



European Union and Sport

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European Union and Sport

European Commission/IOC: meeting between Jacques Rogge and Androulla Vassiliou

Androulla Vassiliou, the European Commissioner responsible for sport and Jacques Rogge, President of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), met on June 10, as part of the Commission's 'structured dialogue' with the sport movement. Both stressed the benefits of their excellent cooperation and agreed on the need to continue such exchanges on an annual basis in the future. The IOC President, who was accompanied by Claudia Bokel, Chair of the IOC Athletes' Commission and Patrick Hickey, President of the European Olympic Committees (EOC), described the meeting with Commissioner Vassiliou as *"extremely useful"* and welcomed proposals for further concrete forms of cooperation. He stated that he was confident that his successor would pursue an equally close relationship with the EU and that the Commission could always count on the IOC's support.



Commissioner Vassiliou, on her side, welcomed the launching of an annual dialogue with the IOC, recalling that the Olympic Movement was a *"very valuable partner for the EU."*

The Commissioner and the IOC President discussed the implementation of the current **EU Work Plan for Sport** (2011-2014) and the priorities of the future Work Plan. Patrick Hickey welcomed the successful cooperation with the EU, including the Expert Groups set up as part of the first Work Plan. He also noted that the new funding programme dedicated to sports - a programme included within **"Erasmus +"** - was *"historic."*

IOC President Rogge and Commissioner Vassiliou also exchanged views about the organisation of a **European Week of Sport**, scheduled for 2015, to boost participation in sport at all levels and to encourage people to become more active. Mr Rogge suggested that the event should build on existing initiatives, such as the Olympic Day, celebrated by the Olympic Movement each year on June 23. *"Everything that helps to get people physically active should be supported,"* he commented. Both agreed to work closely together on the initiative and to seek the support and commitment of all relevant stakeholders.

Other topics discussed at the meeting included the athletes' representation and the participation in the EU structured dialogue on sport. Claudia Bokel seized the opportunity to explain the role and activities of the IOC's and other Olympic Movement Athletes' Commissions. The EU's funding of the **European Youth Olympic Festivals**, the **fight against doping, match fixing**, as well as **'dual careers'** - whose aim is to encourage athletes to continue



their education alongside their sporting careers, were also on the agenda.

The Commissioner also informed the President about a proposal for a Council Recommendation on **health-enhancing physical activity** (HEPA), which is due to be unveiled later this year, and invited the

IOC to the **EU Conference on Gender Equality and Sport**, which will take place in Vilnius on December 3-4.

Further information:

[Press release of the European Commission](#)

[Press release of the IOC](#)

European Parliament: IMCO Committee adopts a report on on-line gambling in the internal market

The IMCO Committee of the European Parliament, in charge of the Internal Market, adopted at the end of May a report, coordinated by the MEP Ashley Fox, on online gambling in the Internal Market. This initiative is the political follow-up of the Communication from the European Commission on this topic, published by the European Commissioner Michel Barnier in October 2012.

This is not the first report that the European Parliament has published on online gambling. Two resolutions have been previously adopted in 2009 and 2011.

The consolidated text was released on June 11, 2013. It includes many paragraphs related to sport, contrary to the initial text proposed by the rapporteur Ashley Fox in February 2013.

With 65 paragraphs in total, the report includes several key parts:

- Specific nature of the online gambling sector and consumer protection (paragraphs 1- 27)
- Compliance with EU law (paragraphs 28 - 33)
- Administrative cooperation (paragraphs 34 - 42)
- Money Laundering (paragraphs 43 - 48)
- Integrity of Sport (paragraphs 49 - 63).

