

Strategic Choices for the Implementation of the New EU Competence in the Field of Sport

EU-wide public consultation

REPORT

Introduction

With the entry into force of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) on 1 December 2009, sport became one of the EU's supporting, coordinating and supplementing competences. Based on Article 165 TFEU, the EU should develop action aimed at promoting sport in Europe.

In preparation of its proposals to implement the new Treaty provisions, the Commission has carried out broad consultations with all concerned parties, the centrepiece of which was an online consultation in the first half of 2010. The online consultation was launched on 7 April 2010 and remained open until 2 June.

The objective of the public consultation was twofold. Firstly, it aimed at gathering stakeholders' views on the key challenges for sport in Europe. Secondly, it intended to help the Commission identify priority areas for action at EU level. In parallel to the online consultation, the Commission received a wealth of written contributions in the form of position papers from stakeholders.

In line with the Commission's general principles and standards governing consultation of interested parties, this Report describes the public consultation process and analyses the contributions received. The objective of this Report is to provide an overview of the wide range of suggestions received and the diversity of opinions expressed in the course of this process. Without claiming to be exhaustive, the Report highlights the main trends and concerns arising from the contributions.

The results of the consultation complement the experience gained with the implementation of the 2007 White Paper on Sport, including evidence gathered through EU studies conducted on selected topics (training and education in sport, sport agents, volunteering in sport), surveys carried out at EU level (Eurobarometer 2010) and EU conferences in the field of sport (EU Sport Forum 2008, EU Sport Forum 2010, anti-doping, licensing systems, funding of grassroots sport).

Hereafter, this Report will present the quantified results of the online questionnaire (section I), list the position papers received in the framework of the consultation (section II) and summarise the results of the analysis of these contributions (section III). In order to ensure transparency, the Report is complemented by the publication of the full text of the position papers, which are clickable in the table in section II.

I. Results of the online questionnaire

Assessment points conversion table	
Field value	Corresponding relative value
Strongly agree	3
Agree	2
Tend to agree	1
Don't know	0
Tend to disagree	-1
Disagree	-2
Strongly disagree	-3

Item/Question		Weighted Average Relative Value	
		Individuals	Organisations
PART I.			
ADDRESSING KEY CHALLENGES FOR SPORT IN EUROPE			
Social and educational function of sport			
Q1	The practice of sport and physical activity is not sufficiently supported by public authorities.	1,58	1,36
Q2	The practice of sport and physical activity is not sufficiently supported by sport organisations.	0,30	- 0,18
Q3	Sport organisations concentrate too much on competitive sports at the expense of non-competitive activities and health-enhancing physical activity.	0,97	0,77
Q4	There is not enough sport and physical activity in primary and secondary education.	2,12	2,16
Q5	There is not enough sport and physical activity in higher education.	2,06	1,97
Q6	Too many obstacles (e.g. physical obstacles, availability, expenses) exist to accessing sporting activities and facilities.	1,30	1,40
Q7	There are unequal possibilities to access sporting activities and facilities between different socio-economic groups.	1,42	1,55
Q8	The potential of sport in relation to social inclusion is not sufficiently exploited.	1,64	1,82
Q9	Access to sporting activities and facilities is more difficult for women than for men.	- 0,55	- 0,40
Q10	Women are underrepresented in sports, notably in management and leadership positions.	0,97	0,97
Q11	With the exception of some professional sports, cross-border mobility of people involved in sports is weak.	1,19	1,14
Q12	The quality of training for coaches, trainers and other sport professionals dealing with children and young people is insufficient.	0,65	0,73
Q13	There are important obstacles to practising a sports profession in another Member State than the one where the qualification for this profession was acquired.	0,67	0,72

