

**ENGSO Statement on the EU Funding for Sport
Position based on the proposal of the European Commission concerning the
"Erasmus for all" Programme 2014/2020**

SUMMARY

ENGSO welcomes the European Commission's 'Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing "Erasmus for All"' and the support it gives to many of the sport movement's priorities. As a summary of its position ENGSO strongly urges that the following points, especially, must be taken into account in the sport chapter:

Funding:

The funding of sport's provision **must be at least** as much as is proposed by the European Commission, **meaning 239 million EUR for years 2014-2020**. ENGSO wants to strongly emphasize that this is the utmost minimum to have at least some impact at European level to implement the sports provisions of article 165 of TFEU. Any cuts would endanger the European added value in the field of sport.

Regarding funding **it is also crucial that no compulsory private funding will be needed**. Otherwise it would jeopardize the participation of many grassroots level actors in the sport funding activities.

ENGSO emphasizes also **the importance of adequate pre-financing**. Any cuts in pre-financing would cause "cash flow problems" which again makes the participation of grassroots level actors more difficult.

Funding objectives:

ENGSO urges that the sport chapter **should focus on objectives and activities which promote physical activity at grassroots level** and enhance the opportunities of every European citizen to be physically active. ENGSO is unequivocally underlining that the **funding priorities such as volunteering, social inclusion, equal opportunities and health-enhancing physical activity** are crucial to achieve this goal in the best way as possible.

Capacity building of sport organisations:

Operational grant should be possible for those **sport organisations which are active at the European level and whose work programme is in line with the sport chapter's objectives**. This develops the sustainability, quality of work and continuity of the sport movement. Operational grant would especially help the organisations which are the voice of grassroots level sport and thus enhance the possibility of the participation of every European citizen.

Events:

ENGSO is of the opinion that **non-profit events at grassroots level** focusing on the objectives of the sport chapter, such as volunteering, social inclusion, health-enhancing physical activity and youth, **should be eligible**.



GENERAL REMARKS

The European Non-Governmental Sports Organisation (ENGSO) welcomes the European Commission 'Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing "Erasmus for All" ([COM\(2011\) 788 final](#))". ENGSO sees that most of the objectives and activities proposed in Articles 11 and 12 are admissible, and can help the sports movement pursue its goals, especially at the European level.

Firstly, it is of utmost importance to have an EU funding chapter for sport. ENGSO welcomes the Commission's proposal of approximately 239 million EUR for the next multi-annual financial framework 2014-2020 as a minimum. Otherwise the impact of the new sport chapter would be endangered and stay too weak. Funding programme will make the EU's competence in the field of sport more tangible, and contribute to enhancing cooperation in sport in Europe. The budget of a sports programme should be sufficient in order to ensure the credibility of both the programme and the EU and in order to enable the full implementation of the sports provisions of article 165 TFEU.

Regarding funding ENGSO wants to highlight the fact that private funding should not be compulsory. This would jeopardise the possibility of many grassroots level organisations participating in and becoming beneficiaries of the programme. It could also create an unequal situation for the actors in different member states, as it might be easier to find private funding in some countries rather than others. The EU should acknowledge the European added value of sport by funding it without compulsory demands for private funding as is happening in member states.

ENGSO emphasizes also the importance of sufficient pre-financing which should stay at the same level as in the Preparatory Actions in the Field of Sport in 2009 and 2010. Any cuts in pre-financing would cause so called cash flow problem, i.e. all the activities must take place during the project period but the balance of the EU grant will be paid only after the final report has been accepted. If the pre-financing share is low for some organisations it is difficult to cover the costs first by themselves. This again makes the participation of grassroots level actors more difficult.

1. SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES OF THE SPORT CHAPTER

1.1 VOLUNTEERING, SOCIAL INCLUSION, EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND HEALTH-ENHANCING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

ENGSO is of the opinion that the sport funding chapter should aim to support activities at a grassroots level. In line with the respective values of the European Union, the goal of the sport chapter should be to reach the European citizens which can be best ensured by

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supporting activities and themes which promote and enhance the participation of grassroots level. ENGSO wants to emphasize that in order to reach the grassroots level, themes such as volunteering, social inclusion, equal opportunities and health-enhancing physical activity should be at the core of funding priorities of the sport chapter.

Volunteering

Sport is the biggest sector in volunteering in Europe, and sports organisations rely on volunteers. The sport chapter should develop European cooperation in promoting volunteering. Recognition of the skills and competences and development of volunteers should be supported. The EU should also aim to decrease the administrative burdens of volunteers and voluntary sports organisations, minimising the unintended harmful consequences that European legislation can have on volunteering, and ensure the sustainable financing of non-profit voluntary sports organisations.

Social inclusion and equal opportunities

ENGSO is unequivocally in favour of taking action to promote social inclusion in and through sport. Besides the inclusion of persons with disabilities, immigrants, different minorities, and vulnerable or disadvantaged groups, ENGSO would like to highlight that the access to sport of people who are in risk of exclusion or poverty or are already excluded should be supported. Inclusion in society through sport can result in better employability and better health, which again contributes to achieving the goals set in the Europe 2020 strategy.

ENGSO also emphasises the need to continue actions to promote gender equality in sport. This covers not only the access of women into leadership positions in sport, but also the participation of girls and women in different sectors and roles within sport.

