



# GOOD GOVERNANCE INITIATIVES IN SPORT AT NATIONAL LEVEL

Good practice handbook No. 9

Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport  
  
Accord partiel élargi sur le sport

COUNCIL OF EUROPE  
  
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

# GOOD GOVERNANCE INITIATIVES IN SPORT AT NATIONAL LEVEL

Good practice handbook  
for the sports movement

Rowland Jack

Good practice handbook No. 9  
Council of Europe

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# Foreword

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**G**overnments are directly involved in good governance in sport. For example, they support sports activities and the participation of athletes or teams representing national sports organisations in international competitions; they invest in hosting events or bidding to host events; or public broadcasters buy certain broadcast rights. When they give support to sport, either directly or indirectly, by committing state funding, governments have a duty to ensure that these resources are managed according to their objectives. They therefore have a direct interest in ensuring that sports organisations within their jurisdiction are compliant with good governance principles.

Instilling a good governance culture in a sports organisation at national level is also expected to have an impact on international sports organisations, which have been under the spotlight for the wrong reasons over the last few years due to misconduct. Given that most decision makers in international sports organisations initially come from national sports organisations, the governance culture and mindset is shaped at local and national level. Governments can therefore contribute to its improvement. Bearing in mind that European leaders play a key role in the international sports movement, the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS) refrains from shifting the blame to other continents, but rather strives to support exemplary behaviour on the European continent, with the belief that it will inspire and enhance the global sport governance culture.

Within this handbook, EPAS aims to share good practices, by either governments or umbrella sports organisations, on how good governance is promoted in national sports organisations. This handbook is likely to be updated as and when new processes and projects develop within a growing number of countries.

It is clear that any focus on the governance of sport at national level will support the zero tolerance policy called for by the ministers responsible for sport, and will help to fine-tune the analysis of the current situation with a view to adopting an evidence-based approach to address more specific governance issues.

**Stanislas Frossard**

*Executive Secretary of EPAS*

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# Introduction

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**S**port is a fundamental pillar of civil society. A large proportion of the world's population enjoys participating in sport, following sport as a fan or being involved in other ways.

While parts of the sports movement are commercially successful, for several decades governments in Europe and in many other parts of the world have subsidised sport in different ways, both directly and indirectly. Governments value the perceived benefits of sport, such as the health-giving effects of exercise, social cohesion, national pride in success at elite level and the economic impact,<sup>1</sup> including employment opportunities and tax revenue.

As sports bodies are often the beneficiaries of public funding, it is appropriate that the governance of sport should come under scrutiny in a similar way to other sectors, such as health and education, to try to ensure that funds are invested economically, efficiently and effectively.

In addition, sports governance matters because credibility and integrity are essential to sport. Fans have to believe they are witnessing a genuine competition and parents need to have confidence in how sport is administered before they will encourage their children to take an interest in organised activity.

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1. 3% of Europe's Gross Domestic Product, see [http://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/sport/library/documents/eu-sport-factsheet\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/sport/library/documents/eu-sport-factsheet_en.pdf) (accessed on 9 May 2018).

The Council of Europe's Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS)<sup>2</sup> was created in May 2007 and later established on a permanent basis by the Committee of Ministers on 13 October 2010. EPAS provides a platform for intergovernmental sports co-operation between the public authorities of its member states. It also encourages dialogue between public authorities, sports federations and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). This contributes to better governance, with the aim of making sport more ethical, more inclusive and safer. The governance of sport is therefore a core issue of relevance to the Council of Europe.

This handbook is based on research originally conducted in June and July 2016, which was commissioned by EPAS ahead of the 14th Conference of Ministers responsible for Sport in Budapest in November 2016. It consists of an outline framework for good governance programmes at national level based on analysis of existing activity together with various examples of national initiatives. There is also some information on international initiatives which have informed activity at national level. The handbook takes into account a number of updates and revisions to governance initiatives between June 2016 and October 2017.

The overall objective of the handbook, as of the research on which it is based, is to provide a logical framework and recommendations on governance for public authorities responsible for sport and sports organisations at national level. The example initiatives are intended to provide guidance to interested parties in the implementation and adoption of similar approaches.

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2. See [www.coe.int/t/DG4/EPAS/default\\_en.asp](http://www.coe.int/t/DG4/EPAS/default_en.asp) (accessed 14 May 2018).

# Logical framework

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**A** logical framework has been developed by analysing good governance initiatives at national level. It is intended that the framework should be helpful to public authorities who are designing or revising governance requirements for sports in their countries.

While there is no single source that should be regarded as the definitive model, a general consensus is emerging about the themes or components of good governance.

Theme/aspect of governance initiative	Example policy	Example activity	Desired outcome/ rationale
Vision, mission and purpose	– regular review and publication	– strategic planning is driven by vision, mission and purpose	The organisation has unity of purpose
Transparency	– publication of accounts and other governance information	– publication of annual report with a set format for certain information	The organisation is open to scrutiny from members, media, public, etc.
Democracy and accountability to stakeholders	– appropriate representation of stakeholders in organisation’s structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– annual general meeting for members enables them to oversee management of organisation</li> <li>– terms of reference for the board and committees</li> <li>– elections for board members</li> <li>– involvement of athletes and other individuals in decision making</li> <li>– formalised engagement and strategic relationships with important national and international stakeholders</li> </ul>	Members and stakeholders can bring about change in leadership, if needed

