

Tweets of the month



EOC EU Office

@EOCEUOffice May 21

Last educational Seminar for #SPOCs is taking place in Lisbon. This project is co-financed by @EUErasmusPlus and makes possible to educate contact points for integrity in 14 different sport organisations, including NOCs and European federations. @EuSport

EOC EU Office

@EOCEUOffice May 20

Call for proposals "Sport as a tool for integration and social inclusion of refugees" is published! Submission deadline: 04/07/2019. No partners needed for this call. Check more information https://ec.europa.eu/sport/calls/call-proposals-sport-tool-integration-and-social-inclusion-refugees_en ... @EuSport

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@EOCEUOffice May 19

Overview on @EuSport funding opportunities, like @EUErasmusPlus #sport, is provided to the 50 NOCs by @Niels_Nygaard & @FolkerF at the @EOCmedia Seminar. @EOCEUOffice will organise a detailed Seminar for the NOCs on the funding opportunities in September. Stay tuned for the date!

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@EOCEUOffice May 18

40th @EOCmedia Seminar taking place in Vienna today & tomorrow is opened by President of Austrian NOC Karl Stoss and @EOCmedia President Janez Kocijancic. On today's agenda e.g. panel discussions on European Sport Model, women leadership & role of technologies in high performance

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EDITORIAL

Dear readers,

Elections to the European Parliament are only a few days away and a complete list of elected representatives is not yet available. Provided that the Brexit takes place as planned by the end of October, the 73 British elected representatives would leave the European Parliament again and the European Parliament would shrink from 751 to 705 MEPs. 27 seats would be distributed to 14 countries that are slightly under-represented. The remaining 46 mandates will be placed in reserve for possible EU enlargements. These provisions are indisputable, which cannot be said for the choice of the top posts to be filled in the upcoming weeks and months.

The first extraordinary summit of Heads of States and Governments on 28 May already revealed the very divergent positions within the Council and between the Council and the EP. Let me remind you once again that, according to the Lisbon Treaty, the Council proposes a candidate by qualified majority, who must be elected by the EP by an absolute majority. The Council's proposal should take into account the results of the European elections. But for the bulk of actors in the Council and the EP, the wording of take into account needs to be interpreted. A large group of Heads of Governments contradicts an automatism to which only the "top candidate" of the largest group can be proposed. That would be Manfred Weber (CSU), who chairs the largest political group (EPP). In any case, a few weeks will pass before all decisions for the top positions are finalised.

An excessively long negotiation period could have concrete consequences for the EOC EU office. The next "European Evening of Sport" in Brussels will also include the new EU Commissioner for Sport in the programme. It is therefore to be hoped that the entire new college of the EU Commission will have started its work in due time.

Good news from the Council of Europe: the Convention against the Manipulation of Sport Competitions, which was launched in 2014, will enter into force on 1 September 2019. Switzerland, as the 5th member state of the Council of Europe, has now ratified the Convention. The Convention is intended to strengthen the integrity of sport by setting up appropriate national structures to improve, among other things, the exchange of information and cooperation between law enforcement authorities and sport federations.

The 2nd European Games will take place in Minsk between 21 and 30 June 4000 athletes will compete in 15 sports. Eight sports will offer the opportunity to earn Olympic qualifying points or even direct starting places for Tokyo 2020. For judo and boxing, the European Games are also the official European Championships. The EOC EU Office wishes all participants of the 2nd European Games successful and fair competitions.

Enjoy your read,

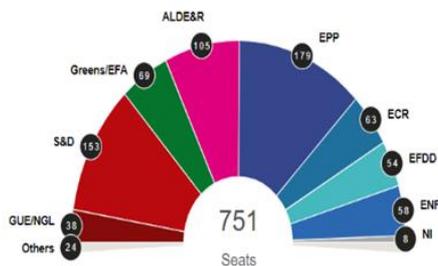


Folker Hellmund
Director

EUROPEAN UNION AND SPORT

European Citizens elect new European Parliament

European Parliament 2019 - 2024
Provisional results



From 23 to 26 May 2019, European citizens elected the new European Parliament (EP) for the period 2019 - 2024. An impressive outcome of these elections was the fact that voter turnout has increased for the first time in 20 years, with around 51 % of all voters casting their ballot.

