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Ethics and integrity in sport — Guidelines

Éthique et intégrité dans le sport — Lignes directrices

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ISO copyright office
CP 401 • Ch. de Blandonnet 8
CH-1214 Vernier, Geneva
Phone: +41 22 749 01 11
Email: copyright@iso.org
Website: www.iso.org

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Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular, the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO document should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see www.iso.org/directives).

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International Workshop Agreement IWA 46 was approved at a workshop hosted by the French Standardization Association (AFNOR), in association with the French Ministry of Sports and the Olympics and Paralympic Games, held in Paris, in June 2024.

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user’s national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at www.iso.org/members.html.

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Introduction

0.1 As a political, diplomatic and economic tool, sport, is at the heart of numerous aspects of society. Sport evolves in step with societal changes and can consequently be subject to tensions that challenge the very values it seeks to promote: justice, ethics, integrity, respect, fair play and honesty.

Illegal and unethical behaviour jeopardize these values and the overall appeal of sport, whether to the general public, governments or investors. Corruption, money laundering, match-fixing and breaches of human rights impact sport at all levels, and are likely to reduce confidence and trust in sport. For the sake of sporting values, sports organizations and relevant stakeholders should work together to combat these issues.

Combatting unethical practices in a professional manner and addressing financial and social shortcomings contributes to rebuilding trust and ensuring inclusion and equality.

This document provides guidelines on ethics and integrity for sports organizations, sports competitions and individuals. It applies to all types of sports organizations, including federations, professional leagues, decentralized bodies, sports associations, sports clubs, and competition organizers (private or otherwise), regardless of their size or location. This document also provides guidance on how sports organizations can limit risks relating to ethics and integrity.

0.2 The activities of sports organizations are often subject to the international codes and regulations of federations, such as the Olympic Charter of the International Olympic Committee (IOC).[7] The IOC also requires the sports organizations it recognizes, as well as their individual members, to comply with the IOC Code of Ethics.[8] Introduced in 1999, it is regularly updated and is an integral part of the Olympic Charter.

The IOC Code of Ethics promotes five fundamental principles:

— respect for the Olympic spirit;

— respect for the principle of the universality and political neutrality of the Olympic movement;

— respect for autonomy despite working with public authorities;

— respect for international conventions on the protection of human rights;

— protecting participants and keeping them safe.

The Code of Ethics reflects the Olympic values defended in the Charter and focuses on the notions of ethics, integrity and good governance. The Olympic Charter and Code of Ethics are mandatory for signatories. Any violation can lead to the application of sanctions, ranging from censure to revocation of the IOC's recognition of the party concerned. The National Olympic Committees and the International Sport Federations have adopted similar charters based on the IOC Charter.

NOTE 1 Some national sports organizations can also be subject to extraterritorial national laws of other countries, such as the UK Bribery Act (2010) applying in France, which uses definitions whose scope varies when applied within their territory or abroad.

NOTE 2 International conventions can also apply to sports organizations, such as those of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (1997),[22] the Council of Europe (1989),[23] the United Nations (2004),[24] the European Parliament's text on an integrated approach to Sport Policy: good governance, accessibility and integrity (2017),[25] or the Macolin Convention (2014),[26] some of which have been transposed into the national legislation of the States Parties.

0.3 At international and regional levels, organizations such as the Council of Europe play an active role in the fight for integrity in sport, as violations of regulations are tackled more effectively at a supranational level. The Council of Europe has been the driving force behind a number of initiatives, recommendations and international conventions.

