

Tweets of the month



EOC EU Office

@EOCEUOffice Jul 02

Thank you madame Commissioner
[@GabrielMariya](#)

for an open, concrete and fruitful exchange with us and our partners. We look forward to the cooperation on important topics like European Sport Model and overcoming the [#COVID_19](#) crisis. [#APM2020](#)
[@EuSport](#)
[@lelosyv](#)

EOC EU Office

@EOCEUOffice June 22

We were deeply saddened to hear that [@EuroAthletics](#) President Svein Arne Hansen has passed away. Under his leadership [@EuroAthletics](#) further intensified partnership with us and got actively involved in EU projects. Our deepest condolences to his colleagues, family and friends.

EOC EU Office

@EOCEUOffice June 16

Congratulations to our partner [@ASOIFSummerIFs](#) for the impressive and crucial work on [#goodgovernance](#) of International Federations. Read the full report here <https://asoif.com/news/third-review-if-governance-reveals-significant-progress-challenges-remain>

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@EOCEUOffice June 15

Our [#RINGSproject](#) on strategic management of the NOCs continues with a series of webinars on the concept of the strategic management to develop one of the outputs - handbook.

[@EuSport](#)

[@EUErasmusPlus](#)

[@FolkerF](#)

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EDITORIAL

Dear readers,

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and in the middle of its term the Croatian EU Presidency had to completely change its way of working. Nevertheless, the Presidency showed full commitment in the area of sport. They managed to convince the European Sport Ministers to make a clear commitment to including sport in European funding programmes. The fact that both the EU Commissioner for Sport and for Cohesion Policy, Gabriel and Ferreira, agreed with this demand is a strong signal to the Member States.

Nevertheless, a lot remains to be done. At national level, sport has so far not benefited sufficiently from European COVID-19 funding schemes. Furthermore, the European Commission has mentioned culture and tourism in its recent proposals for future regional policy funding 2021-2027, but has left sport out of its proposal. Now the Council and the European Parliament are called upon to give sport the same opportunities for support.

In late autumn, Commissioner Gabriel intends to organise a conference on the "future of sport". Without knowing the exact content yet, it can be assumed that the major issues of sport, including its social, societal and economic role, will be discussed. The European Sport Model belongs definitely also on the agenda. The Olympic sport movement will be eager to clarify which values and competences need to be protected from the organised sport's point of view.

On 1 July the German EU Presidency have started. In the field of sport, the German Presidency remains responsible for adopting the future Work Plan for Sport. Under the leadership of the EOC EU Office, a large number of international, European and national sports federations have commonly agreed on a comprehensive assessment of the current Work Plan and made demands for the future. On 25 June the document was presented to the Sport Directors of the EU Member States. The entire Position Paper is available on our website.

Unfortunately, I have to close the editorial with sad news. Svein Arne Hansen, President of the European Athletics Federation, has died in Oslo at the age of 74. In his presidential term, Svein Arne has intensified the traditionally good partnership with the EOC EU Office and was a frequent and most welcome guest at many events in Brussels. With his open and unpretentious manner, he was an excellent ambassador for European Athletics and has modernised the organisation in recent years. The EOC EU Office is losing a close friend and supporter.

We wish his family, friends and colleagues the necessary strength to cope with the great loss.

Kind regards.



Folker Hellmund
Director EOC EU Office

EUROPEAN UNION AND SPORT

EU Work Plan for Sport beyond 2020 – recommendations of the EOC EU Office

Adopted by the Sport Ministers Council, and implemented mainly by the European Commission and the Presidencies of Council of the EU, the EU Work Plan for Sport serves as a roadmap for all relevant stakeholders. The current document will come to the end of its implementation at the end of 2020 and the German Presidency (1 July – 31 December 2020) is about to lead and finish the discussions on the content of the EU Work Plan for Sport beyond 2020.

