

**PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND SPORT
TO MEET THE EUROPEAN CHALLENGES
OF TODAY AND TOMORROW**



**POSITIONS PAPER
2024**



PREFACE

Sport and the European Union: elements of a shared history...to be continued!1

What we now call "physical activity and sport" is the result of the gradual emergence of a new "body culture" in Western Europe since the 19th century. This manifested itself in the identification of the characteristics of "bodily functioning" made possible by the emergence of physiology, and in various forms of social expression in the field of medicine, in hygienic gymnastics and in "English" sports.

De Coubertin promoted this form of education in France, and later internationally, which encouraged people to perform and surpass themselves, but also to compete peacefully with other sportsmen and women. Other forms of "physical activity" developed in the twentieth century with a variety of objectives: health, self-expression, the quest for interiorisation, etc. The institutionalisation of these diverse forms makes the field of physical activity and sport a complex one to grasp, especially as most of the institutions involved in their implementation are jealous of their autonomy vis-à-vis the political powers and institutions that wish to play a unifying role within them, such as the International Olympic Committee, for example...

The European Economic Community (EEC) could not ignore such a social phenomenon and, whether it was the European Council, the European Commission or the European Parliament, declarations, reports and resolutions on sport were produced and financial support offered almost from the outset. From an institutional point of view, however, it was the Maastricht Treaty and the transformation of the EEC into the European Union that accelerated the process of taking sport into account. We will not repeat here the details of this history, which has been perfectly described and analysed by Colin Miège², but simply list some of the key stages...

Sport has been taken into account in the EU's main bodies since it took over from the EEC (1993). A Sport Intergroup was set up in the European Parliament in 1993; a Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Culture and Sport (DG EAC) was set up in the European Commission, taking over from a small DG Sport in 1993.

Informal meetings of sports directors from the member states (the Delbecchia Group) had already been held since 1988, preceding the meetings of ministers responsible for sport organised in 1999. On the agenda of one of these meetings was the discussion of a Commission report on "The European Model of Sport"...

But it was not until the Treaty of Lisbon, signed in 2007 and implemented in 2009, that the presence of official political representation from the member states within these bodies became institutionalised. The Council of the European Union brings together the

¹ Jean Camy, Honorary University Professor, was the first President of the European Network of Institutes of Sport Science and Employment and of the European Observatory of Sport and Employment. He is also a founding member of the European College of Sport Science.

² Colin Miège, *Les organisations sportives et l'Europe*, INSEP Editions (2009)

ministers of the member states responsible for "policy areas". In the latter case, the Council's "configurations" are used primarily to exchange views and harmonise national policies on these subjects. In 2014, the Council set up an Education, Youth, Culture and Sport configuration. Meeting 3 or 4 times a year, it deals in particular with the promotion of physical activity and social inclusion through sport, and drafts texts that could lead to legislative measures. Those responsible for the areas covered within the European Commission also take part in these meetings.

On the "civil society" side, the prospect of the implementation in 1993 of the Maastricht Treaty, in particular the Single Act which organises the free movement of workers within the countries of the Union, prompted the heads of training and research institutions in the field of physical activities and sport to propose to their colleagues in the 12 countries of the Union that they create an organisation to enable them to get to know each other better and to organise themselves collectively... With the support of the European Commission, an initial meeting of representatives of these institutions : With the support of the European Commission, an initial meeting of representatives from these institutions - universities, training structures of sports confederations or National Olympic Committees, structures dependent on sports ministries - was organised in Mondorf, Luxembourg in 1989. They decided to create the European Network of Sport Science, Education and Employment (ENSSEE). The aim of this association was "to increase European cooperation in training, research and the professionalisation of students; to facilitate exchanges of teachers, professionals and students; and to work towards the convergence of training in the sports professions within the EU". The first meeting of the association's members (these meetings are called "Forums" and take place every two years) was held in Lisbon in 1991 and brought together more than 200 representatives of member institutes. Nearly 20 Forums have been held since then. With the support of DG EAC, a number of projects have been carried out to precisely define the suitability of training courses for different sports professions. Then, when it became necessary to know the state of the labour market in the EU and, on the basis of this data, to measure the suitability of training courses for this market in the EU, the support of DG Employment was sought.

Work has also been carried out to define the requirements for research into the development of physical activity and sport. The initial project's desire to "integrate" found its limits in the diversity of skills to be mobilised. In 1995, those primarily concerned with academic research created the European College of Sport Science (ECSS) and those involved in studying the labour market and the suitability of training courses for this market, who, within REISSE, had formed a group called the European Observatory on Sport and Employment (EOSE), were, at the request of the sector's social partners, who have organised themselves in parallel to help steer this work (creation of the "European Association of Sport Employers" -EASE- and mobilisation of EURO-MEI, which brings together employees from the sport sector within the European Trade Union Confederation), to form an autonomous association. With the support of



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DG Employment, a "European social dialogue" was initiated which aimed to cover the three major components of the sport sector: professional sport, associative sport and leisure and sport tourism. This project did not come to fruition. Only professional football has been able to formalise this dialogue. The organisations that grew out of REISSE are still active, some of them very successful, such as EOSE and ECSS. ENSSEE, which has now become ENSE (European Network on Sport Education), is experiencing slightly more difficulties.

The ANESTAPS project seems to us to fit in perfectly with the perspective of the "young creators" that the EU values. In cooperation with their colleagues in other EU countries, they have analysed with great finesse the various fields of action that these future players in the physical activity and sports sector are likely to cover and lead. Aptly entitled "European Challenges for Today and Tomorrow", the text begins by promoting the internal development of the sector, starting with the creation of a "European Network of Young People in Sport Science", which could be a component of the European Students Union (ESU). Let's hope that the organisations representing sport professionals, starting with trainers and researchers, will be attentive to the fresh impetus provided by the students.

