



European Union and Sport

European Sport Ministers adopt Work Plan 2014-17	2
European Parliament election results May 2014	2
State aid: New General Block Exemption Regulation enters into force 1 July 2014	4
ICSS Study on Match Fixing	5

Funding programmes, studies and projects

Programme guide for Europe for Citizens and call for proposal postponed	6
--	----------

Internal and visits

35th EOC Seminar / IOC Olympic Solidarity Forum	6
22nd ENGSO General Assembly takes place in Nice	7
Dates in June	8



European Union and Sport

European Sport Ministers adopt Work Plan 2014-17

In the course of the formal Sport Minister Council the new Work Plan 2014 -2017 was adopted by the Ministers on 21 May.

Compared to the previous work plan 2011-14, the Work Plan was modified in the field of Anti-Doping. This topic will only be discussed in the format of the Sport Directors and no longer a separate expert group.

Consequently the number of Expert Groups will be reduced from six to five:

- Expert Group on Match-fixing
- Expert Group on Good Governance
- Expert Group on the Economic Dimension
- Expert Group on HEPA (Health enhancing physical activity)
- Expert Group on Human Resource Management in Sport (incl. Dual Career)

The concrete topics of the Work Plan range from recommendations on the sustainable

financing of sport to the exchange of best practices in the fight against match-fixing. Other topics are related to volunteering in sport and on the inclusion of sport qualifications in National Qualification Frameworks (NQF) and the European Qualification Framework (EQF).

The main focus of the Expert Group on Good Governance is related to major sport events. Apart from legacy aspects, issues of human rights and awarding criteria will be on the agenda. These topics are already part of the ongoing discussions on the Olympic Agenda 2020 launched by IOC President Bach.

Unfortunately the format of Structured Dialogue meetings between the Member States and organised Sport remains unchanged. In this regard the expectations of sport organisations on more targeted meetings with less sport actors involved have not been fulfilled.

Further information:
[Work Plan 2014-2017](#)

European Parliament election results May 2014

From 22-25 May 2014, elections for the new term of the European Parliament took place in all EU Member States. It was the 8th parliamentary election since the first direct elections in 1979, and the first in which the pan-European political groups fielded European candidates (e.g. Schulz, S&D and Juncker, EPP). 751 Members of the European Parliament will represent over 500 million citizens in 28 Member States.

New Political Groups will be formed during the month of June 2014. The first plenary session taking place beginning of July will elect the new President and vice-Presidents of the European Parliament. The European Parliament's Committees will then also be formed and their scope defined. The first Committee meetings will take place in July 2014.



May 2014

Here below is a list of members of the European Parliament that have been active in sport related topics that will leave the EP:

- **Doris Pack** (Germany, EPP) former chair of the CULT Committee and rapporteur of the Erasmus+ report;
- **Hannu Takkula** (Finland, ALDE) CULT committee member, rapporteur for the "Europe for Citizens" 2014-2020 report, active in volunteering, online gambling in the internal market, funding for sport;
- **Jean-Luc Bennahmias** (France, ALDE) co-author of a written declaration on combating corruption in European Sport, questions about Sport and Europe;
- **Sophie Auconie** (France, EPP) chair of the informal EP group "Friends of Sport";
- **Marie-Thérèse Sanchez-Schmid** (France, EPP) CULT Committee member, active in match-fixing and corruption in sport.

Mr. **Jean-Luc Dehaene**, former Belgian EPP representative has passed away last week at the age of 74. He played an active role in sport as the Head of the UEFA Club Financial Control Body, the investigatory chamber of the Financial Fair Play initiative.

The lists of MEPs that were re-elected, as well as **new members** with a potential interest in sport include the following:

- **Antonio Tajani** (Italy, EPP) Vice President of the European Commission, Commissioner for Industry and Entrepreneurship, recently started together with Commissioner Vassiliou an initiative on the promotion of the sport industry in Europe;
- **Viviane Reding** (Luxembourg, EPP) Vice President of the European Commission, Commissioner for

- Justice. As Commissioner for Education and Culture (1999-2004) she already dealt with Sport;
- **Olli Rehn** (Finland, ALDE) Commissioner for Economic and Monetary Affairs and the Euro, former football player in Finland's top division;
- **Sofia Sakorafa** (Greece, GUE/NGL): former world record holder in javelin throw;
- **Theodoros Zagorakis** (Greece, EPP): former captain of the Greek national football team;
- **Santiago Fisas Aixela** (Spain, EPP) rapporteur of the EP report on the "European Dimension of Sport" in 2011;
- **Petra Kammerevert** (Germany, S&D) spokesperson for sport of the German Social Democrats in the EP, active on match fixing and betting, a supporter concerning the sport chapter of Erasmus+;
- **Ismail Ertug** (Germany, S&D) former member of the TRAN committee, the initiator of the EP resolution on Olympic wrestling;
- **Barbara Lochbihler** (Germany, Greens) organised a hearing on the migrant workers situation in Qatar;
- **Ivo Belet** (Belgium, EPP) rapporteur on online gambling report, rapporteur of the Report on the future of professional football in Europe in 2007, actively follows ongoing football state aid cases;
- **Alexander Stubb** (Finland, EPP) ran marathons and triathlons, tweets actively on sport, shows interest in HEPA and physical activity;
- **Emma McClarkin** (United Kingdom, ECR): member of the CULT committee, report on the European dimension in sport, resolution on match-fixing and corruption in sport.



