



# The state of governance in international sport

Results of a test study by AGGIS-partners among international federations in 2012

Arnout Geeraert



# AGGIS project partners



Univerza v Ljubljani



AGGIS - Action for Good Governance in International Sports Organisations



## Objectives

- to identify guidelines and possible solutions to improve the governance of international and European sports organisations
- to further qualify and stimulate the public debate about governance issues related to international sport
- mobilising a group of leading European experts in the governance of sport to analyse the current state of governance in international and European sports organisations

# Outcomes



**Action for Good Governance in International Sports Organisations**

[www.aggis.eu](http://www.aggis.eu)  
[playthegame.org](http://playthegame.org)



**Action for Good Governance in International Sports Organisations**

Final report • April 2013  
JENS ALM (ed.)

Play the Game/  
Danish Institute for Sports Studies  
[www.aggis.eu](http://www.aggis.eu) / [playthegame.org](http://playthegame.org)



The logo for 'IDRÆTTENS ANALYSEINSTITUT' with the 'playthegame' text below it.

Download the AGGIS leaflet and the final report at [www.aggis.eu](http://www.aggis.eu)

**AGGIS - Action for Good Governance in International Sports Organisations**

A small, thumbnail-sized version of the AGGIS leaflet and final report cover, showing the man in the suit, the title, and the logos.

# What did we do?

- Review of 35 Global Sport Governing Bodies
  - ✓ Recognised by the IOC
  - ✓ No regional federations
  - ✓ Not including IOC, WADA,...
- Focus on areas perceived as problematic: accountability, stakeholder participation and executive body members in SGBs

Today: focus on

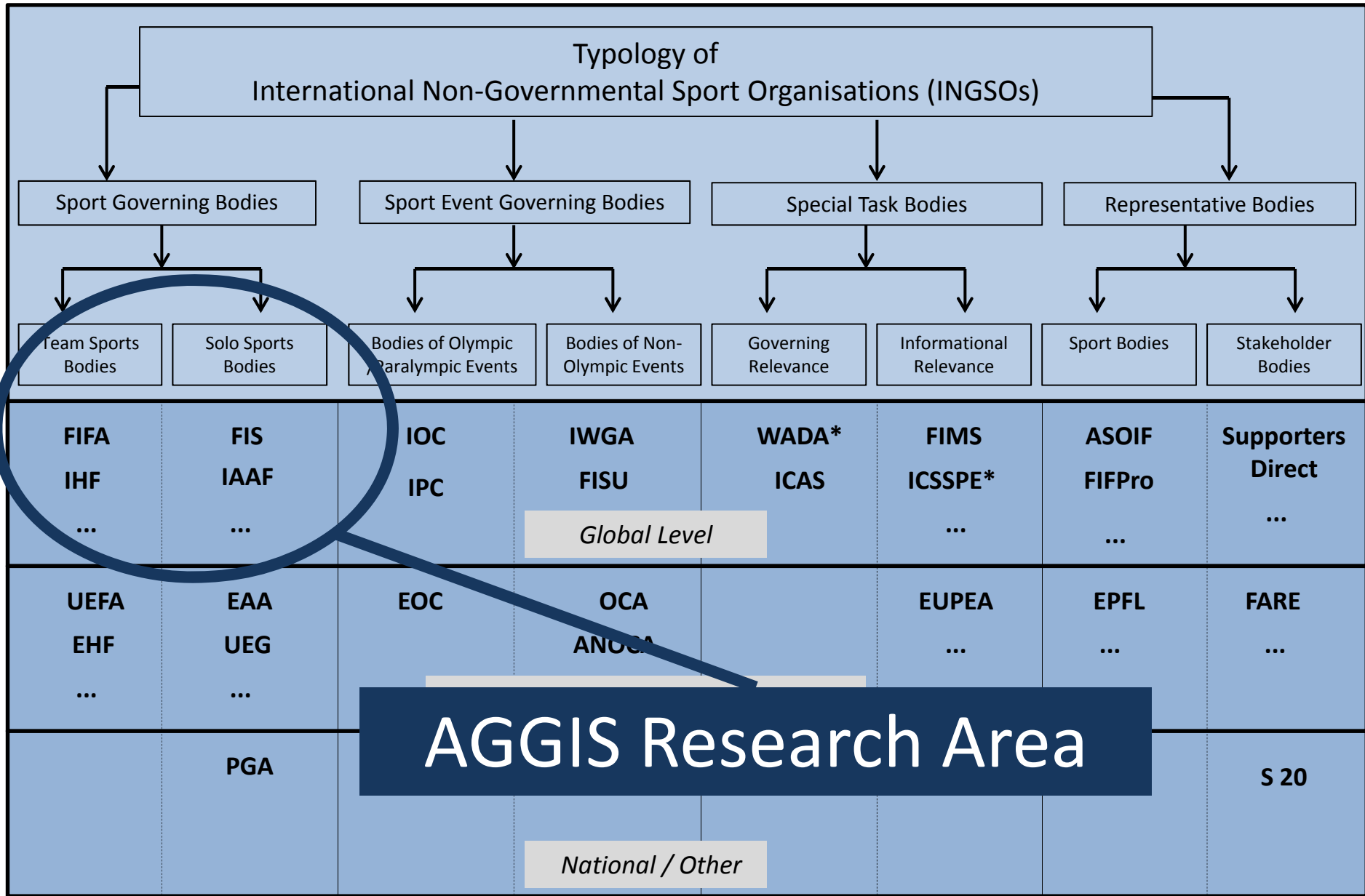
- ✓ Certain accountability issues
- ✓ Lack of term limits elected officials

