

Tweets of the month



EOC EU Office

@EOCEUOffice Oct 28

Challenges of sport events' organisers in the digital environment are currently discussed in an [#EPsport](#) event hosted by MEPs [@TFrankowski21](#) & [@djambazki](#). Important support from Commissioner [@GabrielMariya](#) on fighting online [#piracy](#) in times of [#Covid19](#) [@SportsGroup2024](#) [@EuSport](#)

EOC EU Office

@EOCEUOffice Oct 21

The results of the [@EUErasmusPlus](#) [#sport](#) call 2020 were published yesterday https://ec.europa.eu/sport/news/2020/selection-results-erasmus-sport-published_en.... Despite the 50% increase of applications, we are happy to see that 14 of our partners are involved in the projects. Altogether 18 European NOCs are participating. Congrats to all!

EOC EU Office

@EOCEUOffice Oct 16

Our two current projects on sport governance, [@POINTS_EU](#) & [#RINGSproject](#) would not be possible without the support of [@EUErasmusPlus](#) [#Sport](#). We look forward to continue working on [#Erasmus](#) projects during the new [#MFF](#) & congratulate the programme on all its success! [#ErasmusDays](#)

EOC EU Office

@EOCEUOffice Oct 6

The [@EOCmedia](#) EU Commission is meeting today virtually. Meeting is opened by Chair Juri Tamm and EOC Acting President [@Niels_Nygaard](#). Discussions include topics like [#COVID19](#), New Erasmus+, Green Deal and Gender Equality. Also Head of [@EU_Commission](#) Sport Unit [@lelosy](#) will join.

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EDITORIAL

Dear readers,

with the rapidly increasing numbers of new Covid-19 infections throughout the European Union, the question of how to keep professional and amateur sport alive is becoming more and more evident. Lockdowns already imposed or imminent in a number of EU Member States would severely restrict the possibility of organising sporting events and will pose unprecedented challenges for professional sport in particular.

Surveys of sports federations show the great uncertainty and raise fears that not all leagues and federations will survive the crisis if vaccines are not available soon in 2021.

In the two remaining months of the German EU Presidency, other major issues besides Covid-19 have to be addressed. In particular, the negotiations on the 2021-27 financial perspective are entering a decisive phase and are affected by the discussion on future financial sanctions for breaches of the rule of law. This means that it remains to be seen when and with what rules important programmes such as the Erasmus+ Sport and the European Structural Funds will be adopted. Particularly in the area of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), there is hope that an amendment could be adopted which would make it possible to finance sports infrastructure. This would also be a great success for the EOC EU Office, which has been working for such a provision since the beginning of the negotiations.

At its meeting on 13 October, the General Council addressed the issue of free movement in times of Covid-19 pandemic and reached a number of agreements concerning a better exchange of information between Member States and common criteria for the identification of red zones. However, the Council failed to agree on a common approach to the length of quarantine periods or the mutual recognition of tests, which would also make it easier and more predictable for sports teams to travel. At least the German Presidency of the Council has given a positive reception to the position paper on this issue drafted by the EOC EU office with European team sports federations and it is not excluded that this issue will play a role at the meeting of European Sport Ministers on 1 December.

The just published results of the Erasmus+ Sport call for proposals show a strong increase in applications, which should be seen as an important signal to ensure that the future programme will be adequately equipped. The demand is obvious and the European Commission would certainly be well advised to pay even greater attention in future to the sustainability and legacy of project applications, which can be guaranteed primarily by organised sport, i.e. federations and clubs.

Enjoy your read!

Kind regards.



Folker Hellmund

Director EOC EU Office

EUROPEAN UNION AND SPORT

Coronavirus: Council adopts a recommendation on a coordinated approach to travel measures

On 13 October 2020, the Council adopted a legally non-binding recommendation on a coordinated approach to travel measures between EU countries. Member States agreed on common criteria and a common framework on travel measures in response to the COVID-19 pandemic to reduce the negative impacts of current travel restrictions.

Specifically, this means that a common [colour-coded map](#) broken down by region will be produced weekly by the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) with the data provided by the Member States.

Moreover, Member States (MS) agreed on a common framework for possible measures for travellers:

- MS should not restrict the free movement of persons travelling to or from green areas;
- MS should in principle not refuse entry to persons travelling from other Member States, but they could require persons travelling from non-green areas to undergo quarantine or undergo a test after arrival;
- MS may offer the option of replacing this test with a test carried out before arrival;
- MS should mutually recognise the results of tests for COVID-19 infection carried out in other MS by certified health bodies.
- MS could also require persons entering their territory to submit passenger locator forms (a common European passenger locator form should be developed for possible common use).

