Basic information

2007/2086(INI) INI - Own-initiative procedure	Procedure completed
Role of sport in education **Subject** 4.10.13 Sport 4.40.01 European area for education, training and lifelong learning	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
CULT Culture and Education	SCHMITT Pál (PPE-DE)	23/01/2006

Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
EMPL Employment and Social Affairs	TZAMPAZI Evangelia (PSE)	18/01/2006
FEMM Women's Rights and Gender Equality	PRETS Christa (PSE)	27/04/2007

European Commission

Commission DG	Commissioner
Education, Youth, Sport and Culture	FIGEĽ Ján

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
22/12/2005	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(2005)0680	
26/04/2007	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
10/09/2007	Vote in committee		Summary
30/10/2007	Committee report tabled for plenary	A6-0415/2007	
12/11/2007	Debate in Parliament		
13/11/2007	Decision by Parliament	T6-0503/2007	Summary
13/11/2007	Results of vote in Parliament		
13/11/2007	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2007/2086(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/6/34551

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee draft report		PE390.450	06/06/2007	
Committee opinion	EMPL	PE386.722	08/06/2007	
Committee opinion	FEMM	PE388.660	27/06/2007	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE392.142	30/07/2007	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A6-0415/2007	30/10/2007	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T6-0503/2007	13/11/2007	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Follow-up document	COM(2005)0680	22/12/2005	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary	SP(2008)412	18/12/2007	

Role of sport in education

2007/2086(INI) - 13/11/2007 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 590 votes in favour to 56 against with 21 abstentions a resolution based on the own-initiative report drafted by Pál **SCHMITT** (EPP-ED, HU) reaffirming the EU's legitimate interest in sport, in particular its social and cultural aspects, as well as the educational and social values that sport transmitted such as self-discipline, challenging personal limitations, solidarity, healthy competition, respect for opponents, social inclusion, opposition to any form of discrimination, team spirit, tolerance, and fair play. Members stressed that, in our multicultural society, sport can and should be an integral part of formal and informal education. Studies had shown that regular physical activity improves mental and physical wellbeing, while having beneficial effect on learning abilities. They also stressed the significance of implementing the Amsterdam and Nice declarations, especially the specific characteristics of sport in Europe and its social function account of which should be taken when implementing common policies.

Accordingly, Parliament called on Member States to ensure that greater stress was placed on health development in school and preschool teaching programmes by **encouraging specific forms of physical activity** suitable for the latter age group and raising awareness within clubs and associations in order to ensure that children start physical activity at the earliest possible age and hence to guarantee PE status in accordance with the profile of the institution and the corresponding level of study.

Parliament pointed out that sport and physical activity could make an important contribution to **combating negative health trends** such as a sedentary life-style and obesity, and stressed the important role of sport for public health, especially in the fight against obesity that currently affected 21 million children in the EU. It urged Member States to carry out **information campaigns** aimed at children from a very early age and their parents on the need to adopt a healthy lifestyle, and engage in regular physical activity and on the health risks linked to an unhealthy diet. Parliament proposed that the work of the group of experts involved in the 'EU Platform on Diet, Physical Activity and Health' set up by the Commission be reinforced through the participation of PE educators and sport experts. Parliament welcomed the Commission White Paper on sport, and hoped that the issue of school physical education will form part of the 'Pierre de Coubertin' Action Plan. It recommended a series of measures to encourage physical activity.

Member States were called upon to:

- make PE compulsory in primary and secondary schools, and to accept the principle that the timetable should guarantee at least 3 PE lessons per week;
- promote body awareness and healthy development through a higher degree of integration between sport and academic subjects;
- modernise and improve their physical education policies, principally to ensure that a balance is struck between physical and intellectual activities in schools;
- invest in quality sports facilities and take appropriate measures to make sports premises and sports curricula at schools accessible to all students, with proper regard being paid to the needs of disabled students;
- ensure the teaching of PE at all levels, including primary school, by specialised PE instructors;
- in the spirit of the Bologna process, to step up convergence between training programmes for PE teachers at each school level;
- in cooperation with physical education colleges, to provide high-quality, all-round education, equipping athletes with all the necessary skills to enter the employment market or pursue their studies in higher education institutions and beyond;
- provide physical education teachers with training in the issue of gender by including this aspect in their curriculum. Members called for an end to the downgrading of the status of physical education as a subject and of the status of PE teachers;
- encourage the option of having either sports coeducation or single sex classes from secondary level onwards in order to encourage girls to try out sports traditionally practiced by men;
- carry out a study of quantitative and qualitative participation of girls and boys in sport within and outside schools and to provide the necessary resources to further expand the sports on offer and thereby increase the participation of girls in sports;
- ensure equality of opportunity by taking steps to put an end to any discrimination which might arise on the grounds of gender, religion or ethnic origin;
- promote cooperation, and improve the exchange of information and exchanges of best practice examples, between schools and out-of-school sports associations, local authorities, voluntary and civil society organisations which run sporting activities;
- actively support forms of physical activity which can be carried out by families, and to improve the dialogue between parents, PE teachers and sports associations;
- ensure that sports facilities are designed for easy access by disabled spectators and/or participants;
- pay particular attention to situations in which children’s talent is exploited with a view to success in sports competitions.

