National Sports Governance Observer
Research process and preliminary results

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Presentation

1. Project
2. Research
3. First preliminary results
4. Next steps
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Project background: Sports Governance Observer

### Sports Governance Observer 2015

*The legitimacy crisis in international sports governance*

*Report / October 2015*

#### All 35 federations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>SGO score (on a scale from 1-5)</th>
<th>SGO Index</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transparency</td>
<td>2.99</td>
<td>49.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democratic process</td>
<td>2.81</td>
<td>45.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Checks and balances</td>
<td>2.68</td>
<td>42.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solidarity</td>
<td>2.79</td>
<td>44.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td></td>
<td>45.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NSGO project: relevance

Good governance: a means to an end

- Enhances federations’ legitimacy, effectiveness, and resistance to unethical practices.
- Enables federations to increase their autonomy by building trust with governments and stakeholders.

Good governance: difficult to define, measure, and implement

- Gap between discourse and practice and between expectations and reality.
- Sport federations need to understand what principles must be implemented and how and why.
- Public actors, stakeholders, and researchers need reliable and valid monitoring tools to effectively signal and address weaknesses.
NSGO project: objectives

Main aim
Assist and inspire national sports organisations to raise the quality of their governance practices

Measure governance and build capacity
• Develop and apply indicators of good governance
• Produce reports on the status quo of good governance

Establish sustainable networks: between the project partners and key stakeholders
• National training workshops and Play the Game conference
NSGO project: partners

**Funding:** 383,000 euro EU Erasmus+ programme + subsidies from Danish Parliament.

**Coordinator:** Play the Game / Danish Institute for Sports Studies (Idan)

**Seven full project partners:** research
Danish Institute for Sports Studies/Play the Game; German Sports University Cologne; KU Leuven; Molde University College (MUC); University Bucharest; University of Warsaw; Utrecht University

**Three voluntary partners:** research
Sou do Esporte (Brazil); Marco Begovic (private researcher; Montenegro); University of Central Lancashire and Molde University College (MUC)

**Nine associated partners:** advice and dissemination of research findings
Cyprus Sport Organisation (CSO); Danish Football Association (DBU); EPAS, Council of Europe; European Association for Sports Management (EASM); Flemish Sports Confederation (VSF); International Council of Sport Science and Physical Education (ICSSPE); Norwegian Football Association (NFF); Polish Golf Union (PGU); Romanian Football Federation (FRF)
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Research: process

1. Literature review
   - Best practices (codes and principles)
   - Theories

2. Evaluation tool
   - Principles
   - Dichotomous indicators

3. Data collection
   - Six phases (see above)

4. SGO2017 tool
   - Publication of indicators
   - Weighting of indicators

5. Final report
   - Edited volume
   - NSGO tool
   - Comparative analysis of data

Feedback

Input from all partners

Scoring + analysis
Research: timeline

- **Project Start**
- **Research partners**
  - Research committee meeting
- **Research partners**
  - Submit data
- **Research partners**
  - Receive NSGO scores
- **Research partners**
  - Research committee meeting
- **Research partners**
  - Submit draft report
- **All**
  - Submit feedback evaluation tool
  - Receive evaluation tool
  - Submit feedback NSGO scores
  - Receive feedback draft report
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REPORT

NATIONAL SPORTS GOVERNANCE OBSERVER

Indicators of good governance in national federations

Arnout Geeraert

Play the Game

KU Leuven

Co-funded by the European Union
Operationalising good governance: dimensions

**Transparency** refers to an organisation’s reporting on its internal workings, which allows others to monitor these workings.

**Democratic processes** entail free, fair and competitive elections; affected actors’ involvement in decision-making processes; and fair and open internal debates.

**Internal accountability and control** refers to both the implementation of the separation of powers in the organisation’s governance structure and a system of rules and procedures that ensures that staff and officials comply with internal rules and norms.

**Societal responsibility** refers to deliberately employing organisational potential and impact to have a positive effect on internal and external stakeholders and society at large.
Operationalising good governance: indicators

- **46 principles:** 274 indicators
- **3 categories:** basic, advanced, state-of-the-art
- **Reliable measurement:** clearly defined criteria
- **Easy to apply:** 1 or 0

### Dimension 2: Democracy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Detailed evaluation criteria</th>
<th>Data source</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>Basic</td>
<td>Do the organisation’s statutes or internal regulations contain procedures that determine the appointment and reappointment of all the members of the board? Note: under these criteria, board members may be co-opted or co-opted ex officio members.</td>
<td>Organisation’s statutes and internal regulations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>Basic</td>
<td>Do the rules governing the election of board members include at least information on people qualified to vote and majority or percentage needed to win the election?</td>
<td>Organisation’s statutes and internal regulations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>Basic</td>
<td>Do the rules governing elections ensure that the general assembly directly elects the majority of the members of the board? Note: federations may co-opt members of the board (in order to help fill gaps in terms of skill and expertise in the short term). They should form a minority in the board and may only be appointed for a limited period of time. If the latter is not the case, the organisation does not meet the criteria.</td>
<td>Organisation’s statutes and internal regulations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Relevance

The threat of being replaced by a challenger in case of under-achieving or inappropriate behaviour incentivizes officials to conform to their constituents’ wishes, perform better, and refrain from opportunistic behaviour.
First preliminary findings: transparency

Major strengths
• 95% of the federations publish their statutes and sport rules on their website.
• 78% of the federations publish their internal regulations.
• 94% of the federations list the names of all the current members of the board.
• 86% of the federations list basic information about affiliated clubs.

