



European Union and Sport

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Latvian Presidency Programme

Latvia has taken over the Presidency of the EU Council on 1 January 2015 and will hold it until the end of June 2015. Its Presidency Programme, unsurprisingly, is largely similar to the 2015 Work Programme of the European Commission presented in our last monthly report. Here below is a short analysis of what should be pointed out with respect to issues that could have an impact on sport:

Regarding sport policy per se, the LV Presidency has chosen two priorities:

- **Strengthening grassroots sport.** The Presidency will propose Council conclusions on this topic.
- **Promoting a healthy lifestyle.** The Presidency will hold discussions and exchange of experiences on efficient models of cooperation between public authorities and the sports movements in Member States.

Other points to be pointed out are the following:

- Seeking an agreement on the new **data protection** framework is defined as a high priority.

- In external policies, there will be a particular focus on the **European Neighbourhood Policy**.
- A **review of the Europe 2020 Strategy** is to be adopted in March by the European Council on the basis of proposals made by the Commission, which are expected in the early part of 2015.
- The Presidency will continue its discussions on the **role of healthy nutrition, physical activity and sport in reducing childhood obesity**.
- With regard to the upcoming publication of a legislation proposal on the **revision of the EU copyright framework**, the Presidency intends to initiate discussions "seeking to facilitate creativity, innovation and the completion of the Digital Single Market". Also, the Presidency will host an audiovisual conference entitled 'Preparing for a Fully Converged Audiovisual World: Growth, Creation and Value'.

Further information:

[Latvian Presidency Programme](#)

CoE Recommendation on gender mainstreaming in sport

The Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers adopted on 21 January a Recommendation on gender mainstreaming in sport. Even though the Recommendation is not a legally-binding instrument, it does propose a number of specific measures and steps, which could have, if implemented, a

far reaching positive impact on gender equality in sport and beyond.

On a global level, Member States are invited to adopt and review their legislation and/or policies pertaining to sport in order to ensure that gender equality in sport is promoted and encouraged, to establish specific



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measures to this end, and essentially, to report on the steps taken and progress achieved to EPAS (Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport).

In addition, even though most of the suggested measures are to be executed by the public administration bodies, Member States are to “encourage sport organisations at national, regional, and local levels, bearing in mind their autonomy” to, among other things:

- Mainstream gender equality in their strategies as an integral element of good governance;
- Develop and implement specific strategies and measures, until a balanced participation of women and

men is reached at all levels of sports organisations;

- Implement policies and adopt codes of conduct regarding gender-based violence against girls, boys, women and men in sport.

The Recommendation and the proposed measures build on initiatives and developments of the past couple of years on both European and international level (IWG Helsinki Conference, Council of the EU Conclusions on Gender Equality in Sport, European Commission Group of Experts’ Proposal for Strategic Actions etc.).

Further information:

[CoE Recommendation on gender mainstreaming in sport](#)

Launch of the Sport Intergroup in the European Parliament

On 4 February 2015, the newly created European Parliament’s Sport Intergroup held its first event (see our article in the monthly report of December). The small reception was designed to officially announce the start of the Intergroup and meet all interested stakeholders.

The bureau of the Intergroup will be composed of the following MEPs:

- Marc TARABELLA (S&D, Belgium), co-president.
- Santiago FISAS (EPP, Spain), co-president.
- Bogdan WENTA (EPP, Poland), vice-president.
- Emma MCCLARKIN (ECR, United Kingdom), vice-president.
- Olli REHN (ALDE, Finland), vice-president.
- Virginie ROZIERE (S&D, France), vice-president.
- Theodor ZAGORAKIS (EPP, Greece), general secretary.

The bureau will meet every month during the Plenary Session in Strasbourg. The Intergroup plans to organise 4 to 6 events per year, including breakfast debates, conferences and possibly outside events. The Intergroup also intends to publish a regular newsletter.



From left to right, MEPs S. Fisas, M. Tarabella, T. Zagorakis, B. Wenta and their teams



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The work plan for this year will be adopted in the second week of February. The EOC EU Office has shared a list of topic suggestions with the Bureau, based on the current

developments of the European sports policy and our priorities.

Further information:

[EOC EU Office website article](#)

Funding programmes, studies and projects

Assessment of first programme year of Erasmus+ Sports

2014 marked the start of a new funding period and the first year of the new Erasmus+ Sports Programme, which states the development of grassroots sports as one of its goals in the Regulation. The analysis of the selection results of the first year confirms the EOC EU Office's concerns that the high financial and administrative burden currently prevents a broader involvement of grassroots sport actors.

The analysis of the EOC EU Office indicates that only 26% of all the 301 organisations involved in the 38 selected collaborative partnerships are actors from organised sport (including federations, umbrella organisations and sport clubs). This share equals the number of universities, research and higher education institutes, which also represent about 26% of project applicants and partners. This clearly indicates that the current application procedure favours professional structures with both experience in funding and the required staff to prepare applications.

Additionally, the projects selected receive very high EU-grants with an average of approximately 400,000 EUR. Considering that these projects require their own contribution by the project group of up to 100,000 EUR, actors from grassroots sports

are not able to afford the necessary funds for such proposals.

Based on this analysis, the EOC EU Office has formulated and communicated proposals for the adaptation of the funding criteria in order to ensure a higher participation of grassroots sports.

