

● The project structure

The early period of the project will consist of establishing:

- the 2 «Maps of the 100» meaning mapping existing employer and employee organisations, social partners within the 25 EU Member States (as of 31.12.2006), and the 4 sports sub-sectors identified and represented within EASE;
- an overview of the sports systems in the EU: the organisation of sports in the EU Member States has an impact on the way employee and employer organisations are structured and developed.

Then, the social partners will be approached simultaneously at 3 different levels:

LEVEL 1 - SOCIAL PARTNERS WHO ARE IDENTIFIED AT NATIONAL LEVEL AND ALREADY AFFILIATED AT EU LEVEL,



LEVEL 2 - SOCIAL PARTNERS IDENTIFIED AT NATIONAL LEVEL BUT NOT AFFILIATED AT EU LEVEL,

LEVEL 3 - COUNTRIES WHERE THE SPORTS SOCIAL PARTNERS DON'T EXIST AT NATIONAL LEVEL, OR DO EXIST BUT ARE NOT RECOGNIZED AS OFFICIAL SOCIAL PARTNERS, AND ARE NOT AFFILIATED AT EU LEVEL.

From this point, 4 teams of 2 organisations will start their work, each team will consist of 1 representative of EASE and 1 of EURO-MEI.

At the LEVEL 1, the task of the management group assisted by the team 1 will consist of continuing to establish and maintain contacts with the European sports social partners.

EURO-MEI will provide EASE with information about other sectoral social dialogue experiences. Contacts will be established with the social partners and representatives of the professional football.

→ Team 1 (SkillsActive  + Fes-UGT ) will also be in charge of producing a feasibility study in English for a future application for the creation of the sport social dialogue committee.

During LEVEL 2, the work will largely consist of listing the social partners in the process of developing their structures, and existing social partners who are not yet affiliated at the European level to assess their representativeness and organise round-tables to present them with the benefits of being affiliated at the European level.

Each team operating at the LEVEL 2 will be responsible for the preparation and organisation of 2 round-tables.

Here are the 6 targeted countries:

- the team 2 (WOS  + F3C-CFDT ) will organise the 2 round-tables in Italy and Spain,
- the team 3 (SNELM  + HTF ) in Finland and Denmark,
- and the team 4 (BBF&W  + FNV-Sport ) in Portugal and Germany.

These organisations will demonstrate their own experience of building a formal social dialogue in their country.

LEVEL 3 will differ slightly, and will probably be the real starting point of a longer process.

It will consist of:

- searching and meeting with local structures (sports movement organisations, employers, employees...) and authorities (Ministries of Sport, of Employment, of Youth...)
- participating in negotiations and bringing expertise to the creation of national employer and employee organisations or to the official recognition of those already set up, with the view to making them reach LEVEL 2 of the project and subsequently LEVEL 1 as soon as possible.

We plan to target 4 countries which will be defined, at first, through the "2 Maps of the 100". We intend to especially pay attention to the countries which joined the EU in May 2004 and January 2007.

→ The results of our investigations in the 4 targeted countries will be presented in a report in English on the feasibility of the creation of employer and employee organisations in these countries.

The objective of this structuring through 3 levels of action and 4 operational teams is to provide to all actors of the social dialogue in the sports sector in the EU Member States an answer to the needs corresponding to the level of development of the social dialogue in their countries.



« REINFORCE THE REPRESENTATIVENESS OF THE SOCIAL PARTNERS IN THE SPORT SECTOR: ROW THE BOAT PROJECT »

The strong traditions of sport in associations and volunteering have hindered the emergence of social partners in most national sport systems. Although more than 800,000 people work in the sports sector as their main professional activity in the European Union, and for more than 20 years the professionalisation of sporting organisations has moved very rapidly, social dialogue as an element of the socio-economic development of the sector has been largely ignored or marginalised.

With a view to changing this situation, the general aim of the RBT project is to develop the social dialogue in the European sports sector through the reinforcement of existing social partners, and through EASE and EURO-MEI's joint work to support the development of social partners in countries where the social dialogue in the sport sector is emerging or less developed.

All this work will be carried out with the intention of submitting an application for the creation of a sport social dialogue committee at the end of the project.

