



UNESCO Global Policy Standards for Inclusive, Equitable and Safe Sport and Physical Education (PE)

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POLICY AREA I: POLICY ENVIRONMENT

1. Political Commitment

Scope:

Political commitments towards inclusive¹, equitable², and safe³ sport⁴ and Physical Education (PE), aligned with UNESCO's International Charter of Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport (PEPAS) and relevant international and/or regional human rights treaties

Alignment with the PEPAS Charter:

Each article of the International Charter of Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport highlights the importance of concerted political action to support increased participation⁵ in inclusive, equitable, and safe sport and PE as a fundamental right for all.

Minimum Standard:

Member States **demonstrate political commitment** to advance inclusive, equitable and safe sport and PE, in alignment with UNESCO's <u>International Charter of Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport (PEPAS)</u>, including through the **ratification of** relevant international and/or regional **human rights treaties**.

Aspirational Standard:

Member States operationalize political commitments to advance inclusive, equitable, and safe sport and PE through the development of targeted (national) policies, strategies, action plans, initiatives and/or guidelines, in alignment with relevant ratified international and/or regional human rights treaties and UNESCO's International Charter of Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport (PEPAS).

2. Diversity in Leadership

Scope:

Recognition of the value of leadership diversity⁶ within sport and PE, at all levels, and the intentional development of, and investment in, initiatives and mechanisms advancing inclusive governance and related accountability⁷.

Alignment with the PEPAS Charter:

The Charter highlights the importance of equitable access to leadership roles and diverse representation in sport and PE governance. See Articles $\underline{1}$, $\underline{3}$, and $\underline{10}$.

Minimum Standard:

Member States undertake measures to advance leadership diversity within sport and PE, at all levels, through the development of strategies and programmes that identify and address barriers to inclusive representation, with special attention given to under-represented demographic groups⁸, and by strengthening related accountability measures.

Aspirational Standard:

Member States **systematize** efforts to advance diversity in leadership within sport and PE, at all levels, through the **establishment and sustained use of formal mechanisms**, **programmes and/or quotas** that advance inclusivity and equity, with special attention given to under-represented demographic groups, and with **periodic updates** integrated into implementation strategies to ensure **continued relevance and accountability**.

3. Inter-ministerial Cooperation

Scope:

A whole-of-government approach⁹ that aligns (national) sport and PE policies with those of other line ministries (for example Education, Gender Equality, Youth, Social Development etc) to support the effective and integrated delivery of broader (national) development agendas related to inclusion, equity and safety.

Alignment with the PEPAS Charter:

The Charter highlights the importance of inter-ministerial cooperation to leverage the full potential of sport and PE in Articles 3, 8, 10 and 12.

Minimum Standard:

Member States **undertake** *ad-hoc* **inter-ministerial cooperation** to support the integrated development and delivery of inclusive, equitable, and safe sport and PE policies, including through **cross-government**¹⁰ **strategies** and **implementation plans**.

Aspirational Standard:

Member States **systematize** whole-of-government cooperation through the **establishment and sustained use** of a **centralised coordination mechanism**¹¹ to support the integrated development and delivery of inclusive, equitable, and safe sport and PE policies.

POLICY AREA II: POLICY DEVELOPMENT

4. Evidence-based 12 Policy-Making

Scope:

The continuous use of, and investment in, research and evidence to enhance the relevance, efficiency, and impact of (national) sport and PE policies.

Alignment with the PEPAS Charter:

The Charter emphasizes the value of research and evidence in effective policy-making in Article 6 and reinforced in Article 4.

Minimum Standard

Member States undertake measures to use national and, where relevant, international research and evidence in the development and update of (national) sport and PE policies, strategies, action plans, initiatives, and/or guidelines, with special attention given to inclusion, equity, and safety.

Aspirational Standard:

Member States systematize the integration of robust and relevant national and international research and evidence in the development and update of inclusive, equitable and safe (national) sport and PE policies, strategies, action plans, initiatives, and/or guidelines, including through the establishment and sustained use of formal mechanisms and related good governance processes which engage academic institutions, research bodies, and other knowledge actors.

