

# TOOLKIT

## HOW TO MAKE AN IMPACT ON GENDER EQUALITY IN SPORT

All you need to know



**ALL IN:  
Towards gender  
balance in sport**

“Stepping up  
the pace

ALL IN: Towards gender balance in sport (Erasmus +)

Funded  
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by the Council of Europe

## THE TOOLKIT CONTAINS 11 FACTSHEETS

### Facts, figures, definitions and normative frameworks on gender equality in sport

- Factsheet 1 Facts and figures on gender (in)equalities and differences
- Factsheet 2 Why should we tackle gender inequalities in sport?
- Factsheet 3 Gender equality/gender mainstreaming in sport – what is it about?

### Building policies and programmes to achieve gender equality in sport

- Factsheet 4 Drawing up an action plan to achieve gender equality in sport
- Factsheet 5 Human resources and leadership
- Factsheet 6 Funding
- Factsheet 7 Communication
- Factsheet 8 Sporting opportunities
- Factsheet 9 Training and education
- Factsheet 10 Sports events
- Factsheet 11 Sports facilities

**This toolkit** has been developed as part of the European Union (EU) and Council of Europe joint project “ALL IN: towards gender balance in sport” and complements the other resources developed by the project (an online library of practices and resources, data collection on gender equality in sport, etc.). It provides information, concrete tips, good-practice examples and strategies **to put into practice a gender mainstreaming approach to achieve equality between women and men in sport**.

#### Target groups

- ▶ Decision makers from public authorities responsible for sport and from sporting organisations (at national, regional and local level).
- ▶ Policy officers/operational managers from public authorities responsible for sport and from sporting organisations.
- ▶ Trainers in gender equality/gender mainstreaming in sport.

#### Objectives

- ▶ To understand the extent of gender inequalities and differences in the sports world (in the fields of leadership, coaching, participation and media/communication), the prevalence of gender-based violence and the added-value of moving towards gender equality in this area.
- ▶ To design, implement, monitor and evaluate an action plan to achieve gender equality.
- ▶ To understand what a gender mainstreaming strategy is.
- ▶ To implement a gender mainstreaming approach in sport policies, programmes, actions and in sporting organisations (when devising a human-resources policy, organising sports events, developing a communication strategy, allocating funds, renovating a sport facility, etc.).

The content of the toolkit is fully in line with **Recommendation CM/Rec(2015)2 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on gender mainstreaming in sport**<sup>1</sup>.



Reference to gender-based violence in sport and to diversity issues, including people from disadvantaged groups exposed to multiple discrimination (when sex and gender overlap with other grounds of discrimination such as age, race, ethnic origin, sexual orientation and disability) is included in the different factsheets.

Please note that some boxes can be adapted to individual countries’ particular contexts (national data on participation of women and men in sport, policies, programmes and guidelines on this topic, etc.).

#### Guidelines to facilitate reading

Factsheets 4 to 11 are structured to support the practical implementation of a gender mainstreaming strategy. They are presented in a common format:

##### • A brief introduction highlighting the significance of the topic, containing:

- ▶ Focus of the factsheet 
- ▶ Specific aspects that are addressed 

##### • A two-step approach:

- ▶ “**On your marks**”: elements to consider and/or questions that should be asked to understand the issue
- ▶ “**Take action**”: ideas and examples meant as pointers to facilitate change that can be adapted to each reader’s context

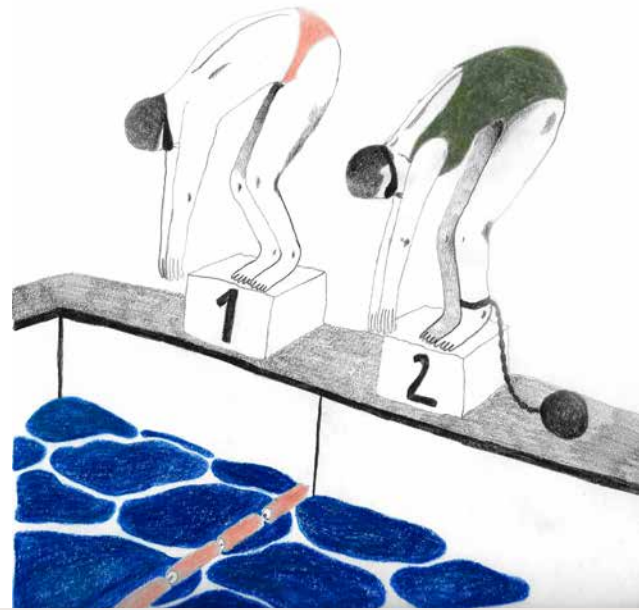
##### • Good practice examples

##### • Connections between factsheets

<sup>1</sup> [https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result\\_details.aspx?ObjectId=09000016805c4721](https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectId=09000016805c4721)

# 1 Facts and figures on gender (in)equalities and differences

Although more and more women are involved in the field of sport in Europe and worldwide, gender inequalities still persist and are entrenched in many domains in overt ways (for example, in participation) or more subtly (such as in the portrayal of female and male athletes).



Gender inequalities in sport roughly concern: access to and practice of sport, physical education and physical activity; access to responsibilities, participation in sports governing bodies and decision-making roles; access to resources, salaries, financial incentives and sports facilities; media coverage of women athletes and of women's sport; reintegration into the labour market after the end of an athletic career; gender-based violence including harassment and abuse.

The right environment in which women and girls can safely, freely and equally participate in sport often remains hard to find.

This factsheet is composed of five sections presenting facts and figures relating to gender inequalities and differences in participation (from grass-roots to elite sport), coaching, leadership and the media and to the prevalence of gender-based violence in sports.<sup>1</sup>

## PARTICIPATION IN SPORT AT GRASS-ROOTS LEVEL

### Gender differences in frequency and setting

In general, men tend to practise sports or other physical activities<sup>2</sup> more often than women in the European Union.<sup>3</sup> For instance, 44% of men exercise or play sport at least once a week, whereas 36% of women do so. The frequency of playing sport or engaging in other physical activity significantly differs according to age. The biggest difference is noticed in the younger group (15-24 years old): 59% of young men compared to 47% of young women practise sport or some other physical activity at least once a week, while 12% of young men compared to 6% of young women engage in sport or other physical activity at least five times per week. This gap tends to narrow for older age groups.

<sup>1</sup> This 1st factsheet is an update of the factsheets compiled by Yellow Window within the framework of the European Union and Council of Europe's joint project "Balance in sport. Tools to implement gender equality" run in 2016.

<sup>2</sup> Other physical activities such as walking, cycling, dancing, gardening, etc.

<sup>3</sup> Source: European Commission (2018). Special Eurobarometer 472 "Sport and physical activity".

Gender differences can be noticed in relation to the setting where sport or other physical activities<sup>1</sup> are practised. Men are more likely to engage in physical activities at a sports club or at work, and women at home or on the way between home and school, work or the shops. In line with this observation, more men than women believe that local sports clubs and other local providers offer many opportunities to be physically active. These differences may be connected to the traditional gender roles attributed to women and men: for instance, women commonly take up caregiving roles which may explain the settings where they mostly practise sport or other physical activities. Men are twice as more likely than women to be members of a sports club (16% vs 8%).<sup>2</sup>

## What motivates girls/women and boys/men to practise sport?

Both men and women are motivated to practise sport or other physical activity to improve their health (53% and 55%, respectively) and fitness (48% and 47%). Although the differences are lessening for many of the indicators, slight gender differences can still be identified in relation to what motivates people to engage in sport or other physical activities. Whereas men are more likely to engage in sport or physical activity to have fun (33%), to be with friends (22%) or to improve physical performance (29%), women are concerned with controlling their weight (24%), improving their physical appearance (21%) or counteracting the effects of ageing (15%).<sup>3</sup> These differences may be explained by a need to comply with gender stereotypes: men are expected to be strong and athletic, and women are expected to look pretty, slim and young.

These gender differences are stronger in the age group 15-24, where boys seem to attach more importance than girls to having fun (respectively 48% and 38%), to being with friends (41% vs 23%) and to the spirit of competition (17% vs 5%). Physical appearance is equally important for both sexes (29% for boys and 30% for girls) but girls tend to attach more importance to weight control (24% vs 20%) while boys prioritise improving fitness (55% vs 48%).<sup>4</sup>

## What prevents them from practising sport?

In the EU, the first and main reason for the non-practice of sport is the lack of time, followed by a lack of interest or motivation, having a disability or illness and the cost. In fact, 40% of those who answered the Eurobarometer survey replied that they could not find the time to engage in a sport or physical activity. While the lack of time is considered as a barrier by both men (40%) and women (39%), aspects such as a lack of interest or motivation appear to be more common among women than men (22% compared to 19%).

These results show that most physically inactive women feel neither the desire nor the need to engage in an activity. This lack of interest is closely linked to family obligations and responsibilities that have been regarded for decades as women's duties. Women who do not participate in physical activities or sport are generally very busy with family and domestic matters. Taking care of children, seeing to the upkeep of the house and the management of the household are regarded as women's prime activities during their free time. These family responsibilities are particularly significant obstacles to the participation in sports among women from working-class backgrounds or ethnic minorities, where the gender-based division of domestic tasks is particularly pronounced.<sup>5</sup>

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1 Ibid.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid.

5 "Gender equality in sports. Access for Girls and Women to Sport Practices", Council of Europe Publishing, 2011, <https://edoc.coe.int/en/gender-equality/6957-gender-equality-in-sports.html>.

## PARTICIPATION IN ELITE SPORT

### The gap in the participation in the Olympic Games narrows...

The participation rate of women in Olympic Games has been constantly increasing. Recent figures from the International Olympic Committee (IOC) show that with 45% of those competing in the 2016 Summer Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro being women, there is now a broad gender-balanced level of participation.

Share of female participants in Summer Olympic Games from 1992 to 2016						
1992	1996	2000	2004	2008	2012	2016
28.8%	34.0%	38.2%	40.7%	42.4%	44.2%	45.0%

In Rio, six countries out of 206 (3%) had a delegation with a majority of women, three of which (New Zealand, Australia and USA) achieved a gender balance<sup>1</sup>.

- ▶ New Zealand, 50% women (99 women, 98 men)
- ▶ Australia, 51% (213 women, 208 men)
- ▶ United States, 53% (292 women, 264 men)
- ▶ Canada, 59% (183 women, 127 men)
- ▶ China, 62% (243 women, 151 men)
- ▶ Puerto Rico, 68% (27 women, 13 men)

Participation in Winter Olympic Games is slightly lower, with 41% of those participating in the latest edition in PyeongChang being women, but nonetheless the level has been increasing since 1992, with the exception of a slight dip in 2014.

Share of female participants in Winter Olympic Games from 1992 to 2018							
1992	1994	1998	2002	2006	2010	2014	2018
27.1%	30.0%	36.2%	36.9%	38.2%	40.7%	40.3%	41.2%

The gap in participation has been further reduced at the Youth Olympic Games, where the participation of women was 46.5% in Lillehammer for the 2016 Winter Youth Olympic Games and 49.7% in the 2018 Summer Youth Olympic Games in Buenos Aires.

### ... but the gender pay gap in elite sport doesn't

Despite this increase in the number of female athletes participating in the Olympic Games, there is evidence of a gender pay gap in elite sport, including athletes' contractual earnings, sponsorships, endorsements and prize money. Even though the gender pay gap in sport is seldom estimated<sup>2</sup> Forbes publishes every year a list of the World's Highest-Paid Athletes.<sup>3</sup> In 2019, Serena Williams is the only woman to break into Forbes' list of the world's highest-paid athletes, coming in at #63.

According to a BBC study carried out in 2015,<sup>4</sup> 10 out of 35 sports that award prize money do not pay the same amount to sportswomen and sportsmen. For example, the total prize money for the 2015 Women's Football World Cup was US\$15 million, compared to US\$791 million for the 2018 Men's Football World Cup.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The participation of women and men at the Olympic Games cannot be fully considered as a gender equality indicator, considering that there is a selection process (based on performance) mostly independent from the country.

<sup>2</sup> Source: Women on Boards (2016). Gender Balance in Global Sport Report.

<sup>3</sup> Source: Forbes (2019), "The World's Highest-Paid Athletes", available at [www.forbes.com/athletes/#507939b155ae](http://www.forbes.com/athletes/#507939b155ae) and "Why Is Serena Williams The Only Woman On The List Of The 100 Highest-Paid Athletes?", available at <https://www.forbes.com/sites/kimlessler/2019/06/14/why-is-serena-williams-the-only-woman-on-the-list-of-100-highest-paid-athletes/#332b875ffa98>.

<sup>4</sup> Source: BBC (2015), "Men get more prize money than women in 30% of sports". Available at: [www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/29789953](http://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/29789953). Last accessed on 27 June 2019.

<sup>5</sup> Source: Forbes (2018), "The Evolution of FIFA World Cup Prize Money". Available at [www.forbes.com/sites/niallmccarthy/2018/06/05/the-evolution-of-fifa-world-cup-prize-money-infographic/#29dfb11a6ca5](http://www.forbes.com/sites/niallmccarthy/2018/06/05/the-evolution-of-fifa-world-cup-prize-money-infographic/#29dfb11a6ca5).

Another important aspect to take into consideration is the large discrepancies between professional and non-professional sport. For example, in Italy, six national sport federations (football, basketball, cycling, motorcycling, boxing and golf) do not recognise professional sport status for women.<sup>1</sup> Salary differentials persist in non-professional sports, with women athletes rarely entering national or international sport and sport-related markets.<sup>2</sup>

### Employment and voluntary positions in sport

Slightly more men than women are employed in sport (55% vs 45%),<sup>3</sup> either working in sport-related occupations in the sport sector (for example professional athletes, professional coaches) and outside the sport sector (for example school sports instructors), or in non-sport occupations in the sport sector (for example receptionists in fitness centres). The same trend applies to men and women who engage in voluntary work that supports sporting activities (8% vs 4%).<sup>4</sup>

Roles occupied by men and women in sport tend to be different. In the voluntary sector,<sup>5,6</sup> men are more likely than women to occupy the role of coach/trainer (30% vs 23%) or referee or official (12% vs 10%). Conversely, more men than women tend to be responsible for administrative tasks (19% vs 17%), while both sexes are equally involved in supporting day-to-day club activities (20%) and in providing transport (10% of men and 11% of women).

