



# GENDER EQUALITY IN SPORT

FINLAND



## FACTSHEET



TOTAL POPULATION

**5.5 MILLION**

MEDIAN AGE

**43 YEARS**



GDP PER CAPITA

**€40,700**

POPULATION

**50.6%**

WOMEN

MEN

**49.4%**

LIFE EXPECTANCY

**84 YEARS**

WOMEN

MEN

**79 YEARS**

Source: Eurostat (2023)

### ALL IN PLUS: PROMOTING GREATER GENDER EQUALITY IN SPORT

The following is a breakdown of six gender equality indicators for sport in Finland:

1. Gender equality in leadership
2. Gender equality in coaching and officiating
3. Gender equality in participation (from grassroots to elite sport)
4. Preventing gender-based violence in sport
5. Gender equality in media/communication
6. Policies and programmes to address gender equality in sport

The results are based on 26 respondents from Finland – 23 sport federations, the Finnish Olympic Committee, the Finnish Paralympic Committee and the Ministry of Education and Culture, the national agency responsible for sports. Data was collated between May and September 2024 on the basis of 2023 data. The data presented is based on responses to the relevant questions, including those who selected 'don't know' or did not provide a specific answer. As a result, percentages may not always total 100%.

The data in this factsheet is from **"All In Plus: Promoting greater gender equality in sport"**, a European Union (EU) and Council of Europe (CoE) joint project. The overarching goal of **"All In Plus"** is to highlight the benefits of greater gender equality in sport. The key objectives are to ensure that the relative invisibility of women in sport and the ongoing lack of awareness about gender imbalance in sport and related issues are brought clearly to the forefront.

The project covers and standardises data collection in 20 countries and Kosovo,\* based on a set of commonly agreed "basic" gender equality indicators in six strategic fields: **leadership; coaching and officiating; participation; gender-based violence; media/communication; gender equality policies and programmes.**

► To find more results for Finland and the other countries involved in the project have a look at the project website: <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/gender-equality-in-sport/home>

\* All references to Kosovo, whether the territory, institutions or population, in this text shall be understood in full compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.

All In Plus: Promoting greater gender equality in sport

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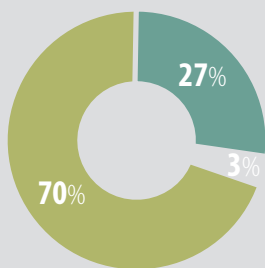
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# GENDER EQUALITY IN LEADERSHIP

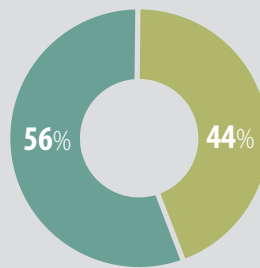
## 1 FEMALE AND MALE PRESIDENTS OF SPORT FEDERATIONS AND OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC COMMITTEES (n=25)



## 2 FEMALE AND MALE VICE-PRESIDENTS OF SPORT FEDERATIONS AND OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC COMMITTEES (n=25)



## 3 FEMALE AND MALE EXECUTIVE HEADS OF SPORT FEDERATIONS AND OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC COMMITTEES (n=25)



**n=x** refers to the number of respondents (i.e. sport federations, Olympic and Paralympic Committees, and national authorities responsible for sport) that replied to the question. **N=x** refers to the number of persons in a specific role (vice-presidents, board members, etc.)

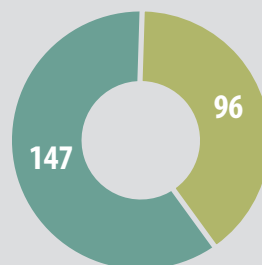
- ▶ Only six (26%) national sport federations have a female president. These include the athletics, badminton, canoe and rowing, equestrian, gymnastics and taekwondo federations. A female president also heads the Paralympic Committee **1**.
- ▶ Among the 40 vice-presidents of the 25 respondents, 50% (N=20) are women and represent the athletics, basketball, biathlon, fencing and pentathlon, figure skating, football, gymnastics, judo, skiing, swimming, table tennis, taekwondo, triathlon and wrestling federations, as well as the Olympic and Paralympic Committee **2**.
- ▶ In national sport federations, less than half of executive heads (N=9) are women, as men hold the majority (61%) of the positions.