Beyond this, many questions regarding the constitution and work of the incoming EP are currently still open. At the time of the Monthly Report publication, the final list of newly elected MEPs has not been published yet. After its publication, political groups – groupings of MEPs from different EU Member States that form on the basis of their political affinities – will be constituted. While some existing EP groups will stay, it is likely that new formations will develop because of the inclusion of new national parties or changes in EU-wide coalitions. Even inside the existing groups, different results on the national level will lead to new leaders appearing in the existing structures. République En Marche, party of the French President Emmanuel Macron, will for example become the biggest national group in the liberal ALDE group, while the Spanish Socialist Party will hold the largest number of MEPs in the Social-Democrat group.

Overall, one can however already take away some considerations for the future work. For the first time, the two big political groups, the European People's Party (EPP) and the Socialist

and Democrats (S&D) do not have a common majority anymore, dropping under a combined 50 % of seats. This means that other groups will have to agree on common positions in order to adopt legislation or make decisions in the coming personnel discussions. This creates potential *king maker* roles for the Greens and Liberal groups and could lead to an increased number of votes being decided topic by topic instead of along political lines.

Similarly, it has to be seen what effect the results will have on the decision on the future Commission President. In 2014, the so-called *Spitzenkandidat*-Prozess was applied for the first time, with Jean-Claude Juncker being elected President of the Commission as the lead candidate of the biggest group (EPP). Whether this will be the case again this time around, is currently open, with a number of Member States seemingly reluctant to follow the same logic again. In parallel, the distribution of votes equally leads to a more complex negotiations inside the EP itself, where the designated candidates will now have to convince other groups to support them.

These decisions will naturally have an important impact on sport. Trilogue negotiations between the Council, EP and the Commission on the EU's future multiannual financial framework (MFF) and on the concrete shape of future funding programmes are looming - in recent weeks and months, the old Parliament has adopted many files or positions that support sport in this regard.

Similarly, the European Parliament will take up an important role considering the newly appointed Commissioner and the portfolios they will take on. In 2014, the EP successfully added sport to the portfolio of Tibor Navracsics (alongside, culture, education and youth) which proved to allow for a positive development of EU Sports Policy in the

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past five years. The EOC EU Office expects the new Parliament to push for the interests of the sport movement along these lines in the upcoming hearings with the new Commissioners and in the negotiations of legislative files.

FURTHER INFORMATION

[European Parliament - Press Release \(27/05/2019\): "Elections 2019: highest turnout in 20 years"](#)

[European Parliament - Press Release \(30/04/2019\): "European elections 2019: what's next? \(infographic\)"](#)

[Official Results of EP elections](#)

Education, Youth, Culture and Sports Council meeting

On 22-23 May 2019 the Education, Youth, Culture and Sports Council took place in Brussels. The ministers responsible for sport discussed several topics and documents, among them:

- a resolution on representation and coordination prior to WADA meetings,
- conclusions on access to sport for persons with disabilities and
- the topic of how to increase the participation of children and young people in sport in the 21st century.

The 2011 resolution on representation and coordination prior to WADA meetings was reviewed. Following a resolution on the representation of EU Member States on the WADA Foundation Board and their coordination prior to WADA meetings was adopted by the ministers. The resolution reiterates that three seats in the WADA Foundation Board are to be occupied by representatives from EU Member States.

The Council also adopted conclusions on access to sport for persons with disabilities. The overall objective of the conclusions is to put emphasis on social inclusion and use sport to foster the latter. A separate section is dedicated to the sport movement, which is therein invited to drive social inclusion through different measures, such as

making use of existing solidarity mechanisms to fund sport for people with disabilities.

Furthermore, a public policy debate was held on 'Increasing the participation of children and young people in sport in the "21st century in Europe'. The Romanian EU Presidency prepared a background document with two questions:

1. How can public authorities and the sport movement cooperate at European and Member State level to boost sport participation rates among children and young people? To what extent would such a cooperation pose challenges for the autonomy of sports?
2. What measures can be undertaken at EU level to strengthen the links of elite and grassroots sport with a view to better supporting the social and educational function of sport?

Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, Tibor Navracsics, mentioned the problems that follow physical inactivity of children and outlined three action points where public authorities and the sport movement need to cooperate at EU and Member State level. First, the people's mind-sets need to be changed in direction of a healthier lifestyle with inter alia sport clubs offering non-competitive health enhancing programs.

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Second, schools and universities need to be supported to promote sport and physical activity. Furthermore, he stressed the important role Erasmus+ plays in that regard and named the European School Sport Day as a positive example.

Third, cross-sector approaches are needed to enable physical activity friendly environments and the Commissioner thereby emphasised the opportunities to co-finance such infrastructure under the European Structural- and Investment Funds. EOC EU Office fully agrees with all these points, and is currently very active with its efforts to get the financing of sport infrastructure included in the future Structural Funds.

The representatives of the Member States were congruent in their goal to tackle the problem and explained their respective measures to do so. They affirmed that a healthy lifestyle needs to be developed during the school years of a child and that physical activity lessons, affiliated projects and an overall education on healthy behaviour is necessary.

Besides, policy cooperation at EU level, best practice exchanges and interinstitutional cooperation on international and national level between several stakeholder groups were outlined by all Member States as needed measures to face the problem appropriately.

In the occasion of the Council meeting, also a structured dialogue lunch with the attendance of the sport stakeholders was organised. The Romanian EU Presidency had chosen the athletes representation and the rights of athletes as the topic of the dialogue, and EOC Athletes Commission Chair Gerd Kanter attended the discussion.

FURTHER INFORMATION

[Review of the 2011 Resolution on representation and coordination prior to WADA meetings](#)

[Conclusions on Access to sport for persons with disabilities](#)

[Policy debate on increasing the participation of children and young people in sport 21st century Europe](#)

Expert Group on "Skills and HR Development in Sport" – 4th meeting

The 4th meeting of the European Commission Expert Group "Skills and Human Resources Development in Sport" (XG HR) took place in Lisbon on 15–16 May 2019.

The first day of the meeting kicked off with presentations on the good practices from Portugal and a visit to the National High Performance Center. Victor Pardal, Filipe Castro and Joao Fernandes presented the UAARE programme that helps young athletes reconcile their sports career with school success. In addition, Joaquim Evangelista presented how the Portuguese Football Players Union promotes their members' dual careers.

The second day was opened with the welcome words from the Portuguese Institute for Sport. Yves Le Lostecque, Head of Sport Unit at the European Commission, provided information on recent policy developments. The 2019 Erasmus+ Call saw altogether 743 applications, and applicants may expect the results in October at the earliest. The Erasmus+ Call for 2020 will be the last call of the current EU financial term, with 65 million euros reserved for sports projects on similar terms and schedules as in 2019.

During the first session on the education of coaches, presentations were provided by e.g. Sergio Lara-Bercial (International Council for

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Coaching Excellence) and Louis Moustakas (European Network of Sport Education).

During the second session on the education of coaches, the participants discussed the draft guidelines regarding the basic requirements in skills and competences for coaches. The aim of the document is to propose minimum standards for coaches' competences – including so-called soft skills – in light of the societal trends and challenges that have relevance for coaches, such as the social inclusion of migrants and other disadvantaged groups, inequality, violence, doping and sport manipulation. The document will be targeted for coach education stakeholders, from sports organisations to universities, regardless of the national coach education system, which vary greatly. The draft document encompasses the context of the organised sports movement, as well as profit-seeking fitness clubs.

As the document recognises that the vast majority of coaches in sport clubs work on a voluntary basis, the final recommendations can be expected to be applicable also to voluntary coaches' training. The Commission is currently collecting good practices in the field of coach education from EU Member State representatives, who have been encouraged to collaborate with their sports stakeholders nationally in this task. The next version of the document will be discussed in the final meeting of the XG in late 2019.

