



## Les financements européens pour le sport « doivent augmenter »

---

*Cet article est traduit de l'anglais par EurActiv Bruxelles, partiellement ou en intégralité (article source).*

Les financements annuels des politiques sportives de l'UE doivent fortement augmenter pour être pleinement efficaces, selon les conclusions d'une évaluation indépendante. Cependant, la Commission ne décidera pas du montant qu'elle allouera à son futur programme de sports avant l'automne.

01/09/2011

---

Total EU funding for the bloc's nascent sports policy amounts to €25.5 million for the period 2009-2011, ahead of the expected launch of a fully-fledged programme in 2014.

### **Sport needs '€20m per year'**

But an annual budget of at least €20 million is required if the EU is to reap the full benefit of its actions in the field of sport, researchers found.

The evaluation – designed to assess the relevance, effectiveness and added value of actions taken by the EU in advance of a fully-fledged sport policy during 2009 and 2010 – was carried out in the first half of 2011 by a consortium of companies led by Italy's **Economisti Associati** and including pollsters Ipsos-MORI.

Most funding went to transnational projects, funded by the European Commission, which were broadly successful in providing policy support, spreading best practice, testing the viability of networks and strengthening the European dimension of sport, the researchers found.

Transnational projects have the greatest potential for achieving EU added value across the range of priorities reflected in EU sports policy and as such should receive the majority (75%) of funding, their report concluded.

Other so-called 'preparatory actions' included campaigns, brochures and conferences to raise awareness of the EU's new powers in the field of sport, the establishment of networks and forums for exchanging best practice on EU sports policy, and budgetary contributions to sports competitions like the Youth Olympics or Special Olympics.

But it was difficult to translate project outcomes into tangible lessons for policymakers given the short timeframe involved and their experimental nature, the researchers found.

Also, "it was difficult for projects to claim EU-level relevance, for example when mapping activities were carried out in a limited sample of countries," their report concluded.

### **Autumn funding decision looms**

EU sports policy is administered by a dedicated sports unit working under the auspices of the European Commission's directorate-general for education and culture, meaning that funding is handled by that department too.

Asked by EurActiv to comment on the consortium's recommendation that funding be increased, Dennis Abbot, spokesman for Androulla Vassiliou, the EU commissioner responsible for sport, was keen to stress that "this is an independent report for the Commission which provides a useful contribution to its work".

"The Commission is currently working on a proposal for a sport sub-programme which would be part of the future programme for education, training and youth (2014-2020)," he explained.

Preparations for the launch have long been marred by concerns about how much funding will be available for EU sports policies after sweeping budget cuts in European capitals led to pressure for the Brussels budget to be slashed.

Article 165 of the Lisbon Treaty, on which the EU's competence in the field of sport is based, provides only a legal basis for action and makes no specific promises of funding.

"An in-house impact assessment is currently being carried out to prepare the future programme. The proposed amounts for the sport sub-programme will be decided by the Commission in the autumn," Abbot told EurActiv.

Meanwhile, the researchers found that networks function better if workload is shared equally between partners. Similarly, financial responsibility should lie with more than one actor.

The report recommended doing more to emphasise the EU added value of projects, even in activities aimed at the general public at local level.

### **Projects 'must run longer'**

Transnational projects should run for longer – up to three years, in line with similar initiatives supported by other Commission programmes – and funding should be increased to around €15 million per year from the current €8.5m, it argued.

This would allow policymakers to pursue more ambitious objectives and activities, and boost the projects' cost effectiveness, it concluded.

The most successful such projects were designed to facilitate cooperation and exchanges of best practice between sports organisations in Europe so that discrepancies between different sports from one EU country to the next can be addressed.

As for special events, organisers should be required to justify financial support with tangible evidence showing that it provided EU added value, the researchers argue. But formal reporting requirements must be accompanied by timely and constructive feedback if they are to be tolerated.

EU support for sports events should be slightly increased to €4m per year and should focus on the young and people with disabilities, where the Commission can most easily achieve visibility, the report argued.

Meanwhile, annual funding of €0.65m for studies, surveys and conferences should be increased to €1m to cover a wider spectrum of activities, it said.

The report calls on policymakers to consult sports stakeholders on potential topics to be addressed by studies, surveys and conferences.

But it remains to be seen how much money will be allocated to the fully-fledged EU sports policy when it is launched in 2014.

**Andrew Williams**

---