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HOT ISSUES FROM BRUSSELS

LISBON TREATY GIVES THE EU NEW POWERS ON SPORT

The Treaty of Lisbon has given the EU new powers to initiate and manage a more focused and coherent European sports policy and to allocate financial resources to it.

The EU's newly enhanced competency in sport will be able to support, coordinate or supplement initiatives taken by its individual Member States, but it specifically excludes the power to harmonise Member State legislation.

Previously, the EU could only address sports issues indirectly through other EU Treaty competences, notably the free movement of citizens, competition law, broadcasting policy or education. Now, the European Commission is drafting a policy document which will create the first 'EU sport programme' in 2012-2013. The new policy will include measures to ensure greater fairness and openness in sport competitions, as well as seek greater protection for the moral and physical integrity of sport practitioners.

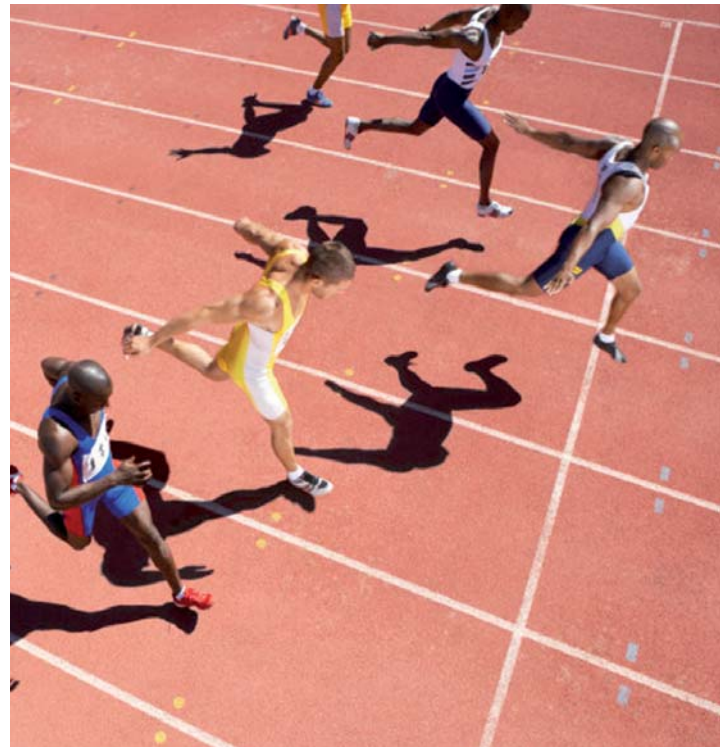
The Commission's 'Communication', due by the end of 2010, is likely to cover the following policy areas:

- > Cooperation between bodies responsible for sports
- > Anti-doping
- > Combating violence and corruption in sport
- > Promotion of good governance
- > Funding programmes on social inclusion and social change
- > Health promotion
- > Education and training
- > Volunteering
- > Protection of minors
- > Supporting the development of research on current issues

One of the Commission's objectives is also to initiate a dialogue between the EU and the sports community as a whole on how best to work together to develop future policy, for example through consultations and direct meetings. This is an opportunity for sport organisations and stakeholders to shape the new EU sports policy and propose ideas, particularly as the EU will now be able to allocate financial resources towards activities in its new competence.

To mark its new role, in September 'Sport' was even added to the mandate of the existing Education, Youth and Culture Council of Ministers of the European Union.

Some branches of sport will welcome Europe's greater role but undoubtedly there are bound to be critics. The implications of the now longstanding Bosman



judgment – regarding the free movement of footballers – are still being felt by federations, clubs and, to a certain extent, other sports.

Once the Communication is submitted at the end of the year, the European Parliament and national governments in the Council will discuss and develop their approach.

Lastly, the new EU competency will have other implications; not least because henceforth the EU will have the power to speak with one voice on sport-related issues that are being discussed in the international arena.

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