Key principles, pushed forward by the sports movement, included in the

section dedicated to the integrity of sport

In this last section, the European Parliament included in paragraph 57 - a fundamental paragraph of the report - many arguments pushed forward by the sports movement:

*"[The European Parliament] recognises that in some Member States gambling revenues and lotteries represent a considerable source of income that can be channelled **to support publicly beneficial and charitable purposes**, cultural works, **grassroots sports** and horseracing and equine sector; underlines, furthermore, **the significance of this sustainable contribution** and specific role that should be acknowledged in discussions at the European level; reaffirms its position that **sports bets are a form of commercial use of sporting competitions**; recommends, while fully respecting the Members States' competence on the issue, that **sporting competitions should be protected from any unauthorised commercial use**, notably by **recognising the property rights of sports event organisers**, not only **in order to secure a fair financial return for the benefit of all levels of professional and amateur sport but also as a means of strengthening the fight against sports fraud, particularly match-fixing**".*

The European Parliament, calling for an expanded cooperation between stakeholders



(paragraph 49), adds other elements in the report. It:

"... calls on Member States and gambling operators to ban all forms of live sports betting since these have proved to be very vulnerable to match-fixing and therefore pose a risk to the integrity of sport" (paragraph 53)

"... calls for an obligation for cooperation and exchange of information on suspicious activities at national as well as European level, among sports bodies, public authorities, Europol and Eurojust, in order to combat criminal cross-border online gambling activities" (paragraph 54)

"... highlights the importance of the support of the European Union to the ongoing work within the Council of Europe towards the negotiation of an international convention on the protection and the promotion of sports integrity" (paragraph 55)

"... considers that a consistent policy on criminal sanctions is essential to a pan-European approach to regulating the online

gambling sector and, to this end, urges the Member States to ensure that the fraudulent manipulation of results for financial or other advantage is prohibited by establishing as a criminal offence any threat to the integrity of competitions, including those linked to betting operations..." (paragraph 56)

"... calls up the [European] Commission to install a European alert system for betting regulators in order rapidly to exchange information about fixed sporting events" (paragraph 60)

The report will be submitted for the final approval of the European Parliament, during the plenary session in September or October 2013, and be established as a resolution. It most probably will be the last initiative of the European Parliament on gambling before the European Parliament's elections in May 2014.

Further information:

[European Parliament – IMCO Committee – Direct access to the report](#)

Council of Europe Convention on the combat against manipulation of sport results: the European Commission joins the on-going drafting process

The Council of Europe currently is drafting an international Convention to combat manipulation of sports results. In November 2012, the European Commission adopted a recommendation, calling on the Member States to participate, on behalf of the EU, in the Convention's negotiations. On June 10, the Council of the EU mandated the European Commission. However, issues related to cooperation in criminal matters and police cooperation are not part of the mandate and still remain under discussions in the Council of the EU.

The European Commission has considered that it should participate in the negotiations because the future Convention of the Council

of Europe will deal with issues discussed at EU-level, such as the promotion of integrity in sport, data protection, match-fixing or sports betting.

The Sports Unit of the European Commission (DG EAC) is in charge of representing the institution regarding this matter. In addition, it will cooperate with other Directorates-General concerned with the on-going negotiations (notably DGs MARKT, JUST and HOME) in order to ensure a harmonized position among them. The Sports Unit attended the drafting Group of the Convention for the first time on June 13-15.



The international Convention to combat manipulation of sports results should be entirely drafted by the end of 2014, and submitted to States' ratification in 2015.

Further information:

[Press release of the Sport Unit \(European Commission\)](#)

[Press release of the Council of the EU](#)

Meeting of the Council Expert Group on Education and Training in Sport

On June 27, the Council Expert Group on Education and Training in Sport (XG ETS) met in Helsinki, Finland. The EOC EU Office attended this meeting as one of the observers. The main topics on the agenda were:

- The presentation of the mid-term draft report on developments regarding sport qualifications in the NQF
- The future EU level policy work in the field of sport and education.

Regarding the inclusion of sport qualifications in the NQFs, the experts discussed the mid-term draft report. The report outlines the relevance of transparent qualifications in sport and describes the different education systems existing leading to sport qualifications. It summarizes the state of play of the inclusion of sport qualifications in national qualification frameworks, including international qualifications and proposes further actions by the Member States, in particular the Ministers responsible for sport and by the EU Commission. The final report, being the second deliverable of this Expert Group, will be finalised by mid-2013.

