

Brussels, 11 July 2007

Commission adopts White Paper on Sport

The European Commission adopted today its first comprehensive initiative on sport. The White Paper aims at providing strategic orientation on the role of sport in the EU. It recognises the important social and economic roles of sport while respecting the requirements of EU law. The White Paper is the result of extensive consultations over the past two years with sport organisations such as the Olympic Committees and sport federations, as well as with Member States and other stakeholders, including an online consultation launched in February this year to which the Commission received 777 replies.

Ján Figel', European Commissioner in charge of Education, Training, Culture & Youth, including Sport, said: *"This White Paper is the Commission's contribution to the European debate on the importance of sport in our daily lives. It enhances the visibility of sport in EU policy-making, raises awareness of the needs and specificities of the sport sector, and identifies appropriate further action at EU level."*

The commissioner concluded: *"The implementation of the White Paper can help pave the way toward future EU supportive action in the sport sector as the recent European Council has re-opened the possibility of a Treaty provision on sport"*.

The White Paper on Sport is the **first comprehensive initiative on sport** by the Commission.

The White Paper respects the principle of subsidiarity, the autonomy of sport organisations and the current EU legal framework. It develops the concept of **specificity of sport** within the limits of existing EU competences.

The initiative contributes to **legal clarity for stakeholders**. For the first time, the Commission takes stock of ECJ case law and Commission decisions in the area of sport.

The White Paper also proposes concrete actions in a detailed **Action Plan called after Pierre de Coubertin**. The Action Plan addresses in particular societal and economic aspects of sport, such as public health, education, social inclusion, volunteering, external relations and the financing of sport.

A **structured dialogue** is foreseen with sport organisations such as European sport federations, European and national umbrella organisations such as the European and national Olympic Committees, and European non-governmental sport organisations.

The White Paper will guide the Commission in its sport-related activities in the coming years. The proposals included in the Action Plan include notably:

- To develop new physical activity guidelines and to put in place a pluri-annual EU Health-Enhancing Physical Activity network.
- To facilitate a coordinated EU approach in the fight against doping, e.g. by supporting a network of national anti-doping organisations.
- To introduce the award of a European label to schools actively supporting physical activities.
- To launch a study on volunteering in sport.
- To improve opportunities for supporting social inclusion and integration through sport activities by mobilising EU programmes and funds such as Progress, Lifelong Learning, Youth in Action, Europe for Citizens, the European Social Fund, the European Regional Development Fund and the European Integration Fund.
- To promote the exchange of operational information and experience on the prevention of violent and racist incidents between law enforcement services and with sport organisations.
- To promote the use of sport as a tool in the EU's development policy.
- Together with Member States, to develop a European statistical method for measuring the economic impact of sport.
- To carry out a study on the financing of grassroots sport and sport for all in the Member States from both public and private sources, and on the impact of on-going changes in this area.
- To carry out an assessment to provide a clear overview of the activities of players' agents in the EU and an evaluation as to whether action at EU level is necessary.
- To provide for a more efficient dialogue structure on sport at EU level, including the organisation of an annual European Sport Forum.
- To propose to the Member States to strengthen political cooperation on sport through a reinforced Rolling Agenda, common priorities and regular reporting to EU Sport Ministers.
- To encourage the establishment of European Social Dialogue Committees in the sport sector, and support employers and employees in this respect.

The White Paper on Sport will now be transmitted to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions and its findings will be presented to EU Sport Ministers.

In October, the Commission will organise a conference to discuss the White Paper with sport stakeholders.

The White Paper is available at
http://ec.europa.eu/sport/index_en.html

See also: [MEMO/07/290](#).