

Steps towards the integration of the gender perspective in the sports sector

A guide for the management of
sports organisations



This guide has been developed as part of the “PROmoting GendeR Equality in Sports – PROGRES” project and represents the fruitful work between the project partners. Its main purpose is to provide information, concrete tips & tricks to put into practice a gender mainstreaming approach to achieve equality between women and men in the sports sector.

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PROGRES

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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.



Main objectives

- to raise awareness towards the extent of gender inequalities and differences in the sports world and the prevalence of gender-based violence;
- to understand how to perform a gender audit in sports organizations in order to identify the gender gap and areas of improvement;
- to integrate the gender perspective in organizational policies, strategies and initiatives;
- to provide guidelines for increased participation of women in decision-making positions of sports organizations.

The overall objective of the PROGRES project is to promote gender equality, encourage social inclusion and equal opportunities in the sports sector and specifically in football, by promoting gender mainstreaming within football federations and associations.



Table of contents

- Gender equality in football and in sports organizations
- Gender auditing and relevant methodologies and tools
 - The planning & analyze phase
 - The monitoring & evaluation phase
- Gender mainstreaming methodologies and tools
- Gender mainstreaming challenges for sports organizations
- Steps towards the integration of the gender perspective in the sports sector
 - Guidelines for improved gender mainstreaming in sports organizations: how to integrate the gender perspective in organizational policies, strategies and initiatives
 - Guidelines for increased participation of women in decision-making positions of sports organizations

Part 1: Gender equality in football and in sports organizations

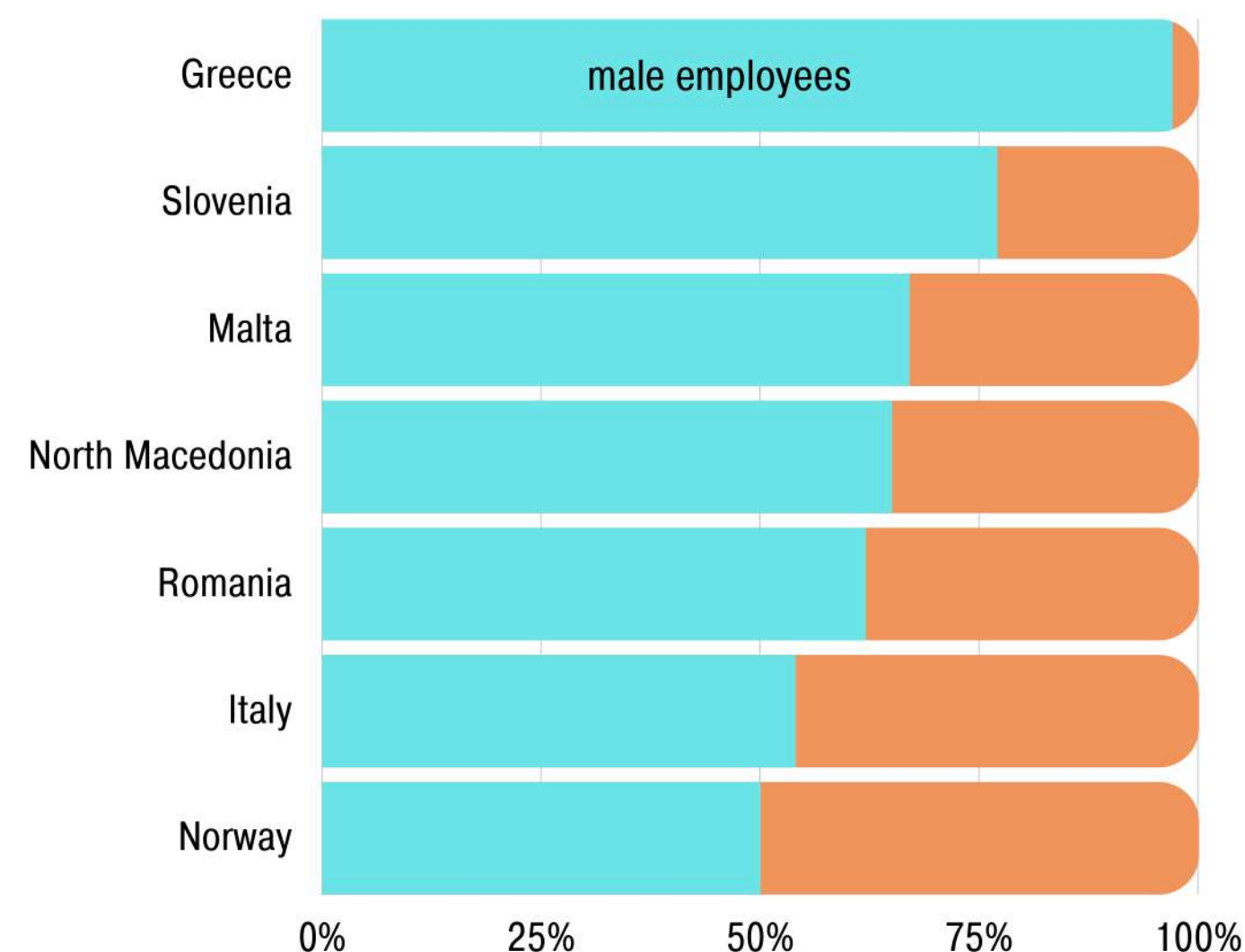
Gender inequalities in sports occur in many different forms from access to practice specific sports and access to responsibilities, participation in sports governing bodies and decision-making roles; access to resources, salaries, financial incentives and sports facilities; media coverage of women athletes and of women's sport to reintegration into the labor market after the end of an athletic career and even gender-based violence including harassment and abuse.