- ▶ **THE OLYMPIC COMMITTEE** is chaired by a male president and has both a woman and a man as vice-presidents, whereas the **PARALYMPIC COMMITTEE** has both a female president and vice-president.

- ▶ The two Committees combined have 21 board members, of whom 11 are women and 10 are men. Six women chair sports commissions/committees compared to nine men.

- ▶ In the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture, there is one woman and one man in managerial positions in the field of sport.
- ▶ Among the 10 federations that responded to the question, there were 1,579 voting members of the (general) assembly in 2023 – 41.5% of whom were women (N=655).

## 4 NATIONAL OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC SPORT FEDERATION AND COMMITTEE BOARD MEMBERS COMPRISE 96 WOMEN AND 147 MEN (N=243)



The representation of female board members among sport federations and the Olympic & Paralympic Committees in Finland reaches 39.5%.

The canoe and rowing, gymnastics, swimming and wrestling federations reported a higher representation of women compared to men.

## WOMEN IN DECISION-MAKING: ACTIONS & MEASURES

**73%** (n=19) of the respondents, including 16 sport federations, the Olympic and Paralympic Committees, and the Ministry of Education and Culture, have implemented measures to recruit or increase the number of women in elected/appointed decision-making positions in sport.

Exceptions are the badminton, basketball, canoe and rowing, equestrian, figure skating, judo and skiing federations.

- ▶ **68%** (n=13) have transparent, clear and gender friendly election/appointment procedures.
- ▶ **63%** (n=12) include gender equal representation in decision-making in their statutes.

- ▶ **47%** (n=9) have adopted gender quotas/targets in elections or appointment procedures.
- ▶ **32%** (n=6) have developed an action plan to increase the number of women in decision-making positions, initiated and/or supported research/studies on gender equality in decision-making positions, and organised awareness-raising campaigns to encourage women to run for decision-making positions.
- ▶ **21%** (n=4) have organised training leadership education and training for women and set up a mentoring programme for women in decision-making positions.

# GENDER EQUALITY IN COACHING

There are **3,315 women (31%)** and **7,291 men (69%)** among registered coaches, trainers and instructors in Finland **5**.

5

**FEMALE AND MALE REGISTERED COACHES AND EMPLOYED ELITE LEVEL COACHES IN THE NATIONAL OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC SPORT FEDERATIONS (%)**



## ALL REGISTERED COACHES

Women are underrepresented among coaches in Finland reaching 31% **5**.

**Federations with the highest percentage of female coaches:**

- ▶ Figure skating: 96.5%
- ▶ Equestrian: 92.5%
- ▶ Gymnastics: 89%.

**Federations with the highest percentage of male coaches (90-99%):**

- ▶ Ice hockey: 95.5%
- ▶ Basketball: 92%
- ▶ Table tennis: 91%
- ▶ Shooting: 90%.

## ELITE LEVEL COACHES

**38 women (26.5%)** and **105 men (73.5%)** coach elite level athletes or national teams **5**.

Of the 38 women, 17 coach men's national teams/athletes – of the 105 men, 42 coach women's national teams/athletes.

- ▶ **17%** (n=4) of the federations do not employ a female elite level coach.
- ▶ **61%** (n=14) of the federations employ at least one female elite level coach.
- ▶ **70%** (n=16) of the federations employ at least one male elite level coach.

## WOMEN IN COACHING: ACTIONS & MEASURES

**58%** (n=15) of the respondents, including 13 sport federations, the Paralympic Committee, and the Ministry of Education and Culture, have taken measures to recruit or increase the number of female coaches since 2020.

