

# 7<sup>TH</sup> EUROPEAN WOMEN AND SPORT CONFERENCE, VIENNA, MARCH 2006

Women, Leadership and the Olympic Movement :  
the effectiveness of targets in achieving policy  
objectives and improving the governance of NOCs

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# Outline of presentation

- Women and decision making: an international perspective
- Latest Figures from UK Sport on progress against strategy targets
- Summary of Loughborough University/ IOC research on women in Olympic Governance
- The quota/ target debate

# The role of women in decision making: a UN perspective

*“ Women’s empowerment and their full participation on the basis of equality in all spheres of society, including participation in the decision-making process and access to power, are fundamental for the achievement of equality, development and peace”*

Kofi Annan 8 March 2006

# The role of women in decision making: a UN perspective

*“The international community is finally beginning to understand a fundamental principle: women are every bit as affected as any man by the challenges facing humanity in the 21<sup>st</sup> century...it is therefore right and indeed necessary that women should be engaged in decision making processes in all areas, with equal strength and with equal numbers”*

Kofi Annan March 8<sup>th</sup> 2006

Women in Politics:  
(average is 16.3% across all parliaments,  
world wide)

## World Classification of 187 countries

- 1<sup>st</sup> Rwanda 49%
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Sweden 45%
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Norway 38%
- 4<sup>th</sup> Finland, Denmark and Netherlands 37%
- 12<sup>th</sup> Austria 34%
- 16<sup>th</sup> Germany 32%
- 50<sup>th</sup> UK 20%

# Women in the Media and Business

One third of journalists are women but less than 3% of senior media executives and decision makers  
(International Federation of Journalists)

In the EU women comprise just 3% of CEOs of major companies

# Women in Academia

- Increasing number of women graduating, often with better results than men but not gaining secure employment in academia or receiving funding for research to same extent as men.
- Few women Chancellors of universities even in countries like Sweden

# UK Strategy Framework for Women and Sport. 2003 - 2005

- Participation target: increase from 38% to 43%. **Target exceeded – 49%**
- Performance and Excellence target: increase in funded athletes from 476 to 506. **Target exceeded - 589**
- Leadership target: Increase from 23% to 30%. **Target not met – 26%**

# Women as a percentage of Board members of Sports Councils in the UK

Scotland 33%

NI 33%

Wales 30%

UK 29%

England 17%

# Women as percentage of Board members of Sports Governing Bodies (average 25%)

- Gymnastics 46%
- Tennis 40%
- Rowing 33%
- Badminton 22%
- Hockey 22%
- Canoeing 10%
- Football 0%, Cycling 0%, Judo 0%
- Table tennis 0%

# Loughborough University/ IOC Research

- Joint project: Jan 2002 – Jan 2004
- The stories behind the statistics :  
Evaluating the impact of IOC policy on women in Olympic leadership
- Research team of 10: diverse backgrounds and skills – 10 different languages
- Full report available on the IOC website

# Background to the Project

## The Targets

- In 1996 the IOC established minimum targets for NOCs and IFs (at least 10% by Dec 2001, 20% by Dec 2005)
- Statistical information about progress towards targets is collected by IOC

54% of NOCs and 30% of IFs have met the 2005 target

The IOC Executive Board of 15 has one woman member

# Research Questions

## Women Members of NOC Executive Committees

- Who are the women on the NOCs, how were they recruited, what difference are they making?
- What qualifications, skills and competences do they have?
- What roles do they fulfil and how do they experience them?
- What are the views of the women themselves on their roles and the policy?
- Views on the IOC's target policy

# Research Questions

## Secretary Generals

- What are the views of the NOCs on the IOC policy and how have they gone about recruiting women (or not)?
- What contribution do they feel the women make to the NOC?
- Does the NOC have a Women's Commission and how successful do they feel it has been?
- What overall impact has the policy had?

# Research Methods

## **Questionnaire Surveys**

- all women members of NOC Executive Committees
- Secretary Generals of all NOCs

## **In-depth Interviews**

- sample of women members of NOC Executive Committees
- sample of Secretary Generals

