

Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on promoting the common values of the EU through sport

(2018/C 196/06)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION AND THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE MEMBER STATES MEETING WITHIN THE COUNCIL,

RECALLING THAT:

1. The European Union is a common space to build a prosperous and peaceful area of coexistence and respect for diversity based on the common values of the EU namely respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities recognised by Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union. These values are common to the Member States in a society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men prevail.
2. According to Article 165 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union the Union shall contribute to the promotion of European sporting issues, while taking account of the specific nature of sport, its structures based on voluntary activity and its social and educational function.
3. The European Union Third Work Plan for Sport (2017-2020) adopted in May 2017 which defined Social Inclusion as a key topic under the priority theme Sport and Society, putting Promotion of the common values of the EU through Sport as one of its key tasks.
4. The Council Recommendation on promoting common values, inclusive education to be adopted in May.
5. Sport is part of the European Union's Erasmus+ programme since 2011. Since the first programme started thirty years ago, more than nine million Europeans have been able to benefit from the opportunity to study, train, teach, or volunteer, in another country and in so doing strengthening their awareness of the values they have in common.
6. The recent EU initiative promoting solidarity among young Europeans, cooperation and partnership in the field of youth through different solidarity activities including sport.
7. The political background as set out in the annex.

CONSIDERING THAT:

8. Values lie in the core of the European Union. The present Conclusions aim to strengthen mutual understanding of the concept of common values among Member States, develop the sense of belonging to the European Union as well as promote, where appropriate, those values outside the EU, while creating a solid basis for people-to-people dialogue across the European borders.
9. The European Union and its Member States are currently facing significant economic, political and social challenges which vary from Member State to Member State. Sport can contribute to ensure sustainable development and to adequately tackle the overarching socioeconomic and security-related challenges facing the EU.
10. The White Paper on the future of Europe emphasises that the European values that we hold dear remain the same. We want a society in which peace, freedom, tolerance and solidarity are placed above all else. These values bind Europeans together and are worth fighting for (¹).
11. The European Commission's White Paper on Sport (2007) which highlights the important contribution of sport to economic and social cohesion and more integrated societies by using the potential of sport for social inclusion, integration and equal opportunities; and also stressing among other things that racism and xenophobia and the exploitation of young players are incompatible with the common values of the EU.
12. The 2018 European Year of Cultural Heritage aims to raise awareness of common history and values and to encourage people to explore the rich and diverse European cultural heritage, of which traditional sports and games are part.
13. Organised and non-organised Sport, like education, youth work and culture, can play a role to promote the common values of the EU.

(¹) ST 6952/17

14. All major international organisations dealing with sport, such as Unesco, the Council of Europe, the International Olympic Committee, the International Paralympic Committee and the World Anti-doping Agency, acknowledge that sport can teach values such as fairness, teambuilding, democracy, tolerance, equality, discipline, inclusion, perseverance and respect that could help to promote and disseminate common values of the EU.

RECOGNISING THAT:

15. All people should be free to practise sport and to feel a part of society, and different sectors related to sport can do what is in their capacity to foster integration as well as to provide equal opportunities to engage in sport and avoid discrimination and social exclusion.
16. Sport can contribute to building and developing civil society and social sustainability. There is a need to foster a common sense of belonging among Europeans — political as well as cultural. Since sport is an universal language understood by all, communicating and emphasising common values through sport, using innovative methods of non-formal and informal learning, can contribute to preventing intolerance, social exclusion, including gender stereotyping and misogyny, racism, xenophobia and marginalisation.
17. Sport can reinforce values in a natural way and in a positive atmosphere. Values such as mutual respect, fair play, friendship, solidarity, tolerance and equality should be natural to all those involved in sport in clubs, schools, in recreational sport and in professional sport.
18. Sport's contribution to social cohesion and building inclusive, strong communities, if infused with the values of equality, can also contribute to the development of an efficient, democratic and just society. Sport instructors and coaches can play a role to reinforce the common values of the EU through sport.
19. There are already existing positive initiatives at EU level that contribute to better understanding of the common values of the EU as sport projects developed and supported by the European Structural Fund and the Erasmus+ Programme.

