



INSTITUTE FOR SPORT GOVERNANCE

2023 Report



AN INDEPENDENT THINK TANK
SPECIALIZED IN
SPORT GOVERNANCE



A WORD FROM THE INSTITUTE FOR SPORT GOVERNANCE PRESIDENT

The year 2023 brought many challenges, and new opportunities for development to the Institute for Sport Governance. The dynamic evolution of the sports world requires continuous broadening of horizons and strengthening of competencies, which we achieved through various activities aimed primarily at maximizing the potential of sports organizations.



Our involvement in eight Erasmus+ Sport projects, including one as a coordinator, has strengthened ISG's position as a solid and reliable institution. Most importantly, these projects have contributed to improving the quality of governance in the sports world.

Nevertheless, our efforts have not stopped there as we have remained open to other activities as well. By taking patronage of student conferences on sports management and sports law, we aimed to share our knowledge and build the competencies of young people, which naturally aligns with the core principles of our organization. We are convinced that to ensure continuity and coherence of actions, we must invest in the future, which belongs to the younger generation.

Last year was full of many interesting events, such as the European Sport Innovation Summit, where we had the chance to participate in discussions about the future and development of sports on our continent. Another significant moment was the inaugural conference of the Polish Centre for Olympic Studies and Research, in the organization of which our Institute had the pleasure of being involved.

Leading ISG makes me proud and I am pleased that together with the Board, Council, and management team we can take on the challenge of changing the image of Polish and European sports. I can assure you that our actions will continue to be guided by the principles of good governance to promote the development of the sports community.

I would like to encourage you to read the brief summary of our activities included in this report.



Grzegorz Botwina, PhD
President of the Board, ISG



ABOUT US

Our organization roots reach back to 2020, when it was founded through the efforts of Grzegorz Botwina. The Institute for Sport Governance operates in the fields of good governance in sports and social responsibility. As an independent think tank engaged in various activities and international projects, we strive to share our knowledge and skills with federations, associations, clubs, and other sports organizations. Our goal is to maximize their potential in the respective areas of activity, and our scope of work is very broad.

Over the years, ISG has been involved in many projects on diverse topics—from governance reforms in sports federations and social services for athletes to conscious and sustainable physical activity in protected natural areas.

Our team consists of individuals with long-standing connections to sports. Their diverse experience, combined with immense passion and commitment, allows us to implement new projects and contribute to positive changes. Through joint efforts, we have combined expertise in sports management, law, and sports marketing in one place. With four years of experience as a foundation and even more individual experience of each member, we strive to improve the world of sports and help its representatives work more efficiently. We use our knowledge to build competencies and raise standards of operation for organizations at various levels, as well as to develop a conscious and responsible society.



OUR AREAS OF ACTIVITY

GOOD GOVERNANCE IN SPORTS ORGANIZATIONS

- Strategic approach to organizational management
- Consulting for sports organizations
- Leadership training

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY OF SPORTS

- Promotion of good practices
- Non-formal education
- Analysis and trends monitoring in sports organizations

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION IN FIELD OF SPORT

- Exchange of good practices
- Knowledge transfer
- Competence building of international and domestic organizations

MISSION

The world of sports is evolving at a rapid pace—increasing influence on other areas of life, bigger financial investments and responsibility, changes in existing competitions, and the emergence of new events. All these factors require intensifying the efforts to maintain the integrity and proper functioning of sport. As a consequence, the tasks and challenges faced by organizations like ISG multiply visibly.

Our mission is to provide guidance for better governance and enhance the social responsibility of sports, preserving its good name, and ensuring that sports arenas continue to unite people regardless of their differences. We aim to unleash the potential of sports organizations by encouraging them to implement healthy practices and ethical principles. We are also aware of our responsibility to shape future generations involved in the sports world through collaboration with student communities.

VISION

By acting in the present, we look to the future. Our vision is a world of sports where good governance principles are widely applied, and management is responsible and sustainable, considering the needs of the entire society.



PROJECTS

In December 2023, we concluded the three-year **ACTION project ("Governance Sport Codification Convergence")** aimed at developing the common Good Governance Code for national sports federations.



