

# ***EOC***

**Liaison Office at the European Union**



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

**July 2005**



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## Sport

### News from the institutions

#### 1st Plan of action for better communication with Europe's citizens

The European Commission has drawn up a new plan for improving the dialogue with European citizens. This should be seen against the background of the negative referenda on the EU constitution in France and the Netherlands.

The three principles of "listening", "communicating" and "establishing contacts at local level" are the main features of the draft. The aim of the 50 actions covered by the plan is to bring about an improvement in the Commission departments' knowledge of and abilities in communicating European policies. Among other things, it envisages increasing Commission representation in the Member States and preparing simply worded summaries and explanations of the most important Commission proposals.

In the second phase, the plan of action will be followed by a White Paper aimed at all those involved and setting out the political vision and the medium- and long-term measures to be introduced in cooperation with the other bodies and decision-makers.



[http://europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/press\\_communication/pdf/communication\\_com\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/press_communication/pdf/communication_com_en.pdf)

## Legal questions

### 2nd Television broadcasting rights – clarification of Infront action

The European Court of Justice's (CoJ) oral hearing on the Infront WM case (formerly Kirch Media WM AG) against the European Commission was held in early July. The reason for the action by Infront is the list drawn up by the United Kingdom regarding sports and other events of national interest under the Directive 89/552 "Television without Frontiers", Article 3a. In 1998 Kirch Media GmbH acquired the broadcasting rights for the 2002 and 2006 football world championships. Only after that did the United Kingdom publish its above-mentioned list, which was subsequently approved by the European Commission. Infront WM is taking action against this as the obligatory broadcasting of certain football world championship games on public channels renders the television broadcasting rights acquired by Infront worthless. Infront considers this unacceptable among other things, because it would breach existing contracts, there would be no compensation and it would harm competition in favour of public television channels.



In the oral hearing, the various positions of the parties to the case were presented and proceedings were discussed. The next steps are the hearings, the opinion of the Attorney-General and finally the judgement of the CoJ.

### **3rd State aid in United Kingdom in the betting sector Case Tote – Racing Trust**

The British government intends to abolish the existing statutory monopoly on the pool betting services.

It informed the European Commission about its project to privatise and sell the Horserace Totalisator Board (Tote), which is entrusted with the provision of pool betting services (monopoly) and is also active in the fixed odds betting market (in competition with other bookmakers), to a consortium of British racing interests (Racing).

When acquiring Tote, Racing would not pay a price reflecting the market value of the Tote but only 50 % of the so-called 'fair value'.

The European Commission has therefore doubts concerning the compatibility of the envisaged sales transaction with the EC treaty rules (article 87 on State aids).

For the Commission, the sale of public companies can only be regarded as being free of aid if either the sale is preceded by an open, transparent and



unconditional procedure or if the sales price corresponds to or exceeds the market value of the company as established by an independent expert. In the case at issue, the presence of aid cannot be excluded given that Racing is to acquire the Tote at 50 % of the 'fair value' instead of paying the full 'market value'.

The Commission initiated then the formal investigation procedure laid down in Article 88(2) of the EC Treaty, and invites interested parties to submit their comments by the **08<sup>th</sup> August 2005**.

The text of the letter the Commission sent to UK is also published in the European Official Journal.



[http://europa.eu.int/eurlex/lex/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2005/c\\_168/c\\_16820050708en00410049.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/eurlex/lex/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2005/c_168/c_16820050708en00410049.pdf)

#### **4th Betting in sport: infringement proceedings postponed**

In its endeavours to liberalise the European market for betting in sport, the European Commission has announced that it will be instituting infringement proceedings against Germany and six other Member States. The Commission's General Directorate Single Market is of the view that State monopolies for betting in sport contravene the freedom to provide services in the Single Market.



Following the intervention of Commission President Barroso, the institution of the infringement proceedings has, however, been delayed for the time being in view of the current political situation in the European Union (referenda on the EU constitution, financial outlook, etc.). The infringement proceedings are therefore likely to be instituted at a later date.

#### **5th Tobacco advertising ban enters into force**

The EU directive on the tobacco advertising ban, which was passed two years ago, entered into force on 31st July 2005. The directive prohibits tobacco advertising in the print media, on radio and via the Internet. It also prohibits the sponsorship of transnational sporting and cultural events. Sponsorship is still allowed though for local sports events involving participants from only one Member State. In addition, advertising is still permitted in cinemas, on scoreboards and on products.

#### **Funding programmes**

#### **6th Active European Citizenship**

In July a call for proposals has been published within the programme for the promotion of an active European citizenship which aims to support town



twinning actions.

Eligible projects shall among other things engage citizens in the construction of Europe, encourage the dialogue on the future of Europe and contribute to raising awareness of European policies.

Town-twinning-actions which may be supported are thematic conferences and training seminars. Conferences must involve participants from municipalities from at least two eligible countries. Training seminars are targeted at people responsible for town twinning.

