

# MONTHLY REPORT

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JUNE 2021



EUROPEAN  
OLYMPIC  
COMMITTEES



**EU**  
Office

EOC EU Office  
@EOCEUOffice

Today we are launching new series of Climate Action webinars together with @iocmedia to European NOCs & our partners. No better timing as European climate law has just been adopted. Opening by @EOCmedia Pres @SpyrosCapralos, @iocmedia Julie Duffus and @EOCEUOffice @HellmundFolker



8:51 AM · Jun 29, 2021

7 1 Copy link to Tweet

EOC EU Office  
@EOCEUOffice

Congratulations new @EOCmedia President @SpyrosCapralos, Vice Pres Daina Gudzeviciute, Sec Gen Raffaele Pagnozzi, Treasurer Peter Mennel and all other members of the ExCom. We are looking forward to the cooperation! [eurolympic.org/capralos-named](https://eurolympic.org/capralos-named)

4:20 PM · Jun 10, 2021

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EOC EU Office  
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Replying to @EOCEUOffice

.@GabrielMariya stresses the importance of the European Sport Model & highlighted that the model brings together grassroots and top-level sport with main principles of autonomy, openness, solidarity and interdependence between international sport federations. @EOCmedia @iocmedia

7:55 AM · Jun 8, 2021

2 1 Copy link to Tweet

## INTERVIEW OF THE MONTH

### New elected EOC President: Spyros Capralos



"I vow to redouble my own efforts on behalf of the EOC and our 50 European National Olympic Committees (EOC) for the benefit of sport and especially the athletes throughout our continent."

See full interview on page 5

## FACTS & FIGURES



### NEW TEAM MEMBER!



The EOC EU Office welcomes Eva Rebmann as new EU Policy Officer.

See full article on page 17



## Erasmus+ Sport Calls

Total number of submitted applications per year:

2019	→	766
2020	→	1145
2021	→	1298





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### EDITORIAL

Dear readers,

With the presentation of the latest version of the IOC Playbook for the Olympic Games in Tokyo, the final phase of preparations has begun. The pros and cons of the Games have been hotly debated in recent months and only one thing can be said with certainty: These Games will demand enormous discipline from the Japanese hosts, the IOC and all athletes and participants to comply with the many rules and hygiene measures. But as we all know, that is the prerequisite for being able to hold the Games at all.

Before and immediately after the Olympic Games, a series of elections take place at the Olympic Committees. The election of Spyros Capralos as the new President of the European Olympic Committees is of enormous importance, as the political and economic environment is particularly challenging for all sports federations. As long-time President of the Greek NOK and member of the IOC, Capralos certainly has enough experience and sport-political connections to put the EOC on the right track (see also Interview of the Month). The EOC Strategic Agenda 2030, which was pushed by his predecessor Niels Nygaard, is certainly a good basis for further reforms and increased cooperation with and between the NOCs. The EOC EU Office wishes the newly elected President Spyros Capralos, the re-elected Secretary General Raffaele Pagnozzi and the Executive Committee (that includes seven women!) all the best for the challenges ahead!

With the election of Brigitte Henriques as the new President of the CNOSF, another woman was elected to head an NOC. Congratulations also going to Paris, we are looking forward to the future cooperation with one of our long term partners.

The EOC EU Office is also dedicated to the topic of "women in leadership positions in sport" and has submitted a corresponding funding application in the latest Erasmus+Sport call for proposals. Despite an extremely short application deadline and a reduced budget, there has been a record participation with over 1200 applications, which strongly demonstrates the high relevance of the programme. The goal must remain to establish more actors from organised sport as applicants, who make up less than a third of the applicants.

The Slovenian government, which will take over the Council Presidency from Portugal in the second half of 2022, is now eagerly awaited. In the field of sport, the European Model of Sport, Lifelong Physical Activity and the Dual Career of Athletes are important topics on the agenda.

In addition, the report of the European Parliament on the future EU sports policy is on the way. The recent hearing, organised by rapporteur Tomasz Frankowski, also gave the EOC EU Office the opportunity to present our priorities. The previous EP reports by Fisas (2011) and Takkula (2015) had set important impulses for sport and led, among other things, to the introduction of the European Week of Sport.

Stay healthy and all the best for 2021!



Folker Hellmund  
Director EOC EU Office





### INTERVIEW OF THE MONTH



Spyros Capralos has been HOC President since 2009 and a Member of the EOC ExCom from November of the same year. He became a Member of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in 2019. His election as new EOC President took place during the EOC's 50th General Assembly in Athens, attended by representatives of all 50 European National Olympic Committees (ENOCs).

