

IPACS Benchmark Guidelines

Updated 21 December, version 6

IPACS Benchmark C9 – The organisation has a programme for promoting gender equality and diversity in and through sports

Definitions

- Diversity – (in this context) involvement in the organisation of people with a range of characteristics and backgrounds who are broadly representative of society at large

Introduction to this Benchmark and its significance

- There is growing evidence that organisations with more diverse leadership tend to be more innovative and produce better results
- However, research consistently shows inequalities in participation in sport and physical activity based on gender, ethnicity, disability, age, socio-economic group and other characteristics
- The composition of elected and appointed roles in sports organisations tend to reflect injustices and barriers apparent in leadership in business, politics, media and other aspects of society
- There are laws against discrimination in many countries

Commentary on the action to be taken

- The organisation should seek to have an equitable proportion of females and males involved in its activities, including in sports participation, employment and coaching and in its leadership, including all committees; it should also seek a balance in media coverage and resource allocation
- The organisation should act without discrimination and take action to address inequalities in opportunity in society
- The organisation should act in a responsible way to prevent gender-based violence and ensure the safety and well-being of all participants and their right to participate without fear of violence, abuse or harassment
- Specific focus areas in addition to gender equality may include a combination of ethnicity, disability, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, gender identity, nationality, religious beliefs, political beliefs, age and other characteristics, depending on the nature of the organisation, applicable national legislation, the scale of its operations and so on
- The organisation should set targets and monitor and report on progress towards them, in accordance with applicable laws; targets may be in the form of quotas and/or in the form of action to take to work towards being an organisation that is more balanced and diverse; where quotas are used, these should be embedded into internal systems and procedures to ensure implementation
- The organisation should consider the impact on gender equality and diversity of the decisions it makes
- In the case of many sports organisations that have historically been imbalanced, work will be needed to attract and retain more diverse participants, including at junior and local level
- In the case of a small number of sports and sporting disciplines which have mostly or exclusively female participation, a different approach may be appropriate
- See also Recommendations C5 (eligibility rules), D9 (anti-discrimination) and D10 (inclusive sport)

Investment requirement – limited investment is needed to develop appropriate policies and rules; there may be costs associated with monitoring and proactive support work; some re-balancing of resource allocation may be needed

Guidance according to stage of organisation

Early stage

- The organisation has a commitment to non-discrimination in its official documents, covering an appropriate range of characteristics
- The organisation has rules or a policy to encourage gender equality

- The organisation has rules or a policy to encourage greater diversity among the people involved in its activities

Developing

- The organisation's leadership has made a public commitment to gender equality and to wider diversity, and is actively engaged in driving forward change
- The organisation has set appropriate targets regarding gender equality, and monitors and reports on progress
- The organisation has set appropriate targets regarding wider diversity and monitors and reports on progress, in accordance with applicable laws
- The organisation takes proactive steps to work towards gender equality and wider diversity (e.g. outreach work with under-represented groups, mentoring/development support, training for those currently in the organisation)

Advanced

- The organisation can show tangible progress towards gender equality and greater diversity in sports participation and its leadership/decision-making; the organisation uses measurable indicators to demonstrate and report on progress
- The organisation achieves appropriate accreditations that may be available (e.g. national programmes regarding gender equality)
- The organisation actively researches and reviews areas of inequality and under-representation to continue to improve its policies in this domain

Good practice examples

International Federations (from 2020) – assessed on gender balance only

- FIH: [Statutes](#) 7.1.a.ii – 4 men and 4 women to be elected to the Executive Board. Overall, there are 6 women out of 16 members listed on the [Executive Board](#)
- The FIH [Gender Equality Policy](#) is published
- World Athletics – The [2019 Constitution](#) includes provisions to ensure improved gender balance on the Council over time - see article 36
- FISA - The [Council](#) is relatively balanced in composition between women and men
- World Flying Disc Federation – Gender equality is referenced in [Bylaws](#) (Article VIII - Guiding Principles) and there is a Women in Sport commission (Article VI). 7 out of 18 members of the [Board](#) are female (February 2019)

Overall standard among International Federations:

