

## Tweets of the month



### [FranceOlympique](#)

@FranceOlympique Dec 17  
Jean-Michel Brun, Secretary General of the French National Olympic and Sport Committee and Executive member of the EOC, calls for a Manifesto and consideration of the proposals, so that Sport does not only follow the market rules.  
[@EOCmedia](#)

### [EOC EU Office](#)

@EOCEUOffice Dec 17  
Conference on specificity of sport is organised today in Brussels by [@EuSport](#). First panel is now discussing "How to define specificity?" [@Niels\\_Nygaard](#), [@EOCmedia](#) Vice-president and [@DIFidraet](#) President will exchange on the topic with [@UEFA](#), DG COMP and [@FIFPro](#) representatives.

### [ENGSO](#)

@ENGSOsport Dec 4  
[#Sport](#) plays an important role for society in many sectors! Agata Dziarnowska [@EuSport](#) gives 3 examples of using structural funds for this purpose. Why not explicitly mention sport in [#ERDF](#) and [#ESFplus](#) programmes post-2020 to boost these opportunities?  
[#EUBudget](#) [#MFF](#) [#EUsport](#)

### [EOC EU Office](#)

@EOCEUOffice Dec 3  
2nd day of Special Competence Seminar starts with a presentation of the new [@EUErasmusPlus](#) project 'Road towards Innovative governance of NOCs and Grassroots Sport' RINGS by project manager [@h\\_pekkola](#). Discussion on [#integrity](#), Societal issues and stakeholders involvement to come.

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### EDITORIAL

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Dear Readers,

With the election decision in Great Britain, the course has now been set for the European Union to implement the Brexit in the course of next year, but it will only become apparent in the coming months how soft or hard this will turn out.

The new Croatian Presidency of the Council of the European Union will have to deal with other important dossiers, which represent a real test for the Union to cope with the current political turmoil. The next financial framework of the Union for the years 2021-27 should, according to the ideas of the EU Commission, be strongly oriented towards the requirements of the "Green Deal". The difficult negotiations will have a direct impact on sport, as the level of future EU funding for programmes such as Erasmus+ Sport or the European Structural Funds will depend on the level of the overall financial framework.

However, the possible strengthening of European climate and environmental policy should not be seen as a threat by sport, but rather as an opportunity to develop further in this area. This applies in particular to ideas aimed at more environmentally friendly major sporting events. Issues such as energy-saving infrastructures, waste management or climate-neutral transport offer starting points for new or strengthening existing activities.

The development of the new Work Plan of the Sports Ministers 2021-24, which will be adopted under the German Council Presidency in the second half of 2020, will be high on the political agenda. From the organised sport's point of view, the cardinal question of preserving the European model of sport has still not been resolved. The appropriate application of competition law to sports federations, taking into account their social, integrating and non-commercial character, remains the dominant political issue and will also be the subject of the European Evening of Sport on 16 March 2020 in Brussels. On this occasion, IOC President Dr. Thomas Bach will also address this issue.

The EOC EU Office will change its partner structure in 2020. Our British partner SARA (Sport and Recreation Alliance) will terminate the partnership not least because of the Brexit. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all the colleagues for the excellent cooperation over the last 10 years!

Fortunately, the cooperation with ASOIF (Association of Summer Olympic International Federations) has developed so positively that ASOIF will join the EOC EU Office as a new strong partner on 1 January 2020. We look forward to this partnership with high enthusiasm and expectations.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all partners and friends of the EOC EU Office for the good cooperation and wish you all a relaxed Christmas and a good start into the Olympic year 2020!