May 2014

The EOC EU Office is looking forward to set up working relationships with the new MEPs and to strengthen the already existing good contacts to the other ones.

Changes in the Commission

The European elections also trigger some changes at the European Commission. Once elected by the European Parliament, the President of the new European Commission 2014-2019 will propose his/her team of Commissioners to the Parliament. The European Parliament's Committees will then organise a hearing for each Commissioner-

candidate responsible for their respective policy areas. Consequently the Commissioner responsible for sport will be interviewed in the CULT-Committee. The European Parliament then has to vote on the approval of the Commission as a whole. Following its appointment, the new Commission will take office, most likely in November 2014, and it will set out both a work programme for 2015 and strategic priorities for its five-year term.

Further information:

[Official website European elections 2014](#)

State aid: New General Block Exemption Regulation enters into force 1 July 2014

On 21 May, the European Commission adopted the revised version of the General Block Exemption Regulation (GBER) for EU State Aid. This Regulation exempts certain categories of state aid from the obligation of prior notification to the European Commission. For the first time, public aid for the construction, renovation or the operational costs of sport infrastructure has been included in the list of exemptions. The Regulation, which is part of the State Aid Modernisation initiative, will enter into force on 1 July 2014.

Criteria for public aid for sport infrastructure

The GBER makes a differentiation between investment aid (for the construction, upgrade or renovation of infrastructure) and operating aid. Sport infrastructure projects for which the investment aid exceeds the threshold of 15 Mio. EUR or for which the total costs are above 50 Mio. EUR fall outside of the scope of the GBER and therefore still need to be notified. Similarly, operating aid

for sport infrastructure amounting to more than 2 Mio. EUR per year will not be exempted from the obligation of prior notification.

In order to make use of the GBER, the public aid for sport infrastructure therefore needs to remain under the thresholds mentioned above and additionally must meet the criteria set out in Article 55. Among the criteria is the requirement that this infrastructure must also be used by other professional or non-professional sport users for at least 20 percent of its time capacity. The public aid must also be granted in a transparent and non-discriminatory way.

Importance for sport

As mentioned above, public aid granted to sport infrastructure projects (such as small stadiums, swimming pools or riding halls) that falls within the scope of the GBER no longer needs to be notified to the European Commission before being implemented. This means that public aid can be granted



May 2014

immediately without the delay of the notification process. Moreover, the public aid for sport infrastructure that remains within the criteria of the GBER will be automatically deemed to be compatible with the EU State Aid rules.

As a result, the amount of sport projects involving public funds that needs to be notified will decrease for 3/4 of today's state aid measures and 2/3 of aid amounts. Furthermore, the block exemption will significantly reduce the administrative

burden and will save time for sport infrastructure projects whilst providing reassurance to project undertakers. Consequently, the GBER will undoubtedly facilitate the planning and implementation of future sport infrastructure projects.

Further information:

[Press release European Commission \(21 May 2014\)](#)

[Full text of the GBER](#)

ICSS Study on Match Fixing

Mid of May 2014 the University of Panthéon-Sorbonne of Paris and the International Centre for Sport Security (ICSS) have commonly published a comprehensive study on "Protecting the Integrity of Sport Competitions". Within two years of research the scientists gathered a comprehensive set of data and analyzed the limitations of the existing instruments to combat match fixing. Furthermore the study underlined the need for better coordination between all relevant stakeholders at national and international level and proposed common principles to be applied in the future.

Following estimations of the authors, more than 80 % of the overall bets worldwide are illegal. The study identified three levels of sport disciplines with different risks of manipulations. Apart from football, especially cricket, tennis, rugby, basketball and baseball belong to the group of most risky sports regarding match fixing.

Not surprisingly the authors found out that out of the existing 8000 betting operators worldwide, roughly 80 % are operating from territories applying low tax rates. Especially tax havens like Gibraltar, Isle of Man or

Antigua are hosting numerous operators. In the European Union only Malta has granted 86 online gambling licenses. Guernsey has granted 59 online gambling licenses.

The payout rates have increased substantially. Twenty years ago the leading Italian Totocalcio operator offered return rates up to 50 %. Due to the low tax rates in the above mentioned territories, today the main online betting operators like Ladbrokes, Unibet or Bwin are offering more than 90 %. The authors estimated that sport bets generate roughly 4 billion € of revenue for States, sports and various general interest causes. Double-digit growth rates of the gambling market are expected for the upcoming years, especially due to the increase of online gambling (at current 30 % of the overall gambling market).

One weakness of the study is unquestionably that most of the figures are only based on estimations without any reference to the origin of the sources.