The mobilisation of these young people is based on the EU's most successful initiatives in the field of sport, Erasmus of course, which makes it easier for people to get to know each other, but also lesser-known schemes such as the European Solidarity Corps and schemes to promote and capitalise on European voluntary or professional commitments. The recognition of qualifications is a key issue from this point of view. The European Qualifications Framework (EQF) should provide a useful reference for professionals with its implementation at national level (RNCP in France). Another legitimate concern is the recognition by European bodies of the importance of initiatives by young people in training and the place that should be given to them in schemes specific to the field of sport. The European Parliament and the Council of Europe were mentioned, even though the latter organisation is not part of the EU. Original proposals for financing sport were put forward, as well as support for the EU Council's recommendations to strengthen the ERASMUS system.

Finally, let us add the importance given to societal issues in the commitments promoted by this remarkable text. The world of sport should be mobilised around issues of respect for the environment, inclusion, the fight against discrimination and gender inequality, and the promotion of health for all. The text associates them with existing initiatives and those to be developed around sport, which has not always been exemplary in these areas (to put it mildly!). All this is achieved by seeking the broadest possible cooperation with all the players in these fields, in particular youth associations, which can only meet with the approval of the general public.

In conclusion, it's a great roadmap for all those involved in sport, a great enthusiasm capable of stimulating established organisations and changing the face of physical activity and sport in Europe in the years to come!



What's at stake with Europe and young people?

Dear readers,

In exactly eight months' time, European citizens, including students and young people, will have the power to change the governance of the European Union (EU). Current issues such as the ecological emergency, the rise of the far right, the growing number of sedentary people, armed conflicts, the undermining of fundamental rights and the crisis of confidence in Europe's political institutions must find answers and support at the ballot box. However, the transition to action remains difficult, and depends on the spread of dialogue and alliances.

The Association Nationale des Étudiants-es en Sciences et Techniques des Activités Physiques et Sportives (ANESTAPS), the only organisation representing the 120,000 students involved in sport and leisure activities in France, wanted to seize the opportunity in this election year to build an inclusive, open, social and sporting Europe for young people and by young people.

Following a unanimous observation, ANESTAPS has produced this collection to illustrate the ideas that young people have of a Europe that places them and physical and sporting activities at the heart of its concerns.

Aware of the rich European sports ecosystem of which ANESTAPS is a part, it was able to surround itself with trustworthy players in drawing up this compendium. Agreement between European student sports organisations was therefore essential, and this began with the close collaboration between ANESTAPS and ANECAFYDE (Spain's National Assembly of Physical Activity and Sports Students), which represents 25,000 students involved in sport and physical activities in Spain.

This collection is the voice of those who do not have one. It is the voice that makes it possible to claim the place of young people in European sport. This compendium is the legitimacy of a co-construction of sports policies and ambitious public actions concerning them. It is one of the stages in a more global effort to reconcile young people and European politics.

This collection of positions is therefore not an end in itself, but should be seen as a first step in a wide-ranging debate with local, national and European implications. It should be the first step towards the creation of a body to represent young people, which will be able to convey a strong and credible message: European youth through and for sport.

Lily Rogier and the ANESTAPS National Board

With the collaboration of ANECAFYDE



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**THE SPORTING EUROPE
WE IMAGINE
WOULD BE...**

1

... FACILITATING COMMITMENT

AND

ENHANCING SELF-ESTEEM



The issue of commitment was the first focus of this collection. Young people are often cited and used as examples of commitment and voluntary work. This commitment is extremely protean, embodied in temporary movements and for various causes. The specific nature of the sports sector, with its predominance of voluntary work, means that young people in this sector are highly aware of the issues, and are therefore the driving force behind them. This testifies to the vitality and strength of young people's commitment. This should be facilitated and promoted for all, particularly disadvantaged groups and young people without qualifications, who are often excluded from the schemes. Rather than adding new schemes, it would be better to highlight those that already exist. Here are a few ways forward.

A. Wider publicity for the European Solidarity Corps and funding to match demands and needs

Context: Culture, education, youth and sport are EU support competences. However, schemes such as the European Solidarity Corps (ESC) are independent and run by the EU. The ESC enables all young people aged between 18 and 30, resident in an EU country, to make a commitment abroad. Although the scheme is encouraging, it has a number of shortcomings. The first is the uneven effectiveness of the scheme. In France, for example, only 2,408 young people took part in 119 projects funded by the ESC in 2022, out of a total of 29,384 young people across Europe. Other obstacles have been identified, such as the lack of a framework for the status of European volunteer, the lack of a budget and the lack of information.

Encouraging young people's experiences and mobility in Europe contributes to their emancipation and strengthens their sense of European citizenship, leading to more lasting commitments. Discovery and civic participation in the sports sector should be encouraged through this type of scheme. Exchanges of best practice would be more natural between young people. Finally, it is only through **better information and communication campaigns by the various social players**, such as universities, Youth and Culture Centres, local missions, the voluntary sector, etc., that this scheme will be able to fully meet its objectives. **Putting young people who have passed through the CES in touch with various youth organisations, like a system of ambassadors**, will help to streamline communication and information on this scheme, which is still too little known by the general public. In order to develop this approach as a whole, **the budget** needs to be **increased to** meet the growing demand for ESCs throughout Europe.

Example:

- Similar recommendations have been made directly by the [Council of the European Union](#), as well as by *Support, Advanced Learning and Training*

Facilitating commitment and enhancing self-esteem

- *Opportunities for Youth* ([SALTO](#)) on the European Solidarity Corps. SALTO-YOUTH is a network of seven resource centres working on European priority areas in the youth field.
- The [European Parliament](#) is also pushing for greater ambitions for this scheme, and is considering, for example, naming 2025 "*The European Year of Volunteers*"



B. Optimising a platform for valuing and capitalising on commitments, common to the whole of Europe.

Context: In Europe, young people's commitments vary widely. Indeed, the social systems of the different countries of the European Union do not give young people the same access or the same facilities to develop non-academic skills. Nevertheless, it is important to note the figures from the Institut National de la Jeunesse et de l'Education Populaire (INJEP) and the European Parliament, which show that young people are more committed than their elders. Young people's commitments have never been so diverse, with sport and cultural activities still occupying an important place.