Exemptions to quarantine rules are given to travellers with an essential function including *“persons travelling for imperative family or business reasons”*.

The decision of whether to introduce restrictions to free movement to protect public health remains the responsibility of Member States. However, these restrictions have to comply with the principles of proportionality and non-discrimination as described in the EU treaties.

Covid-19 travel restriction and its impacts on sport

Sport actors welcomed this initiative as sport has been deeply impacted by the lockdowns and mobility restrictions throughout the year. An impressive number of sporting events, including a high number of European club and national teams' competitions, had to be cancelled or postponed. Not all sport organisations and leagues on European level managed to finish the 2019/2020 season as planned. Moreover, the current patchwork of Covid-19 rules in the different Member States is causing chronic unpredictability and making effective planning and responsible organisation of pan-European competitions nearly impossible. Therefore, especially for pan-European sports, improved clarity, pragmatism and coordination at European level would make a vital difference.

European Team Sport Federations express support for Commission proposal

Prior to the Council meeting, the European Team Sport Federations (FIBA Europe, EHF, CEV, Rugby Europe and UEFA) together with the EOC, and supported by EOC EU Office, sent a joint letter to the EU Ministers. With this letter

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the European Team Sports Federations and the EOC:

- Urged the German Presidency of the Council of the EU and the Member States to take up the [proposal](#) of the European Commission from 4 September 2020 “on a coordinated approach to the restriction of free movement in response to the COVID-19 pandemic”;
- Called for a pragmatic and coordinated approach by the Member States regarding the restriction of free movement in order to safeguard the effective planning and responsible organisation of European or international competitions, including qualifications matches, until such time as a proper coordination has been achieved at European level.

The letter went on to explain the specific health protocols adopted by the federations in order to safeguard the highest level of protection for athletes, officials, necessary delegates/entourage and the general public.

In light of the current challenges of sport federations to organise pan-European competitions, the Council recommendations can only be seen as a first step in the right direction. The common framework provides only little more predictability, when organising pan-European sport competitions, as quarantine rules still vary from country to country and the mutual recognition of tests remain in the hands of each MS. Therefore, much of the burden currently lays on the shoulders of national sport federations to cope with national regulations.

Latest Developments

Given the rapidly rising numbers in most Member States, the Commission, on 28 October, launched an additional [set of actions](#). According to Commission President von der Leyen this includes “*increasing access to fast testing, and [...] facilitating safe travel when necessary*”. It will also include the launch of a common passenger locator form until December and increased interoperability of tracing apps.

This push was further underlined by the [Council meeting on 29 October](#), in which the heads of state and government agreed that stronger coordination was needed to fight the pandemic. Especially important, in the eyes of Council President Charles Michel, is the mutual recognition, deployment and use of rapid tests, as this would “*reduce the negative impact on free movement*”. EU leaders also agreed on a common approach regarding rapid testing, as well as cooperation concerning vaccines. On the latter, the Commission has been ensuring that there should be a [fair distribution of vaccines](#) to Member States, as soon as they would be available, yet, no official date has been given yet.

FURTHER INFORMATION

[Council recommendation](#)

[Commission proposal as of September 4](#)

[Website Re-Open EU](#)

[ECDC: common colour coded map](#)

MEPs host online discussion on the upcoming report “Challenges of sports events’ organisers in the digital environment”

On 28 October, MEP Tomasz Frankowski (EPP), together with his parliamentary colleagues Angel Dzhambazki (ECR), Irena Joveva (Renew Europe) and Hannes Heide (S&D) hosted an online meeting

to discuss the upcoming report “Challenges of sports events’ organisers in the digital environment”.

While MEP Dzhambazki is rapporteur of the JURI Committee, which is in charge of the report, MEP

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Frankowski is the rapporteur of the CULT Committee that is giving its opinion. MEPs Joveva and Heide are both shadow rapporteurs in CULT.

In his welcome note MEP Frankowski stressed that piracy of live sport events is threatening the sustainable development of the sport sector. Then, MEP Dzhambazki provided some introduction remarks highlighting the live factor that makes sport unique and needs special protection. Therefore, he asked for illegal streams to be removed in a timely manner.

The keynote speech was given by Mariya Gabriel, Commissioner in charge of sport. Gabriel pointed out that for many sport federations broadcasting rights are the major source of income. In this regard, piracy puts pressure on the sport system. She went on to stress that sport events differ from media content like movies and series in both its live factor and also its unpredictability of outcome. Therefore, Gabriel deemed the topic very important, concluding that the fight against online piracy does not get the attention it deserves.