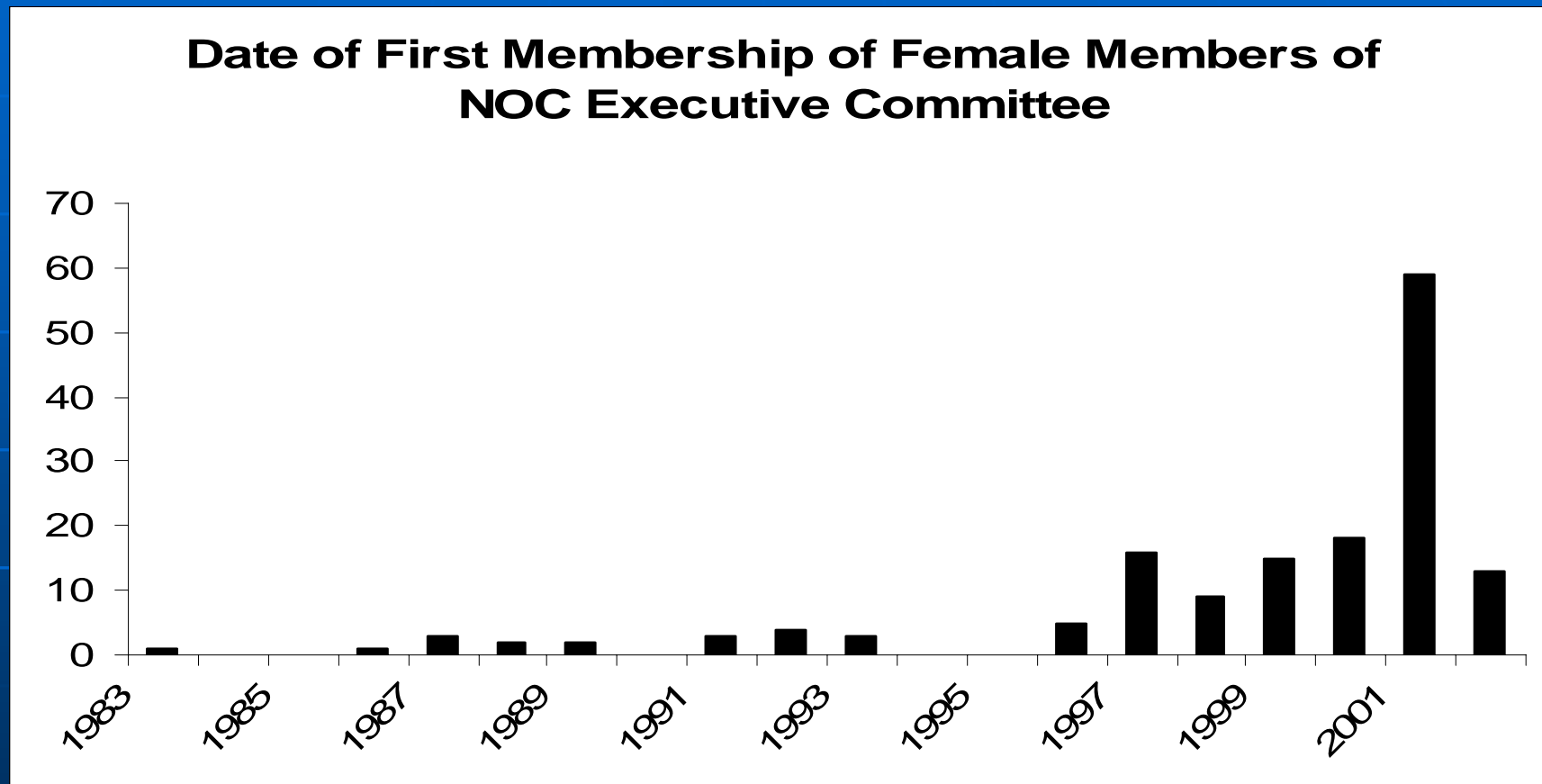


# Findings

- Rapid growth in numbers of women recruited
- Characteristics of women leaders
- Experience, skills and competencies
- Recruitment processes
- Their impact, activity and perception of roles
- Mentoring and networking



# Rapid growth in numbers of women recruited





# Who are the women on NOC Execs?

## Age

Range 25-85; Mean 50

## Household Background

78% married / cohabiting

82% with children; 58% with two or more children

## Employment Status

77% in full time employment

## Sports Career

56% International sportswomen

71% competed at national or international level

21% Olympians

## Religious Affiliation

51% Christian Denominations (various)

7% Islam

1% Buddhism

32% None

2% Judaism

2% Other





# What Experience, Skills and Competences did they bring to the NOC Exec?

## Education

Age on completion of FT education: mean 22.5  
78% degree or teaching qualification  
30% postgraduate degree  
8% doctorates

## Sports Administration Background

90% National Federations  
35% International Federations  
24% Coaching  
23% Officiating / Referees, Judges etc  
27% Physical Education Teaching





# The Recruitment Process

- 64% of respondents indicated their NOC had taken **special measures** to recruit women to their Executive Committees following the introduction of the targets
- Two thirds were **elected** to the Executive Committee, with the remainder **co-opted**. In several cases election had followed after a period of co-option





