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#### OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

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From: General Secretariat of the Council  
To: Delegations

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Subject: Conclusions of the Council and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on the economic dimension of sport and its socio-economic benefits

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Delegations will find attached the conclusions on the economic dimension of sport and its socio-economic benefits, as adopted by the Council and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council (ECYS) on 26-27 November 2018.

**The economic dimension of sport and its socio-economic benefits**  
**- Draft conclusions of the Council and the Representatives of the Governments**  
**of the Member States, meeting within the Council -**

The Council of the European Union and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council

I. RECALLING THAT:

1. The EU Work Plans for Sport (2011-2014<sup>1</sup>, 2014-2017<sup>2</sup> and 2017-2020<sup>3</sup>), adopted by the Council and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, underlined the importance of the economic dimension of sport, addressing in particular the sustainable financing of sport, the legacy of major sport events, economic benefits of sport, and innovation.
2. The Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council of 27 November 2012 on strengthening the evidence-base for sport policy making<sup>4</sup>, recognized the significant contribution of sport to Europe's economy as a driver of growth and employment and its contribution to achieve the goals of the Europe 2020 strategy and underlined the importance of comparable sport-related data and their use in policy formulation to increase the quality of sport policies.

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<sup>1</sup> OJ C 162, 1.6.2011, pp 1-5.

<sup>2</sup> OJ C 183, 14.6.2014, pp. 12-17.

<sup>3</sup> OJ C 189, 5.6.2017, pp. 5-14.

<sup>4</sup> OJ C 393, 19.12.2012, pp. 20-21.

3. The Council Conclusions on the role of voluntary activities in sport in promoting active citizenship<sup>5</sup> point out that the sport sector, together with voluntary activities in sport, constitutes a measurable and significant economic and social value in national economies, with potential to stimulate growth and employment rates throughout the European Union.
4. The Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council of 27 November 2012 on promoting health-enhancing physical activity (HEPA)<sup>6</sup> underline that the current high rates of physical inactivity constitute a major concern for the EU and its Member States, both from a health, social and an economic perspective.
5. The Council Conclusions on the contribution of sport to the EU economy, and in particular to addressing youth unemployment and social inclusion<sup>7</sup> emphasise the importance of the sport sector for the economy and young people to attain useful skills in paid employment as well as in voluntary activities.
6. The Conclusions of the Council and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council on sport as a driver of innovation and economic growth<sup>8</sup> examined the potential of sport in terms of growth and employment and as a driver for innovation.

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<sup>5</sup> OJ C 372, 20.12.2011, pp. 24-26.

<sup>6</sup> OJ C 393, 19.12.2012, pp. 22ff.

<sup>7</sup> OJ C 32, 4.2.2014, pp. 2-5.

<sup>8</sup> OJ C 436, 5.12.2014, pp. 2-5.

7. The Council Conclusions on the promotion of motor skills, physical and sport activities for children<sup>9</sup> foster the encouraging of physical education in schools, including motor skills in early childhood against the background of a change of the daily habits of children from physical activities to more sedentary activities.
8. The Council Conclusions to contribute towards halting the rise in Childhood Overweight and Obesity<sup>10</sup> confirm that health is a value, an opportunity and an investment for the economic and social development of each country and that childhood obesity is a strong predictor of adult obesity with well-known health and economic consequences.

## II. CONSIDERING THAT:

9. Sport is recognized as an economic driver for growth in terms of effects on value added, gross domestic product and purchasing power.<sup>11</sup>
10. Sport is a cross-sectoral phenomenon and goes far beyond the revenues of the sport industry. It represents in particular a stake in public health, regional development and tourism, but also in integration and education and as a social link.
11. Efforts regarding the measurability of the economic impact of sport have been made at EU level since the economic dimension of sport was first addressed in the EU context in 2006<sup>12</sup>.

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<sup>9</sup> OJ C 417, 15.12.2015, pp. 46ff.

<sup>10</sup> OJ C 205, 29.6.2017, pp. 46-52.

<sup>11</sup> Study on the economic impact of sport through Sport Satellite Accounts, 2018.

<sup>12</sup> Expert group on Sport Statistics (2011-2014), Vilnius Definition of Sport

12. To date, altogether nine EU Member States<sup>13</sup> maintain fully-fledged national Sport Satellite Accounts (SSAs) and additional five countries<sup>14</sup> keep a set of sport-related data which allow for a high degree of precision in the results.
13. According to a recent study<sup>15</sup>, sport accounts for 2.12% of the EU GDP and sport-related employment is accountable for 5.67 m people (2.72% of EU employment). The results also show that, when the economy was suffering, sport was a very resilient sector, generating growth and jobs.<sup>16</sup>
14. Although the economic dimension of sport – corresponding to the national accounts – is well represented via SSAs and other calculation systems, the contribution of sport to the economy is still underestimated, because there are numerous additional, so called socio-economic effects (e.g. health economic effects, the commitment of volunteers, the contribution of innovation to growth and the contribution of sport to regional development) that are still not represented, but have effects on GDP and employment.
15. The economic costs of physical inactivity-related diseases<sup>17</sup> are not reflected in the national accounts<sup>18</sup> even if these economic implications are important<sup>19</sup>, and are not quantifiable without appropriate methods.

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<sup>13</sup> Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Germany, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal and the UK.

<sup>14</sup> Bulgaria, France, Luxembourg, Slovakia and Spain.

<sup>15</sup> Study on the economic impact of sport through Sport Satellite Accounts, 2018.