The subsequent debate was moderated by Per Strömbäck of the Forum for the Digital Society Netopia, and included the following speakers:

- Krisztina Stump, Deputy Head of Copyright Unit, DG Connect, European Commission
- Bogdan Cîinaru, Intellectual Property Crime Coordinated Coalition, Europol
- Mark Lichtenhein, Chairman, Sports Rights Owners Coalition
- Erlinda Tabla, VP Head of Legal, Eurosport / Global sports
- Andrew Moger, Executive Director, News Media Coalition
- Seong Sin Han, Chief Counsel, Commercial and Technology Legal Services, UEFA

Overall, the issue was approached from different angles, e.g. from the perspective of consumers, the press, sports federations, broadcasters and law

enforcement agencies. All things considered, panellists showed large consensus over the fact that online piracy of sport events must be fought both more efficiently and in a more timely manner.

Bogdan Cîinaru from Europol explained how criminal groups take sport right holders for a ride by capturing the legal broadcasting signal and duplicating it illegally. Doing so, they run their business and generate money from subscription services illegally offered to consumers as well as by selling faulty hardware and/or advertisement. According to Cîinaru, these groups often operate from outside the EU, are not registered as companies and therefore do not pay taxes. For a consumer it is not always easy to know whether an offer is illegal, as many products can look quite professional. However, apart from being pirated, these illegal services can also pose a major threat for consumers as they can carry malware and viruses.

Erlinda Tabla from Eurosport pointed out the need to take down illegal streams in less than 30 min after detection. Otherwise, criminals would be able to set up a new illegal online stream of the very same event to follow up, which would make efforts in vain, according to her.

Seong Sin Han from UEFA joined her demand stating that “live sports need a live remedy”. He went on to clarify that piracy is a mass problem driven by criminal activity organised in business-like structures, and not at all by fans or media sharing event related content. During the European Championship 2016 around 160.000 illegal streams were detected by UEFA, which is why sport federations need to invest substantial resources to fight piracy.

Mark Lichtenhein from the Sports Rights Owners Coalition made clear that there is no ambiguity or legal uncertainty about telling a legal stream from an illegal one as this can be identified in a failproof way via watermarks and fingerprints. Hence, he called for a real time take down tool that needs to be implemented on the side of the service provider platforms. Andrew Moger from News Media Coalition also agreed that piracy is an evil that needs to be addressed, but stressed that any action should not impact the work of the media.

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Krisztina Stump from the European Commission welcomed the upcoming report of the European Parliament. Moreover, she hinted that parts of the currently negotiated Digital Services Act may be relevant for sport rights owners as well. Apart from technicalities she also highlighted the social value of sports: “The game can unify Europe like neither politics nor any other things can do.”

Finally, MEP Hannes Heide (S&D) concluded the interesting discussions. Summing up the problems of cybercrime, the value of the live factor, the risks for consumers and the growth of the black market, it became obvious for him, that there is a clear need for action.

Prior to the online discussion, both Committees of the European Parliament involved in the report have already held their first exchanges of views:

CULT on 22 September, and JURI on 1 October. While the draft opinion from CULT is already published and MEPs are able to table amendments until 30 October, the JURI Committee’s report is supposed to be published within the next weeks.

EOC EU Office is closely following the discussions and working together with the SROC on the topic.

MORE INFORMATION

[Procedure File: Challenges of sport events’ organisers in the digital environment](#)

[Draft Opinion of the CULT committee](#)

[Exchange of views CULT](#)

[Exchange of views JURI](#)

European Week of Regions and Cities: Workshop “Promoting greener sport in our regions”

As part of the European Week of Regions and Cities 2020 and in the context of the [SHARE initiative](#), a virtual workshop on ‘Promoting greener sport in our regions’ took place on 7 October 2020.

The seminar aimed at raising awareness on the major contribution that sport and physical activity can make to the second objective of the Cohesion Policy 2021-2027: A greener, low-carbon Europe. The seminar highlighted best practice examples ranging from efforts to promote green innovation, develop green and natural sport facilities and the impact of cycling and walking on transport systems to the links between encouraging a healthy and inclusive lifestyle and working for a healthy environment.

Yves le Lostecque, Head of the Commission’s Sport Unit, and Guglielmo Di Cola, member of the cabinet of Commissioner Mariya Gabriel opened the seminar. Both speakers acknowledged the power of sport to promote greener habits. Hence,

sustainable sport initiatives should be supported financially, including through Erasmus and European Structural and Investment Funds (ESI-funds). EOC EU Office warmly welcomes these remarks, as it has been actively working for the full mainstreaming of sport into different funding programmes for several years.

