

EOC

Liaison Office at the European Union



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

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General Policy		3
1st	Regional Policy in the Funding Period 2007–2013	3
Sport		5
News from the Institutions		5
2nd	EU Commission: build on achievements of EYES	5
3rd	EU Commission: consultation procedure on nutrition and exercise	6
Legal Questions		7
4th	Takeover of Reebok by Adidas approved	7
5th	New directive on bathing water quality passed	8
Aid Programmes		9
6th	Call for proposals: Good Practice in the field of youth	9
Miscellaneous		10
7th	Greening the Torino Winter Olympics	10



General Policy

1st Regional Policy in the Funding Period 2007–2013

The new EU funding period begins from 2007 to 2013 in many policy areas.

The budget resources that are to be made available for regional policy (structural fund) have provisionally been estimated at 308 billion (308,000 million) euro. A large part of the funds is to be used for growth and employment. The funding instruments are being simplified and the decisions decentralised even further, i.e. transferred to the member States' area of responsibility.

Three big assistance programmes shape EU regional policy from 2007. 81.9 % of the funds or 252 billion euro are budgeted for the "Convergence" assistance programme, formerly OBJECTIVE 1. 15.7 % or 48 billion euro are to go to the new assistance programme "Regional Competitiveness and Employment" and 2.4 % or 7.5 billion euro to the future assistance programme "European Territorial Cooperation".

The precise distribution of the funds is, however, still undecided. Because of the eastward expansion, EU funding will be lower for the old member States compared to previous assistance periods, as just over half of the funds are to go to the new member States. Thus, the previous determination of eligible regions will no longer exist. Instead, every region can apply for assistance as



long as a programme to increase competitiveness has been submitted.

The Regulation on the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) is one of the legal bases for regional policy 2007–2013. The legislative procedure for this is not yet complete. In cooperation with its partners, the EU Office for German Sports has argued for sport to be taken into account. In its first reading, the European Parliament included sport in the ERDF Regulation. The lobbying activities of the European sports organisations are currently focused on the national ministries responsible for regional policy, which are represented in the Council.



Sport

News from the Institutions

2nd EU Commission: build on achievements of EYES

Following the positive results of the European Year of Education through Sport (EYES 2004), the European Commission has adopted a Communication addressed to the EU organs entitled: “The EU action in the field of Education through Sport: building on EYES 2004 achievements”. Therewith the Commission responds to the obligation to report to the EU institutions on the implementation and the results of the EYES 2004.

Based on an external evaluation of the initiative, the Communication presents the Year’s main achievements together with proposals for follow-up in the field of education through sport.

EYES 2004 was launched to increase awareness on the potential of sport as a tool for education and social inclusion. Political decision makers, teachers, students, managers of sports organisations, young people and deprived social groups were its main targets.

The Commission wants now to build on the achievements and to ensure a follow-up to the EYES 2004. Included in these measures are: increasing the knowledge at EU level of the place of sport, making better use of the possibilities offered by EU programmes, improving recognition of qualifications



and facilitating mobility in sport-related professions and raising awareness of the importance of physical activity in reversing obesity trends.



http://europa.eu.int/comm/sport/index_en.html

3rd EU Commission: consultation procedure on nutrition and exercise

In December 2005 the European Commission used the health problem of obesity as an opportunity to adopt a Green Paper on promoting healthy nutrition and physical exercise and to introduce a public consultation procedure. As part of this procedure, possible actions are to be identified to counter the trend towards obesity. The Green Paper also raises the question of the extent to which the promotion of healthier lifestyles can be integrated into other EU policy areas such as, for example, agriculture, packaging regulations, etc. Furthermore, the EU Commission is requesting contributions on the question of how State actions can help to "incorporate" exercise into daily routine. The public consultation will run until 15 March 2006.

It is fair to assume that the trend towards obesity will increase. 27 % of men and 38% of women in the European Union are currently classed as obese. It is estimated that obesity-related diseases account for 7% of total health care costs.

