



# ***POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS***



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# ***1. PRESENTATION OF TES-D PROJECT***

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The contemporary European context has enhanced the need to develop and promote a European Union (EU) diplomacy aimed at using sport, which is increasingly present in popular culture and politics. Indeed, sport is now seen as a legitimate soft power tool to strengthen both internal relations within the EU and external relations with non-EU actors.

Anchored within this context, and conscious of the economic, social, political and cultural benefits at stake for the EU, the project “Towards an EU Sport Diplomacy (TES-D)” has gathered a unique European consortium of partners from universities, think tank and association in order to promote relevant policy recommendations.

Building on the hypothesis that the knowledge of all existing national sport diplomacies of the 27 member States of the EU can be used to create coherent and implementable policy recommendations at the EU-level, TES-D’s guiding principle is to mix academic inquiry, practitioner perspectives and empirical knowledge. Indeed, in addition to the desk research, 5 pilot actions were also carried out in order to provide relevant advice for the final recommendations.

## 2. METHODOLOGY FOR THIS REPORT

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The recommendations in this report are the result of 2-years of work by the TES-D partners. They have been developed through a threefold approach.

**Firstly**, the TES-D team took into account previous work in this field; first and foremost, the recommendations of the High-Level Group on Sport Diplomacy formulated in 2016, as well as various works and articles published. It was important for the team to be part of a constructive dynamic, contributing to further reflection and debate on this topic.

**Secondly**, these recommendations are based on the desk research carried out during the 2-years of the project by all the partners. More precisely, this account was based on:

- literature review on sport diplomacy<sup>1</sup>,
- case studies of extra-European sport diplomacy, such as Australia, China, Qatar, the United States of America, the United Kingdom<sup>2</sup>,
- case studies of sport diplomacy developed by supra-national actors<sup>3</sup>,
- reflections on the development of the EU sport diplomacy; an analysis of its strengths and the challenges it has to face<sup>4</sup>,
- case studies of the 27 national sport diplomacy of the Member States<sup>5</sup>.

**Finally**, and this is specific to the TES-D project, the recommendations also consider the feedback from 5 pilot actions launched during the project. This feedback from the field has refined the recommendations by situating them in a “grassroots” context that is so important in the conception of European sport.

Relying on these elements, the TES-D team extracted key facets of a framework that would allow them to formulate concrete recommendations for the stakeholders involved at EU level.

Furthermore, it should be noted that these recommendations have been discussed between the partners and also with relevant stakeholders, notably during a special event organised in September 2022 in Louvain la Neuve (Belgium) by the Université Catholique de Louvain. This discussion helped the partners to refine the recommendations in order to make them more and more precise and relevant.

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<sup>1</sup> “Sport diplomacy: a literature review of scholarly and policy sources”, TES-D project, <https://www.tes-diplomacy.org/resources-io2/>

<sup>2</sup> “Case studies of non-EU sport diplomacy: United Kingdom, United States, Australia, China & Qatar”, TES-D project, <https://www.tes-diplomacy.org/resources-io2a2/>

<sup>3</sup> “Case studies of sport diplomacy amongst international organisations outside of the EU”, TES-D project, <https://www.tes-diplomacy.org/resources-io2a3/>

<sup>4</sup> “Development of an EU sport diplomacy”, TES-D project, <https://www.tes-diplomacy.org/resources-io3/>

<sup>5</sup> 27 national sport diplomacy, TES-D project, <https://www.tes-diplomacy.org/resources-io4/>

## 3. CONTEXTUALISATION

### 3.1. GLOBAL CONTEXT OF TES-D PROJECT<sup>6</sup>

In the 2007 White Paper on Sport, the European Commission stated that *“sport can play a role regarding different aspects of the EU’s external relations: as an element of external assistance programmes, as an element of dialogue with partner countries and as part of the EU’s public diplomacy”*<sup>7</sup>.

Two years later, with the adoption of Article 165 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, known as The Lisbon Treaty, the EU committed to develop *“the European dimension in sport”*, and to *“foster cooperation with third countries and the competent international organisations in the field of education and sport”*<sup>8</sup>. Article 165 served to set aside any doubts that the EU was not competent to develop a sport diplomacy strategy.