The EOC EU Office has been actively involved in the discussions and implementation of all EU Work Plans for Sport since the creation of this instrument in 2011. After an in-depth consultation of its partner organisations (written comments in February 2020, Webinar on 4 June 2020 followed up by a written procedure), the EOC EU Office prepared an extensive Position Paper presenting its recommendations to the Members States and the Commission. The Paper outlines and suggests:

- Three general recommendations: (1) Tackle the real challenges of sport; (2) Involve and engage the Olympic sport movement; (3) Mainstream sport in other policy areas.
- Improvements and changes to the current working methods: (1) improved coherence between the different working methods; (2) creation of a stronger link between the Work Plan and the Erasmus+ Programme – establishment of common projects; (3) Expert Groups to be established with clear tasks, clear selection of observers, and set-up of possible smaller “working groups” preparing the particular outputs; (4) continuation of the activities of Groups of Interested Member

States and peer learning activities; and (5) set-up of new methods for structured dialogue with the sport movement, including a “EU Sport Summit” during each Trio-Presidency.

- Arguments for the inclusion of new topics on the agenda: Safeguarding the European Sport Model, Overcoming the crisis caused by COVID-19, Environmental sustainability, Sport infrastructure, and Olympic values and ideals as part of the “European way of life”.

Furthermore, the EOC EU Office suggests maintaining the traditional division of topics into three pillars and working on a specific follow-up to the current activities:

- Integrity - safe sport and gender equality
- Economic dimension of sport - improving information and evidence base
- Societal role - grassroots sport and its societal role

The Position Paper is so far endorsed and co-signed by 27 partner organisations of the EOC EU Office:

- International sport organisations: IOC, ASOIF and International Ice Hockey Federation;
- European sport organisations: EOC, FIBA Europe, European Handball Federation, European Athletics Association, CEV, LEN, Rugby Europe, ENGSO;
- 14 National Olympic Committees: Belgium, Croatia, Germany, France, Italy, the

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Netherlands, Denmark, Cyprus, Finland, Czech Republic, Portugal, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Norway;

- Two other national organisations: RF and DFB.

The Position Paper was presented by the Director of the EOC EU Office, Folker Hellmund, to the Sport Directors of the Member States' during their online meeting on 25 June and shared with the Member States representatives and the Commission Sport Unit.

The European Commission is expected to publish its appraisal of the implementation of the current Work Plan at the beginning of July. Based on this document and on the outcomes of the Sport Directors meeting, the German Presidency will launch the negotiations on the EU Work Plan for Sport beyond 2020, which should be adopted by the Sport Ministers Council on 1 December 2020.

MORE INFORMATION:

[Position Paper: Recommendations for the future EU Work Plan for Sport beyond 2020](#)

Croatian Presidency comes to end with COVID-19 conclusions & discussion on the future Work Plan for Sport

Council adopts conclusions on COVID-19 and sport

On 22 June, the Council adopted its conclusions on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the recovery of the sport sector. The conclusions highlight the important role of sport for societies and its power to contribute to the well-being of citizens, in particular during the COVID-19 crisis. Council conclusions do not intend to have legal effects, however they set up political commitments or positions.

According to the Council conclusions, Member States and the Commission are invited to enable the access to recovery schemes for the sport sector through funding schemes such as Erasmus+, the European Solidarity Corps, the Cohesion Policy, the Corona Response Investment Initiative (CRII), and the Corona Response Investment Initiative Plus (CRII+). In parallel, the Commission was asked to provide regular information on potential flexibility within the framework of Erasmus+ Sport projects, and to reflect on additional flexibility mechanisms for future funding programmes in the field of sport.

With regard to the sport movement, the Council invites sport leaders to follow closely the various guidelines of national health authorities, the WHO and the ECDC in order to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus and to look at possible solutions for the "update of the national sport calendars, while taking into consideration the European and the international sport calendars".

From the perspective of organised sport, the conclusions are welcomed as they recognise the social role of sport and ask for funding possibilities to recover from the crisis. Additionally, the solidarity based European Sport Model was mentioned positively.