In February 2022 we published the study “Analyzing and addressing gender gaps in sport” - an exploratory research on gender inequalities in sport. The results highlight significant gender differences and emphasize once again that football is a male-dominated field. For example data shows:

- **only 58% of girls had a female coach, while 88% of boys had a male coach**
- **66% of women football players faced some form of gender discrimination in the football workplace**
- **most female presidents are found in skating (20%), gymnastics (19%) and triathlon (12%)**

See the full research report [here](#).

When it comes to gender repartition in the federations...



Gender inequalities in FA results both from a male dominated organizational culture (due to the history of this sport, among other factors) and societal gender roles and gender stereotypes. Therefore, in order to address the gender equality issue in sports, it is mandatory to adopt a gender mainstreaming approach. The general goals, that should be carefully translated in actions, measures and indicators, should be: engage a structural change of the organizational culture; opt for an effective and sustainable approach, instead of "policies on paper"; take into account specific challenges and needs of each organization.

Part 2: Gender auditing and relevant methodologies and tools

Gender audit = assess and check the institutionalization of gender equality into organizations (their policies, programs, projects, services, structures, proceedings, and budgets) and evaluate the implementation of gender equality objectives.

A gender audit has at least two levels:

- The planning & analyze phase;
- The monitoring & evaluation phase.

For a gender participatory audit it is necessary to:

- Have political commitment of the FA top management for gender equality;
- form an audit committee by volunteers of different departments/units of the FA; if there are responsible on gender equality issues, they have to be part of the committee;
- organize trainings on gender equality in sport for the management and the committee' members;
- initiate and maintain a permanent dialogue & information sharing on gender equality issue within the organization.

„A participatory gender audit is a tool and a process based on a participatory methodology to promote organizational learning at the individual, work unit and organizational levels on how to practically and effectively mainstream gender”.

The planning & analyze phase

The main objectives are:

- to identify if there are gender equality goals and/or gender mainstreaming objectives in the strategies, regulations and organization of the FA;
- to identify the existing gender gap, gender direct and indirect inequalities, sensitive topics that should be addressed (ex. sexual harassment);
- to define the specific objectives of the audit strategy.

Products of this planning and analyze stage:

- a diagnosis /report of the gender equality situation and the gender culture of the organization.
- a strategy for gender equality, with clear goals, targets, activities and indicators. It is essential to fix reasonable and adapted goals and targets, but also to define clear and measurable indicators.

How to analyze



Desk review

national & sectoral strategies; FA strategy and other policies or regulations, existing reports/audit regarding HR, personnel evaluations, etc.