**1. Dear President, first of all, congratulation to your election as new President of the European Olympic Committees. In your first statement you said that you intend to bring the EOC to a higher level. In which areas you see the most urgent need for improvement?**

Thank you. It is a great privilege to have been elected EOC President and to have the opportunity to lead the Executive Committee for the next four years.

As with any election, the expectation is that with new leadership comes fresh ideas and renewed vigour. I vow to redouble my own efforts on behalf of the EOC and our 50 European National Olympic Committees (ENOCs) for the benefit of sport and especially the athletes throughout our continent.

Generally speaking, the EOC will first and foremost be working towards:

- Sustainable sport, with clear targets including carbon positivity

- Gender equality in sport, with equal medals and athletes per sport at EOC competitions

- Safe sport, with wider adoption of measures to prevent harassment

- Safeguarding the European Sports Model, by working together to preserve the social mission of sport and its values to ensure that everyone benefits from the power of sport

I will also champion the evolution of the governance model. Sport is also big business. As a business leader, I am fortunate to have experienced the highest standards of governance, as applied to publicly listed companies. I am confident that the EOC can be a leader in this critical area, too.

**2. Question 2: How would you describe your style of leadership and what do you expect from the new EOC ExCom?**

First, allow me to congratulate once again all of the recently elected ExCo Members. My job as EOC President will be aided immeasurably by their experience, knowledge and passion for sport.

I would also like to thank Niels Nygaard for a very dignified and respectful campaign but also for everything he did for the EOC and the Olympic movement of the last 8 years. His contribution has been of great benefit to EOC and one of the first things I did, was ask Niels to

continue providing his valuable inputs to the preparations of the 2023 European Games, as a Vice President of the Coordination Commission.

I also have to admit that I am very pleased that seven of the 16 Members are women, which will bring fresh new ideas and perspectives to our meetings.

My leadership style is one based first and foremost on listening to those around me, receiving as many opinions as possible, and then deciding on the best way forward.



So I very much encourage my fellow ExCo Members to voice their thoughts and ideas to me at all times. I have the utmost respect for each of them, and as they come from all over Europe – north, south, east and west – it is important that their input is included in all decision-making processes.

As I like to say, the strength of the team is each individual member. The strength of each member is the team.

### 3. You are a member of the IOC. To which extent that could be helpful for the EOC? Do you plan to increase EOCs support to and pressure on all ENOCs to implement the reforms launched by the Olympic Agenda 2020 and 2020+5 e.g. on good governance, sustainability, gender equality or involvement of athletes?

Being an IOC Member allows me to attend all Sessions and other meetings, which is a terrific opportunity to meet with global Olympic Movement stakeholders to discuss matters of mutual importance and to further the interests of Europe where possible. So this is absolutely of great benefit to the EOC and, by association, the NOCs of Europe.

I firmly stand behind the reforms of Olympic Agenda 2020 and 2020+5, and have been implementing a number of the reforms at home in Greece via the Hellenic Olympic Committee. The documents form an excellent roadmap for our common future, and I will be looking to incorporate more of these reforms at the EOC level in the coming years.

During my election campaign, I identified the following areas that I plan to focus on over the next four years:

- Sustainability, to ensure lasting success

- Solidarity, respecting the European Sports Model
- Digital technology, to unlock growth and promote Olympism
- Integrity, participation and accountability
- Funding and practical support for the NOCs of Europe
- Good governance and operations of the EOC
- Developing our shared resources

We of course encourage all of our Members to adopt measures aimed at improving good governance, sustainability, gender equality, the involvement of athletes and many others. But while Olympic Agenda 2020 lights the way forward, we each have our own paths to travel. All of our 50 NOCs have their unique set of challenges to overcome, which require different timelines and a focus on different priorities. As EOC President, I will provide encouragement and support to our ENOCs so that we can all improve together on and off the field of play.

### 4. Politically and in terms of financial support, the European Union has become an important stakeholder for the sport movement in Europe. Do you share this view and if yes, to which extent this will play a role in your own agenda and priorities?

The European Union is an incredibly important stakeholder and ally for sport in Europe, no question. As IOC President Thomas Bach has said, sport does not exist in a bubble, it coexists within society at large and we must therefore work together with the governments and politicians of Europe to promote the many values and benefits of sport, secure greater funding, and protect the European Sport Model, which is continually coming under attack from

purely commercial interests.

The EOC must also work closely with the EU to put sport and the NOCs of Europe at the heart of a healthy COVID-19 recovery. Building on the experience of the Brussels office, our review will identify new sources of revenue beyond our current models and we will pursue new opportunities determinedly and professionally.

