

EOC

Liaison Office at the European Union



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

April 2004



General Policy		3
1st	EU-enlargement: changes in the institutions	3
Sport		5
News from the Institutions		5
2nd	Appeal for Olympic Truce by the European Parliament	5
3rd	Structural Funds: Performance Reserve allocated	6
4th	Sports betting: parliamentary exchange of views with Commissioner Bolkestein	6
5th	More legal security for television advertising also during sports broadcasts	8
Legal questions		9
6th	European Commission reforms Competition Law	9
Support programme		10
7th	People to People Project: "Check your LimitZ"	10
Miscellaneous		11
8th	Implementation of the 4 studies in the area of "Education and Sport"	11
9th	Production of sports equipment for the Olympic Games	11



General Policy

1st EU-enlargement: changes in the institutions

For the accession of ten new member states it was necessary to reform the EU-contract in December 2000 in Nice. Also the ongoing discussion about the new EU-constitution targets to create a realistic framework for a European Union of 25 and more countries.

The enlargement will cause structural changes in the EU-institutions such as the rise of the number of seats in the bodies.

The **European Parliament** as the only EU-institution representing directly Europe's citizen will be elected in the middle of June 2004 in all 25 member states. From May 1st until the elections the new countries will be already represented by Parliamentarians who had been nominated by their respective national Parliaments for this short period of time. Then the Treaty of Nice limits the number of Parliamentarians to the number of 732 after the EU-enlargement (before 626) and defines the amount of seats that each country will obtain. As the likelihood is that new Member States will enter the Union during the 2004-2009 term of office - and that as a result additional MEPs will be elected in these countries - it is anticipated that the maximum number of 732 seats in the European Parliament may be temporarily exceeded.



For sports organisations it will be of particular interest which newly elected Parliamentarians will then discuss sport matters within the respective committees.



http://wwwdb.europarl.eu.int/ep5/owa/p_meps2.repartition?ipid=0&ilg=EN&iorig=home&img=

Until 1st May 2004 the **European Commission** was composed of 20 members, the president and 19 Commissioners. Until the expiration of the 5 years term on 1 November 2004 there will be a transition solution: The Commission will count 30 members, the current 20 ones and 10 Commissioners from the accession countries. The latter will have full voting rights and play an active role in the Commission's decision-making process. Since the new members will not have portfolios on their own during this transition period, they are integrated in the policy areas of the current commissioners in order to get gradually used to the working procedures.

From 1 November 2004 on these new Commissioners will then obtain their own policy area.



The member states' votes in the Council of the European Union – the Council of Ministers – are readapted. The new weighting of the votes as defined in the Treaty of Nice should enable more decisions by majority vote. In contrast to the principle of unanimity the qualified majority voting offers less room to block the Council's decision

Sport

News from the Institutions

2nd Appeal for Olympic Truce by the European Parliament

In its resolution about Olympic truce, the European Parliament at the beginning of April 2004 urged the Council to push for peace to be observed worldwide during the Olympic Games and the Paralympic Games. In its appeal, it emphasised the peace-promoting aspect of the Games and asked the Council, to call all on EU member states, accession and candidate member states, to support the Games in this respect as international competitions promote reconciliation, tolerance and multicultural dialogue as well as international cooperation and mutual understanding.

At the same time, the European Parliament praised all the efforts until now to promote peace and understanding through sports and the Olympic ideal and in particular welcomed the establishment of an international foundation and centre for the Olympic truce.



3rd Structural Funds: Performance Reserve allocated

For the programme period of 2000–2006, the Commission has allocated a further 8 billion euro for regional and development programmes. The sum represents 4 % of the total resources earmarked for the Structural Funds which were kept back as a performance-related reserve in accordance with the regulations. The distribution key follows the success of the programme implemented until then. The division was determined in close cooperation between the Commission and the member states. The resources that have now become free should serve to give an additional thrust to more growth, investment and creating jobs.

4th Sports betting: parliamentary exchange of views

On the occasion of the parliamentary session of the European Parliament held on the 20th April 2004, an exchange of views on gambling between the members of the European Parliament and the Commissioner Frits Bolkestein, responsible for the Internal Market, took place.

Commissioner Bolkestein reported that the Commission had received a number of complaints from gambling services operators who contest existing national restrictions to cross-border services. At present, the Commission is analysing these complaints.



In addition, Bolkestein pointed out that the Commission intends to launch a study on the field of gambling services this year. This study is supposed to reveal if measures in this field have to be taken by the Commission.

