SAFE HARBOUR

Strengthening Response Mechanisms for Safeguarding in European Sports

Co-funded by the European Union

Project ID: 101183590

D2.1

SAFE HARBOUR PROJECT

GAP REPORT

Status and gaps in the response to safeguarding concerns in 20 European National Olympic Committees and 2 International Federations

Authors: Dr. Karolien Adriaens and Dr. Tine Vertommen, Thomas More University of Applied Sciences, Belgium

Project ID: 101183590

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

List of used acronyms

ENNS	European Network for Safe Sport
FTE	Full Time Equivalent
IF	International Federation
IOC	International Olympic Committee
NOC	National Olympic Committee

SAFE HARBOUR
Strengthening Response Mechanisms for Safeguarding in European Sports
Co-funded by the European Union

Project ID: 101183590

Executive Summary SAFE HARBOUR GAP Report

Mapping Safeguarding Structures and Needs in European Sport

This **executive summary** presents the key findings of the SAFE HARBOUR GAP Report, a comprehensive analysis of available safeguarding structures, procedures and services across 20 European National Olympic Committees (NOCs) and 2 International Federations (IFs) when it comes to responding to safeguarding concerns. The report focuses on mapping existing policies, reporting systems, and capacities, identifying strengths, gaps, and opportunities for future action. Therefore, a structured online survey, using both closed and open-ended questions, was completed by all 22 partners. The overview of the **key findings** including strengths, gaps and how the SAFE HARBOUR project can tackle these gaps are summarised on the following page.

The SAFE HARBOUR GAP Report **highlights** both promising foundations and critical areas for improvement in safeguarding across European sport. By directly addressing issues of capacity, leadership, legal complexity and clarity, and tools for case management, SAFE HARBOUR empowers IFs and NOCs to build stronger, more responsive, and more consistent safeguarding mechanisms. Through continued collaboration, SAFE HARBOUR contributes to a cultural shift toward safer sport – laying the groundwork for a sustainable European Network for Safe Sport (ENSS) and the IOC Regional Hub for Safeguarding in Europe.

SAFE HARBOUR

Strengthening Response Mechanisms for Safeguarding in European Sports

Co-funded by the European Union

Project ID: 101183590

Safeguarding Officers & Capacity

- ✓ Most NOCs + both IFs have officers, many trained
- ! Limited FTE, part-time roles, poor visibility
- Training modules, peer learning (ENSS), templates, ad hoc financial support

Safeguarding Policies

- ✓ 55% of NOCs + both IFs have policies, often year-round
- ! 45% lack policies, minimal evaluation, weak leadership buy-in
- Templates, guidance, leadership training & dialogues, policy evaluation support

Reporting Mechanisms

- ✓ Most NOCs + both IFs have online reporting systems, managed by officers
- ! Some NOCs lack mechanisms, limited support for alleged perpetrators
- Guidance on reporting standards, templates, peer exchanges

Case Management

- ✓ Reports are being received, referrals to services exist
- ! Large variation in cases, no standardized classification tool used
- Classification tool, decision-making framework, trend & risk analysis

Cross-Cutting Challenges

- ✓ Growing awareness of capacity/recource needs
- ! Legal complexity, weak leadership buy-in, geography, limited M&E
- European Network for Safe Sport, financial support, European Response Framework, legal guidance, Monitoring & Evaluation indicators

Project ID: 101183590

1. Background

The SAFE HARBOUR project, short for "Strengthening Response Mechanisms for Safeguarding in European Sport", is a 30-month project co-funded by the European Union through the Erasmus+ Sport Programme 2024. Coordinated by the EOC EU Office, SAFE HARBOUR consortium represents 24 European countries and 27 organisations including International and European governing bodies (European Olympic Committee, International Olympic Committee, and IFs – Biathlon and Ice Hockey), 20 National Olympic Committees (Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Germany, Hungary, Kosovo, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia), and researchers/experts in terms of safeguarding, human rights and law in sport (Thomas More and Asser Institute, respectively).

