

# *EOC*

Liaison Office at the European Union



**Report on the impact of the activities  
of the European Union  
on sports**

**October 2007**

## MONTHLY REPORT OCTOBER 2007

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## General Policy

### 1st The Commission work programme for 2008

The European Commission work programme for 2008 focuses on delivering core policies for the globalisation agenda: detailing key strategic priorities which the Commission undertakes to adopt in 2008, and setting out other areas where the Commission will concentrate attention next year. It addresses many of the most pressing issues of today – growth and jobs, climate change, energy, migration, enlargement.

The proposals to be presented illustrate many of the key features promoted by the Commission: they cover many cross-cutting themes, call for partnership with the Member States and other key actors, and look to tackle some of the longer-term issues facing Europe in the decades to come. They include a particular stress on better regulation, including a detailed list of simplification measures for the year ahead. The Programme also includes areas foreseen as inter-institutional priorities for communication in 2008.



[http://ec.europa.eu/atwork/programmes/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/atwork/programmes/index_en.htm)

## Sport

### News from the Institutions

#### 2nd EU Reform Treaty – Explicit reference to sport for the first time

On 18/19 October the Heads of State reached political agreement in Lisbon on the EU Reform Treaty. The further procedure provides for the European Council to sign the Lisbon Treaty on 13/14 December this year and to conclude ratification before the election of the new European Parliament in June 2009.

For sport, this political agreement is a milestone. It is acknowledged for the first time that the European Union has a partial competence for sport equivalent to its competence in the fields of education and culture.

Thus, the social and political role of sport at European level is recognised and the European Commission is given a legal basis on which to develop a separate sports funding programme. From the beginning of 2008, preliminary work for a sports funding programme is to begin, but it will not be possible to apply it before 2011. The EU-Office of German sport is working committedly for the funding of projects of relevance to sport within the framework of pilot projects from 2009 onwards.

In its general assessment of the Lisbon Agreement, the critical observation remains to be made that organised sport's demand for its autonomy to be enshrined in the Treaty has not been accepted.

The new article 124 contains the following text:

“The Union shall contribute to the promotion of European sporting issues, while taking account of the specific nature of sport, its structures based on voluntary activity and its social and educational function.”

“ – developing the European dimension of sport, by promoting fairness and openness in sporting competitions and cooperation between bodies responsible for sports and by protecting the physical and moral integrity of sportsmen and sportswomen, especially the youngest sportsmen and sportswomen.”



[http://www.consilium.europa.eu/cms3\\_fo/showPage.asp?lang=en&id=1317&mode=g&name=](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/cms3_fo/showPage.asp?lang=en&id=1317&mode=g&name=)

### **3rd Sports Ministers meeting in Lisbon**

The Informal Meeting of the Ministers for Sports was held in Lisbon on 25 October. The main matters on the agenda were the White Paper on Sport and the fight against doping, which was in particular discussed in a seminar preceding the meeting.

The Minister for Presidency, Pedro Silva Pereira, highlighted the change that has taken place in the EU's policy during the Portuguese Presidency in the area of sport, especially through the Lisbon Treaty. The ministers expressed their satisfaction on this achievement, and described the Treaty as a new reality, which means that specific and concrete changes will take place. This inclusion of a sport reference would bring, as a first consequence, the possibility for sports Ministers to meet officially at the Council of EU. A more coherent and continuous approach on sport issues would therefore be ensured during the EU Presidencies. It should also be mentioned that this new reference to sport in the EU Treaty would allow the European Commission to initiate a European funding programme for sport.

From a general point of view, the Ministers gave strong support to the White Paper on Sport and the Action Plan Pierre de Coubertin. They believe that the White Paper gives a coherent and global overview of sports policy in the EU. Another principle emphasised is the autonomy of sport and, from a national

standpoint, the importance of subsidiarity in the EU. The ministers also expressed their support to a complete dialogue with all the stakeholders involved when the community sport policy is being developed. The European Sports Forum was especially welcomed.

In particular, the ministers underlined the following priorities: protection of minors in sport, financing of sport in connection with the gambling situation in Europe and media rights, players agents, doping.

#### **4th The Pan-European Conference on the Fight against Doping**

The Informal Meeting of Sports Ministers was preceded by a pan-European Conference on the fight against doping in sports in Lisbon on 24 October. The conference noted the inclusion of sport (and the fight against doping) in the Lisbon Treaty and discussed the World Antidoping Code, among other issues. In the discussion of the last version of the Code, a new definition of athlete was welcomed, new provisions on education, increased flexibility on sanctions, improvement on personal data-protection.