**61%** (n=14) of the federations surveyed have offered their coaches training courses on the topic of gender equality in sport.

**48%** (n=11) offered training pertaining to gender-based violence in sport.

These are the most to least commonly used measures:

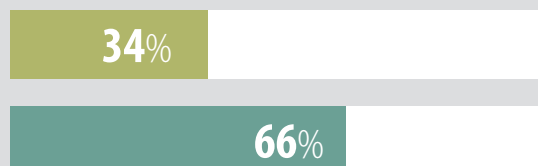
- ▶ Awareness-raising campaigns targeting women (60%, n=9)
- ▶ Education/training courses for female coaches (53%, n=8)
- ▶ Positions reserved for women coaches in education/training courses (47%, n=7)
- ▶ Transparent, clear and gender-sensitive recruitment procedures (40%, n=6)
- ▶ A written action plan to increase the number of female coaches and a mentoring programme for (future) female coaches (33%, n=5)
- ▶ Setting up a network of female coaches and initiating and/or supporting research/studies on gender equality in coaching (27%, n=4)
- ▶ Dedicated resources for female coaches (13%, n=2)
- ▶ Establishing a database of female coaches (7%, n=1).

# GENDER EQUALITY IN OFFICIATING

## SPORTS OFFICIALS

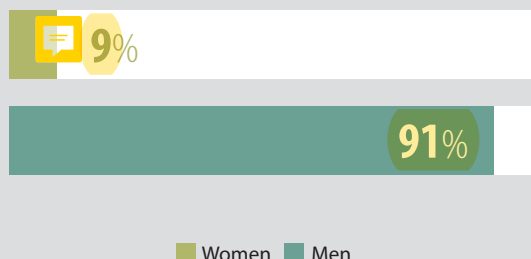
There are **3,666 women (37%)** and **6,230 men (63%)** among registered referees, judges, umpires, race commissioners etc. supervising compliance with rules during sporting events in Finland **7**.

### 6 WOMEN AND MEN OFFICIATING IN ELITE LEVEL COMPETITIONS



There were 58 women officiating in elite level competitions in 2023, of whom 28 (48%) officiated games where men were competing. In contrast, there were 113 men officiating in elite level competitions, of whom 87 (77%) officiated games where women were competing. In other words, of the total 171 sports officials who officiate elite games, 34% were women and 66% were men.

### 7 REGISTERED REFEREES, JUDGES, UMPIRES, RACE COMMISSIONERS ETC.



- ▶ In the Tokyo Olympic Games (2020), 10 Finnish sports officials officiated – three women and seven men.
- ▶ In the Tokyo Paralympic Games (2020), five Finnish sports officials officiated – one woman and four men.
- ▶ In the Beijing Olympic Games (2022), three Finnish sports officials officiated – two women and one man.
- ▶ In the Beijing Paralympic Games (2022), one woman and one man officiated.

Since 2020, **43.5%** (n=10) of the federations have reported implementing measures to recruit or increase the number of female sports officials:

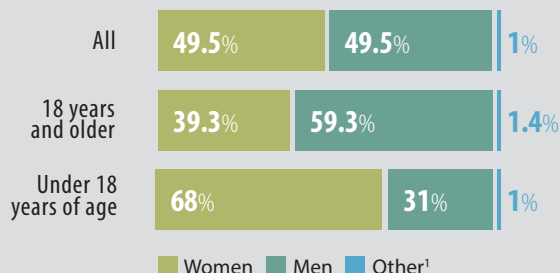
- ▶ **40%** (n=4) have adopted transparent, clear and gender-sensitive recruitment procedures
- ▶ **30%** (n=3) have a written action plan to increase the number of female sports officials
- ▶ **20%** (n=2) report offering education/training courses, have established a network of female sports officials and initiated and/or supported research/studies on gender equality in officiating
- ▶ **10%** (n=1) have dedicated resources for female sports officials, implemented awareness-raising campaigns targeting women, offered mentoring programme for (future) female sports officials and established a database of female sports officials.

