

EOC

Liaison Office at the European Union



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

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General Policy

1st Preparatory work completed on the EU Reform Treaty

Preparatory work on the Treaty for the comprehensive reform of the European Union (see monthly report of July 2007) has been completed. The Portuguese European Council Presidency announced in Brussels on 2 October that the Member States' experts had agreed on a final draft. The text can therefore be submitted to the European Heads of State and Government for their approval. They will meet on 18 and 19 October in Lisbon.

The EU Reform Treaty has cleared an important hurdle with agreement having been reached by national lawyers, but amendments may still be called for by Member States at the Lisbon summit.



Sport

News from the Institutions

2nd European Parliament: Draft report sport in education

In a new draft report on the role of sport in education of 6 June 2007, the European Parliament's Committee on Culture and Education calls on EU Member States to pay greater attention to promoting health in schools and to the guaranteed provision of sport in schools.

The draft report, which was approved by the European Parliament on 10 September, emphasises that sport is the only school subject in which children can be prepared for a healthy lifestyle and can learn social values such as solidarity, tolerance and *corps d'esprit*. There has been a worrying decline in sports lessons in primary and secondary schools in recent years. Thus, the report calls for at least three hours of sports lessons per week to be guaranteed.

The EU Member States are also called upon to remove the existing restrictions to participation in sports lessons resulting from gender, religion and ethnic origin and to guarantee access for children with disabilities.

Finally, structural funds should be established to build schools and sports facilities, particularly in disadvantaged regions, and to promote cooperation



between schools and sports organisations, municipalities and voluntary institutions.



[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2004_2009/documents/pr/669/669478/669478en.p](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2004_2009/documents/pr/669/669478/669478en.pdf)

[df](#)

Legal Questions

3rd Report on EU alcohol strategy approved

The European Parliament approved the report on the EU alcohol strategy in September (see monthly report of July 2007).

The draft report also involved a large number of repercussions for sport. For example, proposed amendments suggested a general ban on advertising and sponsoring in connection with alcohol products along the lines of the tobacco directive. In addition, there were plans to prohibit the sale and consumption of alcohol at sports events. There were also calls for fixed broadcasting times for alcohol advertising.

Since sports sponsoring and advertising by the alcohol industry are a major source of income for sport in many EU Member States, the position of the EU-Office of German Sport was to reject the sometimes extreme interventions in



these areas and it found support for this position among Members of the European Parliament. It was not possible to enforce a total ban on alcohol advertising or a ban on sports sponsoring by the alcohol industry.

The positioning of sport in this debate is of great significance, as the European Commission will use the less drastic parliamentary report as the basis of the work of future legislative initiatives in this area.

4th Sports organisations advocate easing of visa restrictions

The European Parliament is currently discussing the so-called Community Code on Visas, which is to set EU-wide standards in issuing visas. In this debate, sports organisations see the possibility of being able to demand an easing of the restrictions on issuing visas to sportsmen and sportswomen.

International and European sports organisations are often confronted with the problem that visas are not received on time for sportsmen and sportswomen participating in major sporting events. That impedes their work and also makes it less attractive to hold international sports competitions in the EU.

The European sports movement has therefore issued a statement drawing attention to the visa problem and has already had some success.

The European Commission has taken up the visa problem in its recently-



published White Paper and has established that there is a need to take action. In the bilateral visa agreement between the EU and the states of the Western Balkans as well as with Russia, Ukraine and Moldova, restrictions have already been eased for participants in international sports events and people accompanying them in a professional capacity.

Within the context of the debate on the Visa Code in the European Parliament, the European sports movement is now hoping for the support of EU decision-makers in not limiting the easing of visa restrictions only to the Olympic family in future but extending it to events held by international and European sports organisations within the EU area.

Aid Programmes

5th “Europe for citizens”

The European Commission has published a request for project proposals to be submitted within the context of the Europe for citizens programme.

This request concerns the structural funding of organisations pursuing an objective of general European interest from 2008 to 2009. The financial support covers the costs required for the normal and ongoing activity of a selected organisation to be properly carried out.



Among other things, the programme is to involve citizens in the development of a Europe that is growing together more strongly and to improve the mutual understanding of European citizens.

Organisations entitled to funding:

– Measure 1: European research institutes dealing with European public issues (think tanks) and measure 2: European-level civil society organisations that promote European citizenship.

The Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency will select 25 organisations.

The deadline for the submission of applications is 23 November 2007.



http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/citizenship/action2/call3007/index_en.htm



6th Cohesion policy 2007–2013: cross–border cooperation

The European Commission has adopted a first batch of four cross–border programmes under the new cohesion policy 2007–2013. The programmes concern Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, Austria, Italy, the United Kingdom and Ireland.

The programmes will help to solve local problems:

- Entrepreneurship, cross–border trade, tourism and culture
- Protection and joint management of the environment
- Better access to transport
- Information and communication networks
- Joint use of health, culture and education infrastructure

The four programmes now launched are:

"Italy–Austria": Total budget: € 80 million. Community assistance through European Regional Development Fund (ERDF): € 60 million.

"Bavaria–Austria" (between Germany and Austria): Total budget: € 72.1 million. ERDF contribution: € 54.1 million.

"Euroregio Meuse–Rhine": (associating Germany, the Netherlands and Belgium): Total budget: € 144.8 million. ERDF contribution: € 72.4 million.



"Ireland–Wales" (between Ireland and the United–Kingdom) is typical of a sea border and will focus on maritime cooperation. Total budget: € 70 million. ERDF support: € 53 million.

The new cohesion policy is structured around three new objectives: convergence; regional competitiveness and employment; territorial co–operation.

In total, 50 cross–border cooperation programmes will benefit from investment worth € 5.4 billion for 2007–2013. Eligible regions are those along the land–base borders or along maritime borders, separated by a maximum distance of 150 km.



http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/index_en.htm

Miscellaneous

7th New head of the EU–Office of German Sports

On 1 October, Folker Hellmund succeeded Tilo Friedmann, who has left the EU–Office after working for the German Olympic Sports Confederation for nine years. Mr Hellmund has already worked in the European environment in Brussels for 15 years. As Deputy Head of the Joint Representation of Hamburg and Schleswig–Holstein, he attained a wide knowledge of European politics,



particularly in the field of funding programmes. He has a broad network of contacts and is a very experienced lobbyist. He enjoys doing sport in his leisure time and is very much looking forward to representing the interests of sport at European level.

8th Second round of Special Competence Seminars

The EU–Office of German Sport in Brussels organised the second round of its Special Competence Seminars from 25 to 26 September. These seminars are part of the EU–Office’s service package for its partner organisations and they aim to provide participants with in–depth knowledge of a specific subject area in the field of the EU and sport. In 2006, the seminars dealt with EU funding programmes, and this year the subject on the agenda was EU legislation and its influence on the sports sector. After a general introduction and an outline of legislative decisions to date, the following current subjects were thoroughly illuminated: the White Paper on Sport and the new EU constitutional treaty, the sports betting monopoly, the Audio Visual Media Service Directive and its effect on sport and the EU alcohol strategy.