Some of these differences tend to be reversed when age comes into play. In fact, more young women than men aged 15 to 24 are coaches/trainers (31% vs 26%) and are involved in the organisation of sporting events (42% vs 33%), while both sexes are equally represented in the role of referee or official (18%).

## COACHING

Although there is a general lack of centralised gender-disaggregated data regarding accredited coaches at European level, it is generally acknowledged that there is a significant under-representation of female coaches across all fields and levels of sports. As concluded in a report commissioned by the Council of Europe's Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (2011):<sup>7</sup>

- ▶ women represent a small minority of the coaches employed in elite sports;
- ▶ the percentage of female coaches tends to decrease the higher the level of performance;
- ▶ female coaches are more likely to train athletes enrolled in typical women's sports rather than in traditional men's sports;
- ▶ female coaches are almost exclusively training either women, young people or children.

1 Source: Laura Capranica et al., (2013), "The Gender Gap in Sport Performance: Equity Influences Equality", International journal of sports physiology and performance 8(1):99-103.

2 Source: Ibid.

3 Source: Eurostat (2018). Eurostat Compact Guides: Sport statistics – 2018 edition.

4 Source: European Commission (2018). Special Eurobarometer 472 "Sport and physical activity".

5 Source: Ibid

6 No data broken down by sport-related occupation could be found for the paid employment sector.

7 Source: Pfister G. (2011). "Gender equality and (elite) sport". A report compiled for the Council of Europe's Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport.

To illustrate these points, two examples are provided. First, only 11% of the European-accredited coaches participating at the 2012 London Olympic Games were women.<sup>1</sup> Second, a recent report on Head Coaches of Women's Collegiate Teams<sup>2</sup> shows that male head coaches tend to be over-represented in women's teams, particularly in those sports that are traditionally played by men. Examples include Alpine skiing (90.9%), track and field (82.3%), swimming (82.1%), water polo (78.1%), diving (77.1%) and ice hockey (70.8%). Conversely, female head coaches are leading women's teams in field hockey (84.2%), lacrosse (91.2%), equestrianism (76.5%) and rugby (85.7%). These figures may indicate that female coaches refrain or are excluded from training teams of sports that are traditionally perceived as masculine.

This acute unbalance may be explained by stereotypical perceptions about coaching being a male (professional) occupation requiring traditional masculine traits and by a prevailing hegemonic masculinity in sport settings. Indeed, research<sup>3</sup> indicates that the masculinist culture of sport is segregating female coaches. Consequently, their motivation and self-assurance are reduced. Research<sup>4</sup> also shows that organisational factors are affecting female coaching career development. Systemic barriers alienating female coaches from public sports organisations include male-dominated workplaces setting masculinised standards for recruitment and career progression, family-unfriendly working environments, the prominence of male-dominated networks and the lack of female role models. In fact, the over-representation of men throughout decades in sport results in what is called "homologous reproduction", whereby male coaches tend to hire those who look most like them, i.e. other men. Moreover, there seems to be a connection between the gender proportion of athletes and the men-women ratio among coaches as former (male) athletes became (male) coaches.<sup>5</sup>

It is thus not surprising that literature on the subject<sup>6</sup> suggests that it is very unlikely that female students of coaching will eventually become coaches. Therefore, measures need to be put in place to combat multidimensional barriers (crossing the individual, interpersonal, organisational and cultural levels) that are discouraging and preventing women from becoming or progressing as coaches.

## ACCESS TO LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

### Gender-unbalanced representation in decision-making positions in sports organisations

Recent statistics<sup>7</sup> show that, despite the gradually increasing rates of women's participation in sport, there are still very few women in leadership positions on the Olympic and Paralympic Committees, in European and national sports governing bodies, and in national sports federations. Data from the IOC shows that women constitute only 6.3% of National Olympic Committees (NOC) presidents (13 out of 205) and 15.2% of NOC secretaries general (31 out of 205).<sup>8</sup>

According to data provided by the European Olympic Committees and collected in 22 European countries, Norway is leading the way and close to gender parity with women taking up 43% of leadership positions while in 13 countries out of 22 less than 30% of the leadership positions are held by women.<sup>9</sup>

1 Source: International Council for Coach Education and Leeds Metropolitan University (2014). Presentation at the 6th IWG World Conference on Women and Sport: "Gender & Coaching Report Card: London 2012 Olympics". Last accessed on 6 July 2019 at: [https://www.icce.ws/\\_assets/files/news/IWG/Leanne\\_Norman-Gender\\_Coaching\\_Report\\_Card.pdf](https://www.icce.ws/_assets/files/news/IWG/Leanne_Norman-Gender_Coaching_Report_Card.pdf).

2 Source: LaVoi N. (2018), "Head Coaches of Women's Collegiate Teams – A comprehensive report on select NCAA division-I institutions 2017-2018", Tucker Centre for Research on Girls & Women in Sport and the Alliance of Women Coaches.

3 Source: Norman L. (2012), "A crisis of confidence: women coaches' responses to their engagement in resistance", *Sport, Education and Society*, Vol. 19, Issue 5, pp. 532-551.

4 Source: Greenhill J., Auld C., Cuskelly G. and Hooper S. (2009), "The impact of organisations factors on career pathways for female coaches", *Sport Management Review*, 12, pp. 229-240.

5 Source: Pfister G. (2011), "Gender equality and (elite) sport", a report compiled for the Council of Europe's Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport.

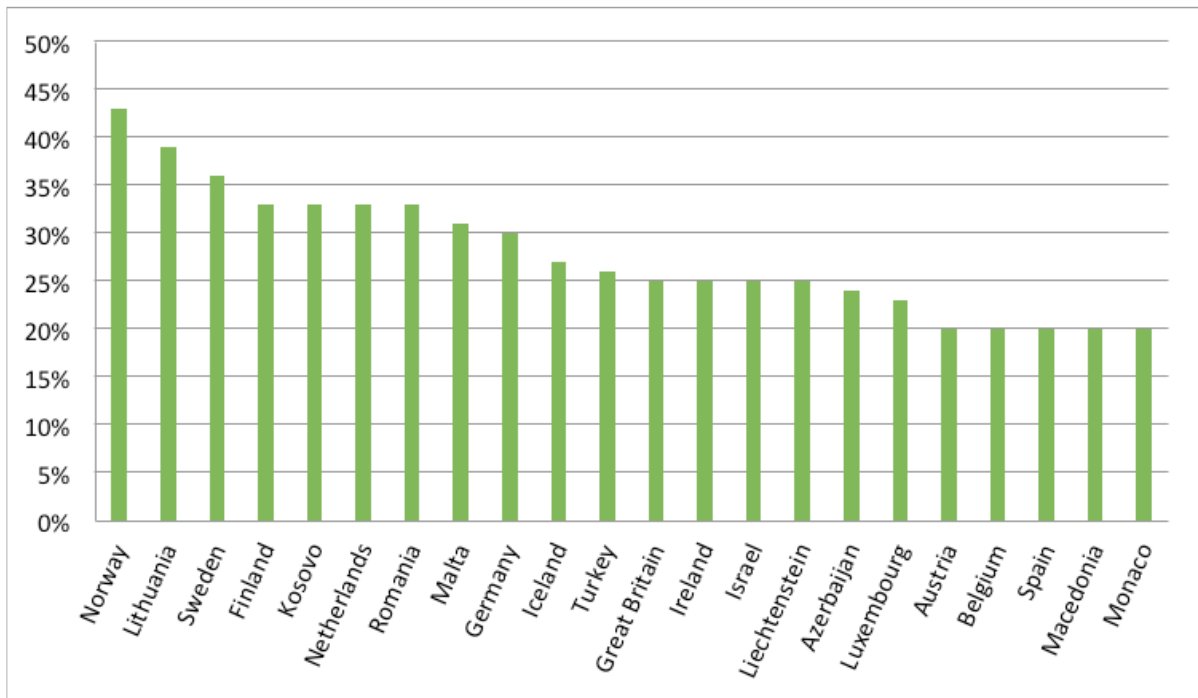
6 Source: Fasting K., Svela Sand T. and Knorre N. (2013), "European female sport students as future coaches?", *European Journal for Sport and Society*, Vol. 10, Issue 4, pp. 307-323.

7 For more detailed information about recent statistical data see, for example, the 2016 Women on Boards Report on Gender Balance in Global Sport, or the 2015 European Institute for Gender Equality Report on Gender Equality in Power and Decision-Making.

8 Source: International Olympic Committee.

9 European Olympic Committees, Gender Equality in Sport Commission, Newsletter, November 2017.

■ Percent of women in leadership positions of European National Olympic Committees



This under-representation of women in leadership positions in sport can be explained by prevailing masculinised sport settings and stereotypical gender roles, but also by gender-blind or biased institutional norms and procedures. Many executive members are elected by their peers, who often tend to elect new leaders that feature similar characteristics as themselves.

### Initiatives in the sport movement

In order to ensure a more balanced representation of women and men in leadership positions in sport, several institutions are issuing policy recommendations, establishing targets or implementing initiatives. A number of examples are described below.

For instance, the International Olympic and Paralympic Committees are engaged in raising the number of women in leadership positions. Both international committees established targets (20% and 30%, respectively) to increase the number of decision-making positions for women (particularly in executive bodies) in the Olympic and Paralympic Movements. Both international committees are undertaking complementary initiatives to support the achievement of these targets.

Eleven sports federations in continental Europe<sup>1</sup> have decided to implement gender quotas to contribute to a balanced representation of women and men for their highest decision-making bodies (executive committee, praesidium and board of directors) and/or for councils, committees and commissions.

Although “Women in Sport” commissions or committees are becoming popular in sports organisations, they are still rather scarce. These structures can be found in the international and national Olympic and Paralympic Committees, as well as in five sports federations in continental Europe. Within their mandate, they propose policies to increase female participation in sport at all levels, including in leadership positions.

Governmental bodies responsible for the policy area of sport also play a role in promoting measures to increase the number of women in leadership positions in sport.

<sup>1</sup> United World Wrestling Europe, European Fencing Confederation, European Handball Federation, European Shooting Confederation, European Weightlifting Federation, Union of European Football Associations, European Hockey Federation, FIBA Europe, European Triathlon Union, European Table Tennis Union and the European Taekwondo Union. Source: European Institute for Gender Equality (2015), “Gender Equality in Power and Decision-Making – Review of the Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in the EU Member States”.



## MEN AND WOMEN IN SPORTS MEDIA: A MEN'S WORLD

### Men make the sports news

Sports media is a male-dominated setting around the globe giving more visibility to sports traditionally practised by men (like football) and reporting massively about male athletes and their performance.

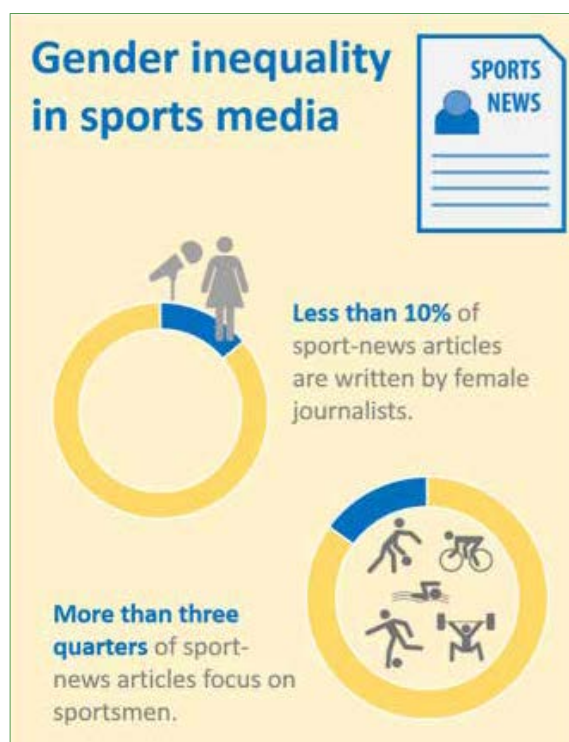
The International Sports Press Survey 2011<sup>1</sup> concluded that more than 90% of articles were written by male journalists and more than 85% of the articles focused on sportsmen. To be more precise, only 8% of the analysed sports articles were written by named female journalists.<sup>2</sup>

As in other fields, horizontal and vertical segregation can be observed in the media, meaning that women tend to be alienated from the sports media at all levels. Not only are women under-represented in media leadership positions, the topics that female journalists cover tend to be stereotypically associated with women's roles. For instance, as reported in the 2015 Women's Media Center (WMC) report,<sup>3</sup> female journalists in the United States of America mainly covered topics like entertainment, education, lifestyle and health, whereas sport is still a predominantly masculine domain, regardless of the type of media. Only 10% of sports news in newspapers is attributed to women journalists, which increases to 21% for internet news and 14% for wire services.

Although some trends remain unchanged, the WMC report noticed a decrease in the overall disparity between women and men in the media (41% of news covered by women and 59% by men) compared to the previous report (38% vs 62%).<sup>4</sup>

### Portrayal and coverage of women's sport are still gender-biased

At international level and over time, the realities of women's sporting performances have not been accurately represented in media images of sportswomen.<sup>5</sup> There is a solid body of research analysing the



representation of sportswomen in different media channels, covering distinct periods of time, in multiple countries. In general, female athletes are far less represented in the sports media than male athletes. Moreover, sportswomen tend to be portrayed in stereotypical, comical, sexualised and sexist ways. Their physical appearance, femininity and/or sexuality are more often referred to than their athletic ability. For example, between 1997 and 2008, only 38 (5.6%) of the US magazine *Sports Illustrated's* 676 issues have featured women on the cover, 12 of which were not athletes, but models in a swimsuit.<sup>6</sup>

The media and sports use gender stereotypes to perpetuate gender inequality and accentuate gender differences.<sup>7</sup> Women are not seen as "real athletes" because the media, on the one hand, objectifies women and highlights aspects of their bodies and, on the other hand, contributes to the reproduction of sport's hegemonic masculinity.<sup>8</sup> Media gender-biased portrayals of sportswomen have an impact on female participation in sport and coaching, as well as on leadership positions in sport.