The experts also discussed the future EU level policy work in the field of sport and education (follow-up on the Guidelines on Dual Careers and follow up inclusion sectorial qualifications in sport in NQF). Numerous suggestions were discussed such as:

- The exchange of good practice and experience on dual careers among Member States at local, regional and national level could be supported

through the Sport chapter of the "Erasmus +" programme;

- The possibility of monitoring further developments in the inclusion of sport qualifications in NQFs leading to a final report in 2016;
- The development of a reference framework for a proper proportional quality assurance system for the education and training system of the sport sector;
- The promotion of the cooperation between formal and non-formal education institutions regarding sport qualifications to enhance a cost effective and high quality sport education system.

The list of future activities, which is the third deliverable of this XG, will be finalised by mid-2013. This deliverable should feed in to the new Communication of the Commission to be presented by the end of 2013. This in turn will then contribute to the negotiations on the next Council EU Work Plan on Sport. The new Council EU Work Plan is foreseen to be adopted in May 2014. Additional information was also given on the follow-up of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for Ski instructors, a pilot project for the issuing of professional cards to professional ski instructors. The MoU between nine EU Member States was set-up to substitute and ease complex and detailed national requirements for the recognition of professional ski instructors. The pilot project started September 15, 2012 and will officially end June 30, 2013. As all partners involved gave very positive feedback, it was



unanimously decided to prolong the project for one more year.

These recommendations now need to be followed through in practice. Their effectiveness will be assessed during the

next meeting of the founding working group, which will take place next year.

Further information:

[Website Sport Unit European Commission](#)

EU budget: Parliament accepts negotiated MFF 2014-2020 package

On July 3, The European Parliament has approved the political compromise on the 2014-2020 financial framework during its last plenary session in Strasbourg before the summer break. With the adoption, the Parliament endorsed the outcome of the Trilogue negotiations between the European Commission, the Parliament and the Council on the EU's Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF).

The Parliament succeeded in safeguarding some of its key priorities, which shall ensure that EU funds are put to use where they are most needed:

- The *flexibility of unpaid funds* will allow allocating unused financial means to succeeding years and different categories of expenditure (and not to refund them to national budgets as it was previously the case).
- The *"revision clause"* will allow the future Parliament and Commission to review the functioning of the MFF from 2016 onwards and use respective conclusions for the implementation of the budget in following years. The future duration of the MFF will align with the 5-year political cycles of the EU institutions.
- Prior to the Parliaments agreement on the MFF, the Council repeated its promise of *settling outstanding payments for 2013*.
- Furthermore, the Fund for European Aid to the most deprived will receive an additional billion Euro and thus be

increased to 3.5 billion EUR for 2014-2020; an additional 200 Mio EUR will be allocated to research in 2014-2015 and an additional 150 Mio EUR will increase the budget for the Erasmus Programme in 2014-2015.

- A new programme dedicated to youth employment for the period 2014-2020 was secured. Nevertheless, governments only guaranteed funding for the first two years.

Further procedure

Alain Lamassoure, Chairman of the Parliament's Budgets Committee (BUDG), explains that: *"This agreement on the overall legislative framework allows negotiations to continue in order to clarify the distribution of funds within each policy."* This means that the different responsible Committees can now proceed with finalising the discussions on the different funding programmes. The Committee on Regional Development (REGI) will for instance vote on the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) during its session on Wednesday July 10. They will consider the outcome of the Trilogue negotiations combined with a limited number of additional amendments. Consequently, the European Parliament will, during the plenary session in early autumn, vote on the MFF Regulation and the new Inter-institutional Agreement accompanying it. The Regulations on the different Funding Programmes will also be voted during this plenary session or shortly afterwards.



