

KU LEUVEN



Utrecht University



Play the Game

National Sports Governance Observer

Danish NSGO seminar

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Content

- NSGO project: who, why, what
- Methodological choices: defining and measuring good governance
- Results

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- Methodological choices: defining and measuring good governance
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NSGO project: who

Funding: 383,000 euro EU Erasmus+ programme + subsidies from Danish Parliament.

Coordinator: Play the Game / Danish Institute for Sports Studies (Idan)

Seven full project partners: research

Danish Institute for Sports Studies/Play the Game; German Sports University Cologne; KU Leuven; Molde University College (MUC); University Bucharest; University of Warsaw; Utrecht University

Three voluntary partners: research

Sou do Esporte (Brazil); Marco Begovic (private researcher; Montenegro); University of Central Lancashire and Molde University College (MUC)

Nine associated partners: advice and dissemination of research findings

Cyprus Sport Organisation (CSO); Danish Football Association (DBU); EPAS, Council of Europe; European Association for Sports Management (EASM); Flemish Sports Confederation (VSF); International Council of Sport Science and Physical Education (ICSSPE); Norwegian Football Association (NFF); Polish Golf Union (PGU); Romanian Football Federation (FRF)

NSGO project: why

Good governance: difficult to define, measure, and implement

- **No common understanding** of 'governance' and its (abstract) components.
- **Gap** between discourse and practice and between expectations and reality.
- **Sport federations** need to understand what principles must be implemented and how and why.
- **Public actors, stakeholders, and researchers** need reliable and valid monitoring tools to effectively signal and address weaknesses.

NSGO project: what

Main aim

Assist and **inspire** national sports organisations to raise the quality of their governance practices

Measure governance and build capacity

- Develop and apply **indicators** of good governance
- Produce **reports** on the status quo of good governance

Establish sustainable networks: between the project partners and key stakeholders

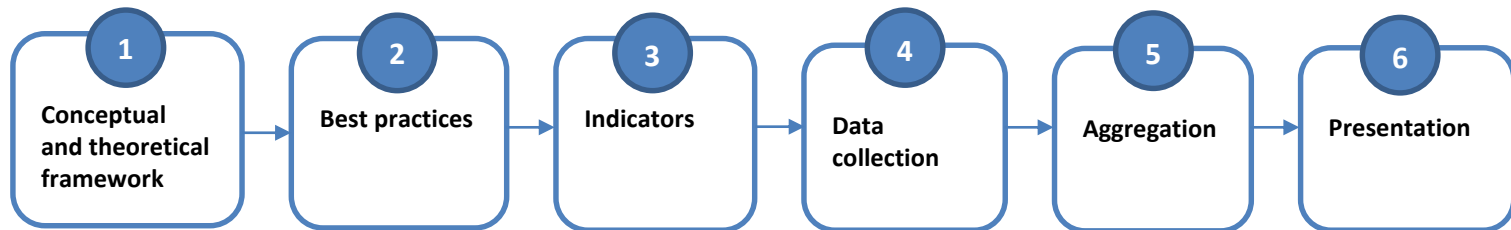
- National **training workshops** and Play the Game conference

Content

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- **Methodological choices: defining and measuring good governance**
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Methodological choices

- No single method exists
- Choices in each of the six phases of the research



Methodological choices

1

Conceptual
and theoretical
framework

Transparency refers to an organisation's reporting on its internal workings, which allows others to monitor these workings.

Democratic processes entail free, fair and competitive elections; affected actors' involvement in decision-making processes; and fair and open internal debates.

Internal accountability and control refers to both the implementation of the separation of powers in the organisation's governance structure and a system of rules and procedures that ensures that staff and officials comply with internal rules and norms.

Societal responsibility refers to deliberately employing organisational potential and impact to have a positive effect on internal and external stakeholders and society at large.

Methodological choices

1

Conceptual
and theoretical
framework

- **Transparency** enhances trust and incentivises staff and officials to perform better.
- **Democratic processes** allow for more effective policies because stakeholders contribute specialised knowledge to the decision-making process and more easily accept policies when they feel a sense of ownership over those policies. In addition, open debate generates more effective solutions to policy problems, and free, fair, and competitive elections incentivise officials to perform better.
- **Internal accountability and control** stimulates learning and decreases the likelihood of power imbalances, abuses of power, and unethical conduct.
- Demonstrating **societal responsibility** has a positive impact on legitimacy because it enhances external audiences' trust. A positive relationship with inter-nal and external stakeholders also contributes to more effective policies.