1 The International Sports Press Survey collected and analysed 17 777 articles about sport from 80 newspapers in 22 different countries: Australia, Brazil, Canada, Denmark, England, France, Germany, Greece, Malaysia, Nepal, New Zealand, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Scotland, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Switzerland and USA.

2 Source: Horky T. and Nieland J-U. (2011), ISPS 2011 – First results of the International Sports Press Survey 2011. Presentation available at: [www.playthegame.org/fileadmin/image/PTG2011/Presentation/PTG\\_Nieland-Horky\\_ISPS\\_2011\\_3.10.2011\\_final.pdf](http://www.playthegame.org/fileadmin/image/PTG2011/Presentation/PTG_Nieland-Horky_ISPS_2011_3.10.2011_final.pdf).

3 Source: Women's Media Center (2019), "The Status of Women in the U.S. Media 2019".

4 Source: Ibid.

5 Source: Sherry E., Osborne A. and Nicholson M. (2016), *Sex Roles*, 74, Issue 7, pp. 299-309.

6 Source: Women's Sports and Fitness Facts and Statistics, Women's Sports Foundation, [www.womenssportsfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/wsf-facts-march-2009.pdf](http://www.womenssportsfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/wsf-facts-march-2009.pdf).

7 Source: Trolan E. J. (2013). "The impact of the media on gender inequality within sport", *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 91, pp. 215-227.

8 Source: Ibid.

The University of Cambridge<sup>1</sup> researched the use of language to refer to women and men in sport through multi-billion-word databases of written and spoken English from a vast range of media sources.<sup>2</sup> Men tend to be mentioned almost three times more often than women in relation to sport. The same online article highlights that, in comparison with men, women are disproportionately referred to regarding their appearance, clothes and personal lives and that women's aesthetics are largely emphasised over their athletic performance. The most common words associated or used for women in sport (but not men) are "aged", "older", "pregnant" and "married" or "unmarried". Conversely, the words most chosen to describe men in sport are "fastest", "strong", "big", "real" and "great". The choice of verbs also differs for sportswomen and sportsmen. Whereas the words "woman" or "women" are usually associated with verbs such as "compete", "participate" and "strive", the words "man" or "men" are commonly combined with "beat", "win", "dominate" and "battle".

Although some positive changes have been noticed in the last 25 years,<sup>3</sup> media coverage of women's sports on TV is still expected to remain rather unchanged as indicated by a longitudinal study.<sup>4</sup> On the other hand, evidence from research<sup>5</sup> suggests that, when compared to traditional media, sports-news websites seem to be playing an important role in setting an agenda of inclusiveness for sports-media coverage (particularly for the Olympic Games) with regard to gender, nationality and different sports.

## GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN SPORT: IT DOES EXIST!

### Defining and measuring gender-based violence

Despite the fact that sport promotes ethical values, fair play and integrity, violence also occurs in the sporting context. In some cases, violence is directed against a person because of their gender (including gender identity or expression). This phenomenon is understood as gender-based violence and may include sexual harassment and abuse, sexual assault, physical or emotional-psychological violence and LGBTQI<sup>6</sup> violence. These forms of gender-based violence are not mutually exclusive; they actually overlap. In sport, gender-based violence usually stems from abuses of power relations facilitated by an organisational culture that ignores, denies or fails to prevent such behaviours.



The media has drawn attention to some cases of such violence that were taken to court, and a few organisations across the world are keeping records of cases of gender-based violence in sport. Recent examples like the USA Gymnastics or the English Football Association scandals can give an idea of the extent and complexity of the phenomenon.

1 See: [www.cam.ac.uk/research/news/aesthetics-over-athletics-when-it-comes-to-women-in-sport](http://www.cam.ac.uk/research/news/aesthetics-over-athletics-when-it-comes-to-women-in-sport).

2 More information about the Cambridge English Corpus and the Sports Corpus can be found at: [www.cambridge.org/gb/about-us/what-we-do/cambridge-english-corpus](http://www.cambridge.org/gb/about-us/what-we-do/cambridge-english-corpus).

3 Source: Cooky C., Messner M. A. and Musto M. (2015), *Communication & Sport*, Vol. 3, no. 3, pp. 261-287.

4 Source: Cooky C., Messner M. A. and Hextrum R. H. (2013), "Women Play Sport, But Not on TV: A Longitudinal Study of Televised News Media", *Communication & Sport*, Vol. 1, no. 3, pp. 203-230.

5 Source: Eagleman A., Burch L. M. and Vooris R. (2014), "A Unified Version of London 2012: New-Media Coverage of Gender, Nationality and Sport for Olympics Consumers in Six Countries", *Journal of Sport Management*, 28, pp. 457-470.

6 Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual, Queer, or Intersex.

Sixteen EU member states and two non-EU states<sup>1</sup> have attempted to estimate the magnitude of certain forms of gender-based violence in sport. However, an approximate and reliable figure translating the reality of the problem in Europe does not exist yet. The research carried out so far does not allow for comparability, mainly due to a lack of consensus of the definition of gender-based violence and what it encompasses.

None of the 38 existing studies use a definition that covers all forms of gender-based violence or use it as an underpinning principle,<sup>2</sup> and most studies focus on sexual violence, without taking into account the psychological and emotional aspects of gender-based violence. Moreover, most of the existing studies were conducted on children and young people.

## How big is the problem?

Data from several studies,<sup>3</sup> conducted in both European and non-European countries, allow us to say that gender-based violence in sport affects primarily women, as shown in the table below. Boys and men are also affected by sexual violence, but to a lesser extent, except in the context of Zambia, where 72% of men are affected by sexual harassment (in comparison to 66% of women).

Gender	Sexual harassment (UK) – Before 16		Sexual violence (Belgium and Netherlands) – Before 18		Sexual harassment (Zambia) – Average age 20 years		Sexual abuse (Quebec) – Average age 14-17 years		Sexual violence (Germany) – Average age 21.58 year		Sexual harassment and abuse by a male coach (Sweden) – Average age 25 years	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Female	1500	34	380	17	120	66	1426	13.8	411	48.1	18	7.0
Male	284	17	198	11	154	72	1281	3.2	170	25.3	8	3.6
Total No.	6124		4043		440		2707		1529		477	

Generally, people tend to associate gender-based violence with abuse by coaches or other personnel within the athletes' entourage, such as doctors, physiotherapists or managers. However, evidence shows that peer athletes are also often perpetrators. Data on sexual harassment and abuse on children and teenagers in sport from the UK, Belgium and the Netherlands show that harassment and abuse came mainly from other athletes. Perpetrators are also more often men but data from Norway<sup>4</sup> and from the Czech Republic<sup>5</sup> report cases of harassment from women (respectively 13% and 28%).

Sexual harassment and abuse	From athletes	From coaches	From other adults
Sexual harassment <sup>6</sup>	66%	21%	20%
Sexual harm <sup>7</sup>	88%	8%	6%
Sexual violence <sup>8</sup>	33%	17%	41%

1 Belgium, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Finland, France, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Latvia, the Netherlands, Norway (non-EU), Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Turkey (non-EU) and the UK. Source: European Commission – Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (2016), Study on gender-based violence in sport.

2 Source: Ibid.

3 Sources: Alexander et al (2011), The Experiences of Children Participating in Organised Sport in the UK; Vertommen et al (2016), "Interpersonal violence against children in sport in the Netherlands and Belgium", Child Abuse and Neglect, 51, 223-236; Fasting et al (2015), Gender-based Violence in Zambian Sport: Prevalence and Prevention; Parent et al (2015), Sexual violence experienced in the sport context by a representative sample of Quebec adolescents, Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 31(16), 2666-2686; Ohlert et al (2017), "Sexual violence in organized sport in Germany", German Journal of Exercise and Sport Research 48 (1), 59-68; Susanne Johansson and Carolina Lundqvist (2017), "Sexual harassment and abuse in coach-athlete relationships in Sweden", European Journal for Sport and Society, 14:2, 117-137, DOI: 10.1080/16138171.2017.1318106.

4 Fasting K., Brackenridge C. and Sundgot-Borgen J. (2003), "Experiences of Sexual Harassment and Abuse among Norwegian Elite Female Athletes and Nonathletes", Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport, 74:1, 84-97, DOI: 10.1080/02701367.2003.10609067.

5 Source: Ibid.

6 Source: Alexander et al (2011), "The Experiences of Children Participating in Organised Sport in the UK".

7 Source: Ibid.

8 Source: Vertommen et al (2016), "Interpersonal violence against children in sport in the Netherlands and Belgium", Child Abuse and Neglect, 51, 223-236.

Another aspect to take into consideration is that some groups appear to be more affected by gender-based violence. Particularly, according to a study conducted in Belgium and the Netherlands, these groups are elite athletes, LGBTI athletes, disabled athletes and athletes from ethnic minorities.<sup>1</sup>

Type of violence	TOTAL SAMPLE % No = 4043	ETHNIC MINORITY % No=334	LGBT ATHLETES % No=308	ELITE ATHLETES % No = 112	DISABLED ATHLETES % No=183
Psychological Moderate or severe experiences	26.1	24.8	34.6	42.0	41.6
Physical Moderate or severe experiences	10.2	16.4	18.2	23.2	30.3
Sexual Moderate or severe experiences	12.8	17.6	24.4	25.9	31.4

## How to combat and prevent it

Over the last 20 years, several policies have been introduced to address the problem.

Knowing that the general legal framework applies in cases of gender-based violence in sport is crucial to combating the problem. It is worth noting that the absence of specific legislation to prosecute cases of gender-based violence in sport, the lack of clarity in relation to what a “sexual act” pertains to, or the varied terminology used to refer to forms of gender-based violence across countries can pose some difficulties in handling cases of gender-based violence in sport. The Istanbul Convention<sup>2</sup> is an important initiative from the Council of Europe to protect women against all forms of violence and prevent, prosecute and eliminate violence against women, including in sporting settings. This convention seeks to establish a pan-European legal framework to prevent and fight violence against women and girls. An independent expert body (GREVIO)<sup>3</sup> was created to monitor the implementation of the convention by the parties.

The assessment of good repute of sport professionals is a very important measure for ensuring the protection of athletes. Checking the criminal background of both voluntary and employed sports staff (such as coaches, managers and therapeutic staff) can help protect potential (underage) victims from sexual violence (including sexual harassment and abuse, as well as rape).

Complementing the existing legislation, sports organisations have established internal measures, procedures, structures and resources to protect their athletes. Examples include guidelines on how to handle cases of sexual violence in sport (including support for victims), measures to protect potential victims of gender-based violence and procedures to report incidents, or registration systems to record cases of offenders who have a disciplinary conviction in sport.

Despite missing robust prevalence and incidence estimates, actions to eliminate gender-based violence in sport are being undertaken by different bodies across the world. Interestingly, stakeholders are teaming up to address gender-based violence in sport. In the European Union, partnerships combating gender-based violence in sport are multilevel, multi-actor and multidisciplinary. They include governmental, public, private and civil society organisations from different sectors, such as sport; health; education; children’s, young people’s, women’s and LGBTQI people’s rights; gender equality; the police; and child welfare.

<sup>1</sup> Source: Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (2011), last accessed on 27 June 2019 at [www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/rms/090000168008482e](http://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/rms/090000168008482e).

<sup>3</sup> More information about the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence can be found here: [www.coe.int/en/web/istanbul-convention/grevio](http://www.coe.int/en/web/istanbul-convention/grevio).



## 2 Why should we tackle gender inequalities in sport?

Gender equality in sport matters. More generally, gender equality is a question of fairness and justice. It is enshrined in a number of legal instruments of the Council of Europe such as the European Convention on Human Rights, the Istanbul Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, as well as other gender equality standards,<sup>1</sup> and in the legislation existing in the European countries.



This factsheet explores the main arguments supporting the systematic implementation of a gender equality strategy in all actions in the field of sport.

### BENEFITS OF GENDER EQUALITY IN SPORT FOR SOCIETY

Fostering access to and the participation of women and girls in many levels and fields of sport can have a positive impact on society as a whole.

► Sport provides girls, boys, women and men with an environment conducive to education and the social development of the individual and contributes to fostering good health and well-being in society → **public health and social development**.

*For instance, by occupying leadership positions in sports organisations, women can develop valuable skills in management, negotiation, communication and decision making to become leaders in all areas of community life. They can provide positive role models and positively influence social attitudes towards women's capabilities as leaders.*

► Sport allows girls and boys to develop the essential values for life in a democratic society, such as fair play, respect for others and respect for rules, team spirit, tolerance and responsibility, which contributes to turning them into responsible citizens → **education**.

► Sport can promote the social integration of girls, boys, women and men, from disadvantaged groups exposed to multiple discrimination (when sex and gender overlap with other grounds of discrimination such as age, race, ethnic origin, sexual orientation and disability) and can contribute towards better understanding among communities, including in post-conflict regions → **inclusion**.

#### Better gender equality in sport can contribute to a better quality of life!

In more gender-equal countries, the chances of enjoying a high quality of life are about twice as high compared to less gender-equal countries.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See [www.coe.int/en/web/genderequality/standards-and-mechanisms](http://www.coe.int/en/web/genderequality/standards-and-mechanisms).

<sup>2</sup> Holter O. G. (2017), "Gender Equality and Quality of Life – How gender equality contributes to development in Europe. A study of Poland and Norway". See contributions at [www.eeagrants.org/project-portal/project/PL12-0066](http://www.eeagrants.org/project-portal/project/PL12-0066).