Unfortunately, it is impossible to combine, continue or build on these commitments from one country to another. This problem not only acts as a brake on commitment, but also on the mobility of young people in Europe. Commitment cannot be seen in a closed way, and its value must be representative of the multiplicity of existing forms and places of commitment. It is in this sense that **optimising a common platform for valuing commitment would make it** possible: to have more figures on young people's commitment, to identify specific needs, particularly in terms of training and practical opportunities, to pursue commitment through mobility and to exchange a large number of good practices.

Example:

- The INJEP (Institut National de la Jeunesse et de l'Éducation Populaire) presents some very enlightening figures and technical information in its document "[Young people's relationship with the European Union](#)".
- In France, a start-up launched by the government, called Diagoriente, enables people to develop and capitalise on their skills, and then find career paths according to their interests via a platform open to all. It is, of course, free.
- At the European level, the Youthpass scheme would be an example of a tool to be developed. Youthpass is a European recognition instrument for identifying and documenting the learning outcomes achieved as part of projects under the Erasmus+ Youth and European Solidarity Corps programmes. It would be interesting to open it up to many other forms of experience and commitment.
- On the international stage, *The House of Sport Volunteers* supports, defends and promotes all volunteers in the world of sport. This is a recent initiative to be developed.

C. A stricter framework for the European Week of Sport (EWoS) to ensure greater equality in its implementation.

Context: An initiative of the European Commission, the EWoS week is held every year from 23 to 30 September to promote sport and physical activity among the general public and raise awareness of their many benefits. According to the French National Olympic and Sports Committee (CNOSF), EWoS "is aimed at everyone, whatever their age, origin or physical condition. It brings together individuals, public authorities, the sports movement, civil society organisations and the private sector". However, this week does not reach the majority of young people and is not known to everyone. The portal that brings together the [various actions identified](#) for the European Week of Sport demonstrates the uneven deployment of this scheme. Hungary is a good example, with more than 159 actions. By comparison, France and Spain have only 5 and 10 respectively. Despite ambitious objectives and a broad target audience, only 3,000 events have been organised across the EU, which seems to have had little impact. Yet the opportunities are huge. Over the course of a week, the media window created allows many projects and other local initiatives and associations to be highlighted. What's more, the lack of a framework for organising the week means that there are major differences between EU countries. All too often, the week is concentrated on a single day in a capital city. In France, the 2023 National School Sports Day has been integrated into EWoS. This is a very good thing in terms of integrating the education sector, but on the other hand it contributes to the illegibility and invisibility of other more specific events.

This week should **involve a wide range of different players (in the youth and education sectors), while at the same time highlighting physical activity and sport as a way of discovering Europe** and the various existing initiatives, particularly those mentioned above. The management of this week must not be targeted at a single target town, and labels are not sufficient measures to facilitate the development of local initiatives. **It is also the distribution and financial framework of this week that needs to be reviewed at European level.**

D. Promotion and financial investment in sports science research

Context: Scientific research forms the basis of French, European and global higher education. Consequently, higher education and research cannot be dissociated ([Roux-Dufort, 2016](#)). Research is the key to meeting tomorrow's challenges in terms of technological, social and societal innovation. In this sense, research into sport and physical activity sciences should be a priority, as it enables both technological innovation in the field of very high performance and social and societal innovation through socio-sport, using sport as a tool for social integration, for example. However, there is a serious lack of public funding earmarked for research, and more specifically for research into physical activity and sport. Although Europe is already moving towards greater funding for research, in particular through the Horizon Europe programme ([European Commission, 2023](#)), this remains insufficient and additional efforts are needed from both Europe and its member countries.

In order to maintain and improve the importance of research, it is necessary to **encourage and promote public policies that favour research, development and innovation (RDI) in physical education and physical activity and sport**. This inevitably means **increasing investment, making it** easier to obtain funding for groups led by physical activity and sports science researchers. In this way, advances in knowledge will help to optimise resources and open up new avenues for economic and social development. For example, in the Olympic and Paralympic sector, through performance centres, optimised infrastructures and coherent human resources, but also in the field of health, with a better understanding of the beneficial effects of sport and physical activity on the physical and mental health of patients, but also of the population in general.

Financial resources must obviously be used to support human resources. At the same time, we need to promote international research networks in the same areas.

Example:

- Spain is an EU country where research has a strong and proven track record. In 2021, Dr López Calbet, an internationally renowned Spanish sports science researcher, pointed out in one of his studies (*The impressive reality of sports science in Spain: successes and risks*) that the success was due, among other things, to "interaction with the best universities in our sporting environment. Most of our best research groups have a high level of internationalisation. In other words, they develop research and exchange doctoral students with leading research groups in other countries".

Facilitating commitment and enhancing self-esteem

- European federations of national organisations representing young researchers already exist, such as Eurodoc (The European Council of Doctoral Candidates and Junior Researchers) and EUACDE (Council for doctoral education). It would therefore be interesting to add the specificity of the field of sport and physical activity to the postgraduate representation exchange.



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**THE SPORTING EUROPE
WE IMAGINE
WOULD BE...**

2

... PARTICIPATORY

AND DEMOCRATIC



In Europe, young people are heard, but not often listened to. Gaining a place and credibility is a long battle. When we look specifically at sport, the place of young people is even less guaranteed than in other areas (such as youth itself). European public policies on sport do not take into account the point of view of 17% of the population: young people. We are the future citizens, the future professionals in the sector, and it is vital that we consider young people as equal players.