Theme/aspect of governance initiative	Example policy	Example activity	Desired outcome/ rationale
Board effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- board should be balanced with appropriate skills among its members</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- job and role descriptions plus competencies for board members</li> <li>- term limits</li> <li>- maximum board size</li> <li>- nominations committee</li> <li>- external board evaluation</li> <li>- induction process</li> </ul>	The board of the sports body is fit for purpose, effective and self-sustaining
Integrity (ethical behaviour)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- conflict of interest policy</li> <li>- separation of commercial and sporting activities</li> <li>- Code of Ethics</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- restrictions on multiple roles which one individual can occupy</li> <li>- rules about offering and receiving gifts</li> <li>- independent ethics officer/commission to examine possible breaches of the Code of Ethics</li> </ul>	Leaders behave with integrity, running the organisation in the best interests of the sport

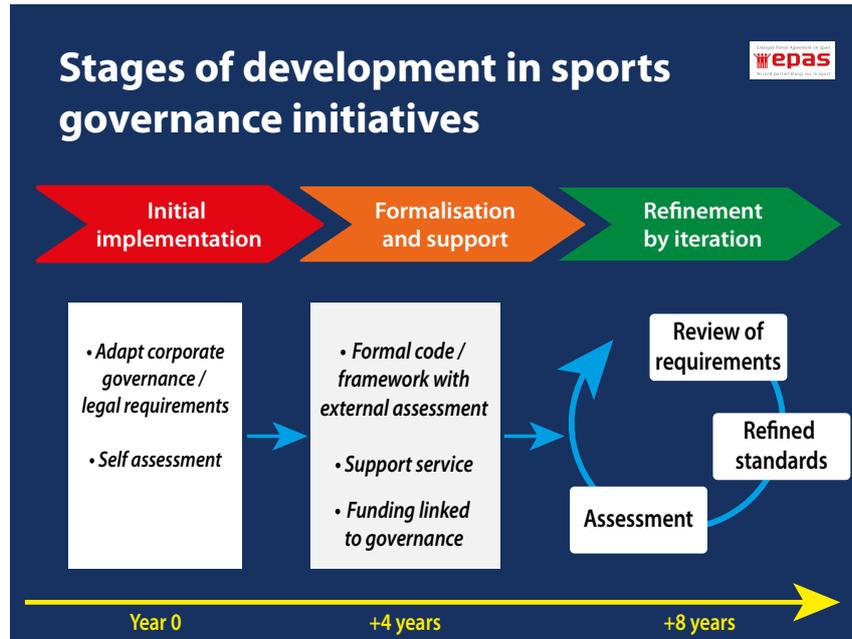
Theme/aspect of governance initiative	Example policy	Example activity	Desired outcome/ rationale
Anti-discrimination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– requirement to seek “diversity of thought” on the board</li> <li>– targets for participation and involvement by different groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– gender target for board membership</li> <li>– open recruitment</li> <li>– programmes to reach under-represented groups</li> </ul>	Involvement in the sport is representative of society or, as a minimum, the administration reflects the diversity of participation in the sport
Risk management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– organisation to follow a recognised process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– mitigation plans in place for important risks</li> </ul>	The sports body is sustainable – major risks are identified and tackled
Legal/statutory requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– depending on legal status of sports body (e.g. company, NGO, charity, etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– audited accounts</li> <li>– audit committee</li> <li>– policies on discrimination, discipline, equality, handling complaints (with independent appeals), health and safety, data protection, etc.</li> <li>– anti-doping rules</li> <li>– match manipulation policy</li> </ul>	Appropriate limits are set to the autonomy of sport, allowing external scrutiny

Theme/aspect of governance initiative	Example policy	Example activity	Desired outcome/ rationale
Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– funding/umbrella bodies provide support to the sports organisation to help with governance requirements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– template policies</li> <li>– written guidance, including on culture and behaviour</li> <li>– good practice case studies</li> <li>– workshops on specific topics</li> <li>– opportunities for sports to learn from each other</li> <li>– consultancy support in specialist areas</li> </ul>	<p>The sports body is enabled and encouraged to improve its governance</p>
Measurement and evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– assessment against set governance principles taking into account the scale and stage of development of the organisation</li> <li>– governance assessment combined with holistic measures of success</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– external assessment against set principles with a scoring system</li> <li>– self-assessment with evidence provided</li> <li>– audits commissioned by funding bodies</li> <li>– thematic research</li> <li>– stakeholder opinion research</li> <li>– participation survey</li> <li>– analysis of results in high performance sport</li> <li>– assessment of financial management</li> </ul>	<p>There is objective benchmarking of standards of governance with recommendations for improvement and recognition of good performance</p> <p>The role of governance is considered in the achievement of overall objectives</p>

Theme/aspect of governance initiative	Example policy	Example activity	Desired outcome/ rationale
Enforcement	– main public funder for the sports body uses funding as leverage to drive better governance	– level of funding increased or decreased depending on measurement and evaluation	Sports bodies are incentivised to improve governance and stakeholders have confidence in the system

Note on “solidarity”: international sports governance frameworks often incorporate a principle of solidarity, which refers to redistributing a portion of the organisation’s resources to disadvantaged regions or to particular sporting disciplines. There is little evidence of a similar policy among publicly funded national sports federations in Europe, as funding is generally allocated to the national sports federations by a branch of government and/or the National Olympic Committee, which may have separate programmes for funding sport for disadvantaged communities. There are examples of redistribution of a proportion of commercial revenue by the larger, professional sports.