Sports Directors discuss the future Work Plan for Sport

On 25 June, the European Sport Directors discussed the future Work Plan for Sport. Against this background, the EOC EU Office was invited to present its positions and ideas for the next years to come. In his presentation, Folker Hellmund, Director of the EOC EU Office, outlined the strengths and weaknesses of the current Work Plan as it reaches its end. Furthermore, he made proposals for the

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future work plan, e.g. the need to involve the Olympic sport movement into policy creation from the early beginning in order to tackle the real needs of sports and to guarantee a better implementation of EU documents afterwards. Moreover, he mentioned the need to better mainstream sport into other policy areas such as health, regional development or gender equality since sport as a horizontal topic requires a holistic approach.

Prior to the Sports Ministers meeting, the EOC EU Office and 27 partner organisations, including IOC, EOC and ASOIF, formulated a comprehensive Position Paper on the new Work Plan for Sport, outlining ideas and approaches to improve the efficiency of the instrument (for more information, please see a dedicated article in this Monthly Report). The Position Paper was sent by the EOC EU Office to the Croatian Presidency, which then forwarded it to all EU Sports Directors.

Virtual Sport Unit breakfast discusses recent EU activities in the field of sport

In order to pursue the exchanges with sport stakeholders despite the restrictions related to COVID-19, the Sport Unit of the European Commission organised a virtual edition of the Sport Unit breakfast. The aim of the meeting was to provide participants with an update on the recent activities conducted at EU level in the field of sport as well as to hear views from sport stakeholders.

The meeting started with presentations made by the different EU institutions on their respective activities to answer the current crisis as well as their priorities for the upcoming months. Agata Dziarnowska, Policy Officer at the Sport Unit, announced a record number of applications for the Erasmus+ Sport 2020 call for proposals – 1145 compared to 776 in 2019 – and provided statistics on the origins and the topics covered by the applications. Then, she introduced the four calls for proposals for pilot projects and preparatory actions in 2020 (for more information, see Monthly Reports of April and May) and encouraged stakeholders to apply. She also updated participants on the latest developments for the European Week of Sport 2020 and the #Beactive awards, underlining the necessity to be flexible to cope with current and potential future restrictions, caused by COVID-19, related to the planned activities. The communication campaign will also be adapted to focus on attracting and

maintaining memberships in sport clubs and associations.

The second part of her presentation was dedicated to the Commission's response to COVID-19 crisis including the adopted supporting funds (CRII and SURE) and the proposal for the new Erasmus+ Sport programme for 2021-2027. She mentioned several ongoing initiatives including the development of an EU Platform for Sport to allow exchanges between Member States, a study on the impact of COVID-19 on sport sector and a meeting dedicated to the future of sport during the second-half of 2020.

The Croatian Presidency also updated participants on Council conclusions on the impact of COVID-19 and the recovery of the sector (see the dedicated article) while Katarzyna Biniaszczyk, Coordinator of the Sports Group of the European Parliament, explained that the activities of the Group will in practise start during the second part of the year. The Sport Group will notably closely follow the EP report on "*Challenges of sport events' organisers in the digital environment*".

The next session allowed three sport stakeholders to present their perspectives and activities to react to the COVID-19 situation. The Olympic Sport Movement was represented by

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Folker Hellmund, Director of the EOC EU Office, who presented several activities conducted by NOCs and sport organisations. These activities included the organisation of webinars and video conference to discuss good practices on the response to COVID-19 situation, the result of a survey conducted by the European Olympic Committees as well as lobbying activities towards EU institutions, including the coordination of the SHARE Position Paper in May as well as letters to the EP President, Commissioner Mariya Gabriel and to the Council. Then, he underlined the importance of the positive message for the sport sector delivered by Commissioner Gabriel and the

Council of Sport Ministers regarding the access of sport organisations to the EU recovery funds. However, he stressed the necessity to ensure that these statements will be followed by concrete implementation at national level and that the next MFF programme will also contribute to support sport actors in their recovery.

The next breakfast of the Sport Unit will take place in September.

The work of the Expert Group on Skills and HR development in sport finalised in virtual meeting

The European Commission Expert Group "Skills and Human Resources Development in Sport" (XG HR) had its 6th and final meeting – this time online – on 19 June 2020. Representatives from 20 EU Member States and 12 observer organisations were present to receive updates from the Commission and to discuss and evaluate the work of the Expert Group.

