

## The House of European Sport

### Tweets of the month

EOC EU Office  
@EOCEUOffice 6 December

Opening session of  
@EuSport on  
#SportDiplomacy with  
@TNavracsicsEU  
@FijiPM and @VRoziere –  
Follow-up of #HLG on  
#SportDiplomacy

EOC EU Office  
@EOCEUOffice 30 November

Viera Kerpanova of  
Executive Agency #EACEA  
presenting @EuSport  
@EUErasmusPlus Sport  
call  
2017 at @EOCEUOffice  
Special Competence  
Seminar

EOC EU Office  
@EOCEUOffice 29 November

Project management  
answers questions  
from participants on  
@SIGGS\_EU self-  
evaluation tool  
#GoodGovernance  
@VanBaelenM  
@ThierryZintz  
@EOCmedia

SIGGS Project  
@SIGGS\_EU 22 November

#SIGGS Final Conference  
on  
29 November 2016 Brussels  
with final version self-  
evaluation tool  
@EOCEUOffice  
@EOCmedia

Editorial 2

## EUROPEAN UNION AND SPORT

EP Sport Intergroup: How to combine education and work with sport? 2

Program of the Maltese Council Presidency: January - June 2017 3

European Commission organises Seminar on Sports Diplomacy 5

Study on gender-based violence in sport 6

EU Sports Ministers Council meeting focuses on sports diplomacy 7

The EP CULT Committee adopts reports on an integrated approach to sport policy and on the implementation of Erasmus+ 8

Follow-up on the Dutch declaration on Major Sport events 9

EP and Council start discussions on Multi-Annual Financial Framework 10

## FUNDING PROGRAMMES, STUDIES AND PROJECTS

Final Conference officially closes SIGGS Project with presentation final version self-evaluation tool 11

## INTERNAL AND VISITS

EOC EU Office: Partners meet for Special Competence Seminar 2016 13

13th Executive Board meeting of the EOC EU Office 14

## PARTNERS' CORNER

RF: Sport and the Social Fund in Sweden 15

## NEXT MONTH

Dates in January 2017 16

## *The House of European Sport*

### EDITORIAL

Dear readers,

The year 2016 comes to an end and it was definitely one of the most challenging ones in the history of organised sport. The dimension of problems related to doping or match fixing are enormous. Only if governments and sport organisations are working hand in hand substantial and sustainable improvements can be obtained.

Looking on the European Sport Policy in 2016 there was a rather new policy field that was boosted by the Council and the EU-Commission: Sports Diplomacy. After having installed in 2015 a High level Group on this topic, their recommendations were handed over to Commissioner Navracsics end of June. In July the Slovakian EU Presidency choose Sports Diplomacy as their favourite topic in the field of Sport; however the link to the activities of the EU Commission in the same field remained low. From the sport perspective a pragmatic approach seems to be the most appropriate one. Provided politics can help to develop sport and sport structures e.g. in countries outside Europe, sport should work closely together with governments. However, sport actors should be always aware of the risk to get misused for purely political purposes.

Another initiative on the better cooperation between governments and sport federation in the field of major sport events was launched by the Dutch EU-Presidency. The Olympic Movement shared the objective of the Presidency and hopes that the follow-up activities will improve the conditions for future major sport events in Europe.

From the view of the EOC EU Office two other areas have been higher on the agenda: the application of antitrust policy to sport and the evaluation and implementation of good governance in sport. It is not a secret that the EU Commission has a very strong competence regarding the application of antitrust rules. However the application to sport requires a specific approach due to the fact that sport federations are non-profit organisations that invest the bulk of the revenues back to the development of the respective sport. If revenues decrease due to events organised by purely profit orientated companies, investments in the education of young athletes, referees or in women sport would be at stake. Sport doesn't ask for a full exemption from the application of antitrust policy but expects a better recognition of the societal role of organised sport and the important governing role of federations especially in the context of safety and integrity of events.

Looking forward to 2017 the improvement of good governance in sport at all levels should be the overarching objective. Connected to this is the full implementation of the Olympic Agenda 2020 and the promotion of self-assessment tools such as our SIGGS projects has offered to NOC's and national federations. The number of around 250 sport federations that worked with the tool proves the great interest to progress in this regard. The EOC EU Office will definitely continue working in the promotion and dissemination of good practices.

On behalf of the whole staff of the EOC EU Office I wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, enjoy your read,



Folker Hellmund

Director EOC EU Office

## EUROPEAN UNION AND SPORT

### EP Sport Intergroup: How to combine education and work with sport?

On 15 November, the Sport Intergroup of the European Parliament held an event on Dual Careers for athletes and how to combine education and work with sport.