# Stages of development in national sports governance initiatives



It is possible to discern three phases often seen in the development of national sports governance initiatives in Europe:

## 1. Initial implementation

- ▶ adaptation of corporate governance and/or legal requirements for sports federations
- ▶ self-assessment questionnaire for publicly funded national sports federations put in place by government ministry, national sports agency or National Olympic Committee

## 2. Formalisation and support

- ▶ formal code/framework in place with an external assessment process
- ▶ support service provided for sports federations to help improve governance
- ▶ funding linked to governance assessment

## 3. Refinement by iteration

- ▶ regular review process leads to governance requirements being updated in line with best practice.

Countries which have no or very limited sports governance requirements in place could consider following these stages. The evidence suggests that it usually takes at least one Olympic cycle to move from initial implementation to formalisation and support, and then probably another four-year cycle to reach the third stage. It would theoretically be possible to progress more quickly. However, in practical terms it takes time for sports federations to accept and understand the governance requirements. Changes to constitutions and board membership require a period of years, except in the most extreme circumstances.

# Emerging trends

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A number of emerging trends in sports governance can be identified.

Trend	Detail
Rapid evolution	Governance requirements for publicly funded sports in Europe are changing fast, or being introduced where they did not exist before. As an indication, about half of the codes and frameworks referenced in this handbook were updated in 2016/17.
Culture/behaviour focus	There is a shift in focus towards influencing culture/behaviour instead of adding new rules – “soft” rather than “hard” governance. Several countries now provide guidelines with examples of appropriate or inappropriate behaviour.
Recognition of role of leadership	The quality of leadership is recognised as one of the most important factors determining the success of sports federations. Many of the issues in sport are symptoms of poor governance, which starts with leadership.
Volunteer/professional division	The specific challenges of managing a combined professional and volunteer workforce are increasingly recognised but not yet well understood.
Value of independent input	Independent directors are increasingly being added to national federation boards.
Independent appeals processes	A dedicated organisation/ombudsperson/designated law firm is sometimes identified to conduct appeals independently.

Trend	Detail
Succession planning	If there are term limits, preparations need to be made for the next generation of leaders.
Modernisation	National federations need to continue to evolve to be more professional and more market-oriented, diversifying revenue streams to be more efficient, more flexible and more collaborative.
Whistle-blower policies and procedures	Systems and processes are being put in place to facilitate the anonymous reporting of concerns with protection for the whistle-blower.

# Examples of good practice sports governance initiatives at national level

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In order to compile examples of national good governance in sports programmes, governance codes, frameworks and similar guidance documents were sourced from national sports authorities known to be managing national initiatives, including from countries which responded to the good governance survey among EPAS member states in 2015.

Additional documents were identified via the ongoing Support the Implementation of Good Governance in Sport project (SIGGS)<sup>3</sup> and the Sport for Good Governance<sup>4</sup> initiative which concluded in 2012.

Each of the documents was analysed and summarised using a similar template. In order to provide extra insight, and to ensure a more representative mix of nations across Europe, specific individuals were interviewed in July 2016:

- ▶ Huibert Brands, Project Manager, Organisation Development, NOC\*NSF, the Netherlands
- ▶ Bartosz Baran, Head Expert, Department of Auditing and Control, Ministry of Sport and Tourism, Poland
- ▶ João Paulo de Almeida, Director General, Olympic Committee of Portugal
- ▶ Matthias van Baelen, Deputy Director, European Olympic Committees EU Office, SIGGS project manager
- ▶ an official from a small country in Eastern Europe (speaking on condition of anonymity).

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3. See [www.siggs.eu/](http://www.siggs.eu/) (accessed 14 May 2018).

4. See [www.s4gg.eu/](http://www.s4gg.eu/) (accessed 14 May 2018).

Material from the interviews contributed to the development of the logical framework. In the 15 months between the original research in the summer of 2016 and the production of this handbook in September and October 2017, about half of the published codes and frameworks were updated. This rapid rate of change demonstrates the fast evolution of governance standards. The handbook incorporates the latest versions published as of October 2017.

## The Netherlands

Initiative	Good Governance in the Netherlands <sup>5</sup>
Lead organisation	NOC*NSF
Year of publication	Evolving since 2005
Connection to other initiatives	Starting point was a code for commercial organisations developed in 2004 (Tabaksblatt)

The Dutch authorities developed a Code of Good Governance for over 70 member federations consisting of 17 minimum requirements. The minimum requirements, which have been in place since 2011, are compulsory for federations which want to receive lottery and other funding. However, as of 2016 none of the federations met all 17 requirements completely.

The code adopts a “comply or explain” model. Federations complete an annual self-assessment with external evaluation every two years.

5. See [www.nocnsf.nl/en/projects-activities/integrity-of-sports/good-governance](http://www.nocnsf.nl/en/projects-activities/integrity-of-sports/good-governance) (accessed 14 May 2018).

Importantly, there is recognition of the distinction between rules and behaviour – federations should “live the code”. The NOC\*NSF provides a range of support tools, including communications, a knowledge database and workshops for federations. A new sport and business foundation helps facilitate the recruitment of new sports managers and board members.