The SAFE HARBOUR project **aims** to strengthen the capacity of the European sports movement to effectively respond to safeguarding concerns and violations. Accordingly, it is designed to provide partner NOCs and Federations with the tools and confidence to implement effective safeguarding measures, while establishing the ENSS to promote a safeguarding culture within their areas of competence and to serve as role models for other stakeholders at both European and national levels. Notably, a European Response framework will be defined to guide ENOCs and IFs in responding to safeguarding, while partner NOCs will also tailor the European Response framework to national contexts through the creation of national strategies. As a result, SAFE HARBOUR is expected to lay the groundwork for the IOC Regional Safeguarding Hub in Europe.

In this context, **safeguarding** is understood as the set of actions taken to prevent and respond to possible harm in sport (i.e. psychological, physical, sexual, bullying, hazing, neglect), as well as the actions taken to proactively promote athlete wellbeing and a safe sport environment (Tuakli-Wosornu et al., 2024). Hence, "*an athletic environment that is respectful, equitable and free from all forms of non-accidental violence to athletes*" (Tuakli-Wosornu et al., 2024 p2). Recent research highlights the high prevalence of interpersonal violence in sport, alongside numerous widely publicized cases (Tuakli-Wosornu et al., 2024). Although there has been a shift toward a broader conceptualisation of safeguarding, policy approaches often remain fragmented. Safeguarding is still frequently addressed through specific lenses—such as age (e.g., violence against children), gender (e.g., gender-based violence), or type of violence (e.g., sexual abuse)—including within the sport context. For example, the Council Conclusions on Safeguarding Children in Sport (2019) and the Council Conclusions on Women and Equality in the Field of Sport (2023) focus on particular target groups. Both documents emphasise the significant responsibility of sport organisations, including federations and NOCs, to address safeguarding concerns effectively. This includes establishing appropriate reporting mechanisms, appointing designated personnel (e.g., Safeguarding Officers), cooperating with law enforcement when necessary, and ensuring the protection of those affected by interpersonal violence in sport, as well as whistle-blowers and witnesses—even in cases involving cross-border jurisdiction.

In **conclusion**, the current GAP Report presents the findings of a comprehensive analysis designed to map and understand the existing procedures and services for responding to safeguarding concerns within the partner organisations of the SAFE HARBOUR project. By identifying both strengths and areas requiring further development, the analysis provides a clear evidence base to support partners in enhancing their safeguarding frameworks and in aligning their practice; thereby contributing to encourage safer sporting environments across Europe.

2. Methodology

To map the current procedures and services for responding to safeguarding concerns in the 20 NOCs and 2 IFs partners involved in the SAFE HARBOUR project, an online survey[1] was distributed among all NOC/IF partners in March 2025. The survey included a briefing and informed consent form, which informed the partners about the setup of the survey and its goal. All partners agreed to take part and provided their consent. Subsequently, a glossary consisting of key safeguarding terminology (see Appendix 1) was presented. Thereafter the actual survey started. The five key survey components are presented in Figure 1. For each of the components a subset of questions was used, both using closed (i.e., predefined categories) and open-ended questions. The latter allowed partner NOCs and IFs to further elaborate on their responses on the closed ended questions.

Figure 1 *Survey elements*

The data of the survey was analysed using descriptive (means, frequencies, proportions) statistics. Open-ended responses were grouped into common themes based on recurring topics, which helped to identify shared challenges, needs, and opportunities across the partner NOCs and IFs. In this report, data from the 20 NOCs and 2 IF partners will be presented separately.

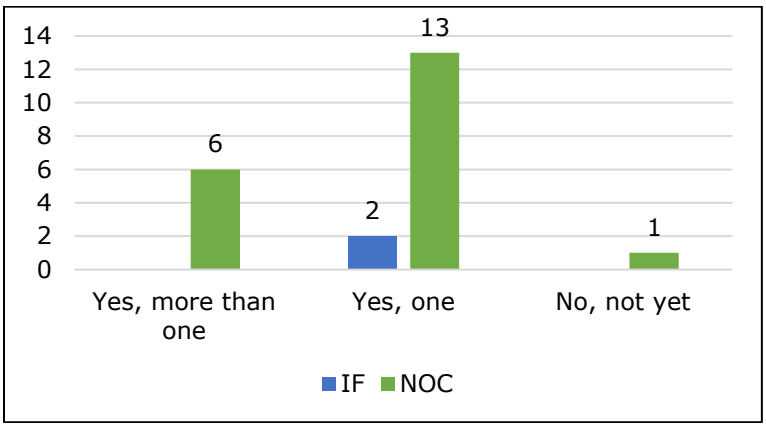
[1] Ethical approval was gained via the Social and Societal Ethics Committee at KU Leuven, Belgium (G-2025 02 2240).