Health-enhancing physical activity

The Europe 2020 strategy emphasises competitiveness and growth, which cannot be achieved without a healthy European population, and thus supports the important work done to promote wellbeing through sport across the board. ENGSO welcomes the Commission's proposal to have health-enhancing physical activity as one of the funding priorities. Through promoting health-enhancing physical activity all European citizens are in a target group. Increasing physical activity of European citizens also increases their health and their ability to work longer and more efficiently, thus contributing to the Europe 2020 strategy. Health-enhancing physical activity is also important in the fight against obesity which is one of the biggest health threats in Europe at the moment. The chapter should focus on physical activity as a preventive measure e.g. against obesity and targeting special groups, such as children, youth and elderly people.



1.2 GOOD GOVERNANCE IN SPORT AND DUAL CAREER OF ATHLETES

Promotion of good governance in sport

ENGSO agrees that the principles of good governance should be strengthened and promoted in sport. Exchange of best practices and capacity building of the sports organisations whose objectives are in line with the objectives of the sport chapter should be supported. However, establishing these principles and implementing them must be a responsibility of the sports movement, respecting the autonomy of sport.

Dual career, education, training and qualifications in sport

ENGSO supports plans to promote dual career of athletes through the EU sport funding activities. However, ENGSO is of the opinion that in the field of sport and education the validation of non-formal and informal learning also should be promoted. Recognising the skills learned through voluntary activity can be an important factor in motivating people to become volunteers, among other issues.

ENGSO urges that the increase in physical activity at schools is of utmost importance in order to promote healthy and active lifestyles from an early age. Schools are key stakeholders when it comes to developing a future "Generation Active". ENGSO recognises that the competence in the field of education lies with the Member States; nonetheless, physical activity at schools should be promoted.

1.3 TRANSNATIONAL THREATS SUCH AS DOPING, MATCH FIXING, VIOLENCE, RACISM AND INTOLERANCE

ENGSO agrees that the sport funding objectives should include tackling transnational threats to sport. However, also in these actions focus should be to support those activities which benefit, concern and involve all European citizens and not only a certain minority.

Match fixing and integrity of sporting competitions

ENGSO supports all actions that ensure financial fair play in sport and the integrity of sports' competitions. Cooperation between the Commission, Member States and the sports movement as well as the Council of Europe, crime authorities and betting operators is essential in order to solve the problems. Preventive measures such as education and awareness raising targeted at athletes and their entourage should be priority actions, to be funded in the field of fight against match fixing. The Commission should encourage finding solutions within the sports movement by exchanging best practices to tackle these issues.



Fight against doping

ENGSO welcomes the support for transnational anti-doping networks and preventive measures. In the field of prevention, ENGSO highlights the importance of supporting educational initiatives and close cooperation between NADO's and the national branch organisations for private fitness centres.

Violence, racism and intolerance

ENGSO is of the opinion that any single violent, racist or intolerant action should not be tolerated in sport and those should be strongly condemned. Fight against these should be on the agenda of the sport chapter. ENGSO strongly promotes equal opportunities for everyone to participate in sport and welcomes the support for actions to fight against these threats.

2. ACTIVITIES

Projects

ENGSO welcomes transnational collaborative projects as eligible activities. Projects should focus on the exchange of innovative practices and concrete examples. Sustainability of the projects should be guaranteed, e.g. having the possibility of long term projects. There should be also a possibility for small scale projects to enable the participation of the grassroots actors as well.

Capacity building of sport organisations

ENGSO is of the opinion that the sport chapter should support the capacity building of the sports movement through annual or multiannual operational grants. Operational grants should be possible only for those sport organisations which are active at the European level and whose work programme is in line with the sport chapter's objectives. This develops the sustainability, quality of work and continuity of the sport movement. Especially organisations promoting grassroots level sports are many times having difficulties to find funding. Operational grants would especially help the organisations which are the voice of grassroots level sport and thus enhance the possibility of the participation of every European citizen.

Events

ENGSO agrees that events should be included as eligible activities. However these events should take place at grassroots level and focus on the objectives of the sport chapter, such as volunteering, social inclusion, health-enhancing physical activity and youth. Events taking place at the grassroots level are the best way to reach European citizens and these open the doors for all Europeans to be part of the sport chapter.



3. ELIGIBILITY

Regarding the eligibility of the programme, ENGSO would like to highlight a few aspects.

- Applicants must be non-profit legal entities being active in the field of sport.
- Applicants based in, and actions taking place in EU member states, EEA and EFTA countries, candidate and potential candidate countries should be eligible.
- Voluntary work should be eligible as a contribution in kind.

4. CONCLUSION

ENGSO welcomes the European Commission 'Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing "Erasmus for All"'. It is crucial to have a funding chapter on sport to be able to implement the sport provisions of the article 165 of TFEU. ENGSO welcomes the Commission's proposal of approximately 239 million EUR for the next multi-annual financial framework 2014-2020 as a minimum. Otherwise the impact of the new sport chapter would be endangered and stay too weak. Funding programme will make the EU's competence in the field of sport more tangible, and contribute to enhancing cooperation in sport in Europe.

To safeguard the opportunity for grassroots level actors to participate in, and be beneficiaries of the sport chapter, it is of utmost importance that private funding is not compulsory and that the pre-financing share stays adequate, i.e. the level of Preparatory Actions in the Field of Sport in 2009 and 2010.

ENGSO is of the opinion that the sport chapter should focus especially on objectives and activities which promote and enhance the opportunities of all Europeans to be physically active. Thus the funding priorities of the programme should be volunteering, social inclusion, equal opportunities and health-enhancing physical activity. ENGSO highlights that these funding priorities are key factors in making Europe more physically active, healthier and competitive.

ENGSO agrees that supporting capacity building of the sport organisations, e.g. operational grants should be included as eligible activities. Operational grants should be available to sport organisations at European level whose work programme is in line with the objectives of the programme. This would ensure sustainability, and improving the quality of work, especially within the organisations which are the voice of grassroots sport.

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