Yves Le Lostecque, Head of Sport Unit at the European Commission, gave an update of the latest activities of the Commission (for more information on the Commission activities, please see the article on the Sport Breakfast in this Monthly Report.) Agata Dziarnowska, Policy Officer at the Sport Unit, summarised the work of the Expert Group, which convened in Bath in the UK, Split in Croatia, Salzburg in Austria, Lisbon in Portugal, Trento in Italy, and finally virtually, to discuss and exchange experiences on the topics of education, coaching, qualifications and dual careers, and prepare its Guidelines regarding the minimum requirements in skills and competences for coaches (for more information, see Monthly Report of May 2020). Furthermore, she invited the experts and observers to discuss, what should be

done in the fields covered by the current XG during the next EU Work Plan for Sport.

Martina Jeričević shared some updates from the Croatian EU Presidency, highlighting the importance of the coaching topic to the Presidency. Guy Taylor, the UK expert involved in groups related to education topics during three Work Plans, provided a critical introduction to inspire discussions related to the work and topics of the Expert Group.

During the discussion, EOC EU Office Deputy Director Heidi Pekkola thanked all the colleagues in the Group and everyone that had contributed to the guidelines on coaches' competences document. She shared some relevant notions set forward in the Office's Position Paper on the future EU Work Plan for Sport (for more information, please see the dedicated article in this Monthly Report), highlighting the need to evaluate the future work of the Expert Groups. She raised the need to have clear tasks for the XGs. Expert Groups should cover topics that make sense to be discussed at the EU level and that have relevance for sport, and include the right experts – also from

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the sport movement – to deliver quality outputs that can also be implemented. She also pointed out that there are also other occasions for networking and sharing best practices – such as peer learning events and Erasmus+ cluster meetings.

ENGSO Secretary General
Kaisa Larjomaa shared similar views on the Expert Groups, highlighting the need for tangible outcomes, while acknowledging the number of documents already existing that still needs to be implemented. She reminded the colleagues of the 2017 Council Resolution on further developing the EU structured dialogue on sport, which recommends governments to use experts from the

sport movement when appropriate, and proposed to invite observers with relevant expertise – perhaps fewer of them. She also proposed digital meetings as a good alternative to some of the live meetings. Many others echoed the call to implement existing recommendations and guidelines instead of producing new ones.

The meeting was concluded with a healthy drink to celebrate the achievements together and raise a toast to Ms Dziarnowska, due to leave the Sport Unit at the end of June.

Expert Group “Integrity” finishes its work with a discussion on Gender Equality in Sport

The Expert Group “Integrity” (XG INT), established by the current EU Work Plan for Sport 2017-2020, finalised its work with its 6th meeting on 24 June 2020. During the morning session, representatives of the Member States and observers met online to receive an update of EU institutions recent activities (for more information, please see the article on the Sport Breakfast in this Monthly Report) as well as to approve the activity report produced by the European Commission. This report combines presentations made during the different meetings of the Group as well as the two studies conducted during the existence of the XG: one on corruption and the other one on safeguarding children in sport. The final part of this session offered the possibility for observers to present their recent activities including the progresses made in the EOC EU Office’s POINTS project ([website of the project](#)), the [third review of IFs Governance](#) published by ASOIF in June, the IOC-INTERPOL-UNODC cooperation regarding the fight against manipulation of competitions and the work done by the International Partnership against Corruption in Sport ([IPACS](#)). Yves Le Lostecque, Head of the Sport Unit of the European Commission, concluded the morning

session by saying that integrity topics will remain high on the agenda of the next EU Work Plan for Sport.

Discussion on future actions for gender equality in sport at the EU level

The afternoon session of the Expert Group was dedicated to the topic of gender equality in sport and the aim of the session was to discuss potential future actions in this field. In addition to the Member States representatives and observers of the Group, the Commission had also invited some high-level representatives and experts to take part in the discussion. During the exchange, participants agreed with a wide consensus that there is a need for actions to advance gender equality in sport. The expert document “[Gender Equality in Sport – Proposal for Strategic Actions 2014-2020](#)” is covering still this year.