MEPs Marc Tarabella and Santiago Fisas Aixela, co-presidents of the Intergroup, together with Agata Dziarnowska, Policy Officer at the European Commission's Sport Unit, welcomed the numerous guests, and stressed the utmost importance of dual careers for elite athletes in their opening statements.

Ms. Dziarnowska described three different approaches to dealing with dual careers in sport at European level

1. Expert level – EU Guidelines on Dual Careers.
2. Political level - Council Conclusions on dual careers in sports
3. Academic level – Recent Study on Minimum Quality Requirements.

She also informed the participants about a forthcoming report of the Council Expert Group report on the implementation of the Dual Careers guidelines in the Members States (for more information, see the October edition of the Monthly Report), which is to be finalised in the first quarter of 2017, and recalled that since 2014 Erasmus+ has provided an important support to European dual careers projects.

The first part of the event featured a panel discussion on 'How to ensure quality of dual career services'. Cees Vervoorn, former Olympic swimmer, coach and lecturer at University of Amsterdam, called for the

installation of a centralised system, which would monitor the implementation of dual careers services in the Member States and help them whenever needed. According to him, this measure would contribute to closing the gap between the labour market and the sports world.

Paul Wylleman, Professor of Sport Psychology at Vrije Universiteit Brussel, explained that elite athletes often have higher success rates in the academic world. He also called for the recognition of "dual career support providers" as an independent profession.

The second panel focused on the topic of 'How to effectively motivate athletes' and was moderated by MEP and former professional handball player and coach Bogdan Wenta.

Wolfgang Stockinger, head of career development Austria at KADA, an organisation which assists elite athletes in education and employment during and after their sports career, pointed out achievements in helping Austrian athletes reach their full potential.

The national manager of Talented Athlete Scholarship Scheme (TASS), Guy Taylor, explained the usual career paths of athletes as either an educational or a sports path. In providing links between the educational and the sports world, TASS effectively helps athletes to combine the two paths. Former elite ski jumper and current PhD candidate Andreas Küttel presented his own career path as a possible model on how to combine sports and higher education.

Last speaker in the panel was former chair of the IOC Athletes Commission, Claudia Bokel. As a former elite fencer and Olympic silver

## *The House of European Sport*

medallist, as well as a Master of Science in Chemistry, Ms Bokel could speak about the dual career path from own experience. In her short statement, she explicitly praised platforms for elite athletes, which can be helpful in preparing them for a career outside of sports: The IOC Athlete Career Program, the Athlete Learning Gateway and the Olympic Athletes Hub.

In the following Q&A session the importance of dual career paths for very young athletes was stressed, among other things.

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### MORE INFORMATION

[EP Research for CULT-Committee: Qualifications/ Dual Careers in Sports](#)

[EU Guidelines on Dual Careers of Athletes](#)

[Study on the Minimum Quality Requirements for Dual Career Services](#)

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## Programme of the Maltese Council Presidency: January - June 2017

Malta, the country taking over the 6 month Presidency of the EU Council on 1 January 2017, published its programme on 22 November 2016.

The programme is based on six main topics: Migration, Single Market, Security, Social Inclusion, Europe's Neighbourhood and Maritime.

Without a specific mention of the sports sector, the Maltese Presidency nevertheless focuses on the trio program of the Dutch, Slovak and Maltese presidencies 2016-2017. This program includes the commitment to capitalize on education in and through sport with specific attention to major sport events, sport diplomacy and voluntary activities. Malta is wanting to focus on the last points after Slovakia and the Netherlands have worked on the other two.

Concerning the Digital Single Market agenda, the Maltese presidency is set to focus on

allowing "EU consumers to continue enjoying their 'home' subscription to Audio Visual online content when visiting another member state" (portability). This has a strong connection to the accessibility of online broadcasts of sport events, which are at the moment often inaccessible because of geo-blocking.

As sport can play an important role in the inclusion of different social groups, the sport sector is indirectly mentioned by underlining the importance of social inclusion within the European Union. The priorities also include combating gender-based violence and to promote the rights of LGBTIQ-people. The cooperation with social partners, civil society and citizens is seen as a crucial part of these efforts, which may also involve all kinds of sport clubs and/ or federations as a significant part of civil society.

