



European Union and Sport

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Priorities on Sport under the Irish Presidency



Irish Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport, Leo Varadkar, released a statement on its department's programme and objectives during the Irish Presidency. Apart from challenges such as stability, jobs and growth the key priority will be an agreement on the Multi-Annual Financial Framework 2014-2020.

Sport was mentioned directly in the first paragraph of the Minister's statement ..."that it would play an important role in Ireland's Presidency programme (...) across a variety of Council formations".

Progress should be made on the EU's Work Plan on Sport, especially in the field of dual careers for athletes. The EU should also consider the contribution of sport to the economy, and support sustainable financing of sport, particularly grassroots sport. In this regard the Irish Presidency will organise a conference on the "sustainable financing of sport" in Dublin on 7 March.

Anti-doping will also be a top priority in the upcoming 18 months. Minister Varadkar is one of the three representatives of the EU to WADA.

Further information:

[Irish Presidency Programme for Transport, Tourism and Sport](#)

Draft reports on data protection in the European Parliament

On 10 January 2013, Jan-Philipp **Albrecht**, rapporteur for the proposed Data Protection Regulation and Dimitrios **Droutsas**, rapporteur for the proposed Data Protection Directive for the law enforcement sector released their **draft reports** for the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE Committee). In their reports a large number of significant changes to the proposed Regulation have been tabled. The deadline for amendments to the above mentioned reports is 27 February.

With its initial proposal, the **European Commission** intended to increase the level of data protection within the EU and with third countries. The principal proposals of

the European Commission reform of the data protection rules are:

- Citizens should be able to refer to the data protection authority in their country, even when their data is processed by a company based outside the EU.
- Citizens should have easier access to their own data and should be able to transfer personal data from one service provider to another more easily. Wherever consent is required for data to be processed, it is clarified that it has to be given explicitly, rather than assumed.
- A 'right to be forgotten' will help people to better manage data protection risks: people will be able to



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delete their data if there are no legitimate grounds for retaining it.

The European Parliament draft report of Jan Philipp Albrecht put increased emphasis on individual rights; it is proposed to further reinforce the "right to be forgotten" by asking companies which have transferred data to third parties without a legitimate legal basis to make sure these data are actually erased. Furthermore, the legitimate interest provision, which presently enables controllers to process personal data and without consent if the reasons for doing so do not undermine the individual's fundamental **data protection** rights would be curtailed by the report's recommended changes. The report envisages the data controllers informing the data subject about any such specific processing and the reasons why these legitimate interests override the interests or fundamental rights of the individual in question. In this regard, reliance on the legitimate interest provision will be reserved for '*exceptional circumstances*' only.

Possible impact on sport:

Transparency and circulation of information (eg. via "ADAMS") are crucial for the **fight against doping**.

However, this new regulation on data protection could call into question the

current proceeding on how data are gathered and transferred. The Olympic movement and WADA are fully aware of the risks and have raised their concerns towards the relevant actors in the European Parliament and EU Commission. The main objective will be to justify the legitimate interest of Anti Doping authorities to process personal and transfer data and to deal with the restrictions on free consent.

Concerning **online betting**, the consumers provide important information about their bank accounts to the betting operators. In the fight against match fixing related to online betting the exchange of data of suspected bettors is crucial. The new regulation might have a significant impact on the transfer of data from betting companies to police or public prosecutors.

As **data protection reform** will play a key role during the Irish Presidency of the European Council, the Irish Government has already hosted an informal meeting to debate certain aspects of the recently released reports. This meeting was attended by European Justice Ministers and the Vice President of the European Commission responsible for Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship, Ms Viviane Reding, on 18 January 2013.

The voting on the two draft reports in the LIBE Committee are expected to be held at the end of April 2013.

Meeting of the Council Expert Group on Anti-Doping

In January 2013 the 4th Meeting of the Council Expert Group on Anti-Doping took place in Brussels. The Olympic movement was represented by Claudia Bokel (Chair of IOC Athletes Commission), Christian Thill (IOC) and Folker Hellmund (EOC EU Office).

Revision of the WADA Code: 3rd EU contribution

The comments of the EU discussed in the meeting referred to the draft Code that was circulated online on 1 December 2012. The



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EU's assessment on the evolution of the draft code is rather positive due to the fact that a number of concerns already have been taken into account by WADA.

One of the remaining obstacles resulted from the fact that the WADA Code -contrary to the UNESCO convention on doping- is not binding for the States. Based on this fact a number of Member States raised their concerns regarding the obligations posed on them by Art. 22 of the revised Code.

Another topic of discussion was the online-publication of sanctions. In some Member States (e.g. Germany) national laws prevent a complete public disclosure. Other Member States do have reservations with regard to the quality of the published information or rejected any information on minors. In this regard WADA clarified that there is no obligation at all to publish sanctions imposed on minors.

Claudia Bokel reiterated the necessity for strong sanctions on heavy dopers (EPO, anabolic steroids etc.) with a minimum four years ban. Furthermore she affirmed the importance of public disclosure due to its deterrent character and in order to protect clean athletes.

Christian Thill emphasized the high importance of the on-going negotiations on the new data protection regulation on sport. Referring to Art. 165 of the Lisbon Treaty he stated that a better recognition of the specificity of sport is required. Otherwise federations could not transfer relevant data of athletes needed for the organisation of events.