Parliament welcomed the inclusion of a direct and unambiguous reference to the social, cultural and economic value of sport, which forms the basis of the legal framework for future Community action, in the text of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, as set out in the draft **Treaty of Lisbon**. It proposed that the EU Public Health Programme pay more attention to raising awareness of the prominent role played by education, physical education and sport in the area of public health. The report welcomed the Commission's White Paper on 'A Strategy for Europe on Nutrition, Overweight and Obesity related health issues', which identified prevention, primarily by means of the promotion of exercise and an increase in the numbers of participants in sport, as a priority. (Please see INI/2006/2231). It also welcomed the achievements of the European Year of Education through Sport (EYES 2004), which stressed the role of sport in education and drew attention to the wide-ranging social role of sport. Parliament welcomed the decision of the International Olympic Committee to hold the Youth Olympic Games as of 2010, and felt that sports education and training, with a particular emphasis being placed on Olympic ideals, was an effective instrument for the social inclusion of disadvantaged groups and multicultural dialogue, and for the promotion of voluntary work. Sports education played an active part in counteracting discrimination, intolerance, racism, xenophobia and violence.

The Commission was called upon to undertake a series of measures, while taking full account of the subsidiarity principle:

- draw on the experiences of the “sports-minded schools” programme initiated by the Luxembourg Presidency and to devise, in cooperation with the Member States, a uniform set of criteria for the award of this label, as well as the conditions for a European sports prize to be awarded to acknowledge new initiatives;
- identify best practices in the fight against sexual harassment and abuse in sport;
- initiate multi-disciplinary research in the field of sport and PE, and to disseminate best practice. Basic principles should be defined for the pan-European survey on physical education policies and practices which the Council of Europe has defined as a priority;
- devise clear guidelines on rules for state support, setting out what type of state support is regarded as acceptable and necessary in the interest of successfully fulfilling the social, cultural, health protection and educational functions of sport;
- identify areas where EU action could provide added value with regard to action already taken by sports organisations and Member States authorities. The report considered that the open method of coordination was an appropriate way to achieve better cooperation at European level in the specific area of physical education policy and sport for all;
- EU structural funds should be used for the creation and development of school and other sports facilities in disadvantaged areas;
- building on the experiences of EYES 2004, in the framework of the Lifelong Learning, Youth and Europe for Citizens programmes, to devise new initiatives aimed at heightening the profile of the role played by sport and PE not only in education and culture point of view but also in terms of social integration and health protection;
- promote the European mobility of PE teachers and trainers, as part of the Lifelong Learning Programme.

Parliament applauded the work of volunteers in all sporting organisations and recognised that most of these organisations could not exist without volunteers. It recommended that 'credits' or some form of reward for voluntary service be put in place at European level in order to promote and give greater recognition to this work.

Lastly, and on the issue of **doping**, Parliament stressed that the use of performance-enhancing chemical substances was contrary to the values of sport as a social, cultural and educational activity. It called on Member States to ensure that PE teachers inform pupils about the physical and psychological dangers inherent in the use of doping substances.

Role of sport in education

2007/2086(INI) - 22/12/2005

PURPOSE: to report on the measures taken during the European Year of Education through Sport 2004 (EYES 2004) under Decision 291/2003/EC establishing the Year.

CONTENT: the Communication presents the Year's main achievements together with proposals for follow-up in the field of education through sport. The Commission Staff Working Paper attached to the Communication outlines the actions and activities implemented as part of EYES 2004. The Commission's reports and proposals are based on an independent evaluation.

