



INTERNATIONAL
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#22 Gender equality and leadership in Olympic bodies

Developed by: IOC Woman and Sport Commission

Year and country: 2010, International

Type of project: Research / Survey analysis

https://stillmed.olympic.org/media/Document%20Library/OlympicOrg/IOC/What-We-Do/Promote-Olympism/Women-And-Sport/The-IOC-Commitment/Support/2010-Gender-Equality-and-Leadership-Report.pdf#_ga=1.110621901.931898661.1476177751

Synthesis of the case study

This document reports the findings of a study which focuses on the issue of how to redress the gender imbalance in key decision-making roles occupied by women in National Olympic Committees (NOCs) and International Federations (IFs). It follows on from an earlier two-year study commissioned by the Olympic research group.

Context and approach

This study was commissioned by the Department of International Cooperation and Development from the Centre for Olympic Studies and Research (COS&R) at Loughborough University. The project follows on from the monitoring and explanation of levels of attainment of minimum targets for membership of NOC Executive Committees.

Adopted methods included two questionnaire surveys, of NOCs and of IFs respectively, and a series of interviews with 36 female Secretary Generals and presidents of NOCs and IFs, IOC members, and members of the Executives of Continental Associations of NOCs.

Objectives / Challenges

The objectives of the research were threefold:

- to establish the current situation in relation to the recruitment of women to executive committees of the NOC-s and IF-s;
- to understand the context and experience of the women who've submitted themselves to election for senior roles within NOCs and IFs, in effect to identify possible key success factors in these cases, both in terms of successful election and in relation to performing tasks effectively in post;
- to identify policy implications for Olympic bodies in relation to promoting gender equality in the leadership and management of Olympic sports

Target

Olympic Bodies and International Sports Federations management and decision-making boards.

The deliverable (What did they do specifically?)

The deliverables for the project were agreed at the initial meeting, addressing the above mentioned research questions and incorporating:

- survey-based questionnaire analysis of NOCs and IFs to meet the information requirements for the research project as well as for the Department of International Cooperation and Development (to avoid duplication of requests for information from NOCs);
- analysis of interviews with the women with experience of the electoral process in IFs and NOCs;
- identifying the implications for female candidates, for NOCs, IFs, and other bodies, and for the IOC in terms of electoral strategies and their implications for gender equality.

Key learnings / Questions to think about

The development of measures to foster performance in gender equity in NOCs, Continental Associations of NOCs, and IFs is complicated due to the fact that while the IOC can encourage and promote equity measures in these bodies, it cannot require them as such since it has no authority to do so. However, rather than setting up sanctions, positive reinforcement of good practice are likely to provide a more acceptable vehicle for promoting good practice. For example, consideration might be given to making an annual award to NOCs or IFs which promote gender equality in a consistent or imaginative way (the KPIs discussed here might provide partial criteria for such an award). Good practice and/or exceptional commitment might thus be recognised and used as an inspiration and incentive to others.

Contact information

International Olympic Committee
Château de Vidy – C.P. 356 – CH-1007
Lausanne/Switzerland
www.olympic.org