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17th ENGSO GENERAL ASSEMBLY

House of Sports, Paris (France), April 24-25, 2009

Report
ENGSO Secretary General

ENGSO

The story of ENGSO started very long ago. From the time when it was founded as a European NGO club in 1966 to what it is now, ENGSO changed and adapted to suit the needs of its members.

Throughout most of its work and activities in this period, ENGSO endeavored to be the bridge, as its very emblem shows, between the sides that had no connections, GOs and NGOs, East and West, most recently, EU and non-EU, safeguarding the independence of sport primarily, broadening the importance of sport activities, fighting against all negative tendencies and, of course, for the role and status of sport in the society as a whole.

President Kervinen presented all our activities in line with the vision and mission of ENGSO and the current political tendencies in Europe. European Non-Governmental Sports Organisation, the pan European organisation for the national sports umbrella organisations (National Sports Confederations and/or National Olympic Committees) in Europe has had an indeed very active period.

As you well know, in August 2005 ENGSO ExCom decided to initiate a process to revitalise and strengthen the organization and formed the Development Group (EDG). Our EDG fulfilled their tasks of evaluating the role, aims, policies and strategies of ENGSO, its mission statement and important areas/issues, and outlined a long-term strategic plan for ENGSO.

Taking into account the needs and wishes of ENGSO members, as well as the input from relevant stakeholders in Europe, the ENGSO Strategic Plan was devised for the period 2007 to 2011.

We are in the mid-term and in conformity with the Plan, adopted by the ENGSO General Assembly in Helsinki in May 2007, we have done quite a bit to fulfill the new vision and mission and newly defined priorities. However, the plan also refers to necessary changes in the internal organisation and its working methods, which we have started.

Not concentrating so much on the political agenda, allow me to underline the practical priorities for which the ExCom worked, and they were:

1. To upgrade and consolidate the ENGSO internal organisation
2. To develop clear and effective profile and communication methods
3. To identify and obtain new organisational resources

We wanted to strengthen the role of ENGSO and to facilitate the future tasks identified in the Strategic plan, so we made some changes to the organisation (structure, human resources) and its working methods upgrading the internal organization to a certain point.

Summarizing the activities in that direction, we have succeeded in fulfilling most of the tasks set by our members.

Beside the regular contacts and communication of the Secretariat, preparation of all documents for and coordination of organization of ExCom meetings, Fora and General Assemblies in the past period, updating the website to some extent, it has functioned as a semi-professional office, with the Secretary General and Administrative Coordinator.

As you all know, in accordance with the decision of the General Assembly in Helsinki, ENGSO founded three new permanent expert Working Groups. The EU, Communication and Marketing, and Funding Working Group.

With the help of EU Working Group in particular, ENGSO has become very EU pro-active in the past two years. The precious knowledge and experience of EU WG members, those from former period and the new ones, enabled us to profit from the programmes and assistance of EU for the projects and programmes directed to sport and citizens. Dynamic and efficient, the activities of this WG have attracted interest of ENGSO members and involved many of them in projects that all members would be able to benefit from. They have provided insight into the projects that deserve the attention of the EU Sports Commission and are also able to impart instruction to those members that can also apply for assistance and funds. One of the possibilities that can still be studied is formation of professionals in member countries with the help of those already involved in projects. Not to mention how very much our EU WG was involved in the consultations for the White Paper on Sport, whose application is already on the agenda.

Communication and Marketing WG was formed somewhat later, but caught up very quickly with the Newsletter and the Press Releases on the occasion of all significant events related to ENGSO and its activities. Further to the decisions made at the meeting of the C & M WG and part of the ExCom in Belgrade, the project for the reconstruction of the website and the potentials of the server being in Belgrade within the NOC Serbia, will offer many new features and possibilities for the future.

In order to implement the Strategic Plan it was necessary to increase the ENGSO resources. Beside the rise in membership fees and voluntary contributions, ExCom also succeeded in providing, through the assistance of EU WG members, significant funding from the EU through the Citizenship project, but also through donations and sponsorship of partners of ENGSO. Some plans are also being made for the sponsorship packages to be offered in future through activities of the C & M WG.

That is maybe why the establishing Funding WG at this moment was probably too ambitious. Limited in professionals that could assist in that area, the financial assistance was provided through the work and activities of the ExCom.

Members of ENGSO ExCom and its WGs have given significant contribution through their projects in the domain of education and health, major topics in the sport and physical activities of our European reality, through their participation in the EU Platform for Health and through the plans to establish data concerning the experts in all member countries.

Based on the needs of ENGSO and its members at this moment, there is a proposal for establishing a new Working Group covering the Sports Social Matters, including collection of data important for ENGSO Members, but that will be on this Assembly to decide on its contents and tasks.

We have planned to professionalize the work of ENGSO, however, ExCom is of the opinion that we should continue to be still somewhat conservative in such sense that at this moment it is a sum too high to accept. But, as we have seen already from the immediate example, project of the EU WG for which we have already received confirmation of funding –

EU:Sport:Future, not only the project, but also an assistant will be financed, working on this and perhaps many other projects. As you know, last year through the Citizenship Project 60,000 EUR were provided to ENGSO members for their activities in ENGSO. This year, most of the funding received for the new project will be dedicated to the project assistant and her work on the project.

As decided by the ENGSO GA through its Strategic plan, the pillars for ENGSO's working methods applied by ENGSO are:

- To meet proactively with important stakeholders and target groups and strengthen the European sporting network in the interest of sport in Europe;
- To involve and support national experts in policy development and promoting ENGSO across a range of subject areas;
- Frequent and high quality exchange of information through the ENGSO website and electronic newsletters;
- To formalise working procedures, especially in the field of communications (internally and externally), involving both the strategic and the operational level.

We have accomplished improving the position and role of ENGSO in the Council of Europe and EPAS, EOC EU Office of Sport, EU Sport Commission and in many other institutions and bodies of Europe.

All this and much more has been done and we will continue in the same way, trying to establish ENGSO and its true values.

Our shared values are based on our belief that the sports structures, its volunteers and young participants are the backbone of sport in Europe. We deem that building up and strengthening these structures and supporting volunteers is absolutely necessary to develop sport, increase participation, especially amongst the young, and maintain an impact that reaches beyond sport. ENGSO Youth, the autonomous organization in charge of all youth issues, has been particularly active in this area, even so much as contributing to have the year 2011 be the Year of Volunteering, creating the Pink Paper on Sports, initiating and educating ENGSO members to create Youth organizations within their organizations, and giving them the real say in sport in their countries.

Following the elections in the NOC Serbia, I have been appointed Special Advisor and Chair of the International – European relations in the NOC. That would give me opportunity to commit myself even more to the tasks and responsibilities of Secretary General in the forthcoming period, if you decide so.

Mission of ENGSO is clear, compact, and very attractive, and we do all in our power to fulfill it - ***promote the interests of sport organisations in Europe.***

We continue with our main aim – fulfilling the ENGSO PRIORITIES 2009-2011:

**Active Citizenship
Impact of EU Policies on Societies
People's Well-being in Europe
Communication**