



# DELIVERING CHANGE

January 2017



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**IN THE 20 MONTHS** since I was elected to lead European Athletics our sport has navigated through a very challenging period. Our agenda for securing European Athletics' financial future, modernising its operations and making athletics 'Your Sport for Life' throughout Europe was somewhat overtaken by events largely out of our control, and the focus of our efforts has been dictated by priorities different from those we might have imagined last April.

It must be said, however, that for me as president it has actually been quite a rewarding time. The way my Council colleagues, our professional staff and our many supporters in the Member Federations have looked forward and worked together to create the sport of the 21st century has been both gratifying and exciting, and I remain motivated to move ahead on all our projects.

Beyond our own organisation, the tough decisions taken by the IAAF and the role Europe has played in the governance reform process are a source of great pride. We as a global sport have shown the willingness to face up to the adversity and take the necessary steps towards rebuilding the trust that is essential for our long-term success.

As I promised to do at the start of every year of my presidency, I am offering this review of European Athletics' activities in the last 12 months with a focus on the

considerable progress we have already made towards delivering the five-part agenda of priorities outlined in my election manifesto 'Leading Change'. Much of the contents have already been covered on the European Athletics website or the Inside Track newsletter, but it is important for transparency and accountability to bring the main points together in one document.

This report follows the same basic structure of last year's and the manifesto but it also includes scorecards for each of the five priority areas summarising the current status of the projects outlined in the manifesto. If more detailed information is required on any aspect of our work I invite you to contact me, our CEO Christian Milz or any of the members of our Executive Board. We will all be happy to assist you.

Thank you very much for your interest and support.



**Svein Arne Hansen,**  
President

# OUR ATHLETICS

## 2016 was the year we started to fight back



**IF 2015 WAS** the year of shock, scandal and disappointment for athletics then 2016 will be remembered as the year we collectively faced up to the very serious issues and started a fight back with changes that, I believe, will ultimately see the sport emerge better, stronger and more popular

The high point of the year for European Athletics had to be the European Athletics Championships in July. To summarise, the event was a success from every point of view: great competition, full stadium, wonderful atmosphere, excellent television viewing figures and a financial surplus for the organisers. In the end, 27 of our Member Federations had medals to celebrate.

People have said that Amsterdam was our best championships ever, but what is important is it demonstrated that a European Athletics Championships in an Olympic year can work, can be sustainable and can be a great promotion for our sport.

A second high point was the excellent competition at the Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro, where Europe's athletes were often in the spotlight. They brought home a total of 35 medals (10 gold) but, consistent with the long-term trend, our dominance over the other Areas was ended and for the first time ever Europe was not at the top

of the medal table at a global event. This underlines the need to enhance Europe's whole competition system, from the youth through senior age groups, as well as our ability to prepare our athletes for success on the world stage.

There were many other positives in 2016. In close collaboration with the local organising committees and our commercial partners, we successfully delivered the rest of our programme of events, including the first-ever European Athletics U18 Championships in Tbilisi, Georgia, and the recent Spar European Cross Country Championships in Chia, Italy. We also had excellent exchanges of ideas with and between our federations at both our CEO Conference in Minsk, Belarus and our Convention in Funchal, Portugal. And the celebration at our end-of-year Golden Tracks evening was outstanding.

I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge the great contributions of the European Broadcasting Union and our commercial partners Spar, Le Gruyère AOP, Omega and Liqui Moly in European Athletics' success in 2016.

However, with all that said, much of the media's coverage of athletics continued to be directed towards the various

investigations and revelations linked to doping and wrongdoing on the part of some of our sport's former leaders. But even in these stories we can find positives.

For example, in response to independent investigations, the IAAF Council unanimously took principled and decisive action by extending the suspension of the Russian athletics federation while the country's authorities go through what still looks to be a long process of reform. There was certainly controversy about Russian athletes missing the chance to participate in Amsterdam and Rio but we can all be assured that our sport did the only right thing in the circumstances.

Just as importantly, our sport embraced much needed reform in how it governs itself. The overwhelmingly supported decision of the IAAF Congress to change the Constitution in order to prevent repetition of the abuses of the past and Europe's strong role in the process must be sources of pride for all of us.

In European Athletics' case, reform was already part of our agenda, so our response to these challenges was simple: continue to lead and accelerate our efforts to enhance governance at all levels.





