Manageable sports governance: the case of Swiss based European sports federations

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Good governance in sport is a European theme since 2000

- European Council (2000)
- EOC & FIA (2001)
- ETS (2008)
- UEFA (2009)
- Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (2012)
- EC Preparatory Actions in the Field of Sport (2013)
- EC Expert Group “Good Governance” (2013)
Manageable sports governance

- Most of the recommendations developed on a supra-national level of analysis apply to a heterogeneous and undefined group of sports organisations.

- Many existing governance principles but only a few measurement tools:
  - BIBGIS (Chappelet & Mrkonjic, 2013), Sports Governance Observer (AGGIS, 2013), S4GG toolkit (S4GG, 2013)

- Manageable sports governance (BIBGIS Light) = parsimonious and minimalist approach to governance proposing a smaller set of the BIBGIS indicators. On the basis of developments in comparative studies and in the corporate sector, there should be an absolute minimum required from an international or
BIBGIS 7 important dimensions

- Organisational transparency
- Reporting transparency
- Stakeholders’ representation
- Democratic process
- Control mechanisms
- Integrity
- Solidarity

Transparency

Democracy

Accountability

Sport

Responsibility
European sports federation

- Scarce literature on the governance of ESFs
- Only few of them are directly or indirectly consulted by European institutions.

Main features:
- Institutionalisation: 29 ESF out of the 35 Olympic sports (Olympic Charter, 2011)
- Average year of foundation: 1975
- Average size of the legislative body: 48 members (up to 56, ETTU)
- Average size of the executive body: 14 members (up to 28, ETU)
- Legal form: non profit associations
- Legal distribution: nine are incorporated under Swiss law (EUROSAF, UEC, ESF, Tennis Europe, CEB, ESC, UEFA, UEG, European Athletics) + seven under Luxembourg Law (EFC, ETTU, ETU, EGA, LEN, CEV, EUBC)
**BIBGIS Light : Main transversal results (I)**

- **The organisation annually publishes an externally audited financial report according to recognised international standards (IFRS or similar)**
  - UEFA and CEB both publish financial reports. The financial report of CEB contains financial information from 2005 to 2011. ESC publishes its preliminary budget. Only UEFA provides information on the quality of the financial report.

- **Athletes are represented in the organisations’ bodies**
  - ESC and European Athletics have an athletes commission. UEFA has no athletes commission but their interests are represented by FIFPRO via its cooptation in the UEFA Professional Football Strategy Council.

- **The executive board members of the organisation have a term limit**
  - All federations have term limits. However, we see substantial differences between the years (from two to four), the terms (from two to four), the limits (unspecified, none, fixed and flexible). The term limits are the same for the president, the vice-presidents and the elected members in all federations except for the ESC where the terms are not limited for the elected members.
BIBGIS *Light*: Main transversal results (II)

- **The organisation publishes on its website an annual activity report**
  - Only UEFA and CEB publish systematically an annual activity report. European Tennis sells its activity report.

- **The organisation has an environmental and social responsibility policy and programmes in place.**
  - Most of the federations do not have such a policy. The only two federations to have sustainability projects are European Athletics (Green inspiration, SSET Toolkit, internal sustainability charter) and UEFA (ad hoc partnerships, f.i. with WWF). ESC has a sub committee in charge of environmental questions but whose responsibilities are not disclosed.

- **The organisation has or recognises an Ethics/Integrity Code for its organs’ members and staff including guidelines for receiving/giving gifts from/to individuals or organisations**
  - Only few federations have an ethics code/integrity code (f.f. European Athletics). Some of the federations rely on the ethics code of the umbrella federation, f.i in the case of the ESC or UEG.
Conclusions

- The analysis shows a complex picture of the governance processes and structures of ESF. Even with a limited number of indicators, it seems difficult to reduce governance to clear cut empirical realities.

- A parsimonious and hierarchised approach is a good start for the implementation of governance recommendations.
Thank you for your attention!