Sport chapter within the Erasmus Programme

For the first time there will be a sport chapter and budget line within the EU's next Programme for education, training, youth and sport. The name of the overall Programme will be "Erasmus+" instead of the earlier proposed "Erasmus for All". The sport chapter will be purely dedicated to sport and is expected to receive 1.8% of the programme's overall budget. The latest

numbers suggest that a total amount of 238 Mio EUR could be allocated to sport over the seven years funding period.

As mentioned above, the Erasmus+ Programme still needs to be voted during the Parliament's plenary session and approved by the Council.

Further information:

[Parliament accepts deal on long-term budget](#)
[Council press release on MFF agreement](#)

Funding programmes, studies and projects

"Sport for Good Governance" Project successfully concluded



On Tuesday, 25 June the "Sport for Good Governance" Project (S4GG), managed by the EOC EU Office, held its Final

Conference in Brussels, thereby concluding 18 months of intensive work. The Conference was held in the EU Representation of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia.



The agenda of the meeting included very interesting speakers. **Yves Le Lostecque** (picture), the new Head of the Sport Unit of the European Commission, and **Marc Theisen**, member of the Executive Committee of the European Olympic

Committees, were the keynote speakers. Yves Le Lostecque highlighted that it is not

up to the Commission to define a single model of good governance. Marc Theisen pointed out that when it comes to good governance, considerable progress has already been made within the Olympic Movement. He also acknowledged the excellent work of the S4GG Project, praising the applied practical approach not only of assessing but also improving the implementation of good governance principles.

On top of that, two guest speakers provided practical insight on how good governance principles can be implemented: **Georg von Waldenfels**, Board Member of the International Tennis Federation and **Marc Coudron**, President of the Belgian Hockey Federation. Finally, **Darren Bailey**, Chair of the Council Expert Group on Good Governance, presented the work of the Expert Group, highlighting the progress made on the recommendation of principles in good governance.



The different presentations were followed by a panel discussion (*picture*). Besides the guest speakers, the panel included **Gianluca Monte**, Sport Unit of the European Commission, **Niels Nygaard**, President of the NOC of Denmark, and **Thierry Zintz**, Dean at the University of Louvain-la-Neuve. The discussion focussed on the current situation and the future of good governance in sport. Four points of discussion in particular are worthy to note. A first point was the balance between volunteers and professionals within a sport organisation. A second question focused on the approach which is needed to implement good governance, with some panellists putting the responsibility on international federations (top-down approach) and others referring to the crucial role of grassroots sports organisations (bottom-up approach).

A third point was the role of public bodies in good governance in sport. Whereas all panellists agreed that good governance falls within the autonomy of sport, Darren Bailey stressed the fact that sport organisations need to act in order to avoid future

intervention by public authorities, especially where public funding is involved.

The fourth and last point discussed was the financial cost of good governance. Good governance does not cost money, rather it is a way of thinking, a kind of mind-set, and is not an additional burden for sport organisations. Therefore, **Folker Hellmund**, Head of the EOC EU Office, claimed that money is saved when organisations work more efficiently and even attract more sponsors as a result of better governance.

Throughout the panel discussion, it became clear that good governance will remain high on the European agenda: good governance will also be included in the priorities of the sports chapter of the funding programme "Erasmus+".

Besides the many interesting presentations and the discussion panel, Matthias Van Baelen and Michael Trinker presented the project results and explained the Sport 4 Good Governance toolkit.

One of the main outcomes of the project is a toolkit designed to help sport organisations in implementing good governance principles. This toolkit, named "Key to Good Governance", includes a master presentation, implementation examples and a very useful self-assessment tool. This toolkit as well as other information on the project can be found on the project's website.

The EOC EU Office would like to thank all project partners once again for their contribution and active participation during the "Sport for Good Governance" Project.

