



FOSTERING FEMALE MANAGEMENT LEADERS IN SPORTS

Final Research Report

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INTRODUCTION

The sport plays an important role and mirrors the overall developmental level of a particular society. In the last fifty years or more, from Title IX to Tokyo 2020, despite many institutional and non-institutional obstacles, the topics of gender representation and equal access cannot be neglected. Gender mainstreaming is top on the agenda for further democratization of our heterogeneous societies. In times of global crisis, a rise of authorities and the presence of democratic deficit, the significance of advocating for a gender mainstreaming approach is an important ingredient to tackle a number of challenges that the sports world faces (Varriale and Mazzeo, 2019).

As it is expected from the sports ecosystem to contribute to the broader societal objectives, the project FAMS tends to secure the support of the public sector and sport movement to work in concert. FAMS aims to balance the under-representation of women and mothers in sports, thus pursuing the promotion of employability through sports and encouraging social inclusion and equal opportunities in sports. FAMS project aims especially to provide concrete and efficient solutions to support the work balance of mothers and prevent them from abandoning sport. In particular, FAMS aims at fostering gender equality in sports coaching and teaching and attaining equal representation and gender sensitivity in decision-making. The rationale behind the FAMS project is to serve as a national kick-off for broader change toward enabling gender equality on and off the court. More specifically, the project activities will enable a number of female athletes to tailor an educational program that will serve as an empowerment tool on the one hand, and as a capacity-building platform for sports movement on the other hand. The media involvement will play an important role to maintain focus on this theme by inviting appropriate stakeholders to take needed actions.

The aim of this report is to provide a platform to stimulate and support further intervention within policy, scientific and sport-specific domains. Within researched countries, despite the present heterogeneity, there is a positive development that will



influence and guide the next phases of this project. It is important to underline that the socio-political realm reflects the heterogeneity of the sporting environment which impacts the current standing regarding participation and opportunities for women in and through sports. This report presents the findings conducted by national research teams within six countries focusing on their particular sports ecosystems.

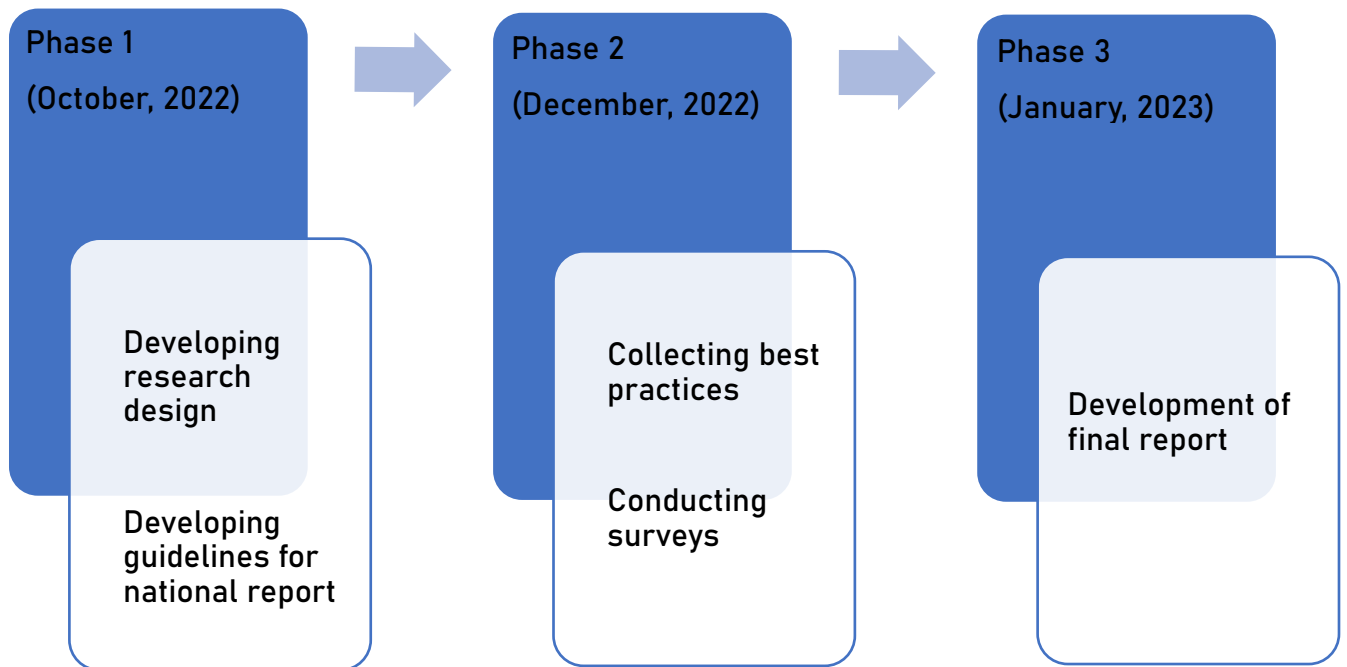
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The overall aim of FAMS is to address the underrepresentation of women in sports by developing targeted curricula to enhance capacity and leadership skills among female sports professionals. In particular, special attention is given to decision-making, coaching and athletes recently finishing sports careers.

The Research Committee (RC) was formed with the initial task to produce a research design. A mixed method and multi-stage approach were employed. According to Corbin and Strauss (2008), document analysis enables a procedure for examining documents to understand their meaning within a particular context. Official documents such as strategies and laws served to outline political landmarks and policy and regulatory frameworks. The collection of documents followed preliminary reading and interpretation of the content (Bowen, 2009).

Following the document analysis, three-level questionnaires were created and distributed to:

- Female athletes (current/former)
- Sport professionals within local sports organizations (clubs),
- Representatives of regional/national/umbrella sports organizations



Phase 1

The RC had four meetings between September and October in developing the research design.

Phase 2

In this phase, the national teams started collecting data. Following the collection process, desktop research and document analysis were conducted. Lastly, teams conducted questionnaires with all three groups of participants.

Phase 3

Development of final report across all six countries.

The theoretical framework was based on institutional work, as institutions and institutional development shape individual development, especially within the closed structure of the sports movement (Begović, 2022). The institutional work is particularly applicable to organizational studies and represents an adequate frame to study the level of influence within the sport system domains (Lawrence et al, 2011).

FINDINGS IN BRIEF

This project aims to serve as a platform to stimulate a variety of interventions from the public to sport sector. The significance of this report lies in providing an evidence base for needed actions toward facilitating more female athletes to be involved in sport governing bodies and decision-making processes. Although there are positive examples, the present obstacles and lack of opportunities require a holistic and comprehensive approach to addressing these challenges. That said, the overall finding suggests in addition to gender imbalance when it comes to participation in organized physical activity, women are significantly less represented in sports professionals' positions (coaches, referees and administration) and with leadership or executive roles. The challenges associated with the main concern of this project are:

- Representation of women in coaching positions across all six countries is less than 20%.
- Representation of women with leadership or executive roles is less than 20%.
- Less than 10% of the National Sports Federations (NSF) across all six countries adopted policies aimed to increase the number of female sports professionals.
- Less than 10% of the NSFs have a functional Women in Sport consultative body (commission).
- Less than 10% of the NSFs have a specific education program for female athletes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

These findings suggest that there is still a road ahead to reach a more gender-balanced sport movement by developing and implementing a range of gender mainstreaming policies. The presence of a democratic deficit is particularly presented in the adoption and implementation of policies to facilitate equal participation. In particular, further steps are needed toward electing more diverse sports governing bodies and



organizational structures, as only a few of the NSFs take necessary action to address these challenges. In addition, diversity should reflect the involvement of both active and nonactive female athletes. The NSF is expected to create an environment where all stakeholders should be appropriately involved in decision-making processes and have access to specific education programs to enhance their capacity. In particular, within the process of formulation of policies within the sport movement, specific action should be taken to ensure equal representation of women including tailored educational programs for female athletes.

The public sector should take into consideration findings from the national level in the direction to introduce gender mainstreaming concepts into policy-making and strategic planning of sport-related and educational activities. Further, a quota system should be prescribed by specific legislation to enable more diverse sport governing bodies. The budgeting of related activities should include gender-sensitive principles in order to stimulate and empower women to take a more active role in sport.

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ANNEX

Annex list

- Belgium - Research Report
- Bulgaria - Research Report
- Croatia - Research Report
- Italy - Research Report
- Romania - Research Report
- Serbia - Research Report

BELGIUM EUROPEAN PLATFORM FOR SPORT INNOVATION

OVERVIEW

The purpose of this study is to investigate and analyse the level of under-representation of women and mothers in sport. Due to the lack of available childcare and the high cost of child-care, women are prevented from participating in sport as equally as men and this is found on different levels in the sport sector – from professional athletes to leadership positions in sport institutions. To drive gender equality in sport forward, the project Fostering Female Management Leaders in Sport (FAMS) is aiming to produce useful educational resources that empower and prepare women for decision-making roles in sport. In pursuing the promotion of employability through sport, FAMS aims to contribute to balancing representation between genders.

This national report provides a first overview of the representation of women and mothers in the sport ecosystem of Belgium.

The conclusions drawn upon the research are intended to serve as a basis for identifying the educational needs of women in the age group 18-30 and contribute to their professional realisation. In this way, FAMS is a significant project linking up to the broader European values for gender equality and equal opportunity. FAMS becomes even more valuable to all stakeholders who can use its intellectual output, integrate it into educational and training programs, and recognise the need for encouraging similar initiatives.

The primary data collection points to a few general trends backed up by governmental policies, community policies and other policies and reports in the past decades.

Although FAMS focuses on gender equality, its output will be valuable in a broader sense. FAMS results may be used for Sport Management and Governance, Good Governance, Sport Science, Economics and Business Administration related studies.

It will attempt to bring out important current standings in sport governing structures; it will shed a light on the gender balance agenda which connects to broader European values for equality and opportunity and it will serve as the basis for creating valuable educational resources targeted at potential female leaders in sport management and



coaching. In this way, it will attempt to fill the vacancy left by the shortcomings of the executed governmental strategy so far.

METHODOLOGY

a. Data collection

For this study, a primary researcher coordinated the process of gathering and analysing the data, while another two researchers were responsible for collecting primary and secondary data. A mixed method and multistage approach are employed for shaping this report. Three-layer questionnaires were created by the consortium of the project to be distributed to athletes, stakeholders of local sport organisations/clubs and National Sport Federations. The rationale behind the drafting of the questionnaires was to understand the dynamics within the sport ecosystem, giving a say to different actors and stakeholders.

The questionnaires and the survey in general were well-structured to obtain as holistic feedback as possible from all the relevant stakeholders from National Sport Federations, sport clubs and sport-related organisations, as well as female athletes and former ones. Keeping in mind the FAMS project aims and objectives, the survey was constructed to meet the needs of female potential sport management and coaching leaders, enquiring more about the level of stakeholders' knowledge on the existing situation in the sport ecosystem related to the representation of women in it. Last but not least, all the aforementioned will be reflected in the mapping of the sport policies on a national and regional level in Belgium.

Additionally, and in accordance with Corbin and Strauss (2008), official documents such as strategies, resolutions, reports and laws were examined, to draw the outline of the context in Belgium related to policy and regulatory frameworks in gender equality, employability, sport and other domains.

The primary data was collected by carrying out a targeted email campaign. The data EPSI collected was in collaboration with our member and partner organisations, federations and companies in Belgium, but also using the snowball sampling technique (Johnson, 2014). A first email was sent describing the FAMS project and explaining its aims and objectives, as well as expressing the importance and value of the research conducted. A second email followed after 7 days due to a lack of responses.

As mentioned before, three different questionnaires were drafted to target the three different groups of stakeholders following:

- Decision makers within National Sport Federations
- Decision makers within other sport organisations and sport clubs
- Female stakeholders (athletes/former athletes) with potential for leadership positions

As per project deliverables and in accordance with Research Committee's decision, a total of 20 questionnaires were sent per sub-category.

b. Data analysis

From all potential replies, 12% returned the completed questionnaires and assisted in building awareness for the structural arrangements within sport organisations relating to gender. As one of the FAMS project's core aims is to create educational opportunities for women and aid their professional realisation, the targeted survey on potential female leaders did not extract the information needed to identify their needs clearly.

Although the researcher contacted several NSFs, he got back 12 responding emails and no answer to the questionnaire. According to the NSFs websites, 4 out of 61 sport federations in Belgium have a female president, 25% of the vice presidents and 23% of the federation's board members are women.

According to the most recent Gender Equality in Sport research for Belgium (ALL In, 2019), almost half of the female coaches in Belgium are registered, but only 1 out of 5 are employed as elite-level coaches. 1 out of 3 members of sport clubs in Belgium are females.

The questionnaire was completed by eleven female active and former athletes. The age range of the respondents was 27 to 57 years of age (mean=34 years old). 80% of the participants are educated at a master's degree level.

When asked whether they had a sport-related certification, 5 out of 11 gave a positive answer.

Coaching certifications were the most popular answers, whilst there were participants holding instructor certifications. Furthermore, only one respondent has a sport management-related type of certification.

More than 50% of the participants are now retired.

More than 50% are now retired, all employed, with a small percentage (36%) involved in the work of sport organisations.

Getting to the point of the survey, the answers paint a discouraging picture. All responses suggest that these women - although their present or past involvement in sport - almost have very limited, if any, knowledge about female representation within the organisation or NFS. When asked if the NFS has a formal (written) policy that outlines objectives and specific actions aimed at involving women in its policy processes, just 3 out of 11 answered “yes”, while the rest were uncertain or said “no”. Same goes for the question on NFS (written) policies that outline objectives and specific actions aimed at encouraging the equal access to representation for women and men in all stages of the decision-making process.

When mentioning the “multi-annual policy plan” of organisation or NFS, just one respondent stated that it is indeed adopted in consultation with women, while the rest has no knowledge about it. Moving to the human resources policies and more specifically the implementation of gender sensitive procedures to identify candidates for awarded positions, it can be inferred that the organisation or NFS does not make this procedure known or does not implement it, as just two respondents answered yes, whereas the others appear to be unaware of it. The same answers were provided with regard to the gender balanced representation on the nomination committee seeking candidates for decision-making within the organisation or NFS. Finally, the question about gender sensitive procedures for identifying candidates for positions awarded as part of electoral procedures within the organisation or NFS, received the same answers as the previous ones.

When it comes to educational opportunities, 45% of the respondents indicate that NFS conducts standard education programmes for active young athletes, and 36% report there are educational learning programmes for professional athletes. Once again, only 36% of the respondents indicate there are educational programmes for female athletes.

Overall, the answers given by the eleven female athletes fail to provide relevant information for the scope of the project. The general picture that emerges from the survey is a widespread lack of knowledge about potential policies and educational opportunities aimed at improving female representation and involvement in sport organisations in Belgium. The cause of this problem can be traced back to the inability of organisations to promote their efforts around gender-gap reduction both internally, in selection and decision-making processes, but also externally in support of educational programmes and initiatives. It may well be that such efforts are judged as insufficient and far from having a real impact. Another element to consider, which probably influenced the outcome of the questionnaire, is that the respondents, although living on Belgian territory, are of different nationalities, and therefore less informed on the matter.

CONTEXT

Belgium is a rather small country, with around 11 million inhabitants. Being a regulated welfare state in the European Union, Belgium has a stable, progressive and liberal democracy, corresponding to the so-called Rhineland model. Rhineland's model is based on long-term policy vision, and active involvement from the government and social entrepreneurship (Albert, 1992).

The Belgian political and cultural organisation is pretty complex taking into consideration the linguistic diversity and the tensions between different communities, as it is also common in similar countries like Canada and Switzerland. Belgium's political power and institutions are separated into three different levels:

- The federal government
- Three community governments (Flemish, French and German-speaking communities) and,
- Three regional governments (Flemish, Walloon and Brussels-Capital Region)

Flanders is the Dutch-speaking northern part of Belgium, inhabited by 59% of the population. Wallonia, is the French-speaking southern region, with 31% of the population. The bilingual Brussels-Capital Region is inhabited by 10% of the population of the country. Finally, the German-speaking Community numbers just over 75,000 people.