5. Participatory Approach

Scope:

The active, meaningful, and iterative engagement of a diverse range of stakeholders, especially those from under-represented or marginalized communities, in the development of (national) sport and PE policies to support the relevance of policy content and to advance outcomes related to inclusion, equity and safety.

Alignment with the PEPAS Charter:

The Charter highlights the importance of inclusive and participatory policy development in addressing systemic inequities. This is reflected in Articles 3, 6, 8 and 10.

Minimum Standard:

Member States undertake measures to engage diverse stakeholder groups¹⁴ in the development and update of (national) sport and PE policies, strategies, action plans, initiatives, and/or guidelines, with special attention given to persons with disabilities, women, youth, displaced persons, survivors of violence¹⁵, the elderly, and people historically marginalized based on race, colour, descent, sexual orientation or national or ethnic origin.

Aspirational Standard:

Member States systematize participatory approaches to sport and PE policy-making through the establishment and sustained use of formal processes for the active, meaningful, and continuous engagement of diverse stakeholder groups in the development and update of (national) sport and PE policies, strategies, action plans, initiatives, and/or guidelines, with special attention given to persons with disabilities, women, youth, displaced persons, survivors of violence, the elderly, and people historically marginalized based on race, colour, descent, sexual orientation or national or ethnic origin.

6. Policy Content

Scope:

Reference to the principles of inclusion, equity and safety for all as core components of (national) sport and PE policies, strategies, action plans, initiatives, and/or quidelines.

Alignment with the PEPAS Charter:

The <u>Charter</u> calls upon Member States to embed its principles in the content of (national) sport and PE policies, ensuring that the policies actively promote inclusive, equitable, and safe participation in sport and PE for all as a fundamental human right.

Minimum Standard:

Member States undertake measures to establish inclusion, equity, and safety as fundamental components of (national) sport and PE policies, strategies, action plans, initiatives, and/or guidelines.

Aspirational Standard:

Member States systematize the promotion of inclusion, equity, and safety as central components of (national) sport and PE policies, strategies, action plans, initiatives, and/or guidelines.

POLICY AREA III: POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

7. Investment

7a. Budget

Scope:

The sustained and transparent ¹⁶ allocation of financial resources to support the implementation of inclusive, equitable, and safe (national) sport and PE policies, strategies, action plans, initiatives and/or guidelines.

Alignment with the PEPAS Charter:

The Charter highlights the importance of and transparent financial resources in sport and PE in Articles 3 and 10.

Minimum Standard:

Member States take measures to allocate financial resources to inclusive, equitable, and safe sport and PE through the development of costed implementation plans.¹⁷

Aspirational Standard:

Member States systematize the transparent allocation of financial resources to inclusive, equitable, and safe sport and PE, including through the establishment and sustained monitoring of fully-costed governance, implementation and accountability mechanisms which engage diverse stakeholder groups from public policy-making.

7b. Infrastructure 18 and Resources 19

Scope:

Investment in, and development and maintenance of, spaces, facilities and equipment which enable the delivery of inclusive, equitable and safe sport and PE.

Alignment with the PEPAS Charter:

The Charter highlights the need for inclusive, equitable, and safe infrastructure and resources to ensure the right of participation for every individual in sport and PE. This is emphasized in Article 8 and reinforced in Articles 5, and 9.

Minimum Standard:

Member States undertake measures to advance quality sport and PE infrastructure and resources by investing in the development and maintenance of spaces, facilities, and equipment that meet basic accessibility and safety needs, with special attention given to the most marginalized demographic groups.[†]

Aspirational Standard:

Member States systematize investments in the development and maintenance of sport and PE spaces, facilities, and equipment that correspond to relevant accessibility and safety standards, including through the establishment and sustained monitoring of fully-costed governance, implementation and accountability mechanisms, and that include procurement policies integrating inclusion, equity and safety criteria.

7c. Impact Investment Approaches

Scope:

The application of impact measurement methodologies²⁰ and impact- or result-based financing instruments²¹ in sport and PE to enhance the effectiveness of public investment, mobilize additional financing and maximize the impact of inclusive, equitable and safe sport and PE.

Alignment with the PEPAS Charter:

The Charter highlights the impact of sport and PE and the importance of measuring it in Articles 2 and 6.

