Sport: safeguarding current structures, maintening social function. Helsinki report

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The committee adopted the report by Pietro-Paolo MENNEA (ELDR, I), on safeguarding current sports structures and maintaining the social function of sport within the Community framework. The committee stressed that sport was an ideal platform for social cohesion and democracy. It called for encouragement to be given to the establishment of sporting associations intended to support amateur sport and show solidarity with the less- advantaged sections of society, and called on the IGC to incorporate an explicit reference to sport in Article 151 of the Treaty so that the EU could recognise the cultural, economic and social phenomenon that sport represents. The committee also agreed that the subjects of vocational training and qualifications for sportsmen and women should be included in the Socrates and Leonardo programmes and that support should be given to the reintegration of sportsmen and women in the labour market at the end of their sporting careers. These programmes should also include education and vocational training to complement the sports training undergone by young athletes. In addition, the committee called on the Commission to draft a report on the position of sports education on the school curricula of the Member States and said that, since sport had a positive impact on health, the Commission should take it into account in the context of a Community health policy. It also said that particular attention should be paid to the funding and promotion of sport for the disabled under Community programmes. To improve the situation of women, the committee called on sports organisations to strengthen women's role in the decision-making process and develop gender equality plans for their members.