

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

1st Germany's EU-Presidency online

Germany's EU-Presidency in the first half of 2007 is approaching. The accompanying website www.eu2007.de is online now and provides preliminary information such as a calendar of the meetings. From 1 January 2007 onwards extensive information in German, English and French will be made available.

2nd Eurobarometer on Health, Food and Nutrition

On 9 November the European Commission presented the results of the latest Eurobarometer on Health, Food and Nutrition. The survey, which reveals that 95% of EU citizens agree that obesity is harmful for health, addresses the health and physical characteristics of Europeans, their diet and general eating habits, problems related to being overweight, and their physical activity levels. Most Europeans consider themselves to be in good health, but 38% feel they are overweight. However, most respondents report feeling trapped in a sedentary life that restricts their attempts to lead a healthy lifestyle. Less than 30% of Europeans carry out "intensive" physical activity on a regular basis. Most Europeans feel public authorities should play a stronger role in fighting obesity. The Commission is planning to respond to this call by developing proposals for a European strategy on the issue next year.



Sport

News from the Institutions

3rd EU Conference of Sports Ministers

From 27 to 28 November, an EU Sports Ministers Conference on the White Paper on Sport planned by the European Commission (EC) took place in Brussels.

The EC is pursuing three main aims with the White Paper, which is to be adopted in May 2007: to better anchor sport as an issue, to achieve greater legal security for sports organisations as well as to define more clearly sport's specificities and values.

The EC is enabling stakeholders to make a contribution to the White Paper in the context of consultations. In June and in September 2006, consultation conferences were held on the subjects of the social and economic role of sport and its organisation as well as on governance in sport. A broad online consultation is to be launched at the beginning of 2007.

EU Commissioner Figel' underlined the need to create comparable economic data on sport throughout Europe.

In addition, he considered how sport in Europe could be financed; it is currently funded mainly from lottery income. Figel' suggested finding new strategies to place the financing of sport on a more solid foundation.



The Sport Ministers unanimously welcomed the White Paper on Sport and saw the need to deal with certain economic aspects of sport at European level. The economic “governance” of sports organisations was criticised. Some delegations welcomed the so-called Arnaut Report (Independent Football Review), but the Sports Ministers and the EC also emphasised that the subsidiarity, specificity and autonomy of sport should be respected and protected.

As a representative of the IOC and the EOC, Kai Holm criticised the over-emphasis of commercial aspects. The Arnaut Report did not represent sport as a whole.

Commissioner Figel’ underlined the significance of integrating sport into other areas of EU policy and gave assurances that the EC’s intention with the White Paper was not to regulate more but less. This initiative is intended to be a guideline by means of which sports organisations can make their regulations in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity.



Legal Questions

4th Directive on Services: Second Reading in the European Parliament

At its vote on 15 November, the plenary session of the European Parliament decided upon the Council common position on the Directive on Services with a majority of more than two thirds of deputies without any amendment to the substance. Sport was able to push through its position that lotteries be removed from the directive's area of application.

The version compiled by the European Parliament is now expected to be accepted at the next meeting of the Competitiveness Council on 4 December 2006. The directive can then enter into force at the beginning of 2007 and is to be adopted in national law by 2010.

5th Current situation regarding the "Television without Frontiers" directive

In expectation of the European Parliament's opinion expected to be given a first reading in mid-December, the European Council expressed its view on the general proceedings in drawing up the "Television without Frontiers" directive.

The Member States see four major questions as being of special significance; the directive's area of application, the question of competence, product placement and the quantitative regulation of advertising. The amendment of the draft directive initiated by the European Commission in December 2005



aims to do justice to the important technological and market developments in recent years while maintaining the equality of opportunity in competition between service providers (see monthly report December 2005).

There is an interface between sport and television to the extent that every Member State can draw up lists of “socially significant events” that have to be available to the audience free of charge. Thus, a large number of significant sporting events are protected from restricted television broadcasting. The new directive is also to deal with the problem arising from the broadcasting of sporting and other events via telephone and the Internet.