Starting with my 2015 request that our Council members sign personal declarations of integrity, which all did immediately, our comprehensive approach has included:

- Commissioning independent professional assessments of European Athletics' Constitution and governance arrangements, of our organisational risks and of our operational procedures;
- Approving a code of conduct for appointed delegates and top competition officials at European Athletics events;
- Creating an online platform where doping and integrity issue reports from whistle blowers will be investigated by independent legal experts;
- Continuing our 'Run Clean' anti-doping campaign and speeding up the work on the anti-doping education system and athletes' 'Run Clean licence' promised in my election manifesto;
- Initiating processes to review the credibility of all European records and conduct integrity checks on all European Athletics' past Athletes of the Year and other award winners;
- Taking part in a European Union funded project to create an online governance assessment tool for national sports organisations and introducing the tool to Member Federations at a special workshop during the European Athletics Convention;

- Raising the need for new transfer of allegiance regulations with the IAAF Council;
- Appointing a project team to study the new IAAF Constitution and recommend any necessary changes to the European Athletics Constitution for our Congress in October 2017 to approve.

As I travelled in 2016 it was very satisfying to speak with our federations and many individuals inside athletics about the progress on our ambitious 'Leading Change' agenda and to listen to their thoughts. The message I heard again and again was one of confidence in the positions European Athletics has taken and satisfaction with how we communicate. I sensed optimism, determination and moral purpose; despite all we have gone through in the last year and a half, everyone is looking to the future and better times.

A great symbol for the overall picture of the sport in Europe came at the end of the year when we inaugurated the beautiful House of European Athletics in Lausanne. To have our own state-of-the-art head office building in the heart of the Olympic Capital underlines the strength, stability and sustainability of our organisation and our sport.

By investing in the building we eliminate the cost of leasing our former offices, and the rental income from tenants in the new building will cover all banking loan interest and capital repayments and leave

a surplus. Again, this must be a source of pride for all of us.

Of course, many challenges remain. For example, although European Athletics was not directly involved in athletics' global scandals we were hurt by their fallout, most notably when we, like the IAAF, lost a major sponsor because of damage to our sport's image.

In our case, the impact could be managed as we were, and remain, strong financially. Our Executive Board and Council quickly adjusted our financial plan and our Congress will be asked to confirm the changes in October 2017.

We are confident that our partner European Athletics Marketing AG will be able to secure a replacement sponsor in time for the 2018 European Athletics Championships in Berlin but it is important to keep in mind that much of our agenda for change calls for resources that can only be utilised if we have them or know that they are coming.

Finally, our 2016 experience underlines the need to further sharpen our public communications. I remain convinced that athletics comprises a lot of great people and that we can work effectively as a team. A task for all of us in the coming months and years will be to make sure all of Europe knows about the core values that drive us and the value we deliver to society.



# MY VISION

## I remain committed to my Leading Change manifesto



**AFTER 20 MONTHS** as the President of European Athletics I remain committed to the vision I expressed in my election manifesto, 'Leading Change': an organisation ever more inclusive, more dynamic, more commercial and more visible. But as might be expected, the reality and experience of my time in office has brought new insights and ideas, and here I would like to briefly share my thoughts on three important areas.

### Working with the Member Federations

'Teamwork' has been a key word throughout my career in sport and the shared purpose and collaboration I have witnessed within European Athletics – including our elected officials, the volunteers working closely with us and our Head Office staff – is gratifying. From my travels to so far 40 European countries and the excellent exchanges at our CEO Conference and Convention, I sense that our Member Federations feel they also are part of our team effort, but it is

always useful if we can further enhance communication.

The customised development support programme and related information gathering system currently under construction will make a valuable contribution in this respect. The priorities for this programme should include governance reform at the national level and innovation in how federations finance themselves and serve society, both of which would bring them in line with European Athletics' strategy and make it possible for us to provide more effective support.

More than that, we need to ensure the best use of the communication opportunities provided by 2017's European Athletics Convention and Congress in Vilnius and look for other ways to improve how we in European Athletics understand the needs of the federations and how they in their turn understand our work on their behalf.

### Future Trends

Nobody can really predict the future, but we can all pick out trends that seem likely to shape how athletics will develop. Three that I think we all need to keep in mind are as follows.