The next session saw presentations on Qualifications and Skills in Sport. The event was concluded with a presentation regarding the Portuguese Sport System.

FURTHER INFORMATION

[Expert Group on Skills and HR: ENGSO delivered messages on volunteering and equality](#)

The General Court of the EU cancels €18.4 Million Real Madrid State Aid Refund decided by the EU Commission in 2016

In 2014, the Commission examined a land transfer between Real Madrid and the City of Madrid. The inquiry determined, based on an independent study, that the land affected by the transaction was overvalued by €18.4 million which led to the decision, in July 2016, that the club and the Madrid City Hall had agreed an illegal transaction involving the sale of municipal land.

The deal between Real Madrid and the City of Madrid started in 1998 when the club had paid €595 000 for the land. However, technical issues prevented the operation to come to fruition which led the authorities, in 2011, to pay Real Madrid €22.7 million in compensation. Based on the assessment of a firm mandated by the Commission, the city should have paid only €4.3 million leaving the land in question overvalued by €18.4 million. According to the Commission, this support was incompatible to EU state aid rules

and gave Real Madrid an unjustified advantage over other clubs and therefore was required to pay back the €18.4 million.

In October 2016, the Real Madrid lodged an appeal against this decision in front of the General Court. On 22 May 2019, the General Court of the EU has released its decision to annul the Commission Decision (EU) 2016/2393 of 4 July 2016 on the State aid SA.33754 (2013/C) implemented by Spain for Real Madrid CF.

In its ruling the Court stated that "*The Commission could not classify the disputed measure as state aid*", as it did not "*sufficiently demonstrate that it conferred an advantage to the plaintiff*". Indeed, the judgement recalled that "*in order to verify whether the advantage could have been obtained under normal market conditions, the Commission is required to carry out a complete analysis of all*

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factors that are relevant to the transaction at issue and its context” before concluding that “the Commission did not take into consideration all the aspects of the transaction at issue and its context.”

Finally, the Court decided that the Commission did not provide enough evidences that the contested measure was illegal as “*the Commission has not proven to the requisite standard that the measure at issue conferred an advantage on the applicant*”.

This judgement can be linked to the decision taken by the General Court in February 2019 (see Monthly report from February) to annul the

Commission decision involving four Spanish clubs, including Real, but also Barcelona, Osasuna and Athletic Bilbao, to repay illegal state aid following the same arguments.

FURTHER INFORMATION

[General Court of the EU ruling on the Commission’s decision on State aid](#)

2019 #BeInclusive EU Sport Awards – Call for applicants open

The European Commission has published a call for applications for the 2019 #BeInclusive EU Sport Awards that will be open until 23 July 2019. Sport has many positive sides such as entertainment, healthy lifestyle and fun as well as it makes people physically and mentally stronger, promotes important values and eliminates barriers regardless of one’s social background. The #BeInclusive EU Sport Awards is created to celebrate the organisations that use the power of sport to increase social inclusion of disadvantaged groups.

Organisations that are working with disadvantaged groups which face challenging social circumstances are welcomed to come up with their initiatives to bring people together. Three winners will be announced in November and will receive €10 000. Other six preselected projects will receive €2 500 each.

The evaluation of the projects’ contribution to social inclusion through sport will be based on the following criteria:

- Relevance of the proposal;
- Quality of the proposal;
- Cost-benefit ratio and;

- Impact.

Applicants have to meet rules of contest, as well as sign privacy statement and the declaration of honour.

How to apply: As a very first step, applicants have to create the European Commission Authentication Service account, EU Login. Moreover, organisation applying should register on the Participant Portal and receive a Participant Identification Code. After these two steps are fulfilled, the applicant can submit application form.

It is good to note that even after the application submitted, applicant will be able to access, change and re-submit it any time until the application deadline of 23 July. The application process is clearly defined and supportive user manuals and guidelines are available.

