

EOC

Liaison Office at the European Union



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

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MONTHLY REPORT JANUARY 2007

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General Policy

1st Angela Merkel on the German EU Council Presidency

On 1 January, Germany took over the EU Council Presidency and it will therefore be organising and chairing the Council's meetings until 1 July 2007.

The motto of the Presidency itself is "Succeeding together".

The main aim of the German Chancellor and officiating Council President Angela Merkel is to present a timetable for the EU constitution. A way out of the present impasse in the constitutional process has to be found so that an agreement can be implemented during the French Council Presidency, before the European Parliamentary elections in June 2009.

Energy policy is another focus of the first months of the Presidency; the first summit on 8 March will deal with economic and educational issues. On 25 March, the 27 heads of state and government will be visiting Berlin to attend a special summit in celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Treaties of Rome. On that occasion they will make a "Berlin Declaration" expressing their commitment to Europe, which is intended to revive the currently dormant constitutional process. The final summit, at which the German EU Council Presidency will submit a document on the current constitutional crisis and will propose a way forward, takes place on 21 June. The revival of the Lisbon

agenda will also be on the agenda.



Lisbon agenda, Lisbon strategy



2nd Hans-Gert Pöttering becomes President of the European Parliament

Hans-Gert Pöttering (CDU) was elected President of the European Parliament on 17 January. He takes over from the Spaniard Josep Borrell Fontelles.

Pöttering was born on 15 September 1945 in Lower Saxony, Germany. After reading law, politics and history in Bonn, Geneva and New York, he worked as an academic employee until 1979 before becoming a Christian Democratic MEP. He has been a MEP since the first direct elections.

On 13 February, Pöttering will present the programme of work for his term of office, which will last two and a half years.

Sport

News from the Institutions

3rd Combating adiposities –European Parliament proposals

Obesity in Europe is seeing a strong upward trend, and it particularly affects children.

The European Parliament is responding to this problem with a report on which a vote will be taken in February 2007. It proposes countermeasures including the following:

- improved information about food
- awareness-raising about nutrition



– promotion of physical activity and healthy eating

In addition, the report calls for the promotion of a healthy and active lifestyle to be integrated into the European Social Fund and the European Regional Development Fund.

The English version of the report is available from the EU Office.



info@eu-sports-office.org

4th Consultation on Credit system for Vocational Education

The European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET) intends to facilitate the transfer, validation and recognition of learning outcomes acquired by individuals moving from one qualification system to another.

ECVET will be used on a voluntary basis. As in the broad European sport sector it is very often the case that people learn a lot without having a widely accepted proof of these acquired competences, this consultation is of great importance to the European sport movement.

The European Commission is consulting among others European associations, NGOs and networks. The responses will be taken into account in establishing the final content and technical specifications of ECVET.



The consultation will close at the end of March 2007. The Commission and the German presidency will co-host a conference in Munich in June 2007.

Participation in the ECVET consultation: EAC-A3-ECVET@ec.europa.eu



http://ec.europa.eu/education/ecvt/work_en.pdf

Legal Questions

5th Football: procedure against France closed

The European Commission has closed the infringement procedure initiated against France on account of its legislation preventing football and other professional sports clubs from being listed on stock markets (see Monthly report December / March 2005). This prohibition constituted an unjustified obstacle to the free movement of capital, infringing the EC Treaty (Article 56). The decision to close the case has been taken following a satisfactory amendment made to the French legislation.

Background: The Commission had sent France a reasoned opinion since its legislation prohibited limited companies operating in the field of sport from raising capital from the public. This prohibition prevented in particular football clubs from being listed on the stock market. While acknowledging that protection of savers and the promotion of a certain degree of equality in sports



competitions are relevant objectives of general interest, the Commission considered that a total ban on raising capital from the public was disproportionate and therefore incompatible with the rules of the EC Treaty on the free movement of capital.

Aid Programms

6th 2007 – European Year of Equal Opportunities for All

2007 is the “European Year of Equal Opportunities for All”. Its main aims are to inform European citizens about the relevant ban on discrimination and about their right to equality, to combat discrimination effectively, to communicate diversity as a positive value and to promote equal opportunities for all.

The official start of the European Year was on 30 January at the first equality summit in Berlin, one of the year’s main activities. A total of € 15 million will be provided to implement activities at EU level as well as at national, regional and local level.

The activities planned include awards for employers who make special efforts to promote diversity, competitions for schools on the subject of respect and tolerance, further-training measures for journalists and trade unions in the field of combating discrimination and sports events held under the banner of diversity.



7th First National Women's Sports Activity Day 2007

On 5 and 6 May, the first Women's Sports activity Day of the German Olympic Sports Confederation will be held in the context of the "European Year of Equal Opportunities for all 2007". The activity day is being funded by the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth and aims to encourage more girls and women to get involved in club sports.

