



Latvian Presidency
of the Council of the
European Union



Ministry of
Education and Science
Republic of Latvia

MEETING OF DIRECTORS GENERAL FOR SPORT Riga, February 17, 2015

SUMMARY REPORT

The Meeting of Directors General for Sport (hereinafter – DG Sport), organized by the Latvian Presidency, took place on 17 February 2015 in Riga, Latvia. The DG Sport is one of the working methods to implement the European Union Work Plan for Sport 2014 – 2017 (hereinafter – WPS). The objective of the DG Sport was to discuss the actual issues in the field of anti-doping as well as aspects that could diversify sport. There were three main topics on the agenda of the DG Sport. One of them was related to the Latvian Presidency's priority (development of grassroots sport); two other topics were related to the WPS concerning fight against doping in recreational sport and the implementation of the new World Anti-doping Agency Code 2015 (hereinafter –Code 2015).

The DG Sport meeting brought together 67 representatives from 27 countries including the Directors General for Sport, senior officials, experts and guest speakers. The DG Sport meeting was also attended by representatives of the Council of Europe.

The DG Sport meeting consisted of two sessions with in-depth discussions on the topics listed above.

1. Implementation of the 2015 World Anti-Doping Code

The Code 2015 and five international standards were published in early 2014 giving signatories one year to revise their rules and procedures in line with the new requirements so that they would enter into force by 1 January 2015. It should be noted that some Member States have implemented rules that are in line with the Code 2015 whereas some other Member States have not yet implemented these rules.

In order to feed into the discussion among the Member States the following two guest speakers were invited to take part in the DG Sport meeting: **Olivier Niggli**, World Anti-doping Agency, Chief Operating Officer General Counsel and **Valery Genniges**, World Anti-doping Agency, Consultant.

The experts' presentation on the Implementation of the Code 2015 raised various useful questions, observations and comments from the participants of the session. Several Member States informed that their national rules did not correspond yet to the Code 2015 that is why amendments to the existing regulations were under way. Some Member States noted that adjustments to the Code 2015 were in the final phase. The

European Commission noted that fight against doping would be an important topic on the agenda and it is important to strengthen the representation of the European Union in the World Anti-doping Agency Foundation Board.

2. Doping in recreational sport and doping prevention

The discussion¹ was opened by a presentation of the European Commission's study on doping prevention finalized in December 2014². Study contractor from Europe Active presented the main findings and recommendations, which are based on the recommendations on doping prevention from the EU Expert Group on Anti-Doping under the EU Work Plan for Sport 2011-2014. In order to feed into the discussion among Member States a guest speaker was invited to take part in the DG Sport meeting: **Cliff Collins**, EuropeActive, Director of Programmes.

During the discussion, the majority of Member States underlined the importance of fighting doping in recreational sport. However, some voiced the opinion that doping in recreational sport was not a widespread phenomenon, especially outside fitness and gym centers. At the same time, some Member States mentioned that a lot of energy and financial support had already been invested in the fight against doping in elite sport and that it would be hard to dedicate considerable efforts to fighting doping in recreational sport, even if this phenomenon was serious.

The study carried out by the European Commission highlighted that greater cooperation, effective partnerships and sharing of best practices in the EU regarding the fight against doping in recreational sport had to be promoted, especially between National Anti-Doping Agencies, health and education policy authorities. Member States did not consider that fighting doping in recreational sport was only a sport issue but rather mainly a public health issue. Healthcare professionals should primarily be targeted as they have a key role to play in prevention. Particular attention should be paid to food supplements in terms of labelling or certification.

The majority of the Member States recognized the EU added value in the fight against doping in recreational sport. The European Commission agreed that doping in recreational sport was also a public health issue. The European Commission supported the view of Member States that exchange of best practices and lessons learned was beneficial and stressed that it was ready to reflect on how to establish practical, continued and focused exchanges of views. Regarding prevention and educational measures, the European Commission recalled the funding possibilities offered by *Erasmus+* and *Horizon 2020* in the research area. It also recalled that three transnational projects related to anti-doping with a focus on prevention had been co-financed under the Preparatory Actions in the field of sport.

¹ The outcomes of the discussion regarding doping in recreational sport and doping prevention was presented by the European Commission in the Working Group of Sport on April 9 2015

² *Doping Prevention - A map of Legal, Regulatory and Prevention Practice Provisions in EU 28*
http://ec.europa.eu/sport/news/2014/study-doping-prevention_en.htm

3. Development aspects of street sport

The core element of the discussion was the development of street sport, its diversity and future challenges. This agenda point of the DG Sport meeting was related to the Latvian Presidency's priority (development of grassroots sport). In order to inspire discussions Latvian Presidency had invited a guest speaker to take part in the DG Sport meeting: **Māris Šlēziņš**, Chairman of the World Street Workout and Calisthenics Federation, Chairman of the Latvian Street Workout Sport Association.

In his presentation the guest speaker informed that the most well-known street sports are street ball, street football, parkour, skateboarding, BMX freestyle and street workout. The main common feature of these sports is urban environment. Street workout is one of the new types of street sports. This is a combination of athletics, calisthenics, parkour and subcultural elements. The guest speaker highlighted that street workout is constantly gaining recognition and popularity across Europe and worldwide (for example, world cup stages are being held) as a social movement and an inclusive sporting activity. In many EU Member States, the street workout movement has an important role among non-traditional sports.

After the presentation, many Member States expressed their gratitude for the job done by Latvian Street Workout Sport Association both in Latvia and abroad in the field of street sport. Some Member States noted that a lot of work had been going on in their respective countries to develop non-traditional sports. In addition, non-traditional sports attract young people in particular and this is important, especially considering the low physical activity rates among young people and the inclusion aspects.