In his contribution, Folker Hellmund, Director of the EOC EU Office, also highlighted that follow-up and concrete actions are needed. He stressed that it is important that the Commission, Member States and sport movement work together to move

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forward and establish concrete actions. In addition, he said that it is vital that the activities by the Commission in the field of sport are linked to the overall Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025 of the European Commission. He also mentioned the Gender Equality Strategy of the EOC, that was adopted last year, as a concrete example on the development. The IOC, represented by Athletes Commission Vice-Chair, Danka Bartekova, welcomed the activities by the Commission, gave a brief overview on the situation at the Olympic movement and explained

that the priority areas of the Proposal for Strategic Actions are well in line with the IOC's Gender Equality Review's recommendations.

The Head of Sport Unit, Yves Le Lostecque, concluded the session by saying that it is clear that a follow-up for the Proposal for Strategic Actions is needed. The Sport Unit will evaluate the proposals of the participants and come back with concrete next steps. EOC EU Office will closely follow and contribute to the process.

Artificial turf pitches: ECHA's Committee for Risk Assessment backs restricting microplastics – new public consultation online

On 10 June, the European Chemicals Agency, ECHA, informed that ECHA's Committee for Risk Assessment (RAC) supports restricting the use of intentionally added microplastics while recommending more stringent criteria for biodegradable polymers.

The news basically refers to the ban of intentionally added microplastics in general. However, there are parts that specifically refer to the use of microplastics as infill material on artificial turf pitches. In this regard it is stated that:

"RAC recommended a complete ban after a transition period of six years as there was incomplete information on the effectiveness of risk management measures. A ban would also be more effective than risk management measures in preventing environmental releases in the long term."

In addition to the RAC (Risk Committee), the SEAC (Socio-Economic Committee) is also involved when it comes to a restriction proposal. SEAC agreed on its draft opinion on the costs and benefits of this proposal for society, noting that microplastic pollution is irreversible and that early action to reduce emissions can be beneficial for society.

"SEAC also noted that risk management measures to contain synthetic infill material on artificial pitches cost less than a complete ban, but a ban would be more effective in preventing releases in the long term. Based on the available information, the committee does not prefer one option over the other."

The next steps involve a 60-day consultation of SEAC's draft opinion that started on 1 July, giving sport organisations the possibility to comment. Deadline for comments is 1 September 2020. No public consultation exists for the opinion of the RAC.

The consolidated opinion of both Committees (RAC & SEAC) is expected to be ready by the end of 2020. The opinions of ECHA's Committees contribute to the decision of the European Commission, which will then take a balanced view of the identified risks and of the benefits and costs of the proposed restriction. Within three months after having received the two Committees' opinions, the Commission will provide a draft amendment to the list of restrictions in Annex XVII to REACH. The final decision is taken in a comitology procedure with scrutiny involving the Member States and the

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European Parliament. The restriction's adoption can be expected in 2022.

ECHA assumes that releases from infill material used in artificial turf pitches to the environment could amount to 16 000 tonnes per year.

MORE INFORMATION

[RAC backs restricting intentional uses of microplastic](#)

[Have your say: Consultation on the draft opinion of the Committee of Socio-economic Analysis \(SEAC\)](#)

[RAC's opinion and SEAC's draft opinion](#)

FUNDING PROGRAMMES AND STUDIES

Crisis management and RINGS handbook development as the main topics of the June RINGS webinars

The coronavirus had an impact on normal life everywhere. Mobility, event-organising, physical meetings, etc. were all subjects of far-going restrictions. This was not different for the RINGS project. The Erasmus+ co-financed project, launched to implement a more systematic approach to the strategic management of NOCs, saw also its agenda limited by the COVID-19 crisis. The May-meeting on strategic management that would normally have taken place in Vilnius, had to be cancelled. Three webinars were therefore organised in June as a replacement. The webinars focussed on the exchange of good practices and lessons learnt regarding crisis management of NOCs during the pandemic as well as on the content of the RINGS handbook on strategic management of the NOCs.