The organisation of sports in Belgium and its development correlates with the complex political and cultural organisation of Belgium (Scheerder et al., 2011). Each aforementioned community is responsible for affairs related to sports, culture, education and welfare (Belgian Government, 1980). As a result, there is no national sport policy in Belgium. Hence, Flanders, Wallonia and Brussels-Capital Region differ significantly in their sport policy-making processes (Thibaut, 2000).

According to Zintz and Winald (2013), the division of the political structure of the Belgian state has notably influenced the organisation of sports in Belgium. Sport also depicts the separated structures, which is clearly reflected in public sport policy; the field of sport was one of the first major governmental competencies to which the communities in Belgium had full authority. From 1970 on, each of the 3 communities has its own independent sport administration developing its individual sport policy programmes.

As already mentioned, governmental competencies regarding sport are an exclusive political, financial and organisational responsibility of the three communities. As it is prominent, Flanders and Wallonia differ considerably in their respective sport policy-

making processes. In Wallonia, sport policy-making is mainly characterised by regulation and monitoring (van Poppel et al., 2012) whilst in Flanders civic involvement is strong in sport (Vos et al., 2013). Flemish municipalities receive financial support for the implementation of their local sport policy, whilst in Wallonia, they focus on the provision and management of local sport centres (Scheerder and Vos, 2013).

In addition to the sport-related community policy structures and legal instruments, there are federal laws and organisations that also impact the sport ecosystem in Belgium.

On the other hand, Belgian unity is also highlighted by sport: Olympic accomplishments are implanted in the context of Belgium (Thibaut, 2000).

As for the analysis of the structural organisation of society, and especially the field of sports, distinctions are mainly made between:

- Public sector
- Commercial Sector, and,
- Civic Sector

Although these sectors operate mostly autonomously, concerning sports, more and more forms of cooperation occur (Scheerder et al., 2011).

In Belgium, as in most other European countries, sport clubs are mostly dependent on voluntary work (Taks et al., 1999), whilst they play a crucial role in providing and promoting sporting activities (Theeboom & Wittock, 2015). Although, over the past decades this monopoly of the club-organized sport sector has decreased significantly, by providers such as fitness and health clubs, but also local sport authorities (Vos et al., 2013).

Nowadays, the sport system in Belgium is characterised by a diversity of organisations and participants, as depicted in the forthcoming figure:

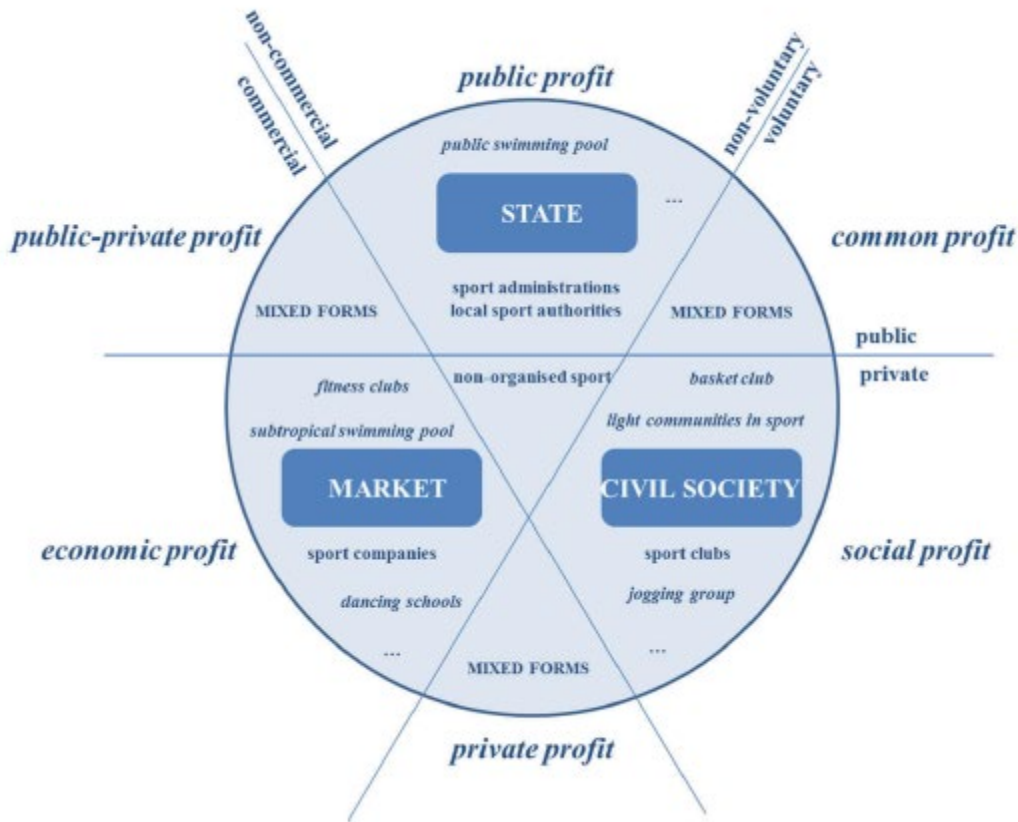


Figure 1. Major Actors in sport; Belgium (Scheerder et al., 2011)

To sum up, each community in Belgium has its own policy and its own focus. Although a national sport policy does not exist in Belgium, national legislations influence sport policy and mostly the professional sport clubs operate in a national context, whilst grassroots sport clubs operate in a community context.

According to the Physical Activity Factsheet of 2021 (WHO, 2021) the national recommendations on physical activity for health include the following target groups:

- Children (<5 y.o.)
- Children and adolescents (5-17 y.o.)
- Adults (18-64 y.o.)
- Older adults (>65 y.o.)
- Frail and very elderly adults (>85 y.o.)
- Pregnant and breastfeeding women
- People with disabilities
- People with chronic diseases

The sectors responsible on monitoring and surveillance of physical activity are:

- Health
- Education
- Sports
- Transport

The monitoring of both physical activity and local health in different settings guided the national health policy. Combining both monitoring strategies allows for deeper understanding because local physical activity has been proven to be an important determinant of national physical activity.

The estimated prevalence of sufficient physical activity levels:

- In adolescents (11-18 y.o.) is 17%. 21,3% for males and 13,7% for females respectively.
- In adults (18-75 y.o.) it is 64,1%. 66,3% for males and 62,1% for females respectively.
- In adults (>75 y.o.) it is 39,9%.

The Sport Ministries coordinates Belgian Health-enhancing Physical Activity (HEPA), established in 2015. It includes Informal meetings for data collection, exchange of information and good practices and preparation of international HEPA meetings.

There are 7 active national policies or action plans for the promotion of physical activity for health implemented in Belgium:

- Organised Sports Sector: Guarantee of Sustainable Sport (Sectors involved in the design of the policy/action plan: Health, Education, Sports)
- Action Plan: Sports at the Workplace (Sectors involved: Health, Sports, Transport)
- G-Sport Policy and Action Plan for People with Disabilities (Sectors involved: Sports)
- Strategy to Open School Sport Infrastructure after School Hours (Sectors involved: Education, Sports)
- Strategic Plan “De Vlaming Leeft Gezonder in 2025” (Sectors involved: Health, Education, Sports, Environment, Urban planning, Transport)
- Move Along: Physical Activity Policy in the Healthy Schools Framework (Sectors involved: Health, Education, Sports, Transport)
- Educational Goals for Health (Sectors involved: Health, Education, Sports, Transport)

All of the 7 aforementioned national policies/action plans include women as a target group, whilst Strategic Plan “De Vlaming Leeft Gezonder in 2025” targets especially Pregnant and Breastfeeding Women.

Finally, besides these national policies and actions, National awareness-raising campaigns on physical activity take place in Belgium on television, radio, newspapers, social media, and public events, through public figures and other channels.

The two main campaigns are:

- The “#sportersbelevenmeer” campaign, which invites active sportspeople to share their (sport) experiences through social media to encourage non-sportspeople to participate in sports. The aim is to emphasise experiences of being active. A number of inspirational examples are created in cooperation with sport clubs to motivate other clubs to include more experience in their sports programme and thereby attract more people. In addition to social media, large campaigns on radio and television spots are used to promote this campaign.
- 10.000 Steps (10.000 stappen) is an annual physical activity awareness-raising campaign based on evidence and a community approach. The evidence is from peer-reviewed research on the pilot project and implementation in Flanders. The campaign includes individual and environmental interventions for inactive adults and older people, including media strategies and different campaign materials.

In Belgium (Sciensano, 2018), 30% of the population aged 18 years and over did at least 150 minutes of at least moderate activity per week. More men (36%) than women (25%) met the recommendations. The prevalence was the highest in the youngest age group (47%) and the lowest in the highest age group (12%).

More people were meeting the physical activity recommendations in Flanders (43% in men and 34% in women) than in Brussels (29% and 18% respectively) and Wallonia (27% and 15%, respectively).

After age standardisation, people with tertiary education were more likely to meet the recommendations (38%) than people with an upper secondary education (26%), a lower secondary education (22%), and primary education (12%).

As for the adolescents, more boys (20%) than girls (13%) between 11 and 18 years old met the WHO recommendations to perform at least 60 minutes of moderate – to vigorous – intensity physical activity per day. A decrease is observed with ageing, with young adolescents (aged 11-12 years old) more likely to be sufficiently physically active than older adolescents.

More adolescents in the Flemish Community (21% of boys and 14% of girls) met the WHO recommendations than in the French Community (18% of boys and 11% of girls).

According to the Health-Behaviour in School-aged Children Report, spending at least 60 minutes a day on physical activity was generally associated with high family affluence.

In the Flemish Community boys and girls from the highest socio-economic group were respectively 2 times and 1.7 times more likely to meet the recommendations than boys and girls from the lowest socio-economic group (Flament, 2018).

In the French Community, a socio-economic gradient was only observed in girls, with girls from the higher socio-economic group being 1.6 times more likely to meet the recommendations than girls from the lowest socio-economic group. (Flament, 2018).

Some regional differences were also observed: boys from the low family affluence group were 1.5 times more likely to meet the recommendation in the French community than in the Flemish Community, while on the contrary, boys from high family affluence were 1.3 times more likely to meet the recommendation in the Flemish than in the French community. Among girls, a same low versus high gradient was observed in both communities (UGent, 2018; ULB, 2018)

According to the European Institute for Gender Equality Index for 2022 (EIGE, 2022), with 74.2 out of 100 points, Belgium ranks 8th in the EU on the Gender Equality Index. Its score is 5.6 points above the EU's score. Since 2010, Belgium's score has increased by 4.9 points. Its progress has been relatively slow as compared to other Member States, resulting in a drop in its ranking by three places. Since 2019, Belgium's score has increased by 1.5 points which is among the highest improvements among the Member States. The country retained its rank at the 8th place. Improvements in the domains of power, health, and work have been the main drivers of the increased score.

As per the most recent Gender Equality in Sport research for Belgium (ALL In, 2019), males govern Belgian sport. Four(4) of the sixty-one (61) sport federations in this data collection have a female president, whilst 25 % of the vice presidents and 23 % of the federations' board members are women. Belgium has many female coaches, 47% are registered but only 22% are employed as elite-level coaches. About a third of the members of a sport club are females.

The federations have been active in trying to increase the number of women in decision-making positions, with 43% taking action in this area, but only 18% have implemented measures to increase the number of female coaches. About one-third (33%) of the federations have implemented tools to combat and prevent gender-based violence. Only

12% have a specific policy for advancing towards gender equality for females and males in sport.

The Flemish sport agency has been active in many different areas and has promoted and initiated change. For its part, the sport administration of Wallonia-Brussels federation has been more involved in the field of gender equality in coaching, than other gender-related issues.

The Olympic Committee has also implemented tools to improve the situation of elite-level athletes and the prevention of gender-based violence.

There are some differences between the two communities. The Wallonia-Brussels Federation (French Community) has more women in leadership positions and the Flemish Community has more female participants and coaches.

More sport federations in the Flemish Community have taken action to prevent and combat gender-based violence, than the Wallonia-Brussels federation. However, the federations located in this community have been more active in increasing the number of women in leadership roles.

CONCLUSION

From a general point of view, there is a range of recommendations. As Belgian sport is actually structured in 3 different communities, national recommendations cannot easily be made. Gender equality and gender-related issues is a hot topic in all three communities, and is recommended to address the problem through education in schools and grassroots sport clubs.

Besides ensuring equal access to sport and sport-related jobs, another recommendation is to stay up to date regarding best practices that encourage sport participation for all.

As a result of the carried out research, almost all the participants expressed their interest to learn more on the FAMS project results, which is recommended to be part of the later stages of the FAMS dissemination process.

From a wider point of view, the related FAMS activities, carried out in Belgian context, are a cornerstone to ensure and build up on the future development of gender equality.

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BULGARIA

MUNDUS BULGARIA

OVERVIEW

The purpose of this study is to investigate and analyze the level of under-representation of women and mothers in sport. Due to the lack of available childcare and the high cost of child-care, women are prevented from participating in sport as equally as men and this is found on different levels in the sport sector – from professional athletes to leadership positions in sport institutions. To drive gender equality in sport forward, the project Fostering Female Management Leaders in Sport (FAMS) is aiming to produce useful educational resources that empower and prepare women for decision-making roles in sport. In pursuing the promotion of employability through sport, FAMS aims to contribute to balancing representation between genders.

The conclusions drawn upon the research are intended to serve as a basis for identifying the educational needs of women in the age group 18-30 and contribute to their professional realization. In this way, FAMS is a significant project linking up to the broader European values for gender equality and equal opportunity. As a member country of the European Union (EU) since 2007, Bulgaria has marked progress in balancing genders in decision-making positions, yet progress has been painstaking due to underlying causes of the standard of living, educational and professional opportunities for people since the 90s. In this way, FAMS becomes even more valuable to all stakeholders who can use its intellectual output, integrate it into educational and training programs, and recognise the need for encouraging similar initiatives.

The primary data collection points to a few general trends backed up by governmental policies (or lack of) in the past 30 years. Firstly, based on the constructed surveys it was evident that Bulgarian sport organizations do not have elaborate gender policies because gender is not considered when evaluating the professional qualifications of potential decision-makers. Sport clubs indicate talent as more important, whereas executive boards in federations look to suitability depending on previous experience. Secondly, the results also indicate that there is a strong female presence on executive boards as well as commissions but this varies depending on the nature of the sport. For example, female decision-makers are predominant in sports like figure skating including female-led sports like rhythmic gymnastics. On the other hand, there is an imbalance in gender representation in sports like basketball and athletics, which are

accepted as more popular and hold bigger numbers of athletes and sport clubs. The general direction of sport in Bulgaria, however, has been on the decline with highly centralised funding from the state and a preference for channeling capital towards a few sports that bring professional successes in international competitions while foregoing investment in youth and sport activities that encourage a broader long-term vision for increasing competitiveness, physical culture and education. This has affected general public health and the availability of adequate sport facilities and it is most evident in the plummeting of Bulgaria's international sports reputation.

Although FAMS focuses on gender equality, its output will be valuable in a broader sense. It will attempt to bring out important current standings in sport governing structures; it will shed a light on the gender balance agenda which connects to broader European values for equality and opportunity and it will serve as the basis for creating valuable educational resources targeted at potential female leaders in sport management and coaching. In this way, it will attempt to fill the vacancy left by the shortcomings of the executed governmental strategy so far.