Methodological choices

2

Best practices

More than 40 codes and lists of good governance principles

- National sport federations
- International sport federations
- Non-profit sector
- Cultural sector
- For profit sector
- International organisations

Methodological choices



4 dimensions; 46 principles

274 dichotomous indicators

- Easy-to-use: yes or no
- Reliable: strict standard

Meta-data sheets

- Relevance
- Measurement criteria
- Data sources

Methodological choices

Dimension 2: Democracy

[Principle 8]

Board members are democratically (re-)appointed according to clear procedures.

Relevance

The threat of being replaced by a challenger in case of under-achieving or inappropriate behaviour incentivizes officials to conform to their constituents' wishes, perform better, and refrain from opportunistic behaviour.

Indicator	Category	Detailed evaluation criteria	Data source	Score
8.1 Do the organisation's statutes and, where applicable, internal regulations contain procedures for the appointment and reappointment of the members of the board?	Basic	Do the organisation's statutes or internal regulations contain procedures that determine the appointment and reappointment of all the members of the board? <i>Note: under these criteria, board members may be co-opted or ex officio members.</i>	Organisation's statutes and internal regulations	
8.2 Do the rules governing elections cover information on people qualified to vote; majority or percentage needed to win the election and, where applicable, weighting of votes; quorum; and election rounds?	Basic	Do the rules governing the election of board members include at least information on people qualified to vote and majority or percentage needed to win the election?	Organisation's statutes and internal regulations	
8.3 Do the rules governing elections ensure that the general assembly directly elects the majority of the members of the board?	Basic	Do the rules governing elections ensure that the general assembly directly elects more than half of the members of the board? <i>Note: federations may co-opt members of the board (in order to help fill gaps in terms of skill and expertise in the short term). They should form a minority in the board and may only be appointed for a limited period of time. If the latter is not the case, the organisation does not meet the criteria.</i>	Organisation's statutes and internal regulations	

Methodological choices



- **Compulsory sports:** athletics, football, handball, swimming, and tennis
- **Recommended sports:** gymnastics, triathlon, and the national umbrella federation (confederation).

Methodological choices

4

Data collection

An external assessment of good governance should be conducted according to the following standardized process, which comprises six phases.

Phase 1: Selecting and contacting

Make a selection of the federations to be reviewed. **Contact the federations** and explain the process (outline, time frame, benefits for federations, confidentiality). **Establish a contact point**, i.e. a federation representative who can assist you with data gathering. **In case of refusal**, explain that scoring will take place on the basis of publicly available data and give the opportunity to give feedback on the data gathered (phases 3 and 5).

Phase 2: Data gathering and first preliminary scoring

Conduct desktop research: analyse the federations' websites, statutes, internal regulations, and any other relevant available documents. Apply the indicators and **conduct a preliminary scoring** to get a clear view of the completeness of the collected data.

Phase 3: Feedback

Send a questionnaire to the federations in which you ask to provide missing data. **If necessary, conduct an interview** and ask for additional evidence (e.g. official documents, emails, newsletters, etc.).

Phase 4: Second preliminary scoring

Conduct a second preliminary scoring on the basis of the feedback received. **Be strict** so that the burden of proof lies with the federations. **Write comments** in case of uncertainty so that you (or an external party) can review your score later.

Phase 5: Final feedback

Send the scores to federations and ask for their feedback and additional evidence in case of disagreement. **Conduct a second interview** in case of any uncertainties.

Phase 6: Final scoring

Conduct the final scoring and inform the federations.

Methodological choices

4

Data collection

Dimension		# Principles	Principles used	# Indicators	Indicators used	Aggregated indicator score	Dimension score	Dimension Label	
Transparency		7	7	42	42	69%	69%	Good	
Principle 1		Principle applies?	Comment			Score	Weight	Principle Score	Principle label
1	The organisation publishes its statutes' constitution, internal regulations, organisation chart, sports rules and multi-annual policy plan on its website.	Yes				7	8	88%	Very good
Indicator		Score (yes / no / NA)	Evidence	Comment	Best practice?	Score	Weight		
1.1	Does the organisation publish its statutes on its website and are they retrievable through the home page (or sub-levels of the home page accessible through the home page) of its website?	Yes				1	1		
1.2	Does the organisation provide its statutes to its internal stakeholders through email or a protected member section of its website?	Yes				1	1		
1.3	Does the organisation publish its internal regulations on its website and are they retrievable through the home page (or sub-levels of the home page accessible through the home page) of its website?	No				0	1		
1.4	Does the organisation provide its internal regulations to its internal stakeholders through email or a protected member section of its website?	Yes				1	1		
1.5	Does the organisation publish its sports rules on its website and are they retrievable through the home page (or sub-levels of the home page accessible through the home page) of its website?	Yes				1	1		
1.6	Does the organisation provide its sports rules to its internal stakeholders through email or a protected member section of its website?	Yes				1	1		
1.7	Does the organisation publish its multi-annual policy plan on its website and are they retrievable through the home page (or sub-levels of the home page accessible through the home page) of its website?	Yes				1	1		
1.8	Does the organisation provide its multi-annual policy plan to its internal stakeholders through email or a protected member section of its website?	Yes				1	1		

