

EU Sport Forum 2011

Organised by the European Commission in Budapest on 21-22 February 2011

REPORT

The third EU Sport Forum since the adoption of the White Paper on Sport took place in Budapest and gathered approx. 450 participants including governmental representatives. Among these, about 340 participants represented the Olympic and sport movement, including leading representatives from international and European sport federations, European and national sport umbrella organisations and other sport-related organisations. Particular attention was given to the European Commission's Communication entitled "Developing the European Dimension in Sport", adopted on 18 January 2011, as well as to projects selected in the framework of the 2009 and 2010 Preparatory Actions in the field of sport.

The Forum included a session which was co-organised by the Hungarian Presidency and the European Commission and included a high-level panel debate between Forum participants and EU Sport Ministers. Following the presentation of the Communication by Commissioner Vassiliou, keynote speeches were pronounced by Attila Czene, Hungarian State Secretary for Sport, Ivo Belet, Member of the European Parliament, and Patrick Hickey on behalf of the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

The panel discussion covered all the main areas and priorities of the Communication on "Developing the European Dimension in Sport". Participants in the Forum had the opportunity to address questions to the members of the panel.

The main outcomes of the EU Sport Forum 2011 can be summarised as follows:

- The first session, focusing on projects supported through the 2009 Preparatory Action in the field of sport, and the exhibition of 2010 projects highlighted the synergetic effects created by the networks and the added value of the European actions, especially in view of assessing the impact of possible future incentive measures. 250 partners from 26 Member States participate in 29 European networks in the field of sport thanks to the Preparatory Actions.
- The second session, consisting of information sharing by the Commission, the Council and the European Parliament, was appreciated by participants in particular in view of the entry into force of the sport provisions of the Lisbon Treaty and the adoption of a new Commission Communication on sport in January 2011.
- The third session allowed for an open and constructive debate between sport stakeholders and Member State representatives. It demonstrated a high level of consensus that the Commission's Communication provided a good framework for the implementation of the sport provisions of the Lisbon Treaty. It also confirmed their commitment to participate in the implementation of actions proposed in the Communication.

Monday, 21 February 2011

Attila Czene, Hungarian Secretary of State for Sport, welcomed the participants in the Sport Forum to Budapest.

In his opening remarks, Gregory Paulger, Director for Youth and Sport at the European Commission, noted that this was the third time since the adoption of the 2007 White Paper on Sport that the European Commission organised this key platform for dialogue on sport at EU level. He mentioned that the public consultation preceding the elaboration of the Commission's new Communication on sport had been very successful and expressed his gratitude for the contributions. He informed the participants that in conjunction with the Sport Forum a seminar for journalists was taking place and that the journalists would be able to follow the sessions of the Forum.

1. First session: "2009 Preparatory Action in the field of sport"

After a short introduction to the two parallel workshops by Michal Krejza, Head of the Sport Unit, the Forum participants were invited to choose project presentations according to their interests. This session was dedicated to the results of the transnational projects financed through the Call for Proposals under the Preparatory Action in the field of sport 2009. The objective of this Call for Proposals had been to test the establishment and functioning of suitable networks and best practices in the fields of (1) health-enhancing physical activity, (2) sports training and dual careers, (3) disability sport, and (4) gender equality in sport. Following the publication of this first Call for Proposals in the field of sport, 207 applications had been introduced. The 18 projects selected were the best applications according to the eligibility, selection and award criteria detailed in the call. The projects selected in 2009 were presented and discussed in two parallel workshops. [More information about the projects can be found on this hyperlink](#) and [their presentations on this hyperlink](#)

Tuesday, 22 February 2011

2. Second session: "Developments since the last EU Sport Forum"

Jan Truszczyński, Director-General for Education and Culture at the European Commission, gave a general overview of the development of the EU policy framework for sport since the last Sport Forum in Madrid in April 2010. The entry into force of the new Treaty provisions on sport (Article 165 TFEU) and the preparation of the Commission's Communication had coincided with an economic crisis and budgetary difficulties in the majority of Member States. These external factors had influenced the direction of the discussions. The entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty in December 2009 had allowed new structures for sport to be put in place at the Council and EU Sport Ministers could now take formal – albeit non-binding – decisions. From an EU perspective, it was important to enable the sport sector to help meet the Union's social and economic goals relating to integration, education, public health, and growth and employment. In the first half of 2010, broad consultations with all relevant stakeholders had taken place to develop ideas for a policy document prepared by the Commission on the basis of the new Treaty provisions on sport. This had formed the basis for the drafting of the Communication on sport, adopted by the Commission on 18 January 2011. [The full text of the speech can be found on this hyperlink.](#)