In May 2021, European Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth Mariya Gabriel acknowledged that even though the EU *“have well established actions in the field of sport diplomacy, we have to admit the lack of a real strategy like United States or China have”*.<sup>9</sup> To this specific point, the project had a distinct focus on these strategies highlighting the importance of adopting a strategic approach based on good practice from elsewhere<sup>10</sup>. As discussed below, the EU has taken its first steps in thinking about sport diplomacy, but as acknowledged by Commissioner Gabriel, these steps have lacked strategic orientation.

### 3.2. CONSIDERING RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PREVIOUS PROJECTS LINKED TO SPORT DIPLOMACY

2015 was an important milestone for the EU Sport diplomacy. Indeed, the former European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport European Commissioner Tibor Navracsics took the first steps towards developing EU sport diplomacy by establishing a High-Level Group (HLG) on Sport Diplomacy. The HLG, three of its members being partners in the TES-D project team, issued a report published in 2016 with 15 recommendations covering external relations, major sport events and organisational culture of sport diplomacy<sup>11</sup>.

In terms of external relations, the HLG experts recommended to EU to develop the following actions:

- Include sport in the agreements of EU with third countries;
- Examine the extension of Erasmus+ programme to non-EU Member States;
- Provide technical and policy support to third country public authorities and sports organisations implementing sports-based projects;

<sup>6</sup> The development of EU Sport Diplomacy, Pompiliu, Parrish, Perez-Gonzalez, Stănescu, Voicu (2021).

<sup>7</sup> White paper on Sport, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/EN/legal-content/summary/white-paper-on-sport.html>

<sup>8</sup> Consolidated version of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A12012E%2FTXT>

<sup>9</sup> Speech by Commissioner Mariya Gabriel at the Sport Council - Sport diplomacy in the context of EU external relations - policy debate, [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/commissioners/2019-2024/gabriel/announcements/speech-commissioner-mariya-gabriel-sport-council-sport-diplomacy-context-eu-external-relations\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/commissioners/2019-2024/gabriel/announcements/speech-commissioner-mariya-gabriel-sport-council-sport-diplomacy-context-eu-external-relations_en).

<sup>10</sup> “Desk research on sport diplomacy, Case studies of non-EU sport diplomacy: United Kingdom, United States, Australia, China and Qatar” accessible here: <https://www.tes-diplomacy.org/resources-io2a2/>

<sup>11</sup> The three members are Professor Richard Parrish, Professor Carmen Perez Gonzalez and Professor Thierry Zintz. See European Commission (2016) High Level Group on Sport Diplomacy: Report to Commissioner Tibor Navracsics. Accessed at: [https://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/sport/library/policy\\_documents/hlg-sport-diplomacy-final\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/sport/library/policy_documents/hlg-sport-diplomacy-final_en.pdf)

- Organise a top-level sport diplomacy conference and keep/improve relations with relevant sports bodies, stakeholders and Council of Europe;
- Promote legal/circular migration through sport;
- Offer awards to projects and initiatives from civil society which are using sports to promote EU values;
- Use communication tools in order to promote sport as an element of EU identity.<sup>12</sup>

Related to major sport events and advocacy, the HLG recommended the following actions in order to promote the EU values:

- Support projects relating to the staging of major sport events, including pre-event, side event and legacy activities;
- Take forward the recommendations of the various expert groups established under the 2nd EU Work Plan for Sport as well as Conclusions adopted by the Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council;
- Recognise the potential of sport, and specifically the staging of major sport events, as an important aspect of EU economic diplomacy and influence effort;
- Create a network of sport ambassadors including current as well as former athletes and coaches, to promote EU values through sport.<sup>13</sup>

Regarding the development of an organisational culture of sport diplomacy, the HLG recommended that the EU:

- Develop the European dimension in sport by mainstreaming sport into relevant EU policies and funding programmes. Feature the word “Sport” in the title of the DG Education and Culture. Give sport diplomacy a priority status in the next EU Work Plan for Sport. Refer to the potential of sport diplomacy in the EU Foreign Affairs strategy and the EU Human Rights Action Plan when it is next reviewed;
- Organize a group of experts on sport diplomacy;
- Incorporate sport into the portfolio of Delegation Officers;
- Increase awareness in the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of EU Member States.<sup>14</sup>

The report of the HLG gave impetus to sport in the EU and specifically to EU sport diplomacy. Progressively the EU institutions have acted to implement many of the Group's recommendations. The Commission and Council have been most active in this field with, to date, more limited involvement from the European Parliament.

