you think will make the European Games more attractive?

One of the key developments for the European Games Krakow Malopolska 2023 is the deal with the European Broadcast Union EBU. The Games will be broadcast, for free, across Europe offering wonderful exposure for the continent's best athletes and enabling spectators to watch all the action if they are unable to travel to Poland.

The Games will also have more athletes competing across more sports than the two previous editions. New sports will appeal to a broader range of society. Although not a medal event, we will also be featuring esports for the first time after signing our deal with the Global Esports Federation. The increased range and variety of sports is sure to provide greater appeal and excitement for athletes and spectators alike.

3. Apart from the European Games, the EOC will organise the two biggest Youth Sport events in Europe this year: the European Youth Olympic Festivals in Friuli Venezia Giulia, Italy (Winter) and Maribor, Slovenia (Summer). Why are these events even more important for young athletes in these challenging times?

The European Youth Olympic Festival (EYOF) Friuli Venezia Giulia in Italy has just concluded. It saw the return of an EYOF to Italy for the second time, following the first winter EYOF ever held in Aosta in 1993 and the summer edition in Lignano Sabbiadoro, still in the Friuli Venezia Giulia region, in 2005.

Friuli Venezia Giulia brought us the best of what EYOF stands for. We experienced a wonderful week of competition and some outstanding performances. With just three years until Italy host the Olympic Winter Games in Milano-Cortina there was certainly something for the athletes to set their sights on!

The EYOFs are very special events. For many young athletes it is the first time they experience a multisport event but more than this the festivals are so much more than competitive sport. One of the main focuses of EYOFs in the educational aspects, the festivals give a taste of what the European Olympic Movement and Olympism stand for.

The Olympic values are at the heart of the festivals, and we strive to ensure every young athlete leaves the Games educated and more rounded individuals. This was also possible thanks to the European Young Olympic Ambassador (EYOA) programme, in which over 30 athletes and young sport enthusiasts organised a series of education and entertaining activities for the EYOF athletes.

Another achievement of this EYOF edition was the streaming coverage, as we reached almost half a million views across 64,000 hours of live action on the EOC TV, confirming EYOF's attractiveness to potential commercial opportunities.

And always this year, Malta is hosting from 28th June to 3 June, the Games of the Small States of Europe, a multisport event which involve nine European small States.

4. The EOC has signed an Arrangement for Cooperation with the European Commission last year. How important is this cooperation for the EOC as such and for the promotion of your events?

The agreement with the European Commission was a strategic and valuable step for the EOC. The agreement strengthens our commitment to promote the key principles and core values of the European Sport Model, including tolerance, equality, respect, and solidarity. It also contributes to safeguarding and improving the way sport is organised in Europe.

This Agreement for cooperation also promotes youth and cultural exchanges between EU citizens and strengthens cooperation in the areas of long-term interest for sport in Europe, such as;

- sustainability
- gender equality
- fight against discrimination
- good governance
- athletes' participation
- integrity

These are all key areas the EOC has highlighted in the EOC Strategic Agenda 2030 and by aligning closely in this manner we hope to become a unified voice for sport, achieving world class sporting events which feedback into grassroots sport ensuring a virtuous circle of participation.

5. The Paris 2024 Games is bringing the Olympic and Paralympic Games back to Europe. Is the EOC planning any specific activity in relation to this major sport event on our continent?

To have the Olympic Games back in Europe for the first time in 12 years is immensely exciting for the region. The European Games 2023 will include Paris 2024 qualification across 18 sports, which is the most the European Games has offered across the two previous editions.

The EOC will also organise its 43rd Seminar in Paris in May, when the NOCs will have the chance to hear from the organisers updates regarding every aspect about the staging of the Olympic Games, as well as the European Games and EYOF.

6. One of the major reform projects of the EOC is the EOC Strategic Agenda 2030. What are the most important elements for you and what is the timeframe for its implementation?

The EOC Strategic Agenda 2030 is a critical initiative to help shape the future direction of European Sport, acting as a roadmap for sporting success in an ever-changing environment.

The EOC Strategic Agenda 2030 is closely aligned with recommendations and priorities set out in Olympic Agenda 2020+5. Combining this with the integration of our NOCs' invaluable inputs has put the EOC in the position to provide them with the most comprehensive support so far. This is only the beginning of an exciting journey, a journey that will unite us through the power of sport to make Europeans' lives better.

I don't believe we can highlight any one particular element of the six key strategic priorities as being more important than another and we are very proud that gender equality and inclusiveness has been integrated and runs as a red thread throughout the whole agenda.

The EOC Strategic Agenda 2030 aims to drive long-term delivery of elite sport in Europe. We plan to review progress regularly to ensure we are on track to deliver against the priorities.

7. In November 2022, the EOC announced a strategic partnership with the Global Esports Federation. What are the EOC's plans regarding e-sport in general, but also in view of the European Games? What do you expect from the new collaboration?