A. Include youth representatives on the APES advisory committee.

Context: At the initiative of the Council of Europe, the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS) enables dialogue between public authorities, sports federations and NGOs. The aim of this conference is to make sport more ethical, more inclusive and safer. At present, the Advisory Committee is made up of members from sports organisations, NGOs and international organisations such as the Alice Milliat Foundation, Engso and TAFISA. However, there is currently no place on the committee for youth and sport organisations. As future players in the world of sport, young people need to be represented so that they can address and explain the needs of young people in European sports affairs. The issues of youth and the future of sport must be dealt with hand in hand with the people concerned, i.e. young people, who are the future players in the world of sport. **The next elections for the bureau of the EPAS advisory committee will take place in June 2024, and it is important to leave open the possibility of having a youth representative on the committee.** More generally, "youth delegates" already exist within certain European institutions, but they do not have the right to vote. **The inclusion of young people should not be partial, but should be at the same level as all the other players involved in European policies.** This also helps to give young people a sense of responsibility, to educate them and to reconcile them with politics in the broadest sense of the term. If young people are to feel concerned and heard, and if they are to go to the polls, they need to feel represented.

Example:

- The European Non Governmental Sport Organisation (ENGSO), whose mission is to represent, develop and defend voluntary sport in Europe, has developed a youth branch, ENGSO Youth, which operates completely independently. A genuine desire to give young people the opportunity to deal with the issues that concern them.
- The European Student Union (ESU) has the following position in its manifesto: *"Support student involvement in the decision-making processes of the European Parliament in all areas that affect them, [...] by inviting democratically elected European student representatives to meetings and taking their positions into account".*

B. Creation of a sub-committee on sport, in liaison with the European Parliament's Committee on Education and Culture

Context: Sport is a support competence for the European Union, yet its impact is cross-cutting. **The creation of a sub-committee on sport would make it possible, as part of the support competence, to establish and bring to life the links that exist between sport and other issues dealt with by Europe:** health, sustainable development, the organisation of major international sporting events, the fight against discrimination, civic commitment, etc. This committee could also work on a better framework for European sports competitions in order to combat certain abuses, which are explained in particular in part V of this compendium, "*Responsible and accessible*". It will analyse and enable better coordination and support for the actions of Member States in their public sports policies. As soon as it is set up, this commission will have to consider the role of young people and listen to them in order to develop positions adapted to their reality.

Example:

- The Council of Europe's Conference of International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGOs) is to set up a "*Sport and Human Rights*" committee, with the main aim of combating discrimination through education and training in sport. The main task of this two-year-old committee will be to issue recommendations and create resources that can be used by the conference and the general secretariat. ANESTAPS was the driving force behind this committee, which is proof that it is possible to give young people a voice on the subject of sport.
- In France, at the beginning of December, the Senate adopted a motion for a resolution to amend its rules of procedure to add the word "*sport*" to the title of the "*Commission de la culture, de l'éducation et de la communication*".
- In Spain, the new law on sport ([Ley 39/2022, de 30 de diciembre, del Deporte](#)) is a pioneer in terms of equality, inclusion and the recognition of sport as a right and an essential activity.

C. Creating and supporting a European network of young people in sports science

Context: The European Network of Sport Education (ENSE) brings together all the university stakeholders in sport in Europe. It is a network that works to represent and defend sport science education at European level, particularly in the areas of physical education, coaching, management, health and physical activity. It also aims to create innovative teaching materials for use by higher education establishments, private employers, federations and governments. All of this is achieved by linking organisations working in the field of sports education and by advocating effective policies at European level. The network of sports employers that we know in France, COSMOS, also has its European equivalent, the European Association of Sports Employers (EASE). As far as research is concerned, the network of researchers in physical activity and sport (ACAPS) has its own European equivalent, the European College of Sport Science (ECSS).

At present, there is no grouping of young people in training in the field of sport in Europe. **The creation of such a federation must be allowed to encourage exchanges between young people and dialogue with institutions.** It is necessary to have someone to represent the voice of young people in each field, particularly sport, where the place of young people is not guaranteed. This European network could then work with the ESU and its network.

Example:

Many examples in Europe have already proved that this kind of coalition works. Most of them work for and are members of the ESU:

- European Medical Students' Association (EMSA)
- European Law Student Association (ELSA)
- European Dental Student Association (EDSA)
- European Pharmaceutical Students' Association (EPSA)
- The International Association for Political Science Students (IAPSS)
- International Students of History Association (ISHA)
- ...

**THE SPORTING EUROPE
WE IMAGINE
WOULD BE...**

3

... BASED ON A FAIRER ECONOMY

FOR

PHYSICAL AND SPORTS

ACTIVITIES



Based on a fairer economy for physical and sports activities

A recent 2018 [study](#) published for the European Commission shows that for every 1% of GDP generated by the sports economy, there is an increase of 1.35% in terms of jobs. Sport is a successful economy, accounting for 2.12% of the EU's GDP. It should continue to be so and even expand. It should be remembered that the EU's two exclusive competences are the establishment of rules and competition necessary for the functioning of the internal market, and monetary policy for those countries in the euro zone that could legislate.

A. Creation of a 10% Buffet tax and a consistent sports betting tax in all EU countries.

Background: The Buffet tax was introduced in France in 2000 to levy a 5% tax on the television rights of channels domiciled in France. This sum is then paid to the Agence Nationale du Sport (National Sports Agency) and, as it trickles down, to amateur sport. Unfortunately, the vagaries of negotiations and the effects of changes in the intensity of competition in the field of audiovisual rights make this tax highly uncertain, and it has fallen considerably in recent years. The sports broadcasting industry generates astronomical sums of money every year. The privatisation and media coverage of sport, which has become a spectacle, means that television rights are now worth unprecedented sums. **Increasing this tax to 10% is a logical step towards better funding sport for all. What's more, an equivalent of this tax could be developed in the various EU Member States.** The EU's opinions and recommendations are essential to encourage the introduction of this tax.

