Results of the project on the prevention of sexualised violence in sport – Impulses for an open, secure and sound sporting environment in Europe

Dr Daniel J. A. Rhind
Overview

• Background and rationale for the project
• Aims and stages of the project
• Collaborations, challenges and caveats
• Launch of the catalogue
Background

• Sports organisations had behaved as though sexual abuse “could not possibly occur in the pristine world of sport” (Donnelly, 1999)
• Over the past decade there has been a growing recognition of the importance of this issue by international agencies (e.g., IOC, UNICEF and the European Commission)
• Lack of a formal European network makes it difficult to:
  • Address this issue
  • Raise awareness
  • Share good practice
## Experiences

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>All</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emotional harm</td>
<td>75</td>
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<td>Sexual harassment</td>
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<td>Physical harm</td>
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<td>Self harm</td>
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<td>9</td>
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<td>Sexual harm</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
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Olympic Legacy

Faster, Higher, Stronger…..Safer?
Aims

- Sensitizing individuals and organizations on all levels of the European sporting structure;
- Create a sound foundation for the methodical elicitation of relevant data to capture the dimension of sexual harassment and abuse in sports;
- Strengthening international cooperation and initiating a network between European experts, transnational umbrella organizations in the organized sport sector;
- Fostering networking and exchange of experiences in a sustainable manner through compiling a catalogue of good practices, campaigning for an open dialogue regarding the topic and gathering impulses for a European sports policy.
The Experts

Chroni, Stilian /Greece
Fasting, Kari /Norway
Hartill, Mike /United Kingdom
Knorre, Nadezda /Czech Republic
Martin, Montserrat /Spain
Papaefstathiou, Maria /Cyprus
Rhind, Daniel /United Kingdom
Rulofs, Bettina /Germany
Toftegaard Støckel, Jan /Denmark
Vertommen, Tine /Belgium
Zurc, Joca /Slovenia
Stages of the Project

• Stage 1: Initiating a structured dialogue between experts, partners, supporting organisations and other interested parties
• Stage 2: Identifying the status quo in selected European countries
• Stage 3: Compiling a catalogue of good practice
• Stage 4: Organising a conference
• Stage 5: Disseminating the results
• Stage 6: Reporting to the EU
Defining Harassment

• Harassment relates to unwanted attention or conduct, the violation of dignity and/or the creation of a threatening, hostile, intimidating, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

• Gender-based harassment means unwelcome conduct related to a person’s gender and has the effect or purpose of offending another person’s dignity.

• Sexual harassment refers to behaviour of a sexualized nature which is, unwanted, exploitative, degrading, coerced, forced and/or violent.
Defining Abuse

- **Abuse** implies that a person’s rights are violated or infringed by another. This is based on an abuse of power and trust.

- **Sexual abuse** means to trick, force or coerce a person into any sexual activity the person does not want, or is not sufficiently mature to consent to.
Challenges

- Differences in definitions
- Differences in social norms
- Differences in legal frameworks
- Differences in sport structures
- Differences in the age of consent
Caveats

• There is a lack of evaluation data regarding a number of the identified practices
• We have identified ‘good practice’ rather than “best practice”
• To maximise the impact of any strategy, there is a need to consider the specific characteristics of the given context
• We were limited to the languages spoken by the experts
Research

- Kari Fasting (Norway) conducted a survey in order to get an overview of sexual harassment, the degree to which it existed and the degree to which it could be characterised as a problem.
- More than 50% of the elite female athletes had experienced sexual harassment.
- No difference was found between athletes and non-athletes.
- Supported by the Norwegian Olympic Committee and Federations.
Awareness Raising

• Multiple victim cases have received significant media coverage since August 2011 in Greece
• Local Association of Football clubs organised a forum entitled “Breaking the Cycle of Child Sexual Abuse” (January 14th, 2012)
• This is an important step in recognising the issue
• However, there is a need to develop a sport specific approach which understands the dynamics of the coach-athlete relationship
• Follow-up action is required to build on awareness
Education and Training

• “Preventing Sexual Harassment in Sport in the Czech Republic”

• The booklet contains definitions, preventative guidelines, procedures for managing cases and key information regarding the criminal code

• Distributed to 5000 sports organisations, national sports federations, regional clubs and all schools

• Highlights the importance of political will
Action Plans and Policies

- Rote Karte gegen sexualisierte Gewalt im Sport (red card against sexualised violence in sports) - A network of key stakeholders

- Sports clubs in the Cologne region can become certified members of the network if they fulfil a specific set of prevention strategies

- Strategies include signing a code of conduct, having a police record check and attending training
<table>
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<th>Supporting and Protecting Procedures</th>
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<td>• Dutch Olympic Committee and the Dutch Sports Confederation (NOC*NSF)</td>
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<td>• Helpline established with 20 counsellors</td>
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<td>• Provides support for victims, alleged perpetrators, families and bystanders</td>
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<td>• Re-direction to other services</td>
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Monitoring and Evaluation

• There is a need to monitor and evaluate the development and implementation of safeguarding policy

• Employed an Activation States Analysis (Brackenridge et al., 2005)

• Shows that the Rugby Football League is an organisation willing to reflect and continually improve
Conclusions

• The substantial reduction of sexual and gender harassment and abuse, in and through sport, is:
  • desirable,
  • necessary and
  • achievable
• Any measures must be culturally sensitive
• We can all play a small part in making a big difference