METHODOLOGY

a. Data collection

For this study, one researcher was responsible for collecting primary data and coordinating the gathering and analysis of the research. The primary data was collected by carrying out a targeted email campaign with one primary email explaining the aims of the FAMS project and the value of information collected by the posed questionnaires. Following this, in the next ten working days, a couple of follow-up emails yielded most of the replies. A couple of phone calls were also included in the data collection process mainly to clarify and explain the posed questions in the survey and build rapport for future collaboration with sport organizations.

The questionnaires were sent to all registered national sport federations (NSFs) which are around a hundred. Other stakeholders from sport clubs also completed the survey contributing to the final data output. The questionnaires were divided to target three different groups of stakeholders: NSFs, decision-makers within other sport organizations like sport clubs, and female stakeholders with potential for leadership positions. They were well-targeted to explore the policies and governing structures of NSFs relating to gender but general feedback from sport clubs focussed on training and quality rather than establishing structures and procedures, which will be reflected on the analysis of the condition of sport policies on a national and local level in Bulgaria. As to the survey constructed for female potential leaders, keeping in mind the aims of

the FAMS project, the survey enquired more about the level of knowledge of structural predispositions in organizations and NSFs. Overall, the primary data points to structural arrangements while the research on best practices shows the level of support existing for potential female leaders in sport and coaching.

b. Data analysis

From all potential replies, 12% returned the completed questionnaires and assisted in building awareness for the structural arrangements within sport organisations relating to gender. Since the project aims to create educational opportunities for women and aid their professional realization, the targeted survey on potential female leaders did not extract the information needed to identify their needs clearly. The results from the NSFs survey indicate that there are women in decision-making roles and that the NSFs with paid staff, employ women and provide equal opportunities in recruitment. For example, there is a clear positive correlation between unpaid staff and unpaid women staff. The correlation between paid staff and paid women staff is also positive. There are too few respondents reporting a combination of paid and unpaid staff, which suggests some federations operate on a volunteering principle and the women reported as unpaid staff are volunteers. Federations operating with paid staff report a lack of unpaid women staff and only paid women staff. This is further backed up by the data comparing unpaid staff and women in decision-making roles: there is little positive correlation between the two characteristics. Based on this, it is fair to suggest that leadership roles for women are available as paid opportunities, thereby supporting financial self-sufficiency, which is an important component of encouraging gender equality. The survey analysis further supports this claim by pointing to the number of women participating in commissions and the number of women in leadership roles. The average of those numbers is 21%, which is lower than the average of reported women athletes 35.9%. Furthermore, the data is skewed in female-centered sports like cheerleading and rhythmic gymnastics which can carry the assumption, women are more present in leadership positions than men. Therefore, it is important to acknowledge that, a fuller picture can be extracted if the primary data covered a wider spectrum of questions posed to female stakeholders on opportunities for professional development in the field of sport. At the present moment, the limited data sample exhibits women's representation as a work in progress with space for improvement.

The questionnaire was completed by several sport federations varying in size, some stakeholders within sport clubs, and some female decision-makers within the governing body of NSFs. To reflect on the survey analysis concerning gender policies, 100% of the respondents report that women take part in the formation of sport activities and that women participate in the strategic plan for the development of the sport organization.

Half of the NSFs report that there are women taking part in consultative bodies while a portion of the federations does not have such a governing body in their structure. The latter tend to be the smaller federations with less than 20 registered clubs under their wing. The majority of respondents do not have specific gender-related policies in place that influence recruitment except for female-based sports (cheerleading and rhythmic gymnastics). The National Federation for Triathlon has an official policy in place, which states that there must be gender equality on the Executive Board and therefore all decisions are made in this format. The federation reports 50% of women on the Executive board, higher than the average of 21% across the board. This goes to show that gender balance can be stimulated with structural nudges but at the moment those choices depend on the federation and a broader national approach can further drive the equilibrium between male and female leaders.

When it comes to educational opportunities, 90% of the respondents indicate there are programmes targeted at young athletes, and 60% report there are learning programmes for professional athletes. Only 27% of NSFs indicate there are educational programmes for female athletes, which suggests training and education exist within federations but are targeted more toward developing professional athletes without discrimination based on gender. This is supported by research of best practices and existing programmes like *Get better, evolve* in basketball and *Girls Camp* in badminton as initiatives that develop sporting skills and support the growth of professional athletes. The current indicators point to a focus on ensuring equal sporting opportunities and developing sporting skills for competitions.

Most of the surveyed respondents indicate their selection process is more focused on evaluating sporting talent and qualities for athletes and on professional qualification and knowledge when it comes to decision-making positions. This is backed up by 100% of respondents reporting there are no gender-based guidelines for carrying out procedures of recruitment within the governing structure of NSFs. All federations declare their intention on selecting the most qualified candidate rather than taking gender into account. Yet, as mentioned earlier there is female participation in commissions and senior roles which suggests that there are qualified female candidates that participate in the decision-making processes. When looking at the median number of 23.65 as a percentage of women in senior roles across the surveyed, the gender imbalance becomes starker. The percentage of women in commissions as a median number is 21.65, which is even lower. When examining more closely it becomes clear, most governing bodies are either dominated by women or dominated by men. For example, out of 5500 athletes in the Bulgarian basketball federation, about 1500 are women, which is an 11:3 ratio and the percentage of women in leadership positions is 11%. One reason that can be attributed to this is that some sports are simply more

preferred by either gender. It is often the case that decision-makers within sport institutions have been professional athletes in the past representing the same sport. Consequently, in ice-skating which is a sport more popular with women and where currently 96% of athletes are women has an executive board ratio of 4:1 in favour of women. Only 25% of NSFs report official policies encouraging equal access of men and women to decision-making. The same number of respondents report balance on the executive committee that appoints new staff members, yet all NSFs report that women take part in the long-term strategy of the institution. This points to the lack of formal gender policies within sport institutions but also indicates a certain level of female presence without top-down measures. The lack of policies encouraging gender balance links up to the lack of such values recognized within the national sport policy and the policies driven by the Bulgarian Ministry of Youth and Sport. Bigger sport federations and sport clubs should be encouraged to develop their discipline for both genders but upon examining formal policies and the history of sport in the past couple of decades, it becomes clear the problems have been building up and the execution of strategy has been neglected.

CONTEXT

With the founding of the Bulgarian Union for Physical Culture and Sport in 1958, began the centralized governance of sport, which brought about big international achievements. The number of Olympic medals won by Bulgarian professional athletes in the period between 1952 and 1992 is 167 (40 gold, 69 silver, and 58 bronze) (BSFS, 2022). At the Seoul Olympic Games in 1988, Bulgaria was in 5th place with 247.8 points and in 1994 at the FIFA Football World Cup, the Bulgarian team came in 4th place. Ever since this era and the political changes that took place in the early 90s, Bulgarian sport reputation finds itself in a decline with continuously worsening trends in both physical culture and international sport achievements. In comparison, in the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games Bulgaria came in 42-43rd place with only 31 points (National Sport Strategy, 2012, 5).

One of the most important policy frameworks on a national level each year is the Budget Bill. The budget allocates the amount of capital flow to each ministry, it plans investment in construction and infrastructure and in this way can follow up on strategic aims in the long term. The latest available strategy on sport outlines a funding goal of 0.5% of GDP by 2022 (National Sport Strategy, 2012, 11). This year, it can be confirmed that the goal has not been reached and current levels of funding are barely 0.1% of the GDP (Kartunov, 2022). The chronic underfunding is evident in the budget policy, which has been

addressed by a number of professional athletes. The lack of modern conditions for practicing sport on a professional level means that athletes need to go abroad to train for competitions. This might alleviate short-term pressure of the country's need to provide modern facilities for training for professionals but in the long-term, it deprives the general public as beneficiaries from using, participating, and paying for sport. According to a 2017 study published by Eurobarometer, Bulgaria is the only country where the majority of respondents consider that the area they live in does not offer many opportunities to be physically active (Eurobarometer Report, 2022, 53). This is recognized by the national strategy for youth and sport, which acknowledges that the number one priority is modernizing sport infrastructure but structurally the system does not predispose to stimulating the practice of sport. This can be observed on many levels connecting to the school and teaching practices of sport and physical education, the flow of capital to NSFs, sports clubs and levels of misuse of allocated funding. For the purpose of the FAMS project, this report will focus on the relationship between sport, government and education.

The main beneficiary of sports policies is youth, because students, undergraduates and professional athletes are by definition young people. Therefore, conducting a good sport policy and practices in schools from an early age is crucial to the development of youth and the growth of sport culture among the population. The European Institute for Gender Equality reports that coaching professions are dominated by men (EIGE, 2015, 2). When it comes to empowering female leaders in sport, it is assumed they have a sporting background as most coaches, trainers and sport managers have competed professionally at one point or another. Educational opportunities in sport management and coaching are available in the National Sport Academy as university qualifications. Another path is private courses in a chosen physical activity popular in the studio or gym-based physical activities. Results from the questionnaires also indicate sparse educational programmes for youth athletes and professional athletes conducted abroad. Moreover, there are projects and programmes developed by the Ministry of Youth and Sport, Sofia municipality, and the Bulgarian Olympic Committee aiming to increase experience and job opportunities for young professional athletes. However, feeding into the general outlook on sport in Bulgaria, many qualified coaches prefer practicing their qualifications abroad due to the lack of decent pay and opportunities for growth and development (National Report, ESSA-Sport, 22). This act further depletes the sector of available talent and a competitive edge while aggravating the overall condition of the system.

Structurally, the current relationship between government, education and sport is centralized and hierarchical (National Report, ESSA-Sport, 13). At the bottom are schools with a lack of funding to upkeep gymnasiums, which also depends on the

national strategy for education and the functions of the Ministry of Education. Following the political changes in the 90s, the scene became fragmented with the formation of many federations and sport clubs competing for national funding. The National Strategy for Development of Sport in Bulgaria 2012-2022 does outline the state of sport in the country with several worrying trends that continue to deepen due to the decline of physical education and lack of funding for sport, especially in schools. It has been pointed out that teachers in primary school also teach "Physical Education", which posits the lack of qualification and how this translates into the context of children's physical development and their perception of its importance.

Apart from governmental initiative, we can look into other activities and existing best practices. One very successful programme is '*Get better, evolve*', which started as an educational resource for youth in basketball and professional upskilling of coaches. It not only provides the latest methods in training and coaching but it recognises the need for personal development for youth. It is led by a former professional basketball player and with experience in women's NBA in the USA so it's primarily focused on training young girls. According to a report on gender equality issued by the ministry of Labour and Social Politics there should be no gender discrimination requirements that encourage the participation of either genders (Ministry of Labour and Social Politics Report, 2018, 53). This means there are no law and policy frameworks that require gender quotas or certain level of female representation in sport. It is highlighted that sport should be available to everyone for access to equal opportunity. Nevertheless, there are practices that focus on encouraging sport among girls and *Girls Camp* for badminton is another example that exhibits focus on ameliorating sport skills and at the same time stimulates the development of social and team-based skills for girls in age group 14-15. Consequently, the results and resources of the FAMS project will be very valuable for aspiring women coaches and trainers due to the current deficiency of accessible support for professional development in sport.

On another level, the issue of underfunding takes a different perspective when we examine the current standing of sport clubs in Bulgaria. An interview with the chairman of "Slavia, Sofia" basketball sports club (the oldest sports club in Bulgaria founded in 1913) has pointed to the lack of state funding for sport and the unproportional funding for disciplines that bring in medals at the expense of disciplines that require development (Todorov, 2022). The effect of under-financing trickles down to all sport clubs and federations. At the moment, it is easier to fund female teams in a particular sport like basketball and volleyball because it is less expensive than men's. This is showcased by "Slavia, Sofia", where female teams in every age group are formed and trained to participate in national and regional competitions but the financial upkeep of a professional women's team is too great for the capabilities of the club in the present

season (2022/2023). Men's basketball teams at the club are formed at the professional level and a couple of other age groups. Another issue is the availability of training grounds since the number of teams have to schedule training to fit in a limited space and therefore resort to using nearby school facilities. It can be seen from this example, due to low funding, paradoxically women's basketball is stimulated on a wider scale and age groups because it is lower cost.

When it comes to gender-related policies, no specific measures are put in place for stimulating balanced gender representation except as an implied reference to European values and their integration into modern-day society for preventing racial, religious and other forms of discrimination (National Sport Strategy, 2012, 7). This goes to show that the issues embedded in the Bulgarian system for sport and physical culture are overshadowing the gender perspective and at the moment there is no official top-down policy framework for supporting gender equality in decision-making structures. Nevertheless, the primary data research indicates the involvement of women within executive bodies where a somewhat gender correlation exists. Analysis excludes female-centered sports like rhythmic gymnastics and cheerleading where female presence in commissions and women in senior roles is above 90% on average. However, it is important to take into account the consideration whether gender balance is appropriate for all sport organizations without exception. When a particular sport is gender-focused and excels in competitions as is the Bulgarian representation in rhythmic gymnastics, bringing in top-down measures to stimulate balancing out genders can do more harm than good. The general pattern for coaches and members of the executive boards is that previously being professional athletes they pass down traditions of coaching and best practices, contributing to the success of following generations. Therefore, gender-balancing policies should not be applied without some discrimination. Having established the general conditions in which Bulgarian sport has to develop and notably the systemic underfunding for sport in schools, sports clubs and the lack of following a long-term strategy, bringing additional gender-related requirements may weigh down the already brittle system in place. Arguably, educational programmes for promoting the employment of women in decision-making positions are beneficial to the development of governing structures and should be encouraged.

RESULTS

General recommendations range from addressing the problem at the grassroots by giving initiative to schools and encouraging physical education with qualified teachers to a clear long-term programme of education for youth, which is implemented in reality. The second recommendation concerns funding and prioritization of ensuring the availability of local sport facilities that can be used by communities. This can be driven

by municipalities, organizing educational programmes with other stakeholders like sport clubs, NSFs, NGOs, sponsors, and others. Except for ensuring equal access to adequate sport facilities, another priority is bringing the national system for physical education and sport up to date with European best practices that encourage sport on all levels. The execution of FAMS will contribute with educational resources on a larger scale making up for the lack of implementation of a coherent strategy on behalf of formal institutions while their capacity building remains a work in progress. The work on strategic partnerships and elaboration of the NGO sector can be a reflection of the needs of society by highlighting existing issues and providing solutions.

As a result of the carried out research, a part of the surveyed organizations expressed interest in learning the results of the project. The process of engaging different stakeholders and initiating relations for the exchange of knowledge and information will contribute to the success of dissemination at the last stage of FAMS and ultimately its impact.

On a wider level, the activities carried around FAMS in the Bulgarian context are an important step forward to building agency and ensuring discourse on the future development of gender equality. At present, issues are overshadowing the gender perspective but continuous investigation and engagement of stakeholders in the topic are necessary steps forward ensuring gradual progress. Following this the report draws upon the following recommendations:

Policy implications:

- Policy framework based on a long-term vision and increasing state funding free of malpractices and directed towards underfunded areas of professional sport for both men and women.
- Policy framework that recognises the need for improving access and availability to sport facilities on a local level, which addresses the improvement of physical activity among the population.
- Policy framework addressing the need for a balanced development of sport among young boys and girls and a balanced gender representation in sport's governing bodies.

Sport and Educational implications

- Recognition and sponsorship for sport initiatives that work for the physical and personal development of youth and professional athletes.
- Establishment of educational practices in schools that highlight the importance of physical activity and encourage the practice of sport among both girls and boys.

- Assistance and funding for sport coaches and physical educators that can pass on their experience and expertise to the following generation thereby encouraging the development of sport talent and the fostering of a high-quality sport practice on a national level. with a particular sport on female coaches and professionals.

