

Six-Monthly Report on Developments in the EU
by
Minister for Arts, Sport and Tourism, John O'Donoghue, T.D.

Period: 01 January – 30 June 2003

Scrutiny review:

The Department of Arts, Sports and Tourism did not submit any European Union draft legislative proposals for review by the Oireachtas between 1 January and 30 June 2003.

Previous Presidency:

Arts and Culture

During the Greek Presidency, the Education, Youth and Culture Council took place in Brussels on 5-6 May 2003. The Council adopted the following Resolutions:

- (i) 'Resolution on the horizontal aspects of culture: Increasing synergies with other sectors and Community actions and exchanging of good practices in relation to social and economic dimensions of culture', (Doc. 13601/03);
- (ii) 'Resolution on accessibility of cultural infrastructure and cultural activities for people with disabilities', (Doc. 13405/03);
- (iii) 'Resolution on Archives in the Member States', (Doc. 11302/03).

At this meeting the Council also took note of the following European Commission presentations relating to:

- (i) the proposal for the extension by one year to 2006 of the MEDIA-Training (training programme for professionals in the European audio-visual programme industry) and MEDIA-Plus (programme to encourage the development, distribution and promotion of European audio-visual works); and
- (ii) the proposal for the extension of the Culture 2000 programme for the years 2005-2006. These proposals aim to extend the respective programmes until the end of the current financial perspectives for the Union, i.e. end 2006, and provide for the relevant proportionate additional budgets.

Further details of the above resolutions and conclusions can be found on the European Union website: http://www.europa.eu.int/
--

Sports

An informal meeting of EU Sports Ministers was held in Brussels on 25 February 2003 in preparation for the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) Conference in Copenhagen on 3-5

March 2003. There was unanimous EU support for efforts to combat doping in sport on a world-wide basis.

The Minister for Arts, Sport and Tourism John O'Donoghue T.D., following on the WADA World Anti-Doping Conference, signed the Copenhagen Declaration on Anti-Doping on 2 April 2003, signalling Ireland's commitment to the global fight against doping in sport.

At an informal meeting of EU Sports Ministers held in Athens on 8 May 2003, a substantial majority of Member States expressed their support for a provision to be made for sport in the new EU Constitutional Treaty and this has been reflected in the draft finally adopted. Following its deliberations on the matter, the European Convention included a new provision on sport in the new draft constitutional treaty for the European Union. The provision appears as part of a general provision on education, Article III-177 (ex Article 149).

Work progressed on preparations for the EU year of Education through Sport 2004. This Department is working in close collaboration with the Department of Education and Science, the Department with lead responsibility for the programme in Ireland. During its EU Presidency beginning on 1 January 2004, Ireland will have a pivotal role in helping to ensure the success of the year both at home and at Community level.

Further details on European Year of Education through Sport can be found on the European Union website: http://www.europa.eu.int/

Tourism

During the Greek Presidency, a conference and informal Ministerial meeting was held in Crete on 6 May 2003 on the subject of EU Transport policies and European tourism competitiveness. The Commission reported on progress in relation to its work programme on tourism arising from the 'Council Resolution of 21 May 2002 on the future of European Tourism', (Doc. 13501/02). In that context, a public consultation process has been initiated by the Commission on the sustainable development of European tourism with a view to preparing a Commission communication on the matter for possible adoption by the Competitiveness Council of Ministers later this year.