Further information:

[An executive summary of the Sorbonne-ICSS Integrity Report](#)



Funding programmes, studies and projects

Programme guide for Europe for Citizens and call for proposal postponed

On 6 May 2014 the official programme guide for the "Europe for Citizens Programme 2014-2020" was published in the 23 working languages of the European Union. The documents are now available on the Education, Audiovisual and Culture executive agency website.

Several sport related projects have been financed under the former "Europe for Citizens Programme" for promoting discussion and debate among citizens on different European sporting issues such as doping, violence, future EU competences in sport, sport and cultural diversity.

The new programme offers funding for the following actions: European remembrance, democratic engagement and civic participation.

Project proposals for European remembrance can be submitted until **4 June 2014**, for projects starting up until 31 January 2015.

The Democratic engagement and civic participation includes three types of measures:

- Town-Twinning: the deadline for applications is **4 June 2014** for projects beginning up until 30 September 2015, or **1 September 2014** for the remaining period of 2015;
- Networks of Towns: the deadline application is **4 June 2014** for projects starting up until 30 June 2015, or **1 September 2014** for the remaining period of 2015;
- Civil Society Projects: the deadline for submitting proposals is **1 September 2014**.

The overall budget of the "Europe for Citizens Programme 2014-2020" is 185.4 million EUR.

Further information:

[News on the programme guide and deadline](#)

Internal and visits

35th EOC Seminar / IOC Olympic Solidarity Forum

On 23-24 May 2014, delegates from the 49 National Olympic Committees (NOCs) gathered in Nicosia, Cyprus, for the 35th EOC Seminar and IOC Olympic Solidarity Forum. The Seminar, hosted by the NOC of Cyprus, was officially launched by the President of the Republic of Cyprus, Mr.

Nicos Anastasiades, and by the President of the EOC, Patrick Hickey.

The agenda contained two workshops. The first workshop was dedicated to major sport events: the Youth Olympic Games (YOG) 2014 in Nanjing, the winter edition of the



May 2014

European Youth Olympic Festival 2015 in Vorarlberg/Liechtenstein, the Rio Olympic Games 2016 and the Winter YOG 2016 in Lillehammer. On top of that, extensive updates were provided on the progress for the first European Games in Baku 2015.

A second workshop featured discussions on the autonomy and good governance in the NOCs. This workshop was organised by the IOC Olympic Solidarity. The IOC is organising similar meetings in the four other continents as part of a global consultation process. Pamela Vipond, IOC Deputy Director Olympic Solidarity, and Jerome Poivey gave an update on the future initiatives of the IOC on good governance thereby also referring to the discussions in the framework of the Olympic Agenda 2020. Subsequently, Patrick Hickey gave a key note speech on autonomy and good governance in his new capacity as IOC Special Delegate for Autonomy. He emphasized that autonomy and good governance are closely linked and that implementing good governance principles is worth the effort.

Several NOCs such as the Netherlands and Denmark presented their activities in the field of good governance. The EOC EU Office contributed to the discussions by referring to the outcomes of the "Sport4Good Governance" Project and in particular to the

educational toolkit "your key to good governance".



In addition, Folker Hellmund, Director of the EOC EU Office, provided an update on the activities of the EOC EU Office and on recent events regarding sport & EU. The presentation titled "upcoming chances and challenges" mainly focused on the Erasmus+ Sport Programme and the new Work Plan of the Sport Ministers for the period of 2014-2017. Also Jean-Michel Saive, Chair of the EOC Athletes' Commission referred to the EU activities in sport in his presentation by stating that "the EOC Athletes' Commission needs to be much more present in Brussels if it is to make the voice of Olympic athletes heard as it deserves".

Next year, the EOC Seminar will be hosted by the NOC of Turkey in Antalya.

22nd ENGSO General Assembly takes place in Nice

The 22nd ENGSO General Assembly, hosted by the French Olympic Committee, was organised in Nice on May 16-17. ENGSO Youth Assembly also took place in parallel. Besides approving the annual report of ENGSO and ENGSO Youth, the accounts of 2013 and the budget for 2014, member organisations were given the opportunity to discuss future developments and strategic

choices of ENGSO. This discussion was based on a member survey which was carried out in order to inquire on members' opinions, for example on the key priorities and membership structure of ENGSO.

Prior to the Assembly, an ENGSO EU Seminar was organised in order to update the participants on the European sport policy

May 2014



developments. Speakers included Head of Sport Unit, Yves Le Lostecque, from the EU Commission, who gave an overview on the current EU sport policy matters and Harri Syväsalmi, Chairman of the EPAS Convention Drafting Committee, presenting the background, purpose, and main

objectives of the Convention against the Manipulation of Sports Competitions.

Further information:

[22nd ENGSO General Assembly takes place in Nice France](#)

[ENGSO EU Seminar gives an update on the European Sports Policy Developments](#)

Dates in June 2014

11	Conference on the European Week of Sport, Brussels
12-15	6th IWG World Conference on Women and Sport, Helsinki, Finland
23	Olympic Day
26	Deadline for applications in the Erasmus+ Sport programme

Imprint:
EOC EU Office
52, Avenue de Cortenberg
B-1000 Brussels
Tel. : 0032-2-738 03 20
info@euoffice.eurolympic.org