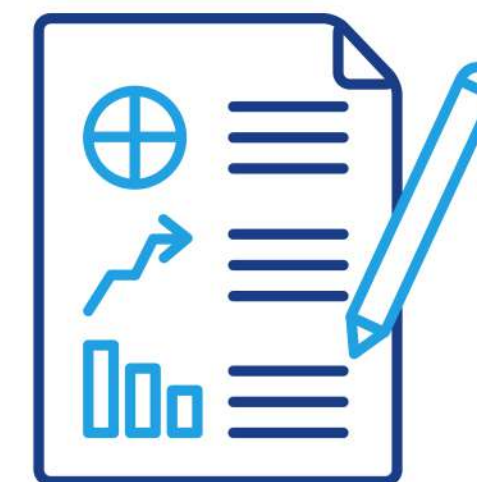
Data collection

total number of women and men; women/men repartition on horizontal and vertical; indicators on career progression for men and women; complaints on discrimination, sexual harassment, psychological violence etc; gender pay gap; access to different facilities / advantages



Consultations

formal and informal interviews, focus group, surveys



Analysis of collected data

Main points: perception of gender equality and organisational gender culture



Recommended topics for consultations

- How gender equality is perceived in the organization?
- To what extent is gender equality a priority for the organization's management?
- Does knowledge and awareness exist for gender equality?
- What are the identified gender inequalities/problems (are there differences in responses between men and women, direction and executive positions)?
- What are the existing measures promoting gender equality?
- Are these measures perceived as effective?
- What are the needs/expectations of the staff?
- Are there programmes, initiatives promoting gender equality? If so, are these programmes, initiatives
- accessible for all the members of the organization?

Analysis of collected data

- Perception of gender equality and organisational gender culture (is there an institutionalized sexism?);
- Are indicators and data collection sex disaggregated?
- Does organizational culture, procedures and policies favor gender equality and gender mainstreaming?
- Are there clear indicators for gender equality and does it address progress towards increased gender equality and change in institutional norms?
- Is there a specific budget for gender equality policies?
- Do gender assessment budgeting procedures exist?
- Are training and information sessions on gender equality issues regularly organized ?

The monitoring & evaluation phase

In the first place it is very important to define procedures for the monitoring of the implementation of the gender equality strategy.

Examples:

- regular collection of genders disintegrated data;
- regular surveys on gender equality issues;
- regular/permanent gender impact assessment budget;
- spreading information on gender equality actions and activities.

Evaluation of the strategy: at the end of the period (2/4 years) a new audit report on the implementation of the strategy in regards to the fixed goals, targets and indicators.

Gender mainstreaming methodologies and tools

Even after so much research carried out in the field of gender equality, the concept of gender mainstreaming remains quite abstract. In what follows, we aim to do a brief review of the main gender mainstreaming methods and tools included in the GM Platform developed by the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) and to present a tool developed within the PROGRES project that has the role of helping with a diagnosis regarding the level of gender equality within the sports organization and formulating a series of recommendations depending on the score obtained.

Gender mainstreaming is NOT about including an introductory paragraph in a document stating that a gender equality perspective will be integrated or simply mentioning “women and men” without also taking into account their different needs, interests. The aim is to include a gender equality perspective throughout the policy measures, documents or programmes. It is vital to select methods that suit the specific procedures and working routines of a particular organization as well as developing tools that have been custom-made to suit requirements.



EIGE's methods & tools

The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) created Gender Mainstreaming Platform to support the EU institutions and governmental bodies with the integration of a gender perspective in their work. It provides insights on the relevance of gender in a variety of policy areas. It helps understanding how to design, plan, implement, monitor and evaluate policies from a gender perspective.

- Gender analysis - provides the necessary data and information to integrate a gender perspective into policies, programmes and projects.
- Gender audit - belongs to the category of “quality audits”, which distinguishes it from traditional “financial audits”.
- Gender awareness-raising - a process which helps to facilitate the exchange of ideas, improve mutual understanding and develop competencies and skills necessary for societal change.
- Gender budgeting - a strategy to achieve equality between women and men by focusing on how public resources are collected and spent.
- Gender equality training - combines various activities that aim at strengthening people’s skills and knowledge on gender mainstreaming.
- Gender evaluation - consists of objective assessment of a project, programme or policy at all of its stages, i.e. planning, implementation and measurement of gender mainstreaming outcomes.
- Gender impact assessment - ex-ante evaluation of a law, policy or programme to identify in a preventative way the likelihood of a given decision to have negative consequences for the state of equality between women and men and to formulate it to proactively promote gender equality.