The minimum requirements:

1. Evaluate good governance initiatives in annual report
2. Benchmark good governance every two years (self-evaluation)
3. Have a clear description of governance model
4. Use profiles for board and administrators
5. Have rules to avoid conflicts of interest
6. Limit terms for administrators to a maximum of 12 years
7. Organise an annual meeting at least once a year
8. Have a management statute
9. Centralise governance, preventing autonomous internal entities
10. Have a long-term strategic plan
11. Have a clear description of the planning and control cycle
12. Install risk management and proper procurement
13. Meet financial stability ratios
14. Have the annual report audited by an accountant
15. Install specific regulations concerning:
  - a. sexual intimidation
  - b. disciplinary code
  - c. doping
  - d. equality and discrimination
  - e. complaints

16. Ensure that all individual members are aware of and comply with federation membership and rules
17. Provide all individual membership registrations once a year.

## Germany

Initiative	Good Governance in German Sport <sup>6</sup>
Lead organisation	DOSB – German Olympic Sports Confederation
Year of publication	Evolving since 2005
Connection to other initiatives	None known

The system comprises four governance principles: transparency, accountability, integrity, and participation/involvement. The documents include a description of a comprehensive compliance function and there is an example Code of Conduct.

A number of examples are cited for each principle. For instance, publication of the federation's mission and strategy contributes to transparency. Accountability is enhanced by the clear and transparent assignment of competences and tasks, together with effective controls. In order to promote sporting integrity, decision making should be independent of personal interests and benefits. The organisational culture should promote and encourage ethical conduct and fairness. Finally, democratic structures and opinion-forming processes aid participation and involvement, taking account of stakeholder groups.

The provisional Code of Ethics includes these headings:

1. Tolerance, respect and dignity
2. Sustainability and responsibility for the future

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6. See [www.dosb.de/ueber-uns/good-governance](http://www.dosb.de/ueber-uns/good-governance) (accessed on 25 April 2018).

3. Attitude of zero tolerance
4. Transparency
5. Integrity
6. Participation
7. Focus on athletes.

The provisional Code of Conduct includes these headings:

**A. How we interact with each other**

1. Culture of appreciation and respect
2. Foundation of our actions

**B. Conduct in business dealings**

1. Conflicts of interest
2. Gifts and other benefits
3. Invitations
4. Representation of interests
5. Donations
6. Sponsoring
7. Policy towards public funding
8. Stakeholder involvement
9. Fees
10. Dealing with resources
  - a. Dealing with federation property and materials
  - b. Origin and use of financial resources
  - c. Intellectual property/expertise/confidentially

### C. Framework

1. Procedure
2. Special officers (ethics officer, good governance officer)
3. Ombudsperson's office
4. Data protection.

There is a detailed description of a comprehensive compliance function. The starting point should be a risk assessment which considers such risks as the integrity of individuals, risks to the health and well-being of participants, and manipulation of sporting competitions.

Regulations are to be developed or updated on such topics as the nominations process for officials, anti-doping rules, works agreements for staff and a code of conduct.

Regarding the organisational structure, important points to consider include competences and reporting lines. There may be a role for an ethics/governance officer, or an independent ombudsperson.

The compliance system also requires a regular monitoring process with a right to conduct spot checks and appropriate sanctioning powers. Agreed procedures are needed for reporting concerns and also for the conduct of investigations.

## United Kingdom/England<sup>7</sup>

Initiative	A Code for Sports Governance (in the UK) <sup>8</sup>
Lead organisation	UK Sport and Sport England
Year of publication	2016
Connection to other initiatives	Builds on previous governance requirements for bodies receiving lottery funding from UK Sport and Sport England

The code sets mandatory requirements for national federations and other bodies seeking public funding. There are requirements grouped under five principles. The requirements are divided into three tiers to be proportionate to the scale of funding and the stage of development of the organisation involved. For example, requirement 1.10 for tier three, the top tier which covers most funded national sports federations, specifies that each organisation must maintain an up-to-date matrix detailing the skills, experience, independence and knowledge required of its board. By comparison, at the lower tier one level, the code states that in deciding who sits on its governing committee, the funded organisation should consider the skills and diversity required of its committee members.

Notable features for tier three include a target of at least 30% gender diversity on boards for funded bodies, a commitment to greater diversity more generally, and a requirement that at least 25% of the board members should be independent non-executive directors.

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7. Declaration of interest: the author of this study worked for UK Sport from October 2015 to September 2016 and was personally involved in this project.
  8. See [www.uk sport.gov.uk/resources/governance-code](http://www.uk sport.gov.uk/resources/governance-code) (accessed 14 May 2018).

The code was implemented in April 2017, at which point the first assessment for national federations and other funded bodies began.

These are the principles and summary requirements:

### **1. Structure**

Organisations shall have a clear and appropriate governance structure, led by a board which is collectively responsible for the long-term success of the organisation and exclusively vested with the power to lead it. The board shall be properly constituted and shall operate effectively.

### **2. People**

Organisations shall recruit and engage people with appropriate diversity, independence, skills, experience and knowledge to make effective decisions that further the organisation's goals.

### **3. Communication**

Organisations shall be transparent and accountable, engaging effectively with stakeholders and nurturing internal democracy.

### **4. Standards and conduct**

Organisations shall uphold high standards of integrity and engage in regular and effective evaluation to drive continuous improvement.

### **5. Policies and processes**

Organisations shall comply with all applicable laws and regulations, undertake responsible financial strategic planning and have appropriate controls and risk management procedures.

