

Sport and Recreation Alliance

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# November European Policy Update

## Policy type:

Europe

## Publish date:

Thu, 03/11/2011 (All day)

## European Update November 2011

### 1. Sport and Recreation Alliance

#### 1.1 Better Boards, Stronger Sport

The Sport and Recreation Alliance has won funding to carry out a ***Better Boards, Stronger Sport*** project. This forms part of the Europeans Union's (EU's) programme to ensure that 2011-2012 policy priorities for the field of sport are achieved.

Over the next 18 months, the Alliance will be working with eight other partners across Europe to share board good practice. A toolkit of resources and templates will then be made available so that boards across Europe can benefit from the key features and best practice recognised in the project.

Contact [Joy Tottman](#) <sup>[1]</sup> for more information.

#### 1.2 EU Summit

The Sport and Recreation Alliance European Summit was held at the European Commission's (EC's) offices in London, attended by 60 delegates. It focused on the most pertinent issues affecting sport in Europe including good governance, match fixing and funding.

Speakers included British MEP, Emma McClarkin, talking about challenges in the field of European sport policy, Michal Krejza, head of the EC's sport unit, discussing their current priorities, and Baroness Young of Hornsey, presenting recommendations from the House of Lord's inquiry into grassroots sport.

Darren Bailey from the Football Association and David Sparkes from the Amateur Swimming Association delved into Europe's role in promoting good sport governance, whilst Rafal Piechota from the Polish Ministry of Sport outlined its work to combat match-fixing at European level.

The summit heard from Pierre Cornu on how the Union of European Football Association (UEFA) is tackling corruption in football, and Tom Docherty and Rowenna Hoy about the funding opportunities available for sport through the Leonardo Da Vinci fund.

[Find out more about our EU Summit and download the presentations by our speakers.](#) <sup>[2]</sup>

### 2. European Parliament

#### 2.1 European Parliament Sport report

The European Parliament's Culture Committee is proposing amendments to the latest EU Sport Report: ***Developing the European Dimension in Sport***.

The report focuses on:

- the social role of sport
- the economic role of sport
- sport governance
- European identity through sport.

### **What it means**

There looks to be many encouraging inclusions, including territorial exclusivity for the sale of media rights, better use of structural funds to finance sport projects, and stricter protection for sport's intellectual property rights.

The Sport and Recreation Alliance worked closely with MEPs on these amendments to ensure that parliament is sending strong messages to Europe and its member states in favour of sport. All proposals made by MEP's will be voted on by the Committee in mid-November.

To find out how and why you should be engaging with MEPs, contact [David Foster](#) [3].

## **2.2 European Parliament resolution on Online Gambling Paper**

The Internal Market Committee has concluded that member states should maintain their own rules on online gambling, but cooperate on an EU-wide level to combat issues surrounding the black market and protecting children and vulnerable consumers.

This [non-legislative resolution](#) [4] means that the Commission will need to take parliament's opinions on board when it develops legislative proposals on online gambling.

### **What it means**

From a sporting perspective, there are some very positive inclusions - such as a request for every member state to include a definition of sporting fraud in their domestic criminal law, support for protecting sporting property rights, and fair financial return for grassroots and professional sport from commercial betting operations.

If you have any questions on how European legislation can affect sport, contact [David Foster](#) [3].

## **3. European Commission**

### **3.1 Communication on Volunteering**

As part of the European Year of Volunteering, the EC published the paper ***EU Policies and Volunteering: Recognising and promoting Cross-Border Voluntary Activities in the EU*** [5], which defines sport as the biggest area for volunteering, followed by social care, welfare and health.

The EU is currently setting up a European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps and has proposed the development of a 'European Skills Passport' that will acknowledge the skills and competences acquired through voluntary activities. Volunteer projects can be supported in a number of EU funding programmes like Youth in Action, Lifelong Learning and Europe for Citizens.

The EU has made it its goal to improve access to these programmes for volunteers, allowing the sector to fully exploit European funding opportunities.

For additional information on EU funding opportunities, contact [David Foster](#) [3].

## 4. European Court of Justice

### 4.1 Premier League vs. Karen Murphy case

The European Court of Justice (ECJ) delivered its judgment in the Premier League v. QC Leisure/Murphy cases involving UK pub landlady, Karen Murphy, who bought a decoder card and showed a Greek broadcast of Premiership matches in her pub.

The Premier League argued that this was in breach of their licensing arrangements, while Murphy argued that she was free to do so under internal market legislation on the free provision of goods and services across EU member states. The entire judgment has to be reconsidered by the UK courts in due course before a final decision is reached.

#### What it means

Whilst the judgement was seen as a victory for Murphy and the consumer in certain sections of the press, closer inspection revealed a slightly different story. Whilst there can be nothing in law or in broadcast licence small print to prevent British people watching Premier League football matches in a pub on a foreign decoder card, content providers may still choose to make life difficult by pursuing a narrow avenue of copyright enforcement through liberal use of copyright graphics, logos and other material. The ruling may not only impact sports broadcasting rights, but could also have ramifications for other types of content such as film and music.

## 5. Council of Europe

### 5.1 Council of Europe recommendations on match-fixing

Further to the work being done by the Polish Presidency of the EU on match-fixing and integrity, the Council of Europe has also put forward its recommendations. Its paper was agreed by the Committee of Ministers to be a political document that could also potentially be made politically binding.

Among the many positive recommendations included in the paper, it was promising to see commitment by member states to ensuring that no betting is allowed on a sports event unless the event organiser has been informed and given prior approval.

The integrity of sport would benefit greatly from the ability to determine what bets are taken, meaning that risky 'novelty' bets could be banned should sports wish to do so.

[Download the Council of Europe's recommendations on match-fixing](#) [6], or contact [David Foster](#) [3] for more information on match-fixing and integrity issues in the UK and Europe.

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**Source URL:** <http://www.sportandrecreation.org.uk/lobbying-and-campaigning/policy-information/update/03-11-2011/november-european-policy-update>

#### Links:

[1] <mailto:jtottman@sportandrecreation.org.uk>

[2] <http://www.sportandrecreation.org.uk/smart-sport/governance-events/past-events/eusummit>

[3] <mailto:dfoster@sportandrecreation.org.uk>

[4] <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/document/activities/cont/201110/20111014ATT29350/20111014ATT29350EN.pdf>

[5] <http://europa.eu/volunteering/en/download/file/fid/6827>

[6] [http://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?Ref=CM/Rec\(2011\)10&Language=lanEnglish&Ver=original&BackColorInternet=C3C3C3&BackColorIntranet=EDB021&BackColorLogged=F5D383](http://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?Ref=CM/Rec(2011)10&Language=lanEnglish&Ver=original&BackColorInternet=C3C3C3&BackColorIntranet=EDB021&BackColorLogged=F5D383)