What is the current state with regard to good governance?

Is there a need for the Sports Governance Observer?



lack of empirical evidence



Key: \* = Hybrid Organisation; IHF = Int. Handball Federation; EAA = European Athletics Association; UEG = European Union of Gymnastics; IWGA = Int. World Games Association; FISU = Int. University Sports Federation; OCA = Olympic Council of Asia; ANOCA = Association of National Olympic Committees of Africa; CGF = Commonwealth Games Federation; ICAS = International Council of Arbitration for Sport; FIMS = Int. Federation of Sports Medicine; ICSSPE = Int. Council of Sports Science and Physical Education; EUPEA = European Physical Education Association; ASOIF = Association of Summer Olympic Associations; S 20 = Sponsors Voice Germany

# Accountability: What?

- A. Parliamentarians
- B. Board of directors
- C. ExCo international sports organisations

Has to explain and justify

- A. People
- B. Shareholders
- C. Member federations/ ethics committee

Lack of accountability arrangements constitutes a potential breeding ground for

- ✓ Corruption
- ✓ Concentration of power
- ✓ Lack of democracy
- ✓ Lack of effectiveness

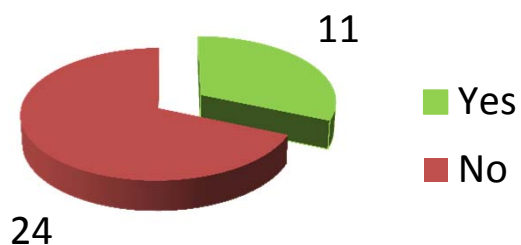
Three elements: A, B & C  
Accountability arrangements help to make sure 3 elements are present

## Some accountability issues: Finances and audit committee

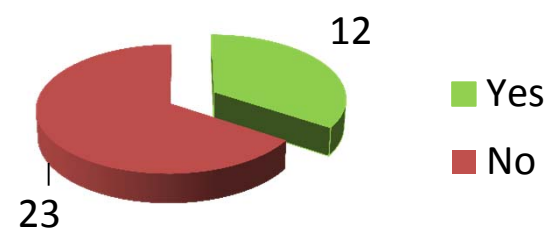
‘Explain and justify conduct’ : monitoring mechanisms

- ✓ Need for complete and credible information on the accuracy of the accounting and financial reporting of the governing body.
- ✓ Financial and Audit Committee

Financial Committee



Audit Committee





# Accountability issues: Funding

## Funding to Member Federations: potential danger for accountability

- ✓ Can be used to get support for a certain policy agenda
- ✓ Member Federations may become benevolent in order to obtain funding

↳ MFs will not be inclined to pose questions and pass judgement

↳ They will turn from WATCHDOGS into LAPDOGS for ExCo members

## Solution?

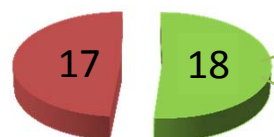
- ✓ Make specific decisions related to the distribution of funding objectively reproducible
  - Funding should be awarded according to objective, pre-established criteria
- ✓ Make distributed funding open to outside scrutiny
  - Distribute funds in a transparent manner

## Accountability issues: Funding

What is *status quaestionis*? Are funds distributed transparently and according to pre-established criteria?