## Examples of Measures adopted to Recruit Women to Exec Committees

- Amending the constitution
- Setting up a task force
- Inviting women to special functions
- Appointing women to sub committees
- Selecting women to represent the NOC at international conferences and seminars
- Inciting national federations to present more women candidates





## Examples of difficulties reported by SGs in Recruiting Women to NOC Exec in order to meet the IOC target

*“Social and Cultural factors. Qualified women exist in our community, but often **do not volunteer** to take up a position in sports” (Americas)*

*“The **constitutional structure** of members being elected through sport [federations] requires action at the grassroots level of administration” (Oceania)*

*“**Rejection of proposals/changes of Status** as regards the rule about at least 2 women members of Executive Board” (Europe)*

*“There are **very few** [women]” (Europe)*

*“**Very few women were willing to serve** when asked.” (Africa)*





# Female NOC Exec Members' Perceptions of their Roles

## Focus of their work

3% Solely involved with women and sport issues

25% Primarily women and sport but also general

66% Primarily general but also some women and sport

6% Solely general no women and sport issues

## Impact

64% report having some positive impact on policy

56% report having a positive impact on NOC processes





# Impact of Presence of Women

## Some Positive Responses

*“better decision making - broader perspectives to debates, better policy development. Men often begin issue analysis with a 'numbers' perspective - cost based / cost effectiveness etc. Women often begin issue analysis by examining the key values and principles underpinning decisions” (Americas)*

*“actually, the [NOC] is a gender- sensitive, organisation and with more women present in the committee, it has helped in creating awareness on the difference between women's concerns and women's issues, in considering certain policy measures regarding training opportunities and in organising activities” (Africa)*

*“First and foremost it has provided role models who can act as a catalyst not only for equity between sports, but providing a balance of elements to the Committee and the sporting world at large” (Europe)*





## SG's Evaluation of the Level of Activity of Women Members of Executive Committee

	<i>No of female Exec Members</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Most active quartile of members of the Exec.	<b>73</b>	<b>51.4%</b>
Second most active 25% of members of the Exec.	<b>38</b>	<b>26.8%</b>
Third most active quartile of members of the Exec.	<b>25</b>	<b>17.6%</b>
Fourth most active quartile of members of the Exec.	<b>6</b>	<b>4.2%</b>





# Mentoring and Networking

- Female Role Models
- Recruitment to NOC Executive Committees, and subsequent effectiveness was fostered by the support and encouragement of senior NOC members
- Moral Support, Encouragement and Confidence Building



# Success of the targets

1. Rapid growth in numbers of women
2. Quality of the Women Recruited
3. Contributions of the Women Recruited
4. A simple, understandable and measurable policy goal

# Limitations of the targets

1. Affects only part of the system
2. Achievement of target seen as an end in itself
3. Do not take account of different social and cultural conditions
4. Targets regarded as maxima rather than minima

# Quotas or Targets?

- **Quota** – a number or level an organisation *must* achieve .... “required”
- **Target** – a number or level an organisation *aims* to achieve.... “desired”

# The quota / target debate

- Lack of distinction between targets and quotas
- What was “desired” by the IOC ( the parent body) was regarded as “required” of the NOCs
- Socialist and former socialist states most comfortable
- Should there be sanctions for those who do not reach the targets?

# The Quota /Target debate: Arguments against

*“ even the women don't like this kind of quota;  
they would prefer to be chosen by competence”  
(Sec Gen of European NOC)*

*“ one should not have a quota for the principle of  
having one. It should be valid candidates that  
emerge. The quota means taking people invalidly  
qualified just because they are women and that is  
wrong” ( Sec Gen of African NOC)*

# The quota/ target debate: arguments for

- The present rate of change is unacceptable. Some kind of intervention is necessary to accelerate the process of change
- Research evidence has confirmed that the IOC's target approach was effective in bringing increased numbers of able women into NOCs

# Conclusion

- In working towards gender equality as a principle of improved governance of sport organisations, a multi faceted approach is needed
- This should include data gathering, awareness raising, policy formulation and commitment, target or quota setting, special measures, monitoring and evaluation, education, training, and support

# Kofi Annan. March 2006

*"We have far, far more to do. The rate of progress overall is slow. Let us remember that in individual countries the increase in the number of women in decision-making has not happened by itself. Rather it is often the result of institutional and electoral initiatives, such as the adoption of goals and quotas, political party commitment and sustained mobilization. Those are lessons every nation needs to take very seriously"*