INVITE MEMBER STATES TO:

20. Where appropriate, explore and support initiatives and actions to promote sport as a way for building social, civic and intercultural competences for people of all ages, gender and backgrounds. This can be done through supporting and encouraging local and regional authorities in cooperation with sport clubs, schools, youth organisations, including non-governmental organisations.
21. Where appropriate, promote the common values of the EU in connection with major sport events organised by the sport movement often in cooperation with the public authorities. Major sport events can offer a great opportunity to raise awareness among athletes, volunteers, as well as supporters.
22. When relevant, promote the common values of the EU to the sports movement at national level as a part of the structured dialogue.
23. Take the opportunity of international cooperation to promote and communicate at international level, where appropriate, the need to respect the common values of the EU.
24. Encourage and where possible support sport organisations in strengthening good governance, within their organisations and where appropriate address these values in their ethical guidelines or equivalent documents.
25. Encourage educational institutions to promote activities linked to common values in sport.

26. Where relevant, promote the fight against racism and xenophobia, gender stereotyping and misogyny, the exploitation of young athletes, all forms of discrimination and violence in stadiums and violations of integrity in sport. Support sport organisations in fighting these violations by for example developing and promoting initiatives engaging supporters. This could involve educational programmes or awareness-raising campaigns in cooperation with sports organisations which teach respect for human dignity, peace and non-discrimination.

INVITE THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION:

27. Develop and explore the already existing initiatives, such as European Week of Sport (EWoS) to promote the common values of the EU.
28. Include sport as part of external relations, where appropriate to promote the common values of the EU, for example through including mobility and capacity building or supporting sport integrity, as well as integrating it in the discussions and High Level Dialogues with third countries.

29. Disseminate successful projects and initiatives among Member States as well as outside the EU as a tool to promote common values of the EU
30. Use the opportunities given by the current and future European Social Fund, the Erasmus+ Programme and future EU programmes to highlight and promote the importance of the common values of the EU.
31. Promote the role sporting organisations could play in solidarity, mobility and capacity building initiatives supported by the European Commission and make sport organisations aware of these opportunities.
32. Encourage sport organisations to promote the involvement of third countries, including candidates countries in not-for-profit sports events and initiatives.

INVITE THE SPORTS MOVEMENT TO:

33. Take the opportunity of hosting major international sport events and existing initiatives by sports organisations to promote the common values of the EU.
34. Actively participate in structured dialogue initiatives in order to better communicate their policies with the governments and EU institutions.
35. Consider including modules on the importance and better understanding of common values of the EU through sport in the educational programs and training methodology for coaches, support staff, volunteers and other relevant actors.
36. Encourage information campaigns and initiatives for sport spectators and supporters – so that they promote and reiterate the common values of the EU in order to tackle violence at stadiums. Involvement of grassroots level organisations is essential for this purpose.
37. Where appropriate use innovative methods of non-formal and informal learning to transfer the common values of EU through sport.
38. Continue developing mutually enriching relations and exchanges between grassroots sport organisations from EU countries and third countries, sharing values and principles, and illustrating the diplomatic value of such people-to-people relations.

ANNEX

Political background

1. Resolution of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on the European Union Work Plan for Sport (1 July 2017-31 December 2020) (OJ C 189, 15.6.2017, p. 5).
2. Council Conclusions on the role of youth work in supporting young people's development of essential life skills that facilitate their successful transition to adulthood, active citizenship and working life (OJ C 189, 15.6.2017, p. 30).
3. Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on the prevention of radicalisation leading to violent extremism (OJ C 467, 15.12.2016, p. 3).
4. Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on the role of the youth sector in an integrated and cross-sectoral approach to preventing and combatting violent radicalisation of young people (OJ C 213, 14.6.2016, p. 1).
5. Conclusions of the Council and of the representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on the role of coaches in society (OJ C 423, 9.12.2017, p. 6).
6. Commission White Paper on Sport of 11 July 2007 (COM(2007) 391 final).
7. Commission White Paper on the future of Europe (2017) (ST6952/17).
8. Council Recommendation on promoting common values, inclusive education, and the European dimension of teaching (ST5462/18).
9. Paris Declaration on promoting citizenship and the common values of freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination through education.
10. EP Cult Committee — European Identity Study (2017).
11. EP Cult Committee — Teaching Common Values in Europe (2017).
12. Unesco's initiative 'Values Education through Sport' (2017).
13. International Charter of Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport, revised (Unesco), 2015.
14. Revised Recommendation No R (92) 13 Rev of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on the Revised European Sports Charter (2001).
15. Council of Europe, 'Charter of Sports Ethics' (Revised 2010).