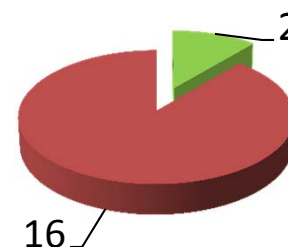
NO

Funding distributed?



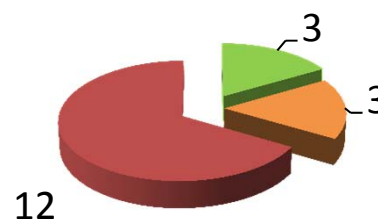
Yes No/Unknown

Objective criteria?



Yes No

Transparent distribution?



Yes Partly No

## Accountability issues: Ethics committee

In theory an ethics committee is an excellent tool for holding ExCo members accountable

↳ However: 3 elements of accountability must be present

- ✓ 'explain and justify conduct'
- ✓ 'pose questions'
- ✓ 'pass judgement'

↳ Therefore:

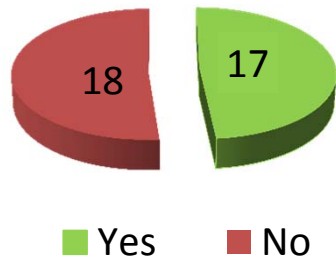
- ✓ ethics committee should have the power to initiate proceedings *ex officio*, without referral by the ExCo or president
- ✓ ethics committee should be sufficiently independent from the ExCo

# Accountability issues: Ethics committee

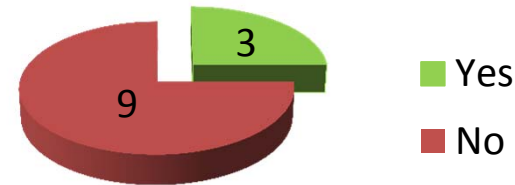
Are ethics committees present, are they sufficiently independent and can they initiate proceedings ex officio?

NO

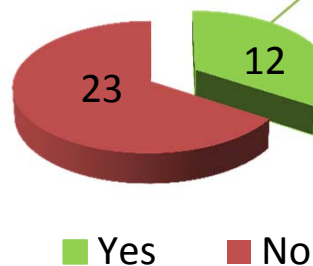
Code of ethics?



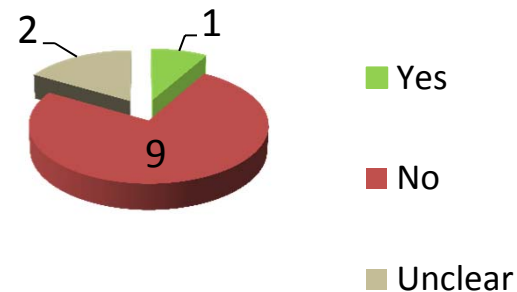
Independent ethics committee?



Ethics Committee?



Ex officio investigations?



## Term limits for elected officials

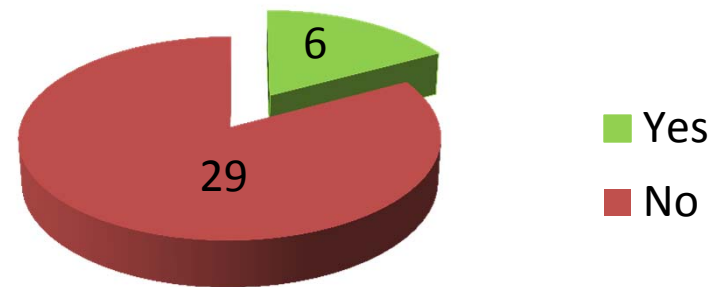
In general, term limits constitute a remedy for several tenure issues

- ✓ High rates of reelection stemming directly from the advantage incumbents enjoy over challengers
- ✓ Apathetic voters due to the certain reelection of incumbents
- ✓ Monopolisation of power