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CROATIA

COMMUNITY OF SPORTS ASSOCIATIONS OF THE CITY OF RIJEKA RIJEKA SPORTS ASSOCIATION

OVERVIEW

Sport has always been a competition of physical abilities and skills between people, and today it has a much broader and more complex role than it did before it became a way of everyday life and culture, a source of positive energy, a form of economic activity of society and, after all, the sport has become a business. In addition, sport certainly has important implications for society as a whole, it shapes young generations and ultimately the whole of society. The equality of women and men is one of the principles of the European Union. European Commission expressed her commitment to fighting the gender gap and its elimination in decision-making for the equality of women and men. In a situation where the majority of sports organizations in Croatia are usually managed by men, the general representation of women in sports is a lower percentage, especially in leading positions. FAMS aims to balance the under-representation of women and mothers in sports, thus pursuing the promotion of employability through sports and encouraging social inclusion and equal opportunities in sports. In particular, FAMS aims to foster gender equality in sports coaching and teaching and attain equal representation and gender sensitivity in decision-making. In spite of some progress, discrepancies still exist in terms of equal opportunities in some areas of sport.

The aim of this study is to investigate what percentage and level of women and mothers are represented in sports. Due to the lack of available childcare and the high cost of childcare, women are prevented from participating in sports as much as men, and this is found at different levels in the sports sector – from professional athletes to leadership positions in sports institutions. In order to promote gender equality in sports, the Facilitating Female Leaders in Sport (FAMS) project aims to produce useful educational resources that empower and prepare women for decision-making roles in sports. In promoting employability through sport, FAMS aims to contribute to gender balance.

The research carried out for the purposes of the project aims to see the actual situation and what are the needs of women in sports between the ages of 18 and 30, and how, based on these conclusions, can contribute to their professional development. FAMS indicates the necessity for gender equality in sports. In the EU, sport is viewed in two ways: as a professional activity and as recreational activity. In both cases, it represents

a large economic sector that is growing and contributes significantly to economic growth and the creation of jobs.

Looking at the good practice in Croatia regarding the representation of women in sports and improving their position, we noticed that there are very few policies in force that would help women in this. Namely, we came across small steps being taken in Croatian sports, and much more is certainly needed to improve the position of women in sports. The importance of such policies is recognized by the Croatian Olympic Committee, which, with the help of the project of equal representation of women in the media, is trying to empower female athletes and also enable greater visibility of women in sports.

In the introductory part of this report, the aim is to provide an overview of the project and the content of the report, as well as to summarize the good practices that have been gathered for the purposes of this project. The following section elaborates on the methods used for data collection and analysis. The context is focused on the policy and regulatory framework. The results of the study are summarized in the last part of this report.

METHODOLOGY

One researcher was responsible for collecting primary data and the other for research analysis. Data were collected by sending emails to the addresses of registered sports associations in Croatia. The goal was to collect as many answers as possible by sending questionnaires to national associations where the FAMS project was also presented, and the emphasis was on collecting the data needed for research in the aforementioned project. Since there was no answer after a week, we had to call each association individually. Given the time limit, we had to narrow down the number of people we will contact. We called 10 major associations to explain what it was all about and to get the answers needed to collect the data in the questionnaire.

Given that some of the comments were incomplete, we subsequently called to clarify certain questions and thus receive more complete answers. Given that the goal was to collect as many responses as possible, questionnaires were also sent to the email addresses of major sports clubs. The answers of individual associations were incomplete due to the fact that some were not familiar with certain spheres of the organization, so they could not answer with certainty. Most of the work here is about the implementation of certain policies related to the representation of women. Their focus was mostly on the implementation of training, while the parts related to structures and

procedures were unknown to them. Of course, this is closely related to the fact that in Croatia, in general, the policy related to the representation of women in sports is not clearly expressed.

The questionnaire was answered by 10 associations/clubs. The number of answers was representative to get an impression of women's positions in sports organizations. Since the goal of the project is to create opportunities for women in sports in terms of their professional opportunities, this research was focused on the part to clearly define what are the current opportunities for women in sports. The results of the research show that there are women in the sports federations who are in decision-making positions and that are offered the opportunity to be employed in paid positions, although there are also women who are invited in volunteering. Respondents were asked about the representation of women employed in the sports community, and they were offered the option of entering this answer. Based on the obtained research results 80% (N=8) of respondents state that there are employed women in their sports community, while 40% (N=4) state that only one woman is employed in their sports community, and 11 women are employed in one sports community as the example of sports federation with the more employed women than man. Few respondents reported having paid and unpaid staff. Associations that have paid female staff have a small number of people who volunteer. The questionnaire was filled out by federations of different sizes and by large clubs that are members of their federations. All respondents include women in the formation of sports activities, but they do not have special policies related to women and their employment. In the executive committees, 50% of respondents have a policy that there must be a minimum quota of 1 woman, but in all associations, women are represented in the executive committees. This shows that gender balance can be achieved if it is implemented in such a way as to promote the equality and representation of women.

CONTEXT

Gender equality is one of the fundamental principles of the *acquis* of the European Union, and ensuring equal opportunities and combating gender discrimination is a general goal and an integral part of all its programs and policies.

Gender equality is one of the highest values of the constitutional order of the Republic of Croatia and is one of the foundations for the interpretation of the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia. It ensures the equal presence of women and men in all areas of public and private life, equal status, equal opportunities to exercise all rights, and equal

benefit from the achieved results. The abilities, wishes and needs of women and men in conditions of equality are equally valued and favored, and the introduction of the principle of gender equality in education, health, public information, social policy, employment, entrepreneurship, decision-making processes, family relations, etc. is defined as the goal of the Republic of Croatia.

Until the adoption of the first Croatian Law on Gender Equality in 2003 (Plan ravnopravnosti spolova, 2021), gender equality was regulated by the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia and international treaties that formed part of the internal legal order of the Republic of Croatia. The Law on Gender Equality establishes the general basis for the protection and promotion of gender equality as a fundamental value of the constitutional order of the Republic of Croatia, and defines and regulates the method of protection against discrimination based on gender and the creation of equal opportunities for women and men, thereby defining and applying the principle of equality put a stronger emphasis. Equality in this context does not mean that men and women will become the same, but that rights, responsibilities and opportunities must not depend on whether a person was born as a man or a woman and that the interests, needs and priorities of individuals regardless of gender are taken into account, while recognizing the differences.

An important role in the position of women in sports is played by the members of the governing boards of sports clubs and coaches who decide on the fate of sportsmen and women in achieving their goals career (Bartoluci, 2009). There are numerous recommendations and guidelines that encourage clubs and national teams, sports committees and the media to eliminate gender discrimination. The most important document in Croatia for sports is the sports law. This Law regulates the system of sports and sports activities, professional jobs in sports, sports competitions, financing of sports, supervision and other matters of importance for sports. Sports activities are activities of special interest to the Republic of Croatia. Sport must be equally accessible to everyone regardless of age, race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, nationality, social position, political or other belief. In the Republic of Croatia, the development of sports is encouraged by the construction and maintenance of sports facilities, the education and training of professional staff, scientific projects in the field of sports, economic measures, stimulating the partnership of governmental and non-governmental organizations in sports and private entrepreneurship, and financing sports with the funds of the state, local units and local (regional) self-government and the City of Zagreb.

The law prescribes several forms of discrimination, namely: direct discrimination and indirect discrimination, harassment and sexual harassment, incitement to discrimination, failure to make reasonable adjustments and segregation. One example of direct discrimination is placing men in leadership positions in sports clubs, associations, federations and other organizations because they are considered better experts in sports than women.

Sociologists claim that it is the culture that sets different expectations for men and women and offers them different opportunities, which consequently leads to their different position in society. Social norms in the society in which we grow up may emphasize equality and equity or on the contrary, teach individuals that men and women are not equal and that one gender has more rights and power than another (Donnelly, 2010).

It is necessary to encourage gender balance and realize the principle of equal opportunities when opening leading positions in this segment to the underrepresented gender, through the development and use of measures to harmonize professional and personal life. There are many challenges and obstacles on the way, but given that gender equality is neither a minority issue nor a marginal issue, but rather an issue that concerns everyone, it is necessary to face them. It is certainly worth noting the current partial mismatch between the legislative frameworks of the EU and the European Commission and the Croatian national legislation in the sphere of gender equality. At the moment, the Croatian legislation does not recognize gender and sex in the same way as the EU legislation does, this presents us with certain dilemmas and open questions.

RESULTS

Coaching positions are another sporting area where women are underrepresented. An estimate based on numerical data in seven EU member states shows that women occupy from 20% to 30% of all sports coaching positions in Europe¹. Women as coaches appear more often in sports of an artistic nature, such as dance, gymnastics, and figure skating, in sports where there is a larger number of female athletes and in those where they compete at the local level. Also, there are more men employed in sports than women, and data from gender statistics databases show that at the European level from 2012 to 2014, the number of women employed in sports actually decreased, while the number of men increased. Federations are instructed to use transparent recruitment procedures to increase the number of female coaches in sports. We have seen that there are no clearly defined campaigns or policies to increase the number of women in sports and

raise awareness focused on women. The Croatian Olympic Committee is the only one that organizes awareness-raising campaigns aimed at women and girls and has established mentoring programs for future coaches.

Croatian sports are dominated by men. 89% of the 35 sports federations have a male president, and only four (11%) federations have a female president (state the source). There is only one woman among the vice presidents. Registered trainers make up 22%, and elite level trainers 13% of all registered trainers. Only 2 federations have a specific written policy for progress towards equality between women and men in their sport, while 1 has gender equality mentioned in its long-term plans. All of them expressed a desire for affirmative measures, but none of the alliances had a gender-aware policy strategy. 2 respondents took measures to employ or increase the number of women in elected and appointed decision-making positions in their sport. 4% took measures to increase the number of female trainers. The Olympic Committee implemented programs to increase the number of women in positions of decision-making, coaching and participation in sports from the grassroots to the elite. Both the Central State Office for Sports and the Olympic Committee implemented activities for the protection and prevention of gender-based violence in sports. Sports is the sector in which traditionally men prevail, and progress in terms of gender-equal opportunities in this area is hindered by social constructs of femininity and masculinity. Generally accepted birth stereotypes affect women's participation in childbirth decisions in sports organizations, but also their own participation in sports activities.

The Croatian Olympic Committee has already 1996 established the Commission for Women in Sports, which has been renamed to the Commission for Gender Equality in Sports in 2015. Its main task is to raise awareness on the role of women in sports, encourage research on women in sports, especially from the health, sociological, educational, economic and societal aspects, as well as to encourage women to get involved in decision-making processes. The Croatian Olympic Committee keeps a database of gender structure in management and expert positions in national sports organizations. The data for 2015 shows the average share of women in management positions in national sports organizations stood at 19.34 %, with the largest share of women among administrative staff (51 %) and the lowest share as presidents and vice presidents of national sports organizations (around 9 %). The share of women in leading positions in the Croatian Olympic Committee was 17 % on average. In comparison, one research dating back to 2007 shows that the share of women in management positions ranged from 10 % in county sports associations, over 11 % in national sports organizations to 15 % in the Croatian Olympic Committee.⁴⁴ A slightly better situation was recorded in management and expert positions in national sports teams, where the share of women

in 2007 was 31 % (European Parliament, 2017). Each EU member state should develop, monitor and revise the national action plan on gender equality in sports in tight cooperation with the main interested parties, which may be part of the national strategies on gender equality and national sports strategies.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Policy framework: In Croatia, there is no clearly expressed policy for gender equality in the sports sector, there is generally a legal act aiming for gender equality in society. In sports, there is an initiative by the Croatian Olympic Committee to promote gender equality in sports. HOO works on the promotion of women's sports, both in women's participation and in managerial and coaching positions. Public authorities should be encouraged to create policies that promote gender equality in the field of sports. Sports organizations should be encouraged to adopt legal frameworks to ensure a place in sports clubs for more women in all positions. The Ministry of Tourism and Sports is working on various campaigns to raise awareness on the topic by creating women's teams. The Croatian Olympic Committee, in cooperation with the Croatian Olympic Academy, works on various projects financed by the European Union that represent women in sports and enable them to participate equally, have better visibility and enable the development of informal education in the field of sports. HOO also provides support to all sports clubs.

Funding for sports movements in Croatia comes from a combination of state and organizational sources, with the government playing a significant role in supporting the development and growth of sports in the country.

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ITALY MVNGO

OVERVIEW

The word sport has always been connected to the civil society since its origins. From the first Olympics in the Greek civilization, the word “sport” describes a social gathering, an opportunity for peace, passion and community pride. Sport is far more than simple entertainment. It drives social and civil messages, athletes are looked up as models of life, resistance, discipline. Massive sport events (modern Olympics, World Cups, International Championships...) have been often involved into the XXth century history, demonstrating how important sport is felt by societies all over the world and, mostly, how social and political messages can be spread more efficiently through the sport medium. One could just think about the Olympics of 1936 organized by the Nazi Germany, when the Afro-American Jesse Owens won four golden medals; Or the left punch raised by other two Afro-Americans, Tommie Smith and John Carlos, during the Olympics of 1968 in Mexico City to ask human rights for black people during the apartheid period; and in more recent times, the current protest of Iran national clubs to support the revolts in the country to gain more civil rights; the quires regarding the Olympics of 2016 in Brasil, and the current World Cup in Qatar, country accused to have trampled on human rights in its realization. To sum up, a sport competition is never only about championships, scores or medals, but is mainly about geopolitical affairs, quires for rights, and national soft-power. Assumed this, how sport can be used to focus the attention on another massive theme that gained more and more importance in our societies: *gender equality*? Is sport equal? Do women and men have the same opportunities? Economically speaking, the sport industry is gender balanced? Are women enough represented among responsibility roles nationally and continentally? Can a woman be a mother and working in the sport field at the same time?

These are only some of the many questions the project FAMS - Fostering FemAle Management leaders in Sports- aims to answer. The project is funded by the European Commision and it aims to investigate the presence of women in positions of responsibility within associations, organizations and sports clubs in Europe, as well as at National Sports Federations.

FAMS aims at balancing the under-representation of women and mothers in sport, thus pursuing the promotion of employability through sport and the encouragement of social inclusion and equal opportunities in sport. FAMS project aims specially to provide

concrete and efficient solutions to support the work balance of mothers and prevent them from abandoning sport. In particular, FAMS aims at fostering gender equality in sports coaching and teaching and attaining equal representation and gender sensitivity in decision-making. This theme is particularly important in Italy where gender gap, in sport in particular, is a tangible reality far to be resolved. According to a Censis (a national statistic research center) report in 2019, even though the number of female athletes has raised of the 11.9% during the last 10 years the gender gap is still present. Among professional athletes, for example, only the 28% are women. Women coaches are the 19.8% of the total, female sport managers are the 15%, and Federation managers the 12.4% (Censis Institute, 2019). (Censis Institute, 2019).

A big gap between the salary of male and female athletes is also notable. This is due to a patriarchal society which thinks that sport is a “man thing” and features such as aggressivity, strength and competitiveness are not part of the female sphere. Also national mass media help to foster this view of the world, leaving less space to female teams and international competitions, underlying the esthetic value of female athletes rather than their sport abilities (Caputo, 2021).

To analyze the current situation of women in sport clubs, associations and leagues (both amateurs and professionals) questionnaires and surveys have been created and sent to sport organizations and female athletes and sport managers. The results and the discussion of them will be shown in this document. In the part titled “Methodology” researchers responsible for collecting data and coordinate the research will be presented and the way data have been collected will be explained. In the part “Context” will be provided gender-related sport policies and regulations in Italy and the structure of the relationship between government, educational and the sport sector at the national level. Eventually, in the “Results” part the overall results of the study will be discussed, summarizing the main findings. Policy implications on existing legal framework and policy will be provided as well as an explanation of which changes should be made in policy making or development of educational programs at the national level to address the aims of the project.

