



EU Work Plan
for Sport | 2014-
2017

Expert Group on Good Governance

Promotion of existing Good Governance Principles

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1. Introduction

In September 2013 the Expert Group "Good Governance" (XG GG) adopted the "Principles of Good Governance in Sport".¹ In accordance with the mandate deriving from the Council Resolution on the European Work Plan for Sport (2014-2017), a second Expert Group on Good Governance was established to consider four issues in more detail.² One issue concerned the follow-up of the EU Good Governance principles, and to understand to what extent the principles had been implemented and promoted within the EU.

The first meeting of the Expert Group was held in October 2014; a total of 7 meetings have been held covering all four deliverables as outlined in the EU Work Plan for Sport. With regard to the "Promotion of existing good governance principles, possibly followed by a pledge board", the XG GG began its work on 23 February 2016, and subsequent discussions were held on this subject on 12 May and 14 July.³

The group continues to believe that if good governance principles are firmly embedded in the structures, and culture, of sport governing bodies, they will help restore credibility and people's faith in sport, and ensure that integrity of sport is safeguarded for future generations to enjoy.

Events which have happened during the course of the current Expert Group only served to emphasize the importance, and need, for good governance measures to be in place and used as a tool for minimizing risks in light of the complex issues which sport governing bodies face in the 21st century.

This short report will highlight some of the main aspects with regard to the implementation and promotion of the EU principles, covering both best practices as well as challenges that have been faced. Other initiatives on good governance will also be highlighted, in order to try to ensure complementarity, and avoid unnecessary overlapping or competing initiatives. The report will be presented to the Council Working Party on Sport under the Slovak Presidency of the Council of the EU.

¹ http://ec.europa.eu/sport/library/policy_documents/xg-gg-201307-dlvrbl2-sept2013.pdf

² [http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A42014Y0614\(03\)](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A42014Y0614(03))

³ http://ec.europa.eu/sport/policy/cooperation/expert-groups-2014-2017_en.htm

2. Implementing and promoting Good Governance in sport

A questionnaire was submitted to the members of the Expert Group initially in January 2016, with the aim to establish a first impression of the extent to which the EU principles had been incorporated into the sport governance systems at various levels, and/or the extent to which they have complemented or could complement existing governance principles.

The results of the Questionnaire are attached in Annex 4. The relatively low response rate is both a reflection of the challenges in measuring the implementation of the principles, and difficulties in mapping the extent to which the EU principles have been taken on board.

In that sense, the EU principles are not alone, and there are a number of other initiatives which exist. The IOC principles are an example. Indeed, there is a current on-going project financed by Erasmus+ which looks at how a combined IOC-EU set of principles could be incorporated by sport federations. This is being drawn up in conjunction with seven Member States, and represents a first practical application of the principles.

Self-evaluation has its limitations, however, although it can be considered an important first step in the process. Complementary external monitoring or auditing and follow-up is recommended to ensure that the effect of any likely shortfalls is minimized.

Another challenge which can arise is the administrative burden which can be associated with the implementation of good governance. It is clear that small voluntary grassroots type sport organizations do not have the necessary means or capacity to deal with numerous principles. The development of clear and simple guidelines by ISCA and Transparency International for good governance in grassroots sport is seen as a welcome addition.

Governments and public authorities can play an important role in the implementation and promotion of good governance in sport, with respect to autonomy of sport. Good governance should be a prerequisite condition for the recognition of the autonomy of sport.

Funding provided to sport from the public purse is already subject to good governance conditions in several Member States (e.g. Netherlands, Malta, Finland, France, UK) and is being developed by others (e.g. Belgium). Member States can also provide the appropriate framework to assist sport to ensure implementation of good governance, e.g. through legislation and raising awareness, and providing support to help implement changes to reflect good governance.

3. Conclusions

The reform process in sport is a challenging one. If sport organizations do not implement reforms, then they risk losing not only their reputation but also their most valuable sources of income. Conversely, by embracing good governance principles within the organisation, sports bodies can create new opportunities to gain new revenues.

By implementing the good governance principles, sports organisations would be more credible partners in the fight against doping, manipulation of sports competitions and other kinds of corruption and crime.

