

Recommendation CM/Rec(2015)2 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on gender mainstreaming in sport

(Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 21 January 2015 at the 1217th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies)

The Committee of Ministers, under the terms of Article 15.b of the Statute of the Council of Europe,

Noting that sport provides girls, boys, women and men with an environment conducive to education and the social development of the individual, and contributes to fostering good health and well-being in society;

Wishing to help build and promote a "sport for all" culture in society;

Noting that sport also allows girls and boys to develop the essential values for life in a democratic society such as fair play, respect for others and respect for rules, team spirit, tolerance and responsibility, which contribute to turning them into responsible citizens;

Convinced that sport can promote the social integration of disadvantaged groups exposed to multiple discrimination and can contribute towards better understanding among communities, including in post-conflict regions;

Mindful that, despite the existence of standards at national, regional and international levels guaranteeing the principle of gender equality and the right for everyone to participate in sport, a gap still persists between standards and practice, between *de jure* and *de facto* gender equality and discrimination against women and girls, including among disadvantaged groups exposed to multiple discrimination, is still evident;

Bearing in mind that the enjoyment of the rights set forth in the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (ETS No. 5, "the Convention") and its protocols must be

secured without discrimination on any ground such as sex, and that Protocol No. 12 to the Convention (ETS No. 177) guarantees the enjoyment of any right set forth by law without discrimination on any ground such as sex;

Recalling that Recommendation [Rec\(92\)13 rev](#) of the Committee of Ministers to member States on the revised European Sports Charter underlines the right for everyone to participate in sport and recommends that sport be kept free of any kind of discrimination, in particular on grounds of sex;

Taking into account Recommendation [Rec\(98\)14](#) of the Committee of Ministers to member States on gender mainstreaming, which recommends that the governments of member States encourage decision makers to "create an enabling environment and facilitate conditions for the implementation of gender mainstreaming in the public sector";

Taking into account Recommendation [Rec\(2005\)8](#) of the Committee of Ministers to member States on the principles of good governance in sport, which states that the implementation of the principles of good governance in sport is a key element in the promotion of gender mainstreaming in sport;

Taking into account Recommendation [CM/Rec\(2010\)9](#) of the Committee of Ministers to member States on the revised Code of Sports Ethics demanding the “equal participation of women, girls, men and boys in all individual and/or team sports without gender-based discrimination”;

Taking into account Recommendation [CM/Rec\(2013\)1](#) of the Committee of Ministers to member States on gender equality and media;

Recalling the Declaration entitled “Making gender equality a reality” of May 2009, whereby the Committee of Ministers urged member States to commit themselves fully to bridging the gap between equality in fact and equality in law and to accelerate the achievement of this aim by using gender mainstreaming effectively;

Bearing in mind Parliamentary Assembly Resolution 1092 (1996) on “Discrimination against women in the field of sport and more particularly in the Olympic Games” and Parliamentary Assembly Recommendation 1701 (2005) on “Discrimination against women and girls in sport”, as well as the reply to it adopted by the Committee of Ministers (cf. [CM/AS\(2005\)Rec1701 final](#));

Bearing in mind political commitments made at specialised Council of Europe Conferences of European Ministers, notably Resolution III adopted by Ministers responsible for Sport (Budapest, October 2004) and, in particular, the resolution adopted by Ministers responsible for Equality between Women and Men (Baku, May 2010), where it was acknowledged that the gap between *de jure* and *de facto* gender equality can only be bridged by the adoption of specific legislation, policies and programmes and their implementation through the use of positive actions including temporary special measures and gender mainstreaming, including gender budgeting;

Having regard to the fact that States Parties to the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979) condemn discrimination against women in all forms, and agree to pursue by all appropriate means and without delay a policy of eliminating discrimination against women and of achieving substantive gender equality, including in sport and physical education;

Recalling the Declaration adopted during the 4th International Conference of Ministers and Senior Officials Responsible for Physical Education and Sport and its reference to the Athens Declaration on Women and Sport of 2001 and recalling the Berlin Declaration adopted during the 5th International Conference of Ministers and Senior Officials Responsible for Physical Education and Sport in May 2013;

Recalling the Brighton Declaration on Women and Sport (1994), having the aim of developing a sporting culture that enables and values the full involvement of women and girls in every aspect of sport;

Convinced that gender stereotypes and traditional gender roles, including the traditional gender models of masculinity and femininity in the world of sport, affect access to and participation in many levels and fields of sport, as well as the organisational cultures of sport administrations and sporting bodies; but also that sport and its media coverage can contribute to perpetuating or challenging gender stereotypes across Europe;

Considering that, despite the progress achieved, gender inequalities persist between women and men in sport, in particular concerning: access to and practice of sport, physical education and physical activity; access to responsibilities, participation in sports governing bodies and decision-making roles; access to resources, salaries, financial incentives and sports facilities; media coverage of women athletes and of women’s sport;

reintegration into the labour market after the end of an athletic career; gender-based violence including harassment and abuse;

