

– The House of European Sport –

Tweets of the month



EOC EU Office

@EOCEUOffice 26 January
Attending @sportintergroup
discussions on Third-party
ownership in Europe #TPO

EOC EU Office

@EOCEUOffice 21 January
@EOCEUOffice Director Folker
HELLMUND to report on #EU
activities at first meeting #EOC
Executive Committee of 2016 in
Lausanne @EOCmedia

SIGGS Project

@SIGGS_EU 20 January
Jean-Michel SAIVE, Chair
#EOC Athletes' Commission, to
present "view of the athletes on
good governance" at #SIGGS
Mid-term Conf @EOCmedia

SIGGS Project

@SIGGS_EU 20 January
Getting closer: 2 more weeks to
#SIGGS Mid-term Conference
in Lisbon (3-4 February)
#GoodGovernanceProject

EOC EU Office

@EOCEUOffice 12 January
XG HEPA discussion on
Physical activity surveillance
and coordination of the Council
Recommendation on #HEPA

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EDITORIAL

Dear readers,

There is no doubt about it, at present the European Union finds itself in one of the greatest crisis ever and not everybody in Brussels is convinced that there will be a way out of it. Inadvertently, a number of International Sport Federations are also facing huge challenges, especially regarding their governance and it is hard to estimate to which extent and when substantial changes in this regard will take place.

The EOC EU Office aims to support federations in setting up better governance structures. In the frame of its EU funded project SIGGS, the EOC EU Office and its partners are developing an online tool on Good Governance that enables not only a self-evaluation, but generates road maps and action plans to bring sport federations onto a higher level of governance. The mid-term conference of the project will take place in Lisbon in these days and, apart from NOCs, will gather representatives of international, European and national federations. As IOC President Bach has pointed out on different occasions, “there will be no autonomy of sport without the proof of good governance”.

In the meantime, the new Dutch EU Presidency has published its priorities for sport mid of January. Their focus will be on the topic of major sport events, the hosting of the Sport Forum in The Hague and the organisation of a conference on doping and data protection in June. The EOC EU Office is in close contact with the Presidency and appreciates their pragmatic approach so far.

Other challenges for federations on all levels are related to the application of European Antitrust policy to Sport. There is a risk that this application does not sufficiently differentiate between undertakings using sport only as a business model and non-profit federations that are organising the sport, creating solidarity mechanisms and supporting the education of young athletes. Its pyramidal structure is the backbone of organised sport worldwide and deserves all support.

The societal role of the organised sport was never more visible than today. Thousands of sport clubs in Europe contribute to society through the work of their volunteers, not least currently to the integration of migrants and refugees. Together with the Member States, the European Union should therefore definitely focus more on improving the legal and financial conditions for sport clubs in Europe.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Folker Hellmund', written in a cursive style.

Folker Hellmund

Director EOC EU Office

EUROPEAN UNION AND SPORT

Netherlands, Slovakia and Malta publish trio presidency programme

The Dutch presidency of the Council of the EU has published the 18 month programme of the council that covers the Dutch, Slovak and Maltese presidencies (running from 1 January 2016 until 30 June 2017). The Netherlands took over the council presidency with the beginning of the year.

The programme outlines the main priorities and goals the three countries aim to achieve in this period, which will subsequently be defined more closely through the individual presidency programmes. The document is based around five broad pillars, but deemed flexible to react to new developments. These five pillars are:

1. A Union of Jobs, Growth and Competitiveness;
2. A Union that Empowers and Protects all its Citizens;
3. Towards an Energy Union with a Forward-Looking Climate Policy;
4. A Union of Freedom, Security and Justice;
5. The Union as a Strong Global Actor.

EU Sport policy is explicitly mentioned under the second pillar, where “capitalising on good governance, social inclusion and education in and through sport with specific attention to international major sport events, sport diplomacy and voluntary activities” is mentioned. The last three aspects will be the main focus of the Netherlands, Slovakia and Malta respectively.

Other initiatives with an influence on sport are:

- **Initiatives under the Digital Single Market package:** inter alia copyright and portability, geo-blocking, the Cable and

Satellite directive, which all have an impact on sport broadcasting rights.