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### FURTHER INFORMATION

[Priorities of the Maltese Council Presidency](#)

## *The House of European Sport*

### European Commission organises Seminar on Sports Diplomacy

On 6 December 2016, the European Commission organised a Seminar on Sports Diplomacy. The main aim of the Seminar was to discuss the Report of the High-Level Group on Sports Diplomacy, which was finalised in June 2016, and to consider how the recommendations of this Report could be put in practice.



Following the words of welcome by Commissioner Tibor Navracscics, the Prime Minister of Fiji, Mr. Josaia Voreqe Bainimarama, delivered an inspiring speech on sports diplomacy and the importance of the first ever gold medal at the Olympics for Fiji (in Rugby Sevens at Rio 2016). He particularly stressed the importance of sporting success for the image of the country externally, but also internally for all citizens. In this regard, he stated that investing in sport in developing countries is not only an important aspect of diplomatic relations, but more importantly a means to enhance living standards of ordinary people. The opening session was concluded by MEP Virginie Rozière, who explained the recent activities of the European Parliament in the field of sport on behalf of the Sport Intergroup.

The Seminar continued with a number of keynote addresses. Elena Malíková presented the outcomes and activities of the Slovak EU Presidency and in particular the Council Conclusions on Sports Diplomacy. In addition, Valérie Fourneyron, co-Rapporteur of the

Report of the High-Level Group, presented the 15 recommendations that were included in the Final Report.

A high-level panel discussion, which closed the morning session, focused on the question of if and how sport can be used as a tool in diplomacy. The panel, moderated by Richard Parrish, included two members of the High-Level Group, Pál Schmitt (IOC Member) and Jean Brihault, as well as Rodrigo Rivera, Ambassador of the Republic of Colombia to the Kingdom of Belgium, Luxembourg and the EU, and Joanna Zukowska-Easton, Sports Director of the Ministry of Sport of Poland. One of the elements that the panellists touched upon was the added value for a country of organising major sport events, including economic elements such as tourism and job creation, but also the impact on citizens including the promotion of physical activity and health lifestyle, skills development, education and the improvement of infrastructure. In this regard, several speakers highlighted the connection between investing in high-level sports and the positive impact of these investments on grassroots level.

The second part of the Seminar was opened by a session on EU external action, with a focus on funding opportunities available for sport in external programmes such as the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance, European Neighbourhood Instrument, European Development Fund, or the Development Cooperation Instrument. In their presentations experts from DG DEVCO and DG NEAR highlighted that opportunities exist for sport-related projects to be funded under these instruments already now and encouraged the sport sector to get involved in the preparation of future funding priorities and programmes. This is best done directly via EU delegations in the concerned countries. Furthermore, the session included a presentation of the opportunities in Erasmus+



## *The House of European Sport*

Sport for non-EU partner countries showing the possibility to participate in collaborative partnerships.

During the afternoon, three parallel workshops were organised to discuss the implementation of the 15 recommendations of the High-Level Group. The first workshop dealt with EU external relations, the second one with the promotion of EU values in the context of major sport events and advocacy, and the third one with the development of an organisational culture of sports diplomacy.

The Workshop was concluded by Yves Le Losteque, Head of the Commission's Sport Unit. He noted that the next occasion to discuss sport diplomacy and the concrete measures to be implemented will be the EU Sport Forum (7-8 March 2017, Malta). It remains to be seen though, how the outcomes of the Seminar and the recommendations will be followed up in practice. In any case, sport diplomacy is likely to remain a topic on the EU sport policy agenda in the coming years.

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### FURTHER INFORMATION

[High-Level Group: general information and Final Report](#)

## Study on gender-based violence in sport

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In November, the first [EU study on the topic of gender-based violence in sport](#) (GBV) was published by the European Commission. Long-awaited, it provides an overview of the legal and policy frameworks in the EU Member States, describes sport and civil society organisations' initiatives, identifies best practices in combating these negative phenomena and puts forward recommendations for future action. It focuses on the coach-athlete relationship, the relationship of athletes and their entourage (e.g. managers, officials, doctors and physiotherapists) and the athlete-athlete relationship. It considers both female and male victims, and female and male perpetrators.

Led by consultancy Yellow Window, the researchers came to the following conclusions:

- Even though legal frameworks in EU Member States do allow for the prosecution of many forms of GBV in sport, and some countries have even developed special national policies addressing this kind of violence in sport, the concept itself is not well known. Consequently also the awareness

regarding the application of existing legislation is lacking.

