

– The Voice of the Olympic Sports Movement in Brussels –

Tweets of the month



Sean Kelly MEP

@SeanKellyMEP

Feb 25

I met today with Folker and Florence of the @EOCEUOffice, to discuss Data Protection Reform and its impact on sport

Erasmus+

@EUErasmusPlus

Mar 04

.@EOCEUOffice The status of Switzerland remains unchanged. Only organisations from Programme Countries can be applicants #eusportchat

EESC SOC section

@EESC_SOC

Mar 09

F Hellmund: What #sport could do best is to motivate people to get involved in society @EOCEUOffice #EESC hearing

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EDITORIAL

The EOC EU Office has decided to adopt a modernised design for its different communication tools. The new version of our [website](#) has been launched last autumn. This month, I have the pleasure to introduce our new Monthly Report, following the same design pattern as our previous editions.

I do hope that the EOC EU Office's Monthly Report will remain a useful source of information for all of you. We intend to further develop it in order to keep you updated on the recent changes for sport at the EU level.

This editorial will be used from time to time to comment on the recent developments of the EU sports policy making. From the next edition onwards, we will also provide the opportunity for our partner organisations, through the **Partners' Corner**, to inform about their activities and events related to the EU. More information on this new tool will be sent to our partners over the course of the next month.

If you have any comments or proposals on how to improve our Monthly Report, we would be very happy to hear your feedback. Enjoy your reading!

Sincerely yours.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Folker Hellmund', written in a cursive style.

Folker Hellmund
Director EOC EU Office

EUROPEAN UNION AND SPORT

Council Expert Group on Match-Fixing

The second meeting of the Council Expert Group on Match-Fixing took place in Brussels on 25 March 2015. Accepted as an observer, the EOC EU Office took part in the discussions, along with other sports organisations such as the IOC, FIFA, UEFA and ENGSO.

The meeting started with an update on the [Council of Europe Convention on the](#)

[Manipulation of Sports Competitions](#), which has now been signed by 18 States, among them 9 EU Member States (Bulgaria, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Lithuania, the Netherlands and Portugal). Following a decision by the College of Commissioners and an opinion of the EC Legal Service, the European Commission has now formally requested a mandate from the Council to sign the Convention

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on behalf of the EU and invites all Member States to sign it. The ratification however will be pending on the CJEU Decision regarding the compatibility of the Convention with EU Treaties, requested by Malta. Many observers attending the meeting insisted upon the importance of signing and implementing the Convention as swiftly as possible.

The Expert Group meeting continued with a presentation by Europol and Interpol, explaining their actions against criminal offences related to

match-fixing, and by some Member States giving an update on their national action plans.

Following a request of the EOC EU Office, the Expert Group also briefly discussed the current EU Data Protection Reform, stating that its impact on the fight against match-fixing should be assessed and discussed. It was decided to put this item on the agenda of the next meeting, which will most likely take place at the end of September 2015.

Council Expert Group on Good Governance

On 5 March 2015, the EOC EU Office, together with IOC representatives, took part in the second meeting of the Council Expert Group on Good Governance in sport. The two main topics and related deliverables on the agenda were major sport events and gender equality in sport.

Mega sport events

After the introduction of the Chairs **Darren Bailey** and **Jan Loorbach**, the observers were invited to introduce themselves. The IOC and the EOC referred to their written statements and especially on the future impact of the Olympic Agenda 2020 on the bidding procedures and the implementation of mega sport events such as the Olympic and Paralympic Games or the European Games.

There was an open discussion on the role that sport organisations can play to tackle human or workers rights violations in host cities/countries. It became clear that neither the Member States nor other observers expect sport organisations to change countries. Changes need time, in this regard, expectations of the soft power of sport should not be too unrealistic. However, sport organisations should abide by their own commitments to human rights principles. In this context, Transparency International welcomed the concerns raised by some NOCs (e.g. Germany

and the Netherlands) regarding the human rights' situation in Azerbaijan.

In the general discussion on responsibilities of different actors, the [UN Global Impact Initiative](#) was mentioned several times. The methodology of this initiative could possibly be used when setting up sustainability criteria for sport organisations.

Most participants agreed that fundamental rights should apply to all sport events, regardless of their size. Furthermore, possibilities of a stronger involvement of the civil society in the bidding procedures and the implementation of sport events were discussed.

The final report of the Expert Group is supposed to be finalised in October 2015.

