

## Position paper about the impact of the Covid-19 crisis and the benefits of Social Dialogue for the Sport Sector

Everyone in Europe is concerned about the health crisis our society is currently facing and the consequences it may have on all sectors of our society, including sport. This crisis will indeed have very important consequences on the sport sector, from professional to grassroots sport. Cancelling and postponing international competitions is one of the most visible examples of this. Thousands of sport employers have been forced to stop their activities, as in other sectors, and are now seeing their existence jeopardized.

As the representative of sport employers at European level, we have as our responsibility the defence of their interests. That is why we care to see that this issue is the subject of concerns and discussions for European institutions and national authorities, particularly during EU Council meetings gathering the EU Member States' Ministers of Sport. As well as the European Commissioner Maryia Gabriel, we are pleased that the benefits of the European dimension of sport has been reaffirmed by all Ministers in a context that has highlighted the importance of sport and its societal impact.

The cooperation between all the Member States, the EU, the sport movement and European sport organisations is the key to achieve our common goal to restore the sport sector, as well as for the success of the future activities at EU level, as underlined the State Secretary of Sport Tomislav Družak during the videoconference of the EU Ministers of Sport on 2 June 2020. There is a consensus that solutions to redress and strengthen the sport sector will emerge from the dialogue between these stakeholders. In this context, social dialogue can have an important contribution to make.

In fact, this crisis could be the opportunity to develop an effective European social dialogue of the sport sector. Social dialogue can provide solutions to this crisis and make the sport sector more resilient in the long term. EASE, as the social partner representing the sport employers at the European level, can play a role and be one of the pillars of this European social dialogue for sport sector. Our experience of collaborating with the European institutions as well as the expertise of our members about social dialogue in sport at national level could greatly contribute to finding solutions to this crisis.

That is why we encourage any measures taken by the national and European authorities to structure and strengthen the social dialogue in the sport sector in order to ensure that it is better equipped to deal with crisis situations in the future, and in particular :

- to **identify and strengthen the social partners** in the sport sector at the national and European level for the three main segments of the sport sector: not-for-profit sport, professional sport and active leisure;
- to **structure the social dialogue** in the sport sector around these key players;
- to **involve these social partners in the discussions** concerning the measures to be taken to deal with the crisis;
- to **ensure that recovery plans** envisaged at European and national level will directly benefit the sport sector.

We hope that this message will reflect on the measures put in place by the various authorities and we stand ready to provide our support and expertise.

*Philippe Diallo, EASE's Chairman*