Kind regards,



Folker Hellmund  
Director

## EUROPEAN UNION AND SPORT

### EU Commission: Seminar on the Specificity of Sport

On 17 December the European Commission organised a seminar on the topic “Specificity of Sport”. The seminar was planned within the framework of the current EU Work Plan for Sport running for the period 2017-2020. More than 120 stakeholders from sport and politics took part at the seminar. The Olympic movement were highly represented together with representatives from the European Commission, the Finnish and Croatian Presidency, and other stakeholders. Fruitful discussions took place during the different panels and presentations showed that:

- All stakeholders recognised the existence of the specific nature of sport activities but opinions diverge on the way to take this specificity into account within European and national legislations.
- The promotion and the protection of the European Sport Model is currently a key topic for the different participants as the sport landscape is currently evolving notably with the involvement of more and more third party commercial organisers.
- The application of EU Competition rules to sport remains subject to discussion between the different actors.

After a short introduction by Yves Le Lostecque, Head of the Sport Unit at the European Commission, Director General Themis Christophidou, DG EAC, European Commission, and Heidi Sulander, Finnish Presidency, opened the seminar in Brussels using “dialogue” between all stakeholders as a key word and highlighting the importance to take into account specificity of sport in all EU policies.

Then two keynote speakers, Richard Parrish, Edge Hill University, and Jean-Michel Brun,

Secretary-General of the French Olympic Committee and Member of the EOC Executive Committee, presented their views on the topics. While Richard Parrish approached the topic from an academic point of view focusing on the historical regulations and rulings, Jean-Michel Brun stressed the differences between commercial oriented organisation and non for profit sport actors.



He highlighted the mission of public interest played by sport organisations including societal function and solidarity activities as the main arguments for maintaining and defending the European Sport Model (ESM) and the specificity of sport. In addition, he addressed the necessity to ensure that competition rules take the specificity of sport into consideration as recognised several times by various institutions such as the European Commission, the EU Council, the Council of Europe and the ECJ.

To kick-off the discussions, three panel sessions took place starting with a first focus on “How to define specificity?” Antoine Duval from the Asser Institute gave a presentation on the topic and emphasized two approaches when tackling the question: territorial specificity (sport organisations have a territory where they can freely govern the

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sport) and sensitive specificity (interpretation depending on the context).



Niels Nygaard, President of the Danish Olympic Committee and Vice-President of the EOC Executive Committee, was one of the panelists and described the Olympic movement's definition of specificity of sport with a direct reference to the activities conducted under the European Sport Model and the pyramid structure. Nevertheless, he stressed that sport organisations require a high level of governance in order to defend their autonomy. Sport should not be primarily regarded as an economic activity that must be governed by the EU. Furthermore, Nygaard expressed his concern about the need to define a common ground. Ana Garcia Castillo (DG COMP of the European Commission) confirmed the case by case approach used by DG COMP and highlighted that the European Commission does not want to replace the role of sport organisations but that the rules need to be clear, transparent and proportionate with a reference to Good Governance. In the question and answers session, the FIBA/Euroleague dispute was mentioned and a clear demand was directed to DG COMP to become active in this case in order to ensure that national teams can play with their best players in their qualification matches for Olympic Games.

The discussion started with a presentation from Roxana Maracineanu, French Minister of Sports where she recalled the strong support of France to the European Sport Model and the danger represented by closed leagues from her perspective. She also invited the Commission to become more active on the protection of the ESM

by initiating a discussion between the different actors to find a common ground.

Jana Janotová, Czech Olympic Committee and EOC EU Office, moderated the second session of the day on "How is the specificity of sport taken into account at national level?" Jean Michel Saive, Vice-President of the Belgian Olympic Committee and former athlete underlined the necessity of having a sport calendar that avoids overlaps of events as it happens in his career. Furthermore, he backed the existing Solidarity Model in sport that supports athletes in all sports and countries.



Jean-Francois Brocard, Centre de Droit et d'Economie du Sport de Limoges, first presented some key findings from a recent study revolving around the European Sport Model in relation to the emergence of closed leagues in Europe compared to closed leagues in the U.S. One of the main findings of Brocard analysis was "that European law is not intended to protect the traditional sports model in Europe as it stands". The study will be published in January 2020.

The panel discussion focused on the societal role of sport and a comparison between countries. Two distinguishable differences were the financing aspects as well as the scope of legislation related to the organisation of sport activities in each country.