As highlighted above, esports will feature at this year's European Games in Krakow Malopolska which is a significant move towards embracing the global growth in this area.

Through the partnership with GEF, we will also focus on promoting sport and the Olympic values, while establishing links with all EOC activities and exploring new forms of fan engagement. The partnership with the GEF will help evolve, build, and shape our strategy around esports.

The EOC EU Office is thanking Raffaele "Lello" Pagnozzi for his interview and contribution to the monthly report.



EU SPORT POLICY AND FUNDING NEWS



RINGS Project is over

Discover all tools on the
Sport Governance Platform!



Link to the platform: <https://www.sportgovernance-eoceuoffice.eu/>

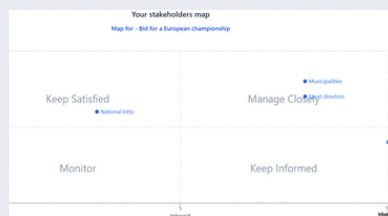


Stakeholders Tool

A quick-and-easy tool for sport organisations to:

- Visualise their ecosystem
- Manage stakeholders strategically thanks to personalised roadmaps

[Test the Tool](#)



Public Affairs Guidelines

A step-by-step guide for sport organisations to:

- Build messages and image
- Strengthen relations with stakeholders
- Influence decision-making and gain political leverage

[Go through the Guidelines](#)



Strategic Management Handbook



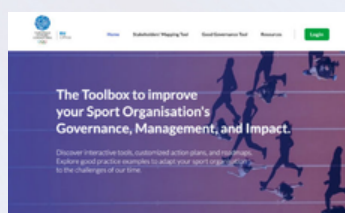
A practical Handbook on Strategic Management for sport organisations to:

- Learn from best practices, strategic tools, case studies and illustrations
- Align their management strategies to today's challenges

[Read the Handbook](#)



Online platform



All tools developed by the EOC EU Office
through Erasmus+ projects in 1 Online Platform

Strategic management, gender equality,
integrity, climate change, etc.

[Discover the Platform](#)

OCEAN Project - EOC EU Office launches new Erasmus+ project focused on the reduction of NOCs carbon footprint

January 2023 marks the official launch of the EOC EU Office's new Erasmus+ project entitled OCEAN (Olympic Committees of Europe Approaching Carbon Neutrality).

The project aims to develop and provide training for "Climate Action Officers" to help their NOC get as close as possible to climate neutrality. As a result, the project focuses on supporting partner NOCs in developing a tailored strategy for carbon reduction after evaluating their carbon footprint with the support of German environmental research institute Öko-Institut.

OCEAN consortium: 18 partner NOCS

OCEAN brings together a consortium of 18 NOCs (Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Greece, Ireland, Kosovo, Lithuania, Luxemburg, North Macedonia, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and Spain) as well as the IOC, ANOC and Öko-Institut.

The OCEAN project will achieve the following three main objectives:

- Training of 18 Climate Action Officers

The scope of the OCEAN project is to upskill partner NOCs' workforce in the field of climate action through a "Climate Action Officer" training course and provide them with the right tools and expertise so that they can lead the process of carbon reduction strategies' development in their respective NOCs.



Climate Action Officers will be responsible for the use of the carbon emissions measurement tool within their NOC, as well as the implementation of a carbon reduction strategy.

- Use of the Carbon emissions measurement tool

As mentioned above, a carbon emissions measurement tool, tailored to the needs of NOCs and other like organisations, will be developed, piloted and refined. While partner NOCs will use it to measure the carbon footprint of their organisations, the tool will be later made available in an online form to a wider sport movement.

- NOCs' carbon reduction strategy

Based on the carbon emissions measurement tool, each partner NOC is expected to develop a fact-based carbon reduction strategy to lead their actions well beyond the end of the project, and, ultimately, to reach the ambitious objectives of the Olympic movement in this area.

- Kick-off meeting in Brussels

The kick-off meeting is scheduled to take place in Brussels on 21-22 February 2023, where NOCs' Presidents or Secretary Generals, and NOCs' Climate Action Officers will meet, together with IOC, ANOC, Öko-Institut, and the EOC EU Office experts in sustainability. The first Climate Action Officers' trainings will be delivered on day 2 and day 3.

The EOC EU Office is grateful for being the project coordinator of such an ambitious, yet promising and positive project funded by the European Commission.

FURTHER INFORMATION

The official webpage of the project will be available

Transnational Project Meeting - GAMES consortium continues working to strengthen gender equality in leadership positions



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

The Transnational Project Meeting of the [GAMES project](#) (Guidance to Achieve More Equal Leadership in Sport) was hosted by the Turkish Olympic Committee in Istanbul on 16-17 January 2023.

