

EN
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Answer given by Mr Micallef
on behalf of the European Commission
(7.1.2026)

The Commission upholds the principle of best interests of the child¹ and recognises the benefits sport offers for mental health, rehabilitation, social inclusion and reintegration.

In line with Commission Recommendation (EU) 2024/1238 on developing and strengthening integrated child protection systems², national justice systems should address the children's specific needs in legal proceedings³. Furthermore, in detention, multidisciplinary measures must ensure children's health and emotional development⁴.

The Erasmus+ and the Citizens, Equality, Right and Values⁵ programmes can fund projects on rehabilitative sports. Projects funded are available on the respective results platforms. The Commission welcomes collaboration with stakeholders, including children, to harness sport for positive change.

To better assess sports' impact on children's rights and social reintegration, it will explore Member States' willingness to define common indicators when reviewing the 2013 Council's Recommendation on 'promoting health-enhancing physical activity across sectors', indicatively planned for 2027.

The Commission will continue work in this domain, with the shared goal of facilitating meaningful opportunities for all young people through sports.

¹ Article 24 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, provides that children shall have the right to such protection and care as is necessary for their well-being, and that in all actions relating to children, whether taken by public authorities or private institutions, the child's best interests must be a primary consideration.

² OJ L, 2024/1238, 14.5.2024 <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reco/2024/1238/oj/eng>.

³ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reco/2024/1238/oj/eng>.

⁴ Commission Recommendation (EU) 2023/681 of 8 December 2022 on procedural rights of suspects and accused persons subject to pre-trial detention and on material detention conditions.

⁵ https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/projects-results?order=DESC&pageNumber=1&pageSize=10&sortBy=es_SortDate.