

EOC

Liaison Office at the European Union



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

December 2005



General Policy	3
1st Revision of the EU Television Directive	3
2nd Active integration of people with disabilities	5
Sport	6
News from the Institutions	6
3rd European Parliament: Olympic Truce 2006	6
4th European Parliament: sport and development	7
5th European Parliament: against racism in football	8
Legal Questions	9
6th France must not ban clubs from stock market flotation	9
7th Infront action against Commission successful	10
8th Visa facility for Winter Games in Turin adopted	11
Funding Programmes	12
9th YOUTH: sport culture and snowboard culture	12
Miscellaneous	14
10th Creative competition "EUropäischE VISION" (Your European Vision)	14
Glossary	15



General Policy

1st Revision of the EU Television Directive

In order to keep pace with rapid technological and market developments in the audiovisual sector, the European Commission has tabled a proposal to reform the “Television without Frontiers” directive passed in 1989. The proposal provides for less regulation, greater flexibility and a level playing field. In addition, the Commission wants to replace the numerous individual State regulations on the protection of minors and the prevention of surreptitious advertising with EU-wide, uniform minimum standards.

Also new is the fact that the directive concerns not only conventional television but is to apply to all audiovisual content (Internet, video on demand, etc.).

For television advertising, the Commission recommends cutting red tape, making rules more flexible for new forms of advertising and increasing self-regulation and co-regulation. The Commission proposes retaining the existing restriction of 12 minutes an hour. For the first time, a clear legal framework is to be created for product placement. Accordingly, apart from in the news, current affairs programmes and children’s programmes, so-called ‘product placement’ would be allowed in future but consumers must be advised of its presence at the start of a programme.



From the point of view of sports, this results in definite points of contact with the television directive. For one thing, it creates new marketing options through alternative forms of advertising during the broadcasting of sporting events. One area of conflict arises between the right to news flashes and the exclusive nature of broadcasting rights. Another crossover point consists of the lists of “socially significant events” (a higher percentage of which are sporting events) drawn up by the Member States, which have to be broadcast on free TV.



“Product Placement“



2nd Active integration of people with disabilities

The European Commission is planning concrete measures aimed at making life easier for people with disabilities in the European Union. These include, among other things, ensuring greater awareness among small and medium-sized enterprises about “disability“, the use of the European Social Fund to finance training for people with disabilities in the workplace and promoting the concept of independent living. These measures were outlined on 3 December at a conference on the European Day of People with Disabilities in Brussels.

On this occasion, the annual conference – whose participants include representatives of the high-level EU group “Disability Issues“, heads of non-governmental organisations (including the European Disability Foundation) and representatives of the European Parliament and European Commission – dealt with the subject of “Living together in society“. The main emphasis was on the “active integration“ of people with disabilities. Top priorities included raising the employment and earnings quota for people with disabilities.



http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/emplweb/news/news_en.cfm?id=96



Sport

News from the Institutions

3rd European Parliament: Olympic Truce 2006

Following a UN resolution of 2003 on the creation of a peaceful world through sport and the Olympic ideals, the European Parliament has published a resolution on Olympic Truce for the Winter Olympics and Paralympics in Turin. The resolution reminds us of the tradition of ancient Greece according to which, during the Olympic Games, all hostile incursions were ceased. Also mentioned is the joint declaration of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), the Organising Committee for the Games in Turin and the Italian authorities on the obligation to observe Olympic peace, security during the Games and a wide-ranging programme of events intended to enable people from all over the world to foster Olympic peace and its values. The European Commission and the European Council are urged to monitor the observance of Olympic Truce and to show a presence at the events in Turin. Over and above that, the Commission is also asked to attach greater importance to the potential of sport in work aimed at development and promoting peace.



http://www.europarl.eu.int/meetdocs/2004_2009/documents/re/578/578924/578924en.pdf



4th European Parliament: sport and development

In a written resolution, the European Parliament is asking the European Commission to support sports-related development programmes and projects by means of a budget line specifically opened for that purpose.

The aim is, among other things, to set up programmes to improve the state of knowledge of PE teachers in the area of “development through sport“ and to draw up a study on the results of projects already carried out in this sphere.

The parliament also advocates the explicit integration of sport and development by the EU member States in their national policies on reducing poverty. In addition, it urges international and national sports institutions and organisations with connections to sport to work out and implement partnership initiatives and development projects that help to achieve the “Millennium Development Goals” at all levels of education.



“Millennium Development Goals”



5th European Parliament: against racism in football

Following incidents in football stadia and riots in Italy, Spain and the Netherlands, a group of MEPs including representatives from all the parties has issued a declaration against fanaticism and racism in football. UEFA and other organisers in Europe are asked to give referees the power to interrupt games or even stop them altogether in the event of serious racist attacks. UEFA, which supports this initiative, is also advised to disqualify from competitions clubs whose fans or players are well known for such offences.