By the way, sport does not merely reflect society, it is also a powerful means for influencing it. As it is highly visible and one of the most powerful social institutions, sport can therefore be an important vehicle for promoting gender equality as well as the empowerment of women and girls.

It can be also a tool for educating, informing and raising awareness of gender-based violence. Sporting activities offer opportunities to reach out to men and boys and women and girls to examine issues related to gender-based violence, gender-based discrimination and stereotypical attitudes, for example on the physical abilities of women and men, on the role of women in social life, in leading positions, etc.

### Why prevent and combat gender-based violence in sport?

Gender-based violence affects one woman in three globally and occurs in the sporting context as well, despite the ethical values that sport promotes (see Factsheet 1).

It threatens athletes' physical, emotional and mental health. It impacts on their performance and career which may lead to them dropping out of the sporting world completely. Violence also undermines organisations' reputations and the integrity of sport.

- ▶ Preventing and combating it can contribute to ensuring sport is a safe place for all, which fulfils its role of empowering women and girls.

## BENEFITS FOR SPORTS ORGANISATIONS

Investing in gender equality can have a substantial positive impact within sports organisations.

- ▶ Gender equality is generally associated with progressive organisations, responsive to social change, which may improve the image of the organisation in the eyes of government, members, spectators, media, potential sponsors and the general public → **positive image**.

- ▶ As women represent more than half of the European population, including them better offers an organisation an expansion of its "market" through better outreach of all groups and profiles of individuals, attracting more public interest and private investment and, in turn, potentially, more memberships → **economic growth**.

*For instance, more coaches of the under-represented sex may shift the culture and the dynamics in the organisation and attract more players.*

- ▶ Diversity within teams and organisations brings together varied perspectives, produces a more multifaceted analysis of the issues at stake, and triggers greater effort from all that leads to improved decisions and performance. It can also increase creativity, innovation and members' understanding, and foster mutual learning and motivation<sup>1</sup> → **performing organisations**.

- ▶ In the context where sports organisations often face difficulties in recruiting coaches, attracting volunteers, finding decision makers, etc., investing in women can lead to more human resources → **increase in human resources**.

<sup>1</sup> UEFA and University of St Gallen, "Benefits of Diversity & Inclusion: Outcomes, Challenges & Opportunities" (2017).

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### European Commission's Proposal for Strategic Actions in Gender Equality in Sport (2014-2020)<sup>1</sup>

This proposal identifies the current challenges for gender equality in sport and sets some objectives to be reached by 2020, both at the national and international level. It also provides some examples of actions and measures that can be implemented to reach the 2020 objectives. It touches on several different areas, including:

- ▶ decision making
- ▶ coaching
- ▶ gender-based violence
- ▶ the role of the media

### International Olympic Committee Gender Equality Review Project (2018)<sup>2</sup>

This details 25 recommendations that aim to encourage those within the Olympic Movement (athletes, officials, commissions, federations and executives) to take concrete steps and to enact effective change to achieve better gender equality in five specific areas:

- ▶ Sport
- ▶ Portrayal
- ▶ Funding
- ▶ Governance
- ▶ Human resources, monitoring and governance



## COUNTRY CONTEXT

(To be completed according to country-specific context)

- ▶ Main legislation in the country on gender equality, and on gender equality in sport
- ▶ Current policies and programmes
- ▶ Guidelines and standards from sports organisations




For more definitions on gender equality, see the Gender equality glossary of the Council of Europe<sup>3</sup>



See **Factsheet 1** – Facts and figures on gender (in)equalities and differences

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/sport/events/2013/documents/20131203-gender/final-proposal-1802\\_en.pdf](http://www.ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/sport/events/2013/documents/20131203-gender/final-proposal-1802_en.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <https://stillmed.olympic.org/media/Document%20Library/OlympicOrg/News/2018/03/IOC-Gender-Equality-Report-March-2018.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> <https://edoc.coe.int/en/gender-equality/6947-gender-equality-glossary.html>

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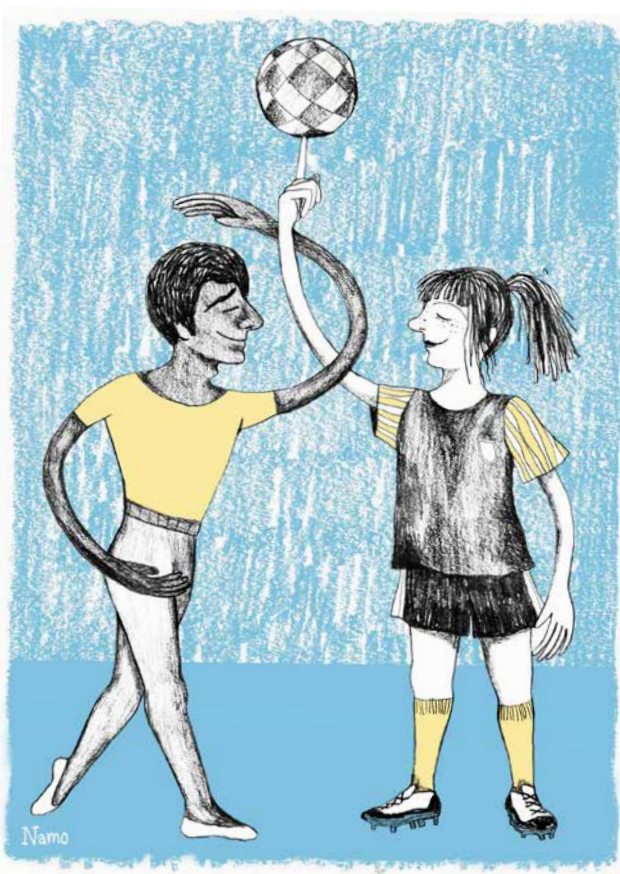
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## 3

# Gender equality / gender mainstreaming in sport – what is it about?

This factsheet first presents key definitions of sex and gender, a basis for achieving a deeper understanding and some explanations of the inequalities and differences between women and men in the sports world. It is followed by a description of mutually supportive policy approaches for achieving gender equality, including gender mainstreaming.



## SEX VS GENDER

### SEX

Chromosomes, hormones, anatomy

#### BIOLOGY

Identifies the biological differences between women and men.<sup>1</sup>

In sport, for instance, men usually run faster than women; this is due to their biological characteristics.

SEX IS WHAT YOU'RE BORN WITH,  
GENDER IS WHAT YOU'RE GIVEN



### GENDER

Behaviour, looks, attitudes, roles

#### SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION

The socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for women and men<sup>2</sup>

Learned and internalised by both women and men through socialisation

Not constant:  
it varies within and across cultures and over time

Carries a hierarchy  
that disadvantages mostly women

Gender is a power system with an unequal power structure between women and men (in the distribution of resources, wealth, paid and unpaid work, time, decision making, political power, enjoyment of rights and entitlements within the family and in all aspects of social and public life)

Girls are keener on practising dancing than playing rugby. This can be explained by the social construction of gender. Society usually considers dancing as a more "appropriate" activity for women than rugby.

<sup>1</sup> While these sets of biological characteristics are not mutually exclusive, as there are individuals who possess both, they tend to differentiate humans as males and females (World Health Organisation).

<sup>2</sup> Article 3C of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention).

### How can gender inequalities and differences in sport be explained?

- ▶ Constructed gender roles affect the situation and opportunities of women and men in all aspects of life, including sport. Sport was traditionally, and still is in many respects, a male domain.
- ▶ Sport was created by men for men. Women's participation in sport has been marked by a long history of exclusion (exclusion from some sports clubs and competitions; only since the 2012 Summer Olympics have women been allowed to compete in boxing, etc.), division (competitions separated by sex) and discrimination (the Wimbledon tennis championships only implemented a pay equality policy for women and men players in 2007, for example).
- ▶ The development of sports activities has been built upon a heavy emphasis on performance and merit ("the best" wins) while also promoting physical force, a trait usually attributed to men.
- ▶ Stereotypes and beliefs about women's role in society – for example, by imposing household work and care responsibilities on them – create constraints for women's involvement in society and in sport, as participants, athletes, coaches or leaders, in management or in other decision-making positions from the local to the international level.
- ▶ Gender stereotypes and traditional models of masculinity and femininity in society, and in sport in particular, arbitrarily assign characteristics and roles to females and males in this area.

*For instance, some sports such as boxing or baseball, or ways of practising them like striving for physical performance or spirit of competition are perceived as "masculine". Conversely, dancing, figure skating, fitness, sports practised to improve physical appearance or to control weight, or positions in sports clubs like secretary or being responsible for children and young athletes are perceived as "feminine".*

Gender stereotypes and traditional models affect:

- ▶ Access to and participation in many levels and fields of sport.
- ▶ The organisational culture of sports organisations in terms of the norms and values conveyed and in terms of the power dynamics, processes and practices that underlie the way such organisations function in their role as an employer (as regards recruitment and promotion) and in in-service delivery. Gender stereotypes regarding the value of women's sport can also lead to inequality in financial resources, such as prize money and other financial incentives.
- ▶ Media coverage of sport, which also often contributes to perpetuating or challenging gender stereotypes across Europe.

Gender stereotypes in sport prevent both women and men from fully enjoying their rights and they limit women's and men's opportunities, potential and well-being.

## HOW TO ACHIEVE GENDER EQUALITY IN SPORT

### What is gender equality?

Gender equality entails equal rights for women and men, girls and boys, as well as the same visibility, empowerment, responsibility and participation, in all spheres of public and private life. It also implies equal access to and distribution of resources between women and men.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Council of Europe gender equality strategy 2018-2023, <https://www.coe.int/en/web/genderequality/gender-equality-strategy>.

To achieve gender equality, **three mutually supportive policy** approaches can be implemented

### **EQUAL TREATMENT POLICIES: ensures women and men enjoy the same rights**

Equal treatment policies are best represented by legislative frameworks aimed at the elimination of sex-based discrimination.

#### **Example**

A female coach cannot be paid less than her male colleague.

### **POSITIVE ACTIONS: counterbalance inequalities**

Positive actions are measures adopted to accelerate the improvement of the position of the under-represented sex (or of disadvantaged groups) to achieve equality, and to correct past and current forms and effects of discrimination.

#### **Example**

Preferential fees for girls to become members of a previously all-male football club.



### **GENDER MAINSTREAMING: integrates women's and men's perspectives in all policies**

Gender mainstreaming consists of integrating a gender equality perspective at all stages and levels of policies, programmes and projects.

Women and men have different needs and living conditions and circumstances. The aim of gender mainstreaming is to take into account these differences when designing, implementing and evaluating policies, programmes and projects, so that they benefit both women and men and do not increase inequality but enhance gender equality.

In a nutshell, gender mainstreaming means:

- Grounding policies on the situation and needs of both women and men
- Better informed policy making
- Challenging the gender neutrality of policies

#### **Example**

Designing a football programme for girls, which addresses the physical and social barriers that may prevent girls from taking part.

## **STANDARDS AND LEGAL FRAMEWORKS**

### **Recommendation CM/Rec(2015)2 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on gender mainstreaming in sport<sup>1</sup>**

This Recommendation aims to achieve de facto equality between women and men in and through sport and puts forward a comprehensive set of measures to the governments of member states, sport organisations, media and regional and international institutions. The main topics addressed by the text are:

- ▶ Achieve gender-balanced decision making
- ▶ Ensure equal access and participation for women and men at all levels and in all fields of sport
- ▶ Implement programmes and policies to combat gender-based violence
- ▶ Use gender equality as a criterion for budgets
- ▶ Include the interests of women and men exposed to multiple discrimination
- ▶ Ensure that facilities are safe, affordable and accessible for all
- ▶ Ensure gender equality in pay, grants and money
- ▶ Combat gender stereotypes and use non-sexist language
- ▶ Awareness raising and training
- ▶ Support data collection and research
- ▶ Monitoring and reporting

<sup>1</sup> [https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result\\_details.aspx?ObjectId=09000016805c4721](https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectId=09000016805c4721)

## EXAMPLES

### INTERNATIONAL OLYMPIC COMMITTEE GENDER EQUALITY REVIEW PROJECT – ACTION PLAN

**Organisation:** International Olympic Committee  
**Target group:** Olympic Movement Stakeholders

Example from the Recommendation related to Sport, number 6, under “Coaches” – “Balanced gender representation for coaches selected to participate at the Games”.

► **Actions:** The Working Group recognises the importance of supporting the participation of more female coaches at the Games. The Working Group recommends the IOC coordinates the development of an action plan in collaboration with Olympic Movement stakeholders for more women to be eligible and selected to participate at Olympic Games level. It is also recommended that a baseline for female entourage members at the Olympic Games is established.

► **Timeline:** Project Lead to work with Olympic Solidarity and Sport (Entourage) on an action plan. Initial findings and action recommendations reported to IOC Athletes’ Entourage, Olympic Solidarity and Women in Sport Commissions by December 2018.

Available at:

<https://stillmed.olympic.org/media/Document%20Library/OlympicOrg/News/2018/03/IOC-Gender-Equality-Report-March-2018.pdf>

### GENDER SURVEY

**Organisation responsible:** The Norwegian Olympic and Paralympic Committee and Confederation of Sports (NIF)

**Country:** Norway

**Target group:** Women in leadership

Content: The NIF has developed a barometer for leadership on boards at different levels. The report is meant to be used by special federations, so they can develop their own projects to achieve gender balance.

### A GUIDE TO GENDER MAINSTREAMING FOR LOCAL SPORTS POLICIES

**Project leader:** Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces (FEMP)

**Country:** Spain

**Partners:** sports and gender equality experts, technical staff of local sports bodies

**Project period:** 2009

**Target groups:** Spanish municipalities and provinces

**Sports:** a wide range of sports

In 2009, aware that sports grounds are among society’s most male-oriented settings, the Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces decided to produce a guide to help local sports bodies to take into account gender issues. It aims at describing instances of discrimination in various sports at local level, providing tools to identify such cases and giving advice on the development of public sports policies based on gender and gender equality issues. In the opinion of the project initiators, five aspects need to be taken into account when assessing discriminatory practices: local sports organisations and their structure; sports policies; the presence of women on governing bodies and organisations; budget level and allocation; communication.