- **Finalisation of data protection reform:** new data protection rules could have an adverse impact on the fight against doping and match-fixing
- **EU 2017 budget:** this will have a direct impact on the 2017 funding programmes, including Erasmus+ Sport.
- **TTIP:** possible impact on delivery of sport services.
- **Mid-term review of the Erasmus+ Programme:** possible changes would have an effect on the Sport programme and other programmes accessible for sport organisations.
- **Visa:** work on a simplified Visa Code and a new touring visa especially could mean improved access for third-country athletes to the Schengen area. Negotiations on Visa facilitation and liberalisation agreements could have a similar effect for some countries.
- **Legislative proposal on firearms:** changes in the rules on gun ownership could have an impact on sport-shooting.

The Dutch presidency has subsequently published its programme, with precisions on some of these issues (see article). The trio for 2017-2018 will consist of United Kingdom, Estonia and Bulgaria.

FURTHER INFORMATION

[18 month programme of the trio Council presidency](#)

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Program of the Dutch Council Presidency

The Netherlands took over the Council Presidency of the EU on 1 January 2016 and will hold it until the end of June 2016. Having presented its programme for the coming six months, these overarching priorities have been highlighted:

1. A comprehensive approach to migration and international security;
2. Europe as an innovator and job creator;
3. Sound, future-proof European finances and a robust euro zone;
4. Forward-looking policy on climate and energy.

With regard to sport policy, the Presidency will put the integrity of sport on the agenda, in line with the EU Work Plan for Sport 2014-2017. The focus will be on the organization and legacy-building of major international sporting events, in particular looking at how this can be done with positive social, economic and sustainable returns that can generate public support. The Presidency will work closely with the sports sector and organize different events to promote anti-doping, good governance and transparency in sport.

A general objective related to sport will be the integration of migrants and the role of education and youth work in combating youth radicalization. The Presidency underlines the importance of sport as a tool to engage with young people.

Other policy issues relevant for sport are the following:

- In the area of education the Netherlands Presidency will give priority to employability and the development of knowledge and skills. One key focus of

attention is the modernization of higher education and vocational training.

- Discussion of the European Commission's new Skills Agenda in its 2016 Work Program, which aims at promoting investment in skills development.
- With regard to culture, media and the creative industries the Netherlands Presidency will strive for a debate and Council conclusions on the infrastructure and platforms required for European digital heritage.
- Promoting the circulation of European audiovisual productions and the modernization of copyright as part of the Digital Single Market Strategy.
- Advancement of negotiations on the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP).
- Promoting gender equality and health issues.

In addition, the Netherlands, Slovakia and Malta, which will hold the next three Presidencies of the EU Council (known collectively as the Trio Presidency), have drawn up an 18-month agenda focusing on the integrity of sports, sports diplomacy and volunteering in sports. The challenge of migration and refugees will remain high on the agenda for the Dutch, Slovak and Maltese Presidencies and sport will play an important tool in this context.

FURTHER INFORMATION

[Program of the Dutch Presidency of the Council of the European Union](#)

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Council Expert Group on Match-fixing meets in Brussels

On 26 January, the fourth meeting of the Council Expert Group on Match-fixing was organised in Brussels. The EOC EU Office and the IOC represented the Olympic Movement.

The state of play on the signing and ratification of the Convention on the manipulation of sport competitions of the Council of Europe was among the topics discussed at the meeting. Currently, 20 countries (including 12 EU Member States) have signed the Convention and 2 (including 1 EU Member State: Portugal) have ratified the Convention. One of the main open questions for EU Member States is the question of shared competences and the agreement on the EU to sign the Convention.

The Council of Europe actively promotes the Convention and encourages countries to sign and ratify the Convention. For instance, on 25 January, a promotional side-event to the Parliamentary Assembly (PACE) meeting was organised in Strasbourg, including Claudia Bokel, Chair of the IOC Athletes' Commission.

Furthermore, a number of National Platforms were presented as good practice examples, including the Platforms established in the UK, the Netherlands, Norway and Finland. Although considerable differences exist between the various

platforms (e.g. in terms of law enforcement powers, composition and structure), it clear showed the efforts that are being made by public authorities in cooperation with the sports movement to tackle the issue of match-fixing and to encourage cooperation and exchange. The IOC congratulated the Member States that have set-up a National Platform already and encouraged the other Member States to follow. Furthermore, the IOC stressed the importance of building trust and confidence between different actors. In addition, reference was made to the usefulness of disciplinary measures of sports organisations as a flexible instrument that can be applied across national borders.