### **3.3. CONSIDERING THE OUTCOMES OF THE TES-D PROJECT**

#### **3.3.1. THE EU'S STRENGTHS IN SPORT DIPLOMACY**

The EU can draw on a number of distinct strengths that highlight why strategic thinking in this area should be pursued.

##### ***Europe: A Sporting Heritage***

Europeans love sport. Despite concerns about declining participation in organized sport, 38% of the EU population practiced some physical activities at least once a week (2022)<sup>15</sup> and around one-third

<sup>12</sup> European Commission (2016) High Level Group on Sport Diplomacy, p. 24.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid. p. 25.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid. p. 25.

<sup>15</sup> Eurostat (2022), Sport and Physical activity. Accessed at: <https://europa.eu/eurobarometer/surveys/detail/2668>



attended a live sport event (2015)<sup>16</sup>. For broadcasters, sport remains the key driver for attracting viewers and advertisers and with robust levels of household consumption on sport, the sector accounts for 2.12% of total EU GDP and 2.72% of EU employment.<sup>17</sup> Aligned to this, sport is one of Europe's most prominent sources of attraction for external audiences.<sup>18</sup>

### ***Unity in Diversity: National Sport Diplomacy Strategies***

The Member States and the relevant sports bodies retain the primary competence for sport, and the Article 165 (4) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union refers to the adoption by the EU of incentive measures, meaning that an EU sport diplomacy strategy will not replace those of the Member States. This is an important qualification that emerged during the project. The EU's remit being to help to highlight commonalities in national strategies on which to build an aligned policy. In other policy areas where the EU possesses a supporting competence, such as cultural policy, EU action can add value to Member State actions through so-called 'smart complementarity', whilst respecting the principle of subsidiarity. EU action can help amplify national strategies thereby giving such strategies global reach and impact in international organisations. With sport diplomacy only recently emerging as an area of interest in national capitals, the EU is well placed to share best practices, pool resources and give a greater voice and impact to these developing strategies.

### ***The EU as a Diplomatic Actor***

One of the key strengths of the EU as a global actor in the field of sport is its emerging diplomatic persona, supported by a maturing diplomatic institutional architecture which can in turn facilitate the development and implementation of an EU sport diplomacy strategy.

The EU can also harness the power of sport to exercise influence with third countries through the range of agreements it has entered into.

### ***The Availability of Existing Budgets***

Whenever an organization seeks to develop new areas of activity, budgetary issues can shape progress and for the EU the scenario is not different. Yet developing a sport diplomacy strategy is relatively low cost, making use of existing budgets. The EU's Erasmus+ programme which has emerged as the embodiment of EU 'soft power' is of key importance<sup>19</sup>.

### ***Existing Strengths in Cultural and Educational Diplomacy***

Although relatively underdeveloped in certain regards, the EU possesses diplomatic experience in fields closely related to sport, notably in the cultural and educational areas. These two areas sit alongside with sport as a supporting competence. This means that along with sport, cultural and educational policy, are retained as Member State competences. This has not, however, impeded the development of an external and diplomatic dimension to these two areas of EU activity, an observation strengthening the view that so called 'third-tier' competences can assist with the implementation of wider EU goals, notably those connected to its external relations policies.

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<sup>16</sup> Eurostat (2020), Statistics on Sport Participation. Accessed at: [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Statistics\\_on\\_sport\\_participation](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Statistics_on_sport_participation)

<sup>17</sup> European Commission (2018) Study on the economic impact of sport through sport satellite accounts. Accessed at: <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/865ef44c-5ca1-11e8-ab41-01aa75ed71a1/language-en>

<sup>18</sup> PPMI et al (2015), Analysis of the perception of the EU and EU's policies abroad, Executive Summary, p.10. Accessed at: [https://www.cultureinexternalrelations.eu/cier-data/uploads/2016/11/2016\\_FPI\\_Study-External-Perceptions-of-the-EU\\_Executive-Summary.pdf](https://www.cultureinexternalrelations.eu/cier-data/uploads/2016/11/2016_FPI_Study-External-Perceptions-of-the-EU_Executive-Summary.pdf)

<sup>19</sup> Ferreira-Pereira, L & Mourato Pinto (2021), Soft Power in the European Union's Strategic Partnership Diplomacy: The Erasmus Plus Programme, in Ferreira-Pereira, L. & Smith, M. The European Union's Strategic Partnerships, pp.69-94. See also Perilli, A (2018), Erasmus Student or EU Ambassador? People-to-People Contact in the European Neighbourhood Policy: The Cases of Georgia, Ukraine, and Tunisia, International Relations and Diplomacy, Vol.6, No.11, pp.583-605.