Q14	It is difficult for an athlete to combine a sporting career with studies or with an alternative professional career.	1,21	1,07
Q15	There is not enough comparable data on the economic and social impact of sport in EU Member States.	1,47	1,61
Volunteering in sport			
Q16	Voluntary activity in sport is not sufficiently recognised as a valuable contribution to society and to personal development.	1,86	2,01
Q17	Voluntary activity in sport is hindered by legal obstacles such as disadvantageous fiscal practices, employment laws and inadequate insurance schemes.	1,36	1,48
Q18	There are not enough incentives for voluntary activities in sport.	1,69	1,75
Q19	Opportunities to take part in voluntary activities in sport are unequal for people from different socio-economic groups.	0,75	0,73
Physical and moral integrity of sportspeople			
Q20	Sportsmen and sportswomen, especially the youngest ones, are not sufficiently protected from doping.	0,84	0,58
Q21	Sportsmen and sportswomen, especially the youngest ones, are not sufficiently protected from overtraining and other harmful practices (e.g. unhealthy diets).	1,18	0,88
Q22	Under-age sportsmen and sportswomen are not sufficiently protected from exploitation.	0,60	0,34
Q23	There are not enough preventive measures against injuries and accidents in sport.	0,72	0,63
Q24	Fairness in sporting competitions is endangered by the use of doping substances.	2,17	1,88
Q25	Doping substances and methods are extensively used among high-level athletes.	0,85	0,45
Q26	The use of doping substances and methods is wide-spread among recreational users (e.g. in gyms, fitness centres, amateur sport clubs).	0,47	0,16
Q27	It is easy to obtain doping substances.	0,95	0,75
Governance of sport			
Q28	There is not enough communication among different EU Member States regarding different approaches they have in relation to sport and sport policy.	1,44	1,61
Q29	There is not enough communication and cooperation among sport organisations that work on the same topics.	1,39	1,45
Q30	Public authorities do not respect the autonomy of sport organisations to regulate their own sports.	0,30	0,17
Q31	Sport organisations often consider themselves above the law.	0,42	- 0,20
Q32	Sport organisations are not sufficiently transparent and democratic in their functioning.	0,99	0,31
Q33	Sport organisations do not involve relevant actors in decision-making processes to a sufficient degree.	1,06	0,56
Q34	Sport events and activities often have a negative impact on the environment.	- 0,64	- 0,96
Q35	Professional sport does not provide enough funding for grassroots sport.	1,53	1,48
Q36	Public funding for grassroots sports is not sufficiently stable.	1,64	1,81
Q37	Too much public funding is allocated to high-level sport.	0,53	0,45
Specificity of sport			
Q38	There are not enough opportunities to engage in dialogue with European authorities on the specific nature of sport.	1,25	1,50

Q39	The societal values of sport are not sufficiently taken into account compared to its commercial aspects.	1,91	1,96
Q40	The rights of athletes are not sufficiently respected by sport organisations.	0,50	0,05
Fairness and openness of sporting competitions			
Q41	Strong commercial pressure and requirements of the media endanger the original spirit of sport based on fair play.	1,89	1,42
Q42	Media and sponsors influence the decision-making of sport organisations too much.	1,90	1,37
Q43	The increasing commercialisation and mediatisation of sport has benefited only professional sports, not the grassroots level of sport.	1,54	1,28
Q44	Sport exacerbates nationalist attitudes.	0,33	0,07
Q45	There are not enough preventive measures to tackle the problem of violence at sporting events.	0,83	0,75
Q46	Not enough preventive measures are in place in order to tackle problems related to discrimination, racism, homophobia and xenophobia in sport.	0,79	0,74
Q47	Financial crime in sports is spreading.	1,16	0,76

PART II. IDENTIFYING POLICY PRIORITIES FOR EU ACTION			
Social and educational function of sport			
A1	Support the role of sport in enhancing public health through physical activity.	2,52	2,57
A2	Promote sport and physical activity as a tool to achieve a more active lifestyle and to fight against obesity.	2,49	2,57
A3	Encourage EU Member States and sport organisations to take action in order to increase participation levels in sport and physical activity.	2,49	2,54
A4	Eliminate obstacles to the practice of sport for EU citizens residing in other Member States than their own.	1,99	1,90
A5	Support and promote the social and educational function of sport.	2,44	2,52
A6	Encourage EU Member States and sport organisations to improve the quality of training for sport professionals who deal with children and young people.	2,23	2,27
A7	Promote better integration of sports issues in education and training policies.	2,33	2,34
A8	Encourage EU Member States and other actors to improve equal access to sport activities and facilities.	2,19	2,20
A9	Promote "sport for all".	2,41	2,47
A10	Support the role of sport in relation to social integration and inclusion (regardless of age, gender, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, disability etc.).	2,31	2,41
A11	Promote gender equality in sport.	2,01	2,17
A12	Promote the mobility of people active in sports, notably young people.	1,89	1,96
A13	Promote knowledge-based decision-making in the field of sport.	2,12	2,22
A14	Collect and analyse comparable statistical data on the impact of sport in economic and social terms.	2,07	2,20
Volunteering in sport			