METHODOLOGY

To analyze the real opinion of stakeholders and female athletes about the theme, a database containing 20 of the first and 20 of the later was created. Their numbers, addresses, and e-mail addresses had been looked for surfing in the net, some of them had been taken from the organization’s staff’s networks. As stakeholders we meant sport associations, sport teams, and sport federations at regional and national level.

Once the database had been created, they were contacted by the organization. Some of them answered some others not. This survey will take into account only the answers arrived. A questionnaire was delivered to them to be filled in. The questionnaire, beside identifying the age and the profession of the answerer, asked respondents to express their thoughts about women's representation in sport both in their local, professional context, and in the National Federation of Sport. Every impression had to be justified by evidences or personal experiences. Other questions dealt with women representation in sport, gender balance in sport, women represented among lead positions, and the importance of women in the national policies for sport. Once they delivered their questionnaire filled in, the organization's staff collected all of them and started to compare them.

CONTEXT

According to the study "Women in Sport" of 2018, "only 7% of media representation of sport is dedicated to women's sport, only 30% of IOC/International Olympic Committee commissions are led by women, only 9% of National Olympic Committees are led by women and only 6% of International Sports Federations are chaired by women" (Anesi, 2021). This huge gap is felt as a priority for the EU too. In fact, a basic tenet of the European Union is gender equality. The European Charter of Sport of the Council of Europe defined "sport" as any physical activity with advantages to the body and mind as well as one that fosters socializing and success in contests at all levels in 1992. In particular, the *Women and Sport Resolution* (2002/2280, INL) was adopted in 2003. According to this resolution, female sport is defined as an expression of all women's freedom to dispose of their bodies and occupy public space, regardless of their nationality, age, physical disability, sexual orientation, or religion. In the *Women's Charter and the Strategy for Equality between Men and Women 2010-2015*, the European Commission expressed their intention to address and eliminate the gender gap in decision-making. In the wake of the 2013 EU conference on gender equality in sport, a proposal was adopted addressing the strategic measures to be carried out in the years 2014 to 2020 to advance gender equality in sports (Varriale et al., 2019). The proposals' actions and recommendations call for sport governing bodies and non-governmental organizations to create and carry out national and international action plans for gender equality in sport, supported by consistent and practical actions.

According to EIGE data of 2015, the Women president of a national federation in Europe are the 4% and the ones membering board council, the 15%. According to these data, the 14% is the average of women covering decision-making positions in sport federations in Europe. In Italy the average is less than the 10%, one of the lowest in Europe (EIGE

Intitute,2019). Italy experiments a great gender gap in all the aspects of society and sport is, sadly, not an exception.

According to a World Economic Forum (Wef) study which verifies the distance in terms of opportunities that separates the two sexes and places the countries where resources are distributed more fairly, Italy is at the 85th position. According to Eurostat, 37.3% of Italian women do not work to take care of their children and in Europe one in three works part-time to be able to reconcile the two spheres. A recently published AlmaLaurea report (Italian institute of research on university students and employability) points out that the female employment rate continues to register lower percentages than those of men, a gap that also makes its way into contractual forms and wages, furthermore it states that women accounted for 60% of graduates in the 2020 achieving better performances and final grade but, despite everything, men receive 20% more and occupy higher level professions. Moreover, after the COVID pandemic in November 2021 employment grew by 0.3%, but only for the male component, while the female component remains unchanged almost twenty percentage points less than men, one of the lowest female employment rates in Europe (Massarenti, 2022).

In the sports arena, the sector this study concerns, out of 44 Italian federations, 43 are headed by men. Gender equality in sport is therefore far away in Italy also according to other data: According to Censis, of the 4,708,741 registered athletes in the various federations, just 28% are women. Among the operators they are even less: only 19.8% are female coaches, 15.4% are company managers. According to CONI (Italian National Sport Federation) less than the 10% of leadership positions in sport are covered by women (Censis Institute, 2019).. These data confirm how women are still more likely to be minority in Italy than in other nations, according also to other data on the proportion of women in sport leadership.

At national level, The Gender Quotas Act, was adopted in 2011 in response to new regulations put forth by European nations. This law made significant changes to the composition of corporate boards in terms of women's membership through the implementation of "gender quotas" (quote rosa) within the boards of directors in Italian listed public companies. As a result, since July 2012, the boards of directors of listed companies—those traded on the Stock Exchange—and public companies—those subject to public control and management—must be made up of one-fifth women (with gender quotas on the boards of 30% by 2015 and 40% by 2020) (Varriale and Mazzeo, 2019). This ensures that women have equal access to the boards of directors and auditors. In order to address women's underrepresentation in sport governance in Italy, gender quota regulations are a pertinent action. The precise characteristics mentioned in the regulatory system, which are going to strengthen the foundational elements of the

national regulatory system, namely the Italian Constitution, have relevant implications for sport corporations and general sport organizations as well. Otherwise, there is a significant delay in the Italian regulatory system, especially when some of the distortions in the current rules for professional sports are taken into account. Despite the introduction of laws and numerous regulations, such as the Gender Quotas Act, the legislative body still gives the sport setting insufficient consideration when attempting to provide a clear and complete discipline in the perspective of complete gender equality without any discrimination at all organizational positions. Some specific policies that have been put in place nevertheless fall short of the intended outcome, which is complete equality for women in sport settings in all positions, both as athletes and in positions of high leadership.

Moreover, in Italy there is a law that regulates sports professionalism, the law of 23 March 1981, n. 91, a rule that leads Italian athletes to deal with too much discrimination in terms of investments, prizes and jackpots, visibility and representation. With the same dedication and commitment as men, female athletes are not recognized as professionals and are also severely penalized, as amateurs do not receive a salary, often no health insurance, no pension contribution, no protection in the case of disability, and in the case of maternity, until a few years ago, the problem was exacerbated even more by mere private agreements which provided for the "anti-pregnancy clauses" under penalty of termination (Massarenti, 2022). In the soccer field, for example, considered by many the "Italian National sport" only 2% of athletes are women, and the economic question mirrors this gap too: according to the Agi, until a few years ago a female player could not receive a gross salary of more than 30,658 euros per season (Caputo, 2021). The annual average among the top is around 15 thousand euros, far from the salaries of the men's championships. To help women in sport, currently, however, a fund has been set up thanks to which pregnant athletes receive a sum of money to protect their motherhood. Even if in sip mode it seems that something else is slightly changing on the front, a novelty comes from a current amendment which finally equates female athletes to athletes and which also extends the protections on sports work performance to them; however, it is the Federations that have the freedom to decide on the status of the athletes.

RESULTS

The survey mirrored the data analyzed in the context part. The results depended on the sport stakeholders and athletes were involved. For example, if female participation in dance practice was consistent, in rugby it was less relevant than the male one, and this reflects the stereotypes that are still so strong in the Italian society about the role of

women in society. Both stakeholders and female athletes underlined mostly these following results:

- Women in sport are, generally, well represented. Many women practise sport and are an added value for sport organizations.
- Although women are represented among athletes and their number is relevant, women are not fully represented among legal bodies of sport organizations and federations. Even if women seem to be part of consultive bodies, few respondents confirmed their presence among decision-makers.
- Guidelines indicated gender balance as an objective exist in some (not in every) federations, but in the majority of cases they are not followed by practical actions or charge of responsibility.
- In all the analyzed cases it does not exist a sort of HR body responsible of maintaining gender balance actions during the selection process, neither rules that discipline the percentage of women that must be part of decision-making bodies
- Programs and projects to enhance youth participation in sport exist, as well as programs to support sport professionals. Also campaigns to enhance women participation are, in the majority of cases, implemented. Some campaigns and projects to enlarge women representation among decision-making processes are ongoing with some universities or external bodies as partners.

Contestants think that there is still a lot of work to do in Italy to achieve gender balance policies, especially in sport. In relation to their answers and suggestions it is possible to see some corrective measures that would be helpful to take into account:

- More laws protecting mothers in the sport context with a bigger economic effort to support their pregnancy
- Educational programs in relation to gender equality, to build more aware generations
- More importance gave to female championships among newspapers and TV News
- Push girls to attend sport courses since primary school, fighting prejudices
- A national law on sport that facilitate the careers of women inside the decision-making bodies (Federations, agencies, etc.)
- Make mandatory to have at least one woman in decision making comitee among whatever sport organization
- A law to balance sports' salaries between women and men, and a law to enhance private sponsorships to female sport clubs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. For public authorities

Policy Framework: In Italy, there is not a specific policy framework for gender equality in the sport sector for stakeholders. However, there are several initiatives and organizations working towards promoting gender equality and women's participation in sports in Italy. Some examples include the Italian National Olympic Committee's (CONI) Women and Sport Commission, which works to promote and support the participation of women in sports at all levels, and the Italian Association for Women and Sport (AICS), which works to promote and support the participation of women in sports through education and awareness campaigns.

Regulatory framework: The Italian Constitution guarantees equal rights and opportunities for all stakeholders, regardless of gender. The "Code of Sports Justice", to promote and support the participation of women in sports through education and awareness campaigns, as well as providing support for the creation of women's teams and the development of women's sports.

Funding mechanism: The Ministry of Youth and Sport provides funding for various initiatives aimed at promoting gender equality in sports, such as the "Parità di genere nello sport" (Gender equality in sports) project, which aims to promote and support the participation of women in sports through education and awareness campaigns. The Italian National Olympic Committee (CONI) also provides funding for sports organizations and initiatives through various programs, such as the "Coni Servizi" program, which provides financial and logistical support for sports clubs and organizations, and the "Progetto Sport e Periferie" (Sports and Peripheries project), which aims to promote sports in disadvantaged areas.

2. For sports movement

Policy Framework: Encourage sports organizations to adopt policies that promote gender equality, be encouraged to adopt policies that promote gender equality, such as reserving a certain number of roster spots for women on teams, and promoting women to leadership positions.

Regulatory framework: , the regulatory framework and actions taken by the government, CONI and national governing bodies are aimed at promoting equal opportunities for men and women in sport. i.e. national governing bodies such as the Italian Football Federation (FIGC) and the Italian Cycling Federation (FCI) have also taken steps to promote gender equality in their respective sports.

Funding mechanism: Funding for sport movements in Italy comes from a combination of government, private, and organizational sources, with the government and private sector playing a significant role in supporting the development and growth of sports in the country.

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ROMANIA

NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SPORTS

OVERVIEW

FAMS project (Fostering FemAle Management leaders in SportS) has a real importance both for our university and for Romania, considering the fact that „Gender equality is one of the fundamental rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This was and still is a topical issue.”

In this national report we want to make a general presentation of the situation in Romania, in relation to the topic addressed by the project.

The report includes the following sections:

1.Overview: in this section we present a series of information, data, studies for a theoretical substantiation of the report.

2.Methodology: the section includes information about data collection and data analysis.

3.Context: the 3rd section of the national report includes information about legal framework, gender related sport polices and regulations, literature review on gender and sport in Romania.

4.Results: in this section we find the overall results of the study and the main findings.

5.Conclusions and recommendations: we conclude the national report and offer a series of recommendations.

6.References: we provide a list of references.

„Gender equality, one of the fundamental rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, was and still is a topical issue.”

Gender equality must constitute „an important objective of any democratic society that wishes to recognize equal rights for all its citizens.” Equality of opportunities between women and men is a fundamental right, a common value of the European Union and a necessary condition for achieving the EU objectives of economic growth, employment and greater social cohesion. In the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, Article 21, it is specified: „discrimination of any kind, on grounds such as sex, race, colour, ethnic or social origin, genetic characteristics, language, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, membership of a national minority, wealth, birth, disability, age or sexual orientation is prohibited.”

According to the European Commission, „women in the European Union still earn on average 18% less than men per hour of work. They have fewer resources during working life and face more difficulties in accessing finance during retirement, thus being much more affected than men by all forms of poverty, including in-work poverty.”

In the contemporary period, due to the access of women to management positions more and more often, studying the status of the female manager and its characteristics has become a point of interest for many authors. Therefore, we find this theme illustrated in specialized literature, but less often we can find it addressed to the sports field.

The statistics made in the last decades have identified an upward curve of the presence of women in management positions, but for the middle level of organizations (middle management), while for top management positions, women still hold a very small percentage (Singh Si Vinnicombe , 2004 cited by Curşeu and Boroş in the volume coordinated by Avram and Cooper, 2008). These percentages are often due to existing stereotypes that women have less training and more family responsibility than men. In addition, leadership activities are still considered to be traditionally male, while women are assigned domestic, household, childcare activities.

Studies carried out in Romania in recent years have highlighted the high weight of gender stereotypes in terms of leadership and management activities. The content of the gender stereotype of women in management positions is often centered on the idea that women are weaker, less trained, more emotional and less rational. Therefore, they would be less able to cope with a management function.

As for the sports field, it has been a male-dominated one for a large period of human history. We can think of the Ancient Olympic Games, where women were not allowed to participate. It should also be mentioned that in the first edition of the Modern Olympic Games in 1896, women could not participate. The inclusion of women in the world of sports took place gradually, only in 2012, at the edition of the Summer Olympic Games in London, all participating delegations included women. Also, management structures in the sports field often have men in management positions. For example, the International Olympic Committee has had only men as president since its foundation (1894) until now, and the Romanian Olympic and Sports Committee has had only one women president, in the person of Mrs. Lia Manoliu, a top athlete and outstanding personality in the world of world sports.

In the National Strategy regarding the promotion of equal opportunities and treatment between women and men and the prevention and combating of domestic violence for

the period 2018–2021, developed by the National Agency for Equal Opportunities between women and men, we find some important data:

- In Romania, in 2016, the employment rate (for the 20–64 age group) was 75.0% for men and 57.4% for women; at European Union level it was 77% for men and 65% for women;
- The fields of activity where the female population holds jobs in a higher proportion than that of men are: health and social assistance (79.6%), education (76.4%), financial intermediation (63.9%), hotels and restaurants (59.7%), professional activities - civil servants (56.3%) and trade (55.9%);
- The fields in which men have higher weights are: construction (93.6%), transport and storage (85.2%), production and distribution of electricity and thermal energy, gas and water (83.7%), water distribution, sanitation, waste management, decontamination activities (75.9%), administrative service activities and support service activities (71.9%) and public administration and defense (62.9%);
- In 2016, men were the majority in the following work groups: skilled and assimilated workers: 79.0% compared to only 21.0% women; members of the legislative body, of the executive, senior leaders of the public administration, leaders and senior officials: 66.4% compared to only 33.6% women; skilled workers in agriculture, forestry and fishing: 55.2%, compared to 44.8% women;
- Women predominated, in 2016, in the following occupations: administrative officials without management positions 61.8%; service workers 61.5%; specialists in various fields of activity 56.1%;
- In Romania in 2016, in the political field, the situation looked like this: of the 465 positions of senators and deputies, 81.08% were occupied by men and 18.92% by women; In the Chamber of Deputies, men were represented in a percentage of 79.33%; At the level of the Senate, the representation of men was 85.29%.

In 2011, at the request of the European Commission, the Ministry of Labor carried out a study entitled *The situation of women and men in decision-making positions in the central public administration*. From this study we learn that, in 2011, the first 3 ministries with over 50% women in decision-making positions were: Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Protection - 73.91%, Ministry of Public Finance - 71.14%, Ministry of Justice - 70.97%. On the other hand, the first three ministries with over 50% men in decision-making positions were: the Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sports - 64.71%, the General Secretariat of the Government - 62.50%, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs -

59.62 %. Therefore, in 2011, the current Ministry of Youth and Sports had the highest representation of men in decision-making positions in the central public administration.

Another study that addressed gender equality at the national level is the *Study on Gender Barriers in Romania* conducted by the Lumina Foundation. It covers 3 areas: socio-political, legal and economic and includes a series of recommendations for the 3 mentioned areas. We believe that it would be beneficial to develop such reports and specialized studies for the sports field in our country.

