

Basic information	
2007/2261(INI) INI - Own-initiative procedure	Procedure completed
White Paper on sport	
Subject 4.10.13 Sport	

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible		Rapporteur
	CULT Culture and Education		MAVROMMATIS Manolis (PPE-DE)
	Committee for opinion		Appointed
	ECON Economic and Monetary Affairs		RYAN Eoin (UEN)
	EMPL Employment and Social Affairs		BOZKURT Emine (PSE)
	ENVI Environment, Public Health and Food Safety		The committee decided not to give an opinion.
	IMCO Internal Market and Consumer Protection		MANDERS Antonius (ALDE)
	REGI Regional Development		GALEOTE Gerardo (PPE-DE)
	JURI Legal Affairs		GILL Neena (PSE)
	LIBE Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs		DE LANGE Esther (PPE-DE)
European Commission	FEMM Women's Rights and Gender Equality		LOCATELLI Pia Elda (PSE)
	Commission DG		Commissioner
	Education, Youth, Sport and Culture		FIGEL' Ján

Key events			
Date	Event	Reference	Summary
11/07/2007	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(2007)0391 	Summary
29/11/2007	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
01/04/2008	Vote in committee		Summary
14/04/2008	Committee report tabled for plenary	A6-0149/2008	
08/05/2008	Decision by Parliament	T6-0198/2008	Summary
08/05/2008	Results of vote in Parliament		
08/05/2008	Debate in Parliament		
08/05/2008	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2007/2261(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Initiative
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 55
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	CULT/6/55895

Documentation gateway				
European Parliament				
Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee draft report		PE398.399	26/11/2007	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE400.553	15/02/2008	
Committee opinion		PE398.653	27/02/2008	
Committee opinion		PE400.386	29/02/2008	
Committee opinion		PE398.681	07/03/2008	
Committee opinion		PE400.484	27/03/2008	
Committee opinion		PE400.541	27/03/2008	
Committee opinion		PE400.666	27/03/2008	
Committee opinion		PE402.497	27/03/2008	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A6-0149/2008	14/04/2008	

Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T6-0198/2008	08/05/2008	Summary
European Commission				
Document type	Reference	Date	Summary	
Non-legislative basic document	COM(2007)0391 	11/07/2007	Summary	
Document attached to the procedure	SEC(2007)0932 	11/07/2007		
Document attached to the procedure	SEC(2007)0934 	11/07/2007		
Document attached to the procedure	SEC(2007)0935 	11/07/2007		
Document attached to the procedure	SEC(2007)0936 	11/07/2007		

White Paper on sport

2007/2261(INI) - 11/07/2007 - Non-legislative basic document

PURPOSE: to give strategic orientation on the role of sport in Europe, to encourage debate on specific problems, to enhance the visibility of sport in EU policy-making and to raise public awareness of the needs and specificities of the sector.

BACKGROUND: sport is a growing social and economic phenomenon which makes an important contribution to the European Union's strategic objectives of solidarity and prosperity. It promotes the active contribution of EU citizens to society and thereby helps to foster active citizenship. However, sport is also confronted with new threats and challenges which have emerged in European society, such as commercial pressure, exploitation of young players, doping, racism, violence, corruption and money laundering.

CONTENT: this White Paper focuses on the societal role of sport, its economic dimension and its organisation in Europe, and on the follow-up that will be given to this initiative.

Societal role: sport is an area of human activity that greatly interests citizens of the European Union and has enormous potential for bringing them together, reaching out to all, regardless of age or social origin. It encapsulates the following social issues:

- enhancing public health;
- fighting against doping;
- enhancing the role of sport in education and training;
- promoting volunteering and active citizenship;
- promoting social inclusion, integration and equal opportunities;
- combating racism and violence;
- sharing values with other parts of the world;
- supporting sustainable development.

The Commission supports a wide range of initiatives and proposals concerning these issues, including the development of new physical activity guidelines, anti-doping partnerships and the promotion of dialogue for combating racist and xenophobic attitudes in sport, among others.

Economic dimension: Sport is a dynamic and fast-growing sector with an underestimated macro-economic impact, and can contribute to the Lisbon objectives of growth and job creation. It can serve as a tool for local and regional development, urban regeneration or rural development. On the other hand, notwithstanding the overall economic importance of sport, the vast majority of sporting activities take place in non-profit structures, many of which depend on public support to provide access to sporting activities to all citizens.

