

MONTHLY REPORT

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EUROPEAN
OLYMPIC
COMMITTEES



EU
Office

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EDITORIAL

Dear readers,

This edition of our Monthly Report follows a period of transition for the EOC EU Office and comes at a pivotal moment for European sport and sport policy. As discussions on the future Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) become increasingly concrete at EU level, the positioning of sport within broader European priorities is gaining renewed political attention.

A key highlight of the past month was the EU Sport Forum 2026, where the EOC EU Office actively contributed to ensuring strong representation of the Olympic Movement, once again underlining the recognition of organised sport as a key stakeholder in the European policy landscape. In her address, IOC President Kirsty Coventry emphasised Europe's central role within the global sport system, alongside the importance of safeguarding the autonomy and political neutrality of sport.

At the same time, the European Commission published the summary report of the public consultation on its upcoming Communication on "A Strategic Vision for Sport in Europe: Reinforcing the European Sport Model", confirming broad support for the European Sport Model while also highlighting expectations to further strengthen governance, financial solidarity, and support to grassroots sport. Notably, health, education and youth have been identified as key policy areas for mainstreaming sport, thereby also reflecting a growing understanding of sport as a cross-cutting policy tool.

In this context, the so-called "Lipica Conclusions" bring substance to these ambitions by putting the evidence base, sport statistics and social return on investment firmly back on the agenda. They reaffirm that sport generates substantial economic, social, health and community value, while recognising that this value is not yet fully or consistently measured across the EU. This underlines the importance of promoting a pragmatic EU-level approach to assessing sport's broader value and establishing a more evidence-based framework. The "Lipica Conclusions", together with the first meeting of the Eurostat Expert Group on Sport Statistics, signal a renewed effort to strengthen both economic and social impact measurement. At a time when the EU budget is under increasing pressure, demonstrating sport's contribution to broader societal objectives will be essential.

Negotiations on the next MFF 2028–2034 have now entered a decisive phase. The European Parliament is calling for a more ambitious EU budget that better reflects current and future challenges. It firmly discourages any renationalisation or fragmentation of EU funding and underlines the importance of preserving the European added value of common policies, while advocating for increased investment in key areas such as education, health and competitiveness—policy fields where sport can play a growing role.

Within this framework, the Erasmus+ Programme remains central for sport, with growing political support for increased funding, including discussions on earmarking a dedicated share of the programme for sport. This acknowledges sport's unique contribution to EU objectives and further reflects the proactive engagement and collective mobilisation of European National Olympic Committees and Federations in shaping a comprehensive programme for sport in the years to come.

Looking ahead, we look forward to welcoming our partners to the Annual Partners Meeting in June 2026, which will provide an important opportunity to exchange views, align priorities, and further strengthen our common approach at a time when coordinated action is more important than ever.

I hope you enjoy reading this edition of our Monthly Report.

Kind regards,



Carlotta Giussani
Director EOC EU Office



EU SPORT POLICY AND FUNDING NEWS

EU Sport Forum 2026: Strong Olympic presence and strategic dialogue for European sport

On 15-16 April 2026, European sport stakeholders convened in Paphos, Cyprus, for the annual EU Sport Forum, the European Commission's flagship event for dialogue on sport policy. This year's edition brought together a wide range of actors from across the European sport ecosystem to exchange on key topics such as the European Sport Model, solidarity mechanisms, mental health, intergenerational participation, gender equality, and the future of European basketball.

Strong visibility of the Olympic Movement

A key highlight of this year's Forum was the notably strong representation of the Olympic Movement across the programme, reflecting its continued relevance and growing recognition within the European sport policy landscape. The EOC EU Office contributed to facilitating this visibility, ensuring that Olympic stakeholders were well represented across panels and discussions.

IOC President Kirsty Coventry, in a video address, underlined the importance of safeguarding the autonomy and political neutrality of sport, particularly in a complex geopolitical context. She reaffirmed Europe's central role within the global sport system and highlighted the unifying power of sport.

EOC EU Office partners made significant contributions to the discussions. Roko Sikiric (European Volleyball Confederation - CEV) presented volleyball as a model for solidarity and competitive balance through reforms such as streamlined competitions and redistribution mechanisms. Antonio Silva (European Aquatics) emphasised the interdependence between elite and grassroots sport, demonstrating how elite success can drive mass participation.