**52%** (n=12) of the federations report offering their sports officials training courses on the topic of gender equality in sport.

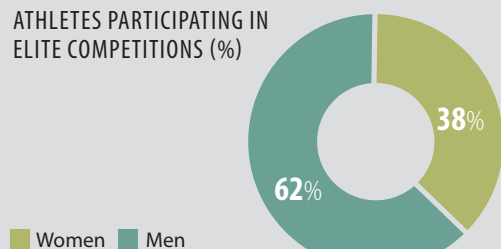
**35%** (n=8) have offered training pertaining to gender-based violence in sport.

# GENDER EQUALITY IN PARTICIPATION

## 8 MEMBERSHIP OF THE NATIONAL OLYMPIC AND/OR PARALYMPIC SPORT FEDERATIONS (%)



## 9 ATHLETES PARTICIPATING IN ELITE COMPETITIONS (%)



- ▶ 15 national federations reported 118,738 girls as members of their sports clubs – this number accounts for 68% of young people who are members of sports clubs out of 174,558 members **8**.
- ▶ Boys account for 54,070 (31%) of young people who are members of sports clubs **8**.
- ▶ 1,750 (1%) of young people who are members of sports clubs are of other/undisclosed gender.
- ▶ There are more women than girls active in sport clubs/federations with 126,797 (52%) members compared to 18,738 (48%) girls.
- ▶ Men represent the majority among male members of sport federations at 191,341 (78%).
- ▶ In the adult category, women's participation reaches 39.3% compared to 59.4% men and 1.4% other/undisclosed **8**.
- ▶ When we count all members from all categories, men represent the highest percentage with 38.5% over women (25.5%), girls (24%), and boys (11%).
- ▶ The sports with the highest proportion of women compared to men are equestrian (95%), figure skating (89%) and gymnastics (84%). Shooting (92%) and table tennis (92%) have the most male members, followed by wrestling (82%) and judo (77%). The athletics, swimming and taekwondo federations are more gender balanced, with a gender gap ranging between 6 and 13%.
- ▶ There are 1,213 women (38%) and 1,962 men (62%) among athletes participating in elite competitions **9**.

## GIRLS AND WOMEN IN SPORT: ACTIONS & MEASURES

**54%** (n=14) of the sport federations surveyed, as well as the Ministry of Education and Culture, have taken action to promote women and girls' access to participation in sport and/or physical activity since 2020.

- ▶ **79%** (n=11) have allocated financial resources to girls' and women's sport and/or physical activities.
- ▶ **64%** (n=9) have ensured equal access to sport facilities for girls/women and other participants.
- ▶ **50%** (n=7) have implemented awareness-raising campaigns targeting girls and women, have a written action plan to increase the number of active girls and

women in sport and have offered taster sessions for girls and women.

- ▶ **43%** (n=6) have offered training seminars for coaches and decision-makers and have changed the competition offers to be more tailored to girls and women.
- ▶ **29%** (n=4) have initiated and/or supported research/studies on gender equality in participation.
- ▶ **21%** (n=3) have changed the provision of sport by introducing new sports, activities or ways of practising them.

The **Ministry of Education and Culture** requires organisations that receive state aid to promote sport to have equality and non-discrimination plans.

## FEMALE ELITE LEVEL ATHLETES: ACTIONS & MEASURES

Since 2020, **58%** (n=15) of respondents have taken action to allocate resources equally among women and men.

These include the athletics, canoe and rowing, fencing and pentathlon, figure skating, golf, ice hockey, judo, shooting, skiing, table tennis, taekwondo, and wrestling federations, as well as the Olympic and Paralympic Committees and the Ministry of Education and Culture.

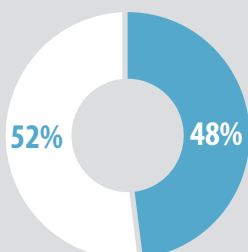
1. Non-binary individuals or those for whom the federation does not have information about their gender.