A15	Promote the recognition of volunteering in sport as a valuable contribution to society and to personal development.	2,30	2,47
A16	Encourage Member States and other actors to remove obstacles to volunteering.	2,25	2,38
Physical and moral integrity of sportspeople			
A17	Contribute to the fight against doping.	2,47	2,34
A18	Take action against trade in illegal doping substances.	2,57	2,49
A19	Support co-operation among Member States, sport organisations and other actors in order to prevent injuries and accidents in sport.	2,17	2,16
A20	Contribute to the protection of minors in sport against exploitation.	2,35	2,35
Governance of sport			
A21	Foster coordination and cooperation among Member States, sport organisations and other actors in the field of sport.	2,11	2,25
A22	Refrain from taking initiatives in the field of sport.	- 0,91	- 0,96
A23	Promote good governance in the field of sport.	1,97	1,96
A24	Promote dialogue among different actors on the specific characteristics of sport.	1,98	2,02
A25	Promote and support environmentally sustainable planning and execution of sporting activities.	1,94	1,97
A26	Promote sustainable public and private financing of grassroots sports.	2,23	2,31
A27	Support networking and exchange of best practice in sport.	2,21	2,41
Specificity of sport			
A28	Strengthen its dialogue with sport organisations to provide guidance on the application of EU law in the sport sector.	2,01	2,14
A29	Pursue a better balance between the societal and commercial dimensions of sport.	2,07	2,06
A30	Pursue a better balance between the objectives of sport organisations and the rights of athletes.	1,87	1,81
Fairness and openness of sporting competitions			
A31	Promote EU values, notably human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and the respect for human rights, in sport.	2,33	2,32
A32	Promote and support fairness in European sporting competitions.	2,42	2,33
A33	Promote the ethical and social values of sport.	2,46	2,48
A34	Support the prevention of and the fight against discrimination, racism, xenophobia, homophobia and violence in sport.	2,41	2,42
A35	Actively contribute to the fight against financial crime in sport.	2,37	2,29
A36	Encourage co-operation among national sport organisations, national governing bodies and other actors in order to fight against corruption in sport.	2,41	2,38

II. Position papers received in the framework of the consultation

Date Received	Organisation
05/01/2010 and 27/05/2010	CCPR
14/01/2010	ENGSO
20/01/2010 and 30/06/2010	Sports Rights Owners Coalition (SROC)
25/01/2010	IOC, EOC, AIOWF, ASOIF, SportAccord, FIBA, FIFA, IIHF, IRB
18/02/2010 and 29/06/2010	EPFL
04/03/2010	Norwegian Olympic and Paralympic Committee and Confederation of Sports (NIF)
05/03/2010 and 31/05/2010	EU Athletes – SPORT PRO – UNI europa
12/03/2010	EOSE
23/03/2010	FIFPro
19/04/2010	EGBA
22/04/2010	Austrian Road Safety Board
23/04/2010	RGA
26/04/2010	News Media Coalition
26/04/2010	EASE
29/04/2010	SportElite Marketing Ltd
03/05/2010	Snowpolis Oy
05/05/2010	PADI Europe
10/05/2010	Swim Ireland
12/05/2010	Irish Waterski and Wakeboard Federation
12/05/2010	Consejo General de los Ilustres Colegios Oficiales de Licenciados en Educación Física y en Ciencias de la Actividad Física y del Deporte de España
17/05/2010	British Gliding Association
26/05/2010	European Volunteer Center (CEV)
27/05/2010	FESI
27/05/2010	NOC and Sports Confederation of Denmark
27/05/2010	ENSSEE
27/05/2010	European Coaching Council
28/05/2010	Dutch Olympic Committee and National Sports Federation (NOC*NSF)
28/05/2010	EGA
28/05/2010	PGA
31/05/2010	EHFA
01/06/2010	ISCA

01/06/2010	CNOSF
01/06/2010	European Fashion Council
17/06/2010	Supporters Direct
18/06/2010	EEA / EFTA
02/07/2010	ENGSO Youth
07/07/2010	Deutscher Olympischer Sport Bund
	Public Authorities
23/03/2010	The Netherlands (Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport)
29/03/2010	Finland (Ministry of Culture and Sport)
13/04/2010	Belgium (Sportdienst, Stad Herentals)
26/04/2010	Spain (Ministry for Youth and Sports of Extremadura)
26/05/2010	Germany (Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart, Sportamt)
01/06/2010	Spain (Diputación de Barcelona)

III. Summary of the results

a) General

The public consultation process in the first half of 2010 produced a satisfactory result in terms of volume, scope and depth of contributions.