The workshop’s first part focused on best practices from Finland and Denmark. The first presentation was given by Liisa Kajala, Metsähallitus, [Parks & Wildlife Finland](#) entitled “Healthy Parks Healthy People – Increasing green exercise in parks and protected areas”. The second best practise example was presented by Jeppe Thogersen from Silkeborg Municipality who explained why Silkeborg is Denmark’s outdoor capital.

The presentations were followed by a panel discussion between different stakeholders:

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- Viola Von Cramon-Taubadel, Member of the European Parliament (MEP)
- Karl-Erik Nilsson, First Vice-President, Union of European Football Associations
- Pedro Mória, Policy Assistant, Cabinet of European Commissioner Ferreira for Cohesion and Reforms
- Pauline Gessant, European Affairs Officer, Ministry of Sport, France
- Thomas Larsen Schmidt, President, International Mountain Bicycling Association Europe

The discussion showed that many institutions have started promoting greener sport whether within their sport (e.g. UEFA with projects such as [Life Tackle](#), co-funded by the EU) or within their country (e.g., France and its [Charter of 15 environmental commitments](#)). Overall, it became clear that sport has a role to play in the EU sustainability goals and should act as a role model for other sectors.

Pedro Mória stated that over 100 regions have included sport in their smart specialisation strategies, which highlights the close links between sport and regional development. In specific, he mentioned that sport can play a role in achieving a greener and low carbon Europe – an objective of the cohesion policy – e.g. by investing in energy efficiency measures across the sport sector. However, he reminded the audience that in the cohesion funds sport should be used as a means to fulfil the aims of the programme, rather than being an objective in itself. Hence, the alignment of sport initiatives with cohesion policy objectives is key to successful projects. Finally, Mória reminded that ESI-funds are managed at national level to take into account specific national and regional needs. In this regard he motivated sport stakeholders to get in touch with national authorities in order to unlock the full potential of sport in the ESI-funds in the next funding period 2021-2027.

MEP von Cramon-Taubadel was impressed by the local sports projects. Therefore, she called for a better accessibility of sport to relevant EU-funds: *“I know that especially at the regional level*

for smaller sports clubs it is very difficult (to access EU funds), for example if you want to invest in energy efficient facilities (...). to support those activities on the local level would be a task for the Commission together with the European Parliament, to ensure the access to ESI-funds. This kind of access is of utmost importance for popular sport and grassroots sport.”

Pauline Gessant, European Affairs Manager of the French Sport Ministry, explained that in France 14 Mio EUR were awarded from the European Development Fund (ERDF) to the Massif Central region for the development and implementation of its tourism strategy. Thereby, 6 Mio EUR were directly given to outdoor sports as a driver of regional development. This led to the creation of 17 outdoor sports hubs with the aim to set up leisure time activities for both tourists and the local population, while providing jobs and protecting the nature.

Mike McClure, Chairman of the European Network of Outdoor Sports concluded the workshop with a short summary. Thereby, he stressed that continued support through ESI-funds is key for sport to deliver sustainable, social and economic benefits to the regional level. Moreover, he presented sport as an important tool to change behaviours for a more sustainable lifestyle in line with the Green Deal's objective.

The workshop impressively demonstrated the opportunities offered by sport to achieve the specific goal of a greener and low-carbon Europe through the ESI-funds, especially in the context of the raising climate ambition of both the European Commission ([proposal for 55% CO2 emissions reduction](#) compared to 1990 levels by 2030), and the European Parliament ([proposal for 60 % reduction](#)). However, it should be emphasised that sport can also contribute to other ESI-funds objectives, such as the goal of a Europe closer to its citizens, e.g. through community based sport programmes. The vast potential of sport in regional development through the ESI-funds is explained in the SHARE initiative [documents](#).

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MORE INFORMATION

[Promoting greener sport in our regions – background document by SHARE](#)

[Watch the replay of the workshop](#)

[SHARE Initiative website](#)

EPAS Webinar on the Impact of COVID-19 on Sport

On 7 October, Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS) of the Council of Europe organised a public webinar on the “[Impact of Covid-19 on sport: how to address new challenges in Europe](#)”.

Alexandre Husting, chair of the EPAS Governing Board, led through the discussion in a Q&A format with the following speakers:

- Ms Snežana Samardžić-Marković, Director General of Democracy at the Council of Europe
- Mr Hoss Rafaty, Secretary General of World Taekwondo Federation
- Mr Stewart Harris, Chief Executive of sportscotland (National Agency for Sport)
- Ms Wanda Wendel-Vos, Researcher from the National Institute for Public Health and the Environment (Netherlands)
- Mr Detlef Dumon, Executive Director of the International Council of Sport Science and Physical Education (ICCSPE)

All guests agreed that the impact of Corona on grassroots and elite sport has been severe and many organisations already switched into survival mode as they try to endure the pandemic.