The Expert Group is to prepare a Report on the fight against match-fixing. This Report should be finalised by June 2016 and will consequently be presented to the Council Working Party on Sport during the second half of 2016. Another meeting of the Expert Group will be organised in the first half of 2016 to finalise the Report. In addition, DG HOME of the European Commission announced a workshop on the fight against match-fixing that will be organised on 17-18 February 2016 in Brussels. The agenda of this workshop should be available in the forthcoming days.

Council Expert Group discusses implementation of HEPA Guidelines

The Council Expert Group on Health-Enhancing Physical Activity (XG HEPA) met on 12 January 2016 in Brussels. The meeting focused on the second deliverable "Coordination of the implementation of the Council Recommendation on HEPA" and included a presentation of best practices.

The Commission informed about recent HEPA related activities. In this regard it especially

referred to the development of the next EU Work Plan for Sport from 2017 and to the Commission's evaluation of the Council Recommendations on HEPA, which is to start soon. It furthermore pointed out cooperation between Commission services, including coordination regarding statistics between DG EAC and DG SANTE on HEPA and childhood obesity respectively.

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Joao Breda of the World Health Organisation (WHO) was invited as a guest and reported on the cooperation between his organisation and the EU, including the new Physical Activity Strategy of the WHO European Region. He also highlighted the work on the recently published Country Factsheets on HEPA.



Prof. Dr. Alfred Rütten (University Erlangen-Nürnberg) presented a project idea focusing on the comparability of physical activity surveillance data. The aim would be to compare three PA questionnaires with accelerometer data to allow calibration and conversion between different methods. Several Member States voiced their interest to join the initiative.

Regarding the second deliverable of the group, the Hungarian lead expert presented the status quo of the document, which aims at collecting national good practices in the implementation. Currently, 20 Member States and 4 observers have provided material. It was agreed to review the contributions in order to ensure clarity. A final draft shall be discussed at the next meeting. Afterwards three Member States and two observers presented projects.

Regarding the first deliverable, the Luxembourgish expert presented how the Council had build their Conclusions on the promotion of motor skills, physical and sport activities for children substantially on the XG document.

The next meeting of Expert Group HEPA will take place on 12 April 2016 on Cyprus, with HEPA Focal Points having a meeting on 11 April 2016.

FURTHER INFORMATION

[Country Factsheets on HEPA](#)

[Physical Activity Strategy for the WHO European Region 2016-2025](#)

[Council Conclusions on the promotion of motor skills, physical and sport activities for children](#)

European Parliament's Sport Intergroup discussed Third-Party Ownership

For its fourth meeting, the Sport Intergroup of the European Parliament held, on 26 January, a discussion on third-party ownership (TPO). The TPO commonly refers to a situation whereby a third party provides financial support to a club or player in return for a certain percentage of a specific player's future transfer fee.

In the current sport world, the TPO is mainly an issue affecting football activities. Financial tool commonly used in South America, the TPO has been prohibited few years ago in some European

football leagues (e.g. France, England, Poland...) and more recently by the UEFA and the FIFA.

Discussions were organised on two panel debates gathering actors from various football organisations. The composition of these two panels, mixing defenders of the TPO and fervent opponents to this system, led to enthusiastic presentation and lively discussions between speakers.

After a short introduction of the co-president of the intergroup Marc Tarabella (MEP), the first panel,

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composed by Wouter Lambrecht (European Club Association), Julien Zylberstein (UEFA), Georg Pangl (European Professional Football Leagues) and Nélio Lucas (Doyen Sport), opened the discussion.

While Mr Lambrecht, who made a presentation on a study commissioned by ECA on TPO in 2013, and Mr Pangl adopted a balanced position, calling for regulation of TPO more than for its banishment, representatives of the UEFA and Doyen Sport have clearly exposed their divergences on the subject. Julien Zylberstein justified the decision of the UEFA to ban TPO explaining that TPO “is bad for clubs, for players, for grassroots sports...it is a tool that may jeopardize club’s autonomy in decision-making and put the integrity of competition at risk”.