3. Key Findings

3.1 Safeguarding officers

Both participating IFs have an **appointed safeguarding officer**. A total of 13 out 20 NOCs (65%) have one appointed safeguarding officer, see Figure 2, while six (n = 6/20; 30%) NOCs have more than one (varying between two to four), whereas one NOC does not yet have a safeguarding officer. The number of appointed safeguarding officers per NOC varies depending on the size of the organisation and the timing during the year. For example, some NOCs report having one appointed safeguarding officer during Game-times, whereas throughout the year they have two people designated with safeguarding tasks; one NOC has several safeguarding officers appointed on events and an ombudsperson who serves partially as a safeguarding officer throughout the year.

Figure 2 *Appointed safeguarding officer(s) within NOCs and IFs*

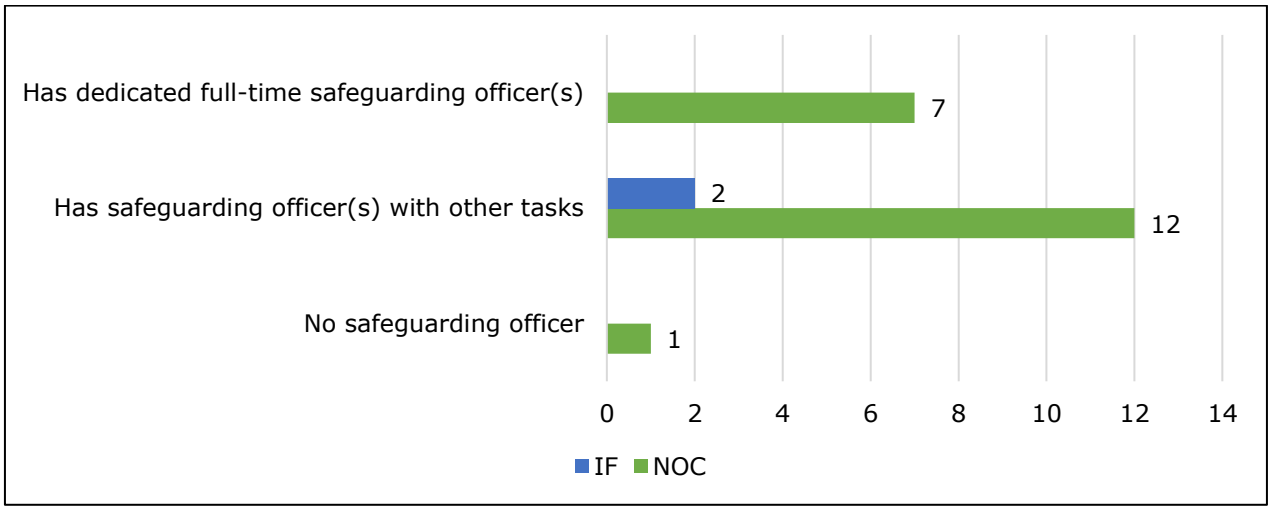


Note: Based on two IFs and 20 NOCs.

Only one NOC does *not yet* have a safeguarding officer appointed. This NOC reports that the *main roadblocks* for appointment include the requirement for specialised training that a safeguarding officer needs to follow, finding the right person for the position, and the time and resources available to hire someone.

The NOCs and IFs have a varying number of FTE appointed to the safeguarding lead/officer(s). On average, NOCs have 0.85 FTE for safeguarding, with a minimum of 0 FTE appointed and a maximum of 5.5 FTE. The two IFs have an average of 0.83 FTE allocated for safeguarding, with one IF having a capacity of 0.65 FTE and one IF having 1 FTE. Among the 2 IFs, both rely on safeguarding officers who combine safeguarding tasks with other responsibilities. Among the 20 NOCs, six have a dedicated full-time safeguarding officer, 12 rely on officers who also cover other tasks in the organisation, and one does not have a safeguarding officer, see Figure 3.