- Policies addressing GBV in sport are at the crossroads of several sectors resulting in a fragmentation of responsibilities, and lack of leadership and ownership.
- Cases of GBV are often not reported.
- The magnitude in sport is unknown.
- Support services for victims of GBV in sport are scarce.
- Prevention initiatives have already been established, but they are seldom monitored or evaluated.

The study stresses that a holistic approach, which assesses the situation, and consists of prevention, legal, policy and disciplinary provisions, services for victims and multi-disciplinary and multi-actor partnerships, is needed to fight GBV effectively and efficiently.

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### MORE INFORMATION

[EU study on the topic of gender-based violence in sport](#)

## *The House of European Sport*

### EU Sports Ministers Council meeting focuses on sports diplomacy

On 22 November 2016, the EU Sports Ministers met in Brussels for the formal Sports Ministers Council in order to exchange on different policy fields including topics of sports diplomacy, the link between sport and skills development as well as the specific nature of sporting activities.

The first topic on the agenda was a discussion on sports diplomacy. The Slovak presidency stressed the various activities that has been recently conducted at the EU level on this topic. In this regard, the presidency welcomed the fruitful discussions with sport organisations and stressed the need to pursue in that direction by informing as much as possible policy makers of sport representatives' views and opinions on the way to efficiently use sport as a diplomatic tool.

In addition, the Council adopted conclusions on sports diplomacy with the main objective to highlight sport as a means to influence diplomatic, intercultural, social, economic and political relations of the EU. These conclusions also raised the necessity to enhance relations between the EU and relevant sports and international governmental organisations to make the best use of the potential of sport in foreign policy. Furthermore, in its conclusions, the Council included several proposals in line with recommendations adopted by the High Level Group on sports diplomacy, in June:

- Include sport in agreements with third countries;
- Use major sport events as a tool to promote EU values and which the EU's economic objectives of growth, employment and competitiveness;
- Ensure the mainstreaming of sports diplomacy within the European Commission and the European External Action Service;

To conclude this part of the discussion, Commissioner Tibor Navracsics expressed his support to the promotion of EU sport ambassadors as well as the idea to open up the European Week of Sport to third countries and to finance sports diplomacy related projects under Erasmus+ Sport.

Another subject emphasized by the Slovak presidency was the impact of sport on personal development. Sport ministers discussed the personal benefits that sport can offer to participants notably by increasing their self-confidence, their teamwork ability and social skills. They linked the topic with the "*New Skills Agenda for Europe*" presented by the Commission few months ago. Then, two athletes, Danka Bartekova, elite shooter and IOC member and Matej Toth, Olympic and world champion in 50 km walk, came to present their views on the topic and to exchange with the ministers.

The final item discussed during the meeting was a note of information from the French delegation regarding the "*Developments and specific features of European sport*". The French delegation expressed its concerns regarding the current challenges threatening the future of the European sporting model. They notably underlined the fact that "*the recent emergence of new participants in the organisation of sport and sporting competitions is worthy of our attention since such developments risk disrupting the ways in which sport has traditionally been organised in Europe. It is clear from several recent cases that a purely commercial logic which relegates sporting considerations and values to secondary status constitutes a threat to the European sporting model*". Therefore they call EU institutions to tackle the issue and to discuss the creation of a clear legislative

## *The House of European Sport*

framework within the next EU Work Plan for Sport.

The meeting has been concluded by the announcement of the Maltese presidency regarding their future priorities: social inclusion

and volunteering in sport and the EU Work Plan on Sport.

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### MORE INFORMATION

[Council conclusions on sports diplomacy Outcome of the Council meeting](#)

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## The EP CULT Committee adopts reports on an integrated approach to sport policy and on the implementation of Erasmus+

On 5 December, the CULT Committee of the European Parliament has voted on two reports, respectively on the implementation of the Erasmus+ programme, including the Sport chapter, and on an integrated approach to sport policy.

Beside the vote of these reports, this meeting also allowed MEPs to have an exchange of views with Commissioner Tibor Navracsics on various topics part of his portfolio. Regarding sport, the Commissioner reiterated his strong support to the signature and the entry into force of the Council of Europe Convention on Manipulation of Sports Competition. In that perspective, he expressed his disappointment on the lack of progress regarding the signature of the Convention at the EU level. Furthermore, he stressed the work already done by the Commission on both Good Governance and Sports diplomacy and he clearly indicated his willingness to pursue these activities in 2017. In a more general perspective, the Commissioner also announced that the Commission intends to develop, in the future, the possibility for more countries to take part of Erasmus+ programmes.