Having said that, however, we must always remember that not all of our 50 ENOCs fall under the EU umbrella, and we cannot fail to consider the needs, viewpoints and ambitions of these NOCs while performing our work.

We have a duty to do what is best for all 50 ENOCs collectively.

**5. Many NOCs in Europe have been closely cooperating with the EOC EU Office for a long time and have appreciated its services and support. How do you see the role of the Office evolving in the next quadrennial?**

The EOC Brussels office should be seen as a platform shared by the NOCs of Europe to help us achieve pan-European goals. Assistance and guidance for the NOCs must be at the heart of its efforts. And new avenues should be explored on the basis of our Strategic Agenda 2030 and what we learn from the NOC consultation, including:

EOC matchmaking, helping the NOCs of Europe with mentorship from each other, and an online platform to help the NOCs of Europe learn from each other's best practices.

**The EOC EU Office is thanking Mr Spyros Capralos for his interview and contribution to the monthly report.**





### EU SPORT POLICY AND FUNDING NEWS

#### Commission holds EU Sport Forum in digital format

From 08-09 June 2021, the European Commission organised the EU Sport Forum in digital format. The EU Sport Forum is one of the most central events of EU sport policy. Last year, the planned Sport Forum 2020 in Zagreb could not take place due to the outbreak of the Corona crisis.

In her opening speech, European Commissioner Mariya Gabriel stressed the importance of the European Sport Model with its elements of solidarity, inclusion and cohesion, bringing together professional and grassroots sport.

IOC President Thomas Bach also highlighted the importance of the European Sport Model in overcoming the Covid crisis and stressed that sport will play a role in building a more human-centred society. Other opening speeches were given by MEP Tomasz Frankowski and the Portuguese Minister of Education Tiago Brandão Rodrigues.

Afterwards, three discussion panels were scheduled on the first day, each of which opened with a keynote speech.

In the panel "How can sport be environmentally friendly?", Hans Bruyninckx, Executive Director of the European Environment Agency, highlighted the enormous climate challenges that all sport stakeholders will increasingly face in the future. Rising temperatures, extreme weather events, droughts and floods will have a direct impact on sports infrastructures and the organisability of sports events. He therefore called on sports stakeholders to acknowledge their responsibility and to actively pursue holistic approaches to environmental protection in and through sport.

In the panel "Ready, steady, go. Off the blocks for a new start!", the then acting EOC President Niels Nygaard addressed the Covid-related challenges in competitive and amateur sport.

For example, the summer and winter European Youth Olympic Festivals (EYOF) in Banská Bystrica, Slovakia and Vuokatti, Finland had to be postponed. Nygaard called for the support of athletes, clubs and federations for a successful new start.

In the last panel of the day, "The impact of Covid-19 on coaches and athletes: challenges and lessons learnt", table tennis player Britt Eerland shared her personal experience of dealing with the Corona crisis.

On the second day, Commissioner Gabriel presented in the panel "A healthy lifestyle for all - teaming up to achieve it!" key points of the planned EU initiative under the same name, HealthyLifestyle4all. The two-year initiative will take a holistic approach to combine aspects of physical activity, nutrition and health. The initiative will be launched in September during the European Week of Sport.

In the final panel #BeEqual: How to move towards more gender balance in the sport sector?, Jean Garcia from European Athletics presented the federation's activities for more gender equality. For example, all disciplines are available for both men and women. However, it is difficult to bind female coaches and judges in particular to functions in athletics.

Overall, the Sport Forum succeeded in being a platform for the exchange of opinions. However, no concrete next steps and measures were discussed or derived.

#### FURTHER INFORMATION

[Website EU Sport Forum 2021](#)



### Portuguese Presidency brings together stakeholders to promote sport innovation

A few weeks before handing over the rotating Presidency of the Council of the EU to Slovenia, Portugal organised a [two-day Seminar](#) on “Sport innovation: beyond usual business”.

Participants included representatives of the Portuguese presidency and other European governments, the European Commission and the Council of Europe, the Olympic Movement, the civil society, the sports industry, sports organisations, athletes and academics.

Together, they discussed the importance of innovation for the sport sector but also the challenges it represents. Speakers were able to share some of the good practices that are already in place and to propose their recommendations for innovation to be best employed in sport. The topic of EU programmes and how to make the best use of the available funds to support sport innovation was also high on the agenda, with project coordinators explaining what they have done in the field.