For more information on these examples and to find out about other practices and resources, take a look at the ALL IN online library<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> . <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/gender-equality-in-sport/online-library>

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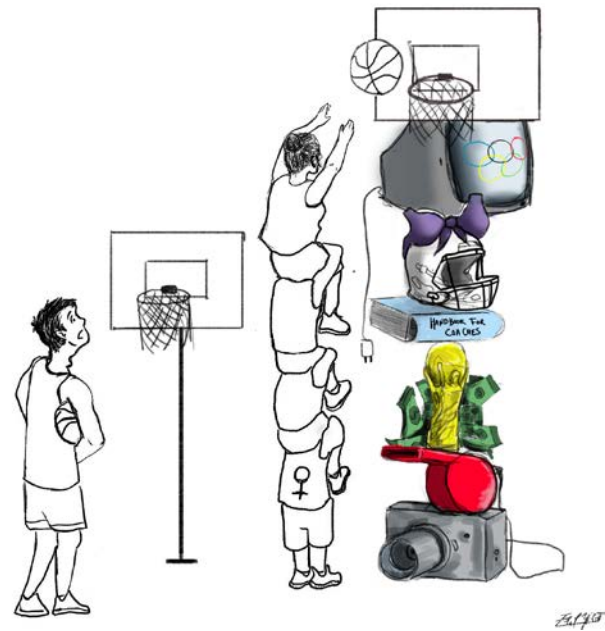
# 4 Drawing up an action plan to achieve gender equality in sport



► **To effectively achieve gender equality, change gender norms and stereotypes that might inform behaviours, decisions and indeed systems.**



- Making gender inequalities visible (by collecting data that show existing gender inequalities)
- Taking proper action in each aspect and at each stage
- Involving all stakeholders, in particular groups that are less engaged in the sports world



**Gender is relevant to every aspect of our lives, as well as all aspects of sport. That is why a gender-sensitive approach to sport cannot be achieved with just one action here and there. Change can only come about by being systematic and comprehensive in our actions. A gender equality action plan is the right tool to keep you on track.**

Your action plan in three steps:

**1. On your marks**  
Get all stakeholders on board and build ownership and awareness to tackle gender inequalities.



**2. Get set**  
Understand the situation in each sport, identify your target group(s), fix your objectives, and define your actions and how to monitor your progress.



**3. Go**  
Get your action plan validated and implement the actions.

## ON YOUR MARKS

- Gather relevant stakeholders to join the planning process, for example, representatives from sport federations, athletes (women and men), policy makers, schools, sport clubs, youth and women's organisations, etc. Participation guarantees involvement and engagement and creates ownership.
  - Make sure there is gender expertise in the planning team and/or provide awareness training on gender equality and sport. Inviting a gender equality expert could be valuable to the quality of your plan.
  - If it is an action plan that involves multiple sports, make sure ALL sports are represented (and not only the popular male-dominated sports). Also make sure both team and individual sports are represented if relevant (as women tend to practise sport individually more than men).
  - If stakeholders provide representatives, ask them to provide one person of each sex.
  - Use participatory planning methods to involve all participants, so that all voices and opinions can be heard. Involve an expert facilitator if necessary.
  - Set rules to make sure that sexist attitudes and remarks or ridiculing (women's) needs during meetings are avoided.
  - Organise the planning session in a location that is safely accessible, at a time convenient for all. If need be, also organise online consultations with under-represented groups.
- With all stakeholders on board, the action plan can now be designed.

## GET SET

Generally, inequalities between women/girls and boys/men can remain invisible in sport. If data are not provided to support claims of inequality, the claims can easily be dismissed. So, the first thing to do is to collect data that demonstrate the existence of inequalities. These data will then serve as a basis for building an action plan.

### Data gathering

Data collection is the basis of planning. First gather data that already exist and if needed, collect new/more data on your target groups with a breakdown by sex and by any other relevant variable (age, education level, etc.). If possible and relevant, also include a third gender category (x). Ensure that all statistics include women and men who practise sport outside sports clubs (for example, those who access free-to-use facilities, recreational runners, etc.).



**TIP:** Publish data regularly and distribute those data to the relevant stakeholders.

■ Gather sex-disaggregated data on different aspects of sport, such as:

- ▶ The number of men/women, girls/boys practising sport.
- ▶ The needs and preferences of women as regards the practice of sport and physical activity throughout their lives (see Factsheet 8).
- ▶ The reasons why women, girls, men and boys stay or drop out of sporting activities and organised or competitive sport.
- ▶ The number of men/women in leadership positions, in coaching (paid and volunteer), acting as referees/officials/judges.
- ▶ Money issues (gender pay gap, prizes).
- ▶ Employment issues (types of employment contract, salaries, non-paid volunteers) (see Factsheet 5).
- ▶ The barriers faced by women and girls or by any disadvantaged group who may face multiple discrimination, in their access to and participation in sports, including elite sports. Identify also the barriers to accessing coaching, management and leadership positions (see Factsheet 5).
- ▶ The prevalence of gender-based violence.



**Differences between individuals are an added value to society. Diversity is OK!**

**However, when a difference leads to an inequality, it is unfair and should be changed. Eliminating gender inequalities is what your action plan should aim for.**

■ In some cases, gathering new data to highlight specific gender-related problems will be required.

- ▶ For example, it has not been done before, start gathering sex-disaggregated data on prize money for all competitions and events.
- ▶ Communicate your data requirements to all stakeholders, distribute checklists or provide templates to fill in.
- ▶ Promote and support research on women and girls in sport and in women's sport in particular, including systematic gender analysis.

### Data analysis

- ▶ Identify the female/male/x differences in the data.
- ▶ Determine which of these differences are in fact inequalities. For example, the fact that women compete with other women and men with men is not an inequality but based on biological differences that may be appropriate in specific contexts/for specific sports. However, if the prize money in women's football is lower than in men's football for the same competition, that is an inequality.

### Define your target groups

Identify two types of target groups:

- ▶ End target groups: girls/women and boys/men (potentially) involved in the sports world.
- ▶ Intermediary target groups: stakeholders you want to work with to attain an outcome beneficial to the end target group (decision makers, coaches, sports federations, sports clubs, media, sponsors, etc.).



**TIP:** Make sure to highlight under-represented and vulnerable target groups.

- ▶ Make the diversity among women and men visible (by highlighting different age categories, pregnant women, women with disabilities, migrant women, etc.).

*For example: a hockey federation wants to increase the number of girls playing hockey. Potential female hockey players are the end target group. Hockey clubs are the intermediary target group. Girls with a migrant or minority background would be a vulnerable target group.*

## Fix your objectives

Decide what you want to achieve with your action plan in relation to your target group(s). A clear objective defines the positive outcome that you want to reach for a specific target group.

*For example: girls (including those with a migrant or minority background) have the opportunity to play hockey and, if willing, to join a competitive team.*

## Define actions

Translate every objective into concrete actions that describe who does what, when, how, the resources allocated, etc. It helps if you make your actions SMART (Specific, Measurable, Acceptable, Realistic and Time-related).

For example:

- ▶ Organise free hockey events for girls (define who, where, when).
- ▶ Set up a hockey team in a refugee centre and have them join in regular competitions (define who, where, when).
- ▶ Make it obligatory for boys' hockey clubs to set up a girls' team if they want to receive subsidies (define who, where, when).

Your action plan should follow two complementary approaches: gender mainstreaming and positive actions.

Reminder: while positive actions aim to correct existing inequalities and improve the situation of women or disadvantaged target groups, gender mainstreaming takes into account both the women's and men's situations and concerns in a systematic manner by transforming policies and working methods. This in turn will improve everybody's situation while decreasing existing and avoiding new forms of inequality.

Example: to increase girls' participation in hockey, the following specific actions and gender mainstreaming actions can be taken:

- ▶ Positive action: organising a summer camp for girls with a migrant background who want to start playing hockey.
- ▶ Gender mainstreaming: organising a hockey tournament with equal numbers of girls' and boys' games, ensuring the same media attention and prize money for both groups.

## GO

## Validate the action plan at a political level and/or by the managing authority.

### Implementation

- ▶ Brief all stakeholders on your actions and confirm what everybody should do.
- ▶ Appoint/recruit a co-ordinator and ensure that she/he has the necessary skills and knowledge about gender equality.
- ▶ Set up a working group to monitor progress. Make sure the participants in this working group are experienced in gender equality issues, are as close to a gender balance as possible and reflect the diversity of stakeholders.

**TIP:** You can keep working with the group set up in phase 1 "On your marks".

- ▶ Take quick remedial action to adapt activities if they do not seem to be on track.

### Monitoring and evaluation

Choose the indicators that will measure your progress.

- ▶ Indicators can measure an activity (did you do what you set out to do?), but also the impact of an activity (are the beneficiaries happy about the activity? What is the result? Has the number of women/girls increased?).
- ▶ Be clear on what you want to measure to assess progress. For example, if your objective is to tackle gender-based violence, progress may actually be measured by an increase in the number of complaints about violent behaviour.
- ▶ Make sure to use your indicators throughout the whole process, to demonstrate progress.

Gather all data and analyse them in terms of gender equality. This evaluation should contain:

- ▶ the indicators and an assessment of the progress made;
- ▶ identification of the remaining inequalities;
- ▶ recommendations for the next planning round.

Share the results of your actions as widely as possible.







# 5 Human resources and leadership



► **Policies, programmes and structures of sport organisations regarding human resources and decision-making bodies.**



► Ensuring fair and transparent recruitment and promotion systems and the equal participation of men and women in sports organisations, whether as workers, decision makers, volunteers, coaches, judges, referees, officials or others.

► Ensuring the equal participation of women and men in executive positions and decision-making processes in sport organisations.



**More diversity in the workforce and among management reduces conflict and staff turnover, enhances innovation and increases organisational effectiveness. An inclusive work atmosphere boosts job satisfaction and performance. In short: diverse and inclusive organisations work better and starting with a mixed leadership group sets a good example.<sup>1</sup>**

## ON YOUR MARKS

### Understand the issue

— Look at the respective recruitment and positions of women and men in the organisation

#### Recruitment

- What are the recruitment channels?
- Any proactive search for candidates?
- Inclusive job description and job profile?
- Specific actions to attract women?
- Who are the volunteers? Who is on the payroll?

#### Career development

- Available posts widely publicised?
- What are usual career paths? Internal job mobility?
- What are the skills and competences required to be promoted to management level?

#### Staff retention and protection of rights

- What are the working conditions? Type of contract, pay, etc.
- Organisational culture: work-life balance; flexible working time.
- Rights and ethics: are procedures in place to combat sexual harassment and to fight sexism and stereotypes?

#### Who gets the decision-making positions?

- What are the rules for proposing candidates? For example, are candidates nominated by current members?
- Are there any rules regarding a minimum number of people from the same sex?
- Is there specific training for women in leadership?
- Is there training on gender equality for leaders?
- Is there a specific committee on women and sport or on gender equality?

#### Leadership style

- Who is involved in setting the agenda for board or other decision-making bodies' meetings?
- Frequency of meetings, time and place?
- What are the rules for decision making? Formal vote or consensus?

<sup>1</sup> UEFA & University of St Gallen, "Benefits of Diversity & Inclusion: Outcomes, Challenges & Opportunities" (2017).



## COACHES

- ▶ Is there any female coach in your organisation?
- ▶ Are they in charge of female teams only? Or of children's teams?
- ▶ Do they get the same position and pay as men (voluntary/employed)?
- ▶ Are there proactive measures to recruit, retain and promote female coaches?

## TAKE ACTION

### Recruitment

- ▶ Ensure a transparent recruitment process. For example, for an internal procedure, the open vacancy should be widely advertised through internal media channels and displayed in common areas (cafeteria, clubhouse). For external recruitment, there should be wide publicity of the post through different channels (social networks, visitors, newspapers, etc.).
- ▶ Pay attention to using inclusive language and not only masculine forms. Use images that show diversity in sport.
- ▶ Set up mixed review and interview panels (balanced proportion of men/women; representatives from human resources; manager; external expert with gender equality knowledge/sensitivity, etc.).
- ▶ Proactively contact candidates of the under-represented sex and contact female coaches directly when a post is vacant instead of waiting for applications. Make use of female networks/NGOs/federations and look further afield for the skills required (consider perhaps physical education teachers, club members, etc.).
- ▶ Organise specific programmes for former female athletes to train to become coaches.

### Career development

- ▶ Be clear about the skills needed and avoid gender stereotypes, such as leadership qualities being associated positively with men and negatively with women. A good leader is someone with a vision, who is humble and capable of planning, etc.
- ▶ Reflect on technical ability (such as sporting performance) and the soft skills required (like empathy).
- ▶ Avoid preconceived ideas about what the team/group will desire. For example, "The team of boys/male athletes will never accept a female coach."
- ▶ Support women to take on new positions through training or other specific actions such as mentoring.

### Staff retention

#### **Ensure zero tolerance towards discrimination, (sexual) harassment, violence and sexism.**

For example, calling a boy a "wimp"; implying that a sport is not for girls; remarks on body features; (sexual) harassment by peers or by persons in charge, etc.

- ▶ Define what constitutes violence, harassment, sexism and any other inappropriate behaviour in your organisation. Adopt and implement protocols, guidelines and codes of conduct. And make them public!
- ▶ Organise an internal complaints procedure for any issues related to discrimination, violence, harassment, sexism and any other inappropriate behaviours. And monitor it!

#### **An absence of complaints is not necessarily a positive sign!**

- ▶ Grant equal pay for work of equal value to men and women in your organisation.
- ▶ Organise gender equality training for all involved in the organisation including decision makers, volunteers, coaches, referees, judges and officials. Include the topics of harassment, sexual violence and sexism.