<sup>16</sup> Also confirmed in: [http://www.oecd.org/mcm/C-MIN\(2013\)1-ENG.pdf](http://www.oecd.org/mcm/C-MIN(2013)1-ENG.pdf)

<sup>17</sup> Direct costs in health system, productivity losses, mortality and occupational disabilities caused by physical inactivity-related diseases like e.g. diabetes type II, depression, back problems or cardiovascular diseases.

<sup>18</sup> Accounts and techniques for measuring an economic activity of a nation

<sup>19</sup> As confirmed by the ISCA/CEBR Study “The Economic Cost of Physical Inactivity in Europe”: <http://inactivity-time-bom.nowwemove.com/> and the WHO Study “Physical activity and health: evidence for action”:

[http://www.euro.who.int/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0011/87545/E89490.pdf?ua=1](http://www.euro.who.int/_data/assets/pdf_file/0011/87545/E89490.pdf?ua=1)

16. Volunteer work has a significant educational benefit and provides an important contribution to the economic dimension of sport<sup>20</sup> which is not reflected in national accounts.
17. The sport-related dimension of innovation<sup>21</sup> has not yet been sufficiently considered in terms of GDP and employment because of a lack of data. It is therefore important to develop reliable empirical results concerning the impact of sport-related innovation on export dynamics and economic growth.
18. The contribution of sport to regional development still lacks visibility and awareness of the many ways sport and physical activity could be powerful means of achieving the EU objective of cohesion, in particular in view of contributing to Europe 2020 objectives. Recent evidence<sup>22</sup> has shown how sport-related projects have contributed to local economies, employment and social cohesion as well as highlighting that many regions across Europe have included sport in their smart specialisation strategies.

### III. RECOGNISING THAT:

19. The representation of the contribution of sport to the economy as a whole requires the consideration of additional aspects, inter alia the quantification of health economic effects of physical activity, the recognition of the additional benefit of voluntary work, the contribution of innovation to enhancing growth potential and the analysis of the impact of sport-related projects on regional development.

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<sup>20</sup> Study on Volunteering in the European Union, 2010

<sup>21</sup> Covering the process of translating an idea or invention into a good or service that creates value or for which customers will pay

<sup>22</sup> Study on the contribution of sport to regional development through the structural funds, 2016.

20. Measuring the socio-economic effects of sport requires additional methods and approaches<sup>23</sup>. In order to provide evidence-based results on the national and European level the availability of comparable data and findings is necessary. Any collected data on these matters should be gender disaggregated.
21. Sport and physical activities contribute to addressing today's local and regional challenges, notably by developing soft mobility solutions, by accelerating the revitalisation of urban areas thanks to smart sport infrastructures, or by improving social cohesion across diverse communities.

#### IV. INVITE MEMBER STATES TO:

22. Consider developing SSAs or other comparable calculation systems to quantify the economic impact of sport.
23. Support and disseminate the idea of extending the representation of the economic dimension of sport by socio-economic aspects, especially volunteering, health economic aspects and innovation, on the European and national level and by enhancing cross-sectoral cooperation.
24. Take into consideration the value of voluntary work for the national economy and including this topic in statistics.
25. Raise awareness about the potential of sport to contribute to growth and employment through reliable data.

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<sup>23</sup> The Kazan Action Plan, as adopted on 15 July 2017 by UNESCO, also establishes in Action 2 the need to develop common indicators for measuring the contribution of physical education, physical activity and sport to prioritized Sustainable Development Goals and targets.

26. Consider further collaboration among Member States and with the Commission to develop comparable definitions, methods and standards concerning the socio-economic dimensions of the sport sector.
27. Promote the exchange at national level on the inclusion of smart specialization strategies, such as sport clusters, where appropriate.
28. Consider including sport and physical activities as a cross-cutting priority across other policy areas, such as health, education, transport, urban planning, social and tourism policies, where the contribution of sport has been widely evidenced.

V. INVITE THE COMMISSION TO:

29. Promote and support actions such as the exchange of relevant data and method-specific know-how, the collection of evidence and aggregation of sport statistics, as well as technical support, which are aiming to improve and simplify Member States efforts to quantify the economic dimension of sport.
30. Initialize an evaluation process on the use and applicability of calculation systems used to quantify the socio-economic aspects of sport, including mapping out existing research and collecting examples of best practices.
31. Support, within the context of a group of experts and with the support of Eurostat, the development of tools to complement or update the already existing data on the economic dimension of sport, including socio-economic aspects.
32. Raise awareness about the potential of sport as a source of innovation.



33. Support the exchange and further strengthen the cooperation, both within the Commission and with other EU institutions, on the role of sport in modern economies and society, in particular in view of its contribution to regional development.

## VI INVITE THE SPORTS MOVEMENT TO

34. Support the collection of data on the contribution of voluntary work in sport and physical activity.
  35. Consider to foster comparable economic analysis on the economic impact of voluntary work and physical activity as well as physical inactivity.
  36. Encourage the exchange of best practices on methods to measure socio-economic effects with experts.
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1. The Commission White Paper on Sport<sup>24</sup> put a particular emphasis on the economic dimension of sport, stressing the need for comparable EU-wide information in order to develop evidence-based policies.
  2. The Commission Communication on Sport<sup>25</sup> recognises the importance of Sport Satellite Accounts (SSAs) for sound policy making and highlights the value of sport as a tool for regional development.
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<sup>24</sup> Doc. 11811/07 - COM(2007)391 final, 12.07.2007.

<sup>25</sup> Doc. 5597/11 - COM(2011)12 final, 21.01.2011.