As town-twinning-actions focus on municipalities or associations thereof, sport organisations are advised to contact first their local / regional authorities and to present their project proposal.

The EU-funding must not exceed 60 % of the total amount of the project's eligible costs and be between EUR 10 000 (minimum amount) and EUR 60 000 (maximum amount).

The deadlines for submission of grant applications are as follows:





First phase: until 17 October 05 for projects beginning between 15 April and 31 August 06

Second phase: until 1 March 06 for projects beginning between 1 Sept. and 31 Dec. 06

For further information please contact the EU–Office or visit also:



[http://europa.eu.int/comm/towntwinning/call/call\\_en.html](http://europa.eu.int/comm/towntwinning/call/call_en.html)

## 7th Call for Tenders

The EU–Commission has published a service contract for actions towards the development of a Commission Communication on Diet, Physical Activity and Health.

Aim of the contract is to support the Commission in the development of policies, strategies and activities related to diet, physical activity and health.

This comprises work on ongoing (platform and network) and planned (communication/green paper/white paper/public consultation) activities in addition to technical and scientific analyses and reporting of diet, physical activity and health–related issues.



The deadline to hand in proposals is 23.9.2005.

The total price of the service is estimated at maximum EUR 500.000.

Additional information and documents can be obtained from:

European Commission, Health and Risk Assessment DG, Directorate C, Att: Mr Giulio Gallo and Mrs Josepha Wonner, JMO C5/90, rue Alcide de Gasperi, L-2920 Luxembourg. Tel.: (352) 43 01-36642, (352) 43 01-33007. Fax: (352) 43 01-34975. E-mail: [Giulio.gallo@cec.eu.int](mailto:Giulio.gallo@cec.eu.int), [Josepha.wonner@cec.eu.int](mailto:Josepha.wonner@cec.eu.int).



[http://europa.eu.int/comm/health/ph\\_determinants/life\\_style/nutrition\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/health/ph_determinants/life_style/nutrition_en.htm)

## 8th Example of INTERREG project: Sedentealps

The INTERREG IIIB project Sedentealps wants to foster transfer of knowledge in the field of sports events management in the Alpine Space through an ad hoc network. The main objective of this network is to promote sustainable economic development and tourism policies. Event management and mainly large scale sports events have become a promotion tool for the know-how of a region.



The Alpine Space has hosted several large scale sport events such as the Olympic Winter Games in Albertville, Innsbruck and Torino. Nevertheless, a professional approach to sport event management is mainly dominated by anglo-american experts.

This Project will capitalise on Sentalps partners' specific knowledge in this field to develop the Alpine Space in a sustainable way. The total budget of the 3 years project (2003-2006) amounts to 1 Mio. EUR, 350.000 EUR are cofinanced by the EU.

The Swiss Graduate School of Public Administration (IDHEAP) is the project leader and it cooperates with 16 public and private research institutes, local and regional public authorities and private organisations from Austria, France, Italy, Slovenia and Switzerland.

## **Miscellaneous**

### **9th "Open Days 2005" in Brussels**

This year 2000 people working together on regional policy at Community, national and regional level are expected to attend the Open Days, the European week of the regions and cities, from 10th to 13th October in Brussels. This



event is led by 106 regions, the Committee of the Regions and the European Commission General Directorate's Regional Policy. 66 workshops and seminars will be held with the focus on the subject of "Working together for regional growth and regional employment". The aim is to assist the Member States and Regions in preparing for the new generation of the Structural Fund programmes and instruments for the period 2007–2013.

Although the subject of "sport" is unlikely to be a specific topic, this is still a good opportunity for sports organisations to establish interesting links and potential for networking. Several sports-related projects in the sphere of employment have already been successfully carried out in this way with subsidies from the European Social Fund.



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## 10th **LEONARDO DA VINCI: 86 million EUR for vocational training**

This year the European Commission has selected 295 projects from 31 countries for funding within the European Leonardo da Vinci action programme. This promotes transnational cooperation in supporting innovation in European vocational training and improving quality. Co-funding for the projects is estimated to amount to a total of 86 million EUR. Since the year



2000 over 500 million EUR have been provided within the framework of Leonardo da Vinci to support nearly 1700 European cooperation projects. In this process, sports-related projects have also been subsidised. The Stadtsportbund Göttingen (sports association of the city of Göttingen), for example, uses sport as a means of integrating young people into the labour market. Together with partners from three other EU Member States, it is examining and testing how sport can teach social skills. This is being done by including relevant units in vocational training and qualifying measures.

The current Leonardo Da Vinci programme runs until the end of 2006. Thereafter vocational training measures will be supported within the framework of the new action programme of Lifelong Learning (2007–2013). This is currently under discussion in the European Parliament and the Council.

The next monthly report will be published at the end of September in the form of a double issue for August / September