### 3.3.2. CHALLENGES FACED IN SPORT DIPLOMACY

Whilst there are compelling reasons why the EU should develop a sport diplomacy strategy, there are challenges that would need to be overcome.

#### ***Relations with Sports Bodies***

As discussed above, the EU has already forged relations with sport bodies, notably through its Structured Dialogue and through bilateral cooperation agreements. However, tensions are evident in these relationships. In short, on the one hand, the EU sees sport as a partner assisting with the delivery of key diplomatic messages, yet on the other, the EU often scrutinises sporting rules for compatibility with EU law.

#### ***Many voices but similar values***

Sport is not always sufficient in itself as a premise for diplomacy, and it is more accurate to consider that it could “create an opportunity” for diplomacy. The question arises as to: an opportunity for what? In itself this is something the EU has to clarify before defining and implementing its own sport diplomacy strategy. Sport can be considered a useful tool to address specific problems: but it is not a universal solution. For this reason, it is important to gather analysis or guidance on the domains where sport can have the biggest impact.

The first challenge is to identify those issues in which sport is a differential tool to solve them. Until now, sport diplomacy goals have been defined very broadly at EU level making this challenge harder to deliver on.<sup>20</sup> Concretizing these objectives into a single strategy that addresses specific problems may be problematic; reflecting the difficulties the EU has in acting as a single actor.

A second challenge is also linked to EU Diplomacy having more than one voice. The plurality of the European Union, as well as the diversity of views in its direction, is its main strength. Nevertheless, in the field of sport, considering case studies and interviews carried out in the 27 EU Member States, significant differences emerged regarding the conception and place of sport within policies. Therefore, it is crucial to keep in mind that we need to find common denominators.

#### ***Framing the Messaging***

Connecting the European model of sport to EU sport diplomacy could be viewed as an attempt by the EU to export its perceived superior model. This difficulty also was also noted in EU cultural diplomacy. High Representative Mogherini referred to the EU as a “*cultural superpower*.”<sup>21</sup> If based on the perceived superiority of European culture and values, this messaging is problematic and will mean EU cultural diplomacy is “*destined to fail*.”<sup>22</sup> Sport diplomacy is not only about convincing the ‘other’; it is also a mutual developing dialogue.

An equally challenging issue and opportunity for the EU, is the question of whether EU sport diplomacy will be co-opted to promote the idea of a European identity.

#### ***The Development of an Organizational Culture of Sport Diplomacy***

As said above, this was one of the recommendations made by the High Level Group on Sport Diplomacy in 2016. It proves to be a crucial challenge: continuous, coordinated and consistent EU work in this field is very much needed in order to build and implement a credible strategy.

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<sup>20</sup> See for instance the Council conclusions on sport diplomacy (supra note 6).

<sup>21</sup> Higgott, R. (2020), *EU Cultural Diplomacy: A Contextual Analysis of Constraints and Opportunities*, in Carta, C. & Higgott, R. *Cultural Diplomacy in Europe: Between the Domestic and the International*, Palgrave Macmillan, p.20.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid, pp.35-36.



Sport diplomacy should not become a topic to be discussed or addressed only at the highest political level. On the contrary, the presence of sport at all levels, particularly grassroots demands it is considered at all levels. In this regard, sport diplomacy initiatives should be part of the daily work of EU institutions and departments.

### ***Facing the new geopolitical challenges***

Considering the growing awareness and concurrently importance of sport on the geopolitical scene, demonstrating its increasing politicization of sport, it is likely that the EU and its members will need to espouse their positions on an increasing number of occasions.