Jean-Michel Saive (Belgian Olympic Interfederal Committee) highlighted the role of sport clubs as inclusive community hubs across generations, while Kim Bui (IOC Athletes' Commission) brought forward the athlete perspective on mental health and wellbeing.

Athlete representation was further reinforced by Johanna Talihärm (EOC Athletes' Commission), who stressed the importance of embedding athletes in governance structures.

In addition, Jaime Lamboy (FIBA) contributed to discussions on the future of European basketball, emphasising the importance of balancing development opportunities with the principles of the European Sport Model.

Policy developments and strategic direction

The Forum provided important updates on EU sport policy and ongoing initiatives. The European Commission outlined progress on its forthcoming Communication on "A Strategic Vision for Sport in Europe," expected by the end of 2026, structured around three core priorities: responsible autonomy and good governance; solidarity and sustainability; and sport as a public good.

Erasmus+ Sport remains a cornerstone of EU funding, continuing to support cooperation and innovation across the sector. The growing interest in the programme reflects its relevance and impact across European sport although increasing competition for limited resources raises concerns about accessibility, particularly for grassroots organisations.

The upcoming Irish Presidency of the Council also presented its priorities, notably the promotion of traditional sports and games as drivers of social cohesion and cultural heritage.

More broadly, discussions reaffirmed the centrality of the European Sport Model, with a strong emphasis on solidarity, the link between elite and grassroots sport, and the role of sport in addressing wider societal challenges such as health, inclusion, and education.



A valuable platform for exchange and cooperation

The EU Sport Forum once again demonstrated its value as a key platform for bringing together diverse stakeholders from across European sport.

In addition to the formal programme, the Forum provided important opportunities for informal exchanges, networking, and bilateral discussions, especially with EOC EU Office partners. These interactions further strengthened cooperation and mutual understanding across the European sport community.

As the European Commission advances its strategic vision for sport, and as discussions on governance, solidarity, and sustainability continue to evolve, the EU Sport Forum remains an important moment for reflection, exchange, and collaboration across the European sport ecosystem.

Parliament adopts position on the Multiannual Financial Framework 2028-2034

The preparation of the European Union's next long-term budget, the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) for 2028-2034, has entered a decisive political phase. Following the European Commission's proposal presented in summer 2025, the European Parliament has now taken the lead in shaping the debate by adopting its interim report during the April 2026 plenary session.

The EU's long-term budget is decided jointly by the European Commission, the European Parliament and the Council. After the Commission presented its proposal, Parliament has now responded by adopting its interim report.

The interim report sets out Parliament's political position and negotiating mandate. It evaluates the Commission's proposal, highlights key priorities, and defines the conditions under which Parliament will approve the final MFF.

Parliament's key priorities for the MFF 2028-2034

A central issue for the European Parliament is the overall size and ambition of the next EU budget. This reflects Parliament's view that the Commission's proposal does not match the Union's political ambitions or the scale of current and future challenges.

Beyond the overall size, Parliament strongly emphasises that the EU budget must retain its European character. It firmly rejects any form of renationalisation or fragmentation, warning against approaches such as “one plan per Member State,” which could weaken common policies, reduce transparency and undermine multilevel governance. At the same time, it stresses the importance of maintaining strong funding for traditional policies, including cohesion policy, agriculture and social programmes, while ensuring the involvement of regional and local authorities.

Parliament also supports a significant reinforcement of investment in strategic priorities under Heading 2. This includes areas such as competitiveness, research and innovation, infrastructure, defence, health, and education, reflecting the need for the EU to respond to an increasingly complex global environment. While it welcomes increased resources for the EU’s external action, it considers the proposed level insufficient and calls for stronger support to address global challenges, enlargement, and geopolitical responsibilities.

A key underlying principle is that the EU budget should focus on financing European public goods with clear added value, particularly in areas where joint action is more effective than national spending, such as cross-border infrastructure, energy, housing and security. At the same time, Parliament highlights the need for greater flexibility to respond to crises, alongside stronger safeguards for transparency, democratic accountability and the rule of law.

Finally, Parliament underlines that a more ambitious budget must be matched by sustainable revenues. It therefore reiterates its call for new own resources to strengthen the EU’s financial autonomy and ensure that future priorities and debt repayments do not come at the expense of core programmes.

A specific focus on Erasmus+

Within this broader framework, Erasmus+ emerges as a flagship programme under Heading 2, reflecting its strategic importance for Europe’s future. Members of Parliament explicitly link Erasmus+ to the Union’s competitiveness agenda, highlighting its role in strengthening human capital, skills development, labour mobility and social cohesion.