While the crisis may also be chance to highlight the importance of physical activity and sport in terms of health and resilience, it is difficult to truly showcase these benefits when clubs cannot operate properly and are even losing members and financial resources due to the restrictions placed upon them. Especially contact and indoor sports

are suffering from the Covid-19 measures. Overall, it was reported that physical activity levels in most countries dropped since the first lockdown as schools and sport clubs had to stay closed. Many organisations have shown great adaptation skills in moving certain sport offers into the digital environment to keep members (and especially children) active. In that sense, the crisis should be used to innovate and further pursue digitalisation efforts.

Another alarming issue is the fact that many sport organisations are experiencing difficulties in attaining financial support from their respective governments due to the high and sometimes unrealistic hurdles that need to be cleared in order to be eligible for recovery and support schemes. This holds especially true for professional clubs and leagues, which provide valuable jobs and contribute to the national economy.

As is often heard in other discussions, the speakers of the webinar also reinforced the view that sport would benefit from a cross-sectoral approach in which it is better integrated into health and education policies. That way, sport could contribute more effectively to public health.

Ms Snežana Samardžić-Marković, Director General of Democracy at the CoE, stressed that sport should not be seen as a luxury but as a fundamental right. She advocated to consider the recent developments in the ongoing revision of the European Sports Charter and to pursue a holistic strategy in promoting the values of sport.

As for the role of the Council of Europe, it was agreed that the institution could function as a plat-

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form to disseminate information and good practices, especially on how governments can support the national sport sector to weather this crisis.

ULEB files a complaint against Euroleague

On 30 September, the Union of European Leagues of Basketball (ULEB) [filed a complaint](#) before European Commission against Euroleague's organiser (ECA).

In its complaint, ULEB highlighted several aspects that could be potentially not in line with European competition law.

Following the argumentation by ULEB there are mainly two practises to be criticized:

- There is no possibility to qualify for Euroleagues based on sporting merits. By providing wild cards to clubs on a hardly transparent procedures, the European model of sport, which is based on promotion and relegation, has been violated.
- Since the Euroleague is the most prestigious club competition in European Basketball, the clubs involved generate additional revenues, while playing at the same time national championships.

In this regard, these clubs do have comparative advantages towards other clubs in the national competitions as long as the participation in the Euroleagues is not based on sporting success and limited to a predefined number of clubs.

- On several times, the calendars of both national leagues and Euroleague have been in conflict, which has a strong impact on national leagues and European competitions organised by FIBA.

There is still a similar complaint from FIBA against Euroleagues (and vice-versa) pending at the EU Commission. It remains to be seen if the ULEB complaint will finally convince the DG Competition to open these procedures.

FUNDING PROGRAMMES AND STUDIES

Erasmus+ Sport 2020: publication of the results

On 20 October, the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) of the European Commission released the [selection results of the Erasmus+ Sport](#) call. This will be the last edition of the Erasmus+ Programme within the current Budget Framework, as the next MFF will entail a new format and a different allocation of resources from 2021 onwards.

The programme was extremely popular this year as the following overview shows:

- 1142 applications were received this year, representing a record increase of 50% in comparison to the 2019 call;
- 315 projects were selected (compared with 260 last year) and will thus receive funding from the Commission. Out of these there were:
 - 121 projects under Collaborative partnerships action
 - 180 projects under Small Collaborative partnerships action
 - 14 projects under Not-for-profit European Sport Events action

Considering the high increase of applications, the EOC EU Office would like to warmly congratulate the 14 partners of the Office, which will be involved in the Erasmus+ projects starting in 2021. Two of them will lead Collaborative partnerships, namely ENGSO with its EQUIP project promoting equality, as well as the Lithuanian NOC's project addressing the empowerment of women in sport. Overall, 18 European NOCs and 5 European sport federations will take part in different projects including European Handball Federation, European Athletics and European Volleyball Confederation. As every year a detailed analysis of the results will be made by the EOC EU Office in the upcoming weeks.

For the next rounds of applications, the [EACEA has already announced](#) that it will only begin publishing the new calls for proposals once the negotiations between the Commission, the Council and the Parliament for the new 2021-2027 framework are completed.

The EOC EU Office congratulates all successful applicants and wishes them all the best for the implementation of their projects.

