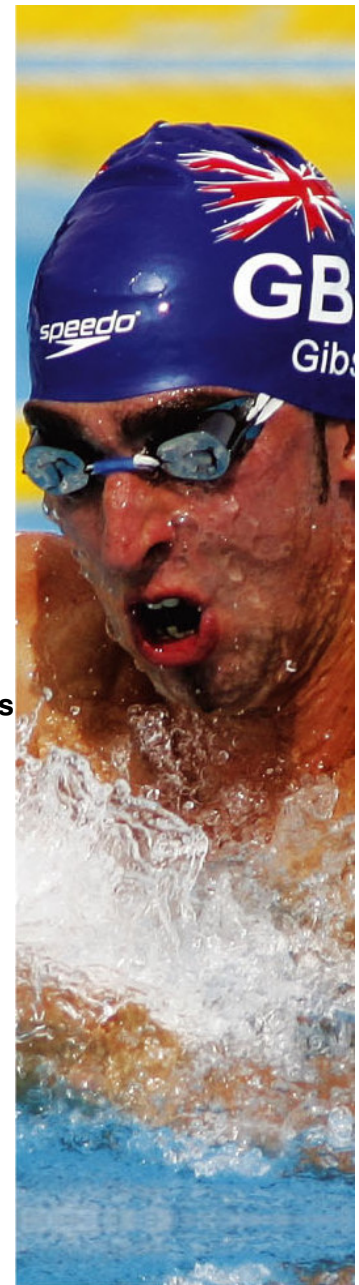


European Update

June 2008

EUROPEAN NEWS

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EUROPEAN NEWS

1. EU Treaty “not dead” despite Irish “No”

Ireland's rejection of the EU Treaty following the 12 June referendum has come as a bitter blow to the European Union and its plans for structural reform and rationalisation in the European institutions. The Commission accused the 'no' campaign of using issues outside the Treaty's remit, indeed using the very issues the Treaty was designed to address - effectiveness and accountability - against the 'yes' campaign. President Barroso believes the Treaty does address these issues saying: "When 18 member states ratified it, they did so because they believed Lisbon was a solution to these problems". Meanwhile the Commission and other member states have vowed to continue ratification of the Treaty, insisting that the Treaty is not dead. While publicly Barroso has clarified that "The opinion of Ireland counts as much as the opinion of France or Germany," stressing he was "strongly against any discrimination based on member states' size", Commission officials have told CCPR that the need to find a solution is very much in Ireland's court.

The suggestion is that the Commission is perhaps unwilling to have the 3 million people of Ireland dictating the future of 500 million Europeans. The irony that Ireland's economic prosperity has increased hugely due to its membership in the EU, rising from the 10th richest country in the European Union in 1997 in GDP per capita to second only to Luxembourg in 2008, is not lost on the European leaders (Eurostat 1997, 2008).

The European Treaty gives Europe a soft competence in sport for the first time. It is hoped that this will allow sport to be 'mainstreamed' into current funding streams and further protect sport in EU law.

2. Home grown player initiatives

In May, the European Commission announced its backing for UEFA's home grown players proposal. It stated that UEFA's system respected the principle of free movement of players and backed its legality.

UEFA's rules mean eight of the 25 man squad for European competitions must be home grown players - which are defined by UEFA as players who, regardless of their nationality or age, have been trained by their club or by another club in the national association for at least three years between the age of 15 and 21.

In contrast, Commissioner Špidla labelled FIFA's 6+5 proposal - where six players should be the same nationality as the club - as blatantly against EU law, stating that the European Commission would have no choice but to take infringement proceedings against any member state employing the rule.

Next steps for sports organisations: The statement does not represent a blanket approval of home grown player rules and is explicit in its comments that this approval is for the UEFA rule only. The Commission has discussed at length with CCPR the key criteria for such initiatives - namely necessity, proportionality and legitimacy - and CCPR is ready to aid sporting organisations in analysing the legality of their proposals, developing initiatives and instigating communications with the Commission.

