

European Non-Governmental Sports Organization

ENGSO Statement on the EU Directive Proposal

"Services in the Internal Market"

National sports confederations throughout the European Union express their deep concern regarding specific contents of the European directive on services, which may lead to a liberalization of national gambling markets.

ENGSO, umbrella organisation representing sport confederations from 40 European countries, informs you about these worries and draws your attention on this matter of fundamental importance for the future of sport.

The organisation of sport within the Community is primarily based on structures, which base upon voluntary engagement by people in clubs and federations. The Nice declaration on sport, adopted in 2000 by the EU Heads of State and government, describe the role of sport organisations as

"Ensuring the essential solidarity between the various levels of sporting practices from recreational to top-level sport, which co-exist there; they provide the possibility of access to sports for the public at large, human and financial support for amateur sports, promotion of equal access to every level of sporting activity for men and women alike, youth training, health protection and measures to combat doping, acts of violence and racist or xenophobic occurrences."

This model, set into action on a daily basis through the network of sport clubs on local and regional level, is financially safeguarded by the revenues from state licensed lotteries. In 2004, an average 50% of national funding for amateur sport in the EU came from lottery funding. In Finland, it even represented 98%.

Non-licensed companies offering sporting bets create private profits by utilizing sport without letting sport organisation participate from their earnings.

Through the financial support of national lotteries, sport organisations are enabled to provide their competences within the fields of

- health prevention
- sport for all initiatives
- sport infrastructure
- employment
- fight against doping
- integration through sport measures
- youth work activities
- free of charge qualification and training of volunteer staff.

The opening of national gambling markets to companies, offering their gambling services without a state license, would go along with a significant decrease of the means national lotteries put to the disposal of public interest activities, such as social works, culture or sport.

Governmental authorities will not be able to compensate these reductions.

On behalf of our members, we therefore call upon the European institutions to exclude gambling services from the scope of the directive 011 services in the internal market, and thus safeguard the existence of sport structures within the community.