Pilot Projects and Preparatory Actions – 2020 results announced

Results of the Erasmus+ Sport 2020 call were not the only ones in the area of sport to be announced by the EU institutions. In the last edition of our Monthly Report, we have informed readers

about the results of the call launched in the framework of the Preparatory action on "Exchanges and mobility in sport. A couple of weeks later, the European Commission published the list of successful

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project applications in another three Pilot Projects and Preparatory Actions ([PP/PA](#)):

- [7 projects were selected](#) (out of 96 applications) under the Sport as a tool for integration and social inclusion of refugees call, among them the “Kids Love Sports” project of the Hellenic Olympic Committee.
- [5 projects were selected](#) (out of 31 applications) in the framework of the Monitoring and coaching, through sports, of youngsters at risk of radicalisation call.
- [5 project applications](#) (out of 141) were successful in the first call of the Grassroots sport programmes and infrastructure innovation Pilot Project.

In total, there has been a considerable increase in the number of applications for the three calls, which have been launched also last year (mobility, radicalization, and refugees). Even though this meant a lower success rate in general, representatives of the organised sport movement were more successful than in previous years (14 out of 27 projects).

- 2 European federations (basketball and archery)
- 5 national football associations (NL, RO, MT, BE, IT)
- 4 (other) national federations (swimming – PT, korfbal – NL, athletics – IT and ES)
- 1 NOC (EL)
- 1 Regional sport confederation (DE)
- 1 sport club (BG)

PP/PA present an additional opportunity for sport organisations to apply for EU funding to co-finance their projects. They are managed directly by the European Commission (not by the Executive Agency) and deal with topics or ways of working, which are not directly supported by the Erasmus+ Sport Programme. Proposed by the European Parliament, the aim of PP/PA is to serve as a “laboratory” or “test” for new actions, which, upon successful evaluation, may become part of regular EU funding programmes.

INTERNAL AND VISITS

Partner Meeting - Update on the EU Sport Policy

On 13 October, an update on EU Sport Policy was virtually organised for the Partners of the EOC EU Office. More than 20 Partners were taking part in the online-meeting, to be informed but also to contribute in the form of an exchange of views and sharing of good practices on the current issues regarding sport in the EU.

Following a warm welcome to all participants, Folker Hellmund (FH), Director of the EOC EU Office, presented the latest news from the EOC EU Office:

- ENGSO is recruiting a successor to Kaisa Larjomaa, who left the office in September
- The Second half of the EU German Presidency will focus on the next Work Plan for Sport
- The next Special Competence Seminar will take place on 8 December 2020

The first topic on the agenda was the impact of the Covid-19 crisis on sport. A short update was given on the latest developments since the [Commission's proposal to harmonise travel restrictions](#), and the planned study on the impact of the pandemic on sport. Furthermore, the possibilities for sport to be integrated in the different recovery schemes and EU programmes were discussed.

The participants were also asked to talk about their own experiences with the management of the Covid-19 crisis and its effect on sport in their country. Common challenges were mentioned such as:

- The organisation of indoor sport events
- The restriction or even ban of spectators at venues

- The limits of EU and national supporting measures
- The decrease in memberships and the access to facilities

On the other hand, some good practices were highlighted, regarding the relation with national governments and ministries on the political side, the coordination with other sport organisations (Portugal with National Paralympic Committee) or some concrete solutions such as the voucher programme for sport clubs in France. Overall, one important aspect stressed by all the partners was the very much needed harmonisation of travel rules.

As a next topic, the EOC EU Office addressed the different ways to make the advocacy work of sport organisations more efficient. The members of the Office highlighted the importance to cultivate and maximise relations with all relevant decision-makers and stakeholders as well as the need to have coordinated messages in order to speak with one voice. This lobbying is crucial for different aspects of European and national sport policy such as the mainstreaming of sport into different EU-funds. Participants also showcased examples of good practices.

After a fruitful discussion, the EOC EU Office took the floor for some other news on current sport-related developments at EU level. Director Folker Hellmund introduced the recent complaint filed by the Union of European Leagues of Basketball (ULEB) against Euroleague's organiser ECA. The complaint points out that Euroleague's shareholders would be actually acting as a cartel.

Regarding the EU Recovery Plan and Next Generation EU, the updated figures were presented, namely a budget of €750 billion, of which €672,5

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billion would go to Recovery Plan. Concerning the ongoing negotiations on the EU's long-term budget, the so-called Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF), updated information has been provided. Thanks to successful lobbying of the EOC EU Office sport has indeed been included in a draft recital of the ERDF as well as in the Parliament's drafts of the EU4Health and ESF+. However, the negotiations are still ongoing.

Furthermore, the partners received an update on the recent developments at the Council of Europe and on the European Parliament's report "Chal-

lenges of sport events' organisers in the digital environment" as well as on the selection results of Pilot Projects that had been published shortly before the meeting.

The webinar ended with a special "selfie" of all participants, that was then tweeted with a greeting to the Commissioner responsible sport, Mariya Gabriel, wishing her a speedy recovery after she was diagnosed with Covid-19. We are happy to hear that Commissioner Gabriel has since recovered and is back at work.