# PREVENTING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN SPORT

10

NATIONAL OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC SPORT FEDERATIONS THAT HAVE A POLICY/ ACTION PLAN TO PREVENT AND COMBAT GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN SPORT (%)



- Have a policy and/or action plan
- Don't have a policy and/or action plan

**46%** (n=12) of respondents, including sport federations and the Olympic Committee, have adopted a written policy and/or action plan for preventing and combating gender-based violence in sport.

The majority (n=8) adopted their policy/action plan from 2020 onwards.

The equestrian and judo federations were the first to put their policy in place in 2016 and the most recent was table tennis in 2024.

For 10 federations, the policy is associated with the national mechanisms on prevention of gender-based violence in sport.

Among those that have a policy and/or action plan:

- ▶ **67%** (n=8) have human resources dedicated to its implementation;
- ▶ **50%** (n=6) have a monitoring and evaluation mechanism in place;
- ▶ **42%** (n=5) have funds allocated to its implementation.

The **gymnastics federation** has allocated €10,000 and the **golf federation** €5,000 for the implementation of their action plans to prevent and combat gender-based violence.

## PREVENTING AND COMBATING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE: ACTIONS & MEASURES

**58%** (n=15) of the respondents, including 13 sport federations, the Olympic Committee, and the Ministry of Education and Culture, have implemented specific actions/measures to prevent and combat gender-based violence in sport.

The actions taken most often to prevent and combat gender-based violence include:

- ▶ Written action plan to prevent and combat gender-based violence in sport, training seminars, workshops, etc. for coaches and/or for decision-makers, awareness-raising campaigns on this topic, appointment of a welfare or a protection officer and provision of formal complaint procedure for reporting gender-based violence (73%, n=11)
- ▶ Codes of conduct/ethical guidelines for coaches and/or people in managerial and decision-making positions as well as guidelines for handling cases of gender-based violence, minimising risks procedures (criminal record checks, risk assessment procedure, etc.) and provision of support services for victims/survivors (60%, n=9)
- ▶ Inclusion of a mention in the organisation's statutes/rules/laws that forbids gender-based violence (53%, n=8).

The National Gender Equality Act, the Criminal Code and the Sports Act provide a framework for sports operators to prevent, intervene and punish gender-based violence. The **Ministry of Education and Culture's** criteria for state funding include a healthy and safe environment, equality and equity, and good governance, all of which support the actions to prevent and combat violence mentioned above. In addition, the Ministry's co-ordinating body, the Advisory Board on Ethical Issues in Sport, which includes members from different ministries as well as organisations (including the Human Rights League and SETA), often deals with violence-related issues.

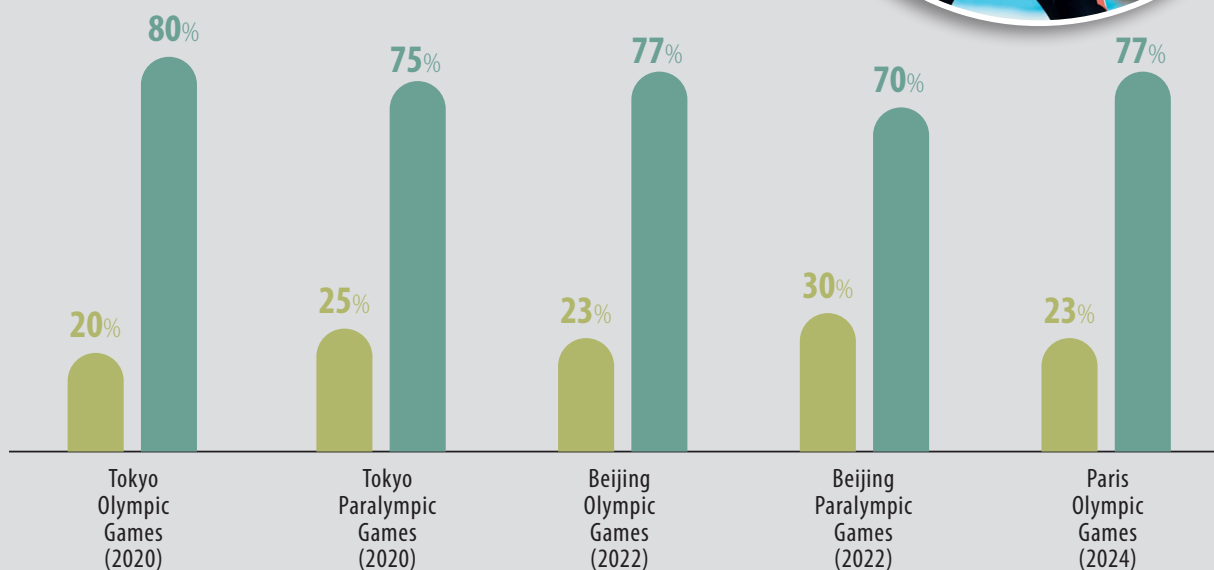
# GENDER EQUALITY IN MEDIA/COMMUNICATION