## Term limits for elected officials

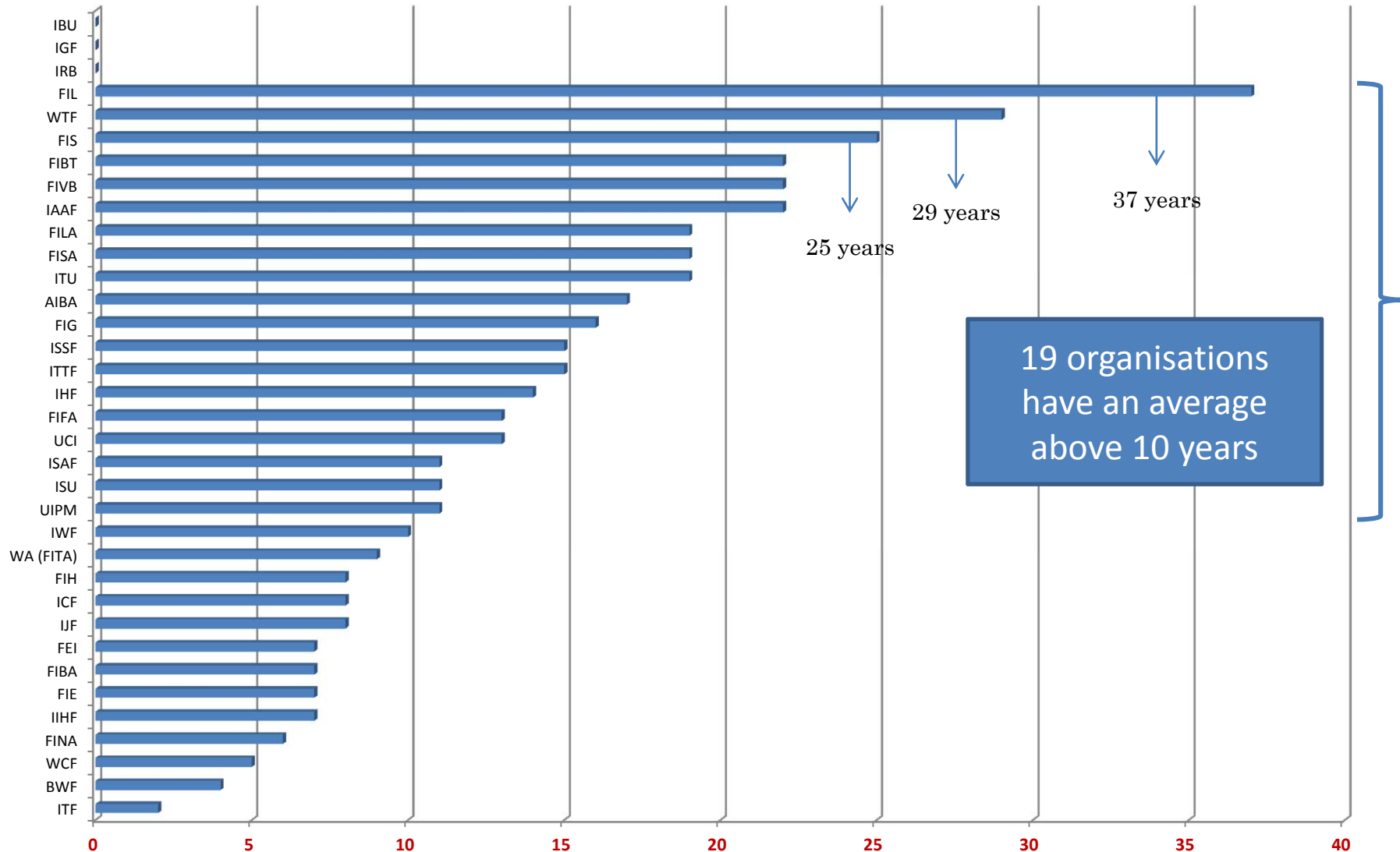
What is the *status quaestionis* with regard to term limits for elected officials?