The upcoming German Presidency of the European Council is organising an informal Council of Ministers in Berlin on this subject in February 2007, so as to take up a joint position in May 2007.



http://ec.europa.eu/comm/avpolicy/reg/twtf/modernisation/proposal_2005/index_en.htm

6th ECJ: Artistic presentations and tax law

The European Court of Justice (ECJ) has recently dealt with a number of cases concerning tax and artistic presentations. Their repercussions could be of significance for the sports sector. All the cases are based on questions arising in Germany.



In the “FKP Scorpio Konzertproduktion” case, for example, the Scorpio company concluded a service contract in 1993 with a Netherlands agency organising events in Germany with American and European artists. The latter company, which does not have a branch in Germany, was subject to a special income tax applying to service-providers not based in Germany. A regulation of this kind is applied by many EU Member States. Independent professional sportsmen and sportswomen (tennis is the most frequent example) are also often affected by this regulation, since they are obliged to pay a percentage of their fee as a direct tax when working outside the Member State in which they have their residence.

The question now arising in this context concerns the different treatment of tax residents and non-resident service-providers, which could involve the risk of discrimination in applying the TEC.

The ECJ has not yet dealt with all the cases conclusively, but found that this different treatment was not necessarily justified. In the specific case of Scorpio, the different methods of taxation are considered to be justified, however.

As soon as the ECJ has reached an overall judgement on the cases referred to above, it will be possible to establish what effect these decisions have on professional sport.



Aid Programms

7th Punctual start for new EU funding programmes

The new EU funding programmes “Youth in Action”, “Lifelong Learning” and “Citizens for Europe”, which will run from 2007 to 2013, will be able to start on time in the new year. The European Commission and the national agencies responsible for programme implementation in Germany are already presenting the new programme structures on their websites and recently have also started providing information on programmes’ guiding principles, submission deadlines for project proposals, application forms and information events being held throughout Germany.

This means that sports organisations, too, are already in a position to compare their own project plans with European partners with the possibilities in the new EU funding programmes. Past experience shows that there are many interfaces between the European Union’s areas of activity and those of sports organisations, particularly relating to the above-mentioned programmes.

The “Youth in Action” programme provides funding for measures in informal education and is targeted at young people between 13 and 30 years of age. Activities such as youth encounters, the European Voluntary Service and youth initiatives receive support. The “Citizens for Europe” programme is open to all age groups and mainly supports projects of civil society at local level, for



example city twinning and civic projects. Sport, too, operates very closely with citizens and it therefore has a great deal of potential in connection with this initiative. Education in and through sport – in this area it is worth taking a look at the new “Lifelong Learning” programme, which covers, among other things, all areas of education, with activities in school, university, vocational and adult education.



http://www.ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/newprog/index_en.html#

<http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/static/index.htm>

8th The European Voluntary Service celebrates 10 years

At the end of November 2006, the European Voluntary Service (EVS) celebrated its 10th anniversary with a birthday party in Brussels. The EVS is the main part of the EU’s YOUTH Activity Programme, which is being re-established for another seven years in 2007.

The European Voluntary Service enables young people to work as volunteers on a project abroad in the public interest that lasts between three weeks and twelve months. Thus, the young people can help to prepare major European events or support social institutions such as kindergartens, youth organisations or sports associations. Since 1996, some 35,000 young people have taken part in the programme, performing unpaid voluntary service in



another country. In the coming funding period, the EVS will be considerably expanded. In addition to the traditional individual projects, there will also be EVS group projects in which up to 100 young voluntary helpers can take part. Major international sports events provide an excellent opportunity to perform voluntary work of this kind.

9th EU MOBYS project – Sport as an initiator of learning motivation

Within the context of the MOBYS (motivation by sports) project funded by the Grundtvig action (adult education in the Socrates programme), the question was examined as to whether sport is a successful initiator of learning motivation among socially disadvantaged adults. A total of 1,000 people aged between 14 and 70 in six European countries (DK, D, I, E, CZ, PL) responded to a questionnaire on the subject of sport and motivation. This was divided into the following three subjects: subjectively experienced social integration, the sporting activity and learning motivation. The correlation between sporting activity and learning motivation was of particular interest. The results of the learning partnership carried out in 2004, which have now been published, clearly show that those who do more sport are more motivated to learn. In addition, the greatest correlation between sporting activities and learning motivation is to be observed in cases of very limited social integration.