The meeting gathered representatives from the National Olympic Committees (NOCs) of (Belgium, Czech Republic, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Latvia, North Macedonia and Turkey), experts on gender equality and sports governance such as Professor Kari Fasting (Equal Rights in Sports) and Rowland Jack (I Trust Sport), as well as the IOC. By pairing scientific knowledge with practical experience, the GAMES project aims to support NOCs in creating concrete strategies to promote gender equality in leadership and decision-making positions.

Day 1

Folker Hellmund (Director, EOC EU Office) and Nese Gundogan (Secretary General, Turkish Olympic Committee) opened the meeting by thanking all participants for their attendance. These highlighted the scope of the meeting being to discuss the content of the Pool of Actions, as well as the NOCs National Action Plans. After which, a brief overview of the status of the project was provided; accordingly, the consortium was thanked for the timely and valuable contributions in ensuring that the activities and deliverables were duly and timely carried out and submitted, so far.

The EOC EU Office presented an update on the status of the Pool of Actions; accordingly, the consortium engaged in an inspiring discussion and peer-to-peer exchange about the actions and monitoring measures included in the Pool of Actions. Accordingly, the feasibility and applicability of the Pool of Actions was discussed across partners NOCs. A wide range of topics were tackled, among others communication, gender budgeting and mainstreaming. Hence, fruitful additions were made towards the advancement of the Pool of Action, as well enhancing its comprehensiveness and accuracy.

Day 2

On the second day, the EOC EU Office and I Trust Sport (Rowland Jack) presented the scope and strategic relevance for the NOCs Action Plans. Accordingly, a series of recommended models and templates for the National Actions Plans were showcased to partners NOCs in order to promote a shared understanding on the foreseen structure; and yet, taking into consideration national's and organisational's context to develop effective and sustainable strategies. Besides, the consortium discussed the National Action Plans and their relevance to further promote the National Action Plans, as well as share knowledge and information regarding the current situation and foreseen future actions among member federations and relevant national/regional sports stakeholders/policymakers in each partner NOCs.

In addition, two guest speakers shared their experiences in promoting gender equality in leadership and decision-making positions. Notably, Dr. Canan Koca Aritan (Turkish Association of Sport and Physical Activity for Women) showcased the Guidelines for Gender-responsive sports organisations developed in the framework of the HeForShe programme and in cooperation with the United Nation Women's office in Turkey.

Besides, Elisabeth Cebrian-Scheurer (Head of Women in Basketball & Special Projects at FIBA Europe) has shared the initiatives that FIBA Europe has carried out to promote gender equality both at the governance and grassroots levels. Hence, the consortium benefitted from several transferable initiatives and actions described to boost gender equality in leadership and decision-making positions.

Accordingly, an open discussion has been held among the consortium regarding “common challenges” in designing and implementing a National Action Plan to promote gender equality in leadership positions. Notably, the consortium discussed key challenges to promote gender equality among which the notion of gender budgeting, recruitment policy/process, flexible working practices, boost women’s impact on decision-making, as well as women’s representation in sport governance and required changes in statues/structural reforms.

The meeting came to a conclusion with Folker Hellmund (Director, EOC EU Office), Nese Gundogan (Secretary General, Turkish Olympic Committee) and Sukran Albayrak (Executive Board Member, Turkish Olympic Committee) who reiterated the importance of cooperation between NOCs to advance the project. Hence, the Turkish Olympic Committee was warmly thanked for their hospitality and outstanding organisation whilst the entire consortium was thanked for their time and contribution to boosting gender equality in sports leadership.

The next Transnational Project Meeting is foreseen to occur in concomitance with the Mid-term Conference and to be hosted by the Hellenic Olympic Committee in Athens between 22-24 of May 2023.



Background:

The [GAMES project](#) is a 24 month project co-funded by the European Commission through the [Erasmus+ Sport Programme 2021](#) and coordinated by the EOC EU Office. It promotes integrity and good governance in sports by advocating for structural and cultural changes regarding gender equality in leadership and decision-making positions among NOCs and their member federations. The EOC EU Office is implementing GAMES together with 8 NOCs (Belgium, Czech Republic, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Latvia, North Macedonia and Turkey) and renowned experts in the field of gender equality and good governance, including Professor Emerita Kari Fasting from Equal Rights in Sports and I TRUST Sport. Furthermore, the GAMES project is supported by the International Olympic Committee.

Sweden takes over the Presidency of the Council of the EU with focus on security, sustainability and competitiveness

The beginning of 2023 marks the start of the Swedish six-month presidency of the Council of the EU, last of the trio with its predecessors France and the Czech Republic. Sweden will hold the presidency until the start of the Spanish semester, scheduled for 1 June 2023.