Gender equality can be implemented in an organization through a management that respects international recommendations and a manager who wants to promote this principle. We thus consider the fact that management is an important means in this sense, and the manager is a vital factor in the implementation of gender equality.

METHODOLOGY

Five researchers from National University of Physical Education and Sport from Bucharest were responsible for collecting data for this national report. To achieve this, we applied 3 questionnaires: the first questionnaire on 20 women (potential leaders in sports, between 18 and 30 years old), the second questionnaire on 4 national sports federations, the third questionnaire on 20 stakeholders. The data has been analyzed using: questionnaire survey method, statistical-mathematical method, graphical representation method.

CONTEXT

- Gender-related sport policies and regulations

Taking into account the reference documents in the field of sports issued by the European Institute for Gender Equality (Gender Equality in Sport Guide – Proposals for strategic actions 2014–2020, p. 6) and the research analyzed we see that the percentage of women in management positions in leading sports organizations is still very small (an average of 10%). Also, in the guide named above, the European Institute for Gender Equality suggests 4 priorities for national strategies on gender equality, namely:

- Equal representation in decision-making of both genders;
- Equal representation and gender equality in coaching and in the field of Physical Education and sport;

- The fight against gender-based violence in sport and the role of sport in preventing gender-based violence;
- The fight against gender stereotypes in sport and the role of the media.

A good example is the International Cycling Union (UCI) which has approved a Recruitment Plan for gender equality. As a result, UCI reports that 49% of its staff and over 35% of its managers are female. The European Institute for Gender Equality encourages all organizations to develop and approve such recruitment plans.

The European Union has a series of instruments for the implementation in the member states of measures aimed at achieving gender equality. These instruments "can fall into two categories: directives with a direct impact on the national legislative framework and non-coercive provisions, such as strategies, roadmaps, action plans and specific recommendations."

The official documents regarding the issue investigated by us (those drawn up by the European Institute for Equal Opportunities between Women and Men) show that, at the European level, women occupy on average only 14% of the decision-making positions within the continental confederations of Olympic sports. Also, of the 91 management positions at the level of the 28 confederations analyzed, there was only one president and eight vice-presidents (at the time of publication of the EIGE report, 2015). Therefore, as one moves up the institutional hierarchy, gender disparities increase.

Regarding measures taken at European level regarding the respect of the principle of gender equality in sports organizations, several continental and international federations in Europe, responsible for the promotion and development of sports, have already demonstrated their commitment to gender equality by introducing gender quotas.

In 2015, out of the 28 European confederations, 9 had already adopted a gender quota for the highest decision-making structure. Only one of these failed to meet its established gender quota, as there was no decision-making position held by a woman within it. Four European confederations (of the 19 remaining confederations without gender quotas) had no women in the highest decision-making structures. According to EIGE, the "highest decision-making structures" refer to the president, the board of directors, the executive committee.

At the national level, we found that there are measures taken to respect the principle of gender equality in sports organizations. In Romania, we identified a sports federation,

the Romanian Athletics Federation, which established a women's commission in 2009. The commission includes important names in Romanian athletics, people who can favorably influence the role of women in athletics. The main role of this commission is to encourage women to be actively involved in the development of athletics. Also, among the commission's objectives are those of supporting and promoting women in the activities undertaken by them. Periodically, the commission promotes a woman with an important role in the growth of athletics at the local level.

Another measure identified in Romania regarding the observance of the principle of gender equality consists in the inclusion of provisions regarding this fundamental right in the statute of federations. On the website of the Romanian Basketball Federation (frbaschet.ro) it is mentioned that "F.R.B. is a legal entity under private law, of autonomous public utility, non-governmental, apolitical, not admitting any discrimination based on religion, racism, gender or profession." We consider it important to have such a mention regarding gender discrimination on the federation's website. Also, in the F.R.B. Statute, Cap. I, art. 1, para. 1.3. we encounter another clarification regarding gender discrimination: "Through the activity carried out, FRB aims to adopt a position of political, religious, ethnic and racial neutrality, demonstrating against any form of discrimination, including, but not limited to, gender or sexual orientation discrimination." It is also worth mentioning that F.R.B. it has two vice-presidents, one male and one female. The same situation (one vice-president for men and one for women) is also found at the Romanian Handball Federation.

At the national level, we have not identified sports structures that have adopted gender quotas. In our country, the introduction of gender quotas has been discussed in recent years, but especially for the political field. For example, in 2016, the Senate plenary voted on a legislative proposal that stipulates the mandatory introduction of a 30% gender quota in local election candidacies, for the positions of local and county councilors. The implementation of such quotas also among sports organizations could facilitate the promotion of women in management positions and could help Romania get closer to that "gender balance zone".

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Legislative regulations and organizations with gender equality responsibilities

Ensuring respect for gender equality depends, to a large extent, on the existence of legislative regulations at national and international level in this field. According to EU

experts, "the most notable improvement in terms of women's access to decision-making positions has been registered in countries where legislative measures have been introduced." We therefore consider it necessary that in this subchapter we present the main normative acts that regulate the principle of gender equality.

At the national level, the issue of gender equality is regulated by laws, Government Decisions (H.G.), Ordinances and Government Emergency Ordinances (O.G and O.U.G.), decrees and decisions. In chronological order and by category, we present the regulations regarding the aspects under discussion.

Laws:

1. Law no. 210/1999 regarding paternity leave. This law regulates the granting of paternity leave, in order to ensure the effective participation of the father in the care of the newborn;
2. Law no. 202/2002 on equal opportunities and treatment between women and men (with subsequent amendments and additions). Law 202 is the main law that regulates the issue of gender equality at the national level;
3. Law no. 62/2009 for the approval of the Government's Emergency Ordinance no. 61/2008 on the implementation of the principle of equal treatment between women and men in terms of access to goods and services and the provision of goods and services. It is specified that "any measure or decision of direct or indirect discrimination against people based on gender is considered discriminatory." Sanctions for these contraventions are also specified;
4. Law no. 23/2015 for declaring May 8 the Day of equal opportunities between women and men;
5. Law no. 22/2016 for the declaration of March 8 – Women's Day and November 19 – Men's Day.

-Decisions of the Government (H.G.):

1. H.G. no. 1054/2005 for the approval of the Regulation on the organization and operation of the county commissions and of the municipality of Bucharest in the field of equal opportunities between women and men;

2. H.G. no. 933/2013 for the approval of the Regulation on the organization and operation of the National Commission in the field of equal opportunities between women and men (CONES). One of the mandates of CONES is to verify and evaluate the harmonization of recommendations and regulations at the level of the European Union with national legislative regulations on gender equality.

Government Emergency Ordinances and Ordinances (O.G and O.U.G.):

1. O.G. no. 137/2000 on the prevention and sanctioning of all forms of discrimination (with subsequent amendments and additions);
2. O.U.G. no. 67/2007 on the application of the principle of equal treatment between men and women within the professional social security schemes;
3. O.U.G. no. 61/2008 on the implementation of the principle of equal treatment between women and men in terms of access to goods and services and the provision of goods and services (with subsequent amendments and additions);
4. O.U.G. no. 111/2010 on leave and monthly allowance for raising children.

Decrees, decisions:

1. Decree no. 342/1981 on the ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). It was adopted in 1979 by the United Nations General Assembly, and Romania ratified the Convention in 1982;
2. Decision no. 145 of May 25, 2015 regarding the approval of the nominal composition of the National Commission in the field of equal opportunities between women and men (CONES).

We must mention the fact that, at the national level, the principle of gender equality is present both in the Romanian Constitution and in the Labor Code: in the Romanian Constitution, art. 4 – Unity of the people and equality between citizens, art. 16 – Equality in rights, art. 41 – Work and the social protection of work, and in Law 53/2003 – the Labor Code we find the principle of equal treatment within labor relations.

Law no. 202/2002 on equal opportunities and treatment between women and men (with subsequent amendments and additions) is the main law at the national level that regulates the issue of gender equality. Article 1 of law no. 202/2002 states that this law "regulates the measures for the promotion of equal opportunities and treatment between women and men, in order to eliminate all forms of discrimination based on the criterion of sex, in all spheres of public life in Romania." Article 2 stipulates that "measures to promote equal opportunities and to eliminate discrimination based on sex, apply both in the public and private sectors, in the field of work, health, education, culture, politics, participation in decision-making, supply and access to goods and services, as well as in other areas regulated by special laws."

According to the report Study on gender barriers in Romania, "improving the existing legislative and enforcement framework is urgent." At the same time, the authors of this study believe that "new legal methods are needed to combat gender discrimination and

clear measures to tighten the legislation regarding any form of discrimination, especially that directed at women.”

At the European Union and international level, the issue of gender equality is mainly regulated by treaties, directives, conventions, recommendations, as follows:

Treaties:

1. The Treaty of Rome (1957) – the principle of gender equality has been integrated into the constitutive treaties of the European Union since its foundation. The principle of equal pay for equal work was then introduced;
2. Treaty of Amsterdam (1997) – the principle of non-discrimination based on gender was mentioned. Once the treaty entered into force, the European Union undertook to promote the principle of gender equality.

Directives:

1. Directive 79/1978/EEC regarding the progressive implementation of the principle of equal treatment between women and men in the field of social security;
2. Directive 85/1992/EEC on the introduction of measures to encourage the improvement of health and safety at work for pregnant workers and workers who have recently given birth or who are breastfeeding;
3. Directive 113/2004/EEC on the implementation of the principle of equal treatment between women and men in terms of access and provision of goods and services;
4. Directive 54/2006/EEC on the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities and treatment between women and men in the field of employment;
5. Directive 18/2010/EU implementing the revised framework agreement on parental leave and repealing Directive 96/34/EC;
6. Directive 41/2010/EC on the application of the principle of equal treatment between self-employed men and women, including agricultural ones, as well as the protection of self-employed women during pregnancy and maternity, which repeals Directive 86/613/EEC of the Council.

Conventions:

1. Convention 100/1951 on equal pay;
2. Convention 111/1958 on discrimination in the field of employment and the exercise of the profession;
3. Convention 117/1962 on social policy;
4. Convention 122/1964 on employment policy;
5. Convention 183/2000 on maternity protection.

Recommendations:

1. Recommendation 90/1951 regarding equal remuneration;
2. Recommendation 165/1981 regarding workers with family responsibilities;
3. Recommendation 2/1985 regarding legal protection against sex discrimination;
4. Recommendation 1/1989 regarding support measures following divorce;
5. Recommendation 4/1990 regarding the elimination of sexist language;
6. Recommendation 9/1991 regarding emergency measures in the family field;
7. Recommendation 1229/1994 regarding equal rights between women and men;
8. Recommendation 1261/1995 regarding the situation of immigrant women in Europe;
9. Recommendation 1269/1995 of the Parliamentary Assembly regarding the achievement of real progress in the field of women's rights;
10. Recommendation 5/1996 regarding the reconciliation of professional life with family life;
11. Recommendation 1321/1997 regarding the improvement of the situation of women in rural society;
12. Recommendation 1/1998 regarding family mediation;
13. Recommendation 1413/1999 regarding equal representation in political life;
14. Recommendation 3/2003 regarding the balanced participation of women and men in the decision-making process in political and public life;

Other regulations:

1. Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) – art. 2 of the Declaration states: "Every person can avail himself of all the rights and freedoms proclaimed in this Declaration without any distinction, such as, for example, race, color, sex, language, religion, political opinion or any other opinion, of national or social origin, wealth, birth or any other circumstances";
2. The UN Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women – CEDAW 1981 (Romania ratified the Convention on January 7, 1982);
3. The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU (2000) – prohibits discrimination based on sex;
4. Resolution 23/2000 on future initiatives and actions to implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action;
5. European Parliament Resolution 2057/2006 on women in international politics;
6. The Istanbul Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence – international treaty adopted by the Council of Europe in 2011 (Romania signed the Istanbul Convention in June 2014, the Convention entering into force in September 2016).

The implementation of all the regulations adopted in relation to gender equality, in all fields (education, social field, work, etc.), is carried out by means of organizational structures that we will talk about next.

The main national and European organizations that ensure compliance with the principle of gender equality are:

Nationally:

- *National Agency for Equal Opportunities between Women and Men (ANES);* In law 202/2002, the National Agency for Equal Opportunities between Women and Men is presented as: "a specialized body of the central public administration, with legal personality, subordinate to the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Protection and the Elderly, which promotes the principle of equality of chances and treatment between women and men in order to eliminate all forms of discrimination based on the criterion of sex, in all national policies and programs, and which exercises the functions of strategy, regulation, representation and state authority in the field of family violence, with attributions in the development, coordination and application of Government strategies and policies in the field of family violence."

ANES develops national strategies regarding the promotion of equal opportunities and treatment between women and men and the prevention and combating of domestic violence;

- *The National Commission in the field of equal opportunities between women and men (CONES)* - "ensures the coordination of the activity of the county commissions and the municipality of Bucharest in the field of equal opportunities between women and men";
- *The County Commissions in the field of equal opportunities between women and men (COJES)*, respectively the Commission of the Municipality of Bucharest in the field of equal opportunities between women and men.

At European level:

- In December 2006, the European Parliament and the Council decided to establish the *European Institute for Gender Equality - The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE)* - is an autonomous body of the European Union, established to contribute to the consolidation and promotion of gender equality, including integration the gender dimension in all EU policies and the

resulting national policies, as well as the fight against sex-based discrimination and the awareness of EU citizens about gender equality.

Literature review on gender and sport in Romania

At the national level, projects were carried out with the theme of gender equality in sports. An example is the project *Sport as a tool to combat gender inequality*, a project coordinated by the National Research Institute for Sport and financed by the European Union through the ERASMUS+ Program, lasting two years, starting in 2016. *Sport as a tool to combat gender inequality of gender inequality* aims to sensitize and train young coaches on the issue of gender equality and provide means to combat existing gender stereotypes in sports. As part of this project, an awareness-raising Guide for young sports professionals was developed. From this guide we learn that women are less involved in sports activities compared to men. 74% of men between the ages of 15 and 24 practice a sporting activity or participate in a sports game at least once a week, compared to only 55% of women in the same age group (according to Eurobarometer 2014). Also from this guide we learn that based on figures from 7 EU member states, it is estimated that only 20% - 30% of all coaches in Europe are women, and at the elite level, the number of female coaches is very low, they usually occupying second or assistant coaching positions, thus supporting male coaches.

Another project at the national level is *ProCALL - Increasing the professional level of female football coaches*, a project coordinated by the National University of Physical Education and Sport. The ProCALL project aims to increase the number of UEFA qualified female coaches in the countries participating in the project, as across Europe only 65 women hold a UEFA Pro license compared to 9,387 men.

The National Agency for Equality between Women and Men has completed a number of projects, but these have generally focused on issues related to domestic violence, not the sports field. Two such projects are: *Project START - A Quality Safe Life*, *Project National Information and Public Awareness Campaign on Family Violence*. Also, the Ministry of Labor and Social Justice completed a project aimed at gender equality, a project called *Inclusion and equal opportunities post-2020*.

We believe that more research projects are needed to address the issue of gender equality in sports, at the national level, as gender equality is often considered an indicator for a developed society.