Sport organisations have many sources of income, including ticket sales, advertising, sponsorship and media rights, for example. However, some sport organisations have considerably better access to resources from business operators than others. In grassroots sport, equal opportunities and open access to sporting activities can only be guaranteed through strong public involvement. The Commission understands the importance of public support for grassroots sport and sport for all, and is in favour of such support provided it is granted in accordance with Community law.

Organisation of sport: The political debate on sport in Europe often attributes considerable importance to the so-called "European Sport Model". The Commission considers that certain values and traditions of European sport should be promoted. In view of the diversity and complexities of European sport structures it considers, however, that it is unrealistic to try to define a unified model of organisation of sport in Europe. Sport activity is subject to

the application of EU law but also has certain specific characteristics, notably in terms of rules and structure. This specificity of sport has been recognised by European courts and the Commission.

There are many challenges to be faced in sport, including combating discrimination, promoting the free movement of EU citizens, protecting minors from exploitation and fighting corruption and money-laundering activities. The Commission is committed to achieving these objectives.

Follow-up: The Commission will follow up on the initiatives presented in this White Paper through the implementation of a structured dialogue with sport stakeholders, cooperation with the Member States, and the promotion of social dialogue in the sport sector.

The White Paper contains a number of actions to be implemented or supported by the Commission. Together, these actions form the **"Pierre de Coubertin" Action Plan** which will guide the Commission in its sport-related activities during the coming years.

White Paper on sport

2007/2261(INI) - 08/05/2008 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted, by 518 votes to 49 with 9 abstentions, a resolution welcoming the Commission's White Paper on Sport which was significantly amended in plenary.

The own-initiative report had been tabled for consideration in plenary by Manolis **MAVROMMATIS** (EPP-ED, EL) on behalf of the Committee on Culture and Education. MEPs recall the importance of sport in society, bearing in mind that it generated an added value of EUR 407 billion in 2004 (3.7% of EU GDP) and employment for 15 million people (5.4% of the labour force).

Parliament welcomes the fact that Member States recognised sport officially in the Lisbon Treaty, enabling the Commission to promote and complement – but not to regulate – the actions of Member States and sports organisations. The complementary competences relating to sport contained in Article 149 of the EC Treaty as amended by the Lisbon Treaty should be exercised by the Commission with regard to the principle of subsidiarity, respecting the autonomy of sports organisations and the relevant governing bodies, and with due regard to the specificity of sport. Parliament asks the Commission to have due respect for the specificity of sports, by not taking a case-by-case approach. The Commission is asked to provide more legal certainty by creating clear guidelines on the applicability of European law to sports in Europe and by supporting studies and seminars on the concrete application of the 'acquis communautaire' on sport.

Parliament agrees that most challenges can be addressed through self-regulation in line with good governance principles, provided that EU law is respected. It acknowledges the roles of the principal actors in professional team-sports, i.e. the clubs as the basic unit, employing players and providing the main link with supporters; players' unions as representatives of the employees; leagues, as the competent organisers at national level and employers' representatives, together with the clubs; and the governing bodies as the guardians of the sport and the rules of the game; with all four elements working to achieve good health, integrity and solidarity within sport. It takes the view that a sports body is free to govern its sport where its rules are purely sporting ones, but where they involve restrictions, these must be proportionate, that is, reasonably necessary to achieve their sporting objective(s), within the framework of EU law. Owing to the large-scale movement of capital in the context of transfers, financial transactions should be conducted openly and transparently between all parties involved and, depending on the sport, the system should be run by the relevant governing body. The resolution asks Member States and sports governing bodies to support the creation of supporters' federations and promote their involvement in the management and administration of games. Parliament encourages the Commission to promote the implementation of self-regulatory licensing systems at national and European level.

Doping: MEPs request Member States to agree on a common legislative approach towards doping and to define common positions in relation to WADA, UNESCO and the Council of Europe. In particular, MEPs call on Member States to treat the trade in illegal doping substances in the same manner as the trade in illicit drugs and to combat doping by avoiding excessively busy schedules that put pressure on athletes. They recommend checks, increased research and testing, long-term monitoring by independent doctors and measures focusing on prevention and training of athletes. MEPs call for an action plan on the fight against doping, in the run-up to the London 2012 Olympics. Member States are asked to ensure more comprehensive information and education for young sports competitors regarding performance-enhancing drugs, prescriptions which may contain them and their effect on health.