Gregory Paulger, Director for Youth and Sport, reported on the first session of the Forum. He underlined some general aspects that had been noteworthy in the workshops. The Commission had chosen four priority themes and there had been a lot of interest especially regarding health and educational aspects of sport. All projects were well advanced in their implementation and most of them were ready to present outputs and outcomes. In most cases the supported networks had created synergies and the mobilisation of the different sectors involved (local authorities, grassroots organisations, academia, clubs, federations, associations etc.) had been impressive, leading to innovation and exchange of best practices. Participants in the debate

had been interested to know the content, the structure, the methodology, the outputs and the impacts of the projects.

Health-enhancing physical activity could help to cut costs on public health budgets and boost productivity, which was good news in view of reaching the Europe 2020 goals. Project leaders repeatedly referred to the EU Physical Activity Guidelines and it was interesting to hear the idea of developing EU-wide fitness measurement tools. Senior citizens were a key topic for the future, as sport organisations could provide them with targeted physical activity if they had the necessary knowledge and skills.

The sport sector, in particular the Olympic Movement, had shown great interest in the dual career projects in view of the problems athletes faced in combining some 30 hours of training per week with general education.

The projects on sport for disabled people illustrated that sport could contribute considerably to the social inclusion of these people, but also that sport for disabled people still needed a lot of development and support, especially to integrate sport for disabled people in mainstream sport on a very concrete level.

Regarding the gender projects, the figures presented concerning the representation of women in management positions in sport were alarming and seemed to indicate that a glass ceiling persisted in sport governing bodies.

Mr Paulger mentioned that the Commission was undertaking an interim evaluation of the current Preparatory Actions in order to facilitate the preparation and formulation of possible future EU incentive measures in the field of sport. A team of external evaluators had been invited to the Forum for this purpose.

Part I: European Commission

Michal Krejza, Head of the Sport Unit, presented the Commission's progress report on the implementation of the White Paper on Sport. He provided an update on the good progress achieved in implementing the "Pierre de Coubertin" Action Plan. The 53 actions had been almost all completed or were under implementation. He underlined that this steady progress would not have been possible without good cooperation with sport stakeholders and Member States. In addition to the actions in the White Paper, 31 new actions had been included in the Commission's new Communication. [The full text of the speech can be found on this hyperlink.](#)

Pedro Velázquez Hernández, Deputy Head of the Sport Unit, provided an overview of the 2010 Preparatory Action in the field of sport. In the framework of the 2010 Call for Proposals 12 projects had been selected in three areas: the fight against doping, social inclusion, and volunteering. As in 2009, the number of applications received had greatly exceeded the available funding. He noted that the Call for Proposals for 2011 would probably be published in May and mentioned that part of the budget would be allocated to special events, studies and conferences.

In 2010, € 3 million was available for the Preparatory Action. In addition, two special events had been supported upon the initiative of the European Parliament: the European Special Olympics Summer Games in Warsaw and the European Youth Olympic Winter Festival in Liberec. Furthermore, the Commission financed a study on the contribution of sport to economic growth and employment, two conferences (the Sport Forum and a conference on sport statistics) and one evaluation. The study would yield results in spring 2012. The evaluation covered the projects selected under the Preparatory Actions and the special events.

The results of a [study on the equal treatment of non-nationals in individual sports competitions](#), based on Action no. 40 of the "Pierre de Coubertin" Action Plan, was presented by Stefaan Van den Bogaert from Leiden University. Mr Van den Bogaert explained the main elements of the methodology of the study (questionnaire, legal analysis, conclusions and recommendations). Sporting rules were categorised in four main groups: 1. rules of purely sporting interest; 2. rules that fall under the scope of the EU Treaty but are not restrictive; 3. rules that are restrictive but capable of being justified; 4. restrictive rules that are not justified and must therefore be abolished. In problem cases, the Commission should play the role of a mediator. Only if no solution can be found should legal action be considered. A number of concrete recommendations were presented. [The PPT presentation can be found on this hyperlink](#).