Gender Equality

The second deliverable discussed at the meeting was the "Recommendation on gender equality in sport". During its intervention, the EOC EU Office stressed the need to build on existing initiatives, in particular on the Call for Strategic Actions 2014-2020, prepared by a Commission Group of Experts, and presented at the meeting by EWS Chair, Kristina Thuree. Together with the EWS and ENGSO, the EOC EU Office suggested to the

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experts that the future Recommendation be based on a limited number of priorities stemming from the Call for Strategic Actions and focused on the implementation of these priorities at national level, while providing a set of best practice examples for this purpose. These suggestions were supported by a majority of intervening experts and were taken up by the Chair, Cedric Chaumond from France.

Human trafficking and prostitution during mega sport events, the power of the media in breaking

stereotypes, sexual-based violence and the crucial importance of monitoring, were some of the issues raised by Member States' experts and observers, which should be given prominence in the future Recommendation. The final document should be presented at the October meeting of the Expert Group and should be followed up in 2016 by the launch of a Pledge Board on gender Equality in Sport. Details are still to be worked out.

How sport can contribute to the promotion of European Values

On 9 March 2015, the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) held a public hearing on Sport and European Values. “*Sport is a key tool to contribute to a European identity and transmitting European values*” said **Henri Malosse**, President of the EESC, in his opening speech. The discussion encompassed different aspects of the social dimension of sport including mutual respect, social integration and equality between men and women.



Since the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty, the EU institutions play a supporting and coordinating role for sport. **Yves Le Lostecque**, Head of the Sport Unit of the DG Education and Culture, outlined the efforts of the

European Commission to fulfil the societal role of sport. He mentioned the EU Work Plan for Sport (2014-17) and the Erasmus+ Programme as important instruments to reinforce the European identity. Nevertheless, Le Lostecque stressed that

“sport cannot solve all social problems, but plays an important role”.

According to **Folker Hellmund**, Director of the EOC EU Office, “*it is necessary that sport cooperates with other stakeholders in order to tackle societal problems like discrimination and social exclusion*”. On the basis of two projects promoting gender equality and the social integration of female migrant workers, Hellmund illustrated how sport can function as a door-opener to society.

Jorge H. Carratero García, spokesman of the Spanish Royal Federation of Football, underpinned Hellmund’s position by introducing a football project for prisoners. This project supported the social interaction between the detainees who through this project acquired a certificate qualifying them for the labour market.

These and other examples demonstrated the potential of sport and the variety of its societal added value. After a lively exchange of arguments and ideas, **Bernardo Hernández Bataller**, EESC Rapporteur, concluded that the EU institutions should encourage the development of sport and coordinate further activities in order to strengthen a common European identity.

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Sexualised violence and harassment in sport



Available data (e.g. [Council of Europe](#)) suggest that about 1 in 5 children in Europe are victims of some form of sexual violence. Cases of sexual harassment, abuse, or physical maltreatment can be found in all societies and all sectors, including in sport.

Participants of the “Sport Respects Your Rights” project final conference, which was organised in Vienna on 16-17 February 2015, would confirm that it is, indeed, an issue “*that will get you*”, as eloquently stated by professor **Celia Brackenridge**, world renowned specialist on violence and harassment in sport. And this especially after having listened to a powerful address of two survivors of sexualised violence in sport - Spanish gymnast and Olympian Gloria Viseras and British TV presenter, former high level runner, Charlie Webster. Such personal stories should motivate sport organisations to become active and/or continue with their efforts and activities to prevent such acts from happening.

To prevent such acts and contribute to the creation of a safer environment in sport, and in particular to “*empower young Europeans to combat sexualized violence and gender harassment through youth-led campaigns and local cross-sector networks*” was the main objective of the “[Sport Respects Your Rights](#)” project. Co-ordinated by the Austrian Sports-for-All Organisation Sportunion Österreich and co-financed by the EU Daphne III Programme, the project involved 8 partner organisations from 6 European countries, which recruited 22 local organisations or groups, participated in trainings, organised local workshops and roundtables and

initiated campaigns in their communities and countries. The German Sport University in Cologne then provided methodological backing and training support. At the [final conference](#), it was concluded that the project’s objectives were largely reached, however, both participants and speakers agreed that despite its very positive results, such a project is just one step towards making the sport environment safer and more enjoyable for everybody.

The importance of visibility, for instance, was stressed during the conference by Austrian Members of the European Parliament, **Ulrike Lunacek** and **Heinz K. Becker**, who promised to “*increase the pressure on a political level*” and to “*raise the issue in the respective Parliament’s intergroup*”. The need for more evidence on this topic was addressed by the Head of the EC Sport Unit, **Yves Le Losteque**, who informed participants that a tender procedure for a study on Sexual-based violence in sport would be launched by the end of March 2015. The UK’s “funding conditionality” whereby sport clubs and organisations, in order to receive state subsidies, must have child protection policies internalised in their structures, was then given as a best practice example in terms of implementation.