Convinced that, in order to achieve *de facto* equality between women and men in sport and through sport, the structural character of gender inequality must be addressed by adopting the strategy of gender mainstreaming and involving all the relevant institutions and actors in its implementation. Nevertheless, given the significance of gender gaps in many fields of sport, gender mainstreaming still needs to be complemented by positive measures,

Recommends that the governments of member States:

a. adopt and/or review their legislation and/or policies pertaining to sport with a view to implementing the strategies and measures outlined in this recommendation and its appendix;

b. promote and encourage policies and practices aimed at introducing, implementing and ensuring gender mainstreaming in all fields and at all levels of sport and establish the existence of specific mechanisms to this end;

c. ensure that this recommendation and its explanatory memorandum are brought to the attention of the relevant political institutions, public authorities, sports organisations and other sports-related organisations as well as education institutions and the media;

d. encourage co-operation between those stakeholders at national level who are responsible for and who influence sport, physical education and gender equality policies;

e. review gender mainstreaming policies, practices and results at national level and report on the steps taken and progress achieved in this field to the relevant bodies of the Council of Europe;

f. co-operate at international level including in the framework of the Council of Europe with a view to exchanging information and sharing good practices,

Invites the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS) of the Council of Europe to follow up the implementation of this recommendation, where appropriate, in co-operation with other Council of Europe bodies such as the committee responsible for gender equality;

Invites the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS) of the Council of Europe to seek co-operation on gender equality in sport with the relevant bodies of the European Union;

Calls on the Secretary General to transmit this recommendation to intergovernmental organisations, international sports and sports-related organisations.

Appendix to Recommendation CM/Rec(2015)2

I. The governments of member States are invited to implement the following measures:

Legislation

1. incorporate the principle of equality between women and men and the strategy of gender mainstreaming into national laws on sport and physical education and/or into the existing body of legislation and/or regulations pertaining to sport; and bring the terminology used in legal drafting into line with the principle of equality between women and men;

2. assess the gender impact of future laws on sport and physical education or pertaining to sport and, where necessary, review existing laws from a gender equality perspective;

Policies and programmes

3. undertake to achieve gender balance in public authorities and public bodies related to sport and physical education and ensure that a gender perspective is included in all respective areas of decision making;

4. draw up action plans for achieving substantive equality between women and men in sport, and bring the gender mainstreaming strategy into public sport and physical education policies and programmes, including in-built monitoring and evaluation;

5. ensure that the interests of women and men from disadvantaged groups exposed to multiple discrimination are systematically mainstreamed into all aspects of sport policies and programmes by taking into consideration all forms of discrimination, irrespective of grounds, as explicitly outlined in Article 14 of the European Convention on Human Rights or any other form established by the case law of the European Court of Human Rights, and provide, where appropriate, specific tailored support;

6. adopt strategies to counter negative traditional gender stereotypes and stereotypes founded on other grounds of discrimination, and protect all people who challenge stereotypes through their free choice and practice of sport;

7. integrate a gender perspective into the budgetary process in order to promote equal access to, and enjoyment of, sports resources by women and men with regard to funds, facilities, human resources (including training and coaching), time, space and equipment for participation and competition;

8. plan, design and manage sport, recreation and physical activity facilities to ensure that they are safe, affordable and accessible to women and men of all age groups, including those from disadvantaged groups exposed to multiple discrimination, and encourage schools, local authorities, sports clubs and relevant decision makers to implement any conversion work needed to meet these requirements;

9. ensure that public authorities require gender equality criteria before granting subsidies to sports organisations;

10. provide support for the work of civil society organisations promoting gender equality in sport;

11. establish concerted action between the ministries responsible for sport and physical education, the ministry responsible for equality between women and men, civil society organisations promoting women's participation in sport, sports organisations and educational and research institutions, in particular when drawing up national action plans and implementing and assessing programmes;

Specific programmes and policies on formal and non-formal physical education in particular at local level

12. encourage the authorities responsible for school and out-of-school education to integrate the principle of gender equality and the strategy of gender mainstreaming into physical education and sports curricula;

13. adopt a gender sensitive and inclusive approach to planning physical education and sports curricula and teaching methods and practices, and ensure the autonomy of girls, boys, women and men in this regard;

14. encourage, enable and support, by using specific training and tools, physical education and sports teachers, trainers, coaches and instructors to promote equality between girls and boys in sport, and manage problem situations caused by gender differences and intercultural issues pertaining to the access to and the practice of sport, physical activity and physical education;

Specific programmes and policies to combat gender-based violence

15. adopt, implement and monitor policies and measures, in co-operation with sports organisations, to prevent and combat gender-based violence against women and girls in sport, namely, physical intimidation or violence, verbal, psychological, physical and sexual harassment and abuse;

16. devise and implement policies and measures to prevent and combat gender-based bullying, harassment and violence with regard to the practice of physical activity, physical education and sport, and encourage schools, local authorities and sports organisations and clubs to implement them and monitor their implementation;