For its part, Mr Lucas, representative of Doyen Sport (one of the main actors involved in TPO deals) has been often questioned by speakers during the meeting on the transparency of their activities. Mr Lucas argued the TPI (third-party investment) done by Doyen Sport is a legitimate and sustainable means to finance clubs, respecting both the independence of the players and of the clubs.

The second panel also offered the opportunity of an interesting debate between Javier Tebas

(President of the Spanish football league), Daniel Lorenz, both in favor of the TPO system while Omar Ongaro (FIFA) and Jonas Baer-Hoffmann (FIFPRO) were defending the ban of the TPO.



Mr Tebas stated that “TPO represents a vital source of funding, helping smaller clubs to stay competitive” whereas Jonas Baer-Hoffmann expressed his concerns about players’ freedom.

Legality of TPO system and of the ban decisions taken by sport organisations have also been discussed by the speakers as several complaints have been dropped to the European Commission

The next meeting of the Sport Intergroup will take place on April 5 focusing on match-fixing.

High-Level Group on Grassroots Sport discusses Social Inclusion and HEPA

High Level Group on Grassroots Sport, set up by Commissioner Tibor Navracsics, met on 22 January 2016 for the second time. In the previous meeting, the Group agreed on the main areas to be covered in the final recommendations, and on these areas social inclusion in and through sport, as well as health-enhancing physical activity (HEPA) were on the agenda of the second meeting.

On the topic of social inclusion, Heike Kübler from the German Olympic Sports Confederation

(DOSB) gave a comprehensive introduction to the topic by outlining the various activities DOSB is doing in the field of social inclusion of migrants and refugees. After the introduction the members of the High Level Group raised several important aspects to be included in the final recommendations, especially reflecting from the good practice examples from their countries or organisations. It was agreed by the members that taking into account the current situation in Europe, the special focus in the final recommendations

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should be given to the social inclusion of refugees and migrants.

The afternoon discussion focused on HEPA. Peter Krustrup, Professor of Team Sport and Health from the University of Copenhagen initialised the discussion with his presentation “Team sports as

prevention, treatment and rehabilitation of non-communicable diseases for individuals across the life span”. He stressed that focusing on the pleasure of physical activity and sport is important, because it attracts also those, who are not competitive, to be active. As an example he mentioned that there is football organised in Denmark without goals, which makes the game less competitive. His examples triggered a lively debate on the ways of creating environments which encourage people to be physically more active.

The High Level Group will continue its work to shape the final recommendations to the Commissioner by June 2016. Next meeting will take place on 16 March 2016.

FURTHER INFORMATION

[Commission meeting report](#)

Third meeting of the informal working group on migration crisis and football

On 26 January, the informal working group on “Migration crisis and football stakeholders” took its third meeting, in Brussels. Composed by representatives of football organisations, which are conducting activities on the areas of migrants and refugees, this working group aims to share best practices and to promote the role that football, and more generally sport, can play in the welcoming and the integration of refugees and migrants.

Antonio Silva Mendes, director Youth and Sport at the DG Education and Culture of the European Commission (DG EAC), welcomed the participants by providing an update on the recent activities of the group. Then, Mr Silva Mendes let the floor to two examples of good practices presented by Kurt Wachter, from the Vienna Institute for Cooperation and international Dialogue, and Laurent Thieule, president of Kraainem football club (region of Brussels).

Kurt Wachter provided an interesting presentation of an Erasmus+ project dealing with the social integration of migrants. Following a first project implemented during the EU preparatory actions in the field of sport, the ESPIN project (European Sport Inclusion Network) aims to develop the participation of migrants in volunteering in sport. Mr Wachter exposed some activities conducted during both the previous and the current project such as the organisation of a Football Refugees Day.

For its part, Laurent Thieule put the focus on the activities conducted by Kraainem football club including the welcoming of refugees for language classes and football training.

The second part of the meeting was leading by the European Commission with a presentation of the results of the questionnaire “Best Practices on Migrants’ integration in and through football”,

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based on the voluntary contributions of members of the working group.

In addition, Astrid Bey (DG EAC) introduced the audience to the webpage dedicated to migrants and sport. Setting-up by the European Commission on its website, this webpage aims to spread information regarding EU-financed projects related to the social inclusion of migrants as well as to present examples of good practices from the football world, collecting via the working group.