Minimum Standard:

Member States undertake measures to integrate impact measurement methodologies and/or impact- or result-based financing instruments in the financing and implementation of inclusive, equitable and safe sport and PE by using impact measurement data to support investment decisions and by developing (national) frameworks to promote the use of impact- or results-based financing instruments.

Aspirational Standard:

Member States sustain the integration and application of impact measurement methodologies and impact- or result-based financing instruments in the financing and implementation of inclusive, equitable and safe sport and PE by systematizing the use of impact measurement data to support investment decisions and by using impact- or result-based financing instruments for (national) sport for development projects.

Including empowerment partners (youth, women, persons with disabilities, displaced persons, elderly, and other vulnerable groups or people in vulnerable situations, with respect for diversity regardless of gender or sexual orientation); impact partners (teachers, coaches, community leaders, parents, entrepreneurs, NGOs); scaling partners (ministries, local authorities, business and philanthropy, development cooperation and funding institutions, UN and regional IGOs, sports organizations, athletes and other influencers, media); knowledge partners (academia and practitioners); environmental and sustainability partners; and innovation and technology partners

[†] Including persons with disabilities, women, youth, displaced persons, survivors of violence, the elderly, and people historically marginalized based on race, colour, descent, sexual orientation or national or ethnic origin.

8. Human Capital Development

8a. Education and Professional Development

Scope:

Investment in, and equitable access to, quality education and related professional qualifications, suitable trainings, and continuous learning and professional development opportunities for all those in the sport and PE workforce²² to enhance capacities related to inclusive, equitable and safe delivery.

Alignment with the PEPAS Charter:

The Charter highlights the need for quality education and professional development for those working in sport and PE. This is emphasized in Article $\underline{7}$ and reinforced in Articles $\underline{4}$, $\underline{9}$ and $\underline{10}$.

Minimum Standard:

Member States undertake measures to enhance education and professional development opportunities within the sport and PE workforce, with special attention given to under-served²³ demographic groups, including through the development and equitable provision of quality higher-level education, professional qualifications, and trainings (both pre-service and in-service²⁴) which embed principles and develop capacities related to inclusion, equity and safety.

Aspirational Standard:

Member States continue to strengthen education and professional development opportunities within the sport and PE workforce, with special attention given to under-served demographic groups, including through the development and equitable provision of quality higher-level education and professional qualifications, and through the regular and continuous provision of comprehensive professional development opportunities (including both pre-service and in-service trainings), which embed principles and develop capacities related to inclusion, equity and safety, and which are supported by the systematic evaluation of learning outcomes, feedback and monitoring mechanisms that inform updates to (national) frameworks.

8b. Workforce Diversity

Scope:

Policies and practices that support sustained investment in advancing workforce diversity across sport and PE, at all levels, including related to recruitment, retention, and professional engagement standards.

Alignment with the PEPAS Charter:

The Charter emphasizes the importance of workforce diversity and practices that ensure diverse representation and equitable treatment in sport and PE systems. This is reflected in Articles 1, 7 and 10.

Minimum Standard:

Member States undertake measures to advance workforce diversity in sport and PE, at all levels, through the identification and mitigation of barriers to inclusive and equitable representation, particularly related to recruitment, retention, and professional engagement strategies and time-bound initiatives which respond to the needs of under-represented demographic groups.

Aspirational Standard:

Member States **systematize efforts** to advance workforce diversity in sport and PE, at all levels, through the **establishment and sustained monitoring of fully-costed formal mechanisms, programmes and/or quotas** that mitigate barriers to inclusive and equitable representation, with special attention to recruitment, retention and professional engagement initiatives which respond to the intersectional needs of under-represented demographic groups.

9. Collective Action

9a. Partnerships

Scope:

Policies and practices which prioritize inclusive multi-stakeholder partnerships - between public authorities, sports organizations, the private sector (where relevant), and non-governmental actors (including civil society and academia) - that increase investment in and drive progress towards inclusive, equitable, and safe sport and PE.

Alignment with the PEPAS Charter:

The Charter highlights the importance of multi-stakeholder partnerships and concerted, collective action to strengthen inclusive, equitable, and safe sport and PE. This is reflected in Articles 3, 6, 8, 10, and 12.