Harbour (PPE-DE), member of the European Parliament, agreed with the directive on the Internal Market for services proposed by the Commission. He criticised, however, the exemption the directive contains for the field of gambling which, from his point of view, opposes the general aim of liberalization (of services).

Bolkestein made clear that the field of gambling was exempted from the country-of-origin principle. The directive proposed by the Commission does not call into question the existing state monopolies. Yet it requires Member States to screen national legal and administrative regulations regarding restrictions to the free movement of services. In addition, Member States have to ensure that authorisation requirements or licensing conditions for gambling services are transparent and based on objective criteria, said Bolkestein.

According to the European Lotteries in 2002 state lotteries provided about 15 billion euros for good causes such as sport in.



5th More legal security for television advertising also during sports broadcasts

In the course of the amendment of the Television Directive, the Commission adopted a statement about issues of interpretation with regard to certain aspects of the regulations of the "Television without frontiers" directive about television advertising. This statement shall improve the legal security when use is made of new advertising techniques and shall thus ensure that the principles of the Directive are being observed to the full extent.

The Commission emphasises that new advertising techniques and new forms of advertising are compatible with the directive, if certain regulations are respected in order to protect the viewer. This includes a clear division between editorial and commercial content, protecting the viewer against an excess of advertising and protecting the integrity of audiovisual works.

In practice it means that for example "split-screen" advertising can be inserted into ongoing sports broadcasts, if a period of 20 minutes remains between the breaks. Advertising may also be shown during intervals, that is to say in intervals during matches. In the example of a football broadcast, the Commission explains that free kicks or substitutions may not be deemed to be such interruptions, but only breaks that lead to an increase in the regular playing time. In addition, virtual advertising can be used, to replace the



advertising present on panels in the stadiums as long as it is not bigger.

Legal questions

6th European Commission reforms Competition Law

Since 1st May 2004, new regulations apply in the area of merger and take-over control. In addition, the new Antitrust Regulation takes effect, which specifies the application of the competition rules of the EC Treaty in accordance with articles 81 and 82. The articles named contain the prohibition of trade-restraining agreements in the internal market or the abuse of dominant positions.

The 25 national competition officials will in future work together with the European competition official in the "European Competition network" (ECN).

Reforms are being carried out within the area of aid control, which could also be interesting for the sports federations in Europe. In the past, subsidies for clubs or infrastructure projects of sport locations created a stir, as the assessment of whether state aid is involved was not always completely comprehensible for all those concerned. The Commission would therefore in future like to change to only taking action in those cases that have considerable consequences for the economy. All other cases should be taken care of by the member states themselves.



Support programmes

7th People to People Project: "Check your LimitZ"

With the "Check your LimitZ" project, the ASKÖ (Workgroup for Sport and Physical Education) in Austria was able to successfully acquire resources from the INTERREG Community initiative. Within this people to people project, schoolchildren from South Bohemia (Czech Republic) and the Austrian Mühlviertel meet and their fitness is tested with various contests such as sprints or long-jump. The "Check your LimitZ" project is the starting signal for future joint activities in both regions in the area of junior sport and health care during adolescence. The project will run from 28 June to 2 July 2004.



Miscellaneous

8th Implementation of the 4 studies in the area of "Education and Sport"

The four studies on various topics in the field of "Education and Sport", that were awarded by the European Commission at the beginning of the year have started. Within the framework of each study, between the end of April and the beginning of June a conference with international experts will be held, which are expected to yield important results. The study *"Young people's lifestyles and sedentariness; analysis of the role of sport in the context of education and as a means of restoring the balance"* is being led by Prof. Wolf-Dietrich Brettschneider at the University of Paderborn. The corresponding conference will be held in Essen on 4 and 5 June.



<http://www.eucopelis.info/>

9th Production of sports equipment for the Olympic Games

During the plenary session of the European Parliament on 22 April 2004, a joint motion for a resolution for respect for the fundamental industrial health and safety standards during the production of sports equipment for the Olympic Games was adopted. The motion for a resolution urged the sports clothing brands, the world association of the sports equipment industry as well as the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in the run-up to the 2004



Error! Use the Home tab to apply Überschrift 1 to the text that you want to appear here. 12

Olympic Games in Athens to respect the internationally recognised labour standards including all the human rights standards, as laid down by the International Labour Organization (ILO) as fundamental rights.