The first is the evolution in how sport is packaged for television. More and more, broadcasters are demanding that a number of sports be coordinated to provide the best entertainment experience for their audiences. We see this in weekly winter sports programming and it is the force behind the multi-sport European Championships concept, in which the 2018 European Athletics Championships in Berlin will be a major feature.

We have worked hard to integrate our event into this exciting new concept while maintaining European Athletics' interests. We are sure that the rewards in terms of the increased value from the European Broadcasting Union and bigger audiences will prove to be worth the effort.





The second is the increasing importance of data in how sport is communicated. Athletics is a data-rich sport but until now we have not fully utilised the possibilities. European Athletics has initiated a pilot project that will eventually help smaller federations manage key data like entries and results and another to develop a data dependent ranking system that will be used for qualification to our championships and general promotion of the sport.

But we need to find even more applications at the national and international levels if we want to remain competitive with other sports in the 21st century.

The third is the expansion of social media in the lives of everyone, especially young people and how it is taking over at least part of the role of traditional media. As president I have tried to keep up by maintaining my own Facebook and Twitter accounts and the reaction I get has been really positive. As an organisation, we need to constantly develop our digital strategy to keep up with the changing environment.

An important aspect is the use of video content on social media platforms. In 2016 we began working with the European Broadcasting Union to utilise near-live highlights from our European Athletics Championships in Amsterdam, a development we must build on in the coming years.

#### Reaching Out

The future strength of athletics will depend on how well we – and here I include the Member Federations, clubs and other grassroots organisations - can reach out to individuals and groups and make them feel that they are part of the sport, that in their own way they are athletes. This is the philosophy behind the European Athletics 'Your Sport for Life' slogan.

The key is that word 'customised' again. We must invest heavily in terms of thinking, work and resources to make sure our events, programmes and communications are really right and specific for various target groups. Our aim must be to bring athletics to every home in Europe.

A good example is the work in recent years to make European Athletics and the Member Federations more important players within the running movement. We are making a bet that over the long term the services and forms of engagement we develop will have a positive impact on how athletics is perceived and supported. We need to continue and increase these measures and make similar, well planned and resourced efforts towards other groups that athletics can naturally serve.

A second example is the 2016 'Innovation Project' through which we started the work to identify a format of athletics that would best meet the expectations of young spectators. The knowledge gained has led us into a new project, 'Athletics 2020', which includes developing a promotional event to be staged for the first time as part of the 2019 European Games in Minsk. Of special interest is the fact that the development work will be completely funded by the European Olympic Committees, the organising body of the Games, which is an indicator of the value athletics can bring.

# PRIORITY AGENDA

2015 - 2019

Member Federations

Commercial Strength

Athletes

Competition

Relevance

# MEMBER FEDERATIONS

## Overview

The main aims in this area of the 'Leading Change' agenda are to increase the financial stability and operational competence of European Athletics' Member Federations. To date we have initiated work on three of the four projects outlined in the manifesto and delivery of all three is anticipated in 2017. We are also expecting that work the fourth project, a strategy for coordinated marketing of the athletics brand to create value at the national level, will start in 2017 with the appointment of a project team.

## Progress Reports

- **New team uniform advertising rules:** Although there was general agreement in 2015 to support a proposal put forward to the IAAF Council, the key decision by the IAAF was delayed in 2016 because of its focus on governance reform and other issues. We will push again in 2017 to bring this much needed reform in as soon as possible.
- **Strategy for accessing European Union project funding:** A workshop during the 2016 European Athletics Convention, attended by more than 60 federation representatives, marked a major step in the development of a strategic approach to Erasmus+ opportunity, which is open to more than 30 of our federations. We anticipate that in 2017 a project team will finalise the strategy, which will include further information sharing and coordinated project proposals.
- **Customised development support programme for Member Federations:** While the project team continues to work steadily on this complex project, the current system of Member Federation grants has been left in place to allow more time. We are expecting the new programme to be ready in 2017 for implementation in 2018. However, one of the elements of the new programme, travel support for needy Member Federation presidents to attend important events, is already in place and was used in 2016 for the European Athletics Championships in Amsterdam and the European Athletics Convention in Funchal.