The EOC EU Office proposals include:

- The reduction of the required number of partners;
- The inclusion of volunteering as an eligible source of own contribution, especially considering the number of volunteers involved in grassroots sports;
- The promotion of project proposals with smaller budgets;
- Other financial and administrative facilitations such as the use lump sums and the increase of the level of EU pre-financing in line with the other Programme lines of Erasmus+.

As funding grassroots sport actors is not solely an aim in itself, but also ensures better sustainability of project results through the established organisational basis that grassroots organisations provide, the EOC EU Office will stay in a close dialogue with the European Commission and the responsible Executive Agency EACEA in order



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to achieve meaningful changes for future calls.

Further information:

[EOC EU Office Recommendations for future calls for proposals](#)

Call for proposals: public-private cooperation on sports betting

The DG Migration and Home Affairs of the European Commission has published a call for proposals on “New integrated mechanisms for cooperation between public and private actors to identify sports betting risks”.

This pilot project is a follow-up on a request that was made by the European Parliament in 2013. It aims at **funding projects on the cooperation between public and private actors to identify sports betting risks**, addressing at least one of the following priorities:

- To ensure the integrity of sport events in relation to sports betting;
- To reduce corruption in relation to sports betting;
- To prevent betting from being used for criminal purposes.

The description of expected projects is similar to the national platforms that are to be established under the Council of Europe’s Convention on the Manipulation of Sports Competitions, even though there is no official link to it.

Eligible applicants are public bodies, private entities or international organisations that are established in an EU Member State or whose mandate includes activities related to sport at the EU or Europe-wide level.

Applications are to be submitted by 11 February 2015 (12:00 CET) and the budget available is 1,800,000 EUR.

Further information:

[Call for proposals](#)
[Information page on the call](#)

SIGGS Project: successful kick-off meeting in the Netherlands

On 4 February, the SIGGS Project organised its Kick-off meeting in Arnhem, the Netherlands. The event, hosted by the NOC*NSF, was the official start of the SIGGS Project which will run until December 2016. It brought together over 25 representatives from the 12 different project partners. The SIGGS Project is managed by the EOC EU Office and supported by the European Commission through the Erasmus+ Sports Programme.

The Kick-off Meeting was officially opened by the Secretary General of the NOC*NSF, **Gerard Dielessen**, and by the Director of

the EOC EU Office, **Folker Hellmund**. In his introductory words, Folker Hellmund listed a number of reasons why it is crucial for sport organisations to implement principles of good governance. Furthermore, he stated that it is about “*the credibility of sport*” and that “*good governance should be an attitude and part of the culture of the sport organisation. In this regard, it should become an integral part of the daily activities*”.

Subsequently, some general information was provided listing out the objectives of the project, the methodology, the activities and



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the tasks of the different project partners. With the general aim of the project to provide practical guidance to National Olympic Committees and national sport federations on the implementation of principles of good governance, particular emphasis was put on the need for a flexible and sustainable approach. This was confirmed by several representatives during the parallel group discussions as the situation in the different countries clearly varies substantially.



During the afternoon session, **Pâquerette Girard Zappelli**, Director of the IOC Ethics Commission, presented the ongoing activities of the IOC regarding good governance in the context of the Olympic Agenda 2020. She stressed that “good



governance is not just a necessity; it is a win for sport”. She also confirmed the support of the IOC to the SIGGS Project and expressed the hope that the outcomes of the Project can contribute to the implementation of the Olympic Agenda 2020.

Finally, **Huibert Brands** presented the activities of the NOC*NSF in the field of good governance. Valuable lessons can be learnt from the process that was started in the Netherlands already in 2004, including the fact that good governance is an ongoing process and that support to sport organisations on the implementation is essential. The inspirational story of the NOC*NSF concluded a successful Kick-off Meeting.

The next steps of the project include the decision on the various principles as well as the development of the self-evaluation tool. The Steering Committee, which consists of a number of experts and the various Work Package leaders, will meet in the upcoming months to proceed with the implementation of the two-year project.

Further information:
[Project website](#)



Internal and visits

EOC EU Office hosts meeting of German regional sports federations

On 26-27 January, the EOC EU Office hosted the annual workshop with representatives of thirteen German regional sports federations (LSB) as well as from the German Olympic Sports Confederation (DOSB).

The discussion focused on last year's changes within the EU institutions and on topics related to the societal role and economic dimension of sport. Additionally, a specific session was organised on EU funding for sport, namely on Erasmus+ sport chapter and the Structural Funds.

In a common meeting with **Michal Rynkowski** (DG EAC, European Commission) from the Sports Unit, the LSBs expressed their concerns regarding the complicated application procedures for funding under Erasmus+ and described their difficulties to receive funding over the EU structural funds.

As a second external speaker **Ansgar Held** (DG Competition, European Commission), provided an update on the impact of state aid on sport and on the implementation of the state aid block exemption that entered into force 1 July 2014.

Furthermore, **Bernhard Schwank**, Board member for International Affairs and Olympic bids, and **Johannes Curtius**, Head of International Relations, presented the international activities of DOSB. Subsequently the participants discussed how to improve their communication and cooperation regarding their respective projects.

The seminar ended with an exchange with the policy officers responsible for sport in the German regional representations in Brussels.

Dates in February 2015

- 9 Council Expert Group on HEPA, Budapest
- 11 Sport Info Day Erasmus+, Brussels
- 12 EOC EU Office partners meeting on Erasmus+, Brussels
- 16 International Conference on Sport and Physical Activity for Development of the Human Capital, Riga
- 17 Council Expert Group on Human Resources Management in Sport, Riga

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