FURTHER INFORMATION

[2019 #BeInclusive EU Sport Awards](#)

[Rules of contest](#)

[Participant Portal](#)

[EU Login](#)

FUNDING PROGRAMMES AND STUDIES

EU Funding opportunities for Sport beyond Erasmus + Sport

In the past two weeks, the European Commission has published three calls for proposals relevant for sport organisations under the so-called preparatory actions and pilot projects (PA/PP):

(1) [Sport as a tool for integration and social inclusion of refugees](#), (2) [Exchanges and mobility in sport](#), and (3) [Monitoring and coaching, through sports, of youngsters at risk of radicalization](#).

These calls provide a good opportunity for sport organisations to apply for an EU grant for their activities ranging from work with refugees, through social inclusion, to international-level cooperation including the exchange of coaches and staff.

Contrary to the Erasmus+ sport calls, which are run by the Executive Agency EACEA, the Sport Unit of the European Commission is responsible for these calls. The application process is considerably simplified compared to the Erasmus+ Programme, as is the partnership structure.

It's important to underline that only organisations based in one of the EU Member States are eligible to submit their project applications under these three calls.

Sport as a tool for integration and social inclusion of refugees – Lot 1: organisation of sport activities in order to promote integration and social inclusion of refugees.

- Deadline: 04/07/2019, maximum grant €300 000,
- Sport activities aimed at promoting participation of refugees into EU societies.
- Preparation and training of sport coaches and staff who will work on integration and social inclusion of refugees through sport.

- Development, of activities and identification of good practices about participation of refugees into sport activities.

Exchanges and mobility in sport - Promotion of the mobility of coaches and other staff of sport organisations (including volunteers, but excluding athletes)

- Deadline: 11/07/2019, maximum grant €200 000.
- In addition to the applicant based in an EU Member State, the projects must include participants from at least two partner organisations from at least 2 other EU Member States and at least 1 non-EU based organisation from (1) Western Balkans, (2) Eastern Partnership, (3) Asia, (4) Latin America or (5) Africa.
- Exchanges of coaches
- Placements
- Periods of trainings/study
- Job-shadowing

Monitoring and coaching, through sports, of youngsters at risk of radicalization - preventing radicalisation by helping youngsters at risk of exclusion and of radicalisation to better integrate in the society in which they are living.

- Deadline: 23/07/2019, maximum grant €350 000.
- Projects must be led by sport organisations, in particular umbrella sport organisations. They must involve national, regional or local members of these sport organisations.

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- Development of sport and physical activities for people at risk of radicalization
- Development of networks at EU level
- Organisation of workshops, seminars and conferences
- Development, identification, promotion and sharing of activities and good practices

The PA/PP mechanism serves as a laboratory for the EU institutions to formulate political priorities and introduce new initiatives that may turn into standing EU programmes. This way the EU can

test the implementation of various activities without having a legal act (e.g. regulation establishing a funding programme such as the Erasmus +) adopted prior to the budgetary decision.

FURTHER INFORMATION

[Sport as a tool for integration and social inclusion of refugees](#)

[Exchanges and mobility in sport](#)

[Monitoring and coaching, through sports, of youngsters at risk of radicalization](#)

Sport Events on the agenda of the EU Green Week

The EU has been organising “Weeks” dedicated to various topics for a number of years. While the mobility week has been well established in the Member State’s agenda for a number of years and while the European Week of Sport has well developed since 2015, the annual [EU Green Week](#) takes a global view on the protection of the environment and the role of the EU therein.

The 2019 edition (13-17 May), which kicked off with an opening event in Warsaw and closed with the end of the Green Week conference in Brussels, was dedicated to the EU environmental legislation and the importance of its proper implementation.

For the first time in its history, sport has made it to the agenda of the Week. Featuring 25 environmental sessions and events, the High-Level EU Green Week Concurrence, which took place in Brussels, welcomed a panel entitled “[How to TACKLE the environmental impacts of football and other sporting events](#)”. Organised in collaboration with Association of Cities and Regions for sustainable Resource management (ACR+) and UEFA, the session aimed “at encouraging the already growing debate on improving the environmental management of sport events and raising supporters’ level of awareness

towards sustainability.” The event served also as an introduction to the new project [LIFE TACKLE](#). Coordinated by the Italian Scuola Superiore Sant’Anna, co-financed by EU Life Programme, and supported by UEFA, the project aims at improving the environmental management of football matches and the overall level of awareness and attention towards environmental issues in the football sector.