- In the 2019-20 review, one IF had a board that was over 40% composed of women; 12 IFs had boards between 25% and 40% female in composition, plus rules or a policy to encourage better gender balance; for 10 IFs the proportion was between 15% and 25%; eight IFs had fewer than 15% of their board composed by women
- This topic was one of 20 covered in the 2018-19 GAISF assessment for non-Olympic sports (compared to 50 topics for Olympic sports) as it was judged to be important and feasible for small organisations to work on

Continental Bodies

- None seen

National Olympic Committees

- Trinidad and Tobago Olympic Committee – President chairs the [Sports Integrity Global Alliance task force](#) on race, gender diversity and inclusion
- US Olympic and Paralympic Committee – [diversity, equity and inclusion commitment](#)
- Norwegian Olympic and Paralympic Committee and Confederation of Sport – [inclusion programme](#)

National Federations

- French Basketball Federation – [toolkit](#) on preventing sexual violence in sport

Selected references

- [ASOIF GTF Questionnaire 2019-20](#), Indicator 3.8
- [SIGGS](#) Principle 4 (Democracy, Participation and Inclusivity), Indicator 10 – How does your organisation approach diversity, inclusion and non-discrimination?; Indicator 11 - How does your organisation approach gender equality?; Roadmap Principle 4
- European Commission Expert Group on Good Governance, [“Principles of Good Governance in Sport”](#):
 - Principle 4.e(6): Ensuring that the appropriate level of inclusivity, diversity and sports representation is achieved and maintained across decision making bodies
 - Principle 5.c: Composition of committees
 - Principle 6.a(6): Requirements for the board – The board must promote equality and diversity and actively work to attract a diverse range of members, including, in particular but not limited to, an appropriate gender balance at board level as part of an overall inclusivity programme
- IOC [Olympic Charter](#), Fundamental Principles of Olympism 4: “The practice of sport is a human right. Every individual must have the possibility of practising sport, without discrimination of any kind and in the Olympic spirit, which requires mutual understanding with a spirit of friendship, solidarity and fair play”
- IOC [Olympic Agenda 2020+5](#), Recommendation 13 – Continue to lead by example in corporate citizenship
- *Foster gender equality and inclusion:*

- The IOC to lead by example by continuing to increase gender balance at IOC Governance level and adopting a Diversity and Inclusion action plan for its administration
- The IOC to call on IFs, NOCs and OCOGs to implement the IOC Gender Equality and Inclusion objectives for 2021-2024 around five focus areas (Participation, Leadership, Safe Sport, Portrayal, Resource Allocation)
- IOC [Gender Equality Review Project](#)
- Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, [Addendum to the report “Working towards a framework for modern sports governance”](#):
 - Principle 2.1: Regular elections of the governing bodies – The Organisation encourages gender equity with regard to its leading functions
- Geeraert, A. (2018). [Sports Governance Observer 2018](#). An assessment of good governance in five international sports federations. Aarhus: Play the Game/Danish Institute for Sports Studies, p.11-15:
 - Principle 24: The organisation implements a gender equality policy
 - Principle 50: The organisation implements a policy to promote gender equality in sport
- IOC’s [“Consolidated Minimum Requirements for Implementation of the Basic Principles of Good Governance for NOCs”](#):
 - Theme 2.4 “Representative governing bodies” – Principle 1: Members of the organisation should be represented within the governing bodies, particularly women and athletes
 - Theme 5.2 “Equity” – Principle 2: The equity in sport should be reinforced: The NOC must actively promote the practice of sport in a non-discriminatory and inclusive manner. All classes of population should be encouraged and supported equally in their sports practice.
 - The NOC should establish inclusion/non-discrimination policies. In particular, the NOC should establish a gender equity policy.
 - The NOC should work with relevant organisations to educate the components of the Olympic and Sports Movement at national level to the values and principles of equity, inclusion and non-discrimination.

ASOIF indicator 3.8 – scoring definitions used in the 2019-20 assessment

- 0 – Female representation is no more than 5%
- 1 – Female representation is more than 5% but no more than 15%
- 2 – Female representation is at least 15% with rules/policy to encourage gender balance
- 3 – Female representation is at least 25% with rules/policy to encourage gender balance
- 4 – Executive Board has at least 40% of each gender with rules/policy to encourage gender balance