## United Kingdom/Wales

Initiative	Governance and Leadership Framework for Wales <sup>9</sup>
Lead organisation	Sport Wales
Year of publication	2015
Connection to other initiatives	Developed in partnership with the Sport and Recreation Alliance

The framework is aimed at the sport sector in Wales. It is designed to be flexible to cover organisations of different sizes but particularly applies to governing bodies which receive lottery funding. It comprises seven principles.

The seven principles are:

1. Integrity: acting as guardians of the sport, recreation, activity or area
2. Defining and evaluating the role of your board
3. Setting vision, mission and purpose
4. Objectivity: balanced, inclusive and skilled board
5. Standards, systems and controls
6. Accountability and transparency
7. Understanding and engaging with the sporting landscape.

Each of the seven principles has a number of minimum expectations. For example, in relation to the first principle on integrity, these include taking the views of athletes, members and participants into consideration, and ensuring the organisation is equipped to manage the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults. Topics listed under

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9. See <http://bit.ly/2rLnJcb> (accessed 14 May 2018).

“Other considerations” for the first principle include actively promoting and monitoring equality and diversity; and promoting the interest of the sport to a wider audience.

“Success indicators” are included to aid measurement. In the case of the principle focused on integrity, one of the indicators states that the organisation’s values should be defined and in line with the vision and strategy.

An innovative aspect of the Governance and Leadership Framework for Wales is an attempt to explore organisational culture. Examples are provided of both “effective” and “ineffective” behaviours. An effective behaviour in relation to integrity is described as the individual declaring conflicts of interest and behaving in a visibly impartial manner. By contrast, an ineffective behaviour would be the use of offensive or discriminatory language.

## United Kingdom

Initiative	The Principles of Good Governance for Sport and Recreation <sup>10</sup>
Lead organisation	Sport and Recreation Alliance – the umbrella body for sport and recreation in the UK representing over 300 national governing bodies
Year of publication	2017
Connection to other initiatives	Builds on research and publications in the UK since 2000

The principles represent best practice in governance, developed through the experience of the Sport and Recreation Alliance working with organisations across the sector. The latest version is the third iteration developed since 2011. The aim is to provide guidance that is compliant with requirements for publicly funded bodies set out in A Code for Sports Governance and the Governance and Leadership Framework for Wales, along with other initiatives in Scotland and Northern Ireland. In addition, the guidance is designed to be of practical assistance to a much wider range of organisations of all sizes which do not receive public funding.

There are seven principles, under each of which are listed several points answering the question, “what does this mean to your board?” There are also supporting governance actions and guidance notes.

As an example, the document explains that one aspect of the significance of the principle of integrity to the board is that it should lead by example, setting and maintaining clear ethical standards for the organisation. One important course of action to take is the implementation of a robust conflicts of interest policy. Including a standard agenda item at each board meeting is a method of ensuring that conflicts are declared.

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10. See [www.sportandrecreation.org.uk/pages/principles-of-good-governance](http://www.sportandrecreation.org.uk/pages/principles-of-good-governance) (accessed 14 May 2018).

Several case studies are provided. For instance, Swim England undertook a board evaluation in line with the guidance in the third principle. This ultimately led to a restructure of the organisation.

The seven principles are:

1. Integrity
2. Organisation's vision and mission
3. Leadership and role of the board
4. Board structure
5. Controls and compliance
6. Accountability and transparency
7. Engaging with the sport and recreation landscape.

There are also a set of board behaviours with explanations to:

- ▶ Protect integrity
- ▶ Encourage understanding
- ▶ Create an effective environment
- ▶ Respect the process.

## Italy

Initiative	Fundamental Principles of the Statutes of National Sports Federations and of Associated Sports Disciplines <sup>11</sup>
Lead organisation	Comitato Olimpico Nazionale Italiano (CONI) – Italian Olympic Committee
Year of publication	2014
Connection to other initiatives	None known

The Italian system consists of 16 principles, each with up to about 20 requirements. For example, principle 11 on transparency includes a requirement that the statutes must specify that the budget, to be approved by CONI, is drawn up in compliance with accounting principles. In addition, the annual balance sheet and the reports, once approved by CONI, must be communicated to the entities entitled to vote, or published on the federation website.

One notable feature is that athletes and coaches should comprise not less than 30% of national federation boards.

The principles are as follows:

1. Community principle
2. Legality
3. Separation of powers
4. Internal democracy on a collective basis
5. Internal democracy on a personal basis

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11. See <http://bit.ly/2ljTPBV> (accessed 14 May 2018).

6. Assembly principle
7. Eligibility for federal offices
8. Forfeiture of federal bodies
9. Territoriality
10. Protection of the collective interests of companies and sports associations
11. Transparency
12. Free provision of sport
13. Distinction between professional activities and non-professional activities
14. Protection of sports athletes on maternity leave
15. Sports justice
16. Sports ethics.

## Poland

Initiative	Co-funding Programme for the Preparation of the National Team for the Olympic Games and Major Championships
Lead organisation	Ministry of Sport and Tourism <sup>12</sup>
Year of publication	2016
Connection to other initiatives	None known

In Poland there is an obligatory, self-assessment compliance test consisting of 19 questions for about 70 national sports federations which seek public funding. As an example, one of the questions asks whether the federation has a rule which makes it possible to challenge its final disciplinary decisions at the Court of Arbitration affiliated to the Polish Olympic Committee. Additional funding is available for sports federations which perform well across a range of criteria (not just governance). Conferences and workshops are organised to raise awareness and understanding of governance issues among the national sports federations.

