

OPEN LETTER

to the **Croatian Presidency of the Council of the European Union**,
the upcoming **German and Portuguese Presidencies of the European Union**,
the **President of the European Commission** and **Commissioner in charge of Sport**,
and the **Prime Ministers and Ministers of Sport of the European Union's Member States**

[The Sport Integrity Global Alliance](#) (SIGA) have taken note of the conclusions of the (virtual) meeting organised by the Croatian Presidency of the European Union (EU) on 21 April 2020. EU Ministers in charge of Sport and their representatives participated, along with the EU Commissioner Mariya Gabriel, to discuss the impact of COVID-19 on the Sport sector. We believe that this discussion was essential and will help to underpin a coherent and impactful, unified response to the current circumstances.

We commend the [Croatian Presidency](#), the Ministers and the EU Commissioner in charge of Sport for recognising the invaluable social, educational and cultural role of Sport, as well as its positive economic impact.

We congratulate the [European Commission](#) for their proactive offer of support to the Member States and the Sport sector. It is only through leadership, cooperation and solidarity that we can overcome the current crisis and mitigate the damaging socio-economic consequences the pandemic will leave behind.

Never has there been a greater global need for society to unite and rebuild. Never has there been a better opportunity to harness the positive power of Sport as an enabler of mental and physical health, social cohesion, human development and economic recovery. Never has there been a more pressing time for Sport and the wider industry to become a beacon for progressive, innovative change.

To be able to play such an invaluable role in the global recovery, Sport, like many other sectors, is undeniably in need of financial support. We therefore welcome the European Commissions' and EU Member States' willingness to allocate public funds to stabilising Sport as a viable industry and enabling it to do what it does best: to motivate, inspire and drive mentally and physically healthy and productive societies; and to act as a catalyst of economic growth, employment and human development. We therefore trust that a specific chapter on Sport will be included within the "Recovery Fund" that the President of the European Commission, Dr Ursula von der Leyen, is expected to present on May 7th.

That said, we must go further than injections of capital. It is clear that poor governance, poor regulation, lack of oversight, and lack of inclusive, action-oriented and result-driven cooperation, at both national and international level, facilitate threats to Sport Integrity, which increasingly involve transnational organised crime. All of which, not only threaten the future of Sport, but also bring the potential utility of any financial assistance provided into question.

We, therefore, advocate, in the strongest possible terms, that any allocation of public funding to Sport, or any other sector, irrespective of intent, must be conducted with absolute transparency, accountability and oversight.

Leading the Way for Sport Integrity Worldwide

It is only through transparency that Sport can break free from the restraints of corruption, money laundering, tax evasion, opaque broadcasting and sponsorship deals, child trafficking, and the many other threats it currently faces.

Sports organisations must hold themselves to the highest possible standards in the way they govern. They must conduct their operations with unequivocal integrity, accountability and transparency. This is mandatory if we aspire to restore trust and rebuild during these unprecedented difficult times.

To this end, we call upon the Croatian Presidency of the EU, the European Commissioner in charge of Sport and the Ministers of Sport of each EU Member State to:

1. Enhance their legislative and regulatory frameworks by adopting and incorporating the [SIGA Universal Standards](#) on Good Governance in Sport, Financial Integrity in Sport, Sports Betting Integrity and Youth Development and Child Protection in Sport; and
2. Ensure that all Sporting organisations, including international and national Sports governing bodies, international and national competition organisers and other relevant stakeholders, comply with the aforementioned [SIGA Universal Standards](#) and undergo the [SIGA Independent Rating and Verification System](#) (SIRVS).

Furthermore, we call upon the upcoming German and Portuguese Presidencies of the EU to place Sport Integrity high on the EU agenda, and ensure that the aforementioned priorities are implemented without further delay. This is fundamental for Sport to safeguard its reputation and properly contribute to the much-needed recovery of Europe's battered economy and broader society.

We trust our views and proposals will be considered with the same positive and constructive spirit they are intended to convey, and look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

We remain, as ever, fully committed to maintaining positive dialogue and constructive collaboration on these matters with all stakeholders.

Yours sincerely,



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(Chairman)



Emanuel Macedo de Medeiros
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