

Modern sports organisations need both genders for good governance

**Birgitta Kervinen, Finland
ENGSO Vice-president**

Principles of good governance

- Sport is recognised to be a significant sector of NGO activity in almost all European countries - often the largest
- Sport is therefore an important means of engaging people in active citizenship, enacting democratic principles in everyday activities
- General commitment is needed to principles of good governance - democratic participation, transparency, accountability etc.
- Sport organisations can play an important role in helping sports federations and clubs build understanding, knowledge and confidence to embrace principles of good governance
- Most important factor is willingness or commitment of leadership to principles of good governance in practice

Both genders are needed for good governance

- The sports culture needs both men and women as local, national and international decision-makers in order to develop equally in accordance with the opinions, experiences and interests of both men and women
- This gives an opportunity for as many as possible to engage in the sports culture
- Decision-makers should also represent all age and social groups in order to guarantee a pluralistic sports culture.

How does gender equality change governance in sports?

- Women's greater involvement as decision makers does not automatically guarantee more ethical, sensitive and pedagogically more conscious activities
- The main significance of women's involvement and the involvement of various other social groups is that we bring forth the ideas, values and experiences of *different* people and increase their influence on decision making
- This kind of development can bring about pluralistic and versatile activities based on various human needs
- Biased and authoritarian exercise of power is also unlikely in this kind of environment

Does my involvement really count?

What kind of norms direct:

- the division of tasks
- the exchange of information
- the conception of competence
- the expression of conflicting opinions
- the true influence different people have in decision making

in your organisation?

EWS and ENGSO – long-time partners

- The European Women and Sport network has been a partner of the European Non-Governmental Sports Organisation, ENGSO for years
- The cooperation is characterised by mutual support and positive and fruitful communication
- ENGSO has made a proposal to the EWS network on future cooperation: ENGSO is offering EWS the possibility to work independently under the ENGSO umbrella
- ENGSO has a high appreciation for the work of the EWS and regards EWS as a natural cooperation partner of ENGSO.

Solidarity and support

- Great progress have been made in several countries in gender equality during the past years
- Yet, future challenges require solidarity and continuous support to one another in local, national and international networks
- In my personal experience I have learned the importance of *women creating our common vision together and working consistently as one front supporting each other at every step*
- There will be no development without shared effort.

I still have a dream
of a more equal European sports culture