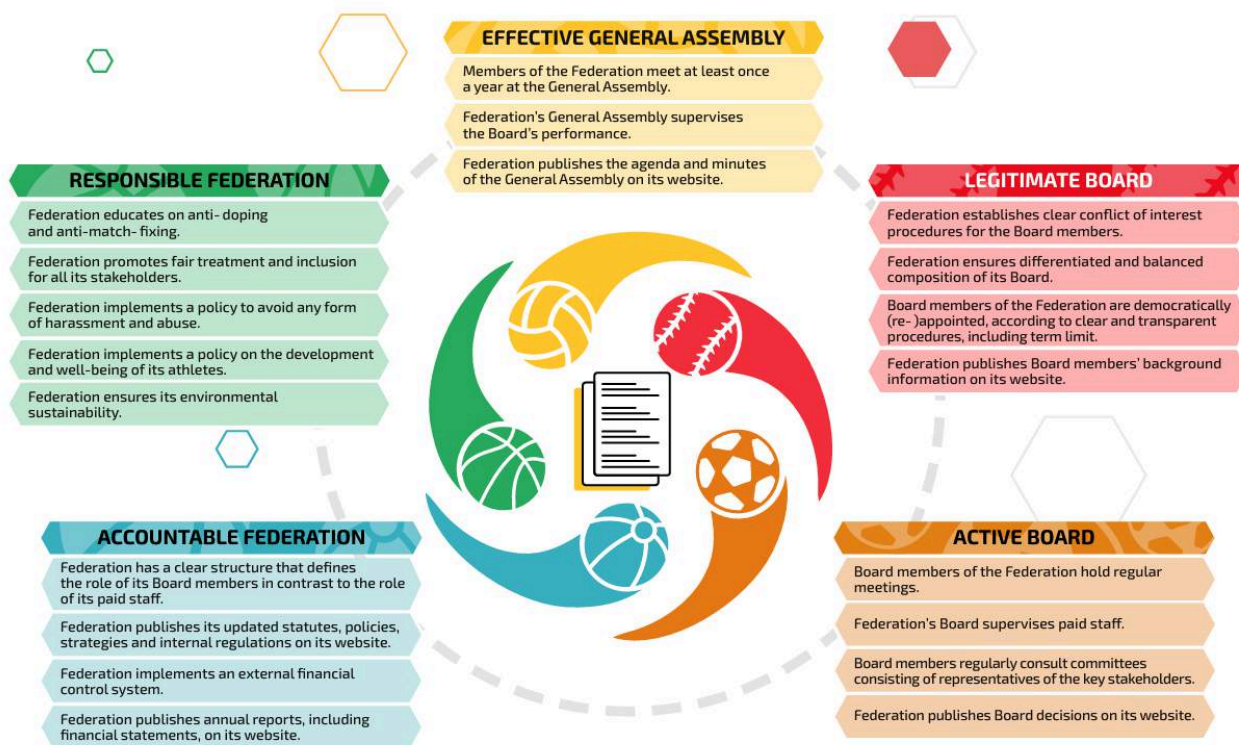
The starting point was mapping the existing Good Governance Codes for sports federations in some European countries, then verifying similarities between them and identifying best practices to improve the functioning of this type of organizations.

In 2023, we had the opportunity to discuss the results of our joint efforts with our partners during meetings held in Bulgaria, Greece, Poland, Malta, and Cyprus.

Additionally, the ACTION project, the first project coordinated by our team, and the related governance topics were presented and discussed during the inaugural conference of the Polish Centre for Olympic Studies and Research in Warsaw, marking the high point of three years of efforts by the involved partners.

The document summarizing the project activities is the [European Convergence Code of Good Governance in Sports](#).

EUROPEAN CONVERGENT CODE OF GOOD GOVERNANCE IN SPORT





The **Athletes4Society project ("Empowering the Public Value of Sport through Athletes as Role Models")** also concluded in 2023. The participants aimed to enhance the social value of sport by collaborating with athletes who serve as role models.

Additionally, the project sought to enable sports organizations to engage in efforts related to the management of sport in the context of its public value.

A notable document produced during the project is an analysis of survey results that illustrates the social value of sport: [Intermediate report: Population survey - results report.](#)

The project also sought to identify best practices and projects where athletes played significant roles and aimed to achieve social impact. The grand finale of this competition featured two projects from Poland: Biegam z Czystą Przyjemnością by POLADA and Route66 by ultramarathoner Edyta Lewandowska. Ultimately, the Finnish project Don't Break the Game, involving the Finnish League for Human Rights, emerged as the winner.