Project	Work Assigned	Project Budget	Concept Approved	Implementation Budget	Substantial Progress	Delivered
New team uniform advertisement rules	√	n/a	√	n/a	√	
Coordinated marketing of the athletics brand						
EU project funding strategy	√	n/a		n/a	√	
Customised development support programme	√	√				

n/a - not applicable, work part of normal operations

# COMMERCIAL STRENGTH

## Overview

This area of the 'Leading Change' agenda is particularly important as its main aim is to help to secure the financial sustainability of European Athletics and thus our ability to make more investment in the future. Each of the four projects outlined in the manifesto progressed in 2016 alongside our work with European Athletics' broadcasting and commercial partners and the coordinators of the multi-sport 2018 European Championships. In 2017 we will continue to progress all four and we will also initiate a new project called 'Athletics 2020', which is outlined below.

## Progress Reports

- **Non-stop public research:** European Athletics' first efforts to understand audience expectations of athletics through research was a major element of the 'Innovation Project', which delivered its final report, including professionally gathered data, to the Council in November 2016. We expect to announce one or more follow-on projects to define our ongoing audience research needs sometime in 2017.
- **PR, digital and social media strategy:** As the media environment is always evolving, work on our communication strategy is constant and many elements were implemented or progressed in 2016. For example, a promotional campaign on social media gave strong assistance to ticket sales for the European Athletics Championships in Amsterdam. We are expecting new input in this area from our Strategic Communications Commission in 2017.
- **Special promotional measures for years without major events in Europe:** We had hoped that in 2016 we could publically launch a Europe vs USA match, but at the end of the year we were still not quite ready with all the arrangements. What we can say is that a host city has been secured for 2019, that contract discussions with USA Track and Field and the other necessary partners are moving ahead and that confirmation of the event is expected in 2017.
- **Host city support:** Progress in 2016 on this multi-part, long-term project was mainly on the enhancement of how we evaluate bids for European Athletics events, including the introduction of a weighted scoring system that takes into account all the factors contributing to a successful event to help the Council with its decisions. The bulk of the project's other envisaged elements remain to be addressed and work will continue in 2017.
- **Athletics 2020:** A project team has been set up to develop a youth-friendly promotional format for athletics that can be used in the 2019 European Games in Minsk and elsewhere. Work will commence in 2017.





Project	Work Assigned	Project Budget	Concept Approved	Implementation Budget	Substantial Progress	Delivered
Public audience research	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Ongoing
PR, digital and social media strategy	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Ongoing
Promotional measures for years with without major events in Europe	✓	n/a	✓		✓	
Host city support	✓				✓	Ongoing
Athletics 2020	✓	✓				

n/a - not applicable, work part of normal operations

# ATHLETES

## Overview

Increasing opportunities for talented performers to excel and demonstrate their commitment to the sport and its values are the main aims of this area of the 'Leading Change' agenda. Four of the seven projects outlined in the manifesto have already been started and the closest to implementation is our ground-breaking mandatory anti-doping education programme. In 2017 we expect to develop a concept for scholarships to support the post-career development of elite athletes and we will start work on the other projects as resources become available.

## Progress Reports

- **European only events in one-day meetings:** This target is currently linked with our ongoing review of the support system for one-day meetings by the Events & Competition Commission and the work of a project team on a new ranking/championship qualification system project. We expect to have a concept ready in 2017 so it can be included in discussions with meeting organisers on ways European Athletics can further support their work.
- **Competition and financial opportunities for U23 athletes:** Following the IAAF's decision to discontinue the World Youth Championships, the European Athletics Events & Competition Commission will open discussions in 2017 with its counterpart in the IAAF about the feasibility of a World U23 Championships. We will start project to develop specific events at the European level when the necessary resources become available.
- **Anti-doping education and mandatory 'Run Clean licence':** The project team's concept for an on-line education programme was approved by the Council in November 2016 and an experienced software company is currently developing the tool with the aim of having it ready to roll out as a part of our ongoing 'I Run Clean' campaign in early 2017.
- **Use of athlete ambassadors to promote European Athletics events and programmes:** Contacts have been made with athletes to promote the 'I Run Clean' campaign and announcements are expected in the first half of 2017. We also expect to develop a plan for the ongoing use of more ambassadors on other programmes.