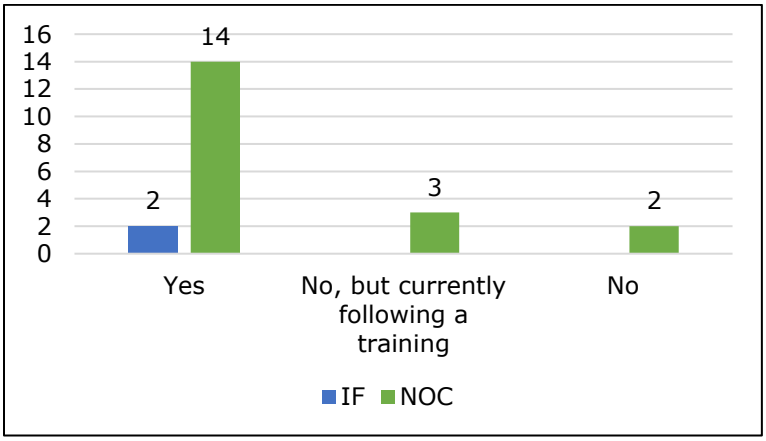
Figure 3 *Professional status of the safeguarding officer(s)*



Note: Based on two IFs and 20 NOCs.

The safeguarding officers appointed in the two IFs were both **trained** via the IOC Certificate Safeguarding Officer in Sport, see Figure 4. Among the NOCs, two reported (n = 2/19, 11%) that the safeguarding officer(s) did not yet follow a certified training. The remaining followed (n = 14/19, 74%) or were currently following (n = 3/19, 16%) a safeguarding training. Most of them were or are currently enrolled in the IOC Certificate Safeguarding Officer in Sport training (n = 16/19, 84%), whereas the remaining completed national safeguarding officer trainings.

Figure 4 *Professional status of the safeguarding officer(s)*

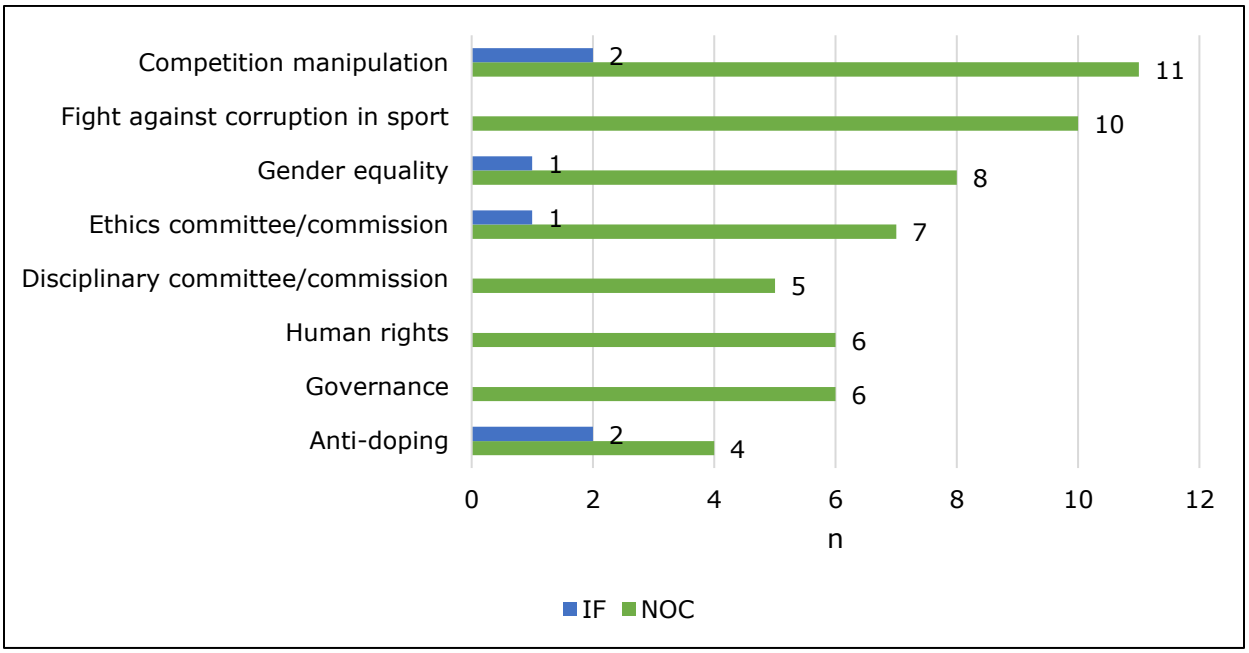


Note: Based on two IFs and 19 NOCs that have an appointed safeguarding officer.