COVID-19 as an example of crisis situation

The first webinar on 10 June brought together again the RINGS partners and reminded the consortium why the RINGS project was launched, and more importantly launched the discussion on external crisis impacting NOCs management and showed what can be learnt from the COVID-19 crisis. Participants were able to share the organisational and management adaptations they implemented to battle the current crisis. During this discussion, their preparedness for an external crisis, the adaptation of needed changes, management needs and existing structures and relations were shared. After this exchange, Heidi Pekkola, RINGS Project Manager, presented why the COVID-19 situation can be perfectly used as an example of an unexpected external crisis impacting the management of the NOCs. In

her intermediate conclusions, she highlighted that it is important to be ready for unexpected situations that could impact organisational and management aspects.

Handbook on the focus of second and third webinar

The discussions of the second and third RINGS webinars on 15 and 18 June focused on the content of one of the main outputs of the RINGS project - a handbook on strategic management. Folker Hellmund, Director of the EOC EU Office, explained how the discussions would proceed and highlighted that the handbook will be drafted as customised as possible. The aim of the RINGS project is namely to make all NOCs able to implement a more systematic approach to the strategic management. The handbook will be a main tool in introducing necessary means to organise processes and implement needed management structures. The Work Package of the handbook is led by Prof. Dr. Holger Preuss from the Gutenberg University Mainz. Together with his colleagues Dr. Norbert Schütte and Prof. Dr. Christiana Schallhorn, they went through the planned content of the handbook asking feedback from the partners. The interaction level of the webinar was subsequently raised through the exchange of good practices relating to change and strategic management. These exchanges are very important for the further development of the handbook to reinforce it.

Heidi Pekkola concluded the webinars by thanking all participants for their presence and valuable contributions. The aim is to have the next transnational meetings in

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November in Athens. However, this is to be confirmed due to the current situation.

INTERNAL AND VISITS

Commissioner Gabriel attends the EOC EU Office's Annual Partner Meeting

On 2 July, the EOC EU Office organised a video-conference for its Annual Partner Meeting bringing together the sport movement and EU leaders to discuss the latest updates on EU policies and other issues facing the world of sport today, in particular the COVID-19 crisis. The meeting was also an opportunity for all partners to have a first exchange with Mariya Gabriel, European Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth, who showed a high motivation and energy to develop sport at European level in cooperating closely with sport organisations over her mandate.

In the first part of the meeting, the partners received the Commissioner's statement and ambitions on the future of sport in which she emphasised the importance of using the post-crisis period to strengthen sport at all levels, from grassroots to top-level sport. To achieve this, she stressed the need to go beyond the funding available under the Erasmus+ programme by also looking to the structural funds at regional level to build *"a real eco-system of sport"*. Furthermore, with regard to the European sport model, she highlighted the importance to work on its preservation at EU level and in parallel, respecting the autonomy of sport organisations, which is an essential element for sport movement. She kindly invited sport movement to discuss with her on the main topics that need to be prioritised and challenges that are encountered by the sport organisations. Because as she mentioned: *"we need to start from somewhere, and sport organisations are in the right place to talk about it"*.

In addition to that, she highlighted the EU initiatives such as #BeInclusive Awards and the European Week of Sport to *"popularize sport and physical activity"*, however, according to her that is *"not*

enough and we need to think now about innovation and new technologies and come with strong ideas and concrete actions to establish a permanent work". Commissioner Mariya Gabriel concluded the exchange by welcoming another meeting to be organised soon to continue the discussions.

Following the discussion with Commissioner Gabriel, the partners received an update on EU sport policy, including e.g the future multi-annual financial framework, Erasmus+, the German EU Presidency and future EU Work Plan for Sport, as well as Green Deal and restriction on intentionally added microplastics on artificial turf.