With good governance principles in place, sports bodies will be better placed to deal with the risks that modern sport faces, and produce more effective sports policies and regulations.

They will also be able to deliver much more efficiently on a number of areas of common interest to sport and society, such as equity, social inclusion and public health through physical activity.

Simple compliance is not however enough to drive real change in the governance of sporting organizations. It is more than updating statutes. It is about leadership and people with the right skills and integrity, incorporating a change in culture, supported by a clear communication strategy and continuous monitoring to measure and if necessary adjust the compliance process.

The EU should play an important role in continuing to ensure a coordinated approach, as well as enabling the share of best practises. It is also well placed

to bring together regularly and have a dialogue with the European and international sport organizations and governing bodies, and other relevant stakeholders.

The EU is also a necessary actor in areas which touch upon good governance and which have a cross-border nature. The EU should also consider ways to promote the implementation of good governance principles as a condition for Erasmus+ sport funding. Erasmus+ funding is itself an important tool to support the efforts of sport organizations.

The expert group believes that good governance in sport remains a top priority for governments and sports stakeholders alike. The group recognises that while some progress has been made, there is still much work to be done and calls for the continuous monitoring of how the principles of good governance in sport are being implemented and promoted. It is recognised that the good governance principles will need to continue to evolve to confront emerging challenges. It is recommended however that various good governance initiatives, whether on a national, European or international level, be appropriately coordinated.

Annex 1: References / Initiatives for Good governance

International organizations

EU

Good Governance principles (adopted by XG 2013)

Work of the expert group on Good Governance 2014-2017

- Gender equality / Major sport events / Protection of minors
- Promotion of existing EU good governance principles

Flagship Event on Good Governance (Sept 2016)

Council of Europe

Recommendation on the principles of good governance in sport (2005)

Resolution 1875 Good Governance and Sport (2012)

Ministerial conference on Good Governance (Nov 2016)

Unesco / Council of Europe

Code of sports ethics (1992)

IOC

Basic Universal Principles of Good Governance (2009)

Olympic Agenda 2020

FIFA reform process

<http://www.fifa.com/governance/how-fifa-works/the-reform-process.html>

Recent initiatives / partnerships

ICSS

Sport Integrity Global Alliance (SIGA): Declaration of Core Principles on Sport Integrity (launched April 2016)

Dutch Presidency

Declaration of Intent (in cooperation with IOC, EOC, FIFA and UEFA)

enhancing regular dialogue on topics regarding major sport events (signed 31 May 2016)

UK / IOC / OECD

International Sport Integrity Partnership (ISIP), to be launched in the margins of the International Forum for Sport Integrity in Lausanne (February 2017)

Annex 2: Further Information

On the subject of Good Governance, the XG heard from several parties during the discussions, which enabled sharing of best practices as well as highlighting the challenges of implementing and monitoring good governance in sport.

EOC – Supporting the Implementation of Good Governance in Sport

<http://www.siggs.eu/>

Dr. Arnout Geeraert – Monitoring and Measuring Good Governance

See also "Play the Game - Sports Governance Observatory"

http://www.playthegame.org/media/3968653/SGO_report_web.pdf

FIFA - Governance reforms

<http://www.fifa.com/governance/news/y=2016/m=1/news=the-reform-process-chronology-2756734.html>

ISCA – Governance at a local level

See also "Guidelines for Good Governance in Grassroots Sport"

<http://www.isca-web.org/english/news/goodgovernanceingrassrootssportguidelines>

Several Member States highlighted their own national initiatives:

UK - Charter for Sports Governance

Published in May 2016, it outlines some of the main themes that will feature in the code that will be finalised later this year, to come into effect in 2017.

<https://www.uk sport.gov.uk/resources/charter>

Portugal - The National Plan for Ethics in Sport

It aims to promote initiatives to assimilate and to experience ethical values in sports practice. A Code of sport ethics also published in 2015 contains the standards of conduct which should guide the action of all the various individuals involved in sport.

<http://www.pned.pt/media/31485/Code-of-Sports-Ethics.pdf>

Belgium

The French Community have a decree on Ethics on Sport since 2014, and it is also a condition to receive public funds. This code is currently under review to increase the place of good governance.