Obesity is a risk factor for many serious diseases. Poor nutrition and lack of



exercise are among the most important causes of avoidable deaths in Europe.

The EU Office for German Sports is preparing a joint statement of the partners for the consultation.



http://europa.eu.int/comm/health/ph_determinants/life_style/nutrition/nutrition_en.htm

Legal Questions

4th Takeover of Reebok by Adidas approved

The European Commission has approved the takeover of the North American sports article manufacturer Reebok International Ltd ("Reebok") by Adidas-Salomon AG ("Adidas") in accordance with the Merger Control Regulation.

The Commission's examination of competition law concerned, above all, the European sports shoe market, on which both Adidas and Reebok have a strong position and the activities of both companies overlap.

However, in the course of their market test, the EU competition authorities determined that, with regard to the brand range, both suppliers serve different segments. In addition, Adidas positions range in the mid to high price segment, while Reebok is more strongly represented in the low to mid price segment.



According to the Commission, there are no grounds indicating that the merged company could raise prices at will, as it is still exposed to tough competition from other suppliers with equally significant shares of the market and popular brands.

5th New directive on bathing water quality passed

Back in October 2002 the European Commission had submitted a proposal for a new directive on bathing water quality, intended to replace or update the old one from 1976. On 17 January the European Parliament ended the discussion process, which had run for more than 3 years, with its final resolution. This followed lengthy negotiations between the Parliament and Council. In the most recent phase, these negotiations in the mediation committee revolved, above all, around the categories for classifying different types of bathing water.

In the meantime, MEPs also proposed including water sports and leisure activities (such as canoeing and windsurfing) in the directive's area of application. The aim of the joint initiatives of various sports organisations was to rule this out. At the end of the day, they have been successful in raising awareness, within the framework of the process, of the interests of those involved in water sports.



Aid Programmes

6th Call for proposals: Good Practice in the field of youth

The European Union has published a call for proposals for the YOUTH programme, Action 5. This call aims at supporting projects which promote an exchange of experience and good practice in the field of youth between the European Union, candidate countries and countries of Africa, the Caribbean, Pacific, Asia and Latin America.

The general objectives of these projects shall be to contribute to the development of youth policies and youth work, and of the voluntary sector, as well as to capacity-building and leadership development for youth organisations/structures in the countries concerned.

In particular, opportunities shall be provided for youth workers and persons responsible for youth organisations to share good practices through activities such as seminars, training courses, study visits and practical training. The objective is to develop sustainable contacts and networks between youth organisations with the aim of continuous sharing of information and experience.

Projects may focus on a wide range of themes, especially cultural diversity and tolerance, youth participation and information, promotion and recognition of non-formal learning and innovation in youth work.



Applications have to be presented until 30 June, 2006. The projects must start between 1 November 2006 and 31 December 2006 and last between 6 and 12 months.



http://europa.eu.int/comm/youth/call/eac4705/index_en.html

Miscellaneous

7th Greening the Torino Winter Olympics

The upcoming 20th Winter Olympics and Paralympics in Torino in February and March will be the first ever truly “green” major sports events in Europe. Both events will achieve this goal by making good use of EU voluntary environmental tools. At a press conference, Environment Commissioner Stavros Dimas congratulated the representatives of the Torino Winter Olympics Organising Committee (TOROC) for rigorously applying these EU standards and tools from the planning to the execution of work at the Olympic sites.

Although they only last a few weeks, one-off sports events such as the Olympic Games require several years of large scale developments in terms of infrastructure, facilities and accommodation. They draw intensively upon natural resources such as water, air and soil and can leave behind them a mixed environmental legacy for the region concerned.

For these reasons, the Torino Olympic organising committee decided to adopt



a life-cycle approach to the Games, taking into account the existing EU voluntary environmental tools and standards from the very outset. These include the health and safety of workers, the management of waste, the rational use of energy and the sustainable use of the facilities after the Games. With the Torino Olympic Games, EU voluntary environmental tools have, for the first time, proved to be operational for large events.