It is recalled that EYES 2004 was launched to increase awareness on the potential of sport as a tool for education and social inclusion. The wider aim of the Year was to promote education through sport in formal and non-formal education and as a vehicle for social inclusion in order to develop knowledge and skills by encouraging cooperation between educational institutions and sport organisations. The more specific objectives of the Year included promoting voluntary activities, pupil mobility and exchanges through sport activities, the social inclusion of disadvantaged groups and the creation of a better balance between intellectual and physical activity in school life.

The **main results are as follows**:

- involvement of the 25 Member States and the 3 EFTA/EEA countries: Iceland, Lichtenstein and Norway;
- 167 projects co-financed, out of 1643 applications;
- 66 projects in the field of formal education: 22 on integration of sport in the school life, 21 promoting the educational value of mobility and exchanges, 17 using of sport to promote a healthier lifestyle and 6 on the education of young athletes taking part in competitive sports;
- in the field of non-formal learning, 60 projects using sport values in activities for young (47 projects) and adults (13 projects), 25 using sport to integrate socially disadvantaged groups, 12 on disability and 4 on non-formal learning through voluntary activities;
- 30 ceremonies (opening and closing EYES);
- representation at 12 international events such as Euro 2004 and the Olympic and Paralympic Games;
- 2 Eurobarometers.

The actions targeted political decision makers, teachers, pupils and students, managers of sports organisations, young people and deprived social groups. The active involvement of European civil society, in particular the Sport Movement, was decisive for the attainment of the objectives of the Year.

The Year provided an opportunity for cooperation and networking among the players which would not have existed without Community action. It mobilised thousands of organisations in Europe by fostering projects. It has created and developed lasting networks and often new partnerships between education and sport. EYES 2004 provided numerous examples of good practices which go beyond its networking achievements.

Its main impacts have been:

- a significant contribution to disseminating the educational values of sport;
- the fostering and increasing recognition of activities in the field of education through sport;
- a contribution to changing the attitudes of the European public in this area.

The initiative can therefore be said to have achieved its objectives.

However, its effects seem to have been more limited in other ways, for example in promoting sport as a vehicle for social inclusion of disadvantaged groups, encouraging a better balance between intellectual and physical activity in school life, and highlighting the positive contribution made by voluntary work and student mobility. Projects were indeed carried out in these fields, and some were truly innovative, but it cannot yet be said that they have had a sufficient effect.

Attitudes have changed concerning the need for better integration of sport in education, both formal and non-formal, and hence for networking and better cooperation between educational institutions and sport organisations. However, it cannot be taken for granted that these precepts will be put into practice. Further political support is required.

Follow up by the European Commission: having regard to the request for action expressed by the citizens during the Year, the Commission, within the limits of its competence and in full respect of the principle of subsidiarity and the autonomy of educational institutions and sport organisations, will ensure a follow-up to the EYES 2004 notably along the following lines:

- to carry out new studies, to organise further expert meetings and to launch new Eurobarometers in order to develop a better understanding and increased knowledge at EU level of the place of sport and physical activity in formal and non-formal education;

- to continue organising meetings with public authorities responsible for education and sport and enlarge them to stakeholders in both fields in order to raise awareness of the mutual benefits for the worlds of education and sport of closer collaboration;
- to intensify cooperation with the Sport Movement on the educational and social functions of the sport (e.g.: volunteering, participation in sport notably for women, fight against racism and xenophobia, education and protection of young athletes, etc.),
- to use the possibilities of financing projects on sporting activities in the frame of EU actions such as future European Yearsand the new EU programme “Integrated Life Long Learning” and to take advantage of the pedagogical value of sport in the exchanges of citizens through exploiting the synergies of sport, youth and citizens initiatives within the EU programme “Youth in Action” and “Citizens for Europe”;
- to improve the recognition of qualifications in sport related professions(e.g. through the inclusion of sport in the Common Quality Assurance Framework – a common reference framework designed to support the development and reform of the quality of Vocational Education and Training) and to facilitate mobility (e.g. by including sport in the field of application of the European Credit Transfer
- System for Vocational Education and Training) as this is an area with a high potential for job creation which can therefore contribute to social cohesion in Europe;
- to raise awareness of the importance of physical activity in reversing obesity trends by ensuring cooperation in the sport field at EU level and promoting involvement of the European educational and sport stakeholders in the EU Platform for Action on Diet, Physical Activity and Health.

The Commission invites the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions to recognise the impact and the positive results achieved by EYES 2004 and to take into account in their work the expectations raised during this Year.