An important discussion on innovation and integrity in sport was held, with the Olympic Committee of Portugal, the National Anti-Doping Authority of Portugal (ADoP), the French Games national authority (ANJ), FIFA, Sport Integrity Global Alliance (SIGA) and the Council of Europe Secretariat of the Saint-Denis Convention, each of them detailing some good practices or projects to support a zero-tolerance sport sector.

The [Lisbon Call on Sport Innovation](#) was launched on 16 June and stakeholders were invited to join this initiative that seeks to support the sport sector in applying the European Digital Strategy and the European Green Deal by mainstreaming sport innovation and fostering research and knowledge. Sport organisations, research institutes, companies and individuals wishing to engage in innovation for sport are welcome.

The Seminar comes after the approval of [conclusions on sport innovation](#) by the Council in May, inviting stakeholders of the sport sector and Member States to promote research and innovation for sport and provide tools for better policy development and sport innovation benchmarking.

With these initiatives, the Portuguese presidency is hopeful that it will leave an important legacy in terms of innovation and that the upcoming Slovenian and French presidency will pick it up for a better sport and society.

#### FURTHER INFORMATION

[The Portuguese Presidency of the Council of the European Union \(EU\)](#)

[Sport – Portuguese Presidency of the European Union](#)



### Conference on Sport Diplomacy organised by the Portuguese Presidency

On 3 to 4 June 2021, the [Portuguese Presidency of the Council of the European Union](#) hosted the [Conference on Sport Diplomacy](#) and attracted representatives of the Member States, experts and key players in the field of sport diplomacy in Lisbon and online.

Sport Diplomacy has been one of the [sport-related priorities](#) of the [Portuguese Presidency](#) that aimed to enhance the European Union's economic, diplomatic, political and social relations with third countries, with the role of sport as a framework for the 2030 Agenda. The conference was a continuation of the debate in the [Council of the European Union on 18 May 2021](#). There the representatives of the Member States had [expressed their approval](#) for a European sport diplomacy strategy and that the cultural and educational diplomacy could serve as a blueprint for the European sport diplomacy strategy.

Within the opening session of the conference, the Portuguese Minister of Education Tiago BrandãoRodrigues highlighted the “power of sport as a universal language to build bridges between people and cultures” and Thomas Bach, President of the International Olympic Committee, as representative of the sports movement stressed sports ability to “promote values, peace and human rights even in situations that lack political agreement”. He further emphasised that as long as the relationship with politics is based on solid principles “the Olympic ideal is intrinsically linked to the values of the EU”.

The objectives of the conference were to give an overview of the scope of sport diplomacy, which, in a modern understanding, can be defined as regular and strategic use of sport to achieve external relations objectives and explore the potential design of a European sport diplomacy strategy.

Therefore, the participants discussed the role of sport in the context of the EU's external relations, promoting European values, human rights, peace, and contributing to human development, breaking down cultural barriers and promoting the cross-sectoral dimension of sport during the two days.

A main part of the discussions was concerning how a European sport diplomacy could look like. Hence, approaches ranging from grassroots sport diplomacy to a focus on elite sport with athletes as ambassadors and strategic hosting of major sporting events in European countries to promote human rights and European values were explored. Albrecht Sonntag, Professor of European Studies ESSC School of Management, pointed out that the Council Conclusions, the EU Work Plan on Sport, the profound coherence of sporting values and the values of the EU, as well as the EU's increased focus on external relations through the Erasmus+ programme, can be regarded as assets in the development of a European sport diplomacy. Even though Stuart Murray, Associate Professor Bond University, highlighted the potential difficulties in trying to find consensus among the 27 Member States, he also acknowledged the potential of the recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic and the re-start of sports to systematically engage in the design of a European sport diplomacy.

The next steps ought to include the further mainstreaming of sport with systematic actions and institutionalised frameworks. In general, sport diplomacy in the context of EU external relations is still a young topic but with a lot of potential for the future.

#### FURTHER INFORMATION

[Programme: Conference on Sport Diplomacy](#)

[Conference Presentation](#)

[Priorities of the Portuguese Presidency](#)



### Expert Group on the Recovery of the Sport Sector from COVID-19 meets for the 2nd time

With the presence of EU Member States representatives (members) and sport stakeholders (observers) the second meeting of the European Commission's Expert Group "Strengthening the recovery and the crisis resilience of the sport sector during and in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic" took place on 14 June. First part of the meeting was open both for members and observers and it included a tour de table among the sport stakeholders to address the key challenges of the sport movement during the pandemic.