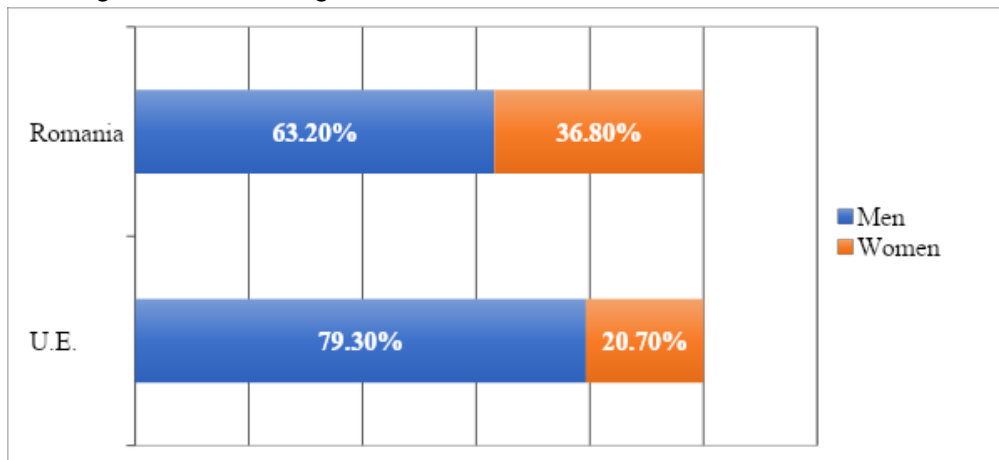
A comparative analysis on women's participation in decision-making in various fields, in Romania

The analysis addressed in this chapter aimed at carrying out a comparative analysis between the field of sports and other fields regarding the participation of women in decision-making, at the national level.

We considered this analysis necessary because "participation in decision-making is one of the areas in which Romania scores very low in terms of equal opportunities between women and men (according to EIGE 2017)." Also, according to the *Strategic Commitment for equal opportunities between women and men 2016-2019*, the European Union considers the promotion of equality between women and men in the decision-making process a priority.

First of all, we wanted to comparatively analyze the participation of women in decision-making, in the sports field, at the national level and at the level of the European Union.

Regarding the representation of women in the decision-making structures of the National Olympic Committees, we note that in Romania their proportion is 36.80%, while the EU average is 20.70% (Fig.1).



Data source: EIGE

Fig.1 The proportion of female members in the decision-making structures of the National Olympic Committees, at the level of Romania compared to the EU average (2019)

In the decision-making structures of the national sports federations, for the Olympic sports with the highest funding, our country again has a better representation of women compared to the EU average. (Table 1).

Table 1. Representation of women in the decision-making structures of national sports federations, for the Olympic sports with the highest funding, compared to the EU average (2018)

Member in the highest decision-making structure	Women	Men
Romania	20,9%	79,1%
UE	17,8%	82,2%
Chief Executive		
Romania	40%	60%
UE	23,6%	76,4%

Data source: EIGE

The situation is slightly different for the representation of women in the decision-making structures of national sports federations, for the most popular Olympic sports. For the position of member in the highest decision-making structure, Romania has a lower representation of women than the EU average, while for the position of chief executive, our country has a higher score, but only by 0.3 percentage points (Table 2).

Table 2. Representation of women in the decision-making structures of national sports federations, for the most popular Olympic sports, compared to the EU 28 average (2018)

Member in the highest decision-making structure	Women	Men
Romania	12,2%	87,8%
UE	16,1%	83,9%
Chief Executive		
Romania	20%	80%
UE	19,7%	80,3%

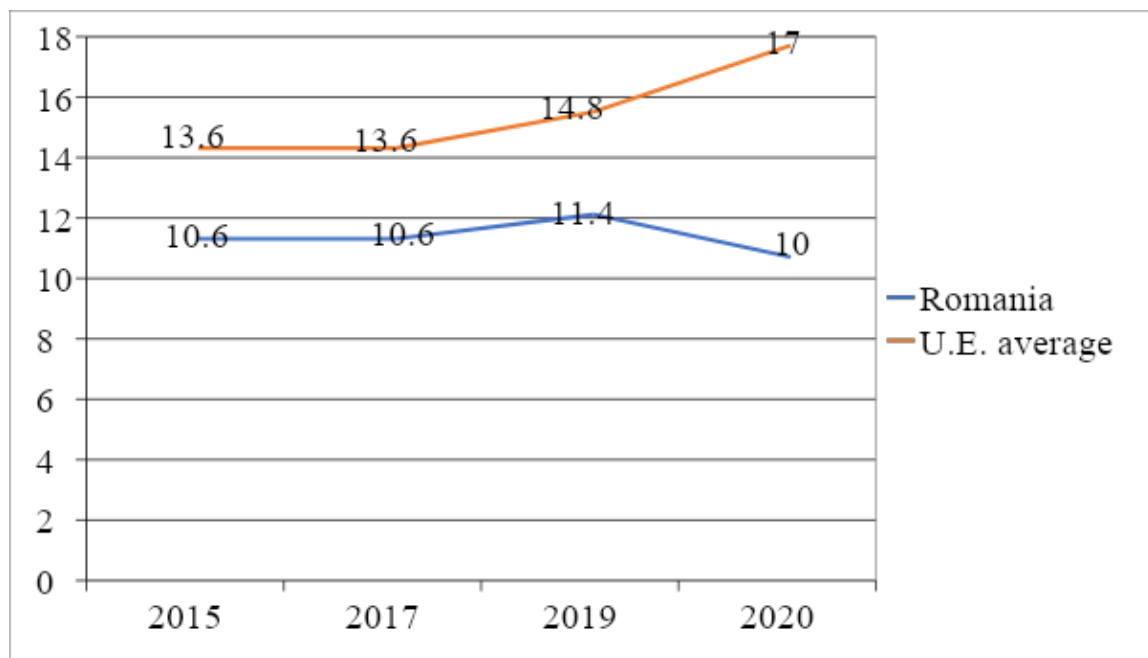
Data source: EIGE

Furthermore, analyzing the data made available by EIGE regarding the members of the highest decision-making structures of the national Olympic sports organizations, we notice that women were underrepresented in our country in all the analyzed periods (Table 3). We also note that Romania has a representation below the European average in these decision-making structures (Fig.2). For example, in 2020, women had a 10% representation in our country, the EU average. being 17%.

Table 3. Members of the highest decision-making structures of national Olympic sports organizations

	Romania		U.E. average	
	Women %	Men %	Women %	Men %
2020	10	90	17	83
2019	11,4	88,6	14,8	85,2
2017	10,6	89,4	13,6	86,4
2015	10,6	89,4	13,6	86,4

Data source: EIGE



Data source: EIGE

Fig.2 Representation of women in the highest decision-making structures of national Olympic sports organizations (%)

Although Romania has a participation of women in decision-making, in the field of sports, close to the average registered at the EU level, we must note that the representation of women in these decision-making structures is still far from that of men, and improvements are still needed in order to reach a gender balance regarding participation in the decision.

Next, we carried out a comparative analysis between the field of sports and 6 other fields regarding the participation of women in decision-making, at the national level. We took over and analyzed the statistical data produced by the European Institute for Gender

Equality in 7 fields: sport, science and research, social dialogue, business and finance, justice, public administration, politics (Table 4).

Table 4. Women's participation in decision-making in 7 fields, at the national level

Area	Women	Men
1. Sports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members in the decision-making structures of COSR (2019) Members in the highest decision-making structures of the national sports federations for the Olympic sports with the highest funding (2018) Members in the decision-making structures of the national sports federations for the most popular Olympic sports (2018) 	36,80%	63,20%
2. Science and research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members in the highest decision-making structures of the academies of science in Romania (2019) Members in decision-making structures of research funding organizations (2019) 	0%	100%
3. Social Dialogue <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members in the highest decision-making structure in employee organizations (2018) Members in the highest decision-making structure in employers' organizations (2018) 	14,7%	85,3%
4. Business and Finance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proportion among non-executive directors of large listed companies (2019) Proportion among chief executive officers (CEOs) of large listed companies (2019) 	14,4%	85,6%
5. Justice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Judges at the Supreme Court (2019) 	41,9%	58,1%
6. Public Administration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Representation in the central public administration (2018) 	41,7%	58,3%
7. Politics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Representation in Parliament (2019) Chamber of Deputies and Senate (2019) Representation in the Government (2019) 	19,6%	80,4%
	14%	86%
	26,3%	73,7%

Data source: EIGE

We observe that the highest representation of women is registered in the fields of justice and public administration. In the field of science and research, women are represented in the decision-making structures of research funding organizations by a percentage of 44.9%, but they are not present in the highest decision-making structures of the science academies in Romania. The fields of sport and politics record a weaker participation of women in decision-making than the fields of justice and public administration, but better than fields such as business and finance or social dialogue. Analyzing the data, the weakest representation of women in terms of participation in decision-making is recorded in the field of business and finance. Also, the social dialogue field has a weak participation of women in the decision.

Although the participation of women in decision-making is an area in which Romania registers very low scores, we still observe the fact that in the field of sports we have a representation of female persons in decision-making close to the average registered at the EU level. We also note that at the national level the sports field has a stronger representation of women in decision-making than other fields, but improvements are still needed in certain areas.

Promoting gender equality in the decision-making process requires "measures to combat the excessive representation of men in decision-making positions within research organizations, as well as measures to promote gender balance in political decision-making and in public life, including in the field of sports." We believe that reaching a gender balance in the decision-making process must represent an important objective for sports organizations in our country.

RESULTS

We applied 3 questionnaires: the first questionnaire on 20 women (potential leaders in sports, between 18 and 30 years old), the second questionnaire on 4 national sports federations, the third questionnaire on 20 stakeholders.

Regarding the first questionnaire (pre-assessment on women, potential leaders in sports) we obtained the following results:

Question 1: Are you involved in the work of sport organization?

- 10 (50%) respondents said yes and 10 (50%) answered no.

Question 2: According to your knowledge, are women formally represented within the organization or National Sport Federation (e.g. via a consultative body)?

- 16 (80%) respondents said yes and 4 (20%) answered no.

Question 3: Does the organization or National Sport Federation have a formal (written) policy that outlines objectives and specific actions aimed at involving women in its policy processes?

- 6 (30%) respondents said yes and 14 (70%) answered no.

Question 4: Does the organization or National Sport Federation have a formal (written) policy that outlines objectives and specific actions aimed at encouraging the equal access to representation for women and men in all stages of the decision-making process?

- 8 (40%) respondents said yes and 12 (60%) answered no.

Question 5: Is the multi-annual policy plan of organization or National Sport Federation adopted in consultation with women?

- 10 (50%) respondents said yes and 10 (50%) answered no.

Question 6: Does the organization or National Sport Federation implement gender sensitive procedures for identifying candidates for positions awarded as part of human resources policies?

- 7 (35%) respondents said yes and 13 (65%) answered no.

Question 7: Does the organization or National Sport Federation have a gender balanced representation of women and men on the nomination committee seeking candidates for decision-making positions?

- 6 (30%) respondents said yes and 14 (70%) answered no.

Question 8: Does the organization or National Sport Federation implement gender sensitive procedures for identifying candidates for positions awarded as part of electoral procedures?

- 6 (30%) respondents said yes and 14 (70%) answered no.

Question 9: Does the organization or NSF conduct standard education program for active junior athletes?

- 11 (58,8%) respondents said yes and 9 (41,2%) answered no.

Question 10: Does organization or NSF conduct education program for professional athletes?

- 9 (45%) respondents said yes and 11 (55%) answered no.

Question 11: Does the organization or NSF conduct specific program for female athletes?

- 6 (30%) respondents said yes and 14 (70%) answered no.

*Regarding the **second questionnaire (on national sports federations)** we obtained the following results:*

Question 1: Are women involved in the work of sport organization?

- 4 (100%) respondents said yes and 0 (0%) answered no.

Question 2: Are women formally represented within the organization or National Sport Federation (e.g. via a consultative body)?

- 3 (75%) respondents said yes and 1 (25%) answered no.

Question 3: Does the National Sport Federation have a formal (written) policy that outlines objectives and specific actions aimed at involving women in its policy processes?

- 1 (25%) respondent said yes and 3 (75%) answered no.

Question 4: Does the organization or National Sport Federation have a formal (written) policy that outlines objectives and specific actions aimed at encouraging the equal access to representation for women and men in all stages of the decision- making process?

- 0 (0%) respondents said yes and 4 (100%) answered no.

Question 5: Is the multi-annual policy plan of organization or National Sport Federation adopted in consultation with women?

- 1 (25%) respondent said yes and 3 (75%) answered no.

Question 6: Does the organization or National Sport Federation implement gender sensitive procedures for identifying candidates for positions awarded as part of human resources policies?

- 0 (0%) respondents said yes and 4 (100%) answered no.

Question 7: Does the organization or National Sport Federation have a gender balanced representation of women and men on the nomination committee seeking candidates for decision-making positions?

- 1 (25%) respondents said yes and 3 (75%) answered no.

Question 8: Does the organization or National Sport Federation implement gender sensitive procedures for identifying candidates for positions awarded as part of electoral procedures?

- 1 (25%) respondents said yes and 3 (75%) answered no.

Question 9: Does the organization or NSF conduct standard education program for active junior athletes?

- 4 (100%) respondents said yes and 0 (0%) answered no.

Question 10: Does organization or NSF conduct education program for professional athletes?

- 3 (75%) respondents said yes and 1 (25%) answered no.

Question 11: Does the organization or NSF conduct specific program for female athletes?

- 2 (50%) respondent said yes and 2 (50%) answered no.

Other information obtained from national sports federations:

Romanian Basketball Federation

Official name: Romanian Basketball Federation

Official acronym: FRB

Number of affiliated clubs: 309

Number of affiliated athletes: 34.385 – total number of registered athletes in the history of the federation, 6000 – athletes still active

Percentage of women athletes: 11.000 – total number of registered women athletes in the history of the federation, 1860 – women athletes still active

Number of paid employees: 34

Percentage of women employees: 15 / 44%

Number of unpaid personnel: 0

Percentage of women engaged as unpaid personnel: 0

Percentage of women involved in governing board (general assembly, board):

Board of Directors – out of 15 members 4 are women (26%)

Romanian Handball Federation

Official name: Romanian Handball Federation

Official acronym: FRH

Number of affiliated clubs: 255

Number of paid employees: 26

Percentage of women employees: 60%

Number of unpaid personnel: 0

Percentage of women engaged as unpaid personnel: 0

Percentage of women involved in governing board (general assembly, board):

Board of Directors – 1 out of 17 (5,88%)

Percentage of women involved in work of commissions: 35%

Romanian Kayak Canoe Federation

Official name: Romanian Kayak Canoe Federation

Official acronym: FR Kayak Canoe

Number of affiliated clubs: 57

Number of affiliated athletes: 611

Percentage of women athletes 32.2%

Number of paid employees: 14

Percentage of women employees: 42,9%

Number of unpaid personnel: -

Percentage of women engaged as unpaid personnel: -

Percentage of women involved in governing board (general assembly, board): 1 woman in the Federal office

Percentage of women involved in work of commissions: 1 woman in the disciplinary committee

Romanian Chess Federation

Official name: Romanian Chess Federation

Official acronym: FRȘah

Number of affiliated clubs: 260

Number of affiliated athletes: 19783

Percentage of women athletes 22.22%

Number of paid employees: 5

Percentage of women employees: 40%

Number of unpaid personnel: 110

Percentage of women engaged as unpaid personnel: 22%

Percentage of women involved in governing board (general assembly, board): 0%

Percentage of women involved in work of commissions: 20%

*Regarding the **third questionnaire** (on 20 stakeholders) we obtained the following results:*

Question 1: According to your knowledge, are women formally represented within the organization or National Sport Federation (e.g. via a consultative body)?

- 18 (90%) respondents said yes and 2 (10%) answered no.

Question 2: Does the organization or National Sport Federation have a formal (written) policy that outlines objectives and specific actions aimed at involving women in its policy processes?

- 12 (60%) respondents said yes and 8 (40%) answered no.

Question 3: Does the organization or National Sport Federation have a formal (written) policy that outlines objectives and specific actions aimed at encouraging the equal access to representation for women and men in all stages of the decision-making process?

- 11 (55%) respondents said yes and 9 (45%) answered no.

Question 4: Is the multi-annual policy plan of organization or National Sport Federation adopted in consultation with women?

- 18 (90%) respondents said yes and 2 (10%) answered no.

