



EU-Sport Directors Meeting 29/30 March 2006 in the Vienna Hofburg

Conclusions of the Austrian EU-Presidency

The EU sports directors came together in Vienna on 29 and 30 March 2006 in the presence of the European Commission, to an informal meeting under the Chairmanship of the Austrian Sport Director, General Director Robert Pelousek.

Sports and the economy in Europe

The sports directors:

- stated their full commitment to the implementation of the Lisbon strategy – economic growth and employment – in sports and emphasised the important role of sports in its realisation
- ascertained that the macroeconomic importance of the European sports industry has so far been tremendously underrated with regard to its potential for growth and employment
- welcomed and acknowledged the explanations of the lecturing expert on the enormous economic importance of sports, in particular with regard to the estimated macroeconomic effects of sports within the European Union – overall, (sports generates a value-added effect of EUR 407 billion, which represents a share of 3.65% of the GDP and 15 million employees, which represents a share of 5.4% of the labour market) and the potential of large sports events and tourism, which offers the opportunity to ideally combine two growth industries in Europe, thus utilising the future development opportunities for the European economy and particularly for the labour market (1.75 million jobs in the tourism sector are directly linked to sports within the European Union, a further 5 million are indirectly linked to sports through other business sectors)
- welcomed as well the positive economic effects on healthcare, in particular in view of the rising costs of an increasingly aging population

- emphasised the important role sports plays in the realisation of the goals of economic growth and employment pursued by the Lisbon strategy
- agreed to support the priority set by the Presidency to consolidate the subject of “Sports and economy in Europe” within political discussion at a European level and to invite future EU Presidencies to continue this discussion
- expressly welcomed the suggestion by the Presidency to form an Expert Working Group under the organisational management of the EU Commission and the provision of the methodical expertise and corresponding contextual resources by the Presidency, with the aim of remedying the lack of economic statistical data, thus rendering sports visible as an important economic factor
- welcomed the participation of Finland, Germany, France, Lithuania, Great Britain, Cyprus, Austria, Rumania and of the Commission in the above mentioned Expert Working Group
- agreed to install a uniform economic statistical method in all EU member states in analogue with the European tourism satellite account for the registration or estimation of the monetary dimension of sports overall effects in the European political economy, with the objective of developing a European sports satellite account

Sports and development politics

The sports directors

- emphasised the importance of sports as a tool to achieve the Millennium Development Goals of the United Nations
- expressed their desire to include “Sports & development” in the national politics of the EU member states
- stimulate an exchange of information on “best practices” regarding sports-based development programmes and the development projects of the EU member states
- expressed their fear in respect of human trafficking, which occurs in connection with major international events, in particular in connection with major sports events and supported the methods necessary to prevent and combat such human trafficking
- welcomed the request by the Presidency to support the initiative of the United Nations to advertise and apply sports as a means of development cooperation

Against doping

The sports directors

- took note of the fact that the 2005 list of banned substances was inadvertently resolved as a binding Annex on resolving the UNESCO Convention Against Doping in Sports on 19 October 2005, that, however, by resolution of the CE Monitoring Group of November 2005 the 2006 list of banned substances applied since 1 January 2006, and that therefore the 2005 and 2006 lists of banned substances would apply concurrently in the event that the UNESCO Convention is ratified
- recommend, in accordance with the suggestion presented by the Presidency, to execute the scheduled UNESCO meeting on 20 and 21 July 2006, to formally resolve the 2006 list and to initiate the evaluation and circulation procedure immediately after presentation of the 2007 list, so that the 2007 list becomes uniformly effective worldwide
- professed to push ahead the ratification of the UNESCO Convention within their respective countries so that these could be concluded as rapidly as possible – taking into consideration the respective approach necessary – and professed to further the rapid processing of the evaluation and circulation procedures in the respective nations and to cooperate in this undertaking
- welcomed the attempts mentioned in section 10 of the UNESCO Convention in respect of scheduled concerted – that is beyond the confines of individual states – activities in this area, which are not only to involve the state bodies responsible for sports but also the areas of health, police, customs and justice and acknowledged that opportunities for state control were severely restricted due to the increasing utilisation of the internet via external servers
- welcomed the suggestion by the Presidency to set up a working group under the chairmanship of the troika to find a joint European candidate to take over the WADA Vice Chair 2007 (Chair 2008) and the participation of Finland, Germany, Great Britain, Spain, the Netherlands, France, Denmark, Sweden, Portugal and Austria in the above mentioned working group. They also acknowledged the date of the first meeting of said group to be 3 and 4 May 2006, to be held in Dürnstein (Austria)
- acknowledged that the amendment of laboratory standards suggested by WADA would increase the athlete's risk of consuming contaminated food

supplements, while emphasising that only WADA-accredited laboratories held the most up-to-date standard of knowledge on reference substances and specialist expertise for analysis, and agreed to request, in the interest of the athletes, that the EU representatives on the WADA Foundation Board countered a prohibition on the analysis of contaminated food supplements by experienced testing laboratories

Implementation of the European study "Education of high-level athletes"

The sports directors

- welcomed the information regarding the study which is to be commissioned by the EU Commission on the "Situation of educational systems for young athletes in Europe as well as their integration into an educational system and/or professional life at the end of their sports' careers", as well as the recommendations made by the study's authors to the European Commission

Sports and the gambling monopoly

The sports directors

- welcomed the explanations by the lecturing expert on the special significance of the gambling monopoly, in particular with regard to the possible financial effects on sports – in 2004, more than EUR 2 billion from gambling offices were channelled into sports within the European Union – and welcomed the successful attempts to exempt the national gambling monopolies from the area of application of the scheduled EU services directive
- suggested to focus on the development of the gambling market and its international activities and to strategically consider alternative and long term sources for the financing of sports, irrespective of the current stable situation with regard to the financing of European sports by the gambling monopoly

Additional European foci presented by the European Commission

The sports directors

- welcomed the suggestion by the Commission to establish a White Paper as a strategic orientation paper for sports, with the objective of demonstrating the specificity of sports as well as the economic, social and societal contribution of sports in Europe
- welcomed the suggestion by the Presidency that the Commission should establish the White Paper together with the EU member states as a basis for the further development of sports in Europe

- welcomed the results of the study commissioned by the EU Commission on “Physical and educational training centres” as well as an exchange of information on “best practices” of the EU member states on summer and winter sports centres and the training of athletes.
- acknowledged the explanations of the Commission on current developments in sports at a European level, in particular on the sale of TV rights, on the results of the working group “Sports & Health” and on Great Britain’s initiative in respect of European football
- acknowledged the announcement of the Commission on the execution of an informal meeting of the Ministers of Sports in Brussels under the subsequent Finnish EU Council Presidency

Presentation of the contents of the subsequent Finnish EU Council Presidency

The sports directors

- welcomed the prospective Finnish Presidency plans on the subject of “Sports” and acknowledged the meeting of EU sports directors to be held in Turku (Finland) from 5 to 6 October 2006