



## **Conference of the Belgian EU Presidency, 16 November 2010 “Sustainable Contributions to Society by Lotteries”**

**Mrs Birgitta Kervinen, ENGSO President**

Mr Chairman  
Ladies and Gentlemen,  
Dear Friends,

On behalf of ENGSO I would like to express sincere thanks and appreciation to the Belgian Presidency for organising this important conference. ENGSO sees it as essential that NGO's and GO's get together to exchange views and opinions about common concerns during each and every European Presidency. This is a very valuable practice that started under the Portuguese Presidency in 2007, and has continued ever since. Long may this process continue!

Since the 1960's ENGSO – the European Non-Governmental Sports Organisation - has grown into the pan-European platform that it is today. ENGSO represents 41 national sports umbrella organisations including national Olympic Committees, within and also outside of the EU. The members of ENGSO represent national sports in the broadest sense – from children and youth sport, over “sport for all” activities to elite sports. ENGSO represents the non-profit voluntary sports movement. Grassroots sport is a crucial part of the activities of ENGSO members.

ENGSO is recognised by the European Commission as an important stakeholder in the area of sport. We are pleased to have been invited as speakers – to the EU Sport Forum and to the subsequent meetings of the EU sports ministers. We, on the other hand, are always pleased to welcome representatives of the EU institutions to all of our congresses and seminars. The same applies to the Council of Europe. ENGSO is the only European sports organisation that has been granted consultative status by the Council of Europe.



In addition, ENGSO Secretary General Mr Predrag Manojlovic, is currently the **Chair of the EPAS Consultative Committee within the Council of Europe**.

And of course we closely cooperate with the European Olympic Committees and we are in turn recognised by the International Olympic Committees.

ENGSO have some very dynamic working groups –and especially I want to take this opportunity to mention our EU Working Group, which is very active. What makes us special, if not unique, is our lively youth organisation: ENGSO Youth. Just to give you an example of their activities.

This year they organised a **Study session– "youth voices through inclusive sports"**. The event was supported by the Directorate of Youth and Sport of the Council of Europe. This meeting was given in front of a gathering of young people and youth sport activists. The study session used non-formal education to offer the participants a platform for exchange and to understand inclusion, exclusion and marginalisation. And in particular to evaluate the role of sport activities as a tool for inclusion.

ENGSO Youth is also a partner in the EU preparatory action in the field of sport. The project is called **"Healthy children in sound communities"**. The key objective is to promote a weekly timetable for primary school children. It includes a combination of physical education lessons at schools, complementary physical activities and one additional hour of health and nutrition education.

The promotion of volunteering and also social inclusion are ENGSO's main priorities. In our last General Assembly in Belgrade in May, we adopted the **ENGSO Manifesto on a Truly Inclusive Sport**. The Manifesto is an example of the societal role that sport can play in European societies. This October we had our ENGSO Forum in Dubrovnik and we went deeper into the topic of inclusion –and at that meeting our member organisations presented descriptions of their best practices. All these best practices are compiled and presented in (this) proceedings book: **Social Inclusion and Education through Sport**. Just two examples to give you an idea of these activities –in Germany ENGSO member organisation DOSB is taking measures to encourage more female immigrants to exercise and play sports. – Whereas in Sweden they have implemented a *"Drive-in Sports Project"* which aims at attracting non-physically active youth to take part in sports with more open and spontaneous types of activities.

You can find this book on the ENGSO website.



Grassroots sport is mainly run by volunteers without whom the everyday activities in sports clubs at the grassroots level wouldn't take place. Next year will be the European Year of Volunteering, and we are confident that this will give a strong push to one of ENGSO main priorities. We will highlight the importance of volunteering and volunteers throughout 2011, as we have planned.

There is another important area, sustainable funding of sports, where we hope for strong support from the EU. In many European countries, the national sports structures can only exist as a result of the revenues guaranteed by the respective state lotteries. For example, in Finland, my home country, the national lottery generates 90 per cent of the funds made available to the national sports bodies. In many other European countries, there are similarly large contributions made by the national lotteries. Without sufficiently financed grassroots sport, there wouldn't be top-level and professional sports.

The organisation, which currently carries out the study on the financing of grassroots sport, on behalf of the European Commission, has calculated that the annual contribution by state lotteries to the EU countries is **2.2 billion EUR**. This figure is based on data gathered from national governments and umbrella sport organisations. The study estimates that about 70 to 80 per cent of that money goes to grassroots sport.

We are pleased to hear that the European Commission will continue to look into the financing of sport and its relationship to gambling and betting. The EU Commissioner for the Internal Market, Mr **Michel Barnier**, has repeatedly stated throughout this year that the funding of sport is an issue close to his heart, and that it will be addressed by the broad stakeholder consultation he plans to launch shortly. This will be accompanied by the publication of a Green Paper on gambling.

It is also important to mention that, the EU Commissioner responsible for sport, Mrs **Androulla Vassiliou**, is expected to present **European Commission's Communication on Sport** next month. One of the actions included in the agenda of this communication will be to develop criteria for the stable and sustainable financing of sport. This will include contributions to sport from gambling and betting. We welcome this measure, and we also welcome the political support from the European Parliament in this matter.



The European Parliament made a resolution on the White on Sport which was adopted on 8 May 2008. In that resolution the point was made that sports organisations consider that the contribution made by state lotteries is vital to the financing of non-professional sport. The European Commission was called upon by the Parliament to help maintain this system of public financing. Moreover, the European Parliament repeated its position in a resolution on online gambling, adopted on 10 March 2009.

Let me now turn to current EU Sports Policy

From our point of view, the EU competence for sport creates a good opportunity for sports-focused incentive measures. For many European citizens and sport organisations, **the upcoming EU sport programme is of the utmost importance** – it is the most concrete way for them to understand the EU as part of their daily activities. **That is why the launch of the specific sport programme must be implemented and fully realized according to the planned schedule.** The most harmful message to the European sports movement and our members and citizens would be the postponing of the EU sport programme, especially after the enormous expectations of the sports movement across the whole of Europe.

ENGSO wants to emphasize that the funding priorities must aim to **improve the societal role of sport** and wellbeing of Europe's citizens. We regard the funding priorities of the Preparatory Actions in the field of Sport, **such as health, volunteering, gender equality, disability, as a success.** These priorities must also be included in the upcoming sport programme.

Areas such as health, volunteering and social inclusion must also be strongly followed up and supported in the upcoming **European Commission's Communication on Sport**. There are items of concern for us. This includes the **possibility that volunteering will not be included in it**. It is essential to emphasize that volunteering and non-profit voluntary sport organisations are the absolute foundation of the whole pyramid sport model. Volunteering and its significance must be recognized.

Dear friends,



One key item in safeguarding the functioning of organised sports – from grassroots level to elite sports – is **to ensure sustainable funding mechanisms**. The financing of grassroots level sports needs to be guaranteed. If this doesn't work because of a lack of sufficient funding, there won't be any top-level or professional athletes. The lack of funding will also have the effect of creating a barrier for participation. State lotteries' contributions are crucial for the participation of everyone.

Thank you for your attention.