Presence of term limits



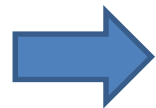
# Term limits for elected officials

Example of potential monopolisation of power: average number of years in office for the 35 sports governing body presidents



# Conclusions

- Our study
  - Empirical evidence for lack of good governance in SGBs
  - Ethical scandals: institutionally induced
- How can change be achieved? (Katwala 2000)
  - Change from within
  - Change through collapse and crisis
  - Change through pressure from outside
- Conclusion: what can we learn from this?
  - Need for list of good governance indicators
  - Need for external pressure (benchmarking)



**SPORTS GOVERNANCE OBSERVER**

**AGGIS - Action for Good Governance in International Sports Organisations**





## TRANSPARENCY AND PUBLIC COMMUNICATION

1	The organisation publishes its statutes/constitution on its website	
2	The organisation publishes its by-laws on its website	
3	The organisation publishes its sport rules on its website	
4	The organisation publishes its organisational chart on its website	
5	The organisation publishes its strategic plan on its website	
6	The organisation publishes the agenda and minutes of its statutory meetings on its website	
7	The organisation gives the media access to its general assembly	
8	The organisation publishes basic biographical information about its board members and senior officials on its website	
9	Contact details to board members and senior officials are published on the website	
10	The organisation publishes information about its member federations on its website	
11	The organisation publishes its annual general activity report on its website	
12	The organisation publishes reports of its standing committees on its website	
13	The organisation publishes an annual financial report on its website	
14	The organisation publishes remuneration, for example per diem payments and bonuses of its board members and senior officials on its website	
15	The organisation publishes main event reports with detailed and relevant information on its website	

## CHECKS AND BALANCES

1	The organisation has an internal audit committee	
2	The organisation is externally audited by international recognised standards	
3	The organisation has accounting control mechanisms in place	
4	The organisation separates regulatory and commercial functions	
5	The organisation has or recognises an Ethics/Integrity Code for all its members and officials	
6	The organisation has clear conflict of interest rules	
7	The organisation recognises a code or has its own standards of good governance	
8	The organisation has an independent body (e.g. Ethics Committee) to check the application of the rules referred in question 5-7 above	
9	The organisation's decisions can be contested through internal channels specified in its governing document/s	
10	The organisation recognises Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) as an external channel of complaint and allows athletes and officials to contest decisions in civil courts	
11	The organisation recognises and complies with the WADA World Anti-Doping Code	

## DEMOCRATIC PROCESS

1	There are elections of the president and the governing bodies and standing committees	
2	The elections are on the basis of secret ballots and clear procedures detailed in its governing document/s	
3	The organisation offers to the candidates standing for election opportunities to present their programme/manifesto	
4	The decisions on allocation of major events are made through a democratic, open and transparent process	
5	The organisation's major policy decisions are taken by ballot in the general assembly/congress or similar	
6	The organisation defines a quorum in its governing document/s for its decision making bodies	
7	The organisation's elected officials have a term limit	
8	The organisation's general assembly meets at least once a year	
9	The organisation's governing body meets regularly	
10	The organisation has gender equity guidelines for its leading officials	
11	The criteria for a bid for major events are communicated to its members in good time	
12	The organisation provides opportunity for stakeholders to be represented within the organisation	

## SOLIDARITY

1	The organisation allocates specific resources for the global development of grass-root activities	
2	The organisation has legacy requirements for communities in which its events are hosted	
3	The organisation inspects and audits the use of funds given to its internal stakeholders	
4	The organisation adopts an environmental management system (ISO, EMAS <sup>4</sup> or similar) for its major events	
5	The organisation has a well-defined Social Responsibility (SR) strategy and/or programmes	
6	The organisation controls the use of funds given to its SR programmes and applies ISO 26000 <sup>5</sup> standard or similar	
7	The organisation offers consulting to member federations in the areas of organisations and management through workshops, one to one advice or similar	
8	Representatives from economically disadvantaged member federations can apply for support to attend the general assembly	
9	The organisation adopts a clear anti-discrimination policy	

# AGGIS - Action for Good Governance in International Sports Organisations



Geeraert, A., Alm, J. And Groll, M. (2013). Good governance in international sport organisations. An analysis of the 35 Olympic Sport Governing Bodies. *International journal of sport policy and politics*, iFirst.

[arnout.geeraert@kuleuven.be](mailto:arnout.geeraert@kuleuven.be)

[arnout@playthegame.org](mailto:arnout@playthegame.org)

**AGGIS - Action for Good Governance in International Sports Organisations**