The interim report calls for a substantial budget increase to €47.39 billion (current prices), equivalent to €42 billion in constant prices. This represents a clear political signal that education, youth and sport policies are central to the EU’s long-term resilience.

In addition, discussions within the Parliament’s Committee on Budgets (BUDG) positively indicate growing support for earmarking 5% of the Erasmus+ budget for sport. This responds directly to advocacy from the sport sector and acknowledges sport’s unique contribution to inclusion, active citizenship, health and cross-border cooperation. The current programme’s success in grassroots sport and capacity-building for sport organisations is cited as evidence of its European added value.

Next steps

With its April plenary vote, the European Parliament has finalised its position on the regulation defining the structure and key figures for the MFF 2028–2034. Interinstitutional negotiations can begin once Member States reach a common position within the Council of the EU. In parallel, the Parliament is advancing work on the legislative proposals for the individual programmes.

In this context, the sectoral regulation for Erasmus+ in the Parliament’s CULT Committee is facing some delays. The draft report is now expected in May, followed by the committee vote in June, while the plenary vote is likely to take place only in October or November.

FURTHER INFORMATION

[Adopted interim report](#)

[Procedure file Erasmus+](#)

Results of the public consultation on the European Sport Model

On 15 April 2026, the European Commission published a [summary](#) of the public consultation on its upcoming Communication on “A strategic vision for sport in Europe: Reinforcing the European Sport Model”.

This [public consultation](#) is one of three undertaken by the European Commission to inform its upcoming Communication. Running from 15 September to 8 December 2025, it gathered 211 responses from a broad range of stakeholders, including citizens (36%), NGOs (32%), academia (12%) and public authorities (10%) among other stakeholders. The EOC EU Office, along with the EU-27 NOCs and partner federations duly contributed to this consultation, albeit in various forms.

The results should be interpreted with caution, given the limited representativeness and the lack of detailed breakdown of respondents. Nevertheless, they reflect broader trends that the EOC EU Office continues to observe in ongoing discussions at European level.

The results of the consultation are articulated into four sections: significance of sport in Europe, the European Sport Model (ESM), challenges to sport in Europe and actions and priorities to reinforce the ESM.

Significance of sport in Europe

Respondents were first asked about the core values of sport that should be better promoted or safeguarded at EU level. Their answers reflected a broad understanding of sport’s role in regard to public health and social cohesion, with health-enhancing physical activity, and inclusion emerging as the top priorities. Education, through skill development and physical literacy, and sport’s economic contribution were also widely recognised.

Taken together, these responses point to health, education and youth as the key policy areas where sport has the greatest potential to be mainstreamed in EU policies beyond sport.

The European Sport Model: key features and evolution

Respondents were then asked whether the ESM reflects the reality of European sport, with 59% considering that it does to a certain or a great extent. Among its features, sporting merit, open competitions and the role of volunteers were singled out as the most tangible and well-functioning aspects of the model.

Financial solidarity was however identified as an area where the ESM does not fully reflect the field experience and reality, with many respondents calling for stronger redistribution mechanisms and better support to grassroots organisations. The topic of financial solidarity will continue being of great importance for the European Commission, expected to launch a study on the matter in the Autumn. Additionally, respondents’ views on the autonomy of sport governing bodies are mixed, with one third supporting maintaining the current level, one third favouring a reduction, and the last third calling for stronger autonomy. Here too, a discrepancy among respondents’ type is to be noted. Overall, there is a clear trend towards linking autonomy to good governance, transparency and accountability, pointing towards a model of “responsible autonomy”.

Challenges for sport in Europe

When asked about the main challenges facing sport, governance and integrity topped the list of concerns, with 84% of respondents flagging corruption and conflicts of interest as major issues.

The state of grassroots sport also drew significant attention, with 78% pointing to a lack of investment and 71% warning that the prioritisation of profit is crowding out development at community level. Education was also raised as a key challenge with 73% of respondents highlighting a lack of physical literacy as a fundamental barrier to fostering active lifestyles.

Actions and priorities to reinforce the ESM

There was clear consensus among respondents on the need for stronger EU-level engagement, with 79% considering it very important. Calls for action centred on embedding health-enhancing physical activity and physical literacy within the ESM, securing dedicated funding for grassroots sport, mainstreaming sport across broader EU policy priorities, and advancing equality, inclusion, accessibility and good governance.