Legal Questions

6th France must not ban clubs from stock market flotation

With regard to the French ban on the stock market flotation of professional sports clubs, the European Commission has addressed a “statement including reasons” to France. In it, it demands that the French government amend the law of 16th July 1984 on the organisation and promotion of physical and sporting activities. This refers, in particular, to Article 13, which prohibits joint-stock companies operating in the field of sport from public trading with their company shares.

According to the Commission, this ban constitutes a restriction of the free movement of capital provided for by Article 56 EC Treaty and this restriction cannot be justified on the grounds of being in the general interest. Although the protection of the shareholder and the promotion of a degree of equal opportunities in sport are undisputed aims of general interest, a complete ban on public trading with shares would be a disproportionate measure.

By way of reminder: In March 2005 France was urged to submit a report on this subject to the European Commission (see Monthly Report March 2005). If the French government fails to comply with the request within two months, the Commission has the option of referring the matter to the European Court of Justice.



7th Infront action against Commission successful

In the first court case, the European Court of Justice has declared null and void the Commission's decision approving the United Kingdom's measures regarding television reporting on events of considerable importance for the British public.

By way of reminder (see Monthly Report July 2005): Kirch Media WM AG, now Infront WM, acquired, by means of contracts with FIFA, the exclusive rights to broadcast the finals of the football world championships 2002 and 2006 for the countries on the Continent, Russia, the former Soviet Republics and Turkey. Only after that did the United Kingdom publish a list referring back to directive 89/552. This list includes the football world championship and was approved by the EU Commission. The directive on TV broadcasting from the year 1989 leaves it to every individual member State to take measures to ensure that events of considerable social importance are shown in a freely accessible television programme. Consequently, the broadcasting rights acquired by Infront became invalid.

In its action against the European Commission, Infront cited four grounds for the action, including an infringement by the Commission against fundamental formalities.



8th Visa facility for Winter Games in Turin adopted

The planned special arrangement to facilitate the visa application and issuing procedure for the 2006 Winter Olympics and Paralympics in Turin (see Monthly Report November 2005) has been adopted.



Funding Programmes

9th YOUTH: sport culture and snowboard culture

In September 2005 the Norwegian Snowboard Federation organised an international contact seminar supported by the EU – funding programme YOUTH, action 5. The mission of the project was to enable an intercultural dialogue of youth interested in snowboarding. Through a get together the participants should experience and share information of different cultures reflected through sport. During two days 25 people (volunteers and staff) from 8 European countries (Bulgaria, Romania, Latvia, Poland, Italy, UK, Czech Republic and Norway) got together. The seminar provided an introduction about the EU programme YOUTH and information about the EU in general with its overall policies and goals. In the further course a presentation about girls and participation in sport regarding challenges and possibilities was held and discussed. Different workshops offered the possibilities for deeper discussions about the different “sport cultures” of the participating countries. A next step was to reflect together how to initiate common projects with more focus on getting to know each other better, to develop cross-boarder friendship and thus also to promote the friendly snowboard culture in Europe. At the end of the seminar all the



participants drew a very positive feedback which was evidenced through the development of 4 new projects drafts for future co-operation.

The total grant provided by the EU was 145.000 NOK (about 17 000 €) from the YOUTH programme.



Miscellaneous

10th Creative competition "EUropäischE VISION" (Your European Vision)

As part of the creative competition "EUropäischE VISION", in the next few months young people are to develop a future vision for Europe. This competition, organised by the EU Commission representation in Germany, is being announced in the twelve venues of the 2006 football world championship. Participants aged from 15 to 21 years are being given the opportunity to present their visions in the form of video clips, radio contributions, Web magazines and photo-stories.

The Commission representation will be visiting these cities together with an information bus of the European Parliament and Federal government between the end of March and June 2006. The winners from each city will be entered into a big "EUropäischE VISION" final. The prize is a trip to Brussels, where the winning teams will discuss their "EUropäischE VISION" with Margot Wallström, European Commission Vice President, and MEPs.

The competition is part of "Plan D", initiated by the EU Commission following the defeat in the referenda on the constitutional treaty in France and the

Netherlands.



<http://www.europaeische-vision.de/>



"Plan D"



Glossary

“Product Placement”: form of promotion of a proprietary article, in which the creative integration of a product (brand) or service is applied by its visual and/or verbal placement in a feature film or any other form of programme. The brand is integrated as a necessary and realistic prop in the plot, while preserving the original essence of the film.

“Millennium Development Goals”: In 2000 the United Nations adopted 8 development goals (Millennium Development Goals – MDG) to mitigate the most serious development problems, on a lasting basis, by 2015.

“Plan D”: The EU Commission Plan for Democracy, Dialogue and Discussion, in which it attempts to expand on its ideas regarding what form the “period of reflection” should take. This period was agreed upon by the EU Heads of State and Government in June 2005 to overcome the EU constitutional crisis. With this, the Commission wants, above all, to contribute to the revival of democracy in Europe and the emergence of a European public.