Further information:

[Project website - Download section](#)



Internal and visits

ENGSO General Assembly Elects a New Secretary General

ENGSO's 21st General Assembly was held in Belgrade, Serbia from June 7-8. The meeting was officially opened by the Serbian Minister of Youth and Sport Alisa Maric at the Palace of Serbia. This year, elections took place for the open positions of ENGSO: the Vice-President, the Secretary General and two Executive Committee members. Predrag Manojlovic from the Serbian Olympic Committee was elected as Vice-President and Helena Carlsson from the Swedish Sports Confederation as Secretary General. Sallie Barker from Sport and Recreational Alliance (UK) and Lotte Büchert from the Danish Olympic Committee were re-elected as ENGSO Executive Committee members.

During the General Assembly information was shared between member organisations and partners of ENGSO. The traditional ENGSO EU Seminar on European sports policy was organised before the General Assembly. In the seminar Pedro Velazquez from the Sport Unit of the European Commission and Ewa Markowicz, Chair of the EPAS Governing Board, updated the delegations of ENGSO members on current European sport policy matters.

Further information:[Article on the General Assembly](#)[Article on EU Seminar](#)

Olympic Athletes Seminar in Brussels

On June 18-19, a group of athletes' representatives from the Olympic Movement, led by IOC Athletes' Commission Chair Claudia Bokel, met in Brussels and spoke to various EU decision-makers who work on relevant topics like the fight against match-fixing and doping, dual career and a sports funding programme.

Michel Barnier, the EU Commissioner for Internal Market and Services, warmly welcomed the athletes' representatives and successful Olympians from the International Olympic Committee (IOC), the European Olympic Committees (EOC) and various National Olympic Committees (NOCs), and explained how his close involvement in the organisation of the 1992 Albertville Olympic Games has influenced his life as a person and a political figure alike.

In his function as an EU Commissioner, he has recently worked towards a

comprehensive European framework for online gambling which highlights the need to safeguard the integrity of sport and prevent match-fixing. Claudia Bokel took the opportunity to explain how the Olympic Movement is educating athletes and their entourage members about the threat of irregular and illegal betting on sport.

The athletes' representatives also visited the European Parliament and spoke to MEPs Doris Pack and Santiago Fisas, respectively Chair and Member of the Culture and Education Committee which deals with sport-related topics. Both have been working recently on shaping a new funding line for sport within the EU budget for 2014-2020, and so were keen to listen to the needs of the athletes in this regard.

June 2013



In other meetings, the athletes' representatives exchanged views with officials of the European Commission

responsible for youth and sport and agreed on a future dialogue with regard to the implementation of the European Guidelines on Dual Career and other topics impacting athletes in Europe.

The stay of the athlete's representatives ended up with an internal discussion on future EU related activities, new ways of information exchange among athletes' representations and regular meetings with EU officials and the EOC EU Office. The visit was organised and coordinated by the EOC EU Office in Brussels.

Further information:

[Olympic Athletes tour Brussels](#)

NOC of Iceland mourns President



On June 20, 2013, the National Olympic and Sports Association of Iceland was informed of the sad news of the sudden and unexpected death of their President, Olafur Rafnsson. He was on a trip to Geneva, Switzerland, to attend the official opening of FIBA's new headquarters. Aged 50, he had been elected President of the Icelandic NOC

in 2006 and had also presided over FIBA Europe since 2010. A lawyer with his own law firm, Olafur was a former basketball player and, as a member of the Haukar team, won the Icelandic Championship in 1988. The EOC EU Office would like to extend their heartfelt condolences to his family as well as the Icelandic NOC. Mr. Rafnsson has built over the years a trustful cooperation with the EOC EU Office. We will treasure the memory of this dynamic Olympic leader, who in January 2012 hosted an EOC Executive Committee meeting in Reykjavik on the occasion of the celebrations of the NOC's 100th anniversary.

Further information:

[Press Release](#)



Dates in July

1	Council Expert Group on Anti-Doping, Brussels
1-2	Council Expert Group on Sport Statistics, Mainz, Germany
4-5	Council Expert Group on Sport, Health and Participation, Lisbon, Portugal
12	Council Working Party on Sport, Brussels
14-19	European Youth Olympic Festival (EYOF), Utrecht, Netherlands
17-18	Council Expert Group on Good Governance, Brussels

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