The relevance of gender in sport

The social construction of femininity and masculinity plays a key role in sport. However, sport can also be used as a means to achieve gender equality through the promotion of values such as fair play, non-discrimination and teamwork. It can also be used to increase opportunities for girls.

Grey literature on sport

What is grey literature? It is literature produced by non-commercial publishers, such as public institutions, universities, research institutes and civil society. It contains a lot of useful content, but is often hard to find as it is scattered across different locations. EIGE has collected grey literature on gender equality and you can access our collection through a simple search interface. EIGE’s collection of grey literature is available in several EU languages and documents come from all EU Member States.

Grey literature in EIGE’s library

EIGE’s library hosts one of the largest collections on gender-related literature related to sport. The collection presents good practices of current policies throughout Europe as well as gender indicators aimed at assessing gender equality in sport. Several resources focus on the ways in which the EU has mainstreamed gender into policy processes for sport. You will also find research reports and statistical documents providing data on key gender issues related to sport.

Mainstreaming gender into the sport field: policies and data

Women’s participation in sport throughout history was recognised by the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action as having been marked by both discrimination but also by empowerment of women and girls. Mainstreaming gender into sport subsequently became part of European policy. In the library you will find several resources outlining the ways in which EU bodies have mainstreamed gender into policy processes.

Reading list

Women, Gender Quality and Sport — Published to promote the goals of the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action;
Conclusions on gender equality in sport: Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council meeting Brussels, 20 May 2014;
Gender Equality in Sports — Access for girls and women to sport practices.
Gender discrimination and barriers in sport

Library resources examine the low participation of women in amateur sports and the policy solutions deployed by sports organisations and public institutions to increase it.

Many resources show that gender stereotypes in sport are still widespread and that there is not enough focus on girls’ athleticism. These are just some of the reasons behind the low participation of women in sports.

Reading list

‘Gender and age inequalities in regular sports participation: a cross-national study of 25 European countries’;

*Sports, Media and Stereotypes — Women and men in sports and media.*

Men and women athletes in professional sport

The library collection of grey literature on sport includes Olympic reports and audits. These reports show how women are frequently pushed into different types of sport events and competitions specifically targeting women.

Library resources also highlight the different ways more women can be encouraged to enter the professional sporting world and how to ensure they are treated fairly.

Reading list

*The London 2012 Olympics: a gender equality audit; A policy analysis of gender inequality within the Olympic movement.*

About EIGE

The European Institute for Gender Equality is the EU knowledge centre on gender equality. EIGE supports policymakers and all relevant institutions in their efforts to make equality between women and men a reality for all Europeans and beyond, by providing them with specific expertise and comparable and reliable information on gender equality in Europe. With over 800 000 items, EIGE’s Resource and Documentation Centre is a one-stop shop for gender knowledge. Access our collection of policy documents, books, articles, studies, specialised databases and more at www.eige.europa.eu

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