Sport under the Swedish Presidency

Regarding sports, the Swedish Presidency will prioritise integrity, good governance and good administration with a focus on anti-doping. Thematic priorities are also the promotion of physical activity among young and elderly people by means of best-practices exchange and the support of Ukraine through sports. These priorities were confirmed in the Swedish Presidency Programme published on 14 December. Sport is mentioned page 34 as follows: "Sweden will work on current matters such as the EU Work Plan for Sport 2020–2024, which includes good governance and administration in sport. The EU's work in the World Anti-Doping Agency will also be highlighted."

The Swedish presidency will organize four events relevant to sports, namely:

- EU Sport Forum (2-3 May 2023)
- Sport Ministers Council (16 May 2023)
- Youth Conference (1-4 June 2023)
- Meeting at the General Directors' Level (15-16 June 2023)

General Priorities of the Swedish Presidency

More generally, the main political priorities of the Swedish presidency can be divided into five groups:

- Provide security for EU citizens and strengthen the EU's role in the world, with the strengthening of EU security and defence cooperation and a focus on energy supply, diminishing dependency on imported fossil fuels;
- Stop organised crime, further efforts at EU level to fight terrorism and violent extremism;
- Speed up the green transition, advancing the 'Fit for 55' package and climate transition;
- Strengthen EU's competitiveness, with negotiations on ambitious free trade agreements with third countries;
- Safeguard EU's fundamental values, continuing Council's country-by-country rule of law dialogue.

Legislative progress

The legislative process in the EU will pick up steam this year as the end of the current legislature term is approaching. Directly regarding sports, in the second quarter of 2023 the Commission will present a Recommendation on piracy of live content, i.e. a non-legislative initiative in response to [Parliament's report on 'Challenges of sports events organisers in the digital environment'](#).



In addition, 2023 will see the advancement of several files on the priority of sustainability, completing the transition to a more resource-efficient and circular society with a greener industry. The Council will continue Trilogue negotiations with the European Parliament on the proposals for a revision of the Renewable Energy Directive and the Energy Efficiency Directive; advance work on the proposed revision of the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive; advance the negotiations on the regulation on the sustainable use of plant protection products, finally moving forward the negotiations on any remaining parts of the 'Fit for 55' package with a high level of ambition.

FURTHER INFORMATION

[Swedish Council Presidency website](#)

[Swedish Presidency Programme](#)

[Work Plan for Sport 2021-2024](#)

Erasmus+ Sport: Coordinators Meeting and Info-day 2023



Erasmus+ Sport Info day 2023

The European Commission and European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) organised the 10th edition of the Erasmus+ Sport Info Day in Brussels on 30 of January. The Erasmus+ Sport info session provided future applicants with key information on the different facets of the Erasmus+ sport programme as well as being a unique opportunity for participants to network both online and in-person.

The Erasmus+ Sport Info Day was opened with the remarks of Yves Le Lostecque (Head of Erasmus Mundus and Sport Unit, EACEA) and Mr Tomas Johansson (Senior Adviser at the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, Government Offices of Sweden) who provided an overview of the key activities and objectives of the Swedish Presidency for the upcoming months.

Accordingly, he reiterated the vital role of the Erasmus+ programme in supporting sport stakeholders and their initiative across the EU. Besides, Mariya Gabriel (European Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth, responsible for sport) and Ms Tiziana Beghin (Member of the European Parliament) contributed with a video addressing the relevance of the programme and the sports sector as a whole.

After which, Gael Broze (Head of Sport Sector, EACEA) provided key insights on the Erasmus+ programme (2021-2027) and the key actions in sport including Partnerships for Cooperation, Not for Profit European Sport Events and Capacity Building in the Field of Sport. Accordingly, the foreseen timeline, budget and deadlines for sport-related actions were presented.

Besides, a series of external speakers shared their experiences, challenges and successes in implementing sport-related projects under the Erasmus+ Sport programme. Furthermore, a panel discussion moderated by the Head of the Sport Unit, Florencia Van Houdt, showcased successful examples of how innovative practices and projects can be funded through Erasmus+ Programme; as well as providing insights on main aspects and challenges to consider in developing project proposals.

In the afternoon, the Erasmus+ Sport Info Day continued with three ad-hoc workshops held in concomitance to inform potential applicant on key aspects of the Erasmus+ Programme:

- How to apply? This workshop was primarily dedicated to new applicants as it provided insights to find the suitable call on the Funding Portal as well as the procedure to
- How to present your proposal? This workshop aimed at presenting the application templates, the funding mechanism of lump sum, as well as providing insights on the selection process and awarding criteria.
-
- How to present a Capacity Building proposal? This workshop was primarily aimed at those interested in applying to the Capacity Building call as it presented the main eligibility criteria of the call, its funding mechanisms, as well as providing insights on the selection process and awarding criteria.

After which, an overview of the additional funding opportunities under the Erasmus+ Programme was presented. Notably, the additional funding opportunity for sport presented included the SHARE initiatives, Mobility of staff in the field of sport, Pilot projects and preparatory actions and the BeActive and BeInclusive Awards.