#### **Work-life balance**

- ▶ Allow and value maternity, paternity and parental leave in your organisation. This includes recognising any competences acquired during a parental break. Ensure that care leave does not have any adverse effect on an individual's future prospects within the organisation.
- ▶ Develop work-life-balance schemes for everyone. For example, ensure that coaching responsibilities can be handled alongside family responsibilities or organise co-coaching schemes. For referees, officials and judges, see if their presence is required during the entire competition or not, and envisage providing for short rest periods to allow them to attend to family responsibilities.



## Leadership and decision-making positions

- ▶ Adopt a regulation/charter that recognises the principle of gender parity within all decision-making bodies and processes. For example, set quotas or targets with an aim of reaching equal representation of women and men.
- ▶ Avoid systems where candidates should be nominated by current members of the board to counter the tendency of recruiting to the same profile as incumbent members.
- ▶ Systematically promote female candidates (or the under-represented sex). One way of ensuring this is by advertising on the organisation's website.
- ▶ Support and/or organise specific training for women to take on leadership positions.
- ▶ Actively search for candidates of the under-represented sex within the organisation, whether they are volunteers, coaches, referees, officials, employees, members or parents.
- ▶ Set a limited number of renewable mandates to achieve more diversity in decision making.

## Leadership style

- ▶ Ensure that all voices and opinions are expressed and heard in meetings.
- ▶ Regularly place on the agenda the topic of gender equality within your organisation and monitor it.
- ▶ Set up a specific committee on gender equality to act as a resource body for collecting the views of women and girls and ensuring that decisions that are adopted take gender equality issues seriously.
- ▶ Ensure that roles and tasks are distributed equally between members of a decision-making body. For instance, avoid situations where executive roles (such as president) are taken by men and more administrative positions by women (such as secretary).
- ▶ Ensure a balanced participation of men and women in all decision-making and preparatory bodies (like specific commissions). For example, aim at mixed representation (male and female) within each different body.
- ▶ Ensure that decisions are taken within a democratic and transparent process. For instance, publish accounts in an understandable way and provide all relevant information ahead of the decision process.

**The ministry in charge of sport or international/national sports organisations can make the respect of gender equality principles a prerequisite for funding or for official recognition.**

## EXAMPLES

### THE WOMEN'S SPORT LEADERSHIP ACADEMY (WSLA)

**Organisations responsible: Anita White Foundation (AWF), Females Achieving Brilliance (FAB) and the University of Chichester (UoC)**

The WSLA is dedicated to developing tomorrow's leaders of sport and provides unique development opportunities for women leaders from around the world to step up, take the lead and make an impact. Since 2014, 228 women from 41 countries have become graduates of the academy. They come from a range of sports organisations, including National Olympic and Paralympic Committees, International and National Sport Federations, sport-for-development charities and organisations, sports departments in universities, sports clubs and media consultancy businesses.

### GENDER QUOTAS IN LEADERSHIP 50-50 IN FORCE IN 2021

**Organisation responsible: Swedish Sport Confederation**

In conjunction with the 2017 annual meeting of the Swedish Sports Confederation, a change in the statute which meant that boards in (national) specialist sports federations should have a gender balance in which no gender is represented by less than 40 per cent. In the nomination committees, the gender balance must be 50-50. The charter will enter into force in 2021. If the specialist sports federations (SSFs) do not reach the targets established by the statute in 2021, it will be considered a contravention of the statute's regulations. The maximum penalty for a contravention is exclusion from the Swedish Sports Confederation.

Throughout 2018 and 2019, SSFs have been able to apply for extra financial support for gender equality. This support is designed to encourage SSFs to intensify their work in order to reach the gender equality goals and the regulation that comes into force in 2021.



For more information on these examples and to find out about other practices and resources, take a look at the ALL IN online library<sup>1</sup>.



**See Factsheet 7 – Communication**

<sup>1</sup> <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/gender-equality-in-sport/online-library>

 **Notes**

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## 6

# Funding



► **How to manage financial resources to ensure a fair distribution of resources to all sports and all athletes and to promote gender equality in sport.**



► Resource allocation to facilitate equal access to and use of all sports facilities and activities by all segments of the population

► Equal access to and benefit from (public) funding for boys and girls, men and women athletes



Financial flows affect all aspects of sports activities, including the building of infrastructures, subsidies supporting sports' organisations, prize money, enrolment fees and salaries, among many other things. In all these aspects, gender can play a significant role. A gender analysis of the allocation of financial resources brings to light how decisions can affect women and men, and girls and boys, differently, and gender budgeting can redress the balance.

## ON YOUR MARKS

### Understand the issue

Traditional ways of accessing and spending funding can lead to gender bias, meaning supporting mainly sports/activities practised by men and boys and/or projects dedicated to them (for instance, the football infrastructure, sponsorship of men's cycling events or financing every year the same sports clubs or teams).

**Gender budgeting, or gender-sensitive budgeting,** is a process that examines (at all stages of the process) how budgets respectively benefit women and men and that changes budgetary allocations accordingly so that funds contribute to gender equality.

#### Examples:

- In sports organisations, it would mean looking at how much money goes to girls/women and boys/men, what proportion they are involved in it and what are the needs of each sex. If a large portion of the budget goes to one sex, it may be necessary to explore what the needs of the under-represented sex are and spend part of the budget accordingly.
- Within the framework of a call for projects for developing sports participation at grass-roots level, it would mean assessing how much money goes to specific sports/physical activities, what proportion of women/girls and boys/men practises them and what the needs of each sex are. Adjustments may be made in case of disparity.
- In the context of the renovation of a sport facility, it may mean taking into account the different needs and practices of both women and men to ensure a wider participation of all.

## TAKE ACTION

### Public procurement (calls for proposals and tenders)

■ **Include gender equality criteria /information** in all public procurement procedures relating to sport and recreational activities.

► Indicate that gender equality should be considered in all activities, including management aspects such as the presence of women on the board. For example, a competition will only be subsidised if organised for both female and male athletes with equal prizes for both; funding will be allocated by priority to multi-sports playgrounds/halls.

► Indicate that sport organisations must have a gender equality action plan to receive public funding.

► Give gender equality some weight: indicate that project proposals taking gender into account will be granted additional points. For example, a proposal for a fitness trail or for organising activities in a multi-functional open space for boys and girls, women and men of different ages gets more points than a football project targeting mainly boys and young men.

► Use gender-inclusive communication (use of male and female grammatical forms, choose images of both men/women, girls/boys in atypical sports, etc.)

■ **Give practical information on how to mainstream gender in proposals**, since organisations applying for funds generally have little idea about how to do it.

► Organise an information/awareness-raising session for all interested organisations on gender equality, gender norms and stereotypes in sport and how to counteract them.

► Include a section in the call document focusing on which aspects should be taken into account in the offer to fulfil the gender mainstreaming requirements. For example, in a call for sport infrastructures in an urban area targeting the younger population, explain that girls and boys are not necessarily practising the same sports and in the same way; demonstrate the importance of thinking about different sports/recreational activities; highlight the importance of ensuring that there is no drop-out of girls during adolescence; and raise awareness of the individual barriers to practising sport/recreational activities, etc.

► Provide references for studies, guides, manuals, etc. on gender and sport to inspire promoters.

### Specific actions

■ Allocate a part of your budget to specific actions for women and girls. For example, organise a call for proposals to develop sport and recreational activities for girls and women from disadvantaged groups, such as football or running discovery sessions for migrant/ethnic minority women and girls.

■ Finance projects on specific gender equality issues; for example, a campaign to prevent gender-based violence in sport.

■ Support projects on inclusive leadership; for example, training aimed at organisations on how to recruit and retain more female managers or training on leadership for future women managers, coaches, referees, etc

### Monitoring and evaluating supported actions

■ Regularly conduct a gender audit of your annual budget looking at the proportion of spending by sex of final beneficiaries.

■ Ask funded organisations to produce regular reports on their activities with statistics on beneficiaries disaggregated by sex and other relevant variables such as age, origin, class, etc.

■ Call for a specific gender evaluation of your activities on a regular basis. Such a focus will help to identify whether financed actions are contributing to more gender equality or not (for example, observing/counting the number of beneficiaries at different times of the day and week, in different sporting setups, etc.) and help to pinpoint obstacles to gender equality in financed actions. Check if organisational or individual barriers are hindering the participation of some groups of girls/boys, men/women and examine potential solutions.



## TIP FOR SPORT ORGANISATIONS

- Make affiliation to the federation conditional on respecting gender equality and implementing gender mainstreaming. For example, offer systematic audits to clubs and guidance on to develop an action plan for gender equality.
- Require that sports clubs monitor their activities from a gender equality perspective. For example, annual reports should include sex-disaggregated statistics on the number of affiliated, volunteers, coaches, officials, etc.
- When possible, use sponsorship to include equipment in the membership fee to reduce costs for women, if relevant, and disadvantaged groups.
- Use diffusion rights to ensure that communication is free of gender stereotypes and that both male and female events are broadcast/covered. For example, make TV and media sign a charter or code of conduct on gender equality in communication.
- Support clubs that organise physical activities for groups of girls in particular aged from 13 to 18, which is the time they often drop out of sports, with additional funding or expertise (for example, financing the visit of a coaching expert to motivate teenagers).

## EXAMPLES

### INTERNATIONAL OLYMPIC COMMITTEE GENDER EQUALITY REVIEW PROJECT

**Organisation:** International Olympic Committee

The International Olympic Committee recommends that the Olympic Movement allocate a proportion of its operations budget to achieve its goals for gender equality on the field of play, in governance and in its own administration.

### GENDER EQUALITY CRITERIA

**Organisation responsible:** Latvian Sports Federations Council

**Country:** Latvia

All recognised sports federations in Latvia are allocated a yearly state budget funding based on criteria such as the federations' activities and its achievements. The said criteria are developed by the Latvian Sports Federations Council and Ministry of Education and Science (the institution responsible for sport). Since 2012, one of the criteria attributes additional points for the number of women sitting on the boards of sport federations. The total score influences the level of funding allocated to a federation.



To have more information on these examples and to find out other practices and resources? Take a look at the ALL IN online library! <sup>1</sup>



**Factsheet 1** – Facts and figures on gender (in)equalities and differences  
**Factsheet 2** – Why should we tackle gender inequalities in sport?  
**Factsheet 7** – Communication  
**Factsheet 8** – Sporting opportunities

<sup>1</sup> <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/gender-equality-in-sport/online-library>



# Notes

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## 7

# Communication



► **How can sports organisations and the media work towards gender-sensitive communication?**



- Break the cycle of the invisibility of women's sports and sportswomen in the media and in communication material.
- Portray women and men in an appropriate way without perpetuating gender stereotypes.
- Deconstruct and fight against gender stereotypes in the world of sport.



Even if some improvement has been achieved in high-level sporting events, sportswomen are still a lot less visible than men and their performances are still undervalued in the media. There is also an unbalanced portrayal of women and men in the media, which often contributes to the perpetuation of gender stereotypes (for example, often asking women athletes about their families or focusing on their looks). This sends a strong message that female sports and athletes are secondary to male sports, a message that must be rectified at every opportunity.

## ON YOUR MARKS

### Understand the issue

#### Female under-representation

- Women are under-represented in sports media at all levels (as journalists, reporters, commentators, editors, etc.)
- Lack of coverage of women's sporting events (types and numbers of events covered, time slots, etc.)
- Women and men are more likely to be covered if they perform in "appropriate" sports (for example, girls and women doing gymnastics or men boxing)
- Women's sport is more likely to be commented on with "matter-of-fact" language, and attracts less footage and fewer interviews

#### Female performance undervalued

- The approach to women's sports emphasises physical appearance and shifts the focus from skills to looks (for example, "sexy" poses in magazines)
- Emphasis on heterosexual femininity (for example, negatively represents lesbian identities and "masculine-looking" bodies)
- Still a high level of attention to women's personal lives and families reaffirming traditional roles (for example, male athletes seldom asked about their spouse or their spouses being presented as trophies)
- Female athletes are less interviewed directly (tendency to interview coaches or entourage who speak on their behalf)
- Men's sport is often considered the norm, while women's sport is given a qualifier (for example, "basketball" = male team; "women's basketball" = female team), setting it apart

## TAKE ACTION

**The aim is to accurately reflect the reality and diversity of sporting experiences and participation among men and women.**

### Strategic level

■ Raise awareness of what constitutes gender bias and stereotyping. For example, develop education and training for sports organisations' board members on how to counter negative stereotypes in sport, draft codes of conduct and set up effective procedures to handle complaints.

■ Develop education and training of athletes and coaches on how to communicate with the media and, more broadly, control the rights of an ethical and appropriate use of their names and images.

■ Develop educational material on gender stereotypes in sport for the media and for journalism schools.

■ Make sure that all marketing and advertising at sporting events stay clear of gender stereotypes and the sexualisation of athletes (for example, avoid women in miniskirts handing out prizes or all-female cheerleading during half-times, distribute the IOC Portrayal Guidelines (2018) to all sponsors, advertisers and marketing stakeholders).

■ Assign responsibility within the organisation to improve media coverage of the under-represented gender. For example, request your press officer to define a communications strategy aimed at raising the profile of female athletes in your sport.

■ Develop contacts with the media and supply them with feature stories, images, statistics related to women's sport.

■ Develop a proactive strategy to promote the representation of the under-represented sex in your sport (for example, advertise the nomination of candidates for awards).

■ Promote reports of girls and women in newspapers and magazines.

■ Promote (female and male) role models in your sport (for example, via social media).

### Operational level

#### ■ Coverage

▶ As much as possible, ensure that both male and female athletes/sports/events are represented in a balanced way in all communication (comments, stories, images, websites, social media, etc.). For example, promote the broadcasting of female or girls' events using your bargaining power when negotiating broadcasting rights for male events to include female competitions).

▶ Bring equal passion to the coverage of both women and men.

#### ■ Images

▶ Focus on performance: do NOT focus on clothing, hair, etc.