The final session of the day discussed "How and why protect the specificity of sport?". Tobias Maass, DG COMP, European Commission, presented a summary of the ISU-case.

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In his presentation he stressed that private entities shall not ride on all benefits sport associations are putting forward but the fact that there were possible less restricting measures made the rules observed in the ISU case disproportionate. Maass explained that the restriction of competition in the ISU case was not linked to a legitimate object but other interests of the ISU. Folker Hellmund, Director of the EOC EU Office, highlighted the importance of high good governance standards in

sport organisation and welcomed the progress that has been made in the last years. Furthermore he emphasized that the ISU judgement confirmed the right of sport organisations to restrict competition when measures are appropriate, necessary and follow legitimate objectives such as health, safety, integrity or if these measures are needed to govern properly the respective sport. Hellmund requested that the latter objective needs to be clarified and in future cases the EU Commission should use its margin of interpretation to increase the legal certainty for sport organisations.

Martina Jericevic from the incoming Croatian Presidency and Antoaneta Angelova-Krasteva, DG EAC, European Commission, concluded the seminar by mentioning the main features discussed during the day such as cooperation across different sectors and a dialogue that remains open as well as the importance of maintaining both grassroots sport and elite sport.

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### Sport Directors of the EU Member States meet in Helsinki to discuss corruption in sport

On 9-10 December the Sport Directors from the Ministries of EU Member States met in Helsinki. The Sport Directors meet usually once under each EU Presidency, and the latter decides the topics to be discussed in the meeting. This time there were three main topics on the agenda: corruption in sport, future Erasmus programme and sustainability.

As the meeting is targeted to the Ministries, sport stakeholders are usually invited only to a certain part of the meeting- this time on the discussion on corruption in sport. The topic was one of the main priorities of the Finnish Presidency and the EU Sport Ministers adopted Council Conclusions on combatting corruption in sport. In the discussion at the Sports Directors meeting, the Olympic movement was represented by Secretary General of the Finnish Olympic Committee, Mikko Salonen.

In his contribution, Mr. Salonen reminded the audience that in recent years the Olympic and sport movement have intensified the work to fight against corruption in sport. As one example he presented the work of the IPACS (International

Partnership Against Corruption in Sport), where the IOC is one of the founding partners. In addition, he reminded that sport organisations have the disciplinary sanctions when it comes to corruption cases. Governments, on the other hand, need to take their own responsibility of taking measures against corruption and not allow such practices. "There is a need to create a bridge between these two stakeholders. Dialogue, interactions and common direction can be the only solution", Salonen said.

The Finnish EU Presidency comes to an end as Croatia is taking over the leadership of the Council in the beginning of 2020 for the first six months of the year. For the priorities of the Croatian EU Presidency, please see a separate article.

#### FURTHER INFORMATION

[Council conclusions on combatting corruption in sport](#)

### Croatian EU Presidency in the first half of 2020

Croatia will take over the Presidency on 1 January 2020, ending on 30 June 2020. Under the slogan "A strong Europe in a world of challenges", the Croatian Presidency will focus on following priorities:

- a Europe that grows
- a Europe that connects
- a Europe that protects

- an influential Europe

The Presidency is responsible for taking forward the Council's work on EU legislation and policy initiatives, including the Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council. The Croatian Presidency priorities in sport are sport qualifications and competences for coaches as well as sport and media.

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With regard to the “qualifications and competences for coaches”, a Presidency Conference will take place in Zagreb, Croatia, on 27-28 February. The Conference is expected to create input for Council conclusion on that same topic. The topic “sport and media” is supposed to have a focus on the societal influence of media e.g. on gender equality and on the educational role in promoting physical activity, as well as on media’s role to shape the public discussion on sport.

Notable dates for the Croatian Presidency are:

- 27-28 February: Conference on qualifications and competences for coaches, Zagreb
- 26-27 March: EU Sport Forum, Zagreb
- 19 May: Council of Sport Ministers + Council debate, Brussels

- 4-5 June: Conference on sport & media, Dubrovnik

The first Council Working Party on Sport, chaired by Martina Jericevic is scheduled for 20 January 2020.

