

Are doping controls in Germany cost effective?

According to the German Anti Doping Organization's annual report for 2008, it spent 343,137.46 Euros in 2008 completing 911 doping tests in the sports of basketball, handball and ice hockey. Out of these 911 tests, there were no positive tests for substances that would have increased performance of the athletes.

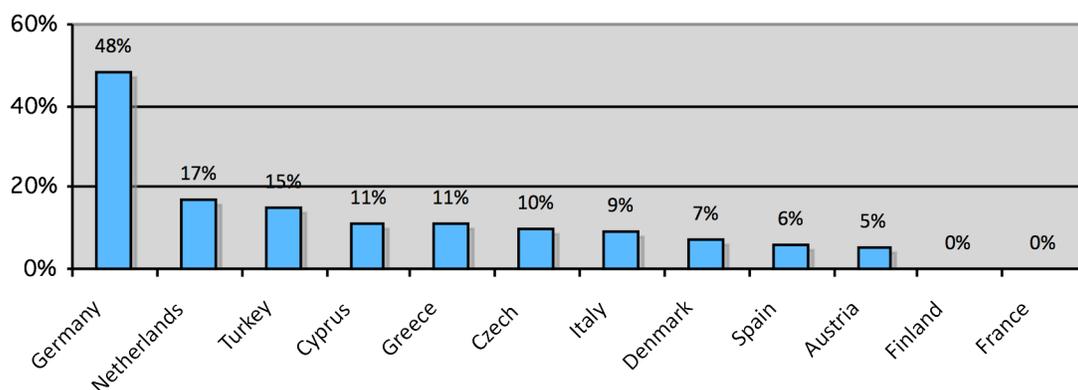
The results were the following:

- 2** positive tests for marijuana
- 3** positive tests for cocaine
- 2** Therapeutic Use Exemptions
- 2** refusals to be tested (one suspension resulting from a refusal to be tested was later overturned by the Swiss Supreme court)
- 1** positive test for sibutramin (appetite suppressant – 3 month suspension)
- 1** positive test for a glucokorticoide (i.e. cortisone cream – 2 month suspension)

The question must be asked if these meager results are worth the cost, the effort, and are proportional considering the infringement of the rights of the athletes and the invasion of their privacy.

Germany has, by far, the highest incidence of doping tests occurring outside of the workplace in the set of countries that participated in a working conditions study of professional basketball players funded by the European Commission.

Doping testing outside of the workplace



There also should be concern about the way that data from athletes is acquired and transferred. An athlete cannot be said to give his free consent when he is threatened with sanctions or is not able to pursue his chosen

livelihood if he does not grant the NADO the right to transfer his data. Additionally, only 7% of German basketball players reported that they were even aware of data protection laws, indicating that the German NADO is not doing an adequate job of informing players before asking for their consent. Sensitive medical data is transferred to the World Anti Doping Agency in Canada against the data protection rules.

The breakdown by sport:

Basketball

232 tests were carried out on 180 athletes. There were 6 positive tests, 1 refusal to be tested and one TUE (therapeutic use exemption). 4 of the positive tests were for "recreational" drugs. 2 were for cocaine and two were for marijuana.

Handball

318 tests were carried out on a pool of 171 athletes. There was one positive result and it was a TUE (therapeutic use exemption).

Ice Hockey

361 tests were carried out on a pool of 226 athletes. There was one positive test and one refusal to be tested. The Swiss Constitutional court later overturned the sanction against the player who refused to be tested. The positive test was for "recreational" drug use, cocaine.