The tax on sports betting is 7.5% in France and as high as 20% in some countries, such as Spain. **That's why the European Union needs to take action to push for an increase in these taxes and ensure that they are properly earmarked for each country, with the aim of developing sport for all.**

Example:

- In Belgium, 'real' sports betting is taxed at 15%, while online 'virtual' betting is taxed at 11%. This is a considerable sum that the Belgian government collects every year to finance its public policies.
- In Spain, national and online betting on sports and racing is taxed at 20% of gross gaming revenue. Bets authorised at regional level vary from 10% to 20% of gross income. Gambling winnings are treated as taxable income (depending on income tax, from 19% to 47%), but losses can be deducted. This is another considerable sum that the Spanish government collects each year to fund its public policies.



Based on a fairer economy for physical and sports activities

- In France, it is the Association Nationale Des Elus au Sport (ANDES), which is [recommending](#) an extension of the three sports taxes financing the ANS (Buffet tax, tax on FDJ games and tax on sports betting) and therefore the French sports movement.



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B. Deduction of sports-related expenses on tax returns.

Context: One of the tax measures that will be most effective in promoting physical activity and sport is for European citizens to be able to deduct from their tax annual expenditure on physical activity and sport services, both their own and that of their dependent children. This would be a complementary measure to [Council Directive \(EU\) 2022/542 of 5 April 2022 amending Directives 2006/112/EC and \(EU\) 2020/285](#) as regards value added tax rates. Annex III on the "[List of supplies of goods and services which may be subject to the reduced rates of VAT referred to in Article 98](#)" refers to "Right of access to sporting events or access to live broadcasts of such events, or both". It would **therefore be worth pursuing this line of thought and extending tax-deductible services to physical activity and sport**, by adding, for example, "*the use of sports facilities and the provision of sports lessons or physical exercise, possibly including live broadcasts*".

Example: several European countries, such as Portugal and Romania, are already applying this measure because of its effectiveness in promoting spending in the sector, while encouraging the population to be more active. Other countries, such as Spain, could take the lead with this measure, applying deductions of 30% of annual expenditure on physical sport services, up to a ceiling of €300, provided that these services are provided by qualified professionals in accordance with current legislation.

C. Securing the future of the ERASMUS+ budget and fairer equality of access

Context: The 2021-2027 ERASMUS+ plan has seen its budget increased to 26.2 billion euros, double that of the last 2014-2020 campaign. These figures are very encouraging and demonstrate the European Union's determination to invest in young people. As a reminder, ERASMUS+ is presented as the European Union's programme for education, training, youth and sport. However, only 64 million euros have been earmarked for sport at European level in 2022, supporting 332 sports projects out of a total of 26,000 applicants in all categories. There is still a disparity in investment in the priority areas of the new campaign. On the eve of the 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games, a world event hosted by an EU country, **ERASMUS+ needs to communicate better about its funding opportunities.** The small number of applications submitted is also **proof of the complexity and illegibility of the procedures, which also need to be resolved.**

ERASMUS+ also wants to prioritise current social emergencies. In line with the Green Deal, the agency says it is paying closer attention to the ecological criteria of the projects it subsidises. **This link should also be made with sport.**

Example: In a move to promote inclusion and enhance the value of sport, the Council of the European Union recently issued a recommendation on the use of European budgets. The European social funds, the European regional development funds and the funds allocated to sport under the Erasmus+ programme should make it easier for everyone to take part in sport, particularly people with disabilities. The aim is also to promote civic initiatives and the development of sports infrastructures for the benefit of the whole population.

Recommendation 27: [Conclusions of the Council of the European Union and the Representatives of the Member States](#)

ERASMUS + 2022 annual report: [budget allocation and projects](#)

**THE SPORTING EUROPE
WE IMAGINE
WOULD BE...**

4

**... HARMONIOUS AND PROTECTIVE
IN THE DIVERSITY
OF ITS FORMATIONS**



As far as training is concerned, the findings are manifold and the needs clear. The foundation of a civil society is built through education and teaching. Training is the answer to all the ills of our civilisation. It is therefore an essential theme to be taken into account and developed with all those concerned. This part of the compendium is intended as a basis for a diagnosis of the problems to which European players can respond, in particular through a structured dialogue including the users of training: young people.

A. Ensuring that training courses in Europe are clearer and more closely coordinated

Context: Today, a young person studying in the field of sport in an EU country will, if his or her training is recognised by ECTS (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System) credits, have a validation of units of competence. Today, ECTS offers better European equivalence for national study programmes, and makes it easier for students to move from one country to another or from one institution to another. However, the recognition of diplomas is not automatic in the European Union. While some universities readily recognise qualifications awarded elsewhere in Europe, they are not obliged to do so. What's more, the fact that the ECTS awarded by each national course is not easily legible does not make the universities' work any easier. The EU has set up the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) as a transposition tool to make national qualifications more understandable and comparable. The European Qualifications Framework provides an overview of national qualifications frameworks. However, it does not currently provide an accurate picture of national qualifications frameworks (NQFs). Skills are sometimes incomplete or do not justify the actual certification of the corresponding diploma. Finally, the disparity of training courses in the field of sport and youth work on a European scale makes mobility more complex. Sport is a special training sector because there can be many certifiers in the same country (ministries, federations, private organisations, etc.), which increases the number of certifiers in Europe. So the issue of the clarity and coordination of training courses needs to be studied in greater depth, starting with existing systems:

- Europass is a European Union initiative designed to help citizens share their skills and qualifications in a clear and structured way, with the ultimate aim of promoting geographical and professional mobility.
- The Diploma Supplement is recognised by all the signatory countries of the Bologna Process, i.e. 48 countries in total, all members of the European Higher Education Area. The Diploma Supplement must enable a diploma to be translated into English or into the language of the student's target country for the purposes of transfer or professional integration.
- There are also the ENIC-NARIC centres, whose mission is to facilitate international mobility through the recognition of diplomas. In all, there are 57

Harmonious and protective in the diversity of it's formations

information centres co-ordinated by the European Commission, UNESCO and the Council of Europe.