Here are the goals that the project partnership wants to achieve:

- to have an overview of the social partners' organisations operating in the sport sector in all the EU Member States,
- to debate and analyse the situation of the sector and its consequences on the future creation of a sport social dialogue committee with the European sports social partners,
- to strengthen the European social partners encompassing the whole sport sector and increase their representativeness,
- to help the local structures and authorities to formally develop social dialogue structures at the national level,
- to increase the level of mutual understanding about the social dialogue in the sports sector in Europe.

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THE EUROPEAN SOCIAL DIALOGUE: A GENERAL INTRODUCTION

● What does social dialogue mean?

Social dialogue is defined by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) to include **all types of negotiation, consultation or simply exchange of information between, or among, representatives of governments, employers and workers**, on issues of common interest related to economic and social policy.

- It can exist as a **tripartite process**, with the government as an official party to the dialogue, or it may consist of **bipartite relations** between employee and employer organisations, with or without indirect government involvement.

- Dialogue can be **informal** or **institutionalised** and often it is a combination of both.

- It takes place at either **national, regional or company level**.

- It can be **inter-professional** or **sectoral** or a combination of these. The social dialogue is a driving force behind successful economic and social development.

● The legal framework

Article 138 of the EC Treaty provides for the consultation of social partner organisations at European level on a range of issues concerning employment and social affairs. This Article provides for **a compulsory two-stage consultation procedure**: at the first stage the Commission consults the social partners on **the possible direction of an initiative**, whilst at the second stage, the focus is on **the content of an initiative**. The dialogue between employee and employer organisations at Community level may lead to **contractual relations, including agreements (Article 139)**.

● The cross industry social dialogue

Cross-industry social dialogue covers the whole economy. Its purpose is to

promote dialogue between unions and employers in key areas common to all fields of employment and social affairs. All tripartite social dialogue, with a few exceptions, is cross-industry. Today, tripartite discussions have taken place on issues such as access to vocational training, improvement of young people's access to the labour market, equal opportunities for women and men, and integration of long term unemployed.

● The sectoral social dialogue

The sectoral social dialogue is gradually taking shape, with a voluntary bipartite dialogue process. It provides an effective level of intervention on the questions of employment, work organisation and the improvement of working conditions as it is **closer to workplace and able to anticipate change**. At sectoral level, the social partner organisations must apply jointly to the European Commission in order to take part in a social dialogue at European level. **The European organisations representing employers and workers must, when submitting this application, meet a number of criteria:**

- relate to specific sectors or categories, and be organised at European level,
 - consist of organisations which are themselves an integral and recognised part of Member State's social partner structures, and have the capacity to negotiate agreements, and which are representative of several Member States,
 - have adequate structures to ensure their effective participation in the work of the committees.
- This bipartite dialogue encourages emergent sectors, such as sports, to structure their exchanges in the European model of social dialogue.

THE SPECIFIC SITUATION OF THE SPORTS SECTOR

Building a sectoral social dialogue committee provides an opportunity for every sector to regulate common issues at European level. It represents the best framework for sports because it is close to the needs, concerns and interests of the social actors. Talking about social partners as such does not yet reflect the reality of the sport sector.

Currently the social dialogue is not organised in all countries through official institutions representing workers and employers. Most of the time a dialogue exists concerning social issues, but without an institutional framework corresponding to the Commission's criteria of social dialogue. Moreover, the necessity of a regulation at European level is an obvious acknowledgement. The only regulation existing is the freedom of circulation and concerns particularly the professional football. Workers circulation is a habit for some professionals in sport. Regulation at European level is not new. The problem is the way to do it that is to say by the social partners. **In this way, the sport sector could be pro-active to defend the specificity of the sector and will prove its maturity, without acting always in reaction like today.**

Previous European projects have identified the growing employment potential in the sports sector across the European countries and revealed that **the development of social dialogue is perceived by all stakeholders as the key factor to improve professionalism of the sector.**

In 2003, the European project «**Building the Social Dialogue in the Sport Sector**» - BSDSS project - consisted of preparing the establishment of a sport social dialogue committee. The partners of this project, led by EASE in cooperation with EURO-MEI, believe that social regulation of sport will be a future task of the European social partners, and not only the task of the European Commission and the sport movement institutions as it was previously.