Following the exchange with the Commissioner, MEPs decided to adopt both Takkula and Zver report. The Takkula report on *“an integrated approach to Sport Policy: good governance,*

*accessibility and integrity”* is an “Own Initiative Report” of the European Parliament (EP) which will not be legally binding for other EU institutions. However, this report should be the only EP document entirely dedicated to sport during the current legislative period and will, consequently, establish the general position of the European Parliament on sport issues and shape their future activities. The EOC EU Office and its partners have been very active to obtain several improvements including a reference to the specific nature of sporting activities, a clear support to the current European sport model as well as provisions on the role of volunteers in sport and the importance of mainstreaming of sport at the EU level.

The other report adopted by the CULT Committee was on the *“Implementation of Erasmus+”*. This report is covering all chapters of Erasmus+ including the sport programme and the rapporteur, Milan Zver (EPP, Slovenia), has been in contact with a vast range of stakeholders, including the EOC EU Office, to prepare an assessment on the first two years of implementation of the programme as well as recommendations for the future. In the field of sport, the report underlined the necessity to reduce the administrative burden in order to facilitate the access of grassroots sport organisations to the programme.



## *The House of European Sport*

Discussions and votes on both reports in the plenary session of the EP has been scheduled for 2 February 2017. The EOC Office is closely following the developments regarding both reports and a deeper analysis will be available following the final adoption of the reports.

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### MORE INFORMATION

[Procedure file Implementation of Erasmus+](#)

[Procedure file report on an integrated approach to Sport Policy: good governance, accessibility and integrity](#)

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## Follow-up on the Dutch declaration on Major Sport events

Organised by the former Dutch EU Presidency nearly 20 Member States representatives met beginning of December in order to discuss the follow-up of the declaration on Major Sport Events (MSE) adopted end of May 2016. The sport was represented Folker Hellmund (IOC/EOC) and Julien Zylberstein (UEFA).

From the Olympic Movement perspective the following aspects should be taken into account:

- The EU activities on MSE should be linked to other existing activities in which governments and sport federations are sitting together in order to avoid an overlap of work
- Sport events are more and more organised by commercial organisers as part of their business model. That creates problems for sport federations and their existing events. The revenues are needed for develop the respective sport (financing of youth sport or education of referees etc.)
- A clear distinction of tasks and responsibilities between sport organisers and governments should be made. Very often only sport federations are blamed e.g. for the missing sustainability of sport infrastructure. The implementation of the Olympic Agenda 2020 is key in this regard e.g. to reduce costs for bidding and hosting Olympic Games.

One main objective of the initiative should be to restore the trust of governments and the population in major sport events. The negative referenda on Olympic Games in some European countries (GER, NOR, SWI) could be regarded as an alert and should trigger common efforts to keep Europe as an excellent host for future MSE.

Further procedure:

- The topic of MSE will be most likely taken up as part of the new Work Plan of Sport Ministers (2017-2020). Furthermore it's obvious that apart from High Level meetings a working structure (incl. federations, governments, and experts) is required in order to produce any outcome. This question will be discussed in the upcoming months before the Sport Ministers Work Plan will be adopted end of May 2017. Further points have been raised by Member States:
  - How smaller countries can be part of major sport events?
  - How host cities and federations could share better expertise in organising events?

It is most likely that the topic of MSE will be taken up at the Sport Forum (8/9 March) in Malta.

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## *The House of European Sport*

### EP and Council start discussions on Multi-Annual Financial Framework

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On 14 September 2016, the European Commission presented a package consisting of a communication and legislative proposals on the EU's Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) for 2014-2020. The MFF lays down maximum annual levels of EU spending in different areas. Pursuant to the MFF regulation, the Commission had to present a review of the functioning of the MFF.

End of June, the European Parliament had already adopted an Own-Initiative Report as a first negotiating positioning, concluding that due to a number of new challenges and initiatives including the migration crisis, youth unemployment and security concerns, a "fundamental increase of funds" and a thorough review was necessary.

In September, the Commission then proposed to free up 6,4 billion EUR for the priority areas of Growth and Jobs; Migration, Security and border control; and the external investment plan from budget reserves, but also proposed measures to simplify rules and make the budget more flexible. It was also propose to increase the funds for Erasmus+ by 200 Mio. EUR.

These measures aim to make access to EU funds easier for citizens and organisations, reduce financial rules, but also to create flexibility

funds and crisis reserves in order to better react to unforeseen events.

The General Affairs Council has discussed the proposal on 15 November and 13 December, but could not reach a final position yet.

After the Council has reached an agreement, the European Parliament still has to give its consent.