11

## PRESS ACCREDITATIONS AT THE OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC GAMES (%) ALL REPRESENTED COUNTRIES

(Source: IOC & IPC)

Women Men



In 2022-2023, the International Sports Press Association (AIPS) issued **6** memberships for women and **53** for men in Finland.

Since 2020, **42%** (n=11) of the respondents have targeted the media (public and/or private) for a gender-balanced representation of those practising sport.

**58%** (n=15) have focused on social media for a gender-balanced representation of athletes.

However, only **35%** (n=9) have guidelines for gender-balanced representation in communication materials (texts, pictures, etc.).

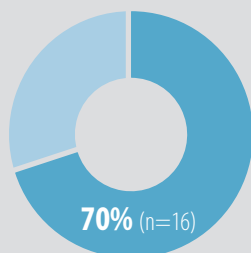
According to the **Finnish Paralympic Committee**, its communication is based on the 50/50 principle, showcasing an equal number of stories about women and men.

The **shooting federation** highlights that the choice of images and personal stories in its publications is based on ensuring an equal representation of genders and persons with disabilities.

# GENDER EQUALITY POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES

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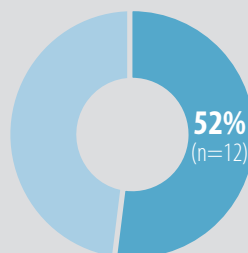
GENDER EQUALITY INCLUDED IN LONG-TERM PLAN OR BUSINESS PLAN



Athletics, basketball, canoe and rowing, equestrian, fencing and pentathlon, figure skating, golf, gymnastics, ice hockey, judo, sailing, shooting, swimming, table tennis, taekwondo and wrestling.

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SPECIFIC WRITTEN POLICY FOR ADVANCING TOWARDS GENDER EQUALITY IN SPORT



Athletics, basketball, canoe and rowing, equestrian, figure skating, golf, ice hockey, sailing, shooting, table tennis, taekwondo and wrestling.

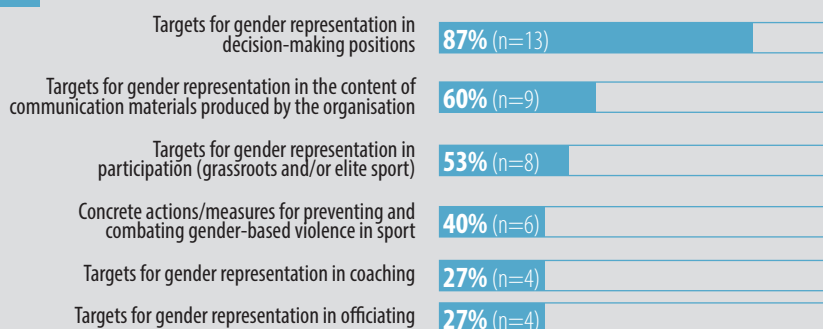
► Gender equality is included in 70% (n=16) of the sport federations' long-term plans but only 52% (n=12) have a policy for advancing gender equality in sport. Most action plans were introduced between 2022 and 2024 **12 13**.