The issue of gender-based violence and children rights in sport respectively will be the subject of two forthcoming Recommendations of the Council Expert Group on Good Governance, on gender equality, and to protect young athletes and safeguard children’s rights in sport.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

[Presentation of Celia Brackenridge](#)

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Sport “mainstreamed” in recent works on gender equality

The European Parliament examines every year the state of gender equality in the EU, based on the European Commission’s (EC) Annual report as well as on its own research and priorities. The own-initiative [Resolution on progress on equality between women and men 2013](#), drafted by MEP **Marc Tarabella** and approved by the EP’s Plenary session in March, includes for the first time a section dedicated to sport. Recalling that societal problems such as violence against women, stereotyping, or the gender-pay gap are also present in sport, the European Parliament calls on the Member States in this Resolution to “*make full use of the opportunities offered by sport to promote gender equality, notably by defining specific action plans to combat stereotypes and violence, favour equality among professional sportsmen and sportswomen, and promote sport for women*”.

For its part, the European Commission, in its recently published [Annual report on Equality between women and men \(2014\)](#), pays a particular attention to sport in connection to so-called “gender budgeting.” The EC has stressed that “*EU Programmes helped to promote gender equality in a number of key areas*”, including in

sport and recalls that the Council called in its 2014 Conclusions on Gender Equality in Sport for “*the Erasmus+ Programme to include a focus on decision-making in sports’ governing bodies, on coaching, and the fight against gender-based violence and negative stereotypes in sport*”.

The Report draws on the data published in the newest [Eurobarometer statistics](#), which confirm that despite some progress, gender equality “*remains an unfinished business*”. According to the Report, “*for every hour worked women earn on average 16.4% less than men; a third of women in the EU report having experienced physical and sexual violence; they still account for less than a quarter of company board members; and even though they are more likely to have a higher education degree, they are still significantly under-represented in STEM studies and careers, in research and in senior posts at all levels of education, including higher education.*” Gender stereotyping was singled out as a likely cause of many inequalities, including in sport. Close to 20% of Europeans think that gender stereotypes are widespread in sport; and 33% of them believe that they are most present in the media, sport related media comprised.

EU foreign policy and sport: Kosovo and Baku in the spotlight

During its March session the European Parliament adopted two Resolutions which refer to sport issues. Drafted by the Foreign Affairs Committee, the documents deal with two very different aspects.

In their annual Resolution on the state of play in [Kosovo](#), the MEPs praised the IOC for its decision to grant full recognition to the NOC of Kosovo and urge other sports federations to act accordingly.

In its yearly assessment of the [human rights situation in the world](#), the European Parliament takes up the issue of hosting mega sports or cultural events and “*denounces the increasing practices by authoritarian regimes [to stage such events] in order to boost their international legitimacy while further restricting domestic dissent*”. In particular, the EP calls on the EU and its Member States to “*engage with national sports federations and other actors on the modalities of*

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their participations” including the Baku European Games and the FIFA World Cup in Russia and

further asks for the development of an EU policy framework on sports and human rights.

INTERNAL AND VISITS

ENGSO General Assembly in Lisbon on 29-30 April

The 23rd ENGSO General Assembly, hosted by the Portuguese Sports Confederation, will take place in Lisbon on 29-30 April 2015. As a parallel event, the ENGSO Youth Assembly will also be organised at the same time.

The first day will start with the EU Seminar, which will give an update on the European sports policy developments. It will be followed by a Sport for All session and as a highlight of the day the official opening of the GA will take place at the City Hall of Lisbon in the evening. The Director of Youth and Sport, **Mr Antonio Silva Mendes** from the European Commission will address the General Assembly in the opening session.

The Assembly itself and the elections will take place on the second day. The General Assembly will among other procedures, elect a new

President, a Vice President, two members of the Executive Committee, as well as a Treasurer for ENGSO. Also the Youth Assembly will elect a new ENGSO Youth Committee with a Chair, a Vice-Chair and seven members for the years 2015-2017.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

[ENGSO Website](#)

[Link to the registration to the ENGSO GA](#)

Dates in April 2015

6 April	Easter Monday, EOC EU Office closed
17 April	EOC EU Office meeting with EC Sport Unit, <i>Brussels</i>
21-22 April	Council Expert Group on the Economic Dimension, <i>Vienna</i>
27 April	SIGGS Steering Committee meeting, <i>Brussels</i>
29-30 April	ENGSO General Assembly, <i>Lisbon</i>