The session had a kick off with a couple of presentations among which Antonio Ortega Gallart’s of RealBétis Balompie, who talked about his club’s “greening” activities. These include, for example, the production of renewable training shirts, reconstruction of the club’s stadium to make its operation more energy-efficient, as well as general sourcing and work with sponsors.

The opening presentations were followed by a lively panel discussion focused on the environmental impact of football events, challenges to managing sustainability, best practices and ideas for future events. The ability to unite all stakeholders, changing people’s mindset and finding the ways to manage older infrastructure were signalled out as the main challenges to be addressed.

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EURO 2020 was discussed as an example of how some of these challenges could be overcome in practice. Patrick Gasser, Head of UEFA Football & Social Responsibility Unit, and Florin Sari, Romanian FA's Good Governance & Social Responsibility Manager, outlined concrete measures that are put in place to encourage the staging of truly sustainable events in all possible ways, starting with the social responsibility chapter during the bidding process, all the way up to the post-event activities.

In his conclusion remarks, Tiberio Daddi, Assistant Professor at the Scuola Superiore Sant'Anne Pisa and Manager of the Life Tackle project, stressed the importance of the "role model" potential of football clubs and players (and of organised sport in general) by noting that football can be a true *"megaphone on environmental awareness and issues for a huge number of people."*

FURTHER INFORMATION

[Recording of the session](#)

INTERNAL AND VISITS

Third educational seminar of the POINTS project in Lisbon



With the support of the Comité Olímpico de Portugal the POINTS project organised on 21 to 23 May the final session of its educational programme for Single Points of Contact for Integrity (SPOCs) in Lisbon. The third educational seminar gathered 25 participants from 16 partner organisations. The main objective of the seminar was to provide skills and competences needed for the SPOCs to fulfil their respective tasks and to prepare future activities.

Furthermore, the participants discussed their expectations regarding their future position as a SPOC and received tools and practical advices on potential ways to handle their responsibilities. The seminar was also the last opportunity for the full group to exchange before the first national workshops will start in September 2019.

João Paulo Almeida, Director General of the Comité Olímpico de Portugal and Folker Hellmund, Director of the EOC EU Office, welcomed the participants by recalling the importance of the POINTS initiative. Both emphasized the relevance of the Council of Europe Convention on the Manipulation of Sport Competitions, which will enter into force on 1 September 2019, for the POINTS project.

The first day was dedicated to the cooperation of the SPOCs with international stakeholders. Following a short discussion on the relations with

the Council of Europe, Friedrich Martens and Jonne Silonsaari from the IOC Unit on the Prevention of the Manipulation of Competitions (OM Unit PMC) underlined their intention to organise cooperation activities between the interested SPOCs and the IOC. These activities would include a support for education and rules implementation in the field of Manipulations of Competitions.

Then, the participants discussed the creation of a European network gathering interested SPOCs from the partner organisations. To shape the discussion Leigh Thompson, from Sport and Recreation Alliance, presented concrete elements and activities of the UK Sports Betting Group. The project management and the interested partners will further explore the different options in the upcoming months.

The second day focused on practical skills which can support the activities of the SPOCs with a mix of presentations, practical exercises and good practice examples. The day started with a session on reporting activities and mechanisms. Ronan O'Laoire from UNODC and Pim Verschuuren from University of Lausanne made a presentation on the detection of corruption in sport and linked it to whistleblowing and reporting. They underlined several aspects such as the necessity to protect whistleblowers, the question of confidentiality as well as the steps to build strong reporting mechanism and policy. To conclude this session, Miriam Reijnen from NOC*NSF explained the impressive system in the Netherlands, within the Center for Safe Sport.

The afternoon session was dedicated to communication, risk assessment and compliance. Britta Warner, from Warner Communicatons, shared insights of their long experience in the field of sport communication and gave several tips and

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advice to handle crisis communication and to improve SPOCs' communication with the different departments of the organisation. The day was concluded by two good practice examples on risk assessment and compliance from Ricardo Andorinho, Chief Financial Officer of the Portuguese Handball Association and Marco Befera, CONI.