EIGE's methods & tools

- Gender statistics and indicators - integrate a gender perspective in the collection, analysis and presentation of statistical data.
- Gender monitoring - verifying whether the plan is being followed and whether the objectives regarding gender mainstreaming are being achieved. It allows us to address identified problems and to introduce changes in order to accomplish gender equality.
- Gender planning - refers to the process of planning and designing the implementation phase of policies, programmes, or projects from a gender perspective.
- Gender-responsive public procurement (GRPP) - a gender mainstreaming tool to promote gender equality through public procurement.
- Gender stakeholder consultation - promotes the participation of women and men in the policymaking process to ensure that their voices are heard and their priorities are represented.
- Institutional transformation - a process of organizational change that describes how gender mainstreaming can be implemented into a public institution and how already-existing approaches can be further advanced.
- Sex-disaggregated data - allow for the measurement of differences between women and men on various social and economic grounds and are one of the requirements in obtaining gender statistics.





Gender mainstreaming cannot be implemented with one single tool. Since it is a process whereby a gender equality perspective is integrated into a range of different processes and tasks, a variety of methods and tools that support its implementation are therefore used in the different operational workflows of a particular field of activities.

The long term aim is that gender mainstreaming methods are incorporated directly into existing processes, work flows and specialist subject content.

PROGRES Gender Mainstreaming Tool

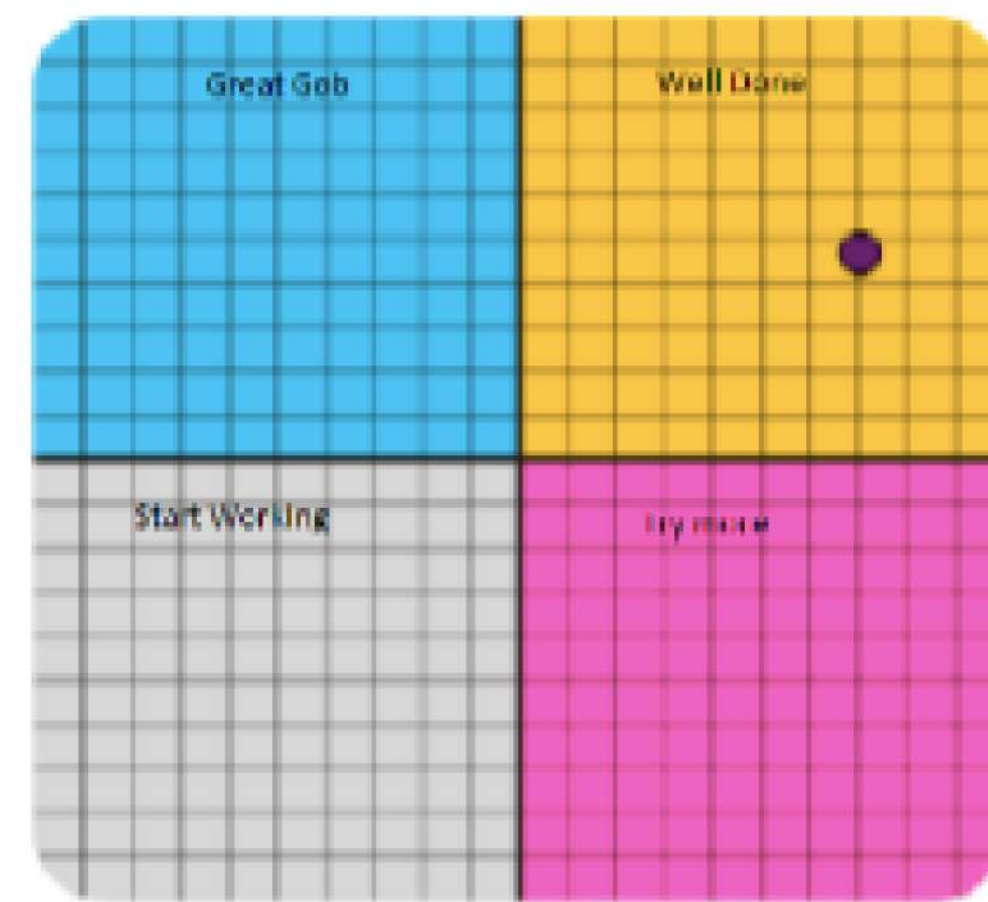
The Gender Mainstreaming Tool was designed to provide the opportunity for football federations / associations to benchmark themselves against identified good practices relevant to the application of gender mainstreaming in sports organizations.