Hence, the Erasmus+ Info session was concluded by Yves LeLosteque who thanked all participants for their contribution whilst encouraging them to actively participate at the Erasmus+ Sport for 2023.

For further insights, the presentations and web streaming are available on the [webpage Erasmus+ Info day 2023](#).



Erasmus+ Sport Coordinators Kick off Meeting 2023

The European Commission and European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) organised also the Erasmus+ Sport Kick off Meeting online on the 23 January 2023. The meeting was designed for organisations whose project proposals were successfully awarded under the Erasmus+ Sport call of 2022 in order to ensure a shared understanding on the main administrative and financial aspects foreseen for the management of Erasmus+ sports projects. Accordingly, the Kick-off Meeting was divided in key sessions to provide valuable guidance on the administrative requirements, continuous and final reporting, as well as the communication/dissemination guidelines and opportunities for enquires.

For further insights, the presentations and web streaming are available on the [webpage Erasmus+ Coordinators Kick-off meeting 2023](#).

FURTHER INFORMATION

[Erasmus+ Programme Guide](#)

[Funding and Tender Opportunities Portal](#)

[Erasmus+ Sport Info Day 2023](#)

[Erasmus+ Coordinators Kick-off meeting 2023](#)

LaLiga and Concurrences organise events in Brussels to discuss the future of sports governance in the EU

On 12 and 13 January, two events were held in Brussels on the topic of future sports governance, in the context of the debate regarding the European Super League (ESL) and ISU vs Commission cases – two decisions that could reshape sports governance on the continent.

LaLiga and Sport and Citizenship

On 12 January, La Liga and Sport and Citizenship organised an event on “defending the European football ecosystem and tradition”. Numerous stakeholders of European sports, including La Liga President Javier Tebas, participated in the discussions and reiterated the importance of safeguarding the European Sport Model (ESM). Speakers also called for more regulation from the EU to further consolidate the model and protect European sporting values. Participants included representatives of European football clubs, president of basketball unions, as well as academics and broadcasting operators.

The meeting was opened by MEP Tomasz Frankowski (EPP, Poland), who reiterated the European Parliament’s commitment to protecting the ESM. Notably, he mentioned the Parliament’s report adopted in 2021 which underlined the critical institution’s stance on breakaway competition in European football. In that regard, he assured that the European Parliament (EP) would continue working on the matter with its Sport Group.

Close league models have been criticised for lack of revenue sharing and calendar conflicts. Jean-François Brocard (University of Limoges) argued that private football actors would not invest enough in talent development, which could have detrimental consequences on the grassroots level. Additionally, Tsjalle Van der Burg (University of Twente) criticised the ESL’s economic strategy, which was by its own nature anticompetitive as it sought to give its participants more power in each nation.

Altogether, the academics concluded that a closed league model was not a productive way to develop football. “It is a mistake to think that a closed competition will bring greater economic prosperity,” said Brocard.

Furthermore, President of the Union of European Leagues of Basketball Tomas Van den Spiegel cited the basketball EuroLeague as a major culprit in the decline of grassroots and national leagues in the sport, saying that “the closed league model has killed national leagues and grassroots”, particularly in terms of media rights contracts, ticketing revenues and sponsorships. “A reintroduction of the integrated basketball model is necessary”, he argued.

Jaroslav Doležal (FK Jablonek, Vice-President) and Alex Muzio (Union Saint-Gilloise, President) discussed how the present model and participation in European competitions was advantageous for their clubs, as it had increased their budget significantly and made them more appealing to sponsors and players.

While arguing in favor of the ESM, all speakers also concurred that it had to be improved in order to be more inclusive and supportive of grassroots levels. Accordingly, the participants identified competitive balance, financial distribution and the social aspects and benefits of sports as the most urgent matters to be addressed in order to improve the current model.

The conference was concluded by La Liga President Javier Tebas’ address in which he reiterated the importance of protecting the ESM. He emphasised that the European Super League posed a danger to both the national leagues and the ESM. “There is already a large gap in revenues between smaller and bigger clubs. With the European Super League model, the gap would grow even bigger”, he stated.

He asserted that economic sustainability – which he highlighted as a crucial element to protect the European model – was the key to the growth of competitions: “If your club loses money and you ask for more, that makes the Super Leagues happen”. Lastly, he urged the EU to take additional measures to safeguard the ESM. “We need directives to regulate the European Sport Model. We must demand that European legislators transcribe everything they have said in defense of the model into directives”, he declared.



La Liga President Javier Tebas speaking at the conference

He asserted that economic sustainability – which he highlighted as a crucial element to protect the European model – was the key to the growth of competitions: “If your club loses money and you ask for more, that makes the Super Leagues happen”. Lastly, he urged the EU to take additional measures to safeguard the ESM. “We need directives to regulate the European Sport Model. We must demand that European legislators transcribe everything they have said in defense of the model into directives”, he declared.