The results of a [study on racism, ethnic discrimination and exclusion of migrants and minorities in sport](#) were presented by John Kellock from the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights. There was increasing awareness and recognition that sport could play a positive role in this area, but data were still scarce in EU Member States. The main purpose of the study was to raise awareness and examine the situation across the EU. The key findings, the barriers to equal participation in sport and the actions to be taken were explained. [The PPT presentation can be found on this hyperlink](#).

Part II: Other EU institutions

Minister Philippe Muylers presented the results of sport-related work in the **EU Council** during the Belgian EU Presidency (2nd half of 2010). The first formal meeting of EU Sport Ministers in the Council had taken place during the Spanish Presidency in May 2010, where a first exchange about future priorities had taken place. The Belgian Presidency worked on three priorities: structured dialogue with the sport movement, coordination of the fight against doping ahead of WADA meetings, and social inclusion. A Council Resolution on structured dialogue with sport representatives in the margins of the Council had been adopted. Conclusions had been adopted in the other two mentioned areas. Sport should become increasingly integrated in the Member States' social inclusion projects. There had also been a change in the name of the competent Council formation ("Education, Youth, Culture and Sport"). [The full text of the speech can be found on this hyperlink](#).

Ivo Belet, MEP, explained the sport-related activities of the **European Parliament**. Overall, the priorities of the Parliament were similar to those of the Council. There had been considerable progress in the field of sport at EU level since 2007, based on the White Paper on Sport, the legal basis provided by the Lisbon Treaty, and the new Communication. However, many problems remained to be tackled and expectations remained high, especially in areas such as the fight against doping and social inclusion. Regarding doping, many MEPs had been in favour of the launch of a specific EU agency. While this proposal did not get sufficient support, it showed that there was a broad platform for more coordination. Good cooperation with the Council of Europe was important, but the EU should also take action itself. As for social inclusion of vulnerable people, there was a growing number of projects at sports clubs and they were often convincing. Ministries should visit the projects at the local level as they showed that it was worth investing in such projects. The latest development at the European Parliament was a written declaration in support of grassroots sport. This had been an initiative of five MEPs and had been signed by the majority of the Parliament. Mr Belet was pleased about this broad support as grassroots sport was crucial for the future. It was important not to cut financial support in spite of the current budgetary difficulties. He called on the Commission to continue supporting grassroots sport and to take it into account when dealing with betting. The following months would be dominated by the preparation of an EP report in response to the Commission's Communication. The rapporteur for this document would be Santiago Fisas. Mr Belet concluded that the EP had to be a frontrunner regarding these topics, in particular in areas which cannot be solved at national level alone.

The interventions by Mr Muyters and Mr Belet were followed by a short debate. ISCA (International Sport and Culture Association) and FESI (Federation of European Sport Industries) wondered how follow-up to the EP Declaration could be ensured. Mr Belet pointed out that there was no legal guarantee, but that the Commission usually took the opinion of a majority of MEPs into account. [The full text of the speech can be found on this hyperlink.](#)

The HEPA Europe Network and FESI asked how health-enhancing physical activity could get a higher place on the EU agenda in view of the alarming increase in overweight and obesity. Mr Belet replied that HEPA was likely to be one of the main issues in the EP's report on sport later this year. The Commission pointed out the link with the Europe 2020 Strategy and announced its intention to propose a Council Recommendation in this field, as mentioned in the Communication.

EU Athletes wondered how the participants in the high-level structured dialogue in the margins of the Council are chosen. Mr Muyters explained that the dialogue should be broad, but not everybody could be there every time to keep it manageable. Each Presidency had to decide which organisations to invite.

3. Third session: "Developing the European dimension in sport"

The Joint Panel with EU Sport Ministers was moderated by Márton István Gyulai, a Hungarian television reporter and commentator. The moderator welcomed the high-level panel and asked Commissioner Vassiliou to present the new Communication on Sport. Her intervention was followed by three keynote speeches.

