

# COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

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COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE COUNCIL

ON DOPING IN SPORTS

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### ON DOPING IN SPORTS

The holding of the Olympic Games in the Community in 1992, is a suitable occasion at which to stress that sport is a means to achieve better health, and that the Community has a contribution to make.

The misuse of drugs in current-day society is widespread and increasing. Not only is drug misuse an ethical issue, it is also a major health problem having detrimental and sometimes lethal results. There is, therefore, a pressing need for a widespread effort to reduce drug misuse. Sport fosters self-discipline, promotes fair play and improves health, and doping has no role to play.

Responsibility for eliminating doping extends from the general public who are active and enthusiastic supporters of sporting events, to parents who have the primary influence on the attitude of young people in sport, to athletes, and the sporting community who serve as role models to youth, to health professionals who are in the best position to provide relevant information related to drugs, to the media which is a significant instrument in conveying a message, and to the laboratories whose role is to conduct the required testing.

The Commission has already laid stress on the importance of encouraging action to combat doping in its Communication to the Council and the European Parliament on "The European Community and Sport". This Communication also recognized the independence and the prerogatives of governmental and non-governmental sports authorities.

This Communication is prepared by the Commission in response to the Resolution of the Council and of the representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council of 3 December 1990 on Community action to combat the use of drugs, including the abuse of medicinal products, particularly in sport (O.J. C 329 of 31 December 1991, page 4). It takes fully into account and complements, as appropriate, the International Olympic Charter Against Doping in Sport, the Anti-Doping Convention of the Council of Europe, and the recommendations of Unesco concerning the adoption of an international instrument against doping in sport. Consideration has also been given to the discussions at the Third Permanent World Conference on Anti-doping in Sport held in Bergen, Norway, 23 to 26 September 1991.

This Communication has been prepared following consultation with a Group of Experts (scientific consultants and national experts) from Member States. It does not take a position on the relative roles of authorities and sports organizations with regard to drug misuse. It has been prepared with the aim of informing the public-at-large and the sports community in particular of the Council's concern, as outlined in the Declaration by the Council and the Ministers for Health of the Member States meeting within the Council of 4 June 1991, on action to combat the use of drugs, including the abuse of medicinal products in sport (O.J. C 170 of 29 June 1991, page 1), over drug misuse in sport and the serious consequences for the health of sportsmen and -women and the harmful effects such practices may have on the population in general and young people in particular. It covers the entire range of sporting activities and makes no distinction between amateurs and professionals.

In preparing this Communication, the commonly accepted concept of "doping" as drug misuse, abuse of medicinal products, and other methods in relation to sporting activities, has been utilized.

In drawing up the draft Code of Conduct on Doping in Sport, the Commission has taken account of the following :

1. Drug misuse, which is widespread in current-day society, is a major health problem having detrimental and sometimes lethal results. In sport, drug misuse, usually called doping, is both a health problem and an ethical issue.
2. Young people must recognize that continued and well-planned training is the best way to improve their performance. Furthermore, sport is not always focussed on competition and winning but is a means to achieve a measure of social interaction, pleasure, and good health.
3. Parents are in a key position to share knowledge, instill attitudes and mould the behaviour of their children.
4. Schools and universities are in important positions to provide information and education on issues related to doping within the framework of their health and physical education programmes. These programmes can help reduce the use of drugs and prevent doping.
5. The ultimate responsibility for the elimination of doping in sports, lies with the athlete. Sportsmen and -women have a duty to seek information if they practice self-medication to avoid possible sports consequences such as disqualification from competition. Doctors are the best qualified persons to prescribe drugs when and where they are needed taking into account the rules regarding doping in sport.

6. Health professionals are in the best position to understand the complex health issues and thus to advise not only athletes but also the many young people interested in sport.
7. Sports entourage (i.e. managers, trainers, coaches) have a significant influence on whether an athlete considers using or begins using doping agents.
8. A drug-free and fair Olympic games can be used by schools and universities to exemplify a society where everyone has the same opportunity for success. The spirit of the Olympics is undermined by the use of drugs or methods artificially enhancing performances. Fair competition provides equal opportunity to each participant.
9. There is a need to reduce the discrepancies between the different sports federations concerning doping. It is important to ensure the dissemination of materials by sports organizations to aid in the prevention of doping as related to their sport.
10. There is a need to ensure that increasing demand on testing for doping does not reduce the quality of the tests. Positive and negative tests results reassure athletes and the general public that fair competition is taking place and can act as a deterrent to doping. Testing laboratories for doping agents are also in the best position to detect early the use of new substances. There is a need to submit such substances to close scrutiny regarding their performance enhancing potential and health risks
11. Media play a crucial role in influencing public opinion, and thus the reaction of the public to doping issues.

It is proposed that the Council examine the Annex to the present Communication, with a view to adopting it in an appropriate form as a Code of Conduct on Doping in Sport.

Subsequent to its adoption, the Commission will take the necessary steps to circulate and disseminate, in close conjunction with Member States by the end of 1991, and with the view to the Olympic Games in 1992, the text adopted by Council.

## DRAFT CODE OF CONDUCT ON

### DOPING IN SPORTS

To ensure that this Code is implemented, there is a need to raise the level of public awareness of the dangers to health as a result of doping and to change attitudes in favour of drug-free sport through appropriate information and education programmes.

1. Youth should be encouraged to play the leading role in promoting drug-free participation in sport and to advocate this attitude among their peers.
2. Parents should be encouraged to foster in their children a positive attitude to participation in sport, to provide them with moral support in their efforts, and to reinforce the basic values of good health, fair play and team spirit.
3. Schools and universities should promote the attainment of success through fair play and drug-free participation in sporting activities.
4. Athletes, as role models, should not use drugs at all and should help to re-establish confidence in drug-free sport and a drug-free society.
5. Health professionals have an obligation to be fully informed of the effects of doping agents and to provide advice to the individuals who come in professional contact with them.
6. Sports entourage (i.e. managers, trainers, coaches) must play an active role in preventing doping and encouraging fairplay.
7. Organizations involved with sports activities, including those related to the Olympic Movement, should re-emphasize the spirit of fair competition.
8. Sports organizations at national and international levels should cooperate on issues related to the status and control of doping.
9. Testing laboratories should continue to maintain high-quality and reliable drug-testing procedures. They should also monitor for the presence of new substances having the potential for performance enhancement and inform the appropriate authorities for action.
10. The media should provide the general public with information about athletes' training programmes and not just the outcome of sports events, as well as relevant information about the health consequences of doping.