Concurrences - The future of sport governance in Europe

The following day, Concurrences (publisher of a quarterly review on EU competition and antitrust law) held a seminar on the topic of the future of sport governance in Europe. The red line that ran through the debate was an argued critique, with various nuances, of the opinions of Advocate General of the European Court of Justice (ECJ) Rantos on the European Super League (ESL) and ISU cases.

As was recalled during the seminar, these two ECJ decisions will determine whether sports federations can use their dominant position to prevent other organisations from entering the market.

Melchior Wathelet, Former Belgian Deputy Prime Minister and Former First Advocate General of the Court of Justice of the European Union held the keynote speech. He questioned the reason of the specificity of sport, recalling that the jurisprudence of the ECJ has always confirmed that sport, as an economic industry, is subject to EU rules regarding competition. He recalled that football governing organisations (UEFA and FIFA) are not based in an EU Member State thus creating a legitimacy question on the reason why would EU law apply in this case (opinion shared by MEP Manders). Wathelet then lamented the lack of autonomy of players and clubs and labelled Advocate Rantos' opinion as misty, with an over-interpretation of Article 165 TFEU.

The first panel focused on the concept of the European sports model and Advocate Rantos' opinion on the ESL case.

Vice-Dean of the Perpignan University R. Bouniol questioned the existence of a single ESM due to the presence of several private competitions in numerous sports (boxing, cycling, basketball, tennis, etc.). He furthermore called on the ECJ to open the market of sports competitions' governance.

Oxford Professor Weatherill pointed out that the current situation of sport in Europe is not the result of a predetermined conscious model. As he criticised the absence of representation of athletes' and fans' interests, Prof. Budzinski (TU Ilmenau) emphasised the lack of checks and balances that prevents grassroots clubs from controlling the administration of the top of the pyramid.

All speakers pointed out that federations' monopolies create a regulatory and commercial overlap that violates EU completion rules and would not be accepted in other sectors with such a big market.

They also highlighted the lack of legislative definition of the ESM in EU treaties, a situation that could change if the ECJ endorses Rantos' interpretation giving the ESM constitutional recognition.

As Prof. Bouniol emphasised that member states' support for UEFA is dictated by an "unfounded" fear of losing national models and competitions, MEP Manders suggested the creation of EU Games excluding all non-EU Countries to reinforce European identity.

In conclusion, the speakers agreed that it should be a legislative process to establish the European sports model to be followed, and not a very broad interpretation of a soft provision of the treaties.

The second panel also focused on the ESL case, but from an economic point of view.

Prof. Van den Bogaert (Leiden University) called for a separation between economic and regulatory power to avoid conflict of interests, with more space for stakeholders like fans and athletes and more financial solidarity.

Mr. Garcia (Compass Lexecon) presented a study on the economic impact of a possible ESL. Results show there will be more revenues (especially for founder clubs), and more economic solidarity. Finally, he stressed that the reduction of national leagues' attractiveness would be limited, as there is already in the actual system big discrepancy between big and small clubs.

Rome Business School Prof. Mancini gave a geopolitical view pointing out the importance of football to gain political leverage. The EU is not benefiting from its soft power potential that could be instead strategically important for EU autonomy and geopolitical role, as catalyst of EU identity and an instrument of EU integration and dissemination of principles and values.

During the Q&A session a representative of the Slovenian rowing federation complained about the lack of discussion on sports other than football, whose governance has not been addressed during the conference, whereas ECJ's decision will, ultimately, impact all sports organisations.

The seminar ended with a closing speech by Mr. Wathelet, who gave a pessimistic outlook on the future due to the lack of will on the part of European legislators to intervene in the sports sector.

FURTHER INFORMATION

[Opinion General Advocate SuperLeague case](#)

[Opinion General Advocate ISU vs Commission](#)

[EP resolution on EU sports policy](#)

ECHA receives a PFASs restriction proposal that potentially impact sport equipment

The national authorities of Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden have submitted a proposal to ECHA to restrict per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFASs) under REACH, the European Union's (EU) chemicals regulation. If the proposal is endorsed, it would be one of the most far-reaching restrictions under the REACH regulation.

PFASs are widely used as they have unique desirable properties. For instance, they are stable under intense heat. Many of them are also surfactants and are used, for example, as water and grease repellents. Some of the major industry sectors using PFASs include aerospace and defence, automotive, aviation, food contact materials, textiles, leather and apparel, construction and household products, electronics, firefighting, food processing, and medical articles.

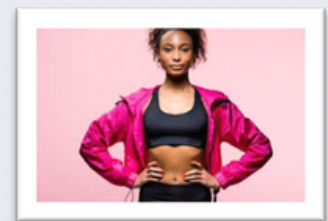
What are the concerns?