Presentation of the Communication on Sport

Ms Vassiliou referred to the previous EU Sport Forum a year ago in Madrid where the implementation of the Lisbon Treaty in the field of sport was discussed and which formed part of the Commission's consultations for a new policy document in the field of sport. Now it was time to discuss the result of those consultations, the Commission's newly adopted Communication. It reflected wide consultations with sport stakeholders and Member States as well as the active contributions of the European Parliament to the debate. More than 1,300 replies had been received to the Commission's online consultation, including an important number of written position papers. The new Communication was the first on sport following the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty. It built on the 2007 White Paper on Sport and presented the Commission's ideas on EU-level cooperation in sport for the coming years. It proposed measures to enhance the societal, economic and organisational dimensions of sport. The Commissioner stressed that the document confirmed the Commission's respect for the autonomy of sport governing structures and the competences of the Member States, in line with the principle of subsidiarity. It also indicated how the actions proposed could help achieve the Europe 2020 Strategy, with more employability and mobility. Ms Vassiliou shared some ideas on the three main sections: the societal role of sport; the economic dimension of sport; and the organisation of sport. [The full text of the speech can be found on the following hyperlink.](#)

Keynote speeches

Hungarian State Secretary for Sport Mr Attila Czene welcomed governmental and non-governmental organisations and experts. The Lisbon Treaty provided the legal basis for future work in the sports field. Sport was a Member State competence, but there were measures from the EU in the context of coordination that could further strengthen the role of sport or enhance its position in society on a cross-border basis. As an update to the White Paper, the

Communication and the new Council structures offered the opportunity to develop the future EU agenda for sport. The Council would provide a roadmap for the next 3 years. Mr Czene highlighted some important areas. As for health-enhancing physical activity, he mentioned senior sport, which was on the agenda at the informal meeting of Sport Ministers in Gödöllő. He welcomed the Communication's grassroots approach. The future funding of sport was also a key topic to be discussed further. He noted the importance of free movement of athletes, which was important not just for federations but also for the Member States. Sport was a must for all European citizens and it was important to make it part of their daily lives. [The full text of the speech can be found on the following hyperlink.](#)

Member of the European Parliament Mr Ivo Belet said that the EP would endorse the Communication as it contained concrete measures in crucial areas such as health-enhancing physical activity (the EP would support a Council Recommendation), fight against intolerance, and European guidelines on dual careers. As regards doping he stressed that it was the biggest threat to sport and all legal means in the new Treaty had to be used. Common European approaches would enhance the efficiency of actions taken. He congratulated the Belgian Presidency for the steps undertaken in this direction and called on the Hungarian and Polish Presidencies to put the bar even higher. He referred to measures being introduced by UEFA regarding a financial fair play mechanism, which deserved support. With regard to transfers of players there was a need for transparency; "zero tolerance" should be the driving principle concerning abuses related to transfers of minors. There was a need for strict rules for sport agents. Solidarity was very important and competitive balance was crucial, especially concerning the redistribution of financial income from TV rights. Santiago Fisas would be the Rapporteur for the report of the EP on the Communication. As regards an EU sport programme, the main questions concerned the budget. It was a clear disappointment that there was no budget for the next 2 years. He called on the Sport Ministers and Council representatives to take into account the enormous potential of European initiatives in sport. Investing in sport meant spending less on social security in the future. In the next Multiannual Financial Framework budgetary means for sport must be secured in areas such as integrity, social inclusion and health-enhancing physical activity. [The full text of the speech can be found on the following hyperlink](#)

On behalf of the **International Olympic Committee (IOC)**, Mr Patrick Hickey concentrated on three areas: integrity of sport, financing of sport and specificity of sport. Regarding integrity, he was glad that doping was at the top of the agenda also for the Commission; WADA needed to be supported while respecting athletes' fundamental rights. Sport betting was a core concern for the sport movement; illicit betting was a threat comparable to doping. There was a need to harmonise legislation on sport betting. The IOC organised a seminar on this issue on 1 March in order to build synergies with police and State authorities. Sport betting was not negative per se as it was one of the most important means of financing of sport. Regarding the financing of sport, the Communication had brought positive messages on issues such as the collective selling of media rights and protection of intellectual property rights; these were good examples of how the specificity of sport was being taken into account in practice. One big disappointment of the Communication was that it contained no firm reference to a future EU funding programme, particularly for grassroots sport. There was a need for a dedicated programme to support social aspects of sport. Mainstreaming of sport in other EU programmes should also be improved, but not just in the ERDF (European Regional Development Fund) and the ESF (European Social Fund). Regarding the specificity of sport, Mr Hickey welcomed the goodwill of the Commission in the Communication, but further clarification was needed regarding the specificity of sport structures (sporting rules were often universal and Europe could not act in isolation). Specificity had been taken into account in the area of free movement; the Staff Working Document on free movement accompanying the Communication was a good example of guidance for amateur sport. The Commission's actions needed to be proportionate. The IOC was ready to provide further input and guidance

