

EU Athletes statement on ‘the key features of a European Sport Model’

Following the recent Resolution of the [Council on the key features of a European Sport Model](#), EU Athletes takes note of an expressed need to ‘further explore and continue on-going discussions with all sport stakeholders on the key features of a European Sport Model by acknowledging the diversity of approaches and new developments across different types of sport...’.

We support this approach as we believe that emerging challenges related to the governance of sport should be addressed through dialogue, negotiations and multi-stakeholder initiatives. Therefore, EU Athletes remains committed to cooperating with the governments, European organisations and institutions, as well as the sport organisations, and making sure that the voice of the European athletes is properly taken into account in these discussions.

As previously stated in EU Athletes’ [position](#), any model of sport that can be accepted in Europe must comply with the principles of good governance, rule of law and democracy, while respecting and promoting the human rights of athletes and other people involved. Furthermore, there cannot be any support for a model that disregards the views, rights and interests of professional and elite athletes as people and workers.

We reiterate that the freedom of association, defined as one of the key features of a European Sport Model, is a fundamental right of athletes. Athletes have a right to form or join an athlete association to defend and advance their interests, to be represented in the decision making by the people of their own choosing and to collectively negotiate the terms upon which they are involved in sport. It is essential to ensure that these rights of athletes are respected, protected and promoted by the Member States, the European Union and the sport organisations.

In any case, the concept of a ‘European Sport Model’ cannot be used as an excuse for sport organisations to claim special treatment or exemption from the application of national and European law, including EU competition law. Ensuring that the sport sector is sustainable and fit for future challenges requires setting clear limits to the autonomy and specificity of sport.

EU Athletes recognizes and supports a crucial role that the European governments and the European Union have to play in ensuring that sport is well governed, complies with the law and respects the fundamental rights of athletes and other stakeholders. We believe that these considerations need to be at the centre of the future inclusive and multi-stakeholder discussions on a European Sport Model.