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## Child Safeguarding in Sport

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| <b>Title of the practice</b>             | <b>Flemish Sports Tribunal</b>   |
| <b>Country</b>                           | Belgium  |
| <b>Organisation(s) responsible</b>       | Vlaams Sporttribunaal, Sport Vlaanderen (Flemish sport government)   |
| <b>Main topic addressed</b>              | Sports tribunal for violence, (sexual) harassment and abuse in sport   |
| <b>Type of resource/practice</b>         | Support systems and case management  |
| <b>Target group(s)</b>                   | Sport federations, victims/survivors   |
| <b>Timing</b>                            | Operational since 1 <sup>st</sup> of January 2021  |
| <b>Language</b>                          | Dutch  |
| <b>Brief description of the practice</b> | The Flemish Sports Tribunal began operations on 1 <sup>st</sup> of January 2021. Since this date it is possible for sport federations which are members of the Sports Tribunal to refer serious cases of violence (physical/psychological), (sexual) harassment and abuse. Individual victims may under certain conditions may also file a complaint. If the case is admissible, an independent investigation will be started. The case will subsequently be brought before a chamber of independent judges who will adjudicate based on the disciplinary regulations of the sport federation concerned. The major advantages of this system are that sport federations do not need to organise the disciplinary procedure themselves and the Flemish Sport Tribunal is independent. Currently fifty-nine sport federations are members of the Flemish Sports Tribunal and fifty of those rely on the Flemish Sports Tribunal for the adjudication of their cases. |
| <b>Context and objectives</b>            | Relevant Flemish legislation obliges sports federations to have or be able to refer cases to a disciplinary body that can both protect and sanction. The Flemish Sports Tribunal is the option for sports federations who do not wish to create their own disciplinary body.   |
| <b>Steps/activities of the practice</b>  | The Flemish Sports Tribunal was created in 2020. In 2020 the Flemish Doping Tribunal (established in 2008 to deal with only doping cases) was transformed into the Flemish Sports Tribunal. The Flemish Sports Tribunal opened its doors for cases of violence, (sexual) harassment and abuse in sport in January 2021.  |
| <b>Resources required</b>                | The Flemish Sports Tribunal was able to build upon the resources of the Flemish Doping tribunal. It also received a limited starting subsidy from the Flemish Government.  |
| <b>Achievements and outcomes</b>         | The Flemish Sports Tribunal created a specific chamber for violence, (sexual) harassment and abuse in sport which consists of nine judges. It also created a unit that investigates incoming cases before they are transferred to the chamber. The unit consists of five legally trained investigators.<br><br>The functions of the chamber and investigation unit is outlined in a specific procedural regulation drafted by the Flemish Sports Tribunal.   |

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| <b>Challenges and limitations</b>       | <p>At the time of writing further professionalisation is needed.</p> <p>Limited funding is a challenge as current funding only allows the employment of one part-time (0.5) employee.</p>  |
| <b>Follow-up ideas and future plans</b> | <p>The Flemish Sports Tribunal wants to further expand its scope of activities. In addition to doping cases and cases of violence, (sexual) harassment and abuse in sport, it wants to offer sports federations the option of bringing cases of a general disciplinary nature and is considering the possibility of dealing with match fixing cases.</p> |
| <b>Further information</b>              | <p><a href="http://www.vlaamssporttribunaal.be">www.vlaamssporttribunaal.be</a></p>  |