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ADVISORY COUNCIL ON YOUTH (CCJ)

Opinion

PACE Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media

**Draft Resolution “Sport for all: bridge to equality,
integration and social inclusion”**

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The Advisory Council on Youth, in accordance with its terms of reference to formulate opinions to the bodies of the Council of Europe, has examined the preliminary draft Resolution of the Parliamentary Assembly on “Sport for all: bridge to equality, integration and social inclusion” as it appears in document AS/Cult (2015) 44, 23 September 2015.

The Advisory Council on Youth (CCJ) welcomes the initiative of the PACE Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media to draft a Resolution on “Sport for all: bridge to equality, integration and social inclusion” and the affirmation that sport plays an important role in strengthening social cohesion. In particular the Advisory Council would highlight the draft Resolution’s focus on promoting a shift in sport policy in member states to recognise sport’s contribution to areas beyond the health sector, and in combating all forms of discrimination in sport.

While the Advisory Council acknowledges the vision of ‘sport for all’, and the good intentions of the draft Resolution, we recommend that both the draft Resolution and the explanatory memorandum becomes even more comprehensive and ensures to a higher degree the inclusion of everyone in sports. We also advise to encourage member states to broaden its scope of actions – not only to make policy aims more inclusive – but also to encourage investment in accessible infrastructure which will provide the prerequisite for everyone to be included in sport.

Within this context the Advisory Council recommends the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media, to consider:

- widening the discrimination grounds in the draft Resolution to include the monitoring of discriminatory incidents based on a person’s (dis)ability, racial, linguistic or ethnic identity, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or sexual characteristics (point 4.2);
- encouraging the inclusion of multicultural awareness, adaptive sport and inclusion of persons with disabilities trainings for sport instructors (point 4.7);
- adding a recommendation to member states to invest in local sport facilities and infrastructure to make sport truly accessible to all, emphasising the importance for member states to include relevant civil society stakeholders, in particular disability and sport NGO’s, in the planning, implementation and management processes;
- adding a recommendation after point 4.8 as follows: “*member states should support on an equal basis access to information of television and other types of media broadcasting of sport events for persons with disabilities to ensure recognition and support of their specific cultural and linguistic identity, including sign languages and deaf culture*”;

- adding a recommendation to member states to encourage all sports governing bodies to follow the Good Governance in Grassroots Sports guidelines developed by the International Sport and Culture Association.¹

Furthermore, the Advisory Council recommends including an additional paragraph in the Explanatory Memorandum under point 1 (Scope and aim) which emphasises facts about physical inactivity in Europe, with the following text:

- *Various governmental and non-governmental organisations have already highlighted the worrying trends of physical activity levels in Europe and their associated costs for public health². According to an ISCA/CEBR report “inactivity imposes economic costs of €80.4 billion per year to the EU-28” only. The latest Eurobarometer on physical activity, while limited to EU countries, has shown that physical inactivity is increasing overall.³*

The Advisory Council also recommends that a reference is made in the Explanatory Memorandum under point 3 (Enhance Social inclusion of vulnerable groups) and/or point 4 (Promote integration by overcoming social, cultural and other barriers...) to the Committee of Ministers Recommendation (2015)³ on the access of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods to social rights⁴ and to encourage the member states to follow the recommendations therein.

Regarding the aspect of achieving gender equality in sport, the Advisory Council strongly recommends that the scope of gender equality in the draft Resolution should be expanded to include all genders by:

- revising point 21 in the Explanatory Memorandum to read: *“I would also recall here that sport still faces the challenge of equal involvement of people who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, trans or intersex (LGBTI). Behind the challenge of bigger participation of the LGBTI community in sport activities, there is a greater challenge of expressing sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression in the sport environment without facing any prejudices or exclusion because of that.”*
- recalling the Parliamentary Assembly Resolution 2048 (2015) Discrimination against transgender people in Europe⁵, and adding a specific point about transgender and intersex athletes who face unparalleled discrimination when accessing sport. Taking heed of the conclusions of the IOC Consensus

¹ http://www.sportanddev.org/en/toolkit/manuals_and_tools/?5590/1/Guidelines-for-Good-Governance-in-Grassroots-Sport

² <http://www.friendsofeurope.org/media/uploads/2015/06/The-Economic-Costs-of-Physical-Inactivity-in-Europe-June-2015.pdf>

³ http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/docs/ebs_412_en.pdf

⁴

<https://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?id=2282497&Site=CM&BackColorInternet=C3C3C3&BackColorIntranet=EDB021&BackColorLogged=F5D383>

⁵ <http://assembly.coe.int/nw/xml/XRef/X2H-Xref-ViewPDF.asp?FileID=21736&lang=en>

Meeting on Sex Reassignment and Hyperandrogenism (November 2015) which states that *“it is necessary to ensure insofar as possible that trans athletes are not excluded from the opportunity to participate in sporting competition”*.⁶

- removing all occurrences of the word “Gypsy” as it carries pejorative connotation and use only “Roma” as it is the term officially recognized and used by international institutions, including the Council of Europe.
- replacing “people with special needs” with “persons with disabilities” on paragraph 36 and 37.

Finally the Advisory Council would like to stress that a comprehensive approach to ‘sport for all’ should also include wide-ranging research on the subject of sport and social inclusion, in order to achieve evidence based policies (for the future) and well informed decisions in the area of sport. Therefore we recommend that the importance of research is emphasised to a larger degree in the draft Resolution.

⁶ IOC Consensus Meeting on Sex Reassignment and Hyperandrogenism (November 2015)
http://media.wix.com/ugd/2bc3fc_c2d4035ff5684f41a813f6d04bc86e02.pdf