EOC EU Commission members met online to discuss recent EU activities

On 6 October 2020, the EOC EU Commission met virtually to discuss recent developments at EU level and current challenges in the sport sector as well as the future of the EOC EU Commission. The meeting brought together representatives of 9 National Olympic Committees who are members of the Commission; along with the EOC Acting President Niels Nygaard and was organised by the EOC EU Office.

Jüri Tamm, Chair of the Commission, and Niels Nygaard, both highlighted the challenging situation that the sport in Europe is facing due to the pandemic, including the impacts of cancellation of events and travel restrictions. Niels Nygaard also addressed several recent activities, such as the EPAS elections, the postponement of Winter EYOF 2021, the situation in Belarus or the progress in the organisation of the European Games 2023.

An exchange of views took place on the issue of recovery measures for sport and the general relations with governments in the current period of the Covid-19 crisis. Discussions revealed that not all national governments responded to the current needs of the sport sector and that the harmonisation of European travel rules would be warmly welcomed by sport stakeholders, whether outside or

inside the EU. The question of a potential vaccines and their availability for athletes was also raised.

In the second part of the virtual meeting, an update was given by the EOC EU Office to the partners on key topics. In addition, Jüri Tamm emphasised the importance of sustainability, whether within the framework of the Green Deal or of the UN Climate Framework. He also raised the question of cooperation with e-sport as a key topic for the future. The EOC EU Office gave an overview on the latest developments on the Erasmus+, gender equality, and the revisions of the Sports Charter within the Council of Europe. Another key subject was the European Sport Model.

The second part of meeting was dedicated to the discussion with Yves le Lostecque from the Sport Unit, who presented the latest EU Sport News on behalf of the European Commission. He congratulated all the stakeholders involved in the organisation of the European Week of Sport despite the pandemic, for which the virtual ceremonies of the #BeActive and #BeInclusive awards will take place on 1 and 8 December. Yves le Lostecque also announced the upcoming study on the impact of Covid-19 on sport, as well as the Conference on the future of Sport, which will be organised on 17

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November. This conference aims at tackling the issues of professional and grassroots sport at EU level and at discussing the future of sport after the pandemic.

Last but not least, members also discussed the activities and the future of the EOC EU Commission. Further exchanges will be organised in the upcoming months.

POINTS project officially launches tools to support integrity activities and good governance in sport organisations

The Erasmus+ co-financed POINTS Project enters its final phase of activities with the publication of the two main outcomes developed by the project consortium:

- The Guidelines for Single Points of Contact for Integrity in Sport;
- SIGGS 2.0 Self-evaluation tool for Good Governance in Sport organisation.

Managed by the EOC EU Office, the POINTS project supported the setting-up and the training of Single Points of Contact for Integrity (SPOCs) within fourteen sport organisations including eleven NOCs, European Athletics, European Volleyball Confederation and FIBA Europe. It is now time for the project consortium to share its knowledge and developed tools to encourage other European and national organisations to strengthen their integrity policies and strategies.

Guidelines for Single Points of Contact for Integrity in Sport

Building on the expertise of the IOC, INTERPOL and other partners, the consortium developed a comprehensive document with the objective to support the setting-up of SPOCs within Sport organisations. The objectives of the Guidelines are the following:

- Propose a common approach for the concept of SPOC to facilitate cooperation and communication between sport organisations and their stakeholders;

- Identify key activities which can be conducted by SPOCs as well as potential developments and challenges;
- Propose recommendations on the steps to be followed when setting-up a SPOC in a sport organisation.

The Guidelines published today are enriched by more than a year of experience, activities and trainings for the SPOCs nominated by the fourteen partner organisations of the POINTS. The Guidelines are available for all sport organisations – NOCs, sport confederations, European federations and national federations - on the website of the [POINTS project](#).

The POINTS project will use the upcoming weeks to promote the Guidelines towards all European NOCs and their members. The objective is to enlarge the scope of organisations setting-up SPOCs and to contribute to the implementation of efficient integrity policies.

The POINTS project started in January 2018 and will end in June 2021. The consortium is composed of the EOC EU Office (project leader) and 17 partners including 11 NOCs (Belgium, Denmark, Norway, Netherlands, France, Czech Republic, Slovenia, Italy, Portugal, Germany and Croatia), 3 European federations (European Athletics, European Volleyball Confederation and FIBA Europe) and 3 specialised organisations (INTERPOL, Sport & Recreation Alliance UK and EOSE). The IOC, through its Ethics and Compliance Office, is an associated partner of the project.