Germany will take over the Council’s Presidency from Croatia on 1 July 2020. It will be the first Council Presidency for Croatia, after having joined the EU in 2013.

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### FURTHER INFORMATION

[Euractiv: Croatia unveils look and feel of next year’s EU presidency](#)

[Twitter: Croatia in the EU](#)

[Croatian Presidency website](#)

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## The role of sport in education discussed at Erasmus+ Sport Cluster Meeting

The Erasmus+ Sport Cluster Meeting on “The role of sport in education: enhancing skills development and dual careers perspectives”, was organised on 4–5 December in Brussels. The event brought together a large number of experts working on the topics of dual careers, skills development through sport, and coaches’ education. Throughout the two days, the participants shared best practices, enhanced their networks and gave recommendations to the European Commission.

The participants were welcomed by Sophie Beernaerts, Head of Department Erasmus+, EACEA, Antoaneta Angelova-Krasteva, Director for Innovation, International cooperation & Sport, European Commission, DG EAC, and Heidi Sulander, Chairperson of the Working Party on Sport under the Finnish EU Presidency.

The policy session “Dual career – from theory to reality” consisted of a testimonial by Andreas Küttel, former high-level athlete and dual career researcher at the University of Southern Denmark

and a panel with dual career experts, who discussed the challenges and good examples regarding dual career development.

“Dual careers are also a social responsibility. Not all kids reach top level. We have the responsibility of their personal and sports development, in order to prepare them for ‘real life’ – there are so few that can live on sport”, said panellist Kent Lindahl from the Swedish Sports Confederation.

During the policy session “Coach as teacher and lifelong learner”, panellist Sara Massini, ENGSO Executive Committee member, gave a brief presentation on the Erasmus+ funded SCORE project, which created an education system for women to enter coaching, and fostered an environment in clubs and federations that attracts women to coaching.

Panellist Michael Kinnen from the Belgian Hockey Federation pointed out that while the discussions seemed to focus on coaches that work at a more or less professional level, the vast majority of coaches are non-paid volunteers.

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The second day kicked off with a high-level policy session on “What can we learn by practicing sport?”, with MEP Tomasz Frankowski, Romanian former high-level athlete Gabriela Szabo, and Head of Sport Unit Yves Le Lostecque from the European Commission as panellists.

“Sport contributes to the development of our society and teaches respect for others, enhances the social skills of children and decision-making abilities”, said MEP Tomasz Frankowski, himself a former professional footballer.

The day continued with three lively parallel workshops: one focusing on how to ensure success in dual careers, the second one on

education through sport with special focus on skills development, and the third one on preparing coaches to work with diverse participants. During the sum-up session, moderated by ENGSO Secretary General Kaisa Larjomaa, the workshop facilitators discussed the key lessons and recommendations arising from the workshops.

The meeting was concluded by remarks by Krešimir Šamija, Deputy Secretary of State for Sport from Croatia and Yves Le Lostecque.

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### FURTHER INFORMATION

[Programme of the Cluster meeting](#)

[SCORE project](#)

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## European Green Deal – One of the big priorities of the new Commission

On Wednesday, 11 December 2019, the College of new Commissioners unveiled the European Green Deal; an ambitious programme initiated by the Commission President Ursula von der Leyen. In introducing the initiative, she said: “The European Green Deal is our new growth strategy – for a growth that gives back more than it takes away. It shows how to transform our way of living and working, of producing and consuming so that we live healthier and make our businesses innovative.”

The European Green Deal is part of the Commission’s strategy to implement the goals of the Paris Agreement besides the United Nation’s 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals. It aims to tackle both climate- and environmental-related challenges. Even though the Green Deal and the instruments the Commission plans to present in its framework will be applicable mainly to the Member States, the EU can use its influence, expertise and financial resources to mobilise its neighbours and partners to join it on a sustainable path.