We successfully completed the **ESCSE project ("European Social Charter for Sport Events")** which culminated in the creation of the European Social Charter for Sport Events applicable in all EU member states.



The Charter includes guidelines on the social impact of sport events in Europe and is based on the Social Charter of the Paris 2024 Olympic Games. The project involved experts in social impact and dialogue, academics, and sport event organizers.

The European Social Charter for Sport Events is the most significant document resulting from the ESCSE project.

Among the partners who collaborated on this project were the Paris 2024 Olympic Games Organising Committee, the Slovenian Olympic Committee, and the Italian Volleyball Federation.





Erasmus+

In September, we travelled to Gijón, Spain, where we participated in the **Erasmus+ Mobility program**.

Thanks to a grant from the National Agency for the Erasmus+ Program and the European Solidarity Corps, Foundation for the Development of the Education System, we gained new skills and expanded our network through job shadowing at the Sport Innovation Hub. This experience provided us with valuable knowledge in the field of sustainable and inclusive sport. It was also an excellent opportunity to observe the organization of the European Sport Congress, a conference dedicated to the European perspective on sport, the development and implementation of innovative projects, as well as the internationalization of sports-related institutions and the mobility of their employees.

ACTION



The next project coordinated by ISG is a direct continuation of the ACTION project, which concluded in 2023 with the creation of the European Good Governance Code.

The goal of the new **ACTION+ project ("Governance + Sport + Implementation")** is to integrate national agencies and ministries in efforts to implement sports reforms and promote good governance principles. One of its main objectives is to ensure equal access to knowledge and best practices in this area.

Many of the partners involved were also part of the ACTION project, which serves as a starting point for current activities. Engaged partners include: Authority for Integrity in Maltese Sport (Malta), Cyprus Sport Organisation (Cyprus), Instituto Portugues do Desporto e Juventude (Portugal), International University of Health, Exercise & Sports (Luxembourg), Kultuuriministerium (Estonia), Ministerstvo na mladezhta i sporta (Bulgaria), Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs and Sports (Greece), Nacionaline Sporto Agentura Prie Lietuvos Respublikos Svetimo Moksloir Sporto Ministerijos (Lithuania), and Universite Catholique de Louvain (Belgium).

Progress on the ACTION+ project can be followed [here](#).



Co-funded by
the European Union





The **SOPROS project ("Assessing, Evaluating and Implementing Athletes' Social Protection in Olympic Sports")** began with an inaugural meeting in Cologne in February. The collaboration aims to promote integrity and socially desirable values by implementing and evaluating actions related to the social protection of Olympic athletes. Key project topics include pension and insurance systems, and in particular, the scope of protection provided to athletes.

In October, our headquarters hosted workshops involving representatives of Polish sports organizations relevant to the social protection of Polish athletes in Olympic disciplines. Similar events took place in Germany, Portugal, Croatia, and the United Kingdom.

In the same month, the **ECOS N2K project ("Environmental Conservation Opportunities and Sport in Natura 2000 sites")** was inaugurated in Italy. This project aims to reduce the impact of sport on the environment and biodiversity degradation in coastal areas, with a particular focus on Natura 2000 sites in densely populated and tourist regions. It encompasses three protected coastal areas: the Veneto region coastline (Italy), Albufera de Valencia Natural Park (Spain), and the Bay of Puck and Hel Peninsula (Poland).



Local Advisory Groups were established in each of the three locations, including organizations representing sectors such as local government, sports, environment, and tourism. Their presence ensures that actions are tailored to local conditions and that cooperation across different sectors yields the best results.



The **Sport Transparency Index project**, launched in March, aims to support efforts to increase integrity at the most fundamental level, helping to protect sport from various threats and facilitating knowledge sharing. One of the tasks is to create means for independent assessment and comparison of sports stakeholders regarding their transparency using appropriate and universal criteria.

The project involves a large number of partners, allowing for broad-scale activities and the expectations that the results will be widely disseminated. The list of partners includes 11 organizations: Sport Integrity Global Alliance (Portugal), University of Castilla-La Mancha (Spain), International Olympic Truce Centre (Greece), European Platform for Sports and Innovation (Belgium), Fedas Verband Des Europaischen Sport Fachhandels (Germany), International Centre for Sport Security (Portugal), European Football for Development Network (the Netherlands), European Multisport Club Association (Belgium), Vrije Universiteit Brussel (Belgium), Portuguese Swimming Federation (Portugal), and Institute for Sport Governance (Poland).



