

Anti-corruption measures in EU sports policy

Corruption and good governance in sport have been a constant concern for the EU since the very beginning of its sport policy. Preserving the integrity of sport has been given top priority in the two EU Work Plans for Sport adopted by the Council in recent years.

General framework

EU competence in the field of sport is a supporting one ([Article 6](#), Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union – TFEU), meaning that the Union can carry out actions to support, coordinate or supplement measures taken by its Member States. In particular, it adds value by helping address transnational challenges where concerted efforts and a coordinated approach are needed. The objectives of EU sports policy are defined in [Article 165](#) TFEU as being the promotion of fairness and openness in sporting competitions and cooperation between bodies responsible for sports, and the protection of the physical and moral integrity of sportsmen and -women. Article 165 only allows for incentive measures and recommendations, excluding any harmonisation of the laws and regulations of Member States. The EU approach to corruption and good governance in sport, as indicated by key policy documents such as the Commission's [White Paper on Sport](#) (2007) and Communication on [Developing the European dimension in sport](#) (2011), as well as the [2011-14](#) and [2014-17](#) Work Plans for Sport, rests mainly on structured dialogue and cooperation with relevant competent organisations, sports movement and bodies, and support for projects and networks.

Policy tools

Structured dialogue with sports movements takes concrete form in the annual '[EU Sport Forum](#)', where key sport-related issues are discussed. Its 2012 meeting led to the adoption of the [Nicosia Declaration](#) on match-fixing. The [EU Expert Group on Good Governance](#), created by the Council in adopting the first EU Work Plan for Sport, also offers a platform for dialogue. It gathers experts from national governments as well as European and international sporting bodies (observer status is granted to sports stakeholders upon request), is supported and attended by the Commission and reports to the Council. Achievements so far include recommendations on [principles of good governance in sport](#), on the EU's role in combating match-fixing and on supervision of sports agents and transfers of players. Within the framework of the 2014-17 Work Plan, the group is expected to work on guiding principles relating, inter alia, to democracy, in particular in the context of the procedure for awarding major sport events to hosts. **Cooperation** with competent international organisations is covered in Article 165 TFEU. One such example is the Commission's participation, on behalf of the EU, in the negotiations for the Council of Europe's [Convention](#) on the manipulation of sports competitions, a legally binding instrument open to signature by the EU. Finally, incentive measures include **financial support** under the sports '[Preparatory Actions](#)' for transnational projects submitted by public bodies or civil society organisations, notably in the area of good governance. In 2014-20, these actions are covered by the [sport chapter](#) of the Erasmus+ programme, allocating funds for collaborative partnerships promoting integrity in sport and non-profit-making European sports events.

European Parliament

Parliament has participated actively in the work on corruption and good governance in sport. Besides dedicated committee hearings on the issue, it has adopted a written [declaration](#) on combating corruption in European Sport (2011); a [resolution](#) on the European dimension in sport (2012) calling for a 'zero tolerance' policy on corruption; and a [resolution](#) on match-fixing and corruption in sport (2013) asking Member States to introduce common sanctions for match-fixing. In reaction to recent corruption allegations against the international football federation, FIFA, the EP adopted a [resolution](#) on 11 June 2015, urging in-depth structural reforms within the organisation.