Minimum Standard:

Member States undertake measures to develop multi-stakeholder partnerships that advance inclusive, equitable, and safe sport and PE, including through the development and collective implementation of targeted activities and projects (including events and campaigns), pooled funding strategies, exchange of good practice, and capacity-building programmes.

Aspirational Standard:

Member States **prioritize**, **systematize** and **sustain multi-stakeholder partnerships** that advance inclusive, equitable, and safe sport and PE, and **establish formal mechanisms that monitor and report transparently** on the integrated implementation of **activities and projects** (including events and campaigns), pooled funding strategies, exchange of good practice, and capacity-building programmes.

9b. Public Awareness

Scope:

Investment in public education and awareness campaigns and initiatives focused on the societal and individual benefits of participation in inclusive, equitable, and safe sport and PE.

Alignment with the PEPAS Charter:

The Charter highlights the importance of raising public awareness to promote the value of inclusive, equitable and safe sport and PE, as reflected in Articles 3, 6, 9, 10, 11, and 12.

Minimum Standard:

Member States undertake efforts to develop and implement public education and awareness initiatives that promote the individual and social benefits of inclusive, equitable and safe sport and PE, including through targeted advocacy campaigns, events and activations.

Aspirational Standard:

Member States **prioritize**, **systematize** and **sustain investments** in a **continuum of public education and awareness initiatives** that promote the individual and social benefits of inclusive, equitable and safe sport and PE, including through **targeted and intersectional advocacy campaigns**, **events and activations**, which are supported by **feedback and monitoring mechanisms** that assess both the effectiveness and efficiency of messaging and delivery, and inform continuous improvement.

9c. Governance of Major Sport Events²⁵

Scope:

Promoting the good governance of major sport events through coordinated cross-government and multi-stakeholder collaborations which aim to increase participation in inclusive, equitable, and safe sport and PE, with special attention to the most marginalized groups, and to deliver meaningful social, economic, and environmental legacies.

Alignment with the PEPAS Charter:

The Charter highlights the need for concerted, collective action and coordination in hosting and organizing major sport events, as reflected in Articles 3, 5, and 10.

Minimum Standard:

Member States undertake measures to develop and adopt ad-hoc cross-government and multi-stakeholder collaborations in the context of major sport events, beginning from the bidding stage, to increase participation in inclusive, equitable, and safe sport and PE, with special attention to the most marginalized groups, including within event legacy initiatives.

Aspirational Standard:

Member States establish and sustain the use of integrated mechanisms, structures and/or processes, in the run-up and follow-up to major sport events (i.e. beginning from the bidding stage, and continuing through planning, delivery, and legacy phases), which systematize cross-government and multi-stakeholder collaborations to increase participation in inclusive, equitable and safe sport and PE, with special attention to the most marginalized groups, and to deliver meaningful social legacies, in addition to environmental and economic considerations.

POLICY AREA IV: POLICY EVALUATION

10. Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanisms

Scope:

The establishment and use of structured mechanisms and processes that centralize the monitoring and evaluation of (national) sport and PE policies and programmes, with special attention to the effectiveness and impacts of inclusion, equity and safety components.

Alignment with the PEPAS Charter:

The Charter highlights the importance of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in enhancing the effectiveness of (national) sport and PE policies and programmes, as reflected in Articles 4, 6, 10, 11, and 12.

Minimum Standard:

Member States undertake measures to centralize the monitoring and evaluation of (national) sport and PE policies and programmes, to determine their impacts, and identify opportunities to strengthen components related to inclusion, equity and safety.

Aspirational Standard:

Member States establish and sustain the use of formal mechanisms that centralize the monitoring and evaluation of (national) sport and PE policies and programmes, with processes and protocols that support feedback loops aimed at enhancing outcomes related to inclusion, equity and safety – particularly from marginalized groups who should be actively engaged.

11. Data and Knowledge

Scope:

Investment in the collection, disaggregation, analysis, and use of data related to participation in sport and PE to identify inequalities, track progress, and generate evidence which informs the development and implementation of inclusive, equitable, and safe (national) sport and PE policies.

Alignment with the PEPAS Charter:

The Charter advocates for the collection and use of data and knowledge as essential for informed decision-making and the development of inclusive, equitable, and safe (national) sport and PE policies. This is emphasized in Article 6 and reinforced in Article 6.