and work together with the EU to tap the full potential of sport in Europe and beyond. [The full text of the speech can be found on the following hyperlink](#)

High-level panel debate

The debate started with a brief intervention by each panellist, in which they provided a general reaction to the Commission's Communication. Following these interventions, the moderator gave the floor to the participants in the Forum, based on questions submitted in writing during earlier sessions.

Flemish Minister responsible for Sport Mr Philippe Muylers welcomed the Communication as a good basis for the implementation of the new EU competence for sport. Concrete actions would be further elaborated in a Council Resolution prepared by the Hungarian Presidency. He stressed the importance of 4 themes: social inclusion in and through sport, fight against doping, education and training in sport and EQF (European Qualification Framework), and volunteering. It was now a joint responsibility of the Council, the EP and the Commission to guarantee that sport would be included in the next Multiannual Financial Framework.

Spanish State Secretary for Sport Mr Jaime Lissavetzky underlined that the sports world was determined to move forward together and to strengthen its structured dialogue with sport authorities at European level. He highlighted 3 themes as priorities for future work: racism, violence and intolerance, fraud and corruption, and doping. As regards the latter, existing anti-doping networks had to be supported and criminal law should be used to strengthen the fight against doping, while recognising WADA as a key reference point. People were getting older and it was vital to get more people, including elderly people, involved in sport.

On behalf of the **International Canoe Federation**, Mr István Vaskuti explained that changes in lifestyle were giving more importance to sport and physical activity. He underlined the importance of 5 areas: education and training (a well-known motto was lifelong learning; the concept of lifelong sport learning should be introduced), sport for all age brackets, the role of women in sport organisations, the fight against doping (including the problems of food additives/supplements and of dealers present in gyms), and unregulated online betting and match-fixing. These were serious issues and solutions had to be found at European level.

For the **World Anti-Doping Agency**, Mr David Howman welcomed the Commission's commitment to a continuous dialogue with WADA. He developed three points. Doping involved not only athletes but in many cases also the "entourage": coaches, trainers, teachers, lawyers and doctors. It had to be ensured that those people, many of whom engaged in regulated professions, could be subject to appropriate sanctions when involved in doping. Doping was more and more sophisticated and difficult to detect by the traditional method of sample collection. Scientific research was one aspect of enhancing anti-doping activities; another was gathering more evidence through law enforcement agencies. Huge amounts of money were being made through trade in doping substances, and strong anti-trafficking and distribution laws (including tough sanctions) were therefore needed to assist law enforcement officers. Mr Howman pointed out that the criminal underworld was involved in trade in doping substances, not just related to high-level athletes, but also to children and young people at schools, fitness centres etc. Doping was thus increasingly becoming a public health issue.

On behalf of the **European Olympic Committees**, Mr Marc Theisen explained that it was important to safeguard the specific characteristics of sport. Sporting rules should receive special treatment in EU law, and this was recognised by Article 165 TFEU. He underlined the

importance of the following 4 themes: integrity (fight against doping, match-fixing and violence/intolerance), financing of sport by guaranteeing revenues from betting and lotteries, EU funding for sport through a dedicated programme, and structured dialogue at EU level.

For **European Team Sports**, Mr Jean Brihault explained that ETS was created in 2009 to defend and promote the European sport model, the specificity and autonomy of sport and the central role of sport federations. He welcomed the Communication as it provided a coherent framework for sport at EU level and as it gave backing to core values of ETS such as autonomy, financial solidarity, centralised selling of rights, existence of sport-related IPR in the context of betting, the fight against illicit betting and support for UEFA's Financial Fair Play rules. He said that the proliferation of online betting created challenges which could only be tackled by the sport movement and public authorities together. There was the issue of a fair return to sport from sport betting, which required an appropriate regulatory mechanism and redistribution of money from betting operators to sport event organisers. Competition organisers should have the right to restrict the use of their events for betting purposes; the French system provided a good model. ETS encourages the Commission to move forward and was ready to support a pan-European approach to the fight against sporting fraud.