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Please do not hesitate to contact POINTS project management if you have any further question: Capelli@euoffice.euolympic.org

SIGGS 2.0 self-evaluation tool for sport organisations

In 2015, the EOC EU Office has developed the “Support the Implementation of Good Governance in Sport (SIGGS) self-evaluation tool” aiming at to support the implementation of Good Governance principles in sport organisations via a self-assessment questionnaire and personalised action plans. The tool has been used by more than 300 European, national and regional sport organisations around Europe.

The second version of the tool, SIGGS 2.0, pursues the ambition to support sport organisations in their path towards better governance. To achieve this objective, the tool has been updated to integrate recent integrity developments and governance good practices and to include additional features for the users.

Key characteristics of the SIGGS 2.0:

- 45 to 50 questions, depending the nature of your organisation, based on four key governance principles:

- Integrity
- Autonomy & Accountability
- Transparency
- Democracy, Participation and Inclusivity
- Automatically generated results synthesis and personalised action plans;
- Access to a library of “Roadmaps” including good practice examples on 20 integrity and governance areas;
- Possibility for individual or collaborative answers and to modify the answers at any time.
- Questionnaire is available in 12 languages (EN, FR, GE, HR, SL, CZ, IT, NT, DK, NO, PT, LT)

Registration to the SIGGS 2.0 is accessible free of charge at <http://siggs.novagov.com/>.

MORE INFORMATION

[Website of POINTS project](#)

[Twitter account of the POINTS Project](#)

[SIGGS 2.0](#)

PARTNERS' CORNER

SPIRIT project: Sport as a solution to the global mental health crisis?

Throughout the pandemic, mental health issues have been in the focus of public authorities and media across the world. With sport clubs being forced to close their doors, the potential positive impacts of sport on mental wellbeing have been mitigated, further adding to the immense mental health crisis resulting from Covid-19 pandemic.

The SPIRIT (Sport & Psycho-social Initiative for Inclusive Training) project, led by ENGSO, the European Sports NGO, addresses the topic of sport and mental wellbeing. The project, funded from the Erasmus+ Sport Programme in 2020–2022, was drafted well before the emergence of the coronavirus. However, the pandemic is further underlining the urgency of the topic.

In the early phases of the project, MIELI Mental Health Finland, one of the project partners, composed an easy-to-read [overview](#) on the mechanisms behind sport's impact on mental health and wellbeing. Mental well-being can be promoted at individual level, for example by strengthening self-esteem and life skills; at community level, by strengthening social support and increasing the safety of the environment; and structural level, by e.g. making social decisions that reduce discrimination and inequality. It is evident that sport in an organised setting can make an impact at all these levels.

The focus of the SPIRIT project is to develop a framework for humane, inclusive and empowering coaching and sport clubs that nurture mental wellbeing. The first concrete activities of the project are to conduct a research review, led by International Council of Sport Science and Physical Education (ICSSPE), and to collect useful best practice examples in the field of sport and mental wellbeing, led by MIELI.

The first analyses of both outputs were presented at the second project meeting, organised online on 26–27 October 2020. The process has already produced some interesting observations, such as:

- Sport can promote a healthy lifestyle – not only physical activity, but also sleep and good daily rhythm
- The importance of a positive and empathetic athlete-coach relationship
- The coach's role in supporting the autonomy of the participant (as opposed to controlling)
- The coach can foster a positive body image and self-esteem
- In order to support their participants, coaches also need to feel supported
- Policies and guidelines for coaching should be in place at club level; club culture should be supportive and inclusive
- Coaches need concrete advice how they can support mental wellbeing
- Lack of time, shortage of qualified staff or proper facilities, and resistance against change pose obstacles to promoting mental wellbeing

The first outputs will be finalised and published in early 2021. After that, the project partners will construct recommendations rising from the analysis of the research and good practices (led by ICSSPE) and create a framework for humane, inclusive and empowering coaching (led by International Table Tennis Federation Foundation). In 2021 and 2022, events will be organised in Germany, Greece, Belgium, Finland, Spain and Bulgaria, for the purpose

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of training coaches and sharing the recommendations with relevant stakeholders. Finally, in 2022, an innovative online learning tool will provide easy-access training for coaches from all over Europe.

MORE INFORMATION

[SPIRIT project website](#)

[Presentation about the relationship between sport and mental wellbeing](#)

[SPIRIT on Twitter](#)

[SPIRIT on LinkedIn](#)

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UPCOMING EVENTS

03 November 2020	POINTS Webinar (EOC EU Office – online meeting)
05 November 2020	EPAS Ministerial Meeting (Council of Europe) – online meeting)
13 November 2020	European Sport Platform (ENGSO – online meeting)
27 November 2020	EOC General Assembly (EOC – Rome, Italy)