

# ***EOC***

**Liaison Office at the European Union**



**Report on the impact of the activities  
of the European Union  
on sports**

**February 2006**



## MONTHLY REPORT FEBRUARY 2006

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## General Policy

### 1st Ratification of EU Constitution continues

Belgium, one of the six founder states, is now the 14th European Union Member State to have ratified the constitutional treaty. However, the future of the constitution is still uncertain due to the 'No' from France and the Netherlands. To date, the 'period of reflection' agreed by the member States and the European Commission has not yet led to any definite proposals for continuing the discussion process. The task of the next European Council meeting in June 2006 will be to sum up all these considerations in order to reach a decision on the subject.

### 2nd Protecting the health of Europeans

Owing to their failure to implement the ban on tobacco advertising, Germany and Luxembourg have received a "reasoned opinion" from the European Commission. The Commission had already sent a "letter of formal notice" to these countries in October 2005, asking them to transpose an EU directive of May 2003 into national law. Both countries now have two months in which to bring the national situation into line with the European provisions. Otherwise, the Commission will appeal to the European Court of Justice (CoJEC). If the



member States also fail to comply with the judgement of the Court of Justice, the CoJEC can impose fines.

The directive passed by the European Parliament and the Council in 2003 prohibits tobacco advertising in the printed media, on the radio and on the Internet. The sponsorship of international events is also banned. It does not, however, cover advertising in cinemas, on scoreboards or on objects. Tobacco advertising on television has been banned in the EU since the early nineties and is subject to the Television without Frontiers Directive.

### 3rd Court of justice: judicial activity in 2005

The European Court of Justice has published the statistics concerning its judicial activity in 2005. The statistics show, first of all, a reduction in the number of pending cases of approximately 12% compared with the previous year and of 24% over two years. In 2005 the Court completed 574 cases. In parallel, the number of cases brought before the Court decreased: 474 cases compared with 531 in 2004.

This noteworthy reduction in the number of cases pending was accompanied by an improvement in the duration of proceedings, including proceedings concerning references for a preliminary ruling (20.4 months) as well as direct actions and appeals (21 months). The Court made use of the instruments



available to speed up its handling of certain cases.

The progress achieved in 2005 is due both to the measures adopted in 2004 to improve the effectiveness of the Court's working methods and to the arrival of the new judges following the most recent enlargement.

## Sport

### News from the Institutions

#### 4th Call 2006 "Public Health" published

The European Commission has published the annual call for proposals in the Programme of Community action in the field of public health (2003 to 2008). The programme covers three main areas: "Health Information", "responding to Health Threats rapidly and in a co-ordinated manner" and "Health Determinants". The 2006 activities in these areas have been streamlined in order to ensure coverage of areas which have not been dealt with previously. Synergy and complementarity with the work undertaken by the relevant international organisations working in the health field (such as the World Health Organisation) will be pursued.

Eligible for participation are organisations active in public health from the 25 EU member states, the EFTA-EEA countries (Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway) as



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well as the applicant countries (Romania, Bulgaria and Turkey). A broad geographic coverage is evaluated as a positive and important characteristic.

The co-financing by the European Union goes up to 60% of the eligible costs for the respective project, exceptionally even up to 80%. The overall budget for this call amounts to approximately 43 million euros. The duration of supported projects shall not run longer than three years. Deadline to hand in proposals is 19<sup>th</sup> May 2006.



[http://europa.eu.int/comm/health/ph\\_programme/howtoapply/how\\_to\\_apply\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/health/ph_programme/howtoapply/how_to_apply_en.htm)



[info@eu-sports-office.org](mailto:info@eu-sports-office.org)



## Legal Questions

### 5th European Parliament approves Services Directive

On 16.02.2006 the European Parliament (EP) voted for the Services Directive with a large majority in its first reading. Owing to fierce criticism, however, substantial changes were made to the original draft from the Commission.

Very positive for sport is the fact that games requiring a monetary stake, in the case of games of chance, including lotteries, gambling casinos and wagers, were exempted from the directive's area of application.