There are 19 questions in the compliance test which cover the following topics:

- ▶ annual general meetings
- ▶ annual reports prepared by the board and presented to members
- ▶ audited financial accounts and selection of auditors

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12. See <http://en.msport.gov.pl/> (accessed 14 May 2018).

- ▶ disciplinary regulations
- ▶ commercial conflicts of interest
- ▶ separation of commercial and regulatory activity in sports with professional leagues
- ▶ development strategy
- ▶ open publication of statutes and other key documents
- ▶ conflicts of interest between board and other parts of the organisation
- ▶ disciplinary proceedings
- ▶ appeals process for disciplinary decisions via the Polish Olympic Committee
- ▶ licensing/registration system for participants
- ▶ appropriately qualified director of training
- ▶ appropriately qualified secretary general
- ▶ use of public funds
- ▶ provision of a profit and loss account with recovery plans in the event of a loss.

## Switzerland

Initiative	Swiss Olympic Code of Conduct <sup>13</sup> and Charter for Ethics in Sport <sup>14</sup>
Lead organisation	Swiss Olympic
Year of publication	2015
Connection to other initiatives	Related to the International Olympic Committee (IOC) Code of Ethics

Swiss Olympic has adopted a Code of Conduct and an accompanying Charter for Ethics rather than a governance code. The Charter for Ethics covers nine broad principles for behaviour, such as equal treatment of individuals and the rejection of doping. In the Code of Conduct there are 11 sections with more specific guidance. For instance, the fifth section on conflicts of interest states that conflicts should be avoided if possible, or else declared with appropriate action taken, such as abstaining from participating in a decision.

Concerns about potential breaches of the Code of Conduct can be reported to an independent law firm.

Principles in the Charter for Ethics:

1. Equal treatment for everyone
2. Sport and social environment in harmony
3. Strengthening personal and shared responsibility
4. Respectful encouragement rather than excessive demands

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13. See <http://bit.ly/2lkgwFW> (accessed 14 May 2018).

14. See <http://bit.ly/2lqpbgT> (accessed 14 May 2018).

5. Educating on fairness and environmental responsibility
6. Rejecting violence, exploitation and sexual abuse
7. Rejecting doping and drugs
8. Abstaining from tobacco and alcohol consumption during sport
9. Opposing all forms of corruption.

Topics covered in the Code of Conduct:

1. Fundamentals and guidelines for our actions
2. Invitations
3. Gifts and payments
4. Integrity
5. Conflicts of interest
6. Sports betting
7. Dealing with partners
8. Awarding of contracts
9. Origin and use of financial resources
10. Financial contributions and sponsorship
11. Data protection.

Additional items:

- ▶ reporting procedure
- ▶ sanctions for breach of the Code of Conduct.

## Austria

Initiative	Austrian Non-Profit Organisation Code of Conduct <sup>15</sup>
Lead organisation	Wirtschaftsuniversität Wien/Vienna University of Economics and Business
Country	Austria
Year of publication	2013
Connection to other initiatives	Related to and partly based on the Austrian Act on Associations of 2002

The Vienna University of Economics and Business developed an NPO Governance Code for Austrian NGOs, including sports organisations, to further improve the responsible management of non-profit entities. The benchmarks, guidelines and recommendations are partly based on the Austrian Act on Associations of 2002 which sets up minimum governance standards. The recommendations of the code enable non-profit organisations (NPOs) to evaluate their structures and processes, whether they are up to date and in line with current good practices. The benchmarks of the code can be used as a tool to identify possible areas of improvement and provide technical assistance at the same time to increase efficiency, effectiveness and ethics within an organisation. Considering that many NPOs are managed by volunteers, one aim of the code was that the proposed good governance measures do not cause an additional administrative burden.

The sections and principles are as follows:

- ▶ rights of members

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15. See <http://bit.ly/2wAZYIE> (accessed 14 May 2018).

- ▶ general meeting
- ▶ decision-making body
- ▶ supervisory body
- ▶ operating body
- ▶ association
- ▶ incompatibility
- ▶ conflicts of interest
- ▶ accountability, control
- ▶ risk management.

The code also refers to a scoring model/table<sup>16</sup> to identify and prioritise important stakeholder organisations

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16. For scoring model, see <http://bit.ly/2wAZYIE> (accessed 14 May 2018).

## Australia

Although Australia is clearly not a member of EPAS, sports governance activity in Australia is openly published and is probably among the leading examples in the world. It is therefore included here as a useful example.

Initiative	Australian Institute of Sport Mandatory Sports Governance Principles <sup>17</sup>
Lead organisation	Australian Institute of Sport
Country	Australia
Year of publication	2015
Connection to other initiatives	The Australian Sports Commission published the first Sport Governance Principles in 2002, which have been updated several times since then

The Australian Sports Commission has developed a set of 21 principles divided into three sections. Since 2013 the seven sports receiving the most funding have been required to meet the Mandatory Sports Governance Principles. From 2015 the number of sports expected to comply has increased. There is an evidence-based annual review process in which each principle is assessed on a scale ranging from “not in place” through to “optimised”. The outcome of the review is published in an annual Sports Tally,<sup>18</sup> a health check which provides a rating and commentary for each sport which receives funding on a scale from “underperforming” to “excelling”.

The sections and principles are as follows:

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17. See <http://bit.ly/2IEA37v> (accessed 14 May 2018).

18. See [www.ausport.gov.au/ais/about/history/sports\\_tally/2017](http://www.ausport.gov.au/ais/about/history/sports_tally/2017) (accessed on 25 April 2018).