On behalf of the **European Non-Governmental Sports Organisation**, Ms Birgitta Kervinen welcomed the Communication while pointing out that it could have been more comprehensive and concrete. ENGSO welcomed the fact that the Communication did not replace the 2007 White Paper but built on its achievements; the White Paper remained an essential policy document. ENGSO underlined the importance of dialogue between the EU institutions, Member States and the sport movement. Ms Kervinen developed three themes: financing, volunteering, and social inclusion. An EU sport programme would be of utmost importance to support sport-related policies at EU level. Sustainable funding of grassroots sport depended on State lotteries in many countries, and gambling and betting should not be harmonised at EU level to respect national traditions and cultures. As regards volunteering, the White Paper must remain an appropriate basis for further work. Social inclusion could be a powerful tool to include people from different backgrounds into society.

For the **European Sport for All Network**, Mr Wolfgang Baumann presented ESFAN which represented some 40 European sport for all organisations covering about 200 million participants. He pointed out that while sport for all was less visible than top sport, it was nonetheless the big brother rather than the little brother of the sporting family. While the Communication covered some aspects of grassroots sport, he regretted that the term "sport for all" was not mentioned explicitly. In times of budget cuts, it was essential to avoid duplication of effort. For example, while the idea of a European Day of Sport was good, he suggested to see what already existed (e.g. World Challenge Day) and to build on it. Voluntary work was an essential pillar of European sport and deserved more support than the Communication seemed to suggest.

On behalf of the **European Professional Football Leagues**, Mr Emanuel Macedo de Medeiros expressed his appreciation to the Commission for its inclusive work in preparing the Communication and welcomed that the EPFL's views had been taken on board. The specificity of sport should not be turned into a Holy Grail: sport was not above the law. He expressed support for the principles of good governance mentioned in the Communication and called on the Commission to ensure that they were respected. Regarding the financing of sport, the EPFL was glad that the Communication gave appropriate attention to the importance of intellectual property rights as they played an important role in ensuring that sport could remain economically viable and self-sustainable, especially since the level of public funding for sport had diminished as result of the economic crisis. As regards the issue of territorial exclusivity, EPFL referred to the opinion of the Advocate-General of the European Court of Justice in the QC Leisure Case, with could have serious consequences not

only for sport media rights but also for Europe's economic, cultural and linguistic diversity. EPFL called on the EU to take legislative action in this area. Mr de Medeiros concluded by inviting the Hungarian Presidency to include this issue in its priorities, and the EU Sport Ministers to mention this concern in the future Council Resolution.

For the **European Club Association**, Mr Umberto Gandini congratulated the Commission for the Communication and particularly welcomed the section on good governance and the link it made between respect for the principles of good governance and the exercise of autonomy. Clubs needed to be on an equal footing with international federations to decide issues such as calendars, which was currently not the case. ECA supported the Commission's approach to the specificity of sport (theme per theme analysis). Regarding transfer rules, ECA called for a cautious approach to any evaluation of the current rules as they provided a good balance and a good system for redistribution. The Commission should consult closely with ECA if it took action in this field. ECA was concerned by the Advocate-General's opinion in the QC Leisure case. Mr Gandini pointed out that ECA clubs had extensive corporate social responsibility (CSR) programmes and supported the Commission's ideas on the societal role of sport.

For the **European Elite Athletes Association**, Walter Palmer stressed that the EEAA represented the athletes, while federations did not. The number of professional athletes had increased tremendously, which explained the fact that trade unions representing them had also grown. From the perspective of professional athletes, it was a good thing that sport was subject to EU and national law, and also to European competition law. Sport was an economic activity and the “specificity of sport” would, in the end, be defined by the European Court of Justice on the basis of individual cases. He welcomed the fact that the Communication highlighted the importance of European social dialogue in the field of sport, to which the EEAA was committed. Athletes had a vested interest in effective and proportional anti-doping rules. The Communication made it clear that the fundamental rights of athletes were to be respected and that anti-doping rules should be discussed between employers and employees. The fight against doping should be based on education of athletes as athletes were the first line of defence. The EEAA was taking concrete action in this field.