This tool is presented in the form of a survey (Gender Assessment Questionnaire) that contains 7 sections (30 questions) aiming to collect information about the organization, the associational structure, human resources, gender mainstreaming, monitoring and evaluation, gender equality training and good practices.

The highest score can be 150 points, while the lowest 0 points. The questionnaire will be integrated into the project website so it can be accessed online, for free for anyone interested and for the calculation of the result it will have a gender equality matrix.

PROGRES Gender Mainstreaming Tool

Those who accumulated between 0-37,5 need to start working to reach gender equality; those who accumulated between 37,5-75 need to try to do more effort for more equal work environment; those who accumulated between 75-112,5 are doing a good job and they need motivation to continue to implement programs and policies towards gender equality and finally those who accumulated between 112,5-150 are doing an excellent job and can be an example for other organizations towards gender mainstreaming. According to which quarter with their score, sport federations / associations will receive recommendations.



Gender mainstreaming challenges for sports organizations

Gender mainstreaming is related to both politics and policies of an organization, and demands both a political will to promote gender equality and expertise and resources in order to plan and implement it. Moreover, as we already highlighted, gender mainstreaming aims to produce structural and cultural changes in all sectors and for the entire staff of an organization.

Therefore, starting from the existent analyses, the main challenges for the promotion and implementation of gender mainstreaming by the FA are:

- **Lack of expertise:** absence of a gender equality expert, scarce knowledge of the management and staff about gender equality and gender mainstreaming. *Suggestion:* create a position of gender equality expert (fire a person with expertise or sustain the qualification on one employee in this domain).
- **Resistance/rejection of the topic at the level of management staff plus society:** it may conduct to a lack of commitment and/or diverse strategy of resistance. *Suggestion:* identify resistance and oppositions and adapt the strategy and the plan to the specific context.

Gender mainstreaming challenges for sports organizations

- **A male dominated organizational structure and culture:** the male origins and history of FA shaped masculine organizational norms, practices and values (ex. a male representation of the excellence; schedule and activities that ignore private/family life needs. *Suggestion:* engage a structural and sustainable organizational change, through permanent activities addressing gender stereotypes, gender norms and gender roles.
- **Compartmentalization of the strategies and measures:** sometimes organizations promote gender equality only within some aspects / domains / departments (ex. work-life-balance; women in management structures). Or the principle of gender mainstreaming is to address all the domains of activities of an organization. *Suggestion:* prioritize the mainstream approach, meaning gender equality should intervene in all spheres of activities of a FA.
- **Lack /absence of budget:** sometimes the gender equality activities and strategies don't benefit from a dedicated budget. A gender equality strategy missing specific and sufficient financial resources is a policy on paper: it mimics the commitment for gender equality. *Suggestion:* allocate separate budget for the gender equality strategy / plan / activities; introduce gender impact assessment in the audit procedures of the FA.

Gender mainstreaming challenges for sports organizations

- **Punctual and/or limited interventions:** actions and measures are either punctual / sporadic or limited to some groups / sectors. These kinds of actions can not engage structural change and the lack of coordination and continuity diminish the impact. *Suggestion:* dress a clear plan / strategy in order to promote a gender mainstreaming approach; all activities and measures must be integrated to a strategic approach of gender inequalities in the FA.
- **Lack of implementation:** all the previous challenges, if not correctly addressed, lead to non-effective gender mainstreaming implementation. At the end of the day, beside claiming the label of "gender equality", the real impact is rather inexistent. *Suggestion:* pay attention to design effective and sustainable gender mainstreaming policies and allocate the necessary resources (human, financial, material etc).

Steps towards the integration of the gender perspective in the sports sector

This tool assesses and checks the institutionalization of gender equality into organizations, including in their policies, programs, projects, services, structures, proceedings, and budgets.