The online consultation was launched on 7 April 2010 and remained open until 2 June 2010. The online questionnaire was based on the Interactive Policy-Making Tool and consisted of a range of multiple-choice questions divided into two parts, "Addressing key challenges for sport in Europe" (Part I) and "Identifying policy priorities for EU action" (Part II). The questions took account of the Treaty mandate to develop EU action in the field of sport as enshrined in Article 165 TFEU. Only fully completed questionnaires were accepted.

In addition to filling out the structured part of the online questionnaire, respondents replying on behalf of organisations had the opportunity to provide supplementary written contributions. The Commission received almost 50 position papers as a contribution to the consultation process, most during the period when the online consultation was open but some before or after this period (see section II above).

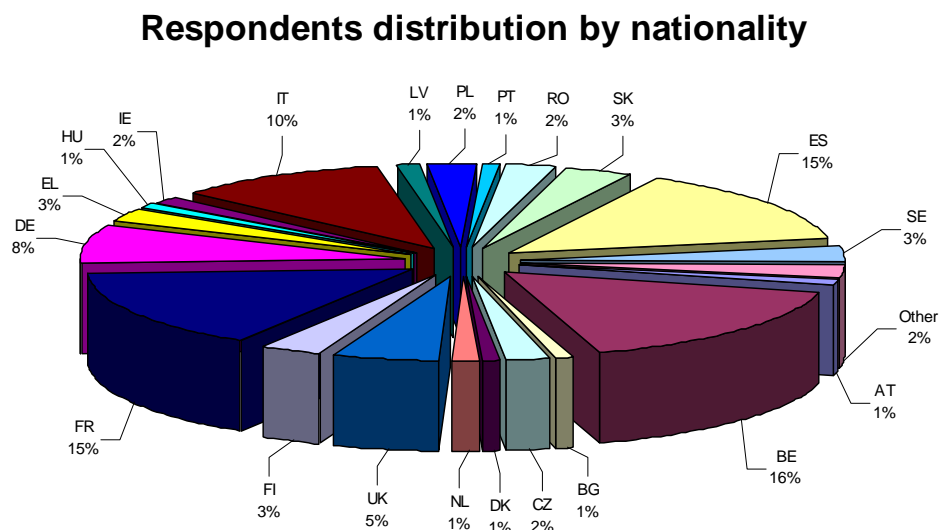
Most of the written papers provided high-quality input on sport-specific topics ranging from socially driven issues over economically oriented suggestions to sport governance aspects. It should be noted, however, that many of the recommendations included in the position papers reflected issues which are not part of the EU's mandate as defined in Article 165 TFEU and which can only be dealt with at national or regional levels (e.g. suggestions for direct EU financing of local sport clubs).

b) Participation in the public consultation

The online consultation was a success as more than 1,300 valid submissions were received. Approximately 30% of respondents filled out the questionnaire on behalf of their organisations¹. This ratio demonstrates that the online consultation reached a considerable number of respondents outside organised sport. The structure of the evaluation has been adapted accordingly.

Online questionnaire – number of replies		
	Number of replies	Percentage of total number of replies
As an individual	935	70.5%
On behalf of an organisation	391	29.5%
Total	1326	100%

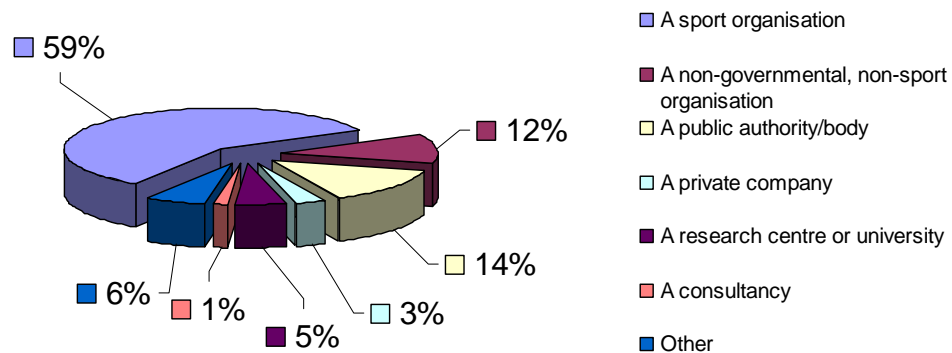
Regarding the nationality of respondents, all EU nationalities except Cypriots and Luxembourgers were represented. Belgium ranked first on the list with 16.1% of replies, followed by France (15%) and Spain (14.8%), as outlined in the following chart:



Regarding the nature of responding organisations which filled out the online questionnaire or submitted a written contribution, sport organisations were the most active in replying and provided almost two-thirds of the contributions. The repartition of participating organisations is visualised in the chart hereafter:

¹ The term “organisation” has been used in a wide sense, including sport organisations (e.g. a sport federation), sport-related organisations (e.g. a sports betting provider), public authorities (e.g. a Ministry) or public bodies (e.g. a sport agency), as well as private companies, research centres or universities, consultancies, and some others.

Participating organisations



c) Analysis of replies and contributions

The following summary synthesises the results of the online questionnaire and relevant contributions contained in the written submissions.

The replies to the online questionnaire were rated with a corresponding relative value of points between 3 (strongly agree) and -3 (strongly disagree). The analysis of the replies demonstrated an impressive degree of consensus between the two groups of respondents (individuals and organisations) for a large majority of issues. Some questions showed particularly high scores (between 2 and 3 points) assigned by both individuals and organisations.

Concerning key challenges for the EU in the field of sport, replies to questions 4, 5, 8, 16, 18, 24, 28, 35, 38, 39, 41 and 42 of Part I demonstrated that all of the sub-areas of the questionnaire were found to be important by the general public as well as by the organised sport sector. Replies to questions 4 and 24 represented the highest cumulative value, highlighting public concern about insufficient presence of sport and physical activity in education (all levels) and about the doping phenomenon as a threat to the physical and moral integrity of sportspeople. This was confirmed by a number of position papers.

The degree of consensus between the two groups of respondents was even more significant regarding Part II of the questionnaire, which sought respondents' views on policy priorities for EU action. While almost all areas were ranked highly, replies to questions 1, 2, 3, 5, 9, 10, 15, 18, 27, 33, 34 and 36 received the highest scores. A considerable number of respondents referred to the fact that there were a number of tasks that the EU could do in relation to the social and educational functions of sport. Support and promotion of sport as a health-enhancing activity ranked particularly high in the replies and was also frequently mentioned in the position papers. Great demand for action at EU level relating to social inclusion was also manifested. Volunteering represented another topic that received strong support in the framework of the consultation. Replies to the online questionnaire highlighted the need for better recognition of voluntary activity in sport and the elimination of obstacles to volunteering.

The public consultation based on the online questionnaire and the written contributions served as an important source of information to identify areas that can be considered as representing key challenges for sport in Europe from a stakeholder perspective, and notably the following:

- Availability of sport and physical activity at all levels of education;
- Insufficient recognition of voluntary activity in sport;
- Doping as a major threat to fairness in sporting competitions;
- Lack of stable funding for grassroots sport;
- Lack of attention for the societal value of sport as compared to its commercial aspects;
- Commercial pressure endangering the original spirit of sport based on fair play.

The online questionnaire also gave useful indications regarding priority areas for future EU action. Most areas that received high scores in the structured questionnaire were also reflected in positions expressed in the written contributions. The areas receiving the highest degree of attention from the general public and stakeholders were:

- Promotion of the social and educational functions of sport, including health-enhancing physical activity, participation levels in sport, quality training for sport professionals, integration of sport in education policies, sport for all and sport in relation to social integration and social inclusion;
- Recognition of and support for volunteering in sport and the promotion of public and private financing of sport, as a means to support sport structures at grassroots level;
- Protection of the physical and moral integrity of sportspeople, in particular the fight against doping and the protection of minors in sport;
- Promotion of fairness and openness in sporting competitions as well as of the ethical and social values of sport, including the fight against discrimination, racism, xenophobia and violence in sport and the fight against financial crime in sport.

Horizontal priorities that were identified included:

- Support for knowledge-based decision-making in the field of sport;
- Promotion of networking and exchange of best practices;
- Support for strengthened dialogue with sport organisations and for EU guidance on the application of EU law to sport.