Deputy Director of the EOC EU Office, Heidi Pekkola, gave an introduction to the topic with a presentation on the "Position paper on the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on the sport sector" that the EOC EU Office coordinated last year together with the SHARE initiative. In addition, she raised some current challenges that the sport movement is facing in her presentation, e.g.:

- Decrease in memberships of sport clubs at the grassroots level
- Reopening of sport competitions and facilities
- Lack of physical activity and its consequences for physical and mental health.

To address these topics coordination between Member States to tackle the pandemic, as well as mutual recognition of tests and the implementation of the EU Digital Covid-19 Certificate would be important.

Furthermore, she raised the EU funding programmes, i.e. structural funds as well as the Recovery and Resilience Facility and urged the Member States to be active to seize the opportunity to get funding for sport sector from these schemes.

Many of the other observers, varying from sport federations to Council of Europe and from fitness sector to sport good industry echoed same challenges and requests.

The objectives of the Expert Group are 1) to analyse the situation by exchanging information, identifying main challenges and discussing recommendations for recovery and 2) to exchange best practices. The plan of the Group is to work on two deliverables: I. A document outlining recommendations for the recovery of the sport sector and II. A guidance document on the inclusion of sport and physical activity into strategy processes, in particular National Recovery and Resilience Plans, Partnership Agreements and Programmes in the context of EU Cohesion Policy funds.

EOC EU Office will continue to participate in the meetings of the Group and actively contribute in the discussions.

#### FURTHER INFORMATION

[Adopted text of the resolution](#)



### “Green sport” remains high on EU’s agenda

The month of June has been full of events and EU-related developments, which have contributed to further anchoring the topics of sustainability, “green sport” and climate change high on the political agenda of both the EU and the Olympic movement, as demonstrated by the first IOC-EOC EU Office webinar dedicated to climate action (see page 16).

Indeed, EU sport policy developments did not shy away from the topic of green sport either this month; quite on the contrary. The first panel discussion of the annual [EU Sport Forum](#) was dedicated to debating ways of “how sport can be environmentally friendly.” Opened by Hans Bruyninckx, Executive Director of the European Environment Agency, the panellists raised topics of environmental management of sport events, sustainability as part of sport organisations’ governance, or the need for (more) collaboration between and beyond sport organisations (more information on 16).

On 18 June, members of the European Commission Expert Group on Green Sport gathered online for their second meeting; this time in active presence of sport movement observers, including representatives of the EOC EU Office, FIFA or UN Climate Change. The first part of the meeting was dedicated to a debate with Hans Bruyninckx following his presentation about the relationship between sport and climate change. The main aim of the meeting, though, was to discuss the form and content of the future “Recommendations for a common framework for sustainable sport”. Even though the structure of the document still needs to be refined, the main areas covered should be: sustainable sport infrastructure, sustainable sport events, innovative cross-sectorial solutions, education and promotion of sustainable sport practices, and sport movement’s contribution to the European Climate Pact. The topics of capacity building and biodiversity should be present throughout the document as transversal priorities. The work on each topic will be organised in smaller sub-groups to which both members and observers were invited.

Moving from sport-specific, to general-level developments, the European Commission organised two events with a general relevance to sport. The traditional annual EU-wide event dedicated to environmental topics - [European Green Week](#) - took place at the beginning of June. Focusing on “Zero Pollution for Healthier People and Planet”, the week-long event featured a variety of speeches, debates and panel discussion, including the “[Cleaner Air, Better Game](#)” high-level panel organised by UEFA, in presence of its president, Aleksander Čeferin and European Commission Vice-President Frans Timmermans.

The end of the month saw the European Commission taking another step towards the full operationalisation of the European Climate Pact with a one-day digital event “[Climate Pact Day of Action](#),” which took place on 29 June. From individuals to companies, all stakeholders were invited to take part in the Pact and to commit to taking concrete actions. Following a similar format to the Conference on the Future of Europe, a [digital platform](#) where everyone can exchange, share experiences, register a satellite event, and make concrete [pledges](#) was launched by the Pact. Also, individuals were invited to [become ‘Ambassadors’](#), and inform, inspire and support climate action in their communities and networks. The event gathered politicians, policymakers, celebrities, ambassadors, country coordinators, and “ordinary” citizens of Europe ‘around the table’ in order for them to exchange on how to move the Climate Pact forward.

Finally, the European Climate Law - which transforms the EU’s political commitments to climate neutrality by 2050 and to 55% greenhouse gases reduction by 2030 into “hard legislation” - is nearing its entry into force. At the end of June, both the [European Parliament](#) and the [Council of the EU](#) adopted the compromise document, which will now be signed and published in the Official Journal before entering into force 20 days later. In the meantime, the Commission will present a series of proposals “[Fit for 55](#)” which should help the EU reach its 2030 targets.