COLLABORATIONS

At ISG, we understand the importance of supporting valuable initiatives and nurturing young people who will shape the future of our world, including the world of sports. From the beginning, we have focused on collaboration with the student community, and 2023 was no exception. We granted honorary patronage to three sports-related events organized by students scientific associations from major academic centres in Poland. Our experts actively participated in these and a couple of other events.

IX CONFERENCE "YOUNG PEOPLE ON SPORTS"

- Management is a key field of study for the sports industry, which is why we were delighted to grant honorary patronage to the **IX Conference "Young People on Sports: The Other Side of the Medal - Managing Change in Sports,"** organized on April 19 by the Sports Managers' Scientific Association at Jagiellonian University.
- The ISG President Grzegorz Botwina, PhD, delivered a lecture, sharing his knowledge and experience with the participants.

- Modern sports cannot operate without appropriate legal regulations. **The X National Conference on Sports Law "Sport Law Finance 2023,"** held on April 21-22, was another event we took patronage over. The conference was organized by the Sports Law Scientific Association "Ius et Sport" at the Faculty of Law and Administration of the University of Warsaw.
- Jakub Fornalik, LL.M. participated as an expert, discussing contemporary challenges related to sports corruption with other speakers.

X NATIONAL CONFERENCE "SPORT LAW FINANCE 2023"

SPORT MANAGEMENT ACADEMY

- Less than a month later, we supported the **Sport Management Academy 2023**, organized on May 16-18 by the Sports Management Scientific Association at the Warsaw School of Economics.
- On the second day of the event, Grzegorz Botwina, PhD, spoke about the role of good governance in sports development. The event was full of valuable and inspiring presentations.

- Encouraged by fruitful collaborations with students associations, we decided to create a space for integrating this ambitious community and organise the **Sport Management Students' Meetup**. It was an excellent opportunity to exchange experiences related to sports marketing, good governance, and the social role of sports.
- Representatives from several scientific associations across Poland attended our event, and among the experts that gave short lectures there was a sports marketing specialist Monika Płaczowska from SPORTFIVE.

SPORT MANAGEMENT STUDENTS' MEETUP

SPORTS LAW CONFERENCE WITH RBA

- Sports law accompanied us not only in the context of student collaborations. In November, we had a chance to become a partner of a valuable conference on changes in regulations regarding football agents.
- The event, titled "**The Uncertain Life of a Football Agent: Changes in Regulations for Football Agents - What Must Players, Clubs, and Agents (and Their Lawyers) Know?**", was organized by the Sports Law Section at the Regional Bar Association.
- The President of the Section, Jakub Fornalik LL.M, had the pleasure of being one of the speakers during the conference. The event was a great success, attracting many listeners from various fields.





KEY EVENTS

The year 2023 was marked by many valuable events that provided us not only with opportunities to share the knowledge our experts have acquired through the projects but also to integrate and establish connections with prominent figures from the worlds of science and practice. Here are the most important ones:

Sport and Innovation Summit

In May, the first edition of the Sport and Innovation Summit, organized by the European Commission, took place in Brussels. Among the participants was Grzegorz Botwina, PhD, who joined innovators, researchers, companies, and policymakers in discussions about the future of innovation in sports. The event featured discussion panels focusing on the latest trends in sports innovation and provided ample networking opportunities.

Conference at the European Company Sport Games

Upon the invitation from the European Federation for Company Sport, one of the partners involved in the ESCSE project, Grzegorz Botwina, PhD, attended the 24th European Company Sport Games held in Bordeaux in June. The competition and the accompanying conference provided a platform for exchanging ideas on employee physical activity.

Grzegorz Botwina on Canal+

ISG's expertise in good governance was showcased on the CANAL+ programme "Wysoki pressing," where Grzegorz Botwina, PhD, analyzed current events in the Polish Football Association from a good governance perspective. Being featured on one of the main sports channels confirmed our expertise and commitment to the topic of good governance.

Paweł Zembura's presentation at the European Forum of Regional Sports

We were also present at the Legionowo Arena, where the European Forum of Regional Sports took place on September 28. The forum provided an opportunity to discuss the changing conditions of sports management at the municipal level. Paweł Zembura, PhD, shared his knowledge and spoke about the need to revise sports strategies in local government units as well as the trends affecting them.