Major weaknesses
• 34% of the federations publish board decisions on their website and 28% explain the rationale behind decisions.
• 34% of the federations publish information on remuneration and 25% of the federations publish a separate statement on the remuneration of board members. Only in Denmark, all federations do the latter.

Other key indicators
• 48% of the federations publish a recent annual report on their website.
  Denmark, the Netherlands, and Flanders: 100%
  Poland and Montenegro: 0%
• 61% of the federations publish information on finances (annual income and expenses).
  Denmark 100%, Montenegro 88%, the Netherlands 88%
  Cyprus and Flanders 50%, Germany 0%, Poland 38%
First preliminary findings: democratic processes

Major strengths
• 88% of the federations have clear voting rules for the elections of board members.
• In 88% of the federations, at least half of the members of the board are elected by the general assembly.

Major weaknesses
• 38% of the federations formally involve athletes in their policy processes.
  Germany 83%, Denmark 67%, the Netherlands 63%, Cyprus 13%, Flanders 14%, Montenegro 25%, Poland 13%, Romania 25%.
• 26% of the federations adopt their multi-annual policy plans in consultation with athletes.
  Denmark 67%, the Netherlands 63%
• 22% of the federations undertake certain actions aimed at promoting gender equality internally.
  Denmark 83%

Other key indicators
• 44% of the federations establish term limits for elected board members.
  The Netherlands 100%, Poland 100%, Denmark and Montenegro 0%, Cyprus 57%, Flanders 50%, Germany 33%, Romania 13%.
First preliminary findings: internal accountability and control

Major strengths
• 89% of the federations have statutes that establish that the general assembly approves the annual financial statements.
• 75% of the federations have statutes and/or internal regulations that establish that the board determines the organisation’s general policy (e.g., mission, vision, and strategy).
• 71% of the federations have their financial statements externally audited.

Major weaknesses
• 26% of the federations establish a long-term financial planning.
• 44% of the federations have a code of conduct that applies to board members.
  Denmark 100%, the Netherlands 88%, Cyprus 0%, Montenegro 0%, Flanders 38%, Germany 50%, Poland 38%, Romania 50%.
• 38% of the federations have code of conduct for board members that contains rules on conflicts of interest.
  The Netherlands 88%, Denmark 100%, Cyprus 13%, Flanders 25%, Montenegro 0%, Poland 0%, Germany 40%, Romania 43%

Other key indicators
• 43% of the federations establish a multi-annual policy plan.
  The Netherlands 100%, Romania 88%, Cyprus 13%, Poland 13%, Germany 40%, Flanders 38%, Denmark 29%, Montenegro 25%.
• 42% of the federations establish procedures regarding conflicts of interest.
  Denmark 71%, Flanders 63%, Poland 63%, the Netherlands 63%, Cyprus 13%, Germany 17%, Montenegro 0%, Montenegro 50%. 
First preliminary findings: societal responsibility

Major strengths
• 84% of the federations implement disciplinary rules to combat doping in conformity with the World Anti-Doping Code.
• 76% of the federations implement formal procedures establishing their cooperation with the National Anti-Doping Authority.
• 66% of the federations undertake actions aimed at promoting sport for all (Cyprus 25%, Montenegro 0%).

Major weaknesses
• 37% of the federations have a code of conduct which outlines rules aimed at promoting the physical integrity of athletes (Netherlands 100%, Denmark 88%).
• 32% of the federations establish procedures for processing complaints about unwanted sexual behavior in their statutes and/or internal regulations (The Netherlands 100%, Denmark 67%).
• 32% of the federations have a formal policy that outlines objectives and specific actions aimed at combating discrimination in sport.
• 20% of the federations undertake actions aimed at promoting the environmental sustainability of the sporting events it (co-)organizes (Denmark 67%).

Other key indicators
• 43% of the federations provide some form of consulting to member organisations in the areas of management or governance (Denmark 100%, the Netherlands 100%, Flanders 88%).
• 39% of the federations implement disciplinary rules to combat match-fixing (Denmark 100%, Flanders 63%).
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Next steps

**Review and revise data**: address inconsistencies and measurement errors

**Assign weights to indicators**: taking into account the importance of the individual indicators and federations’ size and capacity

**Produce project report and national reports**: detailed overview of the status quo and recommendations that aim to inform and stimulate federations’ governance policies

**Organise national training seminars**: stimulate discussion and contribute to capacity building
Implementing good governance

Compliance strategies for two types of organisations

• Unwilling to comply
  – **Monitor** compliance: measure / check the implementation of principles
  – **Sanction** non-compliance: naming/shaming, financial repercussions
  – **Involve federations** in good governance policies and explain the importance

• Unable to comply
  – **Explain** good governance principles
  – Build **capacity** through consulting, one-on-one advise, exchange of best practices...
  – Give **financial support**