Russia's invasion of Ukraine was an example of a rapid reaction by European partners on economic and diplomatic, and sporting dimensions. Like international sports federations, the European Union quickly took a position as a collective of like-minded nations on the invasion and published two statements on "Russia's War on Ukraine and international sport", adopted in March and July 2022 and signed by the following ministers from 37 States (the 27 EU Member States and other States such as the US, the UK, Canada etc.).

Moreover, regarding the growing importance of a range of issues such as human rights and climate change, the world of sport is increasingly questioned about its influence and positioning. The 2022 Qatar FIFA World Cup attracted notably criticism across a range of issues: particularly with respect to concerns about the human rights of migrant construction workers.<sup>23</sup> In January 2021, the 27 EU sports ministers signed a letter addressed to Commissioner Gabriel requesting a more focused approach to the issue of respect for human rights in the staging of mega-sporting events, both within and outside the EU.<sup>24</sup> The message was repeated by the European Parliament in its 2021 report.<sup>25</sup> This issue highlights the opportunity of the EU to speak with a common voice on such issues; while other commentators suggested the statement came too late to have any practical impact and questioned the EU's ability to act in unison.

A particular challenge concerns both EU institutions and Member States' disposition to take common action in the contentious area of diplomatic and sporting boycotts of major events.

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<sup>23</sup> The Guardian (2021), Revealed: 6,500 migrant workers have died in Qatar since World Cup awarded, 23/02/21. Accessed at: <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2021/feb/23/revealed-migrant-worker-deaths-qatar-fifa-world-cup-2022>

<sup>24</sup> <https://valtionneuvosto.fi/documents/1410845/3547387/Letter+to+Commissioner+Gabriel+on+Human+Rights+in+Sport.pdf/c4247b92-2aa6-3ef2-997d-d5abde131c27/Letter+to+Commissioner+Gabriel+on+Human+Rights+in+Sport.pdf?t=1611757153577>

<sup>25</sup> In reality, the European Parliament has gone further. In its resolution of 16 September 2021 on a new EU-China strategy (2021/2037 (INI)) 'recommends that the leadership of the EU and the Member States decline invitations to the Beijing Winter Olympics in the event that the human rights situation in China and Hong Kong does not improve and no high-level EU-China Human Rights Summit/ Dialogue with a tangible outcome takes place prior to the event'. Accessed at: [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2021-0382\\_EN.html](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2021-0382_EN.html)

## 4. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS TO POLICY MAKERS

### 4.1. WHAT THESE RECOMMENDATIONS ARE NOT?

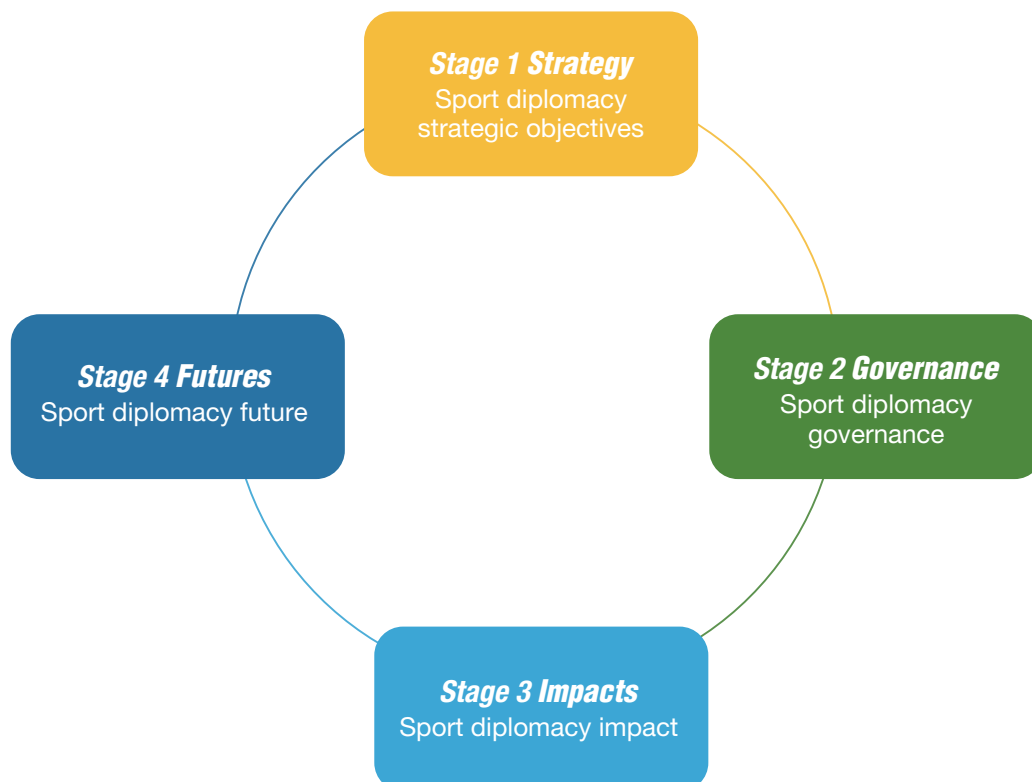
In presenting the results of two years of research and discussion, it was essential for the project team to recall the parameters of the project's recommendations.