Even though the sport sector may not feel the immediate effects of the implementation of the Climate Law, the significant changes EU Members States will need to make to transition to a low-carbon economy in the next 10 years to jointly achieve the 55% reduction target will have a significant impact on all economic and societal sectors, including sports.

### FURTHER INFORMATION

[European Green Deal](#)

[Video on the Climate Pact](#)

[Replay of the Climate Pact Day event](#)

### EU's external relations funding and sport

On 14 June, the EU institutions have officially adopted the [Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument \(NDICI\) – Global Europe Programme](#), which applies retroactively as of 1 January 2021. With a total budget of nearly EUR 80 billion, the Programme, which brings together a number of previously separate geographic and thematic funding instruments targeting countries and regions outside EU's borders, fully recognises the role of sport in international relations and development cooperation. It does so in a way that it is considerably more practical and visible compared to its predecessors.

Sport has been fully integrated in the so-called “areas of intervention” – both geographic and thematic – which specify what kind of activities and initiatives may be supported by the Programme. In concrete terms, geographical sub-programmes (e.g. European Neighbourhood Policy region) may „support actions and promote cooperation in the area of sport to contribute to the empowerment of women, young people, individuals and communities as well as to the health, education and social inclusion objectives of the 2030 Agenda.” Furthermore, next to facilitating the use of sport as an instrument of development cooperation, Global Europe's thematic sub-programmes (e.g. peace, global challenges etc.) will be able to support “cooperation and partnerships among sport organisations”.

Since 2018, the EOC EU Office has been actively advocating for a better inclusion of sport in the new EU's external funding programmes and is therefore delighted to see that the articles

which we had proposed to the EU's co-legislators, were retained in the final version of the regulation.

Multiannual programming documents, which are to specify the concrete support areas per country/region/thematic area, are currently being finalised. The EOC EU Office invites the concerned National Olympic Committees and other sport organisations to collaborate with the EU Delegations in their respective countries and inquire about the position of sport in the programming documents relevant to their countries.

The Instrument for pre-Accession Assistance (IPA III), the only other EU's external affairs programme, is waiting for its final approval. The European Parliament and the Council of the EU's negotiators have reached a [political agreement](#) on both the content and the final budget (EUR 14 billion), which will support candidate countries and potential candidates on their path towards fulfilling the EU accession criteria. This political agreement will now be translated into a legal text, before the two institutions launch the confirmation process to adopt it formally (autumn 2021). It remains to be seen whether sport will be featured in the final text of the Regulation.

### FURTHER INFORMATION

[Global Europe - Fact Sheet](#)

[IPA III – Factsheet](#)



### The European Parliament launches a new evaluation phase of EU sport policy

Five years after its last report on EU sport policy, the European Parliament is taking stock on progress made and the way forward in the sector. In this regard, a study was published by the Committee on Culture and Education (CULT) on [EU sports policy: assessment and possible ways forward](#), and the same Committee is currently drafting an initiative report on the matter.

The study, conducted by the German Sport University of Cologne, is based on the analysis of European sports policy documents and on the participation of around 200 stakeholders, including EU representatives, NOCs, national sport organisations, members of ENGSO, the European Network of Sport Education (ENSE), the European Physical Education Association (EUPEA) and academics.

On that basis, the authors outlined a set of recommendations. Regarding the EU institutions, the study concludes that more cooperation between EU institutions and increasing the role of the European Parliament in sport policy are needed, as well as mainstreaming sport in other fields. Some of the recommendations are particularly relevant for the sport movement, such as the proposal to improve the cooperation with sporting organisations, to support more the organised sport to secure certain principles (uniform competitions, solidarity and values-based sports system), or to include a call for projects on the impact of climate change on sport in the next Erasmus+ call. The EOC EU Office was consulted for feedback and is satisfied to see that most of our comments have been taken into account before publication. The study now recommends a constructive approach for relations with the European Parliament to act as a platform for exchange, and our suggestions to mention some key topics such as sustainability and gender equality and the mainstreaming of sports into other fields were included.

The initiative report, which will be based on the study, is an important opportunity for the Sports movement to put our interests into paper. The EOC EU Office was invited to take part in the stakeholder consultation organised by the rapporteur of the report, MEP Tomasz Frankowski, on 29 June and took this opportunity to highlight the priorities of the Olympic movement such as safeguarding the European Sport Model, the recovery and resilience of the sport movement (including grassroots sports) and a full access of sport in the implementation of the Structural Funds.

The draft of the report should be finalised by the summer break and the tabling of amendments will be open until early September, before a vote by the committee and the plenary in Autumn.