Reflecting these findings, the Commission [identified](#) three overarching priorities to guide its forthcoming work:

- Governance & integrity
- Solidarity & sustainability
- Sport in and for society

Overall, the consultation results confirm support for the European Sport Model and for the role of organised sport in Europe. At the same time, it highlights expectations for further progress, particularly in the areas of governance, financial solidarity and grassroots support.

These results will directly shape the Commission's upcoming Communication, a landmark document expected in Autumn 2026 that, while not legislatively binding, will set out the Commission's strategic vision for sport in Europe for the years ahead.

EU advances PFAS restriction: what it means for the sport sector

The European Union is continuing its regulatory process to restrict per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), a large group of chemicals widely used in many industries, including sport. The initiative, developed under the REACH Regulation (the main EU law to regulate the use of chemicals), aims to address concerns related to the persistence of these substances in the environment and their potential impacts on human health. PFAS are commonly used in sport-related products such as water-repellent sportswear, outdoor equipment and ski wax due to their resistance to water, oil and stains. However, their long-lasting nature and accumulation in ecosystems and the human body have led to increased scrutiny and policy action at EU level.

Procedure and current status

The restriction proposal, submitted in January 2023, is currently in its final assessment phase at the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA):

- The Risk Assessment Committee (RAC) has concluded that PFAS pose risks that are not adequately controlled.
- The Socio-Economic Analysis Committee (SEAC) supports an EU-wide restriction, while recognising the need for limited derogations.
- A public consultation on SEAC's draft opinion is open until 25 May 2026, representing the final opportunity for stakeholder input.

Following this, SEAC will adopt its final opinion and submit it to the European Commission alongside RAC's conclusions. A legislative proposal is expected in 2027.

Relevance for sport

ECHA's assessment highlights several sport-related uses:

- Ski wax: Alternatives are widely available, with low costs and minor performance impacts, making a rapid phase-out likely, according to the Agency. The commitment to fluorine-free alternatives for international ski and biathlon competitions is recognised by the ECHA, while its partiality is recognised due to the focus on events.
- Sportswear and textiles: Most uses can transition to alternatives, with acceptable trade-offs in performance.
- Protective equipment: Substitution remains more complex. These uses may qualify for temporary derogations due to technical or safety constraints.

Other uses, such as synthetic turf and sport shooting, are recognised but addressed under separate EU regulatory processes.

Implications and next steps

Most sport-related applications are expected to transition away from PFAS. While manufacturers will bear primary responsibility, sport organisations may need to adapt procurement practices and work with suppliers to ensure compliance over time.

Stakeholders can still contribute to [the consultation](#) until 25 May 2026. With an EU proposal expected in 2027, the sector is encouraged to monitor developments and begin preparing for a gradual shift towards PFAS-free materials.

FURTHER INFORMATION

[REACH restriction proposal - Questions & Answers](#)

[PFAS restriction under consideration - Consultation- ECHA](#)

[Press release All news - ECHA](#)

[Consultation](#)

From peer learning to policy momentum: Advancing sport statistics in Europe

At the end of February 2026, the Slovenian Ministry of the Economy, Tourism and Sport hosted a Peer-Learning Activity on Sport Satellite Accounts (SSAs) and the Social Return on Investment (SROI) in sport. The meeting brought together representatives from Member States, statistical authorities and sport organisations to exchange practices and explore how to better capture the full value of sport through data.

A central message among participants was the need to strengthen the availability, quality and comparability of sport statistics across Europe. Discussions highlighted that sport should be understood not only as a sector of economic activity, but as a public good contributing to health, social inclusion, employment and community cohesion. However, this broad contribution is still not consistently reflected in current statistical frameworks or policy decisions.

Sport Satellite Accounts were identified as a key tool to make sport more visible in national accounts and to support evidence-based policymaking. At the same time, participants underlined the importance of complementing economic data with approaches such as SROI to better capture sport's wider social impact. Challenges remain, including limited resources, gaps in primary data collection - particularly at grassroots level - and the absence of a harmonised European framework.

Lipica Conclusions: A roadmap for progress

The main outcome of the meeting, the [Lipica Conclusions](#), has now been finalised and was presented at the EU Sport Forum 2026, providing visibility and momentum for follow-up actions.