## Structure for sport

- ▶ single entity for all forms of the sport
- ▶ in a federated structure, all parts work cohesively
- ▶ federation should be a company limited by guarantee

## Board composition and operation

- ▶ staggered rotation system for board members with a term limit
- ▶ nominations committee
- ▶ audit and risk committee, including a qualified independent individual
- ▶ chair elected by the board
- ▶ annual board evaluation with external input
- ▶ target of at least 40% gender representation on the board
- ▶ all directors to be independent, regardless of whether elected or appointed
- ▶ appropriate skills mix on the board, with potential to appoint individuals to fill gaps
- ▶ CEO should not join the board for three years after departure as CEO
- ▶ enforced conflict of interest register
- ▶ minimum of five board meetings per year

## Sport transparency, reporting and integrity

- ▶ publication of legally compliant annual reports
- ▶ consolidated annual accounts to be reported to the Australian Sports Commission
- ▶ rolling three-year strategic plans with targets and an operating budget for the next year
- ▶ disclosure of administration expenses, including remuneration
- ▶ all information to be provided on a timely basis
- ▶ commitment to integrity measures on anti-doping, protocols for sports science and match fixing
- ▶ financial and high performance reporting.

# Selected other governance initiatives worthy of note

A number of other sports governance projects which have an international focus rather than being driven by EPAS member countries are relevant as they help set the context for activity at national level. These are some of the most notable initiatives.

## Association of Summer Olympic International Federations (ASOIF) self-assessment questionnaire<sup>19</sup>

Formal name	ASOIF Governance Taskforce International Federation Self-Assessment Questionnaire <sup>20</sup>
Lead organisation	ASOIF
Country	International, based in Switzerland
Year of publication	2016
Connection to other initiatives	Developed from the Basic Indicators for Better Governance in International Sport (BIBGIS, see below), which used the IOC's Basic Universal Principles of Good Governance of the Olympic and Sports Movement as its starting point

19. Declaration of interest: The author of this study has been personally involved in this project since January 2017.

20. See [www.asoif.com/sites/default/files/basic\\_page/if\\_governance\\_questionnaire.pdf](http://www.asoif.com/sites/default/files/basic_page/if_governance_questionnaire.pdf) (accessed 14 May 2018).

The initiative is aimed specifically at international federations. There is a questionnaire consisting of 50 indicators equally grouped under five principles. Each indicator has a separately defined score from zero (not fulfilled) to four (totally fulfilled in a state-of-the-art way). For example, an indicator relating to transparency of audited financial accounts awards one if at least some financial information is published on the federation website. For a score of four, federations should publish multiple years of full, audited accounts with accompanying data or explanation. International federations submitted completed, self-assessed questionnaires in January 2017. Following independent moderation of responses, an analysis of the 28 international federations was published in April 2017.<sup>21</sup>

Principles:

1. Transparency
2. Integrity
3. Democracy
4. Sport development and solidarity
5. Control mechanisms.

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21. See [www.asoif.com/news/first-review-if-governance-presented-asoif-general-assembly](http://www.asoif.com/news/first-review-if-governance-presented-asoif-general-assembly) (accessed 14 May 2018).

## EU Principles of Good Governance in Sport

Formal name	EU Principles of Good Governance in Sport <sup>22</sup>
Lead organisation	EU Expert Group on Good Governance
Country	European Union
Year of publication	2013
Connection to other initiatives	None known

The EU principles seek to provide an outline for the whole sports movement, not just governing bodies or event owners. The principles are listed under these groupings:

1. Clarity of purpose, objectives
2. Code of ethics
3. Stakeholder identification and roles
4. Democracy and minimum standards
5. Delegation and committees
6. Management
7. Judicial/disciplinary procedures
8. Inclusivity and youth engagement
9. Statutes, rules and regulations
10. Accountability and transparency.

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22. See [http://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/sport/library/policy\\_documents/xg-gg-201307-dlvrb12-sept2013.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/sport/library/policy_documents/xg-gg-201307-dlvrb12-sept2013.pdf) (accessed 14 May 2018).

## Sports Governance Observer

Formal name	Sports Governance Observer <sup>23</sup>
Lead organisation	Play the Game
Country	Denmark/International
Year of publication	2015
Connection to other initiatives	Similar approach and methodology to BIBGIS

The Sports Governance Observer project targeted international federations specifically.

There was a set of 36 indicators divided under four dimensions:

1. Transparency and public communications
2. Democratic process
3. Checks and balances
4. Solidarity.

Each indicator was scored on a scale from 1 (not fulfilled) to 5 (state-of-the-art). An analysis was published of all 35 Olympic international federations.

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23. See <http://playthegame.org/theme-pages/the-sports-governance-observer/> (accessed on 26 April 2018).

## Basic Indicators for Better Governance in International Sport (BIBGIS)

Formal name	Basic Indicators for Better Governance in International Sport <sup>24</sup>
Lead organisation	IDHEAP, University of Lausanne
Country	Switzerland/International
Year of publication	2013
Connection to other initiatives	Based on the IOC's Basic Universal Principles of Good Governance of the Olympic and Sports Movement

The BIBGIS model was also aimed at international federations. Sixty-three indicators were divided under seven dimensions:

1. Organisational transparency
2. Reporting transparency
3. Stakeholders' representation
4. Democratic process
5. Control mechanisms
6. Sport integrity
7. Solidarity.