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#### MORE INFORMATION

[European Commission Press Release \(14/9/2016\): "EU budget review further focuses budget on priorities, ensures more flexibility and less red tape"](#)

[European Commission Communication \(14/9/2016\): Mid-term review/revision of the multiannual financial framework 2014-2020: An EU budget focused on results](#)

[EP Own-Initiative Report \(06/07/2016\): "Post-electoral revision of the MFF 2014-2020: Parliament's input ahead of the Commission's proposal"](#)

[EP Briefing \(1/07/2016\): Mid-term review/revision of the 2014-2020 Multiannual Financial Framework](#)

[EP Fact Sheet Multiannual Financial Framework](#)

## FUNDING PROGRAMMES, STUDIES AND PROJECTS

### Final Conference officially closes SIGGS Project with presentation of final version of the self-evaluation tool

*“Good governance is about better return, better performance; it is not just about compliance, which is not the goal but the mean to become more credible and receive better support.”* With these clear words, Pierre-Olivier Beckers, IOC Member and President of the Belgian NOC, addressed the Final Conference of the SIGGS Project during his keynote speech. “It is urgent to restore the trust of all stakeholders and the public opinion in general. Without trust and credibility, without the necessary transparency, without restoring the positive image of sport, how long will people continue to watch elite sports and the Olympic Games, how long will the youth of the Games want to join clubs and federations, how long will governments and private sponsors continue to fund the development of sport worldwide? Our very survival is at stake.”

With regards to the SIGGS Project, he stressed that “the SIGGS project, in its support of the implementation of Good governance is fully part of the implementation of the Olympic Agenda 2020 and focuses on helping the NOC’s and national federations to improve their governance by providing a crucial self-evaluation tool. The self-evaluation tool is a great way to get started and be aware of where you stand on the good governance journey.”

The SIGGS Project was indeed created with the aim to provide specific, tailor-made and practical advice to NOCs and national sport federations on the implementation of good governance. The Final Conference was the occasion to present the final outcomes and achievements of this

project, which started in January 2015 under the management of the European Olympic Committees EU Office (EOC EU Office). Around 80 participants attended the Conference, among them representatives of various European or international federations as well as representatives of 17 different European NOCs. Folker Hellmund, Director of the EOC EU Office, welcomed all participants and referred to the future of the SIGGS Project by stating the following: “The need for continuous effort is paramount when implementing good governance. In that regard, the EOC EU Office will ensure that the SIGGS Project will continue its implementation of activities, through additional Strategic Workshops and by providing



support to NOCs and federations, in 2017 and beyond.”

Matthias Van Baelen, Project Manager of the SIGGS Project, provided an overview of two years of project implementation highlighting some of the most remarkable facts and figures. Furthermore, he presented the final version of the innovative and unique self-evaluation tool,

## *The House of European Sport*

which besides the possibility to analyse various aspects of governance and ethics also includes functionalities such as the ability to consult various Roadmaps and to generate a customised Action Plan specific for each organisation. Following this presentation, Thierry Zintz, Professor of the University of Louvain, presented the results of the self-evaluation that was run in the seven countries of the SIGGS Project. Over 200 federations and NOCs have taken part in this evaluation, which is a major achievement. In his presentation, Thierry Zintz highlighted some of the common weaker and stronger elements in the implementation of governance in Europe; although he stressed clearly that the assessment was based on self-declared data. Florian Kaiser of the Leadership Academy of the DOSB explained some of the sustainability measures that were foreseen within the SIGGS methodology including some recommendations for future activities. In particular, he presented two different models that NOCs and federations could consider when implementing good governance. He also explained how the SIGGS Project fits within these efforts.

During the afternoon session, a panel discussion was organised to further discuss how good governance could be further implemented and what is the role of umbrella organisations in this process. The high-level panel, which was moderated by Darren Bailey, consisted of the following representatives: Ingmar De Vos, President of the International Equestrian Federation (FEI), Marijke Fleuren-van Walsem, President of the European Hockey Federation, Kamil Novak, Executive Director of FIBA Europe, Joao Paulo Almeida, General Director of the NOC of Portugal, and Jean-Michel Saive, Chair of the EOC Athletes' Commission. Several aspects of good governance were highlighted throughout the discussion. Ingmar De Vos for instance stressed the importance of education in

changing the culture within a sports organisation, whereas Joao Paulo Almeida highlighted the importance of safeguarding the values of sport. Jean-Michel Saive referred to the situation of athletes by stressing the need for athletes to get their voice heard and the need for athletes to be able to trust their federations in order for them to be able to focus on their sport and performances. Kamil Novak stated that "good governance is a never-ending process towards better governance." Marijke Fleuren-van Walsem agreed with this statement by referring to SIGGS stating that "SIGGS is part of this process as it provides the new oxygen which is very welcome for this ongoing process in the world of sport."