Thus, these recommendations are not:

- an attempt to restrain (sub-) national autonomy in terms of sport diplomacy or to impose a kind of supranational sport diplomatic order,
- a restriction of the autonomy and capacity of non-governmental actors to develop sport diplomatic initiatives. It is worth noting the wide range of actors implicated in sport diplomacy initiatives, including actors having no direct responsibility in the sport area, such as broadcasters and health institutions.

In developing policy recommendations, we proceed along four steps:

- Stage 1: **Strategy** – to outline sport diplomacy strategic objectives;
- Stage 2: **Governance** – as there is no proper policy without an adequate governance, to provide a framework for sport diplomacy actors to share best practice;
- Stage 3: **Impacts** – to identify appropriate outcomes and impacts in policy development;
- Stage 4: **Futures** – to design the future of Sport diplomacy (2.4.).



## **4.2. SYNTHESIS OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. To outline a strategic action plan to set out the main directions for the EU sport diplomacy.
2. To increase awareness about the existence of the EU sport diplomacy strategy within all the bodies of the European Union and in particular within the EEAS.
3. To disseminate global knowledge and best practice about the concept of sport diplomacy.
4. To develop its collective values through EU's sport diplomacy policies.
5. To develop its capacity in peace building and conflict resolution through EU's sport diplomacy policies.
6. To mention "Sport" in the title of the Commissioner in charge of Sport.
7. To foster optimal coordination between actors (Official diplomats, Local authorities, Sport governing bodies, Private sector, Athletes, sport association ...) of EU's sport diplomacy.
8. To create a permanent high-level group of experts with an advisory role towards EU's sport diplomacy policies and initiatives.
9. To develop effective cross-cultural communications with third countries through EU's sport diplomacy policies.
10. To develop effective mutual understanding with third countries through EU's sport diplomacy policies.
11. To facilitate the training of a network of sport diplomacy ambassadors.
12. Development of a strategic "sport diplomacy calendar."
13. To take into consideration current issues linking sport to climate change, and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI).
14. To engage EU sport diplomacy beyond EU institutions.
15. To consider an economic dimension to the EU sport diplomacy.

### 4.3. STAGE 1: SPORT DIPLOMACY STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Sport diplomacy can be seen as an integral part of a larger diplomatic approach from governments and public authorities, in the context of public diplomacy. In this framework, it is connected to other modes of diplomacy, such as cultural diplomacy. Sport diplomacy also connects public authorities with non-governmental actors such as sport organisations (IOC, IF's, NOC's, NF's) promoting (inter-) national sport events to brand a nation or to underline its (sport-) power, grassroots sport organisations and non-sport organisations using it to promote social values such as inclusion, such as support to refugees etc.