Education, young people and health: stressing the role of sport in transmitting the fundamental values of tolerance, honesty and respect for the rules of fair play, MEPs insist on the concrete benefits of sport in terms of health and the fight against obesity. They welcome the Commission proposal regarding the award of a European prize to schools actively supporting physical exercise as part of the curriculum. Parliament recommends that Member States recognise the need to provide "dual career" sporting and academic training for young sportsmen and sportswomen, from the outset, in order to ensure that professional sportsmen and sportswomen can reintegrate into the labour market at the end of their careers. The Commission is asked to recognise the legality of measures favouring the promotion of players who have come through training schemes, such as a minimum number of locally-trained players, irrespective of their nationality, on the professional staff. Parliament calls on the Commission to encourage measures by sports organisations to protect young sportsmen and sportswomen, with due respect for the specificity of sport, by openly expressing itself in favour of stricter application of the FIFA regulations banning transfers of players aged under 16 within the EU and endorsing the principle that players should sign their first professional contract with the club which has trained them.

Social inclusion and anti-discrimination: sport is one of the most effective tools for social integration and should be promoted by the EU to a greater extent, e.g. through special programmes for organisers of European, national and local sporting and recreational events. These opportunities should be extended, in particular, to organisers of sporting events that promote integration and involve disabled people. Within the context of the 2008 European Year of Intercultural Dialogue, particular attention must be given to the role of sport as the ultimate arena for intercultural co-existence and a cornerstone for dialogue with third countries. Parliament calls on professional sports organisations and sports clubs to launch campaigns to tackle all

forms of discrimination, racism and xenophobia before, during and after sporting activities by participants and spectators, both inside and outside stadiums. It regrets that the gender aspect is not adequately taken into account in the White Paper, especially regarding equal pay for equal value and the fact that female athletes earn less than their male counterparts.

Policing of sports events: Parliament calls on Member States to encourage the exchange of best practices and of operational information on risk-supporters between police services, supporter initiatives, local anti-violence groups and experts and the sports authorities. All parties concerned must play an active role, eliciting immediate and more stringent sanctions against racism and violence.

Economic aspects: MEPs call for legislation and/or the strengthening of existing regulations on intellectual property rights relating to commercial communications, trademarks and images, names, media rights and any other spin-offs from the sporting events organisers are running, so as to protect the professional sport economy, while respecting the right of "short reporting" as stipulated by Directive 2007/65/EC ('Audiovisual Media Services' Directive). In particular, problems of ambush marketing, internet piracy and unlawful sports betting should be addressed as a priority by Member States and the Commission. Parliament repeats its support for Member States drawing up a list of events of major importance to the public that should be on free-to-air television under Article 3a of the Audiovisual Media Services Directive and it condemns FIFA's court actions in this respect. Parliament voices its concern at a possible deregulation of the market in gambling and lotteries. It calls on the Commission and the Member States to adopt regulatory measures which ensure that sport is protected from any improper influence relating to betting, and to carry out a study of the potential effects of full deregulation of the market in gambling and lotteries, and of what types of control mechanisms could be used to protect consumers.

Employment of sports people: professional athletes should have as broad a range of rights as other workers, including the right to enter or refuse to enter into collective agreements and membership of professional trade unions and to have recourse to ordinary courts of law. Member States and sports associations are asked not to introduce new rules that create direct discrimination based on nationality (such as the 6 + 5 rule proposed by FIFA, in contrast to UEFA's more proportionate and non-discriminatory home-grown player scheme). The Commission is asked to support the efforts of sports governing bodies to regulate players' agents, if necessary by presenting a proposal for a directive concerning players' agents.

EU sport funding: lastly, Parliament requests a special budget line for preparatory actions in the field of sport under the 2009 budget. Since Article 149 of the EC Treaty as amended by the Lisbon Treaty, provides for incentive measures in the area of sport and since a specific EU funding programme on sport would not be operational before 2011 – assuming the Lisbon Treaty is ratified by the 27 Member States – Parliament acknowledges the need to prepare the programme through preparatory actions as from 2009. It calls on the Commission to launch preparatory actions in the field of social inclusion and sport, focusing on projects with clear European added value. It urges the Commission to support projects that fulfil this aim, such as the Special Olympics Unified Sports initiative.