Methodological choices



Considerations

- Method: no common method
- Aim: benchmarking, advocacy, informing federations -> keep it simple
- Differentiation: small, medium, large federations

Solution

- Weighting: equal weighting of dimensions and principles
- Dimension scores: average principle scores per dimension
- Principle scores: average indicator scores per principle
- Differentiation: standard 'not applicable' indicators depending on number of FTE staff

Methodological choices

Coloured labels reflect principle scores

- Easy and nuanced interpretation
- Quick overview of strengths and weaknesses

not fulfilled	weak	moderate	good	very good
0-19 %	20-39 %	40-59 %	60-79 %	80-100 %

Methodological choices

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1.8	Does the organisation provide its multi-annual policy plan to its internal stakeholders through email or a protected member section of its website?	Yes			1	1			

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Results

Figure 1: Flanders' overall NSGO index score

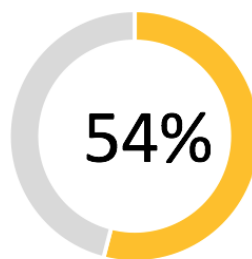
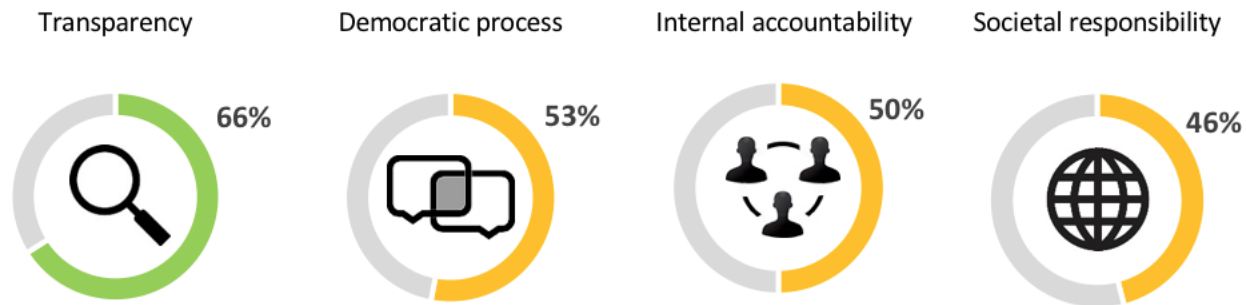