The Conclusions reaffirm that sport generates substantial economic, social, health and community value, while recognising that this value is not yet fully or consistently measured across the EU. They set out key priorities for future work:

- Consolidating SSAs as the economic foundation for sport statistics
- Strengthening coordination on social impact measurement
- Promoting a pragmatic EU-level approach to assessing sport's broader value

Importantly, they call for a phased, proportionate and evidence-based approach, ensuring that improvements in data collection and analysis remain feasible while gradually enhancing their policy relevance.

Moving towards implementation

Concrete follow-up has already begun. The Eurostat Expert Group on Sport Statistics, which met for the first time on 23 April, represents an important step towards closer coordination between statistical authorities and sport policymakers at EU level.

In the context of the discussions on the future EU budget, and sport's contribution to societal objectives at large, these initiatives come at an opportune time.



PARTNERS' CORNER

EOC EU Office contribution to the YOBE Network meeting in Liechtenstein

On 9 - 10 April 2026, the EOC EU Office took part in the Young Olympic Board Network Europe (YOBE) meeting hosted by the Liechtenstein Olympic Committee (LOC) in Vaduz. The event brought together around 30 young board members from European National Olympic Committees (NOCs), providing a dedicated platform for exchange among the next generation of leaders within the Olympic Movement.

YOBE continues to evolve as an important peer-based network, fostering informal yet structured dialogue on governance, leadership, and the future direction of sport in Europe. By connecting board members under the age of 45, the initiative contributes to strengthening long-term leadership capacity and continuity within the Olympic system, while promoting diversity and cross-national collaboration.

Participants explored key questions related to the future of the Olympic Movement in Europe, including evolving governance challenges, leadership requirements, and the implications of broader geopolitical developments for sport.

The EOC EU Office contributed to the meeting through a dedicated session on sport diplomacy. The presentation highlighted how sport can serve as a strategic tool to foster dialogue, build partnerships, and advance shared values at European and international level. In the current context of increasing geopolitical complexity, sport diplomacy is gaining relevance as a means to strengthen cooperation and mutual understanding across institutions and countries.

Building on this input, participants engaged in interactive group discussions to identify concrete ways in which NOCs can integrate sport diplomacy approaches into their activities. These exchanges underlined the importance of equipping emerging leaders with the skills and perspectives needed to navigate the intersection between sport, policy, and society.

The meeting also provided an opportunity to gain insights into the Liechtenstein sport system, showcasing how close cooperation between public authorities, the NOC, and national stakeholders can support both grassroots and elite sport development. The hosting of the event further demonstrated how smaller NOCs can play an active and visible role within the European Olympic community through innovation and strong networks.



Overall, the YOBE meeting in Liechtenstein reaffirmed the value of creating spaces for open dialogue and peer learning among young decision-makers. With a strong engagement of participants and the quality of discussions, the event reinforced the growing importance of YOBE as a platform to shape future governance approaches within the Olympic Movement.

The EOC EU Office looks forward to continuing its engagement with the YOBE network and supporting initiatives that empower the next generation of leaders in European sport.

Cyprus Olympic Committee welcomes EOC EU Office for continued exchange

Ahead of the European Sport Forum, the EOC EU Office was kindly invited for a productive visit to the Cyprus Olympic Committee (COC) on 14 April 2026, reinforcing a shared commitment to advancing sport across Europe.



Credit: Cyprus Olympic Committee

The visit marked an important opportunity for dialogue following the recent appointment of Carlotta Giussani as Director of the EOC EU Office. In a constructive exchange with the President of the COC, Mr. Georgios Chrysostomou, discussions focused on current priorities of the COC, as well as the evolving role of the COC within the European sporting landscape, highlighting unique challenges, EU-level cooperation opportunities, and ways to strengthen future collaboration between both organisations. The programme also included a presentation by the COC staff and a guided tour of the Olympic Hall, showcasing the Olympic Museum and the country's sporting memorabilia.

The EOC EU Office would like to thank the Cyprus Olympic Committee and their dedicated staff for their warm welcome and shared commitment to advance sport in Europe.



UPCOMING EVENTS

04-06 May 2026

EU-NOC's Legal Counsels meeting (Larnaca, Cyprus)

06-07 May 2026

OMC Group Hate Speech: Final meeting (Brussels, Belgium)

11-12 May 2026

Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council (Brussels, Belgium)

26-27 May 2026

Council of Europe: Annual plenary meetings of the EPAS Governing Board and Consultative Committee (Strasbourg, France)



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