

European Year of Education through Sport EYES 2004

2001/0244(COD) - 17/04/2002

The committee adopted the report by Doris PACK (EPP-ED, D) broadly approving the proposal under the codecision procedure (1st reading), subject to a number of amendments. Some of these were aimed at improving and clarifying the text, which the committee felt had been poorly drafted. The committee's changes emphasised the educational potential of sport, in particular for the purposes of integration, peace and cooperation and combating xenophobia, as well as its role in encouraging physical activity by all age groups. They also placed extra weight on the involvement of disadvantaged young people and people with disabilities in the proposed measures. For young people practising competitive sports, MEPs wanted more flexible arrangements to enable them to continue or complete their education. They also stressed that sport and voluntary activities provide a parallel informal education which benefits all concerned. Although the committee endorsed the Commission's proposed budget of EUR 11.5m, it said the budgetary authority should decide how it is allocated between the years 2003 and 2004. The report also called for the funding set aside by the Commission to carry out surveys and studies to be used instead to fund a schools athletics competition in the Member States, the national winners of which would be able to go to the Athens Olympic Games. Lastly, the committee wished to ensure that sport benefited permanently from the attention it would receive in 2004, and proposed the setting-up of networks to promote the educational value of sport as well as on-line databases on the integration of sport into the education systems of the Member States, to promote exchanges of best practice.