Further proceeding: The Working Council Party on Sport will assess the draft EU comments before the COREPER agrees on the final version to be sent to WADA.

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

On 31 January 2013, the Council Expert Group on Education and Training in Sport (XG ETS) met in Dublin, Ireland. The EOC EU Office attended this meeting as one of the observers. The two main topics on the agenda were:

- The inclusion of sport qualifications in the National Qualifications Frameworks (NQFs)
- 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 report. This report was compiled on the basis of the inventory, which was sent to the experts of the different MS in 2012, and the different presentations that were given during the

meeting in Poznan in September 2012. The report is part of a follow-up to the inclusion of sport-related qualifications in NQFs with reference to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and related topics such as validation of non-formal and informal learning and the modernisation of directive 2005/36/EC. The final report, being the second deliverable of this Expert Group, will be finalised by mid-2013.

On the future EU level policy work in the field of sport and education, a first round of discussions took place on possible priorities for the future EU work plan for sport. One of the possibilities is a follow-up on the Guidelines on Dual Careers. These Guidelines were discussed and approved during the previous meeting of the XG in Poznan. The EOC EU Office actively contributed during



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the negotiations on these guidelines, especially because of the expertise and knowledge gained during the Athletes to Business (A2B) Project. Recently the EU Guidelines on Dual Careers of Athletes have been submitted to the Council Working Party. Consequently, Council conclusions on Dual Careers are to be adopted at the Sport Ministers Council meeting in May 2013.

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.

The next meeting of this Expert Group is foreseen to take place at the end of June 2013. No decision has so far been taken on the location of this fourth and final meeting.

Further information:

[EU Guidelines on Dual Careers of Athletes \(16 November 2012\)](#)

[Website Sport Unit European Commission](#)

2013 is the European Year of Citizens

The European Year of Citizens 2013 (Year) was officially launched on 10 January in Dublin, Ireland in the presence of the European Commission President José Manuel Barroso and Vice-President Viviane Reding, responsible for Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship.

The European Year of Citizens 2013 will focus on the rights that every EU citizen has. The Year will encourage dialogue at all levels of government, civil society and business, to explore the views of citizens and to raise awareness of their rights, policies and governance. The 2010 EU Citizenship Report concluded that EU citizens are not benefiting fully from their rights because they are not aware of them. The Year takes place one year before the European Parliament elections and one of the aims is to encourage people to use their right to vote. The Year also celebrates the 20th anniversary of the European citizenship, a concept which was launched by the Maastricht Treaty. In the middle of the economic crisis the Year also aims to empower European citizens and to strengthen the citizen dimension.

One initiator behind the Year is the European Year of Citizens Alliance 2013 which was created by a number of European civil society organisations. From the sport sector European Non-Governmental Sports Organisation ENGSO is a member of the Alliance. From the very beginning the Alliance has lobbied for a broader scope of the Year, not only focusing on raising awareness of citizens' rights. The Alliance emphasizes that the Year should also promote and stress the importance of active citizenship and civil society as well as citizens' participation in the democratic life of the European Union.

EU institutions, Alliance, national coordinating bodies and other stakeholders will organise a series of events – debates, seminars, conferences and exhibitions among others to celebrate the Year. Regarding **possible projects on sport and citizenship**, there will not be any direct funding available for the European Year of Citizens' projects. However, projects linked to the themes of the European Year may be eligible for funding support from other EU programmes and initiatives, such as Europe



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for Citizens, Lifelong Learning, Youth in Action and Directorate-General Justice funding opportunities.

Further information:

<http://europa.eu/citizens-2013/en>

<http://ey2013-alliance.eu/index.html>

Internal and visits

European Evening of Sports

Organised by the EOC EU Office the 3rd European Evening of Sports will take place in Brussels on 27 February. The event brings together key decision makers from European Union and the Olympic Sports movement.



EOC President Patrick Hickey and the Secretary of State for Family, Children, Youth, Culture and Sport of North Rhine-Westphalia, Bernd Neuendorf, will host the important event.

In his key note speech the President of the German Olympic Sports Confederation, Dr. Thomas Bach, will reflect on the relationship amongst the European Union, sport federations and athletes.

Looking forward to the implementation of the new multiannual financial framework 2014-2020, the first panel discussion will

deal with the EU-financing of sport beyond 2014. Contributions are expected, among others, from EU Commissioner Androulla Vassiliou, the Irish Minister of State for Sport, Michael Ring, as well as Doris Pack, Chair of the Committee on Culture and Education of the European Parliament.



Apart from doping, match-fixing is the biggest threat to the integrity of sports worldwide. In the 2nd panel discussion experts will discuss the dimension of this problem by reconsidering current and future activities on prevention and prosecution. Competence in this field is ensured by the attendance of Claudia Bokel (Chair of the IOC Athletes Commission), Christophe de Kepper (Director General of IOC), Harri Syväsalmi (Chair of the Council Expert Group on "Match-Fixing") and the city of Bochum's first Police Commissioner, Friedhelm Althans.



Dates in February

6	Council Expert Group on Sport, Health and Participation in Brussels
7-8	European Council meeting on the Multiannual Financial Framework in Brussels
17-22	European Youth Olympic Festival in Brasov (Romania)
27	European Evening of Sports in Brussels

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