The majority of PFASs are persistent in the environment. Some PFASs are known to persist in the environment longer than any other synthetic substance. As long as PFASs continue to be released to the environment, humans and other species will be exposed to ever greater concentrations. Even if all releases of PFASs would cease tomorrow, they would continue to be present in the environment, and humans, for generations to come.

The behaviour of PFASs in the environment means that they tend to pollute groundwater and drinking water, which is difficult and costly to remediate. Certain PFASs are known to accumulate in people, animals and plants and cause toxic effects. Certain PFASs are toxic for reproduction and can harm the development of foetuses. Several PFASs may cause cancer in humans. Some PFASs are also suspected of interfering with the human endocrine (hormonal) system.

Is sport affected?

Sports items or surfaces can also contain PFAS, for example [outdoor clothing](#), [sports bras](#), [artificial turf](#) or [ski wax](#). Accordingly, surfaces or objects in sports would also be affected by the restriction and manufacturers potentially would have to abstain from using PFAS in the future.



Next steps

ECHA's scientific committees for Risk Assessment (RAC) and for Socio-Economic Analysis (SEAC) will check if the proposed restriction meets the legal requirements of REACH in their meetings in March 2023. If it does, the committees will begin their scientific evaluation of the proposal.

Then, the proposal would be dealt with in the so-called comitology procedure. This is the same procedure that is currently used for the restriction of microplastic on artificial turf pitches and lead in gunshot.

FURTHER INFORMATION

[ECHA News](#)

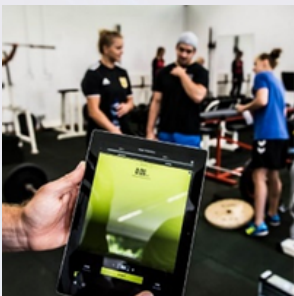
[ECHA info about Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances \(PFASs\)](#)

REACT-EU / ERDF: 30 million EUR for the digitalisation of non-profit sports organisations in North Rhine-Westphalia

With a budget of 30 million EUR from the European Union's REACT-EU programme, the German federal state of North Rhine-Westphalia launched a digitalisation offensive for grassroots sport. A great example that shows how well sport and European funding can go together and may encourage other managing authorities in the EU to follow suit.

The funding mechanism in detail

The funding measure "Digitisation of non-profit sports organisations in North Rhine-Westphalia" aims at the digitisation of organised grassroots sport in North Rhine-Westphalia, which is characterised by its structures based on voluntary commitment as well as its social and educational function. By investing in the media equipment of the respective organisations with the corresponding hardware and software, grassroots sport is to be promoted.



The Landessportbund Nordrhein-Westfalen e.V. or its member organisations as well as sports schools providing basic, further and advanced training based in North Rhine-Westphalia are eligible to apply.

Only expenses such as computers, scanners, monitors, photo cameras, video conferencing tools, wifi routers and server systems can be funded. For organised sport in North Rhine-Westphalia, this is a great opportunity in many aspects. With the funds made available, existing digital infrastructure can be expanded and better use can be made of the digital opportunities that have failed due to financial hurdles.

Minister for Economic Affairs and Climate Protection Mona Neubaur stated: "I am pleased that we can advance the digital and green transformation in North Rhine-Westphalia with funds from the European REACT-EU build-up programme. This makes an important contribution to regional development and will further promote cohesion in the region." (own translation.)

Andrea Milz, State Secretary for Sport and Volunteering of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia declared: "The year 2023 starts with good news for sport, as the funding for the digitalisation of non-profit sports clubs will now precisely complement the efforts already started to modernise sports clubs and associations in North Rhine-Westphalia." (own translation.)

Best practice example for sport in Europe

The budget for the call for proposals stems from the Covid-19 Recovery Package of the European Union. Through REACT-EU, the respective European Structural and Investment Funds, in particular the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the European Social Fund (ESF+), were increased in the various Member States. The ERDF Managing Authority of the Federal State of North Rhine-Westphalia is now using these additional funds to support sports clubs and federations in their digitalisation.

From a sports perspective, this is very welcome news. As far as the EOC EU Office is aware, it is unique in Europe that funds have been specifically allocated from the REACT-EU budget to support sport. It is still important to convince the regional managers of the European Structural and Investment Funds (ERDF, ESF+, EAFRD) to perceive organised sport as a potential applicant and competent partner. The example from North Rhine-Westphalia is great proof of this.

FURTHER INFORMATION

[News State Chancellery North Rhine-Westphalia](#)

[News ERDF Managing Authority North Rhine-Westphalia](#)

European Commission Expert Groups advance in their work

Expert Group on Green Sport

Having met for the first time in May 2020, the European Commission Expert Group on Green Sport, has, since, advanced considerably on its main task: to develop “Green Sport” recommendations for sport organisations, public authorities and other stakeholders. Four sub-groups focusing, respectively, on sport events, sport infrastructure, innovative cross-sectorial solutions, and capacity building, education and communications, have gathered considerable amount of information, good practices and recommendations, which are now to be streamlined and transferred into a concise form to provide hands-on guidance to all the above-mentioned stakeholders.