Finally, Janez Kocijancic, acting EOC President, had the honour to provide the conference conclusions and to officially open the tool for NOCs and national federations in the 50 countries of the EOC. He thanked the European Union for their support and the EOC EU Office and all project partners for the excellent work in the implementation of this project. Furthermore, he invited all sport organisations to make use of this tool to strengthen the governance of sport in Europe. The Final Conference is not the end of the SIGGS Project. It represents the end of the pilot phase of the tool, but equally opens the next chapter of implementation as the tool is now open and available for use by all NOCs and national sport federations across Europe.

It is the European Olympic Committees' commitment to continue the development of the SIGGS tool and the SIGGS activities that have been started during the project lifetime and to contribute to the development of sport in Europe.

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### FURTHER INFORMATION

[Homepage of the SIGGS Project](#)

[Link to SIGGS self-evaluation tool](#)

## INTERNALS AND VISITS

### EOC EU Office: Partners meet for Special Competence Seminar 2016

On 30 November, the EOC EU Office organised its annual Special Competence Seminar in the Brussels Representation of North Rhine-Westphalia. Following the Final Conference of the SIGGS project on the previous day, representatives of 14 partner organisations joined the meeting.

The meeting was divided between an update on different EU policy fields concerning sport and a more interactive part on Erasmus+ Sport including a presentation by guest speaker Viera Kerpanova from the Educational, Audiovisual and Cultural Executive Agency of the European Commission (EACEA).

Following the introduction of Folker Hellmund, Director of the EOC EU Office, who warmly welcomed all participants, a brief overview of the offices activities and upcoming developments was given, together with an explanation of the online services of the EOC EU Office, such as the Intranet.

After these introductory remarks, the partners of the office had the opportunity to share their recent activities and projects at the European level. Various projects with a connection to Erasmus+ as well as an overview of upcoming applications were presented.

Subsequently, the EOC EU Office-staff presented the recent developments in specific policy fields of European sports. Presentations on topics such as the digital single market, competition policy, human resources in sport, sport diplomacy, major sport events and the EP report "Integrated approach to sport policy.

Good governance, accessibility and integrity" (Takkula Report) were followed with interest.



Ms Kerpanova's presentation on the Erasmus+ sport call 2017 was received with much interest. Especially the system of simplified grants for Collaborative Partnerships (CPs) and Small Collaborative Partnerships (SCPs) is a significant change. With a minimum of only three partners from three programme countries and a maximum funding of 60.000€, SCPs offer simplified grants with less outlay. Regular Collaborative Partnerships have a minimum of five partners from five programme countries and offer maximum funding of 400.000€. The deadline for the only call 2017 will be 6 April 2017. The rules for the funding of major sport events and events related to the European week of sport (EWOs) remain essentially unchanged. The maximum grant for EWOs-related events is 300.000€. These measures to simplify funding opportunities especially support grassroots sport organisations through the introduction of unit costs instead of real costs for large parts of the budget (only for CPs and SCPs).



## *The House of European Sport*

The EOC EU Office thanks all the partner organisations for their participation and contributions during the meeting and looks forward to upcoming partner meetings and next year's Special Competence Seminar.

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### MORE INFORMATION

[EACEA-Website on Erasmus+-Sport](#)

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## 13<sup>th</sup> Executive Board meeting of the EOC EU Office

On 14 December 2016, the 13<sup>th</sup> Executive Board meeting of the EOC EU Office took place in Brussels. Representatives of the EOC (Acting President Janez Kocijancic), the IOC (Director General Christophe De Kepper), the DOSB (CEO Michael Vesper) and the Czech Olympic Committee (Vice-President Roman Kumpost) discussed among other items the budget of the EOC EU Office, the implementation of the working plan 2016 and the objectives for the year 2017.

Folker Hellmund, Director of the EOC EU Office, presented the main activities of the EOC EU Office in 2016. He stressed the conclusion of the successful SIGGS Project ("Support the Implementation of Good Governance in Sport") as well as the various activities of the EOC EU Office to promote the Olympic Athletes'

Commissions. The latter included the hosting of the Athletes Seminar, which will be repeated in 2017, and the drafting of an Athletes Position paper. Jean-Michel Saive, Chair of the EOC Athletes' Commission, also attended the meeting to discuss these issues.