Discussion

Regarding the points raised by the panel, **Commissioner Vassiliou** pointed out that she was working in order to make specific EU funding available for sport for the period from 2014. Sport Ministers should convey the message to Ministers of Finance and Prime Ministers that specific EU funding for sport was useful and necessary. As regards volunteering, the relevant section in the White Paper was still valid and, in addition, volunteering was one of the themes covered by the Call for Proposals under the 2010 Preparatory Action in the field of sport. Online gambling was a serious issue and the Green Paper produced by Commissioner Barnier should provide a basis for future action; the sport movement was invited to take part in the discussion. The Commission fully supported the Council of Europe as regards doping and the Communication proposed that the EU should become a party to the Council of Europe's Anti-Doping Convention. Regarding structured dialogue, the Commission gave a lot of importance to dialogue, not just with big sport associations but also with players, athletes, clubs, leagues and other stakeholders.

The following questions were raised:

Several sport organisations: What is the goal of the Hungarian Presidency in the area of sport?

Hungarian State Secretary for Sport Attila Czene said that the objective of these six months was to secure that a Sport Programme would be included in the next EU financial framework beyond 2014. The next steps would be a discussion among EU Sport Ministers at

the informal ministerial meeting the following day and ensuring that an EU agenda for sport would be agreed by the Council in May, setting priorities for the following years.

Marcel Martin, EASE: How do sport bodies envisage participating in social dialogue?

European Olympic Committees, Marc Theisen, said that it would take a long time to fully develop the social dialogue, but that the EOC wished to be part of it.

Michael Archer on behalf of Ms McClarkin, MEP: As regards grassroots sport, to what extent can the Commission ensure that it receives sufficient attention?

Commissioner Vassiliou pointed out that the sustainable financing of grassroots sport was an important theme in the Communication.

Flemish Minister responsible for Sport Philippe Muyters said that for example in Belgium much more money was spent on sport for all than on top sport. In terms of budget, it was 5 to 1 for grassroots sport.

Judit Farkas, Semmelweis University: Most citizens have a narrow understanding of sport. Is an EU-wide media campaign planned to inform people about the health, economic and educational aspects of sport, and why the EU now has a competence in sport?

Commissioner Vassiliou said that this idea could be considered if appropriate funding could be found. It could notably be implemented through schools.

European Sport for All Network, Wolfgang Baumann, noted that national campaigns to promote sport for all existed in most countries but were often ineffective. A European initiative could save a lot of money by basing itself on good national campaigns and practices. It should go beyond advertising: original ideas and research would be needed.

Hungarian State Secretary for Sport Attila Czene said that this idea could be supported through an EU Sport Programme from 2014.

Bengt Nybelius, European Athlete and Student Network: As 30% of Olympic athletes are students, will the EU look into the role of universities to develop European top sport?

Commissioner Vassiliou replied that in the Communication support for dual careers for young athletes was a high priority. The Commission would take action to facilitate the combination of pursuing a high-level sporting career as well as general education.

Jens Sejer Andersen, Play the Game: Match-fixing cannot be fought against without assistance from sport organisations. Does the Commission support the establishment of an international agency for the fight against corruption in sport, focusing on match-fixing and illegal betting?

Commissioner Vassiliou noted that the tendency in the EU was rather not to create more agencies. However, Commission Malmstrom was planning to present a package of measures in order to strengthen the fight against corruption. There would be close cooperation to include sport in this package.

European Team Sports, Jean Brihault, pointed out that in the fight against match-fixing, it was essential to provide better possibilities for athletes to report that they had been approached. For example, the European Handball Federation had created possibilities for athletes to raise alarm without being afraid of personal consequences.

World Anti-Doping Agency, David Howman, stressed that such measures could only be effective if police forces, customs authorities and other law-enforcement agencies supported and cooperated with them.

Simon Taylor, PPF: Is the Commission involved in the review of the WADA Code with regard to fundamental rights of athletes?

Commissioner Vassiliou explained that the Commission maintained a continuous dialogue with WADA and would contribute to the review of the WADA Code. EU rules had to be

respected in areas such as protection of privacy while ensuring that the fight against doping remained effective.