Our team will continue to monitor the drafting of the report and will ensure that the priorities of the Olympic movement are taken into account.

#### FURTHER INFORMATION

[Legislative Observatory on the CULT report](#)





### PARTNERS' CORNER

#### The EOC EU Office held its Annual Partner Meeting online

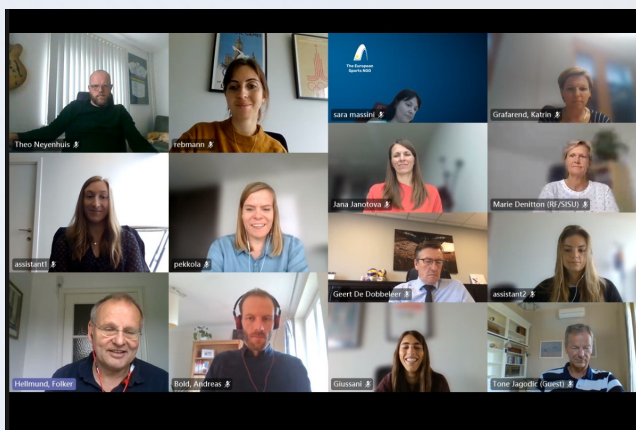
On 24 June, the EOC EU Office held its Annual Partner Meeting online. After a short introduction delivered by Folker Hellmund, Director of the EOC EU Office, the new staff members of the EOC EU Office were introduced to the partners: Eva Rebmann, Policy Officer, and Carlotta Giussani, Funding Officer. Valentin Capelli, former Policy Officer at the EOC EU Office, joined the meeting to say its final goodbyes to the partners, and offered a handover to Eva Rebmann, who will take over its missions.

During the Q&A session, Yves Le Lostecque Head of Erasmus Mundus & Sport Unit - EACEA, mentioned the outstanding number of applications received by the European Commission for the Erasmus+ Programme - a number that has tripled over the past three years. 1298 applications for the Erasmus+ Sport Call were submitted in 2021, against 543 in 2018. This increase shows to the European Commission the growing interest for sport projects. Unfortunately, less applications for the Pilot Project and the call for Preparatory Actions were submitted this year, and this could probably be explained by the fact that all deadlines were due to the same week.

Carlotta Giussani elaborated on the project applications submitted by the EOC EU Office, as well as on the observations made on the new application forms and processes - 2021 being the first year of the new funding cycle 2021 - 2027. The EOC EU Office observed that the different existing application forms could mislead the applicants when submitting their projects to the different call-for-proposals. Also, a clarification on the required annexes and an access to all the key-word definitions, such as 'milestones', 'indicators', 'deliverables', 'outside resources' (...), could help sport organisations in their application process.

Furthermore, updates on the several topics were delivered. Among them, the achievements under the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF), that come after long years of negotiations led by the EOC EU Office for the mainstreaming of sport through different funding programmes: Erasmus+, ERDF, ESF+, EU4Health, Global Europe (NDICI), national Resilience and Recovery Facility (RFF) plans.

Then, the handover of the rotating Presidency of the Council of the European Union, made between Portugal and Slovenia, was mentioned in the light of the Slovenian programme. The EOC EU Office supports the Slovenian Presidency's intention to prepare a Council Resolution on the European model of sport and to focus on the impact of closed sports competitions on the organised sport system. If the European model of sport was recently recognised by several European institutions, e.g. the Council of Europe recognises the 'common feature of a European sport framework and its organisations as understood by the sport movement as the European Sport Model (...)' through its European Sport Charter (Art.2.2.).





Also, an update on the report ‘EU sports policy:” Assessment and possible ways forward’, recently published by the European Parliament, was presented to the partners, with a focus on the work realized by the EOC EU Office to introduce recommendations promoting:

- a more constructive European Parliament approach to increase its role in cooperating with other committees and sport organisations,
- the mainstreaming of sports policy into other fields,
- and the recognition of sustainability and gender equality as highly important topics.

To finish with, the EOC EU Office took part as an observer in the two Expert Groups on Green Sport, and on the recovery from the COVID-19, as well as in the High-Level Group on Gender Equality. By May 2023, the Expert Group on Green Sport should issue recommendations on a common framework for sustainable sport, and

the other Expert Group plans on issuing by June 2023 a document outlining possible recommendations for the recovery of the sport sector, as well as a guidance document on the inclusion of sport and physical activity into strategy processes regarding EU funding. Regarding Gender Equality, the EOC EU Office participates as an observer in the High-Level Group that will issue a proposal for Strategic Actions on gender equality in Sport (2014-2020) by the end of the year.