It is important to keep in mind that:

- Gender inequalities in FA are the result of organizational culture and practices: the gender stereotypes are rooted in the professional definition of roles, activities and responsibilities; gender roles are entrenched in the organization's history, which was mainly constructed and defined by a male model and norms. So, the goals, indicators and activities fixed upon gender mainstreaming policies have to address also these less evident (indirect, implicit) aspects;
- Gender inequalities in FA are also directly linked and influenced by the gender contract existing – and specific – in each society. So, it is mandatory for the FA to develop actions aiming to change the social representations of football (i.e. it is a male sport) and to sustain girls and women practice of football;
- Acting for gender equality through gender mainstreaming has to cover all the domains of activity of the organization, all the regulations and policies of the organization and should concern the everyday life of the organization.

Guidelines for improved gender mainstreaming in sports organizations

For the improvement and the effectiveness of gender mainstreaming policies, it is mandatory to a). built it upon existing tools and methodologies that confirmed their efficiency; b). adapt it to the specificity and particularities of each FA. A participatory approach, encouraging an extended and permanent dialogue upon the entire organization is recommended.

The Gender Mainstreaming Cycle



Define



Some tools that can be used for the first step: gender impact assessment; gender audit and/or gender analysis.

Important actions to have in mind in this phase:

- Consulting stakeholders (gender experts, professional associations, women's sport associations);
- Elaborating an exhaustive and applicable diagnosis of gender issues of the FA;
- Making sure to encourage both quantitative and qualitative data collection and data analysis, in order to identify specific problems and needs in all sectors of activities and at all levels of hierarchy.
- Fixing the main goals of the gender mainstreaming policy, for a defined period (2/4/5 years): the selection should take into account both the emergencies (i.e. identified gender inequalities and violence and harassment against women issues) and the political will of the management to sustain specific objectives with a durable impact on gender equality (i.e. sustain a more equitable funding for women's football).

Plan

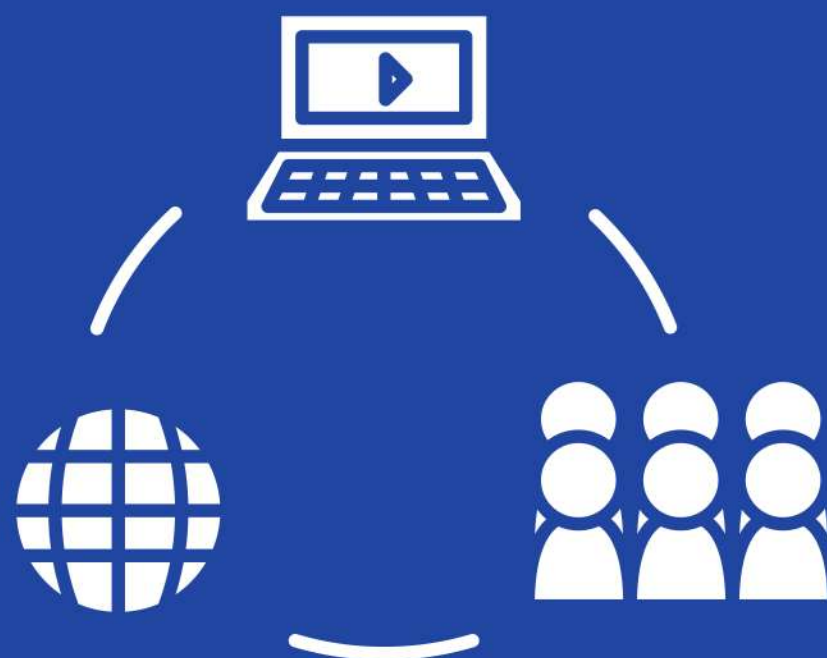


Gender equality plan (GEP) refers to the process of planning and implementing a strategy on gender equality. The design and content should be adapted to the findings and objectives defined in the first phase.

There are some mandatory aspects to take into account:

- Sustain the employment or the specialization of an employee on gender equality issues, who should coordinate the gender mainstreaming policies and the elaboration of gender equality plan.
- Conceive the plan in the logic of a policy strategy, with a clear connection between goals / objectives → activities → resources (human resources, budget, infrastructure etc) → indicators (measurable).
- Include all the sectors of activity of the FA and target the entire staff.
- Pay special attention to gender budgeting.
- Assisting and monitoring the implementation of the gender equality plan.