The Board expressed their satisfaction with the activities delivered by the EOC EU Office. In particular, they supported the SIGGS Project in terms of the useful tool that it has produced for the NOCs and national federations in Europe. Furthermore, they highlighted the importance of the office for both the EOC and the EOC EU Office's partner organisations.

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## PARTNERS' CORNER

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### RF: Sport and the Social Fund in Sweden

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The European Social Fund (ESF) is one of the main funding instruments of the EU in promoting access and participation in the labour market, for instance by contributing to the creation of jobs or by helping people to acquire certain skills. The ESF provides a broad range of funding possibilities to achieve these goals. Some of these measures also provide opportunities for sport-related projects:

- Promotion of sustainable and quality employment or labour mobility in the sport sector;
- Promotion of social inclusion, combating poverty or any kind of discrimination through sport;
- Investment in education, training and vocational training for skills and life-long learning.

A great emphasis is placed on combating youth unemployment. A new element of the ESF is the so-called Youth Employment Initiative, which was established to address the problem of youth unemployment in the EU. The target group includes young people under the age of 25 (some Member States might have other age limits), who are not in employment, education or training (NEETs). In this regard, this initiative also offers possibilities for sport-related projects with the specific aim to get young people into jobs in the sport sector.

In Sweden, we have a tradition of working with the ESF since the fund started. At the beginning, there were also good possibilities for the sport clubs to get funding for their activity ideas, but

successively that possibility has decreased and now it is almost impossible for a regular sport club to get funding. The projects have to be very large with many partners and as a project leader you also need a lot of floating assets, something voluntary sport clubs do not have.

Our district federations still work with the Social Fund though. Sometimes the district federation applies for funding themselves, but it is more common that several districts merge to make an application together. This application may involve projects for improved education and training or employment.

The aim of the education and training projects is to develop the skills of both the staff of your own organizations as well as employees in voluntary sport clubs. Education and training projects can for example be about inclusive workplaces, sports tourism, or to strengthen sport as an employer.

In the labour market projects, we work with sport as a tool to create jobs and employment for people in difficulty and those from disadvantaged groups. Some districts have worked especially with unemployed youth and some of our labor projects are specifically targeted for people with disabilities and people with a migrant background. Several of the projects have attracted attention due to their good results and for getting a very high percentage of the participants back to work.

Sometimes we need to actively lobby to ensure that responsible decision makers really know what the project is about. We feel, however, that

## *The House of European Sport*

the sport has a relatively strong position in the society and many persons realise the importance of sport and the benefit that sport creates for society. This contributes to an often positive attitude towards our projects from the agencies responsible for the Social Fund.

From 2010-2016 we had 18 projects financed from the Social Fund. There were 12 projects concerning education and training and 6 projects concerning the labour market. In total, the projects received 7 684 210 EUR in EU-funding and another 5 135 275 EUR in co-financing.

### **Two project examples:**

#### Labour market - MAGIC

The aim of the project was to reach out to people that have been on a long sick leave or have been unemployed for a long time and to support them in re-entering the labour market. The project incorporated group development and individual job training. Self-confidence, setting individual goals and motivation were key to working with the participants. The project was especially addressed to immigrants and persons with disabilities. 301 persons participated in the MAGIC project 166 of which (55%) re-entered

the labour market and found jobs through the project. During the project, sport was used as a tool for group development, motivation building and individual goal setting. Furthermore, the network of sport was used to find trainee placements for the participants in sportclubs and companies.

#### Education – MORE INCLUSION

The aim of the project was to increase knowledge and awareness of equality in workplaces. All staff, in total 165 employees, in five district sport federations, worked with different tools and methods to increase their competences in equality. They worked with questions related to the discrimination on grounds of sex, transgender identity or expression, ethnicity, religion or other beliefs, disability, sexual orientation and age. A thorough, concrete and accessible plan for equality was defined and a toolbox with different methods describing how voluntary organisations can work with equality was produced. Some of the employees also did study visits to Ireland, the Netherlands and Switzerland to get new experiences and learn how they can work better with equality at work.

## Dates in January 2017

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**22 Dec. 2016- 2 January 2017**

*Christmas holidays, EOC EU Office closed*

**25-26 January 2017**

*EOC Executive Committee Meeting, Lausanne, Switzerland*

**31 January 2017**

*Sports Info Day, Erasmus+, Brussels*