All these examples, while commendable, have their limitations. The EQF is not known to the general public and it is difficult for users to understand. What's more, it does not allow skills to be compared within the same sector, in this case sport. The Europass system is not complete and is not accessible to students, particularly in terms of ergonomics and comprehension. The Diploma Supplement faces similar problems: students and universities are not familiar with the system. The ENIC-NARIC centres are not accessible to the general public and their missions are not well known.

It is important to **review the effectiveness of these services with the users and stakeholders concerned. The lack of communication about these services can be remedied by training international affairs officers in the universities. Peer communication should also be encouraged.** In this context, students who act as intermediaries for these services will be an additional resource for their improved deployment. These students' commitment should be rewarded and/or remunerated, depending on how the service is set up. Furthermore, in view of these observations, **it is necessary to create a European consultation on the issue of the legibility of training courses in the field of sport.** This should include representatives of certifiers, representatives of employers and student representatives from the same courses. This consultation should make it possible to include more specifically every player involved in training, from its use to professional integration, in order to make the systems accessible and understandable to all, adapted to the realities on the ground.



B. Regulation and recognition of diplomas and jobs in the field of sport

Context: Sports science professions are not regulated in all European countries. This lack of regulation is a problem, not only in terms of the recognition of professions, but also in terms of guaranteeing the health security of European citizens, as in many cases sports professions are linked to health issues. When a profession is not subject to regulation in the host country, it is up to the employer to assess the diploma and professional level. In Europe, a distinction is made between regulated and unregulated professions. Today, 7 regulated professions are covered by sectoral directives and benefit from automatic recognition: doctor (general practitioner or specialist), general care nurse, midwife, veterinary surgeon, dentist, pharmacist and architect. Other regulated professions do not benefit from automatic recognition and must therefore apply for a European Professional Card (EPC) to have a regulated profession recognised in another EU country. Only the following professions can apply for an EPC: nurses responsible for general care; pharmacists; physiotherapists; mountain guides; estate agents.

In Spain, there is no national law regulating the sports science professions, with all that this implies in terms of insularity and job insecurity. This also means a greater backlog in the public health system due to the poor quality of sports services, leading to health complications.

All professions in the field of sport and leadership recognised by a country's qualification framework should be able to benefit from the EPC, and subsequently be included in professions with automatic recognition, thus ensuring the security of training. This recognition and regulation of diplomas **should not be to the detriment of university training provision.** A diploma is not necessarily training for a profession. The recognition of diplomas must therefore go hand in hand with the recognition of skills. **A European sports code including the minimum skills required for sports professions should address this issue.** It is necessary to promote professional regulation of the sector in countries where it does not exist, in order to offer safe, high-quality work in the field of sport. The use of the EQF is an interesting avenue to explore if it is to be extended to include not just university education skills, but the training and professional skills of the sport sector as a whole.

**THE SPORTING EUROPE
WE IMAGINE
WOULD BE...**

5
... RESPONSIBLE

AND ACCESSIBLE



Sport, in its universality, can convey messages that transcend generations, cultures and borders. It also reveals the ills of our societies. It is therefore the perfect tool for identifying but also resolving major issues such as the fight against discrimination and the ecological emergency.

A. Establishment of a European framework for hosting major sporting events.

Context: Major sporting events (GES) are followed worldwide and observed from all angles. The travel involved in these events, the money invested and the associated sponsors, the infrastructure required and the human resources needed are not always beyond reproach. Against a backdrop of ecological urgency, it is becoming increasingly important for organisers to monitor the socio-eco-environmental impact of greenhouse gases. Through their shared competences, the EU and its Member States are able to legislate and adopt legally binding measures, particularly with regard to the environment and human rights (treatment of employees, women, civilians, etc.). It is in this way that greenhouse gases must be controlled in order to respond to the current climate and social emergency. **Europe-wide regulation must be envisaged to regulate these impacts. A rigorous framework must be put in place for the allocation, implementation and legacy of these greenhouse gases.** The choices made by authorities and governments with regard to greenhouse gases always have an international impact, both good and bad.

Example:

- In 2017 in France, the Ministry of Sport and the Olympic and Paralympic Games, alongside the WWF, published a charter of 15 eco-responsible commitments. Aimed at sports event organisers, the charter is designed to help them implement the SDGs and comply with national environmental targets. In 2018, the Charter was extended to managers of sports facilities, and in 2020 to public establishments under the Ministry's authority. In 2021, the Charter will be updated.
- In Europe, EASE recently published its European Social Charter for Sports Events. A number of partners worked on the project, including the Paris 2024 Organising Committee, the France 2023 Rugby World Cup, the Slovenian Olympic Committee, the European Corporate Sport Federation, the Italian Volleyball Federation, the ASSER International Law Research Institute, the Institute for Sport Governance and the think tank Sport et Citoyenneté.

B. Encouraging and offering training in intersectionality in the sports sector

Context: Sport is recognised as an area where issues of inequality and discrimination can manifest themselves in significant ways. This can include discrimination linked to gender, alleged race, social class, sexual orientation and/or other dimensions of the identity of participants. **The integration of awareness-raising and training for sports professionals, students and all those involved in the sector in general, on the need to take account of these diversities and the link between the various forms of discrimination,** is an essential part of building a fairer and more egalitarian European sports model.