▶ Avoid sexualised images of female and male athletes.  
▶ Develop images of active girls, also highlighting strength, power and speed (for example, in judo or rugby) and of graceful and supple boys (for example, diving).

#### ■ Language

▶ Avoid gender stereotypes or comparison between genders (for example, "she ran like a female Bolt").

▶ Use gender-sensitive language in all policies, rulebooks, reports, etc. to move away from the notion that males are the dominant gender when it comes to sport (for example, instead of "the athlete will place his personal items in the locker", use "athletes will place their personal items in the lockers").

▶ Avoid gender qualifying women's sport and female athletes (for example, "golfer" instead of "female golfer").

▶ Use adjectives that apply to both men and women (for example, strong, beautiful, determined). Avoid gendered or sexist descriptions (for example, girly, sexy, like a man).

▶ Avoid gender-biased questions in interviews (for example, asking women about partner/children unless she volunteers that type of information).

#### ■ Interviews

▶ Unless someone has clearly refused to be interviewed, put questions directly to them (and not to their entourage or coach).

## EXAMPLES

### PORTRAYAL GUIDELINES FOR GENDER-BALANCED REPRESENTATION

**Organisation responsible:** International Olympic Committee

As leaders and communicators within the sports movement, the IOC can set the tone as to how women and girls in sport, and athletes globally, can and should be pictured, described, talked about and represented – that is, portrayed - across all forms of media and communication channels.

The IOC Guidelines are intended to raise awareness of what constitutes gender bias in the area of portrayal (how women and men are presented and described). They provide examples and good practice within the sporting context of how this bias can be overcome – notably in the areas of print, digital and broadcast media – to achieve gender-neutral language and equal representation.

**Available at:**

[https://library.olympic.org/Default/doc/SYRACUSE/177154/portrayal-guidelines-for-gender-balanced-representation-international-olympic-committee?\\_lg=en-GB](https://library.olympic.org/Default/doc/SYRACUSE/177154/portrayal-guidelines-for-gender-balanced-representation-international-olympic-committee?_lg=en-GB)

### AWARENESS CAMPAIGN “WOMEN, ATHLETES LIKE ANY OTHER” [“LES FEMMES, DES SPORTIFS COMME LES AUTRES?”]

**Organisation responsible:** Les femmes prévoyantes socialistes

**Country:** Belgium

This campaign focuses on portraying female sporting champions whose paths defy the idea that certain sport disciplines are reserved for men. On the other hand, it highlights the persistent inequalities and barriers to regular physical activity for women.

**Available at:**

[www.femmesprevoyantes.be/campagnes/campagne-2016-les-femmes-des-sportifs-comme-les-autres/](http://www.femmesprevoyantes.be/campagnes/campagne-2016-les-femmes-des-sportifs-comme-les-autres/)

<https://parolesdechampionnes.tumblr.com/>  
[www.parolesdechampionnes.be/](http://www.parolesdechampionnes.be/)



For more information on these examples and to find out about other practices and resources, take a look at the ALL IN online library.<sup>1</sup>



**Factsheet 10** – Sports events

<sup>1</sup> <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/gender-equality-in-sport/online-library>

## EXAMPLES

### FIVE STEPS TOWARDS A GENDER-EQUAL AND INCLUSIVE SPORT MOVEMENT

**Organisation responsible:** The Swedish Confederation of Sport

**Country:** Sweden

Education aimed at raising awareness of how different norms (gender, hetero, white and disabled norms) in sport characterise the different environments in sports. Participants achieve more awareness of how norms come into being, as well as concrete tools to change them so that sport is gender-equal, and more people are included and feel safe.

### GUIDE TO IMPROVING PLAYER ASSOCIATIONS' SUPPORT FOR WOMEN ATHLETES

**Organisation responsible:** EU Athletes

The guide "Improving player associations' support for women's athletes" is a result of the Erasmus+ project SWAFE ([www.euathletes.org/?project=swafe](http://www.euathletes.org/?project=swafe)) co-ordinated by EU Athletes. Following research and other project activities, the guide provides practical advice for player associations on how to best support female athletes and for professional and elite-level women athletes who want to set up an association. The publication also includes recommendations for policy makers on how to address inequalities in this area.



For more information on these examples and to find out about other practices and resources, take a look at the ALL IN online library<sup>1</sup>.



**Factsheet 6** – Funding  
**Factsheet 7** – Communication  
**Factsheet 9** – Training and education  
**Factsheet 11** – Sports facilities

<sup>1</sup> <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/gender-equality-in-sport/online-library>



## Notes

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# 8 Sporting opportunities



► How to offer the benefits of sport and physical activity equally to women and men, and girls and boys, in all sports without reinforcing gender stereotypes



► Sporting opportunities that are attractive to all and keep everyone active throughout their lives



Designing sporting opportunities that address the needs of women and girls as well as those of men and boys is key to helping the less represented sex as well as disadvantaged groups overcome potential barriers and take part.

## ON YOUR MARKS

### Understand gender differences in sport practices



#### Tend to be statistically more motivated by:

- Keeping fit
- Improving physical appearance
  - Controlling weight
  - Maintaining health
  - Relaxing



#### Women tend to be found:

- More in recreational or health-oriented activities
  - More in fitness centres/commercially run facilities
  - More in sports that emphasise physical expression (dance, gymnastics, ice skating, etc.)



#### Tend to be statistically more motivated by:

- Being physically active
  - A desire to excel
  - Competition
- Seeking out an adrenaline rush
- Achieving popularity (society/friends)



#### Men tend to be found:

- More in competitions
  - More in clubs
- More in close combat, team sports on large grounds, motor sports, extreme sports, etc.

These differences can be explained by the socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for women and men in different settings, including in sporting activities. They are learned and internalised by both women and men through socialisation and influence the experience of sport and of the different types of sport/physical activity, motivations, etc. (see Factsheet 3).

## Understand the needs of the under-represented group or of those women and men who do not practise any sport

■ Examine your audience. Collect sex- and age-disaggregated data. Who participates in the activities you offer? Who does not?

■ Go further: ask why do they practise sport? Get in touch with those who do not participate (for example, through non-sporting organisations).

### Possible individual barriers

- ▶ Lack of time/interest (link with women still undertaking most of the domestic and care work)
- ▶ Safety concerns (sexual harassment, violence)
- ▶ Low level of relationship with the sporting community
- ▶ Influence of families, particularly at a young age, influence of friends
- ▶ Body image issues, for example, embarrassment and shyness (particularly acute at puberty), enhanced by gender stereotypes
- ▶ Fear of being judged for transgressing gender models

## Examine your current sporting opportunities: types of activities, programming, location/infrastructure, etc.

■ How do they fit the needs of the under-represented groups?

■ What could you improve?

### Possible organisational barriers

- ▶ Activities offered: frequency, types (physical expression, team sports, motor sports, extreme sports), emphasis (performance, fun, health benefits), competition or recreational.
- ▶ Practical aspects: schedules, availability of segregated time slots.
- ▶ Access: fees, transport, logistics.
- ▶ Safety and quality of facilities and equipment.
- ▶ Rules of sports organisations: for example, outfit specifications, bans on religiously symbolic clothing.
- ▶ Representation of under-represented sex among technical and administrative staff.
- ▶ Sexist, stereotyped and/or racist attitudes.
- ▶ Lack of positive role models.

## TAKE ACTION

### Connect and stay in contact with your target audience

■ Involve residents, club members, pupils in schools and students and women and men of all ages to examine how opportunities can be tailored to their needs.

■ Go and meet in schools, in non-sporting community activities, etc.

■ Set up feedback loops on projects and activities using tools such as tests on progress made or questionnaires.

■ Engage prominent athletes as “ambassadors” or “activators” and role models for future practitioners.

■ Nurture relationships with parents; for example, organise intergenerational events.

■ Develop an empowering message that will resonate with your target audience and redress gender stereotypes (see Factsheet 7 – Communication).

■ Ensure an internet presence.

■ Follow female athletes on social media.

■ Run campaigns, such as an “open day for active women”.

### Do things differently! Develop opportunities that provides the support that your audience needs

■ Tailor sports provision to women’s/the under-represented sex’s requirements:

- ▶ offer a wider range of activities, both team and individual sports/physical activity, with an emphasis on performance, fun, health, etc.
- ▶ improve recreational sports provision while providing an opportunity for women and girls who want to compete
- ▶ ensure that all sport equipment and kit (balls, bibs, shorts, cycles, etc.) made available are adapted for both genders
- ▶ establish workable time slots for partly self-organised groups
- ▶ if there is demand, offer women-only areas and female trainers
- ▶ keep it affordable
- ▶ keep it fun!

■ Take positive measures to ensure full and effective equality between users of all backgrounds; for example, provide the same quality and availability of venues for female and male teams

■ Provide childcare or children's activities at the same time as the parents' activities

■ Back civil society organisations in supporting women's and girls' participation; for example, propose specific activities for elderly women's associations

■ Support the creation of female teams in male-dominated sports (rugby, football, etc.)

■ Organise mixed-team training sessions and competitions

■ Support women in the transition to coaching or other technical roles with specific training opportunities

■ Set up clear mechanisms (codes of conduct, protocols, guidelines) for dealing with complaints of sexism, harassment or abuse and make sure that any complaint is treated seriously.

## Take the long view! Consolidate your efforts

■ Regularly reassess public funding for sport participation to support specific sport programmes for under-represented populations

■ Ensure that public sport infrastructures are equally distributed between male and female users (access, quality)

■ Expand mixed sports at every level and work to promote mixed sports for all age groups (reaching out to players, awareness raising)

■ Provide gender equality training for all involved (coaches, administrative staff, volunteers)

■ Promote good practices and the exchange of information

### Elite sport

Offer the same opportunities to all (potential) elite athletes: all provisions and support to compete should be equally accessible to female and male athletes.

- ▶ Offer the same number and quality of programme choices to females and males, at the grass-roots and high-performance levels.
- ▶ Support quality coaching of female athletes by both women and men with attention on creating safe and inclusive spaces, free of bullying, sexism and stereotypes.
- ▶ Ensure that financial advantages, remuneration, prize money, etc. are provided fairly and equitably to women and men.





# 9 Training and education



► **Planning and organising gender training for coaches, trainers, officials and decision makers in sports organisations and/or ensuring that all training opportunities adopt a gender-sensitive approach**



► Free sport education and training practices and material from explicit and implicit gender stereotypes and sexism

► Organise training and education programmes on gender equality dedicated to sport and sports organisations



Training and education are powerful tools for raising awareness of, exploring and combating gender inequalities and existing stereotypes. Training can focus specifically on gender equality, but all training can also be tailored to take into account the respective situations of women and girls, men and boys, and of the factors favouring the participation of one group over another in the sports world.

## ON YOUR MARKS

### Understand the issue

Generally, education and training activities do not consider gender equality aspects as relevant while they should be included both in content and practicalities. Specific training on gender equality is also effective at raising awareness and informing people in charge of sports organisations' management and activities.

#### Key elements to consider

- Practical aspects: time, venue, participation (notably ensuring gender-balanced participation in specific gender equality training).
- Relevance of gender equality aspects in any training.
- Specific issues in relation to gender equality that must be addressed.
- Specific gender equality training raises awareness and addresses gender equality issues in a specific area.

**Gender-blind training** assumes wrongly that differences between men/women and girls/boys, whether biological, social or cultural, are not relevant for their specific purpose. As a consequence, such training can contribute to perpetuating sex-based discriminations as well as traditional gender roles and stereotypes.

## TAKE ACTION

### Prepare

#### Practicalities

■ **Schedule:** avoid busy family time (early evenings, school holidays, etc.) and enquire informally about appropriate timing for your target group, making sure that you are not excluding some groups (such as people with caring responsibilities or without private cars).

■ **Venue:** safety and comfortable and easy access should be paramount for the choice of venue. Prefer locally organised training. If possible, organise common transportation solutions (for example, car-sharing) to facilitate participation for all, including people with disabilities, without private travel means, etc.

■ **Participation:** who is the training for?

▶ **Be inclusive** when considering potential attendees. For example, if the training is for coaches from your sporting organisation, can you extend your invitation to coaches from other sporting fields? Or to potential future coaches, such as athletes (male and female) in your discipline and outside of it?

▶ **Be attractive** to the under-represented sex, for example, avoid using prerequisites (competences, experience, etc.) as criteria that can discourage participation by the under-represented sex.

▶ **Be attentive** to the fact that the price of the training might exclude some targeted groups. Explore different pricing options and/or external financial support for reducing attendance costs.

▶ For **specific gender equality training:** ensure the **participation of leaders** from within the organisation to send a clear message about how important the training is.

▶ **Set targets in terms of the characteristics of people attending**, including a gender balance of participants. For example, request all invited organisations to send one man and one woman to reach a gender-balanced group.

#### Topics

■ **Relevance of gender equality in all training/education.** For example, training/education to become a certified coach should question what a “good coach” is considered to be, what qualities are required, how these qualities are assessed, which traits are usually attributed to male and female coaches, etc.

■ **What are the needs of male and female participants in terms of skills and knowledge?** For example: assertiveness in leadership is generally valued positively in men but negatively in women. So, training in leadership can first explore different ways to be a leader and how to react when leadership is contested.

■ **What support material can you use to design your training?** For example, contacting a gender equality trainer for the preparation of the training or even considering some co-supervision of sessions. Check manuals on gender-sensitive training and/or publications on gender issues on the topic of your training.

■ **See if specific issues relating to gender can be raised.** For example, the qualification training for coaches should also address violence and harassment between teammates.

■ **Look at ways to integrate a gender-sensitive approach to the training content.** For example, in training on coaching skills, reflect on the skills that are actually needed in technical but also human terms: the techniques for passing on knowledge to learners but also the softer skills such as empathy, the capacity to listen, understand and motivate, which can make a difference. Do not hesitate to plan a session on specific gender-related barriers, for example issues that a female coach can face in order to be accepted by a male team.