● Definition of the sports sector

The first issue is to build a unique sectoral social dialogue committee for all sports. There is no legal definition of «sport». But the European Commission created a European Communities' Nomenclature of Activities (NACE) which defined the sports sector under the heading «**sports-related activities**» (under code 92.6), and which promote management training services and sporting events. In conclusion, 3 main segmentations of sports can be done: voluntary sport, commercial or leisure sport and professional sport. The social dialogue does not concern the public sector.

Voluntary sport is the traditional part of the sports sector and is still the most important one. It gathers non for profit organisations (mainly associations), which provide training and competitive sporting activities to their members. Essentially run by volunteers, it is nevertheless experiencing increasing professionalisation of its human resources.

Commercial and leisure sports represents a growing area in the sports sector. It is organised either by associations or by companies, often very small, which offer services and leisure opportunities but do not offer training for competition (e.g. fitness, horse riding, sailing, winter sports...). The last one is the most popular and well-known segment: **professional sport**. This is orientated essentially towards putting on events, within which professional football occupies a dominant position in Europe, ahead of other sports.

Even if these segments are autonomous from each other a feeling of belonging to a whole – the sport in question – is broadly shared by sport stakeholders in the different countries.

● The representative organisations at the European level

The second issue is to fulfil the European Commission's requirements: European social dialogue is only possible with representative social partners at the European level.

Currently, if we follow the criteria put forward by the Commission to the letter, a single organisation appears able to represent the workers in the sports sector at the European level: UNI-Europa. UNI-Europa is the European Region of Union Network International (UNI). It represents 700 unions in the European services sector. This organisation already forms part of a number of social dialogue committees in the services sector.

EURO-MEI is the European region of UNI-MEI, the media, entertainment and arts sector of UNI and part of UNI-Europa. EURO-MEI represents unions in broadcasting, live performance, film and TV production, the arts and sport. EURO-MEI is a clearing house for information useful to its affiliates, particularly that regarding movement of employees across national borders, collective agreements, and legal standards. It aims at developing the European social dialogue further in the audiovisual, life performance and sport sectors. EURO-MEI has affiliated unions in the sports sector in Spain, France, Sweden, Belgium, Germany, Italy and Austria.

EASE is a European non for profit organisation registered in France. It is an independent association of national and European sports employers' organisations wishing to promote social dialogue. EASE, created in 2003, is composed of 8 members: 7 national employer organisations coming from 5 different European countries, and 1 European organisation.

The agreed objectives of EASE in the entire sports field are:

- to understand and defend the rights and the material and moral interests of its members,
- to work together to ensure the harmonious development of the sector,
- to participate in the sport social dialogue committee at the European level,
- to negotiate at the European level on behalf of employers in sport.

Sport is regarded as a whole even if sub-sectors are identified.

The work of EASE is organised through 4 commissions to encompass the specialist interests of the sport sub-sectors: professional sport, voluntary sport, fitness and outdoors.

The European Commission will examine EASE and EURO-MEI through its conception of representativeness (see «The sectoral social dialogue»).

THE "ROW THE BOAT" PROJECT

● General objective

Following the BSDSS project («**Building the Social Dialogue in the Sport Sector**», 2003), the RBT project is the next step in the work towards the establishment of a sports social dialogue committee. According to the BSDSS conclusions, **the sectoral social dialogue is the proper level of discussion on many issues linked to employment, working conditions and vocational training**. The BSDSS recommendations specified that **the European social partners should develop themselves in order to improve their representativeness** in the countries of the EU, before being able to submit an application for the creation of a committee to the Commission. The RBT project endorses such a perspective.

Budget heading	“Industrial Relations and Social Dialogue” managed by the Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities of the European Commission. The RBT project is co-financed by the European Union (80%).
Perspective	to submit an application for the creation of a sport social dialogue committee
Partnership	11 organisations (3 EU ones – 8 national ones): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ leader = EASE ▶ management group = EASE + EURO-MEI ▶ strategic partner = EOSE ▶ 4 national employer organisations (members of EASE) = SkillsActive, WOS, SNELM, BBF&W ▶ 4 national employee organisations (members of EURO-MEI) = Fes-UGT, F3C-CFDT, HTF, FNV-Sport
Duration	A 1 year project from 1 Dec. 2006 to 31 Nov. 2007