Awareness raising and training

17. promote awareness initiatives and initial and in-service training on gender equality, gender mainstreaming and different needs of those involved in sport, for the personnel of public authorities responsible for framing and implementing this recommendation and for those involved in sport;

18. launch and promote awareness-raising campaigns for the promotion of equality between women and men in accessing, participating in and benefitting from sport and physical activities, throughout the different stages of the life cycle;

Data collection and research

19. ensure that the statistics based on individuals and produced by public authorities responsible for framing and implementing this recommendation are disaggregated by sex, published regularly and disseminated to the relevant stakeholders;

20. promote and support research on women and girls in sport and in women's sport in particular, including systematic gender analysis, and provide data to decision makers and other relevant authorities at national, regional and local levels;

21. identify the gender-based reasons for which women, girls, men and boys drop out of sporting activities and organised or competitive sport;

22. identify the needs and preferences of women as regards the practising of sport and physical activity throughout the different stages of life;

23. identify barriers faced by women and girls, including those from disadvantaged groups exposed to multiple discrimination, as regards their access to and participation in all levels and fields of sport, including in coaching, management and other leadership positions;

Monitoring and reporting

24. implement this recommendation by regularly monitoring and evaluating gender mainstreaming policies, practices and results, publishing the findings and disseminating them widely among the parties concerned.

II. The governments of member States are invited to implement the following measures and to encourage sports organisations at national, regional, and local levels, bearing in mind their autonomy, to:

Language

25. use non-sexist language in all documents and materials produced, edited and/or distributed by the public authorities responsible for framing and implementing this recommendation and by sport organisations, and develop all efforts to ensure a balanced representation of women and men in all communication, including positive images of women and girls in sport;

Grants, pay, prize money and bonuses

26. encourage sponsors to support both women's and men's programmes equally and to award women and men equal grants, pay, prize money and bonuses;

Awareness raising

27. raise awareness about the gender hierarchies, inequalities and gender-based violence existing in various levels and fields of sport;

28. identify female role models and gender-sensitive athletes, coaches, journalists and leaders and involve them in the promotion of equality between women and men in sport.

III. The governments of member States are invited to encourage sports organisations at national, regional, and local levels, bearing in mind their autonomy, to:

Policies and programmes

29. apply good governance principles by ensuring on the one hand that substantive gender equality through gender mainstreaming is a part of each organisation's strategy and, on the other hand, that they regularly report on the practices and results and disseminate them widely among the parties concerned;

30. create gender-sensitive and transparent recruitment, selection, appointment and election procedures and practices to increase the number of women participating at all levels of sports organisation, including in coaching, management and other leadership positions;

31. adopt policies which allow a balance of private and family life and sports careers, with a special focus on athletes, coaches, managers and leaders;

32. develop strategies and implement special measures, where appropriate until a balanced participation of women and men is reached at all levels of sports organisations in terms of membership, practice, competition, coaching, leadership, management and national and international representation, and ensure the regular monitoring and evaluation of these policies;

33. implement policies and adopt codes of conduct regarding gender-based violence against girls, boys, women and men in sport and clearly specify the complaint process, disciplinary actions and appeal procedures;

34. provide equal access to sports facilities for women and girls, and especially to those from disadvantaged groups exposed to multiple discrimination, to enable them to participate in sporting activities, training and competitions;

Data collection and research

35. ensure that statistics regarding individual participation and representation in all areas and all levels of organisations, including in executive bodies, coaching and other leadership or decision-making positions, are disaggregated by sex and published and disseminated regularly;

Awareness raising and training

36. promote awareness initiatives and/or training on gender equality, gender mainstreaming and different needs of those involved in sport, to provide personnel, coaches, athletes, sport managers and decision makers at all levels with the necessary tools and competences to implement gender mainstreaming and gender equality in the organisation;

37. carry out training, mentoring and shadowing programmes for women in order to encourage them and allow them to acquire qualifications for leadership roles, and create opportunities to exercise these roles.

IV. The governments of member States are invited to draw the attention of the media, bearing in mind their editorial independence, to the need to adopt measures for:

38. conveying a non-stereotyped image, role and visibility of women and men in sport and of women's sport, by not reproducing sexist portrayals and eliminating sexist content and language which could lead to gender-based incitement to hatred, violence and discrimination, and by reflecting the progress of gender equality in sport;

39. ensuring a balanced participation of women and men in the media through the employment of female sport journalists and through support for their careers among editorial personnel;

40. raising the awareness and strengthening the capacities of sport media professionals and students by offering regular educational and vocational training programmes geared to the acquisition of in-depth knowledge of gender equality and its crucial role in a democratic society.

V. The governments of member States, in co-operation with the relevant regional and international organisations and institutions, are invited to:

41. co-operate follow up and assess the progress of balanced participation of girls, boys, women and men in sport on the basis of internationally comparable data;

42. promote the exchange of information, know-how and "good practices" favouring equality between girls, boys, women and men in sport.