Project	Work Assigned	Project Budget	Concept Approved	Implementation Budget	Substantial Progress	Delivered
Financial incentives for the European Athletics Championships						
European only events in one-day meetings	√	n/a				
Competition and financial opportunities for U23 athletes	√					
Weaker discipline initiatives	√					
Anti-doping education programme and 'Run Clean licence'	√	√	√	√	√	
Use of athlete ambassadors	√					

n/a - not applicable, work part of normal operations

# COMPETITION

## Overview

The aim in this area of the 'Leading Change' agenda is to reinvigorate the international competition system and calendar to better serve the sport. Of the five projects outlined in the manifesto four have been started and a major part of one of these has already been implemented. In 2017 we will implement the Council's approved plan for a restructured European Team Championships and we are expecting completion of the ranking/qualification system that will link one-day meetings and championships.

## Progress Reports

- **Integrated major events system:** The project team's main focus in 2016 was on the ranking/qualification system (see next point) and therefore the work with the IAAF on a new, integrated structure for major events was delayed until 2017. In the meantime, however, the Council agreed that the winners of each event at the European Athletics Championships, starting with Amsterdam, will be automatically qualified for that event at the following edition of the championships.
- **One-day meetings-championships link:** In 2016 the project team produced the principles and structure of a ranking system based on results (places) rather than performances (time or distance) that can be used to qualify for European championships and thereby give a stronger narrative to the season. Testing of the initial design will be complete in early 2017 and after that we are expecting the necessary modifications plus an implementation plan.
- **Restructured European Team Championships:** The Council approved both a new timetable structure for the Super League, to be implemented in Lille/FRA in 2017, and a proposal to stage the event (as well as the European Combined Event Team Championships) in every odd-numbered year, giving European Athletics one senior outdoor championship each year.
- **Support for new and special events:** The first event supported under this project, the Small States of Europe Championships, was staged successfully in Malta in July 2016. The Council has agreed to continue the support in future years when there is no European Team Championships. In 2017 we will develop additional ideas.





Project	Work Assigned	Project Budget	Concept Approved	Implementation Budget	Substantial Progress	Delivered
Integrated major events system	√					
One-day meetings-championships link	√	√			√	
Restructured ETCH	√	n/a	√	√	√	√
Improved timetable and event presentation techniques						
Support for new and special events:	√	n/a	√	√	√	Ongoing

n/a - not applicable, work part of normal operations

# RELEVANCE

## Overview

Assisting Member Federations to reach out to new audience groups through programmes and projects is the main aim of this area of the 'Leading Change' agenda. Four of the five multi-part projects outlined in the manifesto have already been started, with the most advanced being the 'Running for All' project to expand the services offered to the running community. In 2017 we expect to progress all five projects, including making a start on a plan to support Member Federations interested in creating services for the health and fitness markets.

## Progress Reports

- Expanded services for joggers, recreational runners and serious club runners:** 2016 saw an increase in the number of races signed up for our Safety and Quality Standards system, the organisation of a mass participation race in conjunction with the European Athletics Championships in Amsterdam and the successful coordination of mass participation races in 26 countries for the European Week of Sport, which was organised by the European Commission. Among the elements of the project we are expecting to see in 2017 is the staging of a European Athletics Running Business Conference to bring our Member Federations together with race organisers and others in running industry.
- School and club programmes:** Following up our successful 2015 Youth Athletics Conference, in 2016 we published the results of the research project conducted in conjunction with the conference and the Member Federation Development Commission worked on the issue of child protection in club athletics. In 2017 we are expecting a plan for supporting
- Member Federations interested in strengthening the grassroots elements of the sport and, in particular, building their links with schools.
- Links with Masters Athletics:** Although contacts and discussions with the European Masters Athletics Association continued and our relationship remains strong, tangible progress on this important project in 2016 was minimal. We are expecting to refocus our effort in 2017 to produce a plan for more active collaboration in the future.
- Young volunteers programme:** In 2016 we staged a successful European Athletics Young Leaders Forum in conjunction with the European Athletics Championships in Amsterdam. In 2017 European Athletics and the French athletics federation will coordinate a proposal to the European Union's Erasmus+ programme to obtain funding for a project to strengthen our online Young Leaders Community, which will include stronger links to the Member Federations.





Project	Work Assigned	Project Budget	Concept Approved	Implementation Budget	Substantial Progress	Delivered
Expanded services for running community	√	n/a	√	√	√	Ongoing
School and club programmes	√					
Masters links	√	n/a				
Health and fitness programmes						
Young volunteers	√					

n/a - not applicable, work part of normal operations