Three more activities were conducted during the final day of the seminar. The session started with a presentation made by Valentin Capelli, POINTS Project Manager, of the next activity to be organised by the SPOCs: the national strategic workshops. Then, Heidi Pekkola, Deputy Director of the EOC EU Office, conducted a group simulation with three cases dealing with the topic of harassment and abuse. The objective of the

simulation was to enable participants to use all tools presented in the previous sessions.

The final part of the meeting was dedicated to an assessment of the educational programme made by Aurélien Favre from European Observatory for Sport and Employment.

The EOC EU Office would like to thank all participants for their commitment to the project as well as all speakers for their inspiring contributions. The POINTS project will continue with the organisation of 14 national workshops in the upcoming months before a final conference will take place at the end of 2020 in Brussels.

European Games Minsk 2019: A continental celebration of sport and friendship

The second edition of the European Games, the only pan-European multi-sport event directly aligned to the Olympic Games, will take place from 21-30 June in the Belarusian capital of Minsk.

With an array of world-class venues at its disposal and an army of over 8,000 eager volunteers, Minsk is well prepared to host the Games, which will be the largest event ever staged in the country.

Together with the local organisers, the European Olympic Committees (EOC) aim to deliver an exceptional and sustainable event that celebrates the continent's best athletes. Another important goal is to build a bridge between Belarus and the rest of Europe, opening up the country to its continental counterparts and vice versa.

"We are trying hard to create a multi-sport event that will be second only to the Olympic Games," said EOC President Kocijančič. "We are at the last stage of preparations for Minsk 2019 and I can tell you that we are very satisfied and are looking

forward to an excellent Games that will be good for Belarus and good for Europe as a whole."

Upwards of 4,000 athletes from all 50 European National Olympic Committees will compete in 15 sports at the European Games: 3x3 basketball, archery, athletics, badminton, beach soccer, boxing, canoe sprint, cycling, gymnastics, judo, karate, sambo, shooting, table tennis and wrestling.

The Games will be a crucial milestone for athletes, officials, National Olympic Committees and sports federations on the road to the Olympic Games, with eight of the 15 sports acting as qualifiers for Tokyo 2020.

European Athletics is using Minsk 2019 to officially launch Dynamic New Athletics (DNA), a new competition comprised of nine athletics events taking place immediately after the previous has finished. The two-hour, head-to-head format concludes with The Hunt, a distance medley relay race with a time-staggered start based on the points accumulated across the other events.

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Judo and boxing, meanwhile, will use the European Games as their European Championships for 2019.

Minsk 2019 will be a sustainable Games, with 11 of the 12 sporting venues being existing facilities. All 12 sporting venues are located within 30 minutes' drive from the Athletes' Village, ensuring athletes can easily travel to training and competition facilities.

"Minsk is ready to host the Games," said Spyros Capralos, Coordination Commission Chair for Minsk 2019, who added that the Athletes' Village is one of the best he had ever seen. "You can really feel the enthusiasm of the local people and the volunteers, who are ready to offer their services for the success of these Games. These European Games will be a big success."

In preparation for the influx of foreign visitors, the government of Belarus is allowing visa-free travel for up to 30 days for the Games while also ensuring easier border crossings and the waving of road tolls for athletes and guests to the Games.

In addition, the European Olympic Committees (EOC) have received assurances from the highest level of government that media freedom for local and foreign journalists during the Games will be guaranteed in keeping with the Host City Contract.

Other positive developments include an agreement to make all European Games venues, including partner hotels, smoke-free, while an MoU with UNICEF has also been signed to provide children with equal access to education and sport.

The Games are expected to have a positive cultural and socioeconomic impact on Minsk and Belarus, with a boost in tourism and awareness already being seen. Belarus was recently named by Lonely Planet as one of the top 10 destinations globally to travel to in 2019. First-time visitors to Minsk are often struck by how beautiful, modern and clean the city is, in addition to the friendliness of the people who live there.