To date, three major conventions have been written to improve the governance of sports organizations:

— the European Convention on Spectator Violence and Misbehaviour at Sports Events, adopted in 1985 following the Heysel Stadium disaster, which came into force in 2017;[27][28]

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— the Anti-Doping Convention of 1989, in force since 1990, which is the cornerstone of the fight against doping, integrity of sport and health of athletes;[23]

— the Convention on the Manipulation of Sports Competitions (Macolin Convention), in force since 2019, which encourages the interlinking between national organizations that fight match-fixing and establishes binding regulations adopted by States Parties with a view to eliminating these practices.[26]

The Council of Europe has also drafted a series of recommendations for the sports sector, such as:

— Rec(2005)8 on the principles of good governance in sport, adopted in 2005;[29]

— CM/Rec(2018)12 on the promotion of good governance in sport;[30]

— CM/Rec(2011)10 on the promotion of the integrity of sport against manipulation of results, notably match-fixing.[31]

Recommendation CM/Rec(2010)9 on the revised Code of Sports Ethics, adopted in 2010, is accompanied by an appendix called the Code of Sports Ethics.[32] This appendix helps define sports ethics and the responsibilities of governments and sports organizations in promoting integrity in sport, based on the motto “Fair play - the winning way”.

The aims of the recommendations issued by the Council of Europe are to:

— encourage Member States to coordinate and take effective measures to promote the implementation of policies of transparency and conform to democratic principles in sports governing bodies;

— reinforce confidence in sport;

— develop its role in society.

This document takes into account such international texts and initiatives, and provides aligned operational recommendations and evaluation criteria for sports organizations, to facilitate the process of integrating the principles of ethics and integrity into policies and procedures to combat unethical behaviour.

0.4 This document addresses the principles of ethics and integrity in three main areas:

— ethics and integrity of sports organizations;

— ethics and integrity of sports competitions;

— ethics and integrity of individuals.

Each of these comprises various fields of action, identified as being essential in terms of ethics and integrity, all of which should be taken into consideration:

— Field of action 1: Democratic principles;

— Field of action 2: Financial transparency;

— Field of action 3: Anti-corruption;

— Field of action 4: Prevention of conflicts of interest;

— Field of action 5: Whistleblowing;

— Field of action 6: Manipulation of sports competitions;

— Field of action 7: Anti-doping;

— Field of action 8: Mechanical and technological fraud;

— Field of action 9: Violence, discrimination and incivility;

— Field of action 10: Violence in sports arenas;

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— Field of action 11: Safeguarding registered and professional athletes.

NOTE Table B.1 provides a list of workshop contributors.

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Ethics and integrity in sport — Guidelines

1 Scope

This document provides principles and guidelines on ethics and integrity for sports organizations to enable integration into policies, procedures and activities.

These principles have three main pillars:

— ethics and integrity of sports organizations;

— ethics and integrity of sports competitions;

— ethics and integrity of individuals.

This document is applicable to all types of sports organizations, including federations, professional leagues, decentralized bodies, sports associations, sports clubs and competition organizers (private or otherwise), regardless of their size or location.

2 Normative references

There are no normative references in this document.

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminology databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

— ISO Online browsing platform: available at https://www.iso.org/obp

— IEC Electropedia: available at https://www.electropedia.org/

3.1
wrongdoing
action(s) or omission(s) that can cause harm to the *sports organization* (3.2) or one of its *stakeholders* (3.29)

Note 1 to entry: A wrongdoing primarily refers to violations of current national or international regulations, such as fraud, *corruption* (3.10) (e.g. bribes), discrimination, unauthorized use of public funds or resources, abuse of authority, conflict of interest, harassment, violence (including sexual violence), etc.

Note 2 to entry: Additionally, actions can also be considered reprehensible with respect to the internal rules set out, for example, in the organization's codes of conduct or in another relevant code of conduct: serious negligence, violation of the organization's governance policy or rules (particularly regarding the disclosure of *conflicts of interest* (3.9)), etc.

Note 3 to entry: A wrongdoing also includes actions or omissions that cause harm or risk of harm to human rights, the environment, public health and safety, or safe working practices or the public interest.

Note 4 to entry: A wrongdoing or the harm resulting from it can have occurred in the past, be currently occurring or can occur in the future.

Note 5 to entry: Potential harm can be determined by reference to a single event or a series of events.

[SOURCE: ISO 37002:2021, 3.8, modified — definition and notes to entry have been updated so they are relevant to a sport context.]

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