Council of Europe Convention on an integrated safety, security, and service approach at football matches and other sports events (CETS No 218): authorising Member States to become party

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PURPOSE: to authorise Member States to become party, in the interest of the European Union, to the Council of Europe Convention on an integrated safety, security, and service approach at football matches and other sports events (CETS n°218).

PROPOSED ACT: Council Decision.

ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: Council may adopt the act only if Parliament has given its consent to the act.

BACKGROUND: the Convention on an integrated safety, security, and service approach at football matches and other sports of the Council of Europe has been open for signature and ratification since 3 July 2016.

It aims to **provide a safe, secure and welcoming environment at football matches and other sports events**.

The Commission considers that Union support to the Convention is important for combating violence related to sport events and would complement the efforts already made in this field through support to projects under the sport chapter of the Erasmus+ programme.

Given that the Union cannot become party to the Convention, it is necessary to adopt a decision authorising Member States to sign and ratify the Convention in the interests of the Union.

CONTENT: by the present proposal for a Council Decision, **Member States shall be authorised to become Parties to the Council of Europe Convention** on an integrated safety, security, and service approach at football matches and other sports events (CETS No 218) in respect of those parts falling under the exclusive competence of the Union.

The United Kingdom and Ireland shall participate in the adoption of the Decision. Denmark shall not.

The Convention requires the Parties to:

- adopt an integrated, **multi-agency and balanced approach towards safety, security and service**, that is to say, an approach based on the notion that safety, security and service measures at football matches and other sports events invariably overlap, are interrelated in terms of impact, need to be balanced and cannot be designed or implemented in isolation;
- ensure **national and local co-ordination arrangements** for the purpose of developing and implementing a multi-agency integrated approach to safety, security and service;

- take various measures with a view to ensuring **safety, security and service inside sports stadiums**; for example, they must ensure that stadiums' operating arrangements make provision for effective liaison with the police and with emergency services and other partner agencies, and incorporate policies and procedures on matters such as racist or discriminatory behaviour;
- encourage **all relevant agencies and stakeholders to work together** to create a safe, secure and welcoming environment in public places outside stadiums and ensure that relevant agencies develop contingency and emergency plans;
- ensure that **policing strategies** are developed, regularly evaluated and refined, which take account of good practices and that the police work in partnership with relevant stakeholders;
- take all possible measures to **reduce the risk of incidents** of violence and disorder and to ensure, in accordance with national and international law, that effective exclusion arrangements, appropriate to the character and location of risk are in place to deter and prevent such incidents;
- co-operate in seeking to ensure that individuals committing offences abroad receive **appropriate sanctions** and to consider empowering the judicial or administrative authorities responsible to impose sanctions on individuals who have caused or contributed to incidents of football-related violence and/or disorder, with the possibility of imposing **restrictions on travel** to football events held in another country.

Lastly, the Convention requires each Member State to set up or designate a **national football information point** of a police nature (NFIPs), which shall act as the direct, central contact point for exchanging relevant information and for facilitating international police cooperation in connection with football matches with an international dimension.