► All federations that have a policy also include gender equality in their overall long-term goals.

► Gender equality is included in both the **Olympic and Paralympic Committees'** and the **Ministry of Education and Culture's** long-term plans, which include a policy for advancing gender equality.

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GENDER EQUALITY IN THE POLICY/ACTION PLANS BY NATIONAL OLYMPIC AND/OR PARALYMPIC SPORT FEDERATIONS, COMMITTEES AND THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE (n=15)



► **73%** (n=11) of the respondents report having a mechanism for monitoring and evaluating their action plan.

► **67%** (n=10) dedicate human resources and **27%** (n=4) allocate funds to the implementation of the policy/action plan.

► **87%** (n=13) are seeking partnerships/co-operation with other stakeholders in the implementation of the policy/action plan.

► Among respondents that have an action plan for gender equality, 13 target gender representation in decision-making positions, and nine target gender representation in communication materials. Eight target gender representation in participation (grassroots and/or elite sport), and six have concrete guidelines for preventing and combating gender-based violence in sport. Four target gender representation in coaching and officiating **14**.

► The **Ministry of Education and Culture** targets gender representation in decision-making and officiating in their equality plan. In addition, it targets gender representation in their communication materials and sets out measures for preventing and combating gender-based violence in sport.

► The **Olympic Committee** also has a gender equality plan, targets gender representation in decision-making, as well as in their communication materials and set out measures for preventing and combating gender-based violence in sport.

► The **Paralympic Committee** targets gender representation in participation (grassroots and/or elite sport).

According to the **Ministry of Education and Culture** in Finland, equal treatment and gender representation are defined in legislation and regulations.

## GENDER EQUALITY STRATEGIES

► **22%** of the sport federations are taking affirmative action and **9%** have a gender mainstreaming strategy.

► The **Ministry of Education and Culture** and the **Olympic Committee** are using both affirmative action and mainstreaming strategies.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION  
22% (n=5)

GENDER MAINSTREAMING STRATEGY  
9% (n=2)

According to the **Ministry of Culture and Sport** in Finland, when considering the amount of a grant, good gender equality work is taken into account in public funding. In addition, the Ministry awards annual prizes for outstanding gender equality work.



## FINLAND: CONCLUDING POINTS

Since 2020, significant steps have been taken to promote gender equality in the sport sector.

**Gender equality is included in 70% (n=16) of the sport federations' long-term plans** and 52% (n=12) have **a policy for advancing gender equality**.

22% of federations use **affirmative action** measures, and 9% have a **gender mainstreaming strategy**, compared to only 11% and 32% respectively in 2019.

The Ministry of Education and Culture and the Olympic Committee are using both affirmative action and mainstreaming strategies.

Significantly, 46% of respondents, including sport federations, the Olympic and Paralympic Committees and the Ministry of Education and Culture, have adopted a policy and/or action plan for **preventing and combating gender-based violence in sport**.

The national laws in Finland have a robust gender equality focus which is reflected in the work of the Olympic and Paralympic Committees, the Ministry of Education and Culture and the sport federations.

Overall, **men are overrepresented in leadership positions** in Finnish sports organisations. Only six (26%) national sport federations report having a female president, as well as the Paralympic Committee.

Women comprise less than 40% of all board members in sport federations and the Olympic & Paralympic Committees, yet **50% of vice-presidents are women**.

Out of the federations surveyed, 17% do not employ a female elite level coach.

Finally, of the total 171 sports officials who officiate elite games, 34% are women and 66% are men.

In terms of **women's participation in sports**, the rate is 49% across all sports, a **significant improvement since 2019's percentage of 33%**.