Intersectional inclusion is not just a theoretical concept, but a practical approach that should be integrated into sports policies and practices. This should include **training programmes for sports professionals and managers, aimed at raising their awareness of interactional issues and equipping them to create more inclusive sporting environments.** Intersectionality education should be encouraged as a tool to promote diversity and equity within schools and universities. In particular, this means **integrating teaching content that addresses these issues in a cross-cutting way,** thus preparing future sports professionals to tackle diversity issues in an informed and sensitive manner.

Example:

- For example, the NGO ENGSO has developed the *ASPIRE* project, which focuses on the social inclusion of people at risk of exclusion, particularly refugees. The project aims to help sports clubs adopt inclusive provisions. A specialised training module has even been created.
- For its part, the European Commission has developed the *Access City Awards*, to highlight the most inclusive cities and promote their actions. Access to sport is a particular focus.
- To help us better understand the subject of intersectionality, a moderated discussion from the [Forum Génération Égalité - UN Women](#) provides some valuable insights.
- ANESTAPS, in collaboration with the C3D (conference of STAPS deans and directors), is working to include the fight against discrimination in its training models. This will lead to a change in the [RNCP \(Référentiel National de Compétences Professionnelles\)](#) records, so that this theme is taken into account for each STAPS degree.

C. Strengthening European sports policy with regard to the development of parasports.

Context: Sport is a powerful vehicle for inclusion, serving every individual who, regardless of disability, should have equal access to sporting opportunities. The development of parasports is seen as a means of promoting social inclusion, boosting self-confidence and improving the quality of life of people with disabilities (PWD). In calling for a stronger European sports policy, it is important to **coordinate efforts at European level to ensure high standards of accessibility, training for adapted physical activity professionals, and financial support** for the development of parasports. A collective approach at European level can maximise the impact of national initiatives.

Example:

- In its [handbook of good practice number 3](#), the Council of Europe issues a large number of recommendations, as well as a multitude of examples of good practice and projects from European countries.
- Funded by the Erasmus+ programme, the project "*InAbled Cities: Developing inclusive urban environments for physical activity for people with disabilities and older people*" is a cross-sector partnership of six organisations from five EU countries joining forces to increase the participation of people with disabilities in physical activities in urban areas, in order to become a healthy, active and inclusive city.
- Other recent [recommendations](#) from the Council of the EU, particularly financial ones, support this position.

D. Creation of a specific observatory on sport and disability in Europe.

Context: In Europe, as in France, there is an alarming lack of information on the range of sports on offer for people with disabilities. Surveys have been carried out in France, such as the INJEP-MEDES survey of licences issued by sports federations approved by the Ministry of Sport. However, other non-specialised sports federations also issue licences to people with disabilities, but the numbers are not known. What's more, a simple quantitative listing is not enough to define and study practices.

According to Rimmer et al (2004), nearly 10% of the European population is disabled, and 56% of them say that they do not exercise on a daily basis because of a lack of information about the sports on offer, compared with 36% of people without disabilities. Unfortunately, the surveys available are old and not very accurate.

This is why we need to **initiate, promote and support actions at EU level linked to the regular collection of statistics and the development of indicators such as barriers to participation. The creation of an observatory of practices** at European level will provide an **overall view of the state of development of parasport on the continent**, but will also pave the way for real solutions that can be applied and adapted in each territory to enable people with disabilities to participate in inclusive parasports and sports.

**THE SPORTING EUROPE
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6

... AWARE OF HEALTH

AND INTEGRITY ISSUES



Aware of health and integrity issues

Feeling safe, whether physically or mentally, is a determining factor in feelings of well-being and health in general. Access to health is also one of the Sustainable Development Goals. These two issues need to be tackled together in the interests of all Europeans.

A. Consideration of sport as a health tool, as well as its free prescription.

Context: According to a WHO survey, 45% of people in the European Union (EU) say they never take part in physical exercise or sport, and one person in three has an insufficient level of physical activity. In comparison, increasing physical activity to the minimum recommended levels in the EU would prevent 11.5 million new cases of non-communicable diseases by 2050. This figure would represent a saving of €8 billion on the EU health budget.

Ambitious public policies are needed to make sport more accessible. **We need to move towards free prescriptions for physical activity and sport, including training and awareness-raising for health professionals.** Setting up **referents in all European territories** would help to develop local initiatives to combat sedentary lifestyles and physical inactivity (active designs, nudges, development of free practice areas, etc.). Sport is only one of Europe's supporting competencies, but public health is a shared competence that should not be neglected.

Example: There is the European Vivifrail programme. This offers physical activities adapted to prevent frailty and falls in people over 70. It has been shown to significantly reduce the rate of falls among the elderly. This kind of scheme is a good example of what can be done at European level.



B. Preventing sexist and sexual violence in sport and introducing legislation on authorisation to practise following a conviction

Background: For several years now, sexual violence perpetrated against minors and individuals has been denounced, publicised in the media and questioned. People are speaking out in all walks of life, and sport is no exception. Many cases have been reported, and too many others remain unreported. In terms of both prevention and reporting, current national systems lack visibility and clarity. There is an **urgent need to raise awareness and train European clubs in the fight against sexist and sexual violence.**

When the legal proceedings are successful, in many cases the aggressor returns to sport despite having been convicted of a sexual offence. Europe cannot remain silent in the face of this problem. **Anyone convicted of a sexual offence must be banned from working in any field involving young people and sport, whatever the country.**

Example:

- In France, the Code du Sport, which governs the entire sector, requires people to be of good repute. Good repute is an obligation which stipulates that a person may not work as a sports instructor or operator of physical and sports activities if they have been convicted of any crime or certain offences.
- In the Netherlands, the Centre for Sports Safety is a reporting and knowledge centre for (sexual) misconduct, match-fixing and doping in sport. It is a pool of confidential counsellors who guide victims and accused persons. In addition, it is a one-stop shop for knowledge and training for sports clubs and associations, so that everyone can better prevent and guide all cases of sexist and sexual violence and, more broadly, insecurity.