Ministers also agreed that States not complying with the Unesco International Convention against Doping in Sport should not be eligible to bid for major sports.

A pan-European anti-doping conference and informal meetings of heads of

laboratories were suggested during the conference. The forthcoming public authorities meetings include a meeting of European Coordination Forum on WADA in Madrid on 13 November and a meeting of public authorities representatives convened by UNESCO in Madrid on 14 November.

### **5th European sports movement welcomes the White Paper on Sport**

The European sports movement met in Brussels from 8 to 9 October at invitation of the European Commission in order to discuss the recently published White Paper on Sport. The priorities of the Action Plan “Pierre de Coubertin” were to be decided upon and the possibilities for enhanced cooperation with the European sports movement were to be outlined within the framework of this conference.

In principle, the sports representatives welcomed the European Commission’s initiative and evaluated it as being positive for sport. However, they also identified problem areas which are not covered by the White Paper. Strongly commercialised sports organisations such as UEFA had hoped for more specific proposals by the European Commission to resolve problems relating primarily to professional sport, such as club licensing. Other representatives were expecting clearer statements guaranteeing the protection of the autonomy of sports organisations. Birgitta Kervinen, the President of ENGSO, underlined ENGSO’s willingness to cooperate with the European Commission to promote



sport even better at European level. However, she warned against calling into question the basis of the financing of sport; in most EU Member States, sport is financed from the proceeds of gambling monopolies.

Generally, the White Paper was felt to be a very good basis for a discussion of how sport in Europe should be organised in the future. In addition, the European sports movement welcomed plans to embody sport in the future Reform Treaty. This will facilitate the optimal implementation of the White Paper.

On account of the diversity of the organisations invited to attend, some very different needs and interests were presented at the conference. Thus, the European Commission's proposal to reintroduce the European Sports Forum within the framework of structured dialogue was welcomed. It is intended to invite carefully-selected representatives to discuss interests and to exchange information on specific issues.

## **6th Regions call for charter for equality in sport**

The Committee of the Regions adopted on 11 October an own-initiative opinion calling on the EU to establish a benchmark for local and regional authorities in promoting equal opportunities in sport.

The members of CoR recognise that "for differing reasons, certain societal

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groups tend to participate less in sport, are poorly represented at decision-making levels and for a variety of reasons are excluded from some sporting facilities".

The report – part of the Committee of the Regions' contribution to the 2007 European Year of Equal Opportunity for All – then makes a series of policy recommendations which address the questions of age, disability, gender, race, religion/belief and sexual orientation.



<http://www.toad.cor.europa.eu/CORConvocation.aspx?body=plen&date=10102007>

## Legal Questions

### 7th Directive on the control of the acquisition and possession of weapons

The first version of the directive (1991) lays down joint rules on the acquisition, possession and transfer of firearms, enabling controls to be carried out within the Member States. Firearms are divided into four categories (prohibited, subject to authorisation, subject to declaration, not subject to authorisation or declaration). In addition, it deals with subjects such as the recording of transfers of firearms, the introduction of a European Firearms Pass and information exchange among Member States.

In March 2006, the European Commission proposed a new directive within the context of the war on terrorism.

In July 2007, the European Parliament's Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection (IMCO) prepared a report on the basis of this proposal. This report calls for measures including stricter rules regarding the period for keeping registers, the tracing of weapons and the ease of obtaining them.

The directive of 1991 restricts the acquisition and possession of firearms to persons under the age of 18, whereby hunting and target shooting constitute an exception. The IMCO proposes tightening the rules for minors for sporting and hunting purposes as well. They should only be allowed to acquire and possess firearms if they are under the supervision and instruction of an adult who holds a valid firearm certificate or if they are at a registered training centre.

In the area of the transfer of firearms, the IMCO deletes the duty to prove the reason for a trip (invitation, shooting competition etc.) and underlines that the European Firearms Pass should be the only compulsory document. The report also contains a ban on Member States requiring any additional registration documents or payments.

The IMCO retains the subdivision of arms into four categories, but proposes that the European Commission carry out a study on simplifying the internal market for firearms. In this connection, a reduction to two categories would be conceivable, which could mean restrictions for hunters and sport shooters.

Schedule: The first reading in Parliament will be on 13 November 2007, and the Council will discuss the document from 6 December onwards.