Act



The main activities in promoting gender equality are defined through the gender equality plan and should be seriously implemented.

Above these activities, acting for gender equality should also compel to:

- Regular gender equality trainings for the management;
- Gender equality trainings for all the staff involved in the activities of the GEP;
- Founding mobilities for the gender expert(s) for participate to international conferences, trainings and exchange of good practices;
- Maintain a permanent dialogue with national and international bodies and authorities acting in the gender equality field;
- Publicly claim the FA's engagement to support gender equality in football and in sport;
- Spread the gender equality values to all the partners.

Check



The monitoring of the gender equality plan and gender equality indicators is essential for the effectiveness of gender mainstreaming policies.

Actions that should be considered:

- annual reports (progress reports);
- regular surveys for measuring the progress but also to identify the obstacles and dysfunctions in the implementation of the GEP;
- evaluation of the gender equality plan after the period of implementation;
- adapting the strategies and gender equality policies in regard with the evaluation results;
- transparency in communication of the actions and results;
- development of accountability mechanisms.

Guidelines for increased participation of women in decision-making positions of sports organizations

The existing tools and good practices are a starting point to elaborate strategic action in order to increase participation of women in decision-making positions of sports organizations. Nevertheless, we insist again on the need to have a consistent knowledge of the specific situation of each FA. Each action/strategy should respond to the specific problems of the organization and propose intervention adequate to the needs and expectations but also to the resistance and opposition to gender equality issues of the entire staff.

Diagnose. The first step is to clearly understand the situation of the participation of women in decision-making position at the level of the whole FA:

- quantitative analysis combined with a qualitative evaluation of the structures of power of the FA. For instance, the data on the presence or absence of women in direction structures should be completed with the analysis of the role of the respective structures in the decision-making process (a woman who is the coordinator/chief/director of a feminized department but have no influence on the strategic and financial decision of the FA should not be listed as a good example on gender equality in decision making).

- For the positions obtained by competition, analyze if: there are regular women participation; the number of women candidates are similar to the men candidates? There are women in the committee selection?
- For the positions obtained by nomination, verify if: there are objective and public selection criteria; the nomination is the result of a regulated procedure, or it is more a subjective and informal process, allowing a clientele logic and being controlled by power networks.

Understand the reasons. It is important to understand the reasons and the subjective explanation of the diagnosis.

Qualitative and informal interviews are recommended in order to:

- Understand why women are more reserved in candidates to a superior/direction position: discuss either the professional reasons and the personal ones.
- Understand if the men in the decision-making position are supportive for gender equality and are aware of direct and indirect gender inequalities.
- Understand if organizational sexism is one of the factors discouraging women to apply for direct positions.
- Understand the power relations that underpin male dominance.

Examples of actions to support women's access to decision- making positions

- Consolidate a democratic organizational culture, with transparent and public rules, procedures, evaluation and selection criteria;
- Build a gender sensitive organizational culture: it is a long-term process, but it has to be seriously started and pursued;
- Strongly sustain the presence of women in the management positions and direction bodies: gender quotas, financial conditionality, other incentives;
- Revise the criteria and conditions of access to decision-making positions to ensure gender equality;
- Communication campaigns aiming to promote a gender neutral image of the decision-making positions;
- Impose the presence of at least one woman in all commission, committee and other selection and evaluation structures;
- Promote women's success by information campaigns on women's performances and professionalism.

Examples of actions to support women's access to decision- making positions

- Empower women: organize sessions on how to prepare a job competition, how to build a career plan; facilitate women networks encouraging the solidarity and support between women (senior and junior, women with direction position and women on execution position etc). Trainings on gender equality for the management staff and the regular personnel charged with the evaluation and selection of the staff.
- Develop work-life balance measures and facilities: flexible work arrangements (for both parents), aids for childcare.
- Sensibilization to more equitable gender roles in the domestic life: participation of both women and men to domestic work and childcare.
- Encourage men to take parental leave (or at least to share it with the women).

Thank you for your attention!

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