C. Promoting mental health in sport and creating resources for athletes.

Context: Mental health is an essential component of general well-being, and athletes are not immune to the challenges associated with mental health. The pressure of competition, expectations, injuries and transitions in sporting careers can have a significant impact on athletes' mental health. This is why it is essential to develop **the implementation of comprehensive mental health support programmes at all levels of sport**, from amateur to professional. In addition, we advocate the **creation of accessible resources** that provide information, advice and support from qualified professionals in the field to help athletes manage stress, anxiety and other mental health problems. **Collaboration between mental health professionals is needed** to offer comprehensive services. It will also involve **creating online platforms** with educational content, testimonials and coping strategies so that athletes can access valuable information in complete confidentiality. **Budgets must be made available to guarantee the presence of professionals in the professional sector and in the deployment of awareness-raising strategies within federations and countries.**

Example:

- In France, for example, the Société Française en Psychologie du Sport (SFPS), a learned society in sports psychology, and ANESTAPS are working together to define and protect the title of mental trainer.
- Many clubs, and even federations, are creating positions for mental health managers (mental trainers, sports psychologists, etc.).

**THE SPORTING EUROPE
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WOULD BE...**

7

... PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY



Gender equality is a fundamental principle that must permeate all aspects of society, including the sporting arena. We call for specific initiatives to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women in sport. These initiatives should cover a range of areas, from participation, representation and remuneration to access to opportunities of choice.

A. To promote and guarantee the place of women in the sports sector in Europe.

Context: The representation of women in governing bodies is a cross-border issue, and the sports sector, which is predominantly male, needs to implement concrete measures in this area. There is currently a significant gap in equality between the countries of the European Union, mainly due to an extremely volatile labour market that is constantly evolving and changing. According to the latest figures published by the Council of Europe, more men than women are currently in employment (55% compared to 45%) or volunteering in sport (8% of men compared to 4% of women). What's more, the positions held by men and women in sport tend to be different, with the glass ceiling phenomenon not sparing this sector.

Firstly, it seems essential to **give greater recognition to female athletes** in order to encourage women's ambitions and access to sporting careers. At the same time, it is important to **adapt physical education and sports teaching methods to promote equality** between men and women. **In particular, the division of classes and the differentiation of activities practised according to gender must be banned.** In addition, thought must be given to the **design of non-gendered school spaces** to enable every child and adolescent to develop fully, without self-censorship, in their activities and social relationships within European public schools.

Example: There are a number of important initiatives to highlight:

- The EPAS toolbox, comprising 11 information sheets to promote gender equality, translated into the languages of the European Union.
- The recommendations of EASE, with their BesT Inclusion project. This project aims to boost the employability of women (as well as people with disabilities and people suffering from age discrimination) by supporting sports employers and giving them all the keys they need to hire these different categories of worker without fear.
- The Club des 300 femmes dirigeantes, a comprehensive support programme for women leaders in the sporting movement, supported by the CNOSF. The aim is to identify, develop and support a significant number of women between now and 2024 so that they can rise to positions of responsibility.

B. Extending the work of the European Union's Knowledge Centre on Gender Equality to sports-related issues

Context: Collecting data and evaluating progress are essential for measuring the impact of gender equality initiatives. Although such an observatory already exists, **it will be able to develop its expertise on gender equality in sport, identifying areas for improvement and recognising good practice.**

To collect data, this observatory **could work in collaboration with** academic institutions, women's rights organisations and associations with expertise in gender equality. It would produce publications and regular reports on the representation, remuneration and participation of women and men in sport at European level.

Example:

- The Observatory for Equality in Sport in Spain was created in December 2020, with the fundamental aims of promoting real and effective equality between women and men, removing barriers to equality for top-level athletes with disabilities, and promoting equal treatment and opportunities in the Spanish sports system.

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8

... FOR ALL YOUNG PEOPLE



For all young people

Although this compendium is geared towards European sports policies and the student public concerned, we strongly support the pleas of our youth partners. Carried out jointly, these pleas would make it easier to implement the positions developed above. Here, then, are a few ideas, examples and tools that go exactly in the direction we want to take.

- The resolutions put forward by the FAGE, the leading organisation representing students in France, of which ANESTAPS is a member, also include a collection of proposals. With 50 proposals in line with those of the ESU, the FAGE is looking after the interests of all students, naturally taking into account a national vision and observations.
- The manifesto of 24 proposals put forward by Jeunes Européens France, a youth partner of ANESTAPS, provides more specific expertise. With its many local sections, regional feedback provides a broad perspective on European issues, as well as disseminating information and setting up awareness-raising projects. The associations in the ANESTAPS network will certainly be organising such projects to encourage young people to vote.
- Although youth organisations are the bearers of projects and proposals, the European institutions should not be forgotten either. The EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027 sets out three main areas of action (Engage, Connect, Empower) and 11 objectives. They provide a perimeter around the cross-sectoral areas that affect young people's lives, highlighting the challenges they face. They need to be followed up, hammered home and implemented across the board.
- All the proposals and good practices highlighted in this compendium, as well as all the existing offers and opportunities in Europe, need to be better centralised through Eurodesk, an under-used information platform for young people, which should become the European one-stop shop.
- *The Youth Progress Index is another tool that should be taken into account when developing youth policies in Europe. Set up by the European Youth Forum, this youth progress index is based on factual data supporting the mainstreaming of young people's rights. It calculates the quality of life of young people in relation to the economic conditions of the country and focuses on three main dimensions describing social progress: basic human needs, well-being and opportunities.*



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