Fot. Szymon Sikora/PKOl

Grzegorz Botwina appointed to the Committee on Cooperation with Polish Community Abroad and International Relations of the Polish Olympic Committee

In October, ISG President Grzegorz Botwina, PhD, joined the Committee on Cooperation with Polish Community Abroad and International Relations, established by the Polish Olympic Committee. As a member, he will co-implement key goals, including maintaining contact with Polish communities abroad, conducting sports diplomacy, and providing support and advice on international engagement.



Inaugural conference of the Polish Centre for Olympic Studies and Research

In December, we witnessed and co-organized a significant event in the world of sports: the inaugural conference of the Polish Centre for Olympic Studies and Research, chaired by Grzegorz Botwina, PhD. The Centre aims to support development, deepen knowledge, and foster international cooperation.

The event, held at the Faculty of Management at the University of Warsaw, gathered representatives from the sports and academic communities, including the Rector of the University of Warsaw, Prof. Alojzy Z. Nowak, and the Secretary General of the Polish Olympic Committee, Marek Pałus. Attendees included representatives of ministries, universities and sports organizations from Poland and abroad and students who had the opportunity to listen to expert presentations on the relationship between science and sports and the benefits of collaboration in these fields.



Fot. Szymon Sikora/PKOI



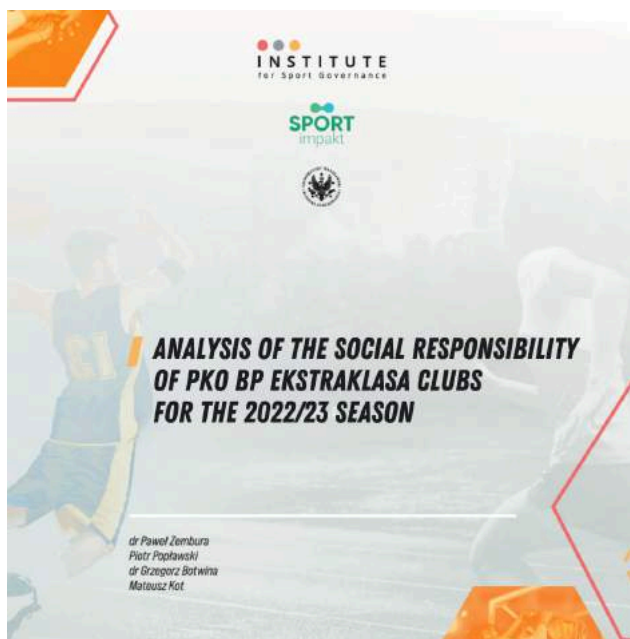
Participation of Grzegorz Botwina at the Pyeongchang International Conference for Olympic Studies and Research Centres 2023

Towards the end of the year, the Pyeongchang International Conference for Olympic Studies and Research Centres 2023 took place in South Korea's Gangwon province. The conference provided numerous discussion opportunities and served as an excellent platform for exchanging experiences. One of its goals was to support early-career scientists in the field of Olympic education and research.

Representing the Polish Centre for Olympic Studies and Research, Grzegorz Botwina, PhD moderated a plenary session and shared details about the ACTION project - "Governance Sport Codification Convergence."

OUR PUBLICATIONS

An important aspect of our activity is researching the current state of sports and publishing reports on the social responsibility of sports clubs from top professional leagues in Poland. The year 2023 brought two more publications in this regard.



CSR Report PKO BP Ekstraklasa

In January, we released a report on the level of CSR engagement among the PKO BP Ekstraklasa clubs, the highest professional men's football league in Poland.

In the 2021/22 season, clubs competing at this level received historically the lowest scores in the society area, average scores in the environment area, and good scores in the governance area. The organizations with the highest average ratings were Legia Warsaw and Warta Poznań. Legia Warsaw achieved the highest score in the society and environment areas, while Warta Poznań led in the governance area.



CSR Report ORLEN Ekstraliga Kobiet

The second report published in 2023 resulted from an analysis of social responsibility levels among the clubs of ORLEN Ekstraliga Kobiet, the top women's football league in Poland.

The study results showed that clubs have potential and ideas for their social responsibility but are limited by finances and the number of people involved in club work. The high level of attachment of clubs to their local communities was noteworthy and is a good prognostic for the coming years.





MORE **ABOUT US**

If you want to collaborate, learn more about us, or share your activities in the area of sports management, contact us and follow our social media. Let's work together towards the professionalization of sports!



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