Question 5: Does the organization or National Sport Federation implement gender sensitive procedures for identifying candidates for positions awarded as part of human resources policies?

- 11 (55%) respondents said yes and 9 (45%) answered no.

Question 6: Does the organization or National Sport Federation have a gender balanced representation of women and men on the nomination committee seeking candidates for decision-making positions?

- 13 (65%) respondents said yes and 7 (35%) answered no.

Question 7: Does the organization or National Sport Federation implement gender sensitive procedures for identifying candidates for positions awarded as part of electoral procedures?

- 14 (70%) respondents said yes and 6 (30%) answered no.

Question 8: Does the organization or NSF conduct standard education program for active junior athletes?

- 18 (90%) respondents said yes and 2 (10%) answered no.

Question 9: Does organization or NSF conduct education program for professional athletes?

- 15 (75%) respondents said yes and 5 (25%) answered no.

Question 10: Does the organization or NSF conduct specific program for female athletes?

- 15 (75%) respondents said yes and 5 (25%) answered no.

In this questionnaire, one of the respondents also gave us an example. In the Romanian Volleyball Federation, we have only 2 women in the board of directors and only one woman in the coaching committee. There are no women in: the referees' commission, the disciplinary commission, the appeal commission, the match observation commission

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Gender equality is a fundamental right, a common value of the European Union and must be an objective of any democratic society that wants to ensure equal rights for all its citizens.

With considerable efforts, women have made remarkable progress and have become increasingly present in the sports phenomenon, both as practitioners and in various leadership positions. Compared to men, however, they are still underrepresented in leadership positions in sports organizations.

Both at the national and at the European level, a series of projects and strategies aimed at gender equality in sport are being implemented, a fact that shows the importance given to this issue.

Recommendations:

- Imposing gender quotas in national structures, as is already happening in various sports organizations at European level and beyond;
- Promoting gender equality in all sports organizations;
- Creating real opportunities for women to reach a level of equality;
- Increasing the level of information among the population regarding gender discrimination; eradication of prejudices, correct assessment of women's abilities;

- Elaboration and implementation of a plan for gender equality in each sports organization;
- The inclusion of provisions in the regulations and statutes of sports organizations that include positive actions in favor of the underrepresented gender at the decision-making level;
- Organization of information meetings, seminars, courses on the legal framework and national and international organizations in the field of gender equality;
- Designation of a person within the organization to be responsible for monitoring compliance with gender equality within the company;
- Hiring or collaborating with an expert in the field of gender equality;
- The introduction of women's committees or commissions within the national federations;
- The introduction in national sports federations of two positions of vice-president: a female vice-president who will primarily deal with the activity of women's teams and championships and a male vice-president for the activity of athletes and men's teams subordinated to the federation;
- Flexible work schedule to reconcile professional life with family life.

Considering the data presented above, we consider the fact that addressing the theme of gender equality in the structures and management functions in sports in our country is of real importance. It is necessary to harmonize what is happening in Romania related to the issue of gender equality with the requirements and recommendations at the European Union level if we want to improve the representation of women in management positions, as well as the status of women managers in the sports field.

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SERBIA FACULTY OF SPORT University Union – Nikola Tesla

OVERVIEW

To stimulate broader discussion and both policy and regulatory interventions, the project Fostering Female Management Leaders in Sport (FAMS) aimed to articulate specific educational needs and target a group of women and empower them to strengthen their capacities to stay in the sport after their athlete's career. This will contribute to larger, gender equality in and through sports stimulating needed democratization processes within the sport movement. Therefore, this project represents a solid foundation for facilitating the development of tailored educational programs and empowering existing stakeholders to engage with similar projects and activities toward the implementation of gender mainstreaming policies.

This report provides an overview of the representation of women in sports within the sports movement in Serbia. The women in sports in Serbia are experiencing multi-level challenges, ranging from unequal access to sport-related activities, dual-career system, and social and childcare support to representation within governing bodies and decision-making positions. The set of recommendations has been incorporated in this report for both public and sports stakeholders. The data collection began on September 15th, 2022 and lasted 30 days with four field researchers being engaged in collecting both primary and secondary data. Following this phase, the primary research started with preparing a report.

This report is structured within four sections. The introduction part aims to provide an overview of the project and the content of the report. The following section elaborates on the methods used for gathering and analyzing data. The context is focused on policy and regulatory framework. The final section presents the results of the study and discusses possible policy implications.

METHODOLOGY

For this study, the primary researcher coordinated the process, while the other five were responsible for collecting primary and secondary data. For this report, a mixed-method approach is employed using a multistage approach. The analysis of documents provided a sound context of a state-of-the-art foundation for shaping three-layer



questionnaires for athletes, stakeholders for local sports organizations (clubs) and NSFs. According to Corbin and Strauss (2008), document analysis enables a procedure for examining documents to understand their meaning within a particular context. Official documents such as strategies and laws served to outline political landmarks and policy and regulatory frameworks. The collection of documents followed preliminary reading and interpretation of the content (Bowen 2009). The literature review confirmed the level of the research interest in gender studies and provided an avenue for in-depth studies.

The theoretical framework was based on institutional work, as institutions and institutional development shape individual development, especially within the closed structure of the sports movement (Begović 2021). The institutional work is particularly applicable to organizational studies and represents an adequate frame to study the level of influence within the sport system domains (Lawrence et al, 2011).

The data we collected was in support of the Faculty of Sport and University Union – Nikola Tesla research and administrative personnel. The meetings with the NSFs were conducted in the following manner. Firstly the email followed by a meeting explaining the scope of the FAMS project. Since the lack of responses was noted after seven days, a follow-up consultation was held. As per project deliverables and following Research Committee meetings, a total number of 20 questionnaires per group were sent. The rationale behind the design of questionnaires was based on the importance to get an understanding of current dynamics within the sports movement from different actors.

CONTEXT

There is limited information on gender and sports research, and the specific topic has not deserved in-depth academic interest in Serbia and the wider region of the Western Balkans (Cooky et al., 2014; Cooky et al., 2018; Begović, 2022a). Elsewhere in the region, it is noted that external pressures such as COVID-19 led to a decrease in participation that primarily affected the female population (Begović, 2022b). According to Jevtić (2022), the contemporary sports movement in Serbia is unconsolidated, meaning that National Sports Federations are exercising significant autonomy within two major umbrella sports organizations – the Olympic Committee of Serbia (OKS) and the Sports Association of Serbia (SSS). Given this institutional regime, the research approach was focused on understanding the dynamics within small, medium and large NSFs including their governing bodies, sports administrators and female athletes. The Sports Development Strategy 2014–2018 with the Action Plan (Government of Serbia 2015)

recognized the need to improve the position of women in sports in the Serbian military. The Law on Sport (Government of Serbia 2016) doesn't have any provision regarding gender equality, gender mainstreaming and gender-based norms.

The work of Mijatov and Radenović (2021) provides a glimpse of the overall gender inequality both in general and within a sport-related domain. Out of the total population, 51.3% are women, in the Serbian Parliament, 32.7% are women; women occupy 4.5% of positions of head of municipalities, while some 31.7% of women are entrepreneurs. At higher institutions, women teaching staff represent 47%. In comparison, at the Serbian Association of Physical Education and Sport Teachers women are presented by 14% and in the administrative roles within Serbian School Sport Federation the percentage is similar (12%).

One of the leading nonexecutive authorities and actors in gender mainstreaming is the Women in Sport Commission within the OKS. According to Juhas (2016), the Commission has an important role in articulating issues surrounding women's participation in sports. The Commission in 2011 found that 11% of women actively participated in organized physical activity as athletes, 6% were engaged as coaches and 8% were the governing bodies and decision-making positions. In 2018, the Women in Sport Commission presented another research where data remained pretty much the same. Out of 40, NSFs approached, the full data from 28 have been collected, while the other 12 provided partial data. The data targeted:

- the gender composition of governing boards and managing positions within the NSFs and clubs;
- the number of permanent employees within the NSFs;
- their age and educational background;
- the number of registered clubs and athletes;
- licensed coaches and their educational background.

Interestingly out of the total 189 paid positions women occupied some 84 (44%). However, these results indicated a larger picture that the majority of these positions are located at the lower-level administration. To contribute to the previous notion, within 40 NSFs, in 12.5% of them are women acting as presidents. The posts associated with International Sports Federation (ISF) indicate a similar imbalance; from 79 international posts, 18% of women representing Serbia or come from Serbia. Gender imparity is not present only off-the-court, as athletes, women comprised 17% of active athletes, while in several categorized athletes refereeing to their sporting success indicating the quantity doesn't necessarily mean quality; some 38% of women are categorized either

as merit athlete on an international or national level. Out of 8287 coaches, 521 (3%) are women.

The Law on Gender Equality (Parliament of Serbia 2021) within articles 45 and 46 laid a foundation for reaching gender-balanced sports governing bodies. More precisely, gender equality in the field of sports includes (Art. 45):

- promoting sports, recreation and healthy lifestyles that maintain and improve the health of women and men, girls and boys;
- ensuring a balanced representation of the sexes and equal opportunities for engaging in sports activities, as well as implementing the fertility procedure when financing these activities.

Special measures implemented in the field of sports include (Art. 46):

- support for sports programs financed from public funds that contribute to the promotion of gender equality and the deconstruction of gender stereotypes;
- establishment of a balanced representation of the sexes in the management and supervision bodies in the field of sports that these bodies have;
- ensuring a balanced representation of the sexes in positions in organizations in the field of sports.

The Anti-Discrimination Law (Parliament of Serbia 2021) enables equal access to public services and facilitates including sport-related services and sports facilities (Art. 17) along with imperative norms in tackling gender-based discriminatory actions (Art. 20).

Although the Ministry of Education is responsible for developing political landmarks in education, regulatory and policy frameworks, the monitoring of the quality and efficiency of the programs are not in place, especially for programs originating outside of the public domain or set up as nonformal education. That being said, all service providers in education or educational institutions have to meet curricula and education standards from the content to the administration and management side. The formal system recognized three levels of higher education programs:

- Undergraduate studies (including vocational or specialist programs);
- Master studies (including vocational or specialist programs);
- Doctoral studies.

The Strategy for the Development of Education in the Republic of Serbia 2030 (Government of Serbia 2021) doesn't have any specific provision for gender mainstreaming in sports or guidelines for the development of target nonformal or formal programs in sport specific. However, there is an aim for supporting the work of Career

guidance and counseling (KViS) with standards that would ensure lifelong learning within different qualifications and mobility throughout the labor market. Non-formal and informal learning, although legally regulated by the Law on the National Qualification Framework (Parliament of Serbia 2021), doesn't provide quality assurance applied to the non-formal learning activities or application of the same to the labor market. In addition, the Law on Foundations of Education System (Parliament of Serbia 2021) facilitates an opportunity for sport-related organizations and service providers in education to establish a partnership. Also, this partnership could include public educational institutions through the Law on Public-Private Partnership and Concessions (Parliament of Serbia 2016). The further foundation for sport-related and specific educational activities provides Law on Fundamentals of Education System, where the specific emphasis is given to the lifelong learning approach as a sort of permanent individual development and equipped with a variety of social and civic competencies as a part of broader democratization processes.

RESULTS

The provided context reflects the need for revision of regulations and policy in a broader gender equality domain. The future sport policy and politics should be crafted taking into account gender mainstreaming policies. Moreover, sport-specific policies and legislations on needs refinement, especially towards setting up a more appropriate framework to tackle a variety of challenges from gender stereotypes and gender-based violence from one side, to increase the opportunities for development through active participation and representation in governing bodies and decision-making positions and processes, on the other side. That being said, towards a gender-balanced approach in governing bodies, public authorities jointly with the sports movements should take appropriate measures through the revision of the Law on Sport stipulating a quota system to be achieved within a certain period. Although there are some general sport-related gender provisions within the existing regulatory framework, the application of the same is not followed by concrete measures and actions. The underrepresentation of women requires in-depth research on challenges, barriers and opportunities. The research in the region confirms that closed and exclusive sports governing bodies and decision-making positions led to several discriminatory actions mostly toward women (Begović, 2021)

According to the current regulatory framework, the NSFs are the major actors in developing the sport in Serbia, facilitating the implementation of strategic orientation in the field of sport and physical activity. The Law defines the structure of the sports

organization putting into place the general assembly (legislative body) and board (executive body) as the main governing bodies. In addition, specific emphasis is given to the role of the president of sports organizations. The sports organizations are obliged through imperative norms to incorporate these provisions in their regulations (founding act and statute). The existing funding mechanism and schemes don't implement a gender-sensitive approach. Thus, the processes of planning, approving, implementing, monitoring, evaluating and auditing are not conducted taking into account gender perspective. For example, the actual expenditure of women and men in sports at different levels. As for the educational system, it remains centralized and semi-interventionist mechanisms when it comes to formal education. In terms of nonformal education, sport-related education is at its beginning.

The primary data confirms document analysis findings. As the current policy and regulatory framework don't oblige sports movement to a gender mainstreaming approach, the NSFs do not have appropriate gender policies in place. In terms of the composition within governing bodies and decision-making positions, the negative trend continues with the insignificant presence of women. The responses from the NSFs stakeholders are rather conflicting, while acknowledging that they are women involved in the work of NSFs (66.6% responses), all of the respondents (100%) indicates that there is no formal policy in place involving women in governing bodies and decision-making positions. To contribute, most of the athletes (60.8%) responded that they are not engaged, or they (70%) are unaware if any of the women are involved in the work of the NSF. Similarly, the sport's stakeholders are in majority confirmed (83.3%) that the NSFs do not have a specific written policy that outlines objectives and specific actions aimed at involving women in its policy processes and 77% of the stakeholders underlined that the NSFs do not have written policy aimed at encouraging the equal access to representation for women and men in all stages of the decision-making processes or written policy. As per educational programs, 61% of stakeholders confirmed that there are no specific programs for female athletes which comply with findings from the secondary data, while 55% indicate that there are some programs for all athletes on an ad-hoc basis focusing on the competitive aspect of the sport.

The research team managed to locate three projects conducted in Serbia in relation to the main topic confirming the above findings. Of those selected ones, only one has a sporting component focusing on awareness raising of gender-related challenges within the youth population, while the other two cover more broadly leadership components with entrepreneurs and politicians as target groups. The other projects coming from the national or local level are more focused on competitive aspects of the sport, such as talent identification, periodization, funding and organization of high-performance sport.

In addition, there are a number of coaching programs without gender mainstreaming or gender-sensitive approaches on both national and regional levels. At the grassroots level, the clubs are focused on raising an overall number of participants which does not necessarily correspond with a gender-balanced approach and differs from sport to sport.

The rationale behind the FAMS project is to serve as a national kick-off for broader change toward enabling gender equality on and off the court. More specifically, the project activities will enable a number of female athletes to tailor an educational program that will serve as an empowerment tool on the one hand, and as a capacity-building platform for sports movement on the other hand. The media involvement will play an important role to maintain focus on this theme by inviting appropriate stakeholders to take needed actions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. For public authorities

Policy framework: to encourage stakeholders within the appropriate public institutions to involve gender mainstreaming in the preparation, adoption, implementation and evaluation phases of strategy and action plans for sport-related and educational domains.

Regulatory framework: to conduct a revision of the Law on Sport by enforcing a quotas system for reaching more gender-balanced governing bodies and decision-making positions.

Funding mechanism: to conduct a revision of the Law on Sport and related bylaws to stimulate gender-sensitive budgeting in sports.

2. For sports movement

Policy framework: to adopt, where appropriate, formal policy outlining objectives and specific actions aimed at involving women in its policy processes.

Regulatory framework: to adopt, where appropriate, the statute of an organization to ensure or stimulate gender-based representation.

Education: in cooperation with the educational sector, to plan and program specific and tailored educational activities for female athletes.

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