With the EU’s climate and energy package of 2008, one of its objectives was a 20 per cent cut

in greenhouse gas emissions by 2020 (next year). Currently, the EU’s goal is to reduce its CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 40 per cent by 2030. The EU’s goal with this European Green Deal is even more ambitious. Already on 28 November MEPs adopted a resolution calling for the EU to set climate neutrality by 2050. The European Council later endorsed this ambitious goal in its December [Conclusions](#).

In order to achieve the target of the European Green Deal, mainstreaming sustainability in all EU policies is important. Therefore, the EU budget and the development of a sustainable Europe Investment Plan will play a key role. Mainstreaming of sustainability issues will, however, have an impact across EU policies, including, as it is expected, in the area of sport.

To realise the European Green Deal, the Commission developed a Communication, which presents an initial roadmap of the key policies and measures needed to achieve the goal of the European Green Deal.

In addition, to make the European Green Deal a success, activating education and training will be



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indispensable. Therefore, the European Social Fund+ and the [EU Skills Agenda](#) are also mentioned as means to the implementation of this Agenda. It should be noted that even though not referred to explicitly in the Commission Communication on the Skills Agenda, sport is considered by the EU as an important instrument for informal and non-formal education.

[Press remarks by President von der Leyen on the occasion of the adoption of the European Green Deal Communication](#)

[Communication of the European Commission on the European Green Deal](#)

### FURTHER INFORMATION

## INTERNAL AND VISITS

### EOC EU Office's Special Competence Seminar takes place in Brussels



On 2-3 December 2019, a Special Competence Seminar was organised in Brussels by the EOC EU Office. The aim of this meeting was to inform the partner organisations about recent EU policy developments and to exchange views on ongoing activities. Participants came from various sport federations, such as the European Volleyball Federation (CEV), the International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF), Rugby Europe, European Athletics, and FIBA Europe, as well as from the NOCs/Sports Confederations of Finland, Sweden, France, Denmark, Norway, Italy, Germany, Netherlands, Croatia, Czech Republic, Belgium and from the IOC.

The two-day meeting allowed a comprehensive update on sport-related EU policies and a rich exchange of views on future potential challenges

and how to act and respond to them. After the introduction by Folker Hellmund, a roundtable took place where partners shared their experiences on different activities and projects being organised within their organisations.

The roundtable was followed by a presentation on the new EU political framework including new actors and priorities. Furthermore, updates were presented on the European Sport Model, upcoming EU Presidencies and EU funding programmes such as Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps. This policy update ended with an analysis of the 2019 Erasmus+ call (number of projects, budget and differences between the 2018 and 2019 call in terms of funding) and a forecast to the new 2020 Erasmus+ call.

In addition, the EOC EU Office welcomed the participation of Yves Le Lostecque, Head of the Sport Unit at the European Commission, and Agata Dziarnowska, Policy Officer of the Sport Unit at the European Commission, who provided an overview on the third EU Work Plan for Sport and then answered questions raised by the participants.

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The second day kicked off with a presentation about the EOC EU Office's new RINGS project on developing and modernising the strategic management of NOCs in Europe. Participants were then divided into different groups to take part in three parallel sessions where they discussed future priorities and challenges for sport and possible activities allowing the implementation of the priorities of the sport movement.

The seminar concluded with a presentation on some of the Council of Europe's activities with a special focus on the European Sport Charter and EPAS. The EOC EU Office would like to thank all partners for their active participation in the discussions and encourage them all to apply for the next 2020 Erasmus+ programme!

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## NEXT MONTHS

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|-----------------------|---|
| <b>9-22 January</b>   | Winter Youth Olympic Games, Lausanne                |
| <b>28 January</b>     | EOC Executive Committee, Lausanne                   |
| <b>28 January</b>     | EOC EU Office Board meeting, Lausanne               |
| <b>31 January</b>     | Erasmus+ Coordinators information meeting, Brussels |
| <b>6 February</b>     | IPACS European Contact Group meeting, Paris         |
| <b>11-12 February</b> | RINGS kick-off meeting, Brussels                    |