Minsk 2019 will be broadcast in up to 160 territories worldwide, with a global reach of more than 500 million potential viewers. In addition, an agreement with the Olympic Channel is expected to be signed soon, which would bring the total worldwide coverage to nearly 200 countries.

Background

The European Games were first proposed in 1967 at the first General Assembly of the European National Olympic Committees, some eight years before the official establishment of the EOC. It wasn't until 43 years later, in 2015, that the first edition of the European Games was staged.

The rationale behind starting the European Games in 2015 was to maintain Europe's preeminent role in world sport, both in the athletic sense and as the leader in sport innovation and technologies. Europe is the birthplace of both the Ancient Olympic Games and modern Olympic Games, as well as the vast majority of Olympic and leading global sports. In addition, European athletes routinely win between 45 and 50 percent of the Olympic medals at Summer Olympic Games and over 70 percent at Winter Olympic Games.

The challenge for sport in Europe and in particular for NOCs is to be less reliant on government money. The European Games aim to help in this regard by raising the profile of Olympic sports and each of the 50 European NOCs. The Games should lead to more sponsorship and broadcasting opportunities both in Europe and globally.

The first European Games were held in 2015 in Baku, Azerbaijan. It was recently announced that Krakow, Poland is expected to become the Host City of the 3rd edition in 2023, subject to a vote by the EOC General Assembly later this month.

PARTNERS' CORNER

EOC Seminar discusses the safeguarding of the European Sport Model

The annual seminar of the European Olympic Committees was organised on 18-19 May 2019 in Vienna, Austria. Besides the presentations on the European Games, Olympic Games and European Youth Olympic Festivals, the Seminar featured some interesting policy discussions in an interactive format. High-level panellists debated the following topics: European Model of Sport and its Value for Civil Society and Social Integration; Working towards a Gender Balanced Future; High Performance and New Technologies in European Sport; the Future of Commercialisation in Sport; the EU funding for sport and the Growth of Urban Sports.

In the first panel on the European Model of Sport, EOC President Janez Kocijancic, ASOIF President Francesco Ricci Bitti and IOC Deputy Director General Pere Miró all stressed the specific nature of the European Model of Sport as it is value-based and an important part of the civil society. "All antitrust cases, which are threatening the European Model of Sport, are touching the professional sport. But sport in Europe is much more than this. We need to explain better the link to grassroots sport and the important work we are doing for the development of sport in Europe" highlighted Ricci Bitti referring to the role of organised sport in Europe.

In the second panel on the European Model of Sport, which focused on its value for civil society and social integration, EOC Vice-President Niels Nygaard reminded the audience that the discussion on the European Model of Sport is not only a European issue: "It's an international issue. The IOC and all NOCs operate under our

European Sport Model. What we are doing here in Europe is therefore very important globally."

As the role of sport as part of civil society in Europe is so crucial, the discussions on the European Model of Sport will continue actively in future as well. The European Commission is expected to organise a seminar on the specificity of sport still this year. Furthermore, the European Model of Sport will be also the main topic of the next European Evening of Sport of the EOC EU Office, which.

Overview on the EU funding opportunities provided for the NOCs

On the second day, an overview on the EU funding opportunities was provided to the 50 NOCs of Europe by Folker Hellmund, Director of the EOC EU Office. In his presentation, he covered the Erasmus+ Sport Chapter, the recently published Pilot Calls and also spoke about the funding opportunities for non-EU countries. Furthermore, he announced that the EOC EU Office will organise a funding seminar for all 50 NOCs in Brussels in September.

The EOC EU Office encourages the NOCs and its partners to actively get involved in the EU-financed projects and to consider applying EU funding and is at their disposal for any inquires.

FURTHER INFORMATION

[40th EOC Seminar Comes to a Close in Vienna](#)

The House of European Sport

NEXT MONTH

04-05 June	IOC Marketing Seminar, Budapest
05-06 June	13th joint meeting of the EPAS Governing Board and Consultative Committee, Strasbourg
19 June	EOC EU Office Annual Partner Meeting, Brussels
21-30 June	European Games, Minsk