Challenges of sport events' organisers in the digital environment

2020/2073(INL) - 19/05/2021 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 479 votes to 179, with 40 abstentions, a resolution with recommendations to the Commission on challenges of sports events organisers in the digital environment.

Members recalled that sport plays a key role in the social, cultural and economic prosperity of the EU and promotes common values of solidarity, diversity and social inclusion, making a significant contribution to the economy and social development. They considered that the revenue generated by the organisation of sports events should contribute to a larger extent to the financing of sport activities that are beneficial to society. Part of this revenue should be directed towards the development of amateur sports, disabled sports and sports with less media coverage.

Parliament asked the Commission to submit without delay, on the basis of Article 114 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and after carrying out the necessary impact assessments, **a proposal for legislative acts**, following the recommendations below:

- improve the current EU legal framework for the **enforcement of intellectual property rights** in relation to live sports events and to enhance the effectiveness of this framework, taking into account the specific nature of sports events and, in particular, their short-term value, building on best practice in the Member States;

- establishing a common EU quality and technical reliability standard for software tools deployed by rightholders, intermediaries and other service providers, in order to identify illegal broadcasting of live sports events with a view to creating a certification scheme for '**trusted flaggers**';

- tackle online piracy of 'live' sports events by clarifying existing legislation to ensure the **immediate removal** of content of live sports events illegally streamed online: in any case, removal should take place at the latest within 30 minutes of receipt of notification of the existence of illegal broadcasts from the rights holders or from a certified trusted flagger;

- require intermediaries, in future legislation on digital services, to put in place effective **know-your-business-customer obligations** to prevent their services from being misused to facilitate illegal streaming of sports events;

- provide that notifications issued by certified trusted flaggers are deemed to be accurate and reliable, and as a consequence, illegal online live sports event content notified by a certified trusted flagger should be immediately removed or access to it disabled, without prejudice to the implementation of complaint and redress mechanisms;

- allow the use of **blocking injunctions** that run during the entire live broadcast of a sports event, but are limited to the duration of the live broadcast, thus blocking the infringing website only for the duration of the event; such injunctions should be temporary;

- introduce the possibility for the competent judicial or administrative authority to issue injunctions to require the real-time removal of, or blocking of access to, illegal live online sports content;

- clarify that the **responsibility** for illegal broadcasting of sports events does not lie with fans or consumers.