Within the IFs, the appointed safeguarding officers are **operational** all year round. The same is true for over half of the NOCs (n = 10/18, 56%), whereas the remaining NOCs only have an operational safeguarding officer in Games-times (n = 8/18, 44%). Among NOCs, more than half reported that the safeguarding officer is **responsible** for the NOC delegation athletes and entourage only (n = 11/19, 58%), whereas six (32%) NOCs reported that the safeguarding officer is responsible for all members of affiliated sport federations and clubs.

Across the remaining NOCs and both IFs, safeguarding officers typically hold broad *responsibilities* that extend beyond safeguarding alone. These include oversight of integrity-related areas such as competition manipulation, anti-doping, gender equality, ethics, and corruption prevention. Only one NOC (5%) reported that its safeguarding officer focuses exclusively on safeguarding. Most NOCs and IFs adopt a multi-domain approach, with IFs emphasising international integrity issues and NOCs covering national delegation responsibilities during Games-time. All details about the responsibility of the safeguarding officer across the 18 NOCs and two IFs are presented in Figure 5.

Figure 5 *Responsibilities of the safeguarding officer/team*



Note: Based on two IFs and 18 NOCs (multiple answers were possible).

Ten NOCs reported additional *responsibilities relevant to safeguarding that intersect with a broad range of operational and thematic areas*. These include athlete services, competition management, Games operations, legal affairs, marketing, communications, finance,

international relations, and project coordination. Additional areas of involvement encompass the work of athletes' commissions and research departments, as well as mental health and psychological support services. Some topics—such as hate speech, anti-racism, the promotion of democratic values, and the handling of historic cases—are addressed primarily due to their legal implications rather than as explicit safeguarding duties.

When it comes to the **visibility** of the safeguarding officers, the IFs reported that the safeguarding officer(s) name, pictures, and contact information are shared transparently. Less than half of NOCs (n = 7/19, 37%) shared this information with all members and stakeholders of the organisation, just more than half (n = 10/19, 53%) did partly, and 2 NOCs did not present any information (11%).

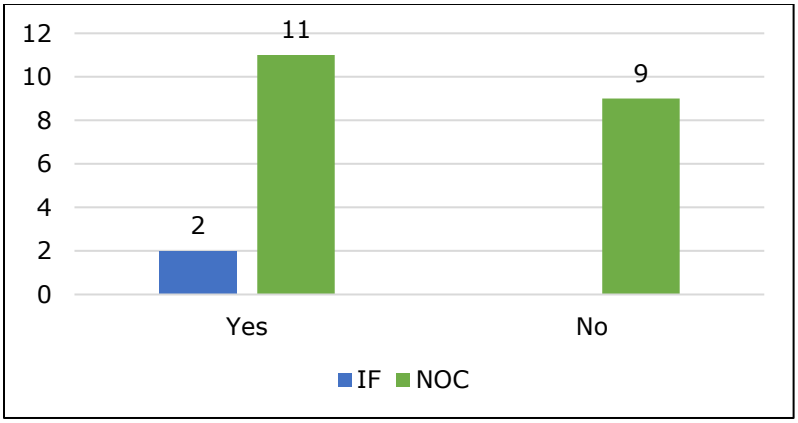
3.2 Safeguarding policy

Both IFs and NOCs have already a variety of **good practices** in place when it comes to safeguarding. Both IFs reported several key practices aimed at strengthening safeguarding in sport. They established formal safeguarding policies, providing a structured framework for prevention and response. Awareness-raising campaigns and education initiatives targeting all stakeholder groups—athletes, coaches, officials, and support personnel—were identified as essential strategies to foster a safe sporting environment. One of the IFs also installed mandatory e-learning modules and an Integrity Officer program to ensure baseline safeguarding knowledge across their communities. Reporting hotlines are also established as accessible mechanisms for individuals to report concerns confidentially. Some of the good practices mentioned by the IFs, were also reported by the NOCs, as they also reported implementing a range of promising practices to strengthen their safeguarding efforts. One example highlights the value of multidisciplinary collaboration, such as close cooperation with the (local) welfare and medical officers to ensure a comprehensive response to safeguarding concerns.