The next stages of the legislative procedure are as follows:

The EU Commission (CEC) has announced that, following the first reading in the EP, it will take back and amend the directive proposal. In reworking the directive, it will take up the amendments desired by the EP and present the revised proposal at the spring summit on 23/24 March 2006. The Austrian Council Presidency is endeavouring to achieve at least a political agreement in the first half of 2006 as, because of diverging interests in the Council, concluding the procedure does not seem very feasible. Thus, it is highly likely that the Services Directive will be discussed after the second reading in the EP.

Both the Council and the EP are speaking out in favour of exempting games of chance from the directive's area of application.



## Aid Programms

### 6th Call for YOUTH programme, Action 5

Recently the EU-Commission published a call for submission of innovative cooperation, training and information projects. All applications must follow one of the priority themes/ areas defined hereafter:

1. Cultural diversity and tolerance
2. Less favoured regions
3. Eastern Europe – Caucasus – South East Europe
4. Innovation in European Citizenship Education
5. Co-operation between local or regional authorities and youth NGOs

It is essential that project promoters specify in the application the innovative elements they intend to introduce. The projects must have a clear transnational European dimension and contribute to European cooperation in youth matters. More specifically, they must lead to the creation and/ or consolidation of strong partnerships between youth organisations or partnerships between youth organisations and public bodies.

Eligible organizations must be legal entities such as non-governmental youth organisations of the EU-25, EFTA countries (Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway) or the candidate countries Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey.



The maximum funding amount per project will not exceed EUR 100.000 per year (12 months) of activity and the maximum grant will not exceed EUR 300.000. Projects must have a duration of at least 18 months. If justified, a maximum duration of up to 36 months will be accepted. Activities must start between 1 January 2007 and 28 February 2007 and applications have to be sent in by July 1, 2006, at the latest.



[http://europa.eu.int/comm/youth/call/index\\_en.html](http://europa.eu.int/comm/youth/call/index_en.html)

#### 7th EU partners using sport for urban regeneration

Twenty four partners from the EU have joined forces to help sports facilities contribute to economic development, urban regeneration, social inclusion and the image of towns and cities.

'Sport Urban' is a project funded by the EU in the framework of the Interreg III programme, which has a total budget of 1.5 million euros. From October 2004 until July 2007 it brings together 24 organisations, mostly cities, to investigate the effects of sports and leisure on a city in order to use these items more effectively.

The main aim is to analyse, exchange, study and communicate on various ways to restructure 'difficult' city areas through sport structures.



The results of preceding phases will be summarised into a practical toolkit on policies and approaches using sport-related policy as instruments for urban development by integrating environmental concerns, social inclusion and economic potential.



Interreg III

## Miscellaneous

### 8th 2006 Winter Olympics boosts regional development

The role of large sporting events in boosting regional development processes is acknowledged. The European Commission therefore considers the 2006 Olympic Games an excellent opportunity to focus regionally effective energies in the Olympic Games region in order to revive and further develop Piedmont economically and structurally.

Sports infrastructure projects, such as swimming pools, ice-skating rinks and ski slopes for example, and the promotion of the 2006 Winter Olympics, were therefore supported within the framework of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).

In the 2000–2006 assistance period, approximately EUR 488.6 million flowed from the European Structural Fund into the Piedmont region.



## 9th Independent review of European football

An independent review of European football should offer tangible recommendations for implementation during the Austrian and Finnish Presidencies of the EU. José Luís Arnaut, former Portuguese Minister of the Presidency, has agreed to chair the review. Its findings should be reported at the beginning of June.

The move is the latest step following the initiative of the UK Minister for Sport, Richard Caborn, to bring together the Sports Ministers of France, Germany, Italy and Spain, as well as UEFA and FIFA, to discuss governance in European football. The group agreed in December 2005 in Leipzig, Germany, to launch an independent review of social and corporate governance in European football under the auspices of the UK Presidency of the European Union.

In particular, the review will look at how the European Union, its member states and the football authorities can best implement the Nice Declaration of 2000, which lays down the specific nature of sport and the role of its governing bodies.



## Glossary

Interreg III: a European Community initiative aimed at encouraging cross-border cooperation among regions within the EU during the period 2000–2006. It is financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).