Flemish Minister responsible for Sport Philippe Muyters said that the fight against doping must be effective but that an equilibrium had to be found regarding the protection of privacy rules.

European Elite Athletes Association, Walter Palmer, noted that this was a priority issue for the EEAA. WADA had been doing good work. However, its Athletes Commission did not represent the voice of athletes in an appropriate way. Athletes had to consent to being subjected to anti-doping rules, but on the other hand they should be involved in setting and implementing the rules. The system had to be balanced.

European Non-Governmental Sports Organisation, Birgitta Kervinen, underlined the responsibility of sport organisations and clubs in promoting education against doping, in cooperation with local governments and from a young age.

World Anti-Doping Agency, David Howman, underlined that WADA respected the voice of athletes; there was a member of FIFPro on WADA's Athletes Commission and WADA was willing to talk also with other athletes' organisations. WADA respected individual rights; this was a matter of balance and proportionality.

Jozsef Harsanyi, European Bridge League: Is there any policy for European countries that are not members of the EU in terms of funding or taking part in EU programmes?

Commissioner Vassiliou replied that sport was mainstreamed in other EU policies including development and neighbourhood policies. Non-EU applicants could be eligible to participate in EU programmes according to the conditions set in each programme.

Bella Bello Bitugu, Fair Play VIDC: How can sport be promoted as a tool for development?

Commissioner Vassiliou explained that sport projects can be eligible in the framework of EU programmes for developing countries.

Mogens Kirkeby, ISCA: How can political leaders ensure that grassroots sport will remain at the top of the agenda in the field of sport?

Commissioner Vassiliou replied that there was a need to spread information about the benefits and values of sport among EU citizens. Sport for all would be high on the Commission's agenda.

Carlos Gonçalves, European Fair Play Movement: Prevention should go hand in hand with the fight against threats to sport such as doping and violence as prevention is often more efficient than fighting. Sport and education should be put on the agenda, together with culture.

Commissioner Vassiliou noted that both education/prevention and the active fight against the negative aspects of sport were essential. One of the projects selected under the 2010 Preparatory Action was about prevention and education of young athletes in the field of doping.

European Elite Athletes Association, Walter Palmer, agreed that prevention was often not highlighted enough. Anti-doping rules were very complex and difficult to understand. There was a real need to step up prevention and education efforts, also in other areas such as integrity and sport betting, including at amateur and youth level. EEAA's partnership with EGBA (European Gaming and Betting Association) was a good example.

Stanislas Frossard, Council of Europe: The Council of Europe provides a platform for intergovernmental cooperation in sport in particular for European countries which are not EU members. There is now a good perspective for strengthening cooperation between the Council of Europe and the European Commission.

European Non-Governmental Sports Organisation, Birgitta Kervinen, noted that good cooperation and good governance were needed and appreciated the Council of Europe's role in these areas.

Tamas Ajan, Budapest Association of Sport Federations: Corruption is an increasing trend in sport. Even doping controls are affected. The public at large is the best remedy against corruption provided that they are well-informed. Information campaigns are therefore needed.

European Professional Football Leagues, Emanuel Macedo de Medeiros, pointed out that online betting amounted to € 38 billion per year in Europe. In such a fast growing sector, prevention was not enough. Football organisations had already invested heavily in early warning and prevention systems. What was needed now was good regulation of betting at EU level.

Petr Hrubec, Czech Olympic Committee: Why is there still no financial support for sport at EU level although the Lisbon Treaty entered into force in 2009?

Commissioner Vassiliou noted that when the EP and the Council decided the current Multiannual Financial Framework for seven years in 2007, they could not know that there would be a new competence for sport. It was important now to look to the future in order to obtain support for sport in the framework of the next Multiannual Financial Framework from 2014 onward.

Forum conclusions and next steps

Commissioner Androulla Vassiliou concluded that the discussion had been very useful for the Hungarian Presidency and the EU institutions. It had demonstrated a high level of consensus that the Commission's Communication provided a good framework for the implementation of the sport provisions of the Lisbon Treaty. She thanked the participants for their active participation and the high quality of their contributions. Ms Vassiliou stressed that there was a need for continuous input from the sport movement in the future and that it was important to further develop evidence for future EU initiatives in the field of sport.