Others emphasise their engagement in international projects, including participation in Erasmus+ initiatives like Safeguarding Children in Sport (GUARD), which aim to advance child safeguarding in sport. Awareness-raising activities, such as the implementation of campaigns like the SAFE SPORT WEEK, were also commonly mentioned as key strategies to promote a culture of safeguarding prevention among and for different stakeholders. In terms of procedures and support, some NOCs introduced mandatory criminal background checks, appointed ombudspersons, and established anonymous reporting mechanisms, including 24/7 hotlines. Capacity building was another central focus, with initiatives including workshops, e-learning courses, and certified training sessions for clubs, National Federations, athletes, and coaches, as well as the organisation of conferences. Other noteworthy practices include increasing the visibility of safeguarding officers within different organisations, attending relevant safeguarding events, offering access to expert guidance and treatment, installing a code of conduct for multisport events, and guaranteeing free legal assistance.

Both IFs and over half of NOCs (n = 11/20, 55%) currently have a **safeguarding policy in place,** see Figure 6. A total of nine NOCs (45%) did *not yet* have a safeguarding policy and mentioned the following experienced *roadblocks* when it comes to developing and implementing a safeguarding policy: limited financial and human resources to install a policy, no official statistics available on safeguarding concerns and therefore hampering the ability to measure effectiveness of safeguarding strategies, lack of participation and acceptance of the policy by the National Federations, and lack of buy-in and support from the leadership. Although NOCs might not yet have a (full) policy in place, they are currently using a code of ethics or gender equality policies. Almost half of the NOCs without a policy (n = 4/9), indicates that being part of the SAFE HARBOUR project is one of the *supporting factors* to develop and install a safeguarding policy. They hope to gain guidance and expertise from those NOCs with already a policy in place. Other helping factors for developing a policy included clear commitment from NOC leadership, access to expertise, better understanding of the legal and cultural context, and support from the government and sport society.

Figure 6 *Safeguarding policy in place*



Note: Based on two IFs and 22 NOCs.

Among IFs and NOCS who have a safeguarding policy in place, the **elements** that are mostly included were a clear statement covering the commitment to keep everybody safe, a clear description of the scope of application, a clear description and definitions of safeguarding concerns and interpersonal violence, and a description of the standards of behaviour that apply. Elements that were included occasionally were the description of the fair process for the responding party, a timeline for the dissemination and implementation of the policy, and a description of how athletes engaged in the development process of the policy. All details about the elements covered in the NOCs (n = 11) and IFs (n = 2) safeguarding policies are presented in Table 1. Importantly, one NOC and both IFs report that the safeguarding policy

(or some parts of it) do not stand alone and are combined with other action plans or refers to the integrity code.

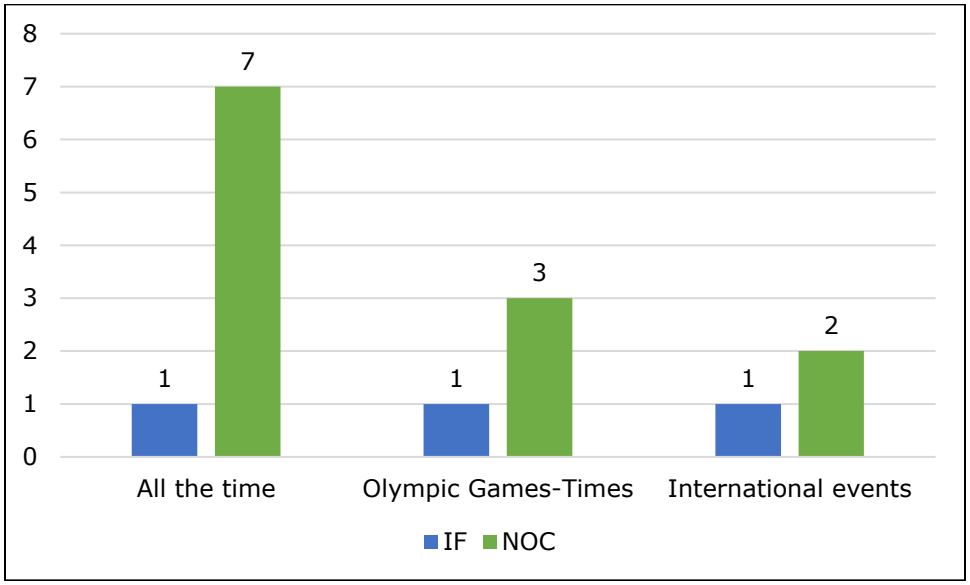
Table 1 *Overview of elements that are included in the NOCs/IFs safeguarding policies*