### **8th Commission confirms UK-list of major events to be televised free-to-air**

Today the European Commission adopted a decision on the UK list of events of major importance for society to be broadcast free to air, either live or with a slight delay. The list covers not only international events like the Rugby World Cup Final, the Olympic Games and the FIFA World Cup Finals but also more specific national events like Cricket matches, the Grand National, the Derby, the Ryder Cup and the Commonwealth Games.

Background: The Television without Frontiers Directive (TVWF) lays down framework conditions in which the public may be guaranteed free access to the broadcasts of events of major importance to society. Each Member State is entitled to draw up a list of such events, which must then be broadcast unencrypted even if exclusive rights have been bought by pay-television stations.

On the basis of the principle of mutual recognition, Member States must ensure that broadcasters under their jurisdiction respect the lists of other Member States notified to the Commission, which have to be compatible with Community Law.

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On the list of major events published by other EU countries, see:



[http://ec.europa.eu/avpolicy/reg/twvf/implementation/events\\_list/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/avpolicy/reg/twvf/implementation/events_list/index_en.htm)

### **9th Reduced VTA rate on horses: infringement proceedings**

The European Commission (EC) has formally requested the Netherlands to amend its legislation with regard to the reduced VAT rate it applies to certain live animals, and in particular horses. According to the EC, the rate to be applied should be the standard rate. The request is in the form of a reasoned opinion which is the second stage of the infringement proceedings. If the Netherlands fails to comply with the reasoned opinion within two months, the Commission may refer the matter to the Court of Justice of the European Communities. At the same time, the EC has sent requests for information in the form of letters of formal notice to seven other Member States (Austria, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy and Luxembourg) inviting them to submit their observations within two months.

Background: The Netherlands apply a reduced VAT rate of 6% to the supply of certain live animals and, in particular, horses which are not normally intended for the generation or production of foodstuffs. Only a limited list of supplies of goods and services may be subject to reduced rates of VAT. Included in that list are foodstuffs for human and animal consumption as well as live animals,

seeds, plants and ingredients normally intended for use in the preparation of foodstuffs. Supply of horses is not included.

## **Aid Programms**

### **10th Call for proposals – Lifelong Learning Programme**

The European Commission published the general call for proposals for the Lifelong Learning Programme on 2 October. Sport organisations which are active in the field of education/ qualification have the opportunity to submit their educational projects for EU funding.

The level of grants awarded as well as the duration of projects varies depending on factors such as the type of project and the number of countries involved.

The Lifelong Learning programme applies to all types and levels of education and vocational education and training.

Applicants must be established in one of the following countries:

- the 27 countries of the European Union (as of 1 January 2007),
- the EFTA and EEA countries: Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway,
- candidate countries: Turkey.

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The main deadlines for applications are:

Comenius, Grundtvig: Mobility	31 January 2008
Leonardo da Vinci: Mobility	8 February 2008
Comenius, Leonardo da Vinci, Grundtvig: Partnerships	15 February 2008
Comenius, Erasmus, Leonardo da Vinci, Grundtvig: Multilateral projects, Networks and Accompanying Measures	29 February 2008

Project examples:

LEONARDO–mobility project – The way into life

Pupils of an Austrian football school make an internship in a German professional football club to acquire additional skills in the field of professional sport management.

LEONARDO–multilateral project – Training for Life

This project shall enable people with disabilities to pursue a career as a professional in competitive sports. Special learning instruments as well as e-learning tools shall be developed to offer relevant educational programmes to the target group.



<http://ec.europa.eu/llp>

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## 11th LIFE+ Call for proposals 2007

In October, the European Commission published a call to present proposals for the LIFE+ selection round 2007. Proposals may be presented by legal entities – public and/or private bodies – registered in the Member States of the European Union.

The following themes are covered by this announcement:

1. LIFE+ Nature and Biodiversity projects
2. LIFE+ Environment Policy and Governance: the principal objectives are amongst others: Climate change, Air, Urban environment (contribute to improving the environmental performance of Europe's urban areas), Noise, Environment and health, Innovation, Strategic approaches (promote the effective implementation and enforcement of Community environmental legislation and improve the knowledge base for environmental policy)
3. LIFE+ Information and Communication: ensure information flow to provide the basis for policy decisions on the environment, and to make information on the state and trends of the environment accessible to citizens.

Project proposals shall be submitted to the national competent authorities by 30.11.2007.



<http://www.ec.europa.eu/environment/life/funding/lifeplus.htm>