Minimum Standard:

Member States **undertake measures to collect, maintain and use** baseline data²⁶ related to participation in sport and PE, with special attention to inclusivity, equity, and safety.

Aspirational Standard:

Member States **systematize and centralize the collection, update and use** of **disaggregated data**²⁷ related to participation in sport and PE, with special attention to inclusivity, equity and safety.

12. Reporting and Follow-up

Scope:

The regular and transparent communication of findings from policy evaluations, and the investment in and use of formal accountability mechanisms to respond to those findings and improve inclusive, equitable, and safe sport and PE policies.

Alignment with the PEPAS Charter:

The Charter emphasizes the importance of reporting and follow-up in ensuring transparency, accountability, and ongoing progress related to the implementation of sport and PE policies, as reflected in Articles 4, 6, and 10.

Minimum Standard:

Member States undertake measures to report on the implementation of (national) sport and PE policies, with special attention to inclusivity, equity and safety, including through independent reviews and multi-stakeholder working groups.

Aspirational Standard:

Member States establish and sustain the use of fully-costed formal reporting mechanisms that ensure regular and transparent communication of sport and PE policy evaluations, including components related to inclusion, equity, and safety, and that integrate formal follow-up processes to support continuous policy improvement.

GLOSSARY OF KEY TERMS

- ¹ **Inclusion** refers to the process of improving the terms of participation in society for people who are disadvantaged on the basis of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion, or economic or other status, through enhanced opportunities, access to resources, voice and respect for rights (UN).
- ² Equity refers to the process of ensuring fairness for all individuals and groups by addressing both present and historical inequalities to achieve equal opportunities and outcomes. In sport, this involves removing systemic barriers and, when necessary, implementing targeted measures to counteract discrimination and bias, particularly for underrepresented and marginalized groups. Equity is a means to achieving true equality in access, participation, and leadership (adapted from <u>UNICEF Glossary of terms related to DEI</u>).
- 3 Safe sport refers to a sport environment that is respectful, equitable and free from all forms of violence and abuse (adapted from IOC).
- ⁴ **Sport** is used as a generic term, comprising sport for all, physical play, recreation, dance, organized, casual, competitive, traditional and indigenous sports and games in their diverse forms (<u>UNESCO</u>).
- ⁵ **Participation** refers to active and voluntary engagement of individuals or groups, based on their freedom of choice, not simply as observers, but as active contributors and co-creators in cultural, educational, sporting, or societal activities. In the context of sport, this encompasses athletes, spectators, decision-makers and, essentially, all stakeholders involved in the wider sports ecosystem (adapted from UNESCO).
- ⁶ **Diversity** refers to the presence and recognition of differences in identities, backgrounds, and experiences within a group or society. In sport, diversity means ensuring the representation and inclusion of individuals across gender, disability, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, age, and socio-economic status in all areas, including coaching, leadership, and decision-making, to create a more inclusive and representative sport ecosystem (adapted from UN Global Compact).
- ⁷ **Accountability** refers to the process whereby public service organizations and individuals within them are held responsible for their decision and actions, including their stewardship of public funds, fairness, and all aspects of performance, in accordance with agreed rules and standards, and fair and accurate reporting on performance results vis-à-vis mandated roles and/or plans (<u>UN</u>).
- ⁸ **Under-represented demographic group** refers to a subset of a population, defined by shared demographic characteristics, whose proportional presence, visibility or capacity of expression within a specific context is significantly lower than their proportion in the general population. (inspired by UNESCO, Cultural organizations and the promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions).
- ⁹ Whole-of-government approach refers to the collaboration between different government ministries, departments, and agencies aimed at breaking down institutional silos, improving policy coherence, and ensuring integrated decision-making across government.
- ¹⁰ **Cross-government** refer to multi-actor collaborations between government departments, ministries, or agencies aimed at building consensus on a formal set of policies designed and implemented (adapted from OECD).
- ¹¹ **Centralised coordination mechanism** is a formal government-led structure or process that brings together multiple ministries, government agencies, and institutions to ensure a coordinated approach to policy implementation. This mechanism may focus broadly on issues such as violence prevention, anti-discrimination/anti-racism, or social inclusion, with sport being one of the sectors involved. It can take the form of interministerial committees, national action plans, or cross-sectoral working groups that facilitate collaboration, align strategies, allocate resources, and monitor progress across different government entities (UNESCO Global Sport Policy Survey).
- ¹² **Evidence-based policy-making** refers to the process of integrating scientific research and grey literature with the work of those responsible for policy formulation, within governments, institutions, relevant stakeholders, and UNESCO itself, to ensure that decisions are informed by up-to-date knowledge and empirical evidence (adapted from <u>UNESCO</u>).
- 13 Marginalized refers to a form of acute and persistent disadvantage rooted in underlying social inequalities (EFA Global Monitoring Report 2010).
- ¹⁴ **Diverse stakeholder groups** refer to the set of formal organizations, institutions, or informal networks from various sectors—including private, civil society, government, intergovernmental, and international entities—that are part of a given ecosystem (adapted from <u>UN</u>).
- ¹⁵ **Violence** refers to intentional or unintentional physical, sexual, psychological, economic, or symbolic harm against an individual, oneself, a group of people, or a community. Violence includes threats, coercion, and manipulation. It can be targeted or indiscriminate, inflicted in private or public, and happen in conflict and non-conflict settings (adapted from UNDRR and UNHCR).
- ¹⁶ **Transparent** refers to the practice of openly sharing accurate, timely, and comprehensive information about an entity's activities, decisions, resource use, and results. It enables stakeholders to monitor performance, ensures accountability, and supports informed governance (adapted from ILO).
- ¹⁷ **Costed implementation plan** refers to a document that describes, in sequence, an identified set of challenges, accompanied by a contextually appropriate, financially justified plan for deployment and monitoring of resources (<u>UN</u>).
- ¹⁸ **Infrastructure** refers to the primary physical and organizational construction needed to facilitate sport participation. From a functional point of view, sports infrastructure enables community members to participate in sports (<u>Hallmann, K., Wicker, P., Breuer, C., & Schönherr, L., 2012</u>).
- ¹⁹ **Resources** refer to the physical, human, financial, and informational inputs required to effectively deliver sport and PE programmes. This includes equipment, funding, operational services and assistive technologies that enable access, participation, and quality experiences for all individuals, regardless of ability, gender, race, religion; socioeconomic background, or other factors.
- ²⁰ **Impact measurement methodologies** refer to the process of identifying and assessing the social, economic and environmental effects of an intervention, both intended and unintended, to understand its contribution to broader development outcomes (UNESCO Global Sport Policy Survey).

