

The increasing awareness of and emphasis on sustainability in relation to sport is highlighted in the [European Sports Charter](#) (ESC), drawing attention to sustainability as part of **sports ethics** (Article 7.1); a positive concept that guides human behaviour and is defined as a way of both thinking and acting. These effects on thought and action can play a major role in the **fight against climate change, over-consumption, economic exploitation, and social disadvantage**.

Article 9 makes it clear that all sporting activities should be **“economically, socially and environmentally sustainable.”**

THE POWER OF VALUES-BASED SPORT

Values-based sport, as outlined in the ESC, recognises and affirms the fundamental importance of human rights; education in values through sports ethics; integrity and sustainability.

SUSTAINABILITY GUIDELINES FROM THE EUROPEAN SPORTS CHARTER (ARTICLE 9)

The ESC calls upon states to design their sports policies according to its guidelines, and stakeholders to take into consideration the principles enshrined therein.

- ▶ When planning, implementing and evaluating sports activities and events, **organisers** should pay due consideration to sustainability, be it economic, social or environmental.
- ▶ The **sports goods industry** should take responsibility for developing and integrating practices that are satisfactory in social terms and are environmentally friendly.
- ▶ **Sports activities** should be carried out responsibly (i.e. resource conservation and risk prevention), and owners of sports **infrastructure** must be proactive in identifying the effects and consequences of their facilities, avoiding potential damage to nature and taking counter- and protective measures against such risks.
- ▶ The organisation of major sports events should ensure a sustainable legacy for **hosting communities** with regard to their economic, social and environmental impact, in particular to balance the financial cost of the infrastructure with its **post-event use** and the effect on participation in sport.

- ▶ Stakeholders should take responsibility to reduce their **carbon footprint** and pursue commitments and partnerships for **climate action** in recognition of the increasingly negative impact of climate change on society and sport.

SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY AND SPORT

Social sustainability is understood as: **“The health, well-being and quality of life within a community and the communities’ adaptability and capacity to function effectively in the future.”**

There are three aspects that are central in both the concept of social sustainability as well as within the policy rhetoric of the meaning and challenges of sport facilities. These are:

1. **Access** to sport facilities for all groups in societies;
2. The optimal **use** of sport facilities linked to their financial operations and their contributions to society;
3. The **sustainability** of sport facilities.

THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENTS

Government authorities can assist in promoting the social sustainability of sports events by producing **guidelines** based on the principles of **good governance** and **ethics**. Such a framework can then serve as a standard for host nations, event organisers and other key stakeholders, delivering an efficient, effective and sustainable use of resources and creating a comprehensive legacy. Such measures assist in eliminating issues such as bad governance, mismanagement and corruption, ultimately enhancing the likelihood of a positive return on investment and long-term benefits for society.

Within the framework of EPAS there have been fruitful discussions, in addition to the production of:

- ▶ A white paper on social sustainability and sport (currently being prepared);
- ▶ A report on [Environmental sustainability in relation to sports facilities](#) – Mapping of Sports Facilities, in collaboration with the Mulier Instituut (2022).

ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

The United Nations [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#)