<http://www.sport-adepts.be/index.php?id=4198>

A code (and indicators) of Good Governance is being prepared for Flemish sports federation, expected to be implemented in 2017. Subsidies for sport federations will depend on various principles, including good governance.

<http://www.bloso->

kics.be/Sportfederaties/Documents/160615_Eindrapport_Goed_Bestuur_in_Vlaamse_sportfederaties.pdf

Annex 3: European Commission projects in sport governance

Erasmus+ projects

2015:

- 1. Strengthening good governance in the European sport community by providing women with necessary competencies in order to support gender balance and equality in decision-making in sport structures (SUCCESS)**

Lead: National Olympic Committee, Croatia

The project aims to contribute to the European overall aim of achieving a full gender balance in the representation in decision-making positions in sport governing bodies by 2020. It will focus on developing a network of National Olympic Committees that will serve as a platform for sustainable national sport management training.

- 2. Ethics4Sports (E4S)**

Lead: City of Sant Cugat del Vallès, Catalonia, Spain

The main objective of E4S is to develop innovative mechanisms to promote ethics in grassroots sports and ensure its effective enforcement. The project will develop and/or improve new Codes of Ethics for sporting bodies to spread ethical values in sport. It also aims to produce an app for recording and reporting incidents during matches and inside sports clubs around Europe.

<https://twitter.com/hashtag/ethics4sports>

- 3. Clubs and supporters for better governance in football (MSIF)**

Supporters Direct, London, UK

The project will help promote EU principles on good governance in sport through a training, education and exchange programme involving member-run football clubs and national supporters' organisations, from six EU member states. The programme will address three core topics: good governance, financial sustainability, and member/volunteer engagement and democratic participation.

<http://www.sdeurope.eu/>

2014:

- 1. How to lead a sport club to a successful future (SportGO)**

Lead: FH Joanneum, University of Applied Sciences, Graz, Austria

Nowadays even amateur and semi-professional sport clubs have to be run like companies, as they have to compete with various competitors on diverse levels such as recruitment of members, volunteers and attracting sponsors. The aim of the "SportGO" is to support sport clubs in Europe to a more successful future, by developing a practical training program to enhance the governance skills of semi-professional and amateur sport club officials.

<http://www.sportgo-eu.com/about/>

2. **Supporting the Implementation of Good Governance (SIGGS)**

Lead: European Olympic Committee

Good governance is increasingly becoming a core topic for sport organisations at all levels. There are plenty of reasons to explain this trend, including the pressure on the proper use of public funds as well as the responsibilities of sport organisations towards their sports and other stakeholders. The general objective of the SIGGS project is to promote and support good governance in sport by providing practical guidance to NOCs and NFs on how to implement principles of good governance in order to enhance their governance.

<http://www.siggs.eu/>

Completed Preparatory Actions (2011-2012)

Promoting innovative approaches to strengthen the organisation of sport in Europe

The EC funded eight projects to help strengthen the organisation of sport in Europe. Further details can be found here.

<http://bookshop.europa.eu/en/preparatory-actions-and-special-events-2009-2013-pbNC0414984/>

Project 1: Sport for Good Governance

Project 2: Good Governance in Grassroots Sports

Project 3: Better Boards, Stronger Sport

Project 4: Action for Good Governance in International Sports Organisations

Project 5: CoachNet: The further development of a coordinated network for Sport Coaching in Europe

Project 6: Improving Football Governance through Supporter Involvement and Community Ownership

Project 7: European Academy for Billiard Champions on the way to sport excellence

Project 8: European Rugby League Governance Foundation Project

Annex 4: Questionnaire to members of the Expert Group

A questionnaire was distributed to all members of the Expert Group in January 2016. The table, attached as a separate document, is a summary of the results received.

The initial aim of the questionnaire was to establish an initial impression of the extent to which these EU principles have been incorporated, in their entirety or partially, into the sport governance systems at various levels, and/or the extent to which they have complemented or could complement existing governance principles.

The replies were a reflection of what measures were in place, or were being incorporated, which were in line with the EU good governance principle in question.