Indeed, the scope, target groups and form of the document were the main topics discussed at the 7th meeting of the Expert Group, which took place on 26 January in Brussels. Led by KEA European Affairs, European Commission’s contractor hired to help the Expert Group finalise the document, the discussion led to the agreement on each of these points as well as on the next steps. The first draft of the Recommendations should be ready for the Expert Group’s revision in March 2023 and its final version is planned to be unveiled in June of this year, thus almost half year earlier than originally envisaged, as to ensure that the content of the document can feed into the preparation of the new EU Work Plan on Sport (2024-2027).

Besides the fruitful discussion on the forthcoming Recommendations, the Expert Group members learnt about the implementation of the UN Sports for Climate Action Framework from the UN Climate Change Sectors Engagement Lead, Lindita Xhaferi-Salihu, as well as about New European Bauhaus and its possible relevance for sport. At the end of the meeting, Member States representatives shared information and news from their countries, including the forthcoming “Guide to Environmentally Responsible Sport Events” developed by Cyprus Sport Organisations, the outcomes of the Peer-Learning Activity hosted by the French Ministry of Sport last year and focusing on zero carbon and zero waste sport events, or the sport-related plans of the Swedish and Spanish Council Presidencies.

Next meeting of the Expert Group is planned to take place in March 2023.

Expert Group on the recovery of the sport sector after the Covid-19 pandemic

Members of the Expert Group dealing with the recovery and crisis resilience of the sport sector in the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic met for the 6th time this month. Together, they discussed the state of play for the sector, almost three years after the pandemic’s outburst.

The first session was dedicated to a presentation of some key figures from the European Commission’s [Special Eurobarometer on Sport and Physical Activity](#), touching upon physical activity and health, support for sport in EU countries, clubs and volunteering, or sustainability and gender equality in sport.

Below are some of the main take aways:

- Frequency and levels of engagement in sport – almost half of Europeans never exercise, and 13% do not walk for 10 minutes at a time at all in a weekly period, while 11% sit for more than 8,5 hours per day
- Location where citizens engage in physical activity – 31% of respondents are members of a sport club, and Europeans mainly practice physical activity in informal settings (outdoors, home, on the way between places)
- Motivators and barriers to sport participation – The main reason to engage in physical activity is to improve health, while the main barrier is a lack of time

- Sustainability and sport – according to respondents' knowledge, sport organisations and clubs mainly do not do any action about sustainability (48%), but when they do, they mainly work in reducing waste or improving waste management (24%)

In the second session, participants heard from Stephen Whiting, Technical Officer of WHO Europe and took part in a tour de table on the inclusion of sport in the national Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF), and on the policies to address the new trends in the settings in which people exercise.



PARTNERS' CORNER

DOSB organises Erasmus+ workshop to support clubs and federations in the application process

On 26 January, the DOSB (German Olympic Sports Confederation) and the EOC EU Office held a workshop on applying to Key Action 2 of Erasmus+ Sport. The event took place at the DOSB headquarters in Frankfurt am Main.

The aim of the application workshop was to enable clubs and federations from Germany to submit a promising Erasmus+ Sport application. First of all, the technical details were discussed: How do I log into the funding portal? How do I create the PIC? How do I submit the application on the platform?

This was followed by considerations on the application's content. Folker Hellmund (Head of the EOC EU Office) and Andreas Bold (DOSB Officer in the EOC EU Office) explained what characterises a good application and how the evaluators assess applications. Furthermore, they explained how a project should be structured and what role the work packages, the activities and the so-called "deliverables" play.

The participants of the application workshop had the opportunity to present their project ideas, which were then discussed in the group in terms of strengths and weaknesses.

The participants of the application workshop had the opportunity to present their project ideas, which were then discussed in the group in terms of strengths and weaknesses



With the application workshop, the DOSB and the EOC EU Office want to actively enable clubs and federations from Germany to successfully overcome all the hurdles of the application process.

The event followed an informational webinar on Erasmus+ Sport funding opportunities that DOSB / EOC EU Office held in December 2022.

12 people from different clubs and federations took part in the application workshop for Key Action 2. We wish all attendees good luck with their application.



UPCOMING EVENTS

21 - 24 February 2023

Kick-Off Meeting and Educational Module 1 of the OCEAN project – EOC EU Office - Brussels

23 February 2023

Deadline Erasmus+ Key Action 1: Mobility of sport staff



EOC EU Office
71, Avenue de Cortenbergh
1000 Brussels, Belgium



+32 2 738 03 20



info@euoffice.eurolympic.org



www.euoffice.eurolympic.org



EUROPEAN
OLYMPIC
COMMITTEES



EU
Office