The European Commission has also confirmed to the EOC EU Office the possibility for actors

coming from other sports to contribute to the collection of data as the current focus on football is only the first step of the initiative.

The EU Sport Forum, on 9 and 10 March in The Hague, will offer the opportunity to deepen these discussions as a specific session will be dedicated to the challenge of integrating migrants for sports clubs.

FURTHER INFORMATION

[Webpage Migrants and Sport of the European Commission](#)

FUNDING PROGRAMMES, STUDIES AND PROJECTS

Enhancing the mobility of professional ski instructors across the EU

The topic of mutual recognition of professional qualifications in sport has been on the EU's agenda for a number of years; and with it the particular issue of ski instructors' qualifications. It has been dealt with by the Commission Expert Groups and followed up by a Council Expert Group under the 2011-2014 Work Plan. It is now on the agenda of the Expert Group on Human Resource Development in Sport.

What is at stake? The profession of ski instructors is regulated to a different degree (or not at all) across the EU Member States and consequently the applicable formal and practical requirements also differ from one country to another. Therefore, it has been a common practice in some, mainly Alpine, Member States to apply very complex national rules making it difficult for non-national professional ski instructors to exercise their profession in the given Member State/region. This has impeded, to a certain extent, one of their basic rights under the EU Single Market - the freedom of movement of services.

The European Commission, together with the Member States and sport experts started working on overcoming this problem and the first concrete result of these efforts was a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) establishing a pilot project for a professional card for ski instructors. The MoU, adopted in 2012 by nine Member States, was intended to substitute and ease those complex and detailed national requirements for the recognition of professional ski instructors' qualification. In any of these countries, ski instructors who held the highest ski instructor qualification and had successfully taken two specific tests ('Eurotest' and 'Eurosecurity test') could obtain a pilot professional card in their country of origin.

Since the MoU was originally agreed for a limited time only, there are ongoing discussions on applying the newly created possibility (introduced by the reviewed Directive 2005/36/EC on the recognition of professional qualifications) of setting up a 'Common Training Test' for ski instructors, to replace the Memorandum of Understanding.

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In order to assess the state of play and map the current situation in all EU Member States, the EU has commissioned a study dedicated to this subject. The study, published in January 2016, is to provide a knowledge base for the future implementation of the Test.

The Common Training Test is now under development and should enter into force this year. Its objective is to make it simpler for ski instructors

from the EU to practice their profession in skiing destinations across the EU Member States.

FURTHER INFORMATION

[Directive 2005/36/EC on the recognition of professional qualifications](#)

[Study to assess the state of play and map the current situation in all EU Member State](#)

INTERNAL AND VISITS

NOC*NSF delegation organises work visit to Brussels

On 13 and 14 January 2016, the Dutch Olympic Committee (NOC*NSF) organised a work visit to Brussels for its Sports Politics Commission, people from the public affairs department of the NOC*NSF and representatives of other interested Dutch sport organisations. The EOC EU Office provided support to facilitate the visit.



The two-day program aimed at getting more insight into EU sports policy as well as meeting representatives of EU institutions as well as sports stakeholders. The program started with a visit to the Sport Unit of the European Commission, where the group was welcomed by Susanne

Hollmann, Deputy Head of Unit, and Michal Rynkowski, Policy Officer with extensive expertise in the field of EU funding.

Consequently, the group visited the EOC EU Office. Following an introduction on the role and the composition of the EOC EU Office, the group discussed several policy fields including the Digital Single Market and Good Governance with a view to get a better understanding of how the EU institutions functions and how to build a successful public affairs and lobby strategy at EU level.

The first day was concluded by an informal meeting with Dutch Member of the European Parliament, Marietje Schaake (ALDE).

During the second day, the group visited the Permanent Representation of the Netherlands to the EU, where the priorities of the Dutch EU Presidency were presented and discussed with a number of stakeholders. The EOC EU Office also took part in the discussion.

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NEXT MONTH

Dates in February 2016

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|---------------------|---|
| 3-4 February | Mid-Term Conference SIGGS Project, Lisbon |
| 6 February | ENGSO Executive Committee Meeting, Stockholm |
| 20 February | 7 th Anniversary EOC EU Office, Brussels |
| 23 February | Council Expert Group on Good Governance, Brussels |
| 25 February | 3 rd meeting High-Level Group on Sport Diplomacy, Brussels |