Recommendations	Relevance	Actions
<b>1. To outline a strategic action plan to set out the main directions for the EU sport diplomacy.</b>	As mentioned, many actions developing the EU sport diplomacy have been launched and implemented for several years. This demonstrates the richness of EU sport diplomacy, although it may also contribute to send a confused message about the guidelines of such strategy. A short and clear document could help to clarify the current status.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publication of a strategic action plan, encompassing all actors and giving indications for each stakeholder of the actions it can undertake.</li> </ul>
<b>2. To increase awareness about the existence of the EU sport diplomacy strategy within all the bodies of the European Union and in particular within the EEAS.</b>	The aim is to build a solid knowledge of the concept of sport diplomacy, based on theoretical contributions and the presentation of concrete actions. It is not a question of systematically using sport as a diplomatic tool but rather of ensuring that all the actors of the Union have in mind the fact that it can be present in the EU tool kit and useful in certain cases.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying specifically a person/department in charge of sport diplomacy within the EEAS.</li> <li>• Developing communication for the main EU institutions.</li> </ul>
<b>3. To disseminate global knowledge and best practice about the concept of sport diplomacy.</b>	Despite its relevance and all that it can bring, both at the elite and grassroots level, it is clear that EU citizens, EU sport associations do not know or understand concretely the concept of sport diplomacy or its affordances.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing a pedagogical approach to explain what sport diplomacy is, what forms it can take, what objectives it can help to achieve.</li> <li>• Highlighting and promoting all the initiatives already developed and good practices in order to demonstrate the interest and relevance of this mode of diplomacy.</li> <li>• Increasing communication about sport diplomacy in order to give a range of actors' opportunities to draw on sport diplomacy:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Universities' opportunities to play an important role on this dissemination through trainings.</li> <li>→ Youth organisations and individuals as invested actors to engage in intercultural dialogue and decision-making processes.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<b>4. To develop its collective values through EU's sport diplomacy policies.</b>	Sport is recognized to be an adequate tool to develop and promote the EU's attractiveness, prestige and reputation in conjunction with consideration of EU soft power.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>While it remains understandable that EU members countries use (elite) sport participation to foster their attractiveness, prestige and reputation, the EU could further support and brand (inter-) national sport events on its territory or take an active role in the sustainability of such events.</li> <li>Building on existing mechanisms, on best practices, using grassroots Sport Diplomacy initiatives as means of enhancing people to people diplomacy.</li> </ul>
<b>5. To develop its capacity in peace building and conflict resolution through EU's sport diplomacy policies.</b>	<p>EU's Sport Diplomacy policies and initiatives should be embraced by the Commission as a transversal tool for peace building and conflict resolution:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>EU (multilateral) to third countries,</li> <li>EU member state (bilateral) to third countries.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improving the coordination between the Representative between the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security, the Commissioner in charge of Sport and the Parliament.</li> </ul>

#### 4.4. STAGE 2: SPORT DIPLOMACY GOVERNANCE

Recommendations	Relevance	Way
<b>6. To mention "Sport" in the title of the Commissioner in charge of Sport.</b>	The word "sport" made it first appearance with the Commissioner Tibor Navracsics and disappeared with Mariya Gabriel, Commissioner for Education, Research and Youth. Although this proposal may seem anecdotal, it is essential in terms of visibility and consideration of sport as an important element* in EU policy. A mention of sport diplomacy will be also an important asset for this matter.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Making sure that the word "sport" is mentioned in the portfolio of the Commissioner in order to make the matter visible.</li> </ul>
<b>7. To foster optimal coordination between actors (Official diplomats, Local authorities, Sport governing bodies, Private sector, Athletes, sport association ...) of EU's sport diplomacy.</b>	<p>Share clear definitions of the roles of actors (official diplomats, local authorities, sport governing bodies, private sector, athletes, social and cultural associations), in EU's sport diplomacy policies would facilitate the coordination between policies and initiatives.</p> <p>A series of initiatives, coming from various actors could be sometimes counterproductive because they may not be coordinated giving rise to potentially damaging impacts for the potential of EU's Sport Diplomacy policies and initiatives.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Drafting of a framework document specifying the scope of action of each stakeholder and the relationships between each actor.</li> <li>Drafting an EU formal document with goals, priorities and a review mechanism in terms of sport diplomacy.</li> <li>Creation of a single point of contact attached and referring to the Commission and Commissioner.</li> <li>Creating communities of practice – informal networks.</li> </ul>
<b>8. To create a permanent high-level group of experts with an advisory role towards EU's sport diplomacy policies and initiatives.</b>	Increasing awareness in the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of the Member States, acting in complementarity with the Ministers of Sport.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creation of a permanent high-level group of experts.</li> <li>Maintaining the network developed in the framework of the TES-D project and feeding it regularly.</li> </ul>

## 4.5. STAGE 3: SPORT DIPLOMACY IMPACTS

Several States (or regional actors) wrote official Sport Diplomacy documents outlining the unique outcomes they expect to acquire from it. Norway, France, Australia and the European Union (High-level group on sport diplomacy and High-level group on Grassroots Sport Diplomacy) are distinct examples although varied in the respective goals, and less focus on the tangible outcomes this project provides. A benchmarking, consultation and review process of other sport diplomacies could be an interesting step to take.