The aim is for the subject of "women in sport" to be a subject of general conversation on the women's sports activity day. This project wants to show that sport not only provides an opportunity to keep fit and healthy, but also provides many opportunities to boost one's self-confidence, to cross cultural barriers and to promote social integration.

8th Social Dialogue – Appeal 2007

The European Commission has published a call for submissions to be made for 2007 for the "industrial relations and social dialogue" budget line. Its aims are to promote social dialogue at cross-sectoral and sectoral level.

Financing opportunities are available for activities including measures to prepare a European social dialogue, measures in the context of social dialogue as well as monitoring and follow-up measures. In addition, there is a separate list of activities that aim to strengthen social dialogue in the new Member



States and accession candidates as well as measures at European and national level intended to contribute to the Lisbon strategy.

Employer and employee representatives, organisations dealing with industrial relations and state agencies are eligible for funding. The European Council will co-finance the projects, assuming 80 per cent of their cost.

This year, there are two application deadlines: 1 March 2007 for activities beginning no earlier than 1 May 2007 and 31 August for activities beginning between 1 November and 22 December 2007.



http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/emplweb/tenders/tenders_en.cfm?id=1005



Lisbon strategy

9th EU project European social dialogue: “Row the Boat”

The project “Row the Boat” (RBT) submitted by the EASE (European Association of Sport Employers) was approved by the European Commission in November 2006. The project will receive cofinancing of €190,000 from the “industrial relations and social dialogue” budget line.

Its aim is to further develop social dialogue within the EU in the sports sector by increasing the representativeness of the social partners and to structure employer and employee organisations. In the course of the “Row the Boat”



project, it will propose that the European Council set up a committee for social dialogue in the sports sector.

First, the task will comprise compiling the “Lists of 100” – lists of the social partners in the 25 EU countries (both employers and employees) operating in the four subcategories of sport defined (club sport, vocational sport, fitness, leisure and outdoor sport). There will also be a survey of the sports systems in the countries concerned to round off this stage of research.

The project runs from December 2006 to November 2007.



<http://www.easesport.org/accueil.php>



Miscellaneous

10th “europa(S)meister” – a DOSB initiative

The German Olympic Sports Confederation (DOSB) is supporting the German Presidency of the European Council through its nationwide activity “europa(S)meister”. Together with 16 European champions, the 16 regional sports federations will present weekly initiatives that have a connection with Europe, such as integration health, promotion of regional economies or training and employment. The first initiative will be in February.

Federal Chancellor and European Council Chair Dr. Angela Merkel has assumed patronage of the activity.

The project was launched at the “europa(S)meister” press conference held in Berlin on 17 January at which European karate champion Ebru Shikh Ahmad presented Baden–Württemberg’s project “Sport’s accents in intercultural dialogue”. It opens up sports clubs to “foreign” sports disciplines in order to appeal more effectively to migrants.

For Berlin, the project “Ecological renovation of the Schlitzer Strasse child–care centre” was presented. The European swimming champion Britta Steffen is its patron. The aim of this structural measure is to improve the inadequate insulation of the facade and roof, thus reducing the child–care centre’s energy consumption by 60 per cent.



The European champions are available for weekly quiz questions on the Internet. As well as presenting attractive weekly prizes, the DOSB, with support from the Zurich Gruppe Deutschland, is offering the chance to win three trips to the XXIXth Olympic Games in Beijing at the end of the German EU Council Presidency.



www.europas-meister.de

11th Public consultation on the revision of EMAS

The EU Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS) is the EU voluntary instrument which recognises private and public organisations that improve their environmental performance on a continuous basis. EMAS registered organisations must comply with environmental legislation, run an environment management system and report on their environmental performance improvements.

The European Commission is currently in the process of revising EMAS. A questionnaire is the second part of a process which began around two years ago, with the launch of an external evaluation study.

The study showed that EMAS achieves its objectives of significantly improving the environmental performance of participating organisations but at the same time, it also showed that the scheme has not reached its full potential in terms



of diffusion.

The public consultation will look in more detail at the issues raised by the evaluation study and seek views on the best way forward for EMAS in the future.

The results of this consultation, as well as other inputs from various stakeholders, will constitute the background information which will help the Commission frame its proposal –due in the first half of 2007– to the European Parliament and the Council for a revised EMAS Regulation.



<http://ec.europa.eu/yourvoice/ipm/forms/dispatch?form=EMASRevision>



Glossary

Lisbon agenda, Lisbon strategy: The Lisbon Strategy was approved in March 2000 and aims to make the EU the most dynamic and most competitive economic area in the world by 2010. The strategy covers a whole number of political areas, including subjects ranging from research and education to the environment and employment.