For the second part of the meeting, the EOC EU Office invited external speakers. Christian Sachs, Head of the Berlin Office at the German Olympic Sports Confederation (DOSB) gave insights to DOSB's public affairs strategy during the corona-crisis. Sachs explained the need to evoke trust among public authorities that organised sport is handling the crisis in a responsible and thoughtful manner. In this regard, DOSB published [10 general recommendations for safe sport](#) during the contact restrictions that were very well received. He concluded that sports organisations in the future will have to expand their public affairs network, not only to the Sports Ministers, but also to high level officials in charge of health and safety.

The next speaker was James Carr, Head of Administration and Projects in the Association of Summer Olympic International Federations (ASOIF), who introduced the findings of the [Third review of International federations \(IFs\) governance](#), published by ASOIF earlier in June. Thirty-one summer Olympic IFs were asked to check their governance against 50 measurable indicators covering five sections:

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Transparency, Integrity, Democracy, Development and Control Mechanisms before an independent moderation of the results. After having described the methodology and some concrete findings of the report, Carr presented some key conclusions:

- Substantial improvements in most IFs since 2018 review;
- Still significant gaps between best and weakest IFs;
- Level of resources matters but it is possible to achieve high standards with less than 20 staff members.

Then, he explained that an individual review of the results will be done with every IF while the methodology will be also used for benchmarking with other organisations in the frame of the International Partnership Against Corruption in Sport (IPACS).

Finally, Benoit Keane, a sports lawyer, provided an update on the EU competition policy issues related to sport, namely the recent hearing on the ISU case at the European Court of Justice, salary caps and the legal cases caused by the COVID-19 restrictions in Belgium, France, Netherlands and Portugal. After briefly recalling the outcomes of the Commission infringement decision on the ISU case where the Commission declared that

ISU had broken competition law through eligibility rules that imposed a lifetime ban on skaters who took part in unauthorized events, he provided participants with information on the ISU hearing which took place on 12 June, in front of the EU General Court in Luxembourg. Secondly, Keane described the decision of a UK independent disciplinary panel on the claim by Saracens that the salary cap in "Premiership Rugby Limited" regime infringed EU and UK competition law as otherwise PRL's charges could not be validly maintained. In this case, the panel found that there is simply no evidence of any adverse impact caused by the salary cap on the ability of elite rugby clubs to recruit players on the global market. The panel even ruled that the salary cap was, in fact, beneficial to competition. According to him, the Saracens decision could provide other sports organisations with more legal clarity as to why caps on salary in sport are not necessarily prohibited under EU competition law and, if correctly designed, can actually be considered as beneficial.

The EOC EU Office would like to thank all the speakers and partners for their active participation and contributions.

PARTNERS' CORNER

Microplastic on artificial turf pitches: DOSB expert group publishes recommendations for action and basic positions

The sport-related entry of (micro)plastics into the environment and the possible health and environmental pollution caused by sports surfaces, sports textiles and sports events are increasingly being scientifically problematised, discussed in sports and environmental policy contexts and addressed in the media.

Therefore, in spring 2019, the German Olympic Sports Confederation (DOSB) established the working group "Microplastics through Sport in the Environment", in which experts from sports organisations, municipal associations, the environmental and scientific sector and the economy are represented. The working group ensures a continuous transfer of knowledge on the socially significant topic of environmental pollution through plastics and its relation to sport.

"The community-oriented sport in Germany can and wants to make its contribution to reducing environmental pollution through microplastics", emphasizes Andreas Silbersack, Vice President Sport Development at DOSB. "We hope that the 'recommendations' and 'positions' now available will lead to the reduction or avoidance of artificial fillers in artificial turf systems".

The two policy papers, which were developed by the DOSB Working Group "Microplastics through Sport in the Environment", were approved by the DOSB Board in April 2020:

- [Recommendations](#) for the design of new artificial turf systems or the operation of existing ones using polymer granulate as a filler for sports clubs and associations as well as local authorities
- [Basic positions](#) and recommendations for funding agencies and industry on artificial turf systems

Unfortunately, both documents are currently only available in German. The "Recommendations" and "Positions" as well as further current information, FAQs, and downloads can be found at: www.dosb.de/mikroplastik

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NEXT MONTHS

06 July 2020

EPAS European Sport Charter webinar consultation

11 September 2020

POINTS Workshop CEV