The Commission's study on home grown players can be found at:
<http://www.ccpr.org.uk/ourcampaigning/europe/euconsultations/>

CCPR's analysis on home grown players at:
<http://www.ccpr.org.uk/ourcampaigning/europe/euconsultations/>

3. European budget line for sport in 2009

The White Paper on Sport highlighted twelve funding streams applicable to sport. However, as sport can only be used as a tool to meet the goals, the individual requirements can make sports projects inappropriate for these streams. While CCPR will continue to campaign for the 'mainstreaming' of sport projects within existing budget lines, there is also the option of new funding for sport. Regardless of the EU Treaty ratification, the European Commission plans to pilot sports projects in 2009. Negotiations for the budget are ongoing, but a minimum of €1.5m will be available for pilot projects (or 'preparatory actions' in European terms) in 2009. Project streams should cover: sport and health; education; voluntary work; conferences and seminars.

Next steps: CCPR has been invited to attend European Parliament meetings which analyse current funding opportunities and new budget lines with both Parliamentarians and Commission officials on 1 July.

4. French courts fine online gaming firms for betting on Roland Garros

The French Court banned Unibet and Expekt, two Maltese based online gaming firms, from taking bets on the French Open and ordered them to pay €800,000 to the French Tennis Federation, which owns the property rights for the event, for taking bets on the tournament. The court ruled that the sites "violated the operating monopoly conferred on the French Tennis Federation". The two gaming firms will appeal against the decision.

5. European anti-doping initiatives

When the European Commission announced in its White Paper on Sport that it would examine doping in Europe, there was much consternation amongst European sporting bodies that it would set up a European anti-doping agency and add a further layer of bureaucracy to the doping landscape.

In its answer to a European Parliamentary question from Manolis Mavrommatis in May, the Commission revealed that it had no intention of setting up a European agency. However, the Commission does intend to analyse where doping procedure and European competences overlap in areas such as data protection and human rights. In order to examine this, the Commission has set up a working group on anti-doping which will meet for the first time in June. While the UK initially had not declared a representative for the working group, Sue Campbell has assured the Sports Unit that the UK will be represented.

6. Council of Europe Study: The Autonomy of Sport

The autonomy of sport survey, highlighted in the last *EU Update*, has been extended with a new deadline of the end of June. The autonomy of sport is the right of sporting organisations to determine their own rules and regulations and not be dictated to by governmental organisations. According to Lord Moynihan, speaking at the National Olympic Academy on 1 March, there is "no greater challenge than the challenge to the autonomy of sport" in terms of the international aspects of sport. The base survey for the study includes conceptual, political, legal, financial and psycho-sociological elements.

CCPR will participate in the survey as part of the European Non-Governmental Sports Organisations but the Council of Europe has also said that national umbrella organisations and national sports federations can submit their views.

How you can help: The Council of Europe survey is available to view on the CCPR website <http://www.ccpr.org.uk/ourcampaigning/europe/euconsultations/>

if you have any comments or you would like your organisation's voice heard, please contact James MacDougall (jmacdougall@ccpr.org.uk).

7. CCPR European Sport Summit

CCPR hosted its inaugural European Summit on 10 June and was delighted that NGBs were able to hear from some of the most influential people in European and British sport policy. In addition, the conference produced a number of concrete initiatives in order to further both CCPR and its members' roles in European affairs. Lord Moynihan proposed that CCPR lead the creation of a memorandum of understanding on how sport was affected by the European Treaty. Minister for Europe, Jim Murphy, pledged to step up analysis of the unwanted consequences of EU legislation to sport in the UK. Meanwhile Chris Heaton-Harris MEP invited NGBs to increase their engagement with MEPs. In fact, CCPR is already organising a trip to the European institutions for its members, which will include the opportunity to take part in one of the European Parliament's Sports Intergroup meetings.

Next steps: If your organisation would like more information on participating in the CCPR event at the European Parliament, please contact James MacDougall (jmacdougall@ccpr.org.uk).

More information and presentations from the summit can be found at:
<http://www.ccpr.org.uk/ourservices/events/ccprevents/>

8. CCPR European Monitor

To complement the *European Update*, CCPR has launched its *European Monitor* which specifically analyses European Parliamentary questions which impact on sport.

For the first *European Monitor* and to subscribe to this service, please see the CCPR website:

<http://www.ccpr.org.uk/ourcampaigning/europe/europeanmonitor.htm>