



## **EU Sports Commissioner supports EU Athletes and online betting industry education program against match fixing**

**Berlin, 23 May 2013 – EU Athletes, the federation of player associations in Europe representing 25,000 athletes, completed today its three day seminar on education against match fixing. The seminar, which is part of multi-year program financed jointly by the European Commission and the European licensed online betting industry, highlighted the vital importance of all sectors working together to educate professional sportspeople about sports betting integrity.**

Androulla Vassiliou, European Commissioner for sport, said: *“Match-fixing is a complex problem with many sides to it. But one very important element that the European Commission focuses on in our efforts to tackle match-fixing is prevention. In this respect, educational programmes and awareness raising campaigns can have a significant impact by reaching those most at risk of being approached to fix matches - the athletes themselves. I therefore very much look forward to the results of the project lead by EU Athletes and the European online betting industry.”*

EU Athletes three day tutor training seminar heard first-hand from the police, the online betting industry, and former athletes on how to behave properly in relation to sports and betting. The purpose of the seminar was to give the player associations’ tutors tools to use during the locker room visits, when they are educating the players face to face.

The seminar is part of a ground breaking co-financed campaign (see [link](#)) by the European Commission and the European licensed online betting industry that targets 15,000 athletes in 13 countries in more than 10 different sports (including football, rugby, basketball and handball). The educational campaign is based on 6 main principles:

- Know the rules of your sport relating to betting
- It is safest to never bet on your own sport
- Be careful about handling sensitive information
- Fixing any part of an event is an absolute No-No
- Report any approaches
- Fixers will be caught: Suspicious bets are monitored

Jean-François Reymond, Secretary General of EU Athletes, added: *“Our education project is unique in its focus on face-to-face education delivered directly into the locker rooms by people the players know and trust. This personal touch is giving players the knowledge to make sure they don’t gamble with their careers.”*

Maarten Haijer, Secretary General of the EGBA and co founder of this program said: *“The EGBA is proud to be part of this campaign, which EGBA and the European Sports Security Association (ESSA) pioneered together with EU athletes back in 2010. Education is fundamental to combat the scourge of match fixing that hurts sports and operators alike.”*

Clive Hawkswood, Chief Executive of the RGA added: *“The Berlin seminar has demonstrated again the importance of player education and has thrown a light on what more might be achieved in the years to come by continued cooperation between the European Commission, betting operators, athletes associations and indeed anyone else who is committed to safeguarding the integrity of sports.”*

**END**

### **Notes to Editors**

The project will provide face-to-face education to 15,000 European elite level and youth athletes in 13 countries and at least 10 different sports. It has a total budget of €500,000 and will be co-financed by the European Commission, the EGBA, RGA and ESSA with respective contributions of 46%, 41%, 10%, and 3%.

Building upon best practice, the education campaign will be delivered by people the players trust and respect – their national sporting trade unions. The countries and sports targeted are listed below. For a full list of the associations see [link](#):

- **Sweden (Ice Hockey, Basketball)**
- **France (Handball, Rugby, Cycling, Basketball, Football)**
- **Italy (Volleyball, Basketball, Rugby; Sky)**
- **Latvia (different sports)**
- **Spain (Indoor Football, Handball, Cycling)**
- **The Netherlands (Rugby, individual athletes, volleyball, Ice skating)**
- **Germany (Basketball, Handball)**
- **Lithuania (Basketball)**
- **Ireland (Gaelic sports, Rugby)**
- **United Kingdom (Football, Cricket, Rugby)**
- **Slovenia (Ice hockey, Football, Basketball and individual sports)**
- **Denmark (Handball)**
- **Greece (Volleyball)**

The education will be supported by athlete friendly key messages on posters, wallet cards, social media and an upgraded internet site that will be accessible from smart phones and tablets.

### ***About EU Athletes***

*The European Elite Athletes Association is a federation of independent athletes associations from all over Europe with member associations from 15 European countries representing over 25,000 professional athletes. Among the sports represented are basketball, cricket, Gaelic sports, handball, ice hockey, rugby and volleyball. EU Athletes has member associations in for example Denmark, England, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Israel, Italy, The Netherlands, Scotland, Spain and Sweden. For more information, please visit <http://www.euathletes.info/> or call General Secretary Jean-François Reymond +33 6 60861223*

## **About ESSA**

*The European Sports Security Association (ESSA) was established in 2005 by the leading online sports book operators in Europe to monitor any irregular betting patterns or possible insider betting from within each sport. To achieve this goal ESSA implemented an early warning system between its members that highlights any suspicious betting activity. The Early Warning System allows ESSA to work with the sports regulators and their disciplinary and legal department, ensuring that when an alert is given the regulator is informed immediately which may prevent the possibility of any game manipulation on a given event.*

*So far, ESSA has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with FIFA, The FA, DFB, ATP, ITF, WTA and has established close relations with the IOC and many other sports regulators. ESSA members include: Betcllic; Bet-at-Home; bwinparty; Digibet; Expekt; Goldbet; Interwetten; Ladbrokes; Paddy Power; Sportingbet; StanJames; Stanleybet, Unibet and William Hill and. For more information on ESSA please go to the ESSA website <http://www.eu-ssa.org> or contact Khalid Ali, Secretary General at +32 2256 7565*

## **About EGBA**

*The EGBA is an association of leading European gaming and betting operators [Bet-at-home.com](http://Bet-at-home.com), [BetClic](http://BetClic), [bwinparty](http://bwinparty), [Digibet](http://Digibet), [Expekt](http://Expekt), and [Unibet](http://Unibet). EGBA is a Brussels-based non-profit association. It promotes the right of private gaming and betting operators that are regulated and licensed in one Member State to a fair market access throughout the European Union. Online gaming and betting is a fast growing market, but will remain for the next decades a limited part of the overall European gaming market in which the traditional land based offer is expected to grow from € 71.9 Billion GGR in 2010 to € 79 Billion GGR in 2015, thus keeping the lion's share with 86% of the market. Source: H2 Gambling Capital, September 2011. For further information or comment please contact: Maarten Haijer +32 2 554 08 90*

## **About the RGA**

*The RGA is the largest online gambling trade association in the world representing over 30 of the largest licensed and stock market-listed remote gambling operators and software providers (see [www.rga.eu.com](http://www.rga.eu.com)). The organisation provides the remote gambling industry with a single voice on all issues of importance to regulators, legislators, and key decision makers around the world. For further information, please contact Brian Wright +44 20 7831 2195*