Figure 3: Flanders' scores on the four NSGO dimensions

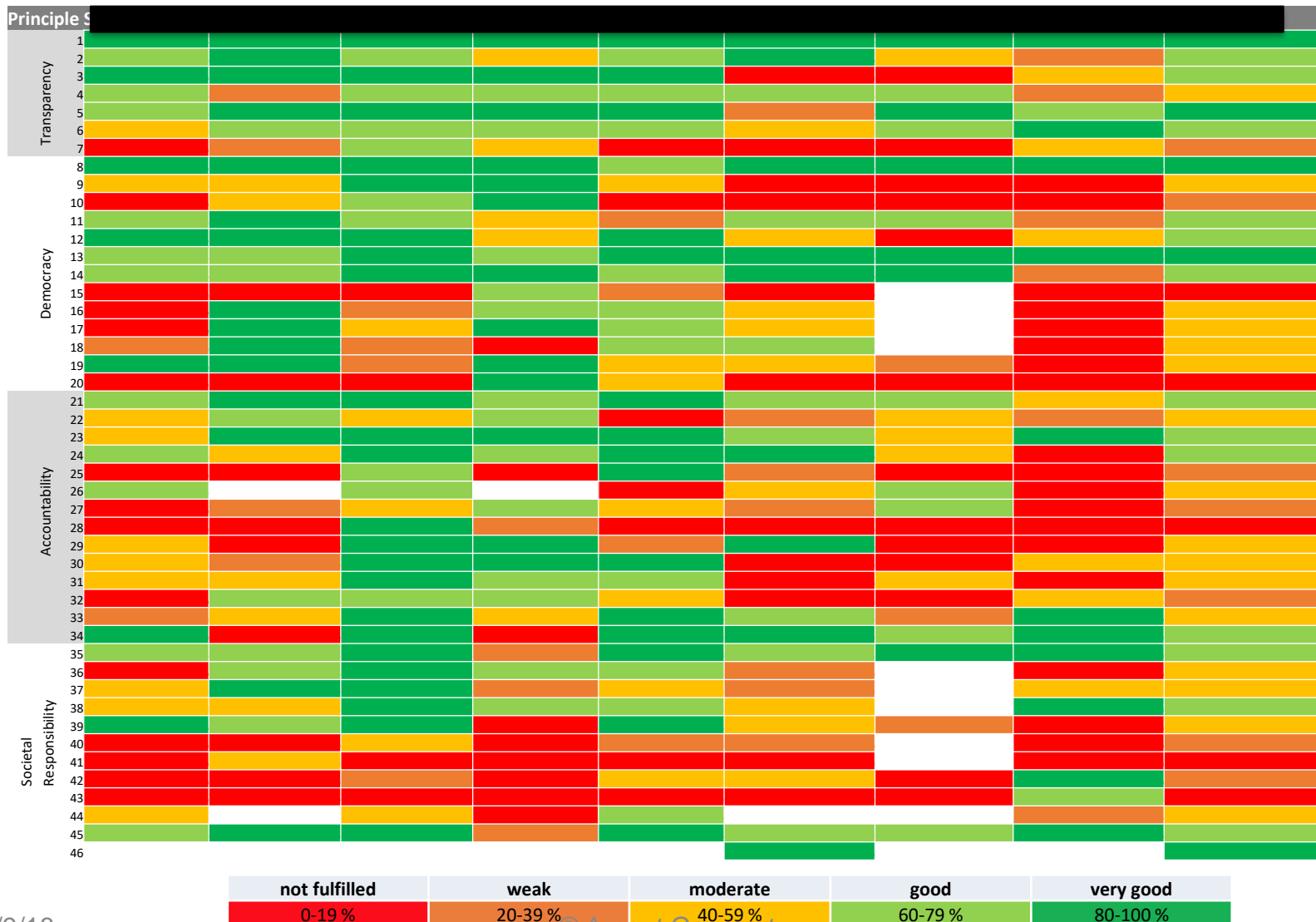


Results

	Principle								
Transparency	1. Legal and policy documents	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
	2. General assembly	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Orange
	3. Board decisions	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Orange
	4. Board members	Green	Orange	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Orange
	5. Athletes and clubs	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Orange	Green	Green
	6. Annual report	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Orange	Green	Green
	7. Remuneration	Red	Orange	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Yellow
Democratic processes	8. Elections of board members	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
	9. Policy for differentiated board	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Red
	10. Nomination committee	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Red
	11. Quorums	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Orange	Green	Green	Orange
	12. Term limits	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Red	Yellow
	13. Member representation	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
	14. Regular board meetings	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Orange
	15. Athletes' participation	Red	Red	Red	Green	Orange	Red	White	Red
	16. Referees' participation	Red	Green	Orange	Green	Green	Yellow	White	Red
	17. Coaches' participation	Red	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	White	Red
Internal accountability	18. Volunteers' participation	Orange	Green	Orange	Red	Green	Orange	Red	Red
	19. Employees' participation	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Orange	Red
	20. Gender equality policy	Red	Red	Red	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Red
	21. Supervision of board	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow
	22. Board resignation procedures	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Red	Orange	Orange
	23. Board eligibility rules	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green
	24. Clear governance structure	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Red
	25. Supervision of management	Red	Green	Green	Red	Green	Orange	Green	Red
	26. Audit committee	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Red
	27. Financial controls	Red	Orange	Yellow	Green	Green	Orange	Green	Red
	28. Board self-evaluation	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Red
	29. External audit	Yellow	Red	Green	Green	Green	Orange	Green	Red
	30. Code of conduct	Yellow	Orange	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Yellow
	31. Conflict of interest procedures	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow
Societal responsibility	32. Complaint procedure	Red	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Yellow
	33. Appeal procedure	Orange	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Orange	Green
	34. Board meeting schedule	Green	Red	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green
	35. Governance consulting	Green	Green	Green	Orange	Green	Green	Green	Green
	36. Mitigating health risks	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Orange	White	Red
	37. Combating sexual harassment	Yellow	Green	Green	Orange	Yellow	Green	White	Yellow
	38. Anti-doping	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	White	Green
	39. Social inclusion	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Yellow	Orange	Red
	40. Anti-discrimination	Red	Green	Yellow	Green	Orange	Green	White	Red
	41. Gender equality	Red	Yellow	Red	Green	Red	Red	Red	Red
42. Anti-match-fixing	Red	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Green	
43. Environmental sustainability	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Green	
44. Dual careers	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Red	Green	Green	Green	Orange	
45. Sport for all	Green	Green	Green	Orange	Green	Green	Green	Green	
46. Athletes' rights									

not fulfilled	weak	moderate	good	very good
0-19 %	20-39 %	40-59 %	60-79 %	80-100 %

Results



Thank you

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