■ **Specific gender equality training** should be organised, such as training for certified coaches focusing on developing gender-sensitive coaching techniques. Ensure that the training includes specific content on preventing and combating gender-based violence in sport.

## During the training

### Methodology

- Participative methods have the greatest potential to ensure that all voices and opinions can be expressed. For example, ask your audience to share their own experiences at every opportunity.

- Set out the rules: an equal voice for all, listening to others, respectful exchanges, no sexist humour.

- Make people aware about their representations of men and women and boys and girls to help them change their attitude (for example, “would you say the same for/to a female coach?”)

### Support material

- Illustrate your points with sex-disaggregated data as much as possible.

- Use pictures, diagrams or illustrations that do not reinforce gender stereotypes.

## After the training

- Look back at the number of participants sorted by sex and by any other relevant characteristic, for example by age, disability or level of responsibility.

- If a selection process for participants has taken place, how many men/women applied and how many were selected to participate in the training?

- Reflect on the dynamic of the group, previous knowledge and the topics covered.

- Analyse the answers to the evaluation questionnaire to assess how effective the training has been and if any need was not covered. Sort the answers by sex and by any other relevant characteristics.

## EXAMPLES

### TRAINING AND EDUCATIONAL MATERIAL ON CO-EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES

**Organisation responsible:** High Council for Sports (Spain)

**Country:** Spain

**Target:** physical education teachers and sports trainers

The High Council for Sports has devised educational materials and organises training courses to teach PE teachers and sports trainers about good co-educational practices.

It is still very common in PE classes for teachers to decide on the different activities for girls and boys by following stereotyped patterns.

That is why the High Council for Sports has created educational materials (in a digital format) and offers training free of charge to PE teachers on the topic.



For more information on these examples and to find out about other practices and resources, take a look at the ALL IN online library<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/gender-equality-in-sport/online-library>



# Notes

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**ALL IN: Towards gender balance in sport (Erasmus +)**

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# 10 Sports events



► **Gender-sensitive planning and organisation of sport events and competitions by public authorities and sports organisations.**



- Achieve a gender balance in participation in sporting events and competitions
- Offer an equal number of events and competitions for women and men, girls and boys
- Ensure gender equality in prizes and awards
- Promote all events equally with material free of gender stereotypes



The gender-sensitive organisation of sporting events and competitions will contribute to making events more accessible to both sexes, to making female athletes more visible and breaking down gender stereotypes. Raising the visibility of female athletes and competitions will underline the importance of female sports, making them more viable commercially. Such events can also help raise awareness of gender inequalities and serve as good examples.

## ON YOUR MARKS

### Understand the issue

Even if the norm is to organise distinct competitions for males and females, a lot can be done to improve gender equality in events and competitions to give equal opportunities, visibility and rewards to all, as well as to challenge gender stereotypes.

#### Key elements to consider

- Schedule (for example, are slots fairly distributed between female and male competitions?)
- Venue (is the quality of venue and/or equipment the same for all events?)
- Participation (is the number of male and female athletes roughly equivalent?)
- Attendance (is the number of men and women and girls and boys attending the event roughly equivalent?)
- Prizes and awards (are the funds available for female and male competitions or events equal?)
- Promotion (are female competitions or events as well promoted as male events?)
- Non-sporting aspects (does marketing avoid sexualisation of athletes?)

## TAKE ACTION

### Plan

#### ■ Choose the right venue

- ▶ Make sure that the venue can provide the same quality of infrastructure and equipment for male and female games. For example, clean, safe, adequate changing facilities and toilets, enough adequate space to accommodate television crews, etc.
- ▶ Make sure that all venues can be accessed safely by all segments of the population. For example, examine the necessary measures required to ensure well-lit parking facilities in the evening.
- ▶ Check that all venues can accommodate a section for family seating, with family friendly restrooms.

#### ■ Aim at equal participation/attendance

- ▶ Consider organising mixed events; for example, mixed teams for a triathlon instead of single-sex teams, female and male games organised the same day and at the same venue.
- ▶ In mixed sports competitions or events, ask organisations to send equal numbers of men/boys and women/girls as much as possible.
- ▶ In your planning, ensure an equal number of single-sex events.
- ▶ Support to participants: ensure that rewards, incentives, recognition, sponsorship, promotion and other forms of support are provided fairly and equitably to women and to men.
- ▶ Plan opening and closing ceremonies of sporting events in which women and girls feature as significantly as men and boys.

#### ■ Plan a fair schedule

- ▶ Ensure a fair distribution of slots for male and female events/competitions to guarantee equal visibility to all. For example, avoid scheduling all women's finals in the early afternoon and all male ones in the early evening.

### Organise

■ Make sure that all marketing and advertising stays clear of gender stereotypes and of the sexualisation of athletes (for example, avoid all-female cheerleading, distribute the IOC "Portrayal Guidelines" (2018) to all sponsors, advertisers and marketing stakeholders).

■ Explore all possibilities for making ticket prices affordable to ensure access to all categories of income (for example, family tickets, free access to children under a certain age).

■ Use the opportunity offered by an event or competition to promote your sport effectively; for example, offer free/cheaper access to under-represented group(s).

■ To counter the tendency of men's events to be referred to as the only game in town, designate events or competitions as either men's or women's competitions (for example, Men's Tennis Championship, Women's Tennis Open).

■ Ensure that both male and female events attract balanced coverage in the media. For example, when negotiating diffusion rights, demand that male and female events are covered equally.

■ Alternate the order of presentations, matches and mentions of women's and men's results and events in presentation ceremonies, publications, etc. to be sure that women's sport is not unintentionally presented as secondary to men's sport.

■ Maintain an active social media presence on multiple platforms and increase outreach, for example by engaging female athletes.

■ Develop a clear strategy against sexism and (sexual) harassment during the event, including a clear procedure on how all complaints will be dealt with and the support provided.

■ Distribute clear, precise and practical information to all participants and staff about your policy to prevent and combat gender-based violence.

■ In liaison with public transport services, organise safe and affordable transport.

■ As far as possible, make sure that the support staff, volunteers, event managers, officials, etc. are gender mixed teams.

■ Organise a collection of sex-disaggregated data on participating athletes and the public to check for gender disparities.

■ Post-event: organise a feedback session with all relevant stakeholders. Use the collected data on participation and attendance to support your analysis. How did it all go? How could it be done better? Develop an action plan for your next event.

## EXAMPLE

### MONITORING GENDER BALANCE (I.E. PRIZE MONEY) AT (LEADING) SPORTS EVENTS

**Organisation responsible: Sport Vlaanderen (Flemish Ministry of Sport)**

**Country: Belgium**

Organisations that are subsidised by the Flemish authorities for their (leading) sports events are obliged to submit an evaluation form in addition to their expense reports.

Since 2018 this evaluation form has included the following question: "What actions does your organisation take with regard to the equal treatment of men and women concerning prize money, starting fees or other payments? Please specify whether an equal treatment was applied and what your intentions are for this aspect for future events".

The Minister of Sports and the Administration of Sports (Sport Vlaanderen) have explicitly chosen to apply the principle "comply or explain".



For more information on these examples and to find out about other practices and resources, take a look at the ALL IN online library<sup>1</sup>.



**Factsheet 4** – Drawing up an action plan to achieve gender equality in sport

**Factsheet 6** – Funding

**Factsheet 7** – Communication

**Factsheet 8** – Sporting opportunities

**Factsheet 11** – Sports facilities

<sup>1</sup> <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/gender-equality-in-sport/online-library>

 **Notes**

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# 11 Sports facilities



► **How to plan, (re)design and manage sports facilities at the local level integrating a gender dimension.**



► Overcome some of the barriers to the participation of women and girls in sporting activities.

► Guarantee that all sports facilities are accessible, safe and adapted to all and offer sporting opportunities to all segments of the population



**A gender-sensitive (re)design and management of sports facilities and their direct environment will make them more responsive to the needs of all potential users and enhance the participation of boys, girls, men and women in physical activities.**

## ON YOUR MARKS

### Understand the issue

Look into how several aspects of the design and management of sports facilities can influence participation.

#### Key elements to consider

- Venues: what kind are they? (Indoor, outdoor, a swimming pool, football pitch or river, etc.).
- Location which links safety and accessibility: where are the venues located? What is the distance to the urban centre or urban area (for example, is the football pitch out of town or the skating ring in an industrial area)?
- Transport: is there public transport?
- Access for all: is the facility accessible to people with disabilities? Is the price affordable?
- Lighting: is there lightening in and around the venue?
- What are the activities practised? What are the schedules (distribution of slots)? What section of the public is being targeted?
- Users: who are they (sex- and age-disaggregated data)?
- What about changing rooms? Are they male, female, unisex?



**CONSIDER AREAS WHERE SPONTANEOUS SPORTING ACTIVITIES ALSO TAKE PLACE, SUCH AS WALKING, RUNNING, CYCLING, SKATING, ETC.**

## TAKE ACTION

**The aim is to guarantee equal access to safe, affordable and adapted sports facilities for all sections of the population.**

### (Re)Design

■ Location: it is essential to offer easy access, but also pay attention to perceptions of safety; for example, isolated areas far from city centres may feel insecure while busy urban or populated areas can reinforce a feeling of safety.

■ Lighting: well-lit areas and infrastructures reinforce a feeling of safety. For example, adequate lighting on the approach to and around the facilities is essential.

■ Ensure easy access for all, taking account of things such as the proximity of public transport, easy access for wheelchairs and prams and adequate parking areas.

■ Locate baby-changing stations in common areas or in both male and female changing rooms.

■ Make sure that all equipment fits all users' physical needs and features (height and weight); for example, unisex changing rooms that cater for the needs of both males and females, and showers and changing rooms for referees and officials.

■ Offer a wide choice of activity in public spaces to ensure that opportunities to participate are as attractive to women and girls as to men and boys (for example, not just basketball or football, but also badminton or volleyball).

### Manage

■ Allocate facilities and pitch time equally between women's and men's sports and teams: make sure quality equipment and slots are fairly distributed between male and female sports and/or allocate sessions devoted exclusively to the under-represented sex (for example, football sessions supported by a trainer offered to girls only).

■ Transport: co-ordinate the schedule of activities or opening hours with public transport schedules as much as possible; use web-based resources to develop possible alternatives (for example, car-sharing).

■ Explore all possibilities to make pricing affordable to ensure access to all categories of income based on an assessment of the needs of different groups (for example, student discounts, family/group subscriptions, subsidies for activities favoured by under-represented segments of the population).

■ Organise the use of changing rooms to respond to the needs of various groups; for example, family changing room(s) on weekends.

■ Ensure all staff working at facilities are aware of the rules and objectives regarding gender equality and preventing gender-based violence, and that they are trained to work with people with disabilities.

■ Publicly display your protocols, guidelines and codes of conduct regarding gender-based violence.

■ Set up tools to quantify the use of facilities (for example, the systematic collection of sex- and age-disaggregated data on users), set quantitative objectives and monitor progress.

■ Be imaginative about the venues: for example, use schools after school hours, organise summer gym classes in parks.

■ Set up play areas and childcare services to facilitate the practice of sport for parents and carers.

■ Publish a catalogue (in print and online) detailing the available indoor and outdoor facilities, complete with scheduled activities and details about who the activities are aimed at.

## EXAMPLES

### CRÈCHE FACILITIES TO FOSTER WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN SPORT

**Organisation responsible:** Edinburgh Leisure  
**Country:** UK

Edinburgh Leisure runs a number of women-only sessions for a variety of activities; sessions that have become much appreciated by women in the community. Several of the leisure centres also provide crèche facilities to enable women with children to take part in activities while their children are cared for and engaged in suitable activities. As a follow-on from this work, Edinburgh Leisure has also secured funding from the "Girls on the Move" participation programme to provide a service for young mothers. This initiative will target young mothers from socially excluded areas and will provide access to leisure opportunities as well as a crèche free of charge.

**Available at:**

<https://sportscotland.org.uk/documents/resources/makingwomenandgirlsmoreactive.pdf>

### GENDER-SENSITIVE REDESIGN OF A SKATEPARK

**Organisation responsible:** North Ayrshire Skate Group  
**Country:** UK

Evolution Skate Park, North Ayrshire Skate Group, wanted to encourage girls and young women to take up inline skating, skateboarding and BMX cycling when they had a skatepark built. As skateparks often become part of territorialism and very much a boys-only zone, they wanted to counteract this trend and provide a safe and non-intimidating park where girls felt welcome. The skatepark introduced two girls-only sessions per week. Girls can come and learn to skate under the watchful eye of a tutor, on hand to encourage and help them develop their skills. The skatepark has approximately 30 to 40 girls attending each session and many of the girls have gained enough confidence to use the park outside the girls-only sessions.

**Available at:**

<https://sportscotland.org.uk/documents/resources/makingwomenandgirlsmoreactive.pdf>



For more information on these examples and to find out about other practices and resources, take a look at the ALL IN online library<sup>1</sup>.



Factsheet 6 – Funding  
Factsheet 8 – Sporting opportunities

<sup>1</sup> <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/gender-equality-in-sport/online-library>

## ALL IN: Towards gender balance in sport

The “ALL IN: towards gender balance in sport” European Union-Council of Europe joint project provides support to public authorities and sports organisations when designing and implementing policies and programmes aimed at tackling gender inequalities in sport and adopting a gender mainstreaming strategy.

- “All In” ► **Data collection on gender equality in sport in leadership, coaching, participation, media / communication and gender-based violence**, to monitor the progress, to allow comparisons between countries and sports, and to help design evidence-based policies.
- “All In” ► **Developing concrete materials and activities**, to support policy making and driving changes. In addition to this toolkit, the following have been developed:
  - an online library of practices and resources on gender equality and gender mainstreaming in sport;
  - face-to face-training seminars;
  - relevant awareness-raising tools (testimonies, video messages on gender equality in sport, etc.).

### WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO USE THESE RESOURCES

#### STEPPING UP THE PACE

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