- ²² **Sport and PE workforce** refers to individuals working in the sport industry, from leadership roles (presidents, board members) to executive, managerial, and technical positions. It encompasses coaches, officials, volunteers and professionals within sport organizations, federations, clubs, among others (adapted from the All in Plus Report, Council of Europe).
- ²³ An **under-served** demographic group refers to a subset of a population, defined by shared demographic characteristics, that does not have access to, has limited access to, or faces barriers in accessing basic services (adapted from Kowalsky M., Handbook of Research on Social Inequality and Education, 2019).
- ²⁴ **Pre-service and in-service**: Pre-service refers to training in education and skill development before starting a professional role, while in-service training is ongoing learning for those already working, to update and improve their skills (adapted from WHO).
- ²⁵ **Major Sport Events** refer to sport events with a large number of spectators, national and/or international media attention. These events also have a significant environmental, social and economic impact (adapted from the Declaration of Berlin).
- ²⁶ **Baseline data** refers to data that describes the situation to be addressed by a programme or project that serves as the starting point for measuring changes in the situation and the performance of that programme or project (UN).
- ²⁷ **Disaggregated data** refers to statistics that are collected and presented by distinct categories or groups, such as sex, gender, age, ethnicity, religion, or any other characteristics, to show the respective results separately for each group (adapted from <u>UN</u>).

²¹ **Impact- or result-based financing instruments** refers to instruments, such as a social impact bond (SIB), that align financial incentives with the achievement of desired and measurable social outcomes, encouraging more effective and efficient delivery of services (UNESCO Global Sport Policy Survey).