Each indicator could be scored on a scale from 0 (not fulfilled) to 4 (totally fulfilled in a state-of-the-art way).

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24. See [https://serval.unil.ch/resource/serval:BIB\\_7BDD210D3643.P001/REF](https://serval.unil.ch/resource/serval:BIB_7BDD210D3643.P001/REF) (accessed 14 May 2018).

## IOC Basic Universal Principles of Good Governance of the Olympic and Sports Movement

Formal name	IOC Basic Universal Principles of Good Governance of the Olympic and Sports Movement <sup>25</sup>
Lead organisation	IOC
Country	Switzerland/international
Year of publication	2008
Connection to other initiatives	...

The IOC's Basic Universal Principles of Good Governance of the Olympic and Sports Movement were intended to be relevant to all organisations in the Olympic movement. There are over 100 principles grouped into categories as follows:

1. Vision, mission and strategy
2. Structures, regulations and democratic process
3. Highest level of competence, integrity and ethical standards
4. Accountability, transparency and control
5. Solidarity and development
6. Athletes' involvement, participation and care
7. Harmonious relations with governments while preserving autonomy.

There is no reference to a measurement or monitoring system.

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25. See <http://bit.ly/2lgAS36> (accessed 14 May 2018).

## International Partnership Against Corruption in Sport (IPACS)

<b>Formal name</b>	<b>International Partnership Against Corruption in Sport<sup>26</sup></b>
Lead organisation	Partnership involving international sports organisations, governments, intergovernmental organisations and other relevant stakeholders
Country	International
Year of publication	Initial meeting in May 2017
Connection to other initiatives	Anti-Corruption Summit on 12 May 2016 <sup>27</sup>

At the initial meeting it was agreed that the mission of IPACS should be to bring together international sports organisations, governments, intergovernmental organisations and other relevant stakeholders to strengthen and support efforts to eliminate corruption and promote a culture of good governance in and around sport.

Three task forces are to be formed:

1. Reducing the risk of corruption in public procurement in the context of sports events
2. Ensuring transparency and integrity in the selection of venues for major sport events in the light of relevant standards on conflicts of interest
3. Optimising the processes of compliance with good governance principles to mitigate the risk of corruption.

26. See [www.coe.int/en/web/sport/ipacs](http://www.coe.int/en/web/sport/ipacs) (accessed on 26 April 2018).

27. See <http://bit.ly/2rF1Fio> (accessed 14 May 2018).

## Support the Implementation of Good Governance in Sport (SIGGS)

Formal name	Support the Implementation of Good Governance in Sport <sup>28</sup> Self-Evaluation Tool <sup>29</sup>
Lead organisation	European Olympic Committee
Country	European Union
Year of publication	2016
Connection to other initiatives	EU-funded study building on the Sport for Good Governance project in 2011-12

The SIGGS project was aimed at national Olympic committees and national sports federations. There is an online governance self-evaluation tool with 44 questions divided among four principles:

1. Integrity
2. Autonomy and accountability
3. Transparency
4. Democracy, participation and inclusivity.

Responses to the self-evaluation serve as a basis for establishing a customised action plan.

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28. See [www.siggs.eu/](http://www.siggs.eu/) (accessed 14 May 2018).

29. See <http://siggs.novagov.com/> (accessed 14 May 2018).

## Sport Integrity Global Alliance (SIGA)

Formal name	Sport Integrity Global Alliance Universal Standards <sup>30</sup>
Lead organisation	SIGA is a distinct legal entity – it is a voluntary association of members
Country	Legal seat is in Switzerland
Year of publication	2017
Connection to other initiatives	A number of frameworks were researched, including several listed in this hand-book.

The universal standards are divided into three separate units:

1. Good governance in sport
2. Financial integrity in sport
3. Sports betting integrity.

The standards, which are designed to cover a range of different organisation types, propose three levels of implementation: bronze, silver and gold. The initial focus is on self-assessment, although there is an ambition to add independent scrutiny, regulation and support mechanisms over time.

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30. See <http://siga-sport.net/> (accessed 14 May 2018).



## About the author

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**R**owland Jack founded sports governance consultancy I Trust Sport in 2013. He supports international federations, institutions and individuals on projects that have improving sports governance as their aim.

Recent projects include a review of the governance of Olympic sports commissioned by the Association of Summer Olympic International Federations.

From 2015 to 2016 he worked in-house at UK Sport, the national high performance sports agency, helping to develop the new Code for Sports Governance in the UK.

He is a guest lecturer on governance at universities and speaks regularly at conferences. Earlier in his career Rowland worked in sports marketing and communications for more than 10 years in several countries, including at six editions of the Olympic Games.



Since the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS) was set up in 2007, its major priority has been to address current challenges facing sport in Europe. To this end, it has developed a pan-European programme involving a variety of stakeholders from public authorities and the world of sport. All have an important role to play in reversing the discriminatory trends currently observed in sport and in promoting sport as a means of fostering diversity and social cohesion.

This collection of good practice handbooks is an illustration of current policies and practices throughout Europe. Its aim is to disseminate and share positive experiences highlighting the potential of sport in promoting the Council of Europe's fundamental values of human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

[www.coe.int/epas](http://www.coe.int/epas)

[www.coe.int](http://www.coe.int)

The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It comprises 47 member states, 28 of which are members of the European Union. All Council of Europe member states have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The European Court of Human Rights oversees the implementation of the Convention in the member states.

Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport  
  
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