The EOC EU Office would like to express its sincere thanks for the attendance in the partner meeting and invite all partners to take part in a survey that will be sent to the partners very soon in order to ensure that the services of the EOC EU Office remain targeted and tailor-made for the partners' needs.

### The EOC EU Office and the IOC launch a series of webinars on the Olympic movement and climate action

On 29 June, the EOC EU Office and the International Olympic Committee (IOC) opened a series of webinars on the Olympic movement and climate action. More than 50 representatives from more than 30 sport organisations across Europe, including National Olympic Committees and European and international federations, participated in the first webinar.

The main aim of the webinar series is to motivate Olympic movement organisations in Europe to become active in climate action, and to present and discuss concrete ways forward. The first webinar was conceived as an introduction to the topic, where the “why’s” of climate action, inducing the activities and expectations of the International Olympic Committee, were discussed, and where the intersection between the Olympic movement’s goals and activities and those of the European Green Deal were explored.

In opening the webinar, European Olympic Committee’s President, Spyros Capralos reminded participants that the Olympic

Movement has a responsibility to adapt to climate change, as reflected in the Olympic Agenda 2020+5. All actors are expected to go forward and cooperation will be key, the President said. Julie Duffus, Sustainability Senior Manager at the IOC, added that sport organisations should “be a team in fighting climate change”, complemented by Folker Hellmund, Director of the EOC EU Office, who called for proactivity and cooperation on the matter.

Participants learnt about the relationship between sport and climate change, explored the IOC’s climate change activities and their link to NOCs, and uncovered the EU’s dimension of climate action while learning why it is relevant for sport and what opportunities it may bring.

On the IOC side, Jeremy Mathieu, Sustainability Adviser, gave an alarming overview of how climate change impacts sport and referred in particular to damage to playing surfaces and infrastructure, lack of natural snow and hire risks of cancellation of sports events, and stated that, being at the heart of society, sport has a great chance to lead the change.



Julie Duffus spoke about the role of the Olympic movement and introduced several initiatives taken by the IOC such as the IOC Sustainability Strategy (as part of the UN Sports for Climate Action Framework), and the Olympic Forest project. Importantly, she reminded the audience that the IOC and the EOC EU Office are here to provide support and facilitate cooperation.

Jana Janotova, from the EOC EU Office, gave a thorough overview of existing and upcoming EU legislation, notably on renewable energy, transport, circular economy, land use and explained how related to these texts sport organisations are. Like any other sector, sport is affected by climate change and will not escape from the green transition, and opportunities for sport organisations to lead the change do exist.

Participants were then invited to answer a series of questions on the impact of climate on their sport and activities, the demands for climate action arising from stakeholders, and the needs to take further action in climate.

The answers translated a clear interest to move forward and future webinars will continue to accompany our partners.

In the autumn, the IOC-EOC EU Office series will continue with webinars on topics of high relevance to the operations of Olympic movement organisations such as “how to measure organisation’s carbon footprint”, or “how to optimise travel and sourcing to decrease organisation’s impact on climate”. By then, the IOC and EOC EU Office remain available for any questions or remarks on the way forward regarding those webinars.

### FURTHER INFORMATION

[The European Green Deal](#)

[The IOC’s Sustainability Essentials](#)

## Welcome to Eva Rebmann, our new EU Policy Officer, and farewell to Valentin Capelli



We are pleased to welcome Eva Rebmann as our new EU Policy Officer and team member.

Eva is replacing our former colleague Valentin Capelli who has left the EOC EU Office

after more than 6 years. Valentin remains in sport after having accepted a job offer by the European office of WADA in Lausanne.

Eva has obtained a Master’s degree in European and Franco-German relations at Science Po in Strasbourg and gained professional expertise in Brussels as an EU Affairs Adviser at Euros/Agency. This position enabled her to gain a solid understanding and on-the-ground experience of how the EU institutions work and she has also monitored EU policies related to sports but also to climate, circular economy, digital and health.

Eva will in particular contribute to advocate the interests of the organised sport movement to EU institutions, including interaction with Members of the European Parliament, Member States representatives, and relevant European Commission Directorates General.



We are looking forward to start working with Eva and, of course, we would like to warmly thank Valentin Capelli who has brought a great value to the team and the activities of the office during his six years with us. With him we are losing an expert for

governance and integrity and a great colleague. We wish him a long and successful career at WADA!



### UPCOMING EVENTS

**22 - 23 September 2021**

Sport Directors Meeting (Council of the EU)

**23 -30 September 2021**

European Week of Sport (European Commission - EU).





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