Recommendations	Relevance	Actions
<b>9. To develop effective cross-cultural communications with third countries through EU's sport diplomacy policies.</b>	Sport is recognized to be a tool of cultural exchanges and education when it comes to traditional and grassroots sports.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Taking advantage of “traditional sports” to bring EU's and non-EU's countries together in (inter) national sport meetings, while exploring new ways in which sports can engage e.g., e-sports.</li> <li>• Fostering grassroots sport activities in (inter-) national sport encounters.</li> <li>• Developing a social media platform to access the “people to people” level.</li> </ul>
<b>10. To develop effective mutual understanding with third countries through EU's sport diplomacy policies.</b>	Sport is recognized to be a tool of mutual understanding when taking advantage of its ethical dimension and Fair Play rules.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further developing and promoting Be-Active, European Week of Sport and other activities in promoting mutual understanding and recognition with organisations such as the International Olympic Committee.</li> <li>• Keep inviting third countries, and organisations within them to join these initiatives.</li> <li>• Given the stance taken during the war in Ukraine, the development of sports diplomacy with Kyiv through organisations such as Football for Peace.</li> </ul>
<b>11. To facilitate the training of a network of sport diplomacy ambassadors.</b>	EU's Sport Diplomacy policies and initiatives should be promoted and supported by sport practitioners from the field, with notoriety.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using pilot actions already developed and run new pilot actions.</li> <li>• The project's partners and a number of relevant European universities could play a key role through training, for example thanks Erasmus + programs.</li> </ul>

## 4.6. STAGE 4: SPORT DIPLOMACY FUTURE

Recommendations	Relevance	Actions
<b>12. Development of a strategic “sport diplomacy calendar”.</b>	<p>The United States has set up a calendar in order to have a strategic vision of the next major events and how maximize their impact.</p> <p>At the EU level, two EU Conferences on Sport Diplomacy were organized in 2016 and 2017. In June 2021, the Portuguese presidency readdressed the matter and made Sport diplomacy a priority of the EU Work plan for Sport 2021-2024.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishment of a strategic sport diplomacy calendar – aka the “Fixtures of sport diplomacy”</li> <li>• Organisation of an annual Sport Diplomacy Conference and practitioner workshops to keep building evidence-based knowledge in sport diplomacy.</li> </ul>



<b>13. To take into consideration current issues linking sport to climate change, and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI).</b>	<p>Considering the major concerns within the society about climate change, equality, and considering that the European Union claims a leading role on these issues, it would seem both opportune and appropriate to develop a global strategy to coordinate the role of sport in addressing these matters.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation of a network / an observatory composed by universities/faculties/research institutions with experience on these fields to support the process and to contribute to the new thinking.</li> <li>• Mobilizing research and financing pilot actions and events that promote a more sustainable approach to elite sport but also to act at the grassroots level.</li> </ul>
<b>14. To engage EU sport diplomacy beyond EU institutions.</b>	<p>While, the European Union has developed aspects of a sport diplomacy strategy it has failed to gain wider traction with key stakeholders. Therefore, a concerted communication strategy is needed to ensure a level of awareness amongst European citizens. It will be crucial to develop the awareness about sport diplomacy within EU society through actions, events, articles.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication strategies to engage with the full range of stakeholders.</li> <li>• Appropriate targeting of key stakeholders through conferences, training, publications could in order to popularize the concept and contribute to the concrete implementation of the EU Sport diplomacy.</li> </ul>
<b>15. To consider an economic dimension to the EU sport diplomacy.</b>	<p>Sport industry has an important contribution to EU economy and sport diplomacy could be an interesting tool to promote the EU market. However, it is important to qualify this within the context of existing EU commercial practices, given the competition that may exist in this field between European countries.</p> <p>Therefore, any progress concerning a potential economic sports diplomacy must be carefully thought out and limited to specific areas that do not encroach on national prerogatives.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoting EU sport industry through diplomatic networks in the context of sporting events for example.</li> </ul>

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