

**Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States,
meeting within the Council, of 10 May 2012 on combating doping in recreational sport**

(2012/C 169/03)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION AND THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE MEMBER STATES,

1. RECALLING:

1. The European Union Work Plan for Sport for 2011-2014 ⁽¹⁾, adopted on 20 May 2011, which highlighted the fight against doping as a priority theme and which established an Expert Group on anti-doping,
2. The Commission's White Paper on Sport of 11 July 2007 ⁽²⁾ which called on all actors with a responsibility for public health to take the health risk aspects of doping into account, and the Commission's Communication of 18 January 2011 on Developing the European Dimension in Sport ⁽³⁾, which stated that doping remains an important threat to sport and that use of doping substances by amateur athletes poses serious public health hazards and calls for preventive action, including in fitness centres,
3. That European Union action in the field of sport shall be aimed at, inter alia, protecting the physical and moral integrity of sportsmen and sportswomen, especially the youngest sportsmen and sportswomen,

2. CONSIDERING THAT:

1. Doping in recreational sport and recreational sport environments such as fitness centres, is an important problem across EU Member States which:
 - threatens the health of individual doping users
 - threatens persons in the doping users' immediate environment
 - harms the integrity of recreational sports
 - is linked to negative societal phenomena, including criminal activities such as illegal trafficking of doping substances
 - in particular affects young people,
2. Knowledge of doping in recreational sport, including the scope and magnitude of the problem and effective measures of prevention, education, control, sanctioning and recovery from substance abuse, is limited at both an EU and an international level ⁽⁴⁾,

3. While international cooperation in relation to the fight against doping in elite sports is well developed, cooperation in relation to the fight against doping in recreational sport, between EU Member States as well as internationally, has so far been limited,
4. The fight against doping in recreational sport should not divert attention from the fight against doping in elite sports, but rather supplement the efforts to secure clean and safe sport environments at all levels,
5. While the main motive for using doping in elite sport is performance enhancement, studies indicate that users of doping in recreational sports also have a range of other motives, including aesthetics, self confidence building and experiencing euphoria from using doping substances, and that the problem of doping in recreational sport should be understood and dealt with accordingly,
6. While the World Anti Doping Code (the Code) focuses on the fight against doping in international and national elite sports, the Code also states that some National Anti Doping Organisations (NADOs) may elect to test and apply anti-doping rules to recreational-level or masters competitors, but that the NADOs are not required to apply all aspects of the Code to such persons and instead can establish specific national rules for doping control for non-international-level or non-national-level competitors without being in conflict with the Code ⁽⁵⁾,

3. CALL ON EU MEMBER STATES TO:

1. Encourage and contribute to the development of educational programmes, information campaigns or other preventive measures regarding doping in recreational sport and related issues that could be applied by the sports movement, by the fitness sector, and by the education system and the health sector,
2. Promote close cooperation between public authorities, the sport movement and the fitness sector, for instance by sharing information on prevalence and prevention and developing joint projects, guidelines and regulation in the fight against doping in recreational sport,

⁽¹⁾ OJ C 162, 1.6.2011, p. 1.

⁽²⁾ doc. 11811/07.

⁽³⁾ doc. 5597/11.

⁽⁴⁾ Among more recent studies on the subject are the network projects regarding doping in recreational sport co-financed through the 2010 Preparatory Actions in the field of sport, 'Fitness Against Doping' and 'Strategy for Stopping Steroids'.

⁽⁵⁾ World Anti Doping Code, World Anti Doping Agency, 2009, p. 126 (Appendix I, Definitions, Athlete).

3. Encourage adequate and effective information sharing and cooperation between national and international authorities dealing with aspects of the problem of doping in recreational sport and with investigation and sanctioning of illegal sale and trafficking of doping substances, including authorities responsible for sport, anti doping, health, education and police and customs authorities,
 4. Promote a framework of effective and appropriate national measures for investigation and sanctioning of the production, trafficking, distribution and possession of doping substances in recreational sport in order to restrict the availability and use of such substances, for example through control and related measures in relevant recreational sport environments such as fitness centres,
 5. Support the efforts of WADA to develop effective frameworks of cooperation with Europol, Interpol, the World Customs Organization, the pharmaceutical industry, and other relevant international stakeholders in order to restrict the availability of doping substances that can be used both in elite and recreational sports,
4. AGREE TO:
- Extend the mandate of the Expert Group on Anti-Doping established under the EU Work Plan for Sport 2011-2014 by adding, while stressing that priority should be given to the actions described in the Work Plan relating to the EU contribution to the World Anti-Doping Code review process, the following action: to collect, including through cooperation with relevant stakeholders, best practices in the fight against doping in recreational sport in EU Member States, inter alia, in relation to prevention, education, control and related measures as well as recovery from substance abuse, and on this basis, by end-2013, to present a set of recommendations on combating doping in recreational sport that can be applied at both EU and national level.
5. INVITE THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION TO:
1. On the basis of previous work in this field initiate a study with the aim of developing the evidence base for policies designed to combat doping in recreational sport, including through information gathering on the use of doping substances in recreational sport in EU Member States,
 2. Promote and support the sharing of best practices in the EU regarding the fight against doping in recreational sport, inter alia, through support to trans-national public awareness campaigns and dissemination of the results of the projects regarding the fight against doping supported through the Preparatory Actions in the field of sport as well as the results of any projects regarding doping in recreational sport to be supported in the future. The sharing of best practices could relate to:
 - Education, information and public awareness raising
 - Testing for doping substances in recreational sport
 - Treatment and recovery from abuse of doping in recreational sport
 - Labelling and controlling content in nutritional supplements in order to avoid inadvertent intake of doping substances
 - Legislative measures that have proven effective at tackling doping in recreational sports in individual EU Member States.
-