Elements safeguarding policy	Number of NOCs	Number of IFs
Clear policy statement covering the commitment to keep everybody safe and importance of safeguarding	9 (82%)	2 (100%)
Description of the scope of application, this includes to whom the policy and related procedures should apply to (i.e. all people affiliated with the NOC/IF, including athletes)	9 (82%)	2 (100%)
Clear description and definitions of safeguarding concerns and interpersonal violence	8 (73%)	2 (100%)
Description of the standards of behaviour that apply (e.g., codes of conduct)	8 (73%)	2 (100%)
Clear role description of the safeguarding lead/officer/focal point's role	7 (64%)	1 (50%)
Description of the reporting procedures to address all reports and concerns in a timely and thorough manner	7 (64%)	2 (100%)
Description of the investigation procedure to respond to alleged incidents of interpersonal violence which aims to assemble comprehensive information on the alleged incident	7 (64%)	2 (100%)
Description of a confidentiality policy stating that an alleged incident of interpersonal violence is regarded as confidential, and that personal information shall not be disclosed	7 (64%)	1 (50%)
Description on competition safeguarding including all safeguarding measures and procedures applying specifically to competitions	6 (55%)	1 (50%)
Description of when and in what circumstances a report, or a concern should be referred to the relevant authorities for investigation	6 (55%)	2 (100%)
Description of the appropriate mechanisms available to provide support and information to people involved in an alleged incident of interpersonal violence	6 (55%)	1 (50%)
Clarification on applicable legal framework(s) at national or international levels, government guidance and principles that underpin the policy, as well as the instances in which different legal frameworks may apply	5 (46%)	1 (50%)
Description of the disciplinary procedure for alleged incidents of interpersonal violence	4 (36%)	1 (50%)
Description of a safer recruitment procedure to prevent the access of unsuitable persons to positions of responsibility over athletes and other groups of vulnerable people	3 (27%)	1 (50%)
Description of how the NOC/IF commits to providing safeguarding education and capacity building	3 (27%)	1 (50%)
Description of the fair process for the responding party	3 (27%)	1 (50%)
Description of the timeline for the dissemination and implementation of the policy and its recurrent revisions as well as indications on how its effectiveness is going to be monitored	2 (18%)	2 (100%)
Description of how athletes were involved in the development cycle of the safeguarding policies and procedures	1 (9%)	1 (50%)

Note: Based on two IFs and 11 NOCs that reported having a safeguarding policy in place.

Both IFs and all except one NOC (n = 10/11), have their safeguarding policy at least partly **implemented** within their IF/NOC, meaning that the policy was being rolled out and procedures are developed in line with the policy. However, both IFs and three NOCs (27%) only fully implemented their policy. The safeguarding policy is applicable for both IFs and most NOCs (n = 7/11, 64%) all year round. For the remaining four NOCs (37%), the policy is only applicable in Games-times only. Two NOCs (2/11, 18%) have an additional separate Games-related safeguarding policy for the multisport Olympic events. The main difference between the 'general' and Games-related safeguarding policy are the included reporting channels and intervention plans. The periods in which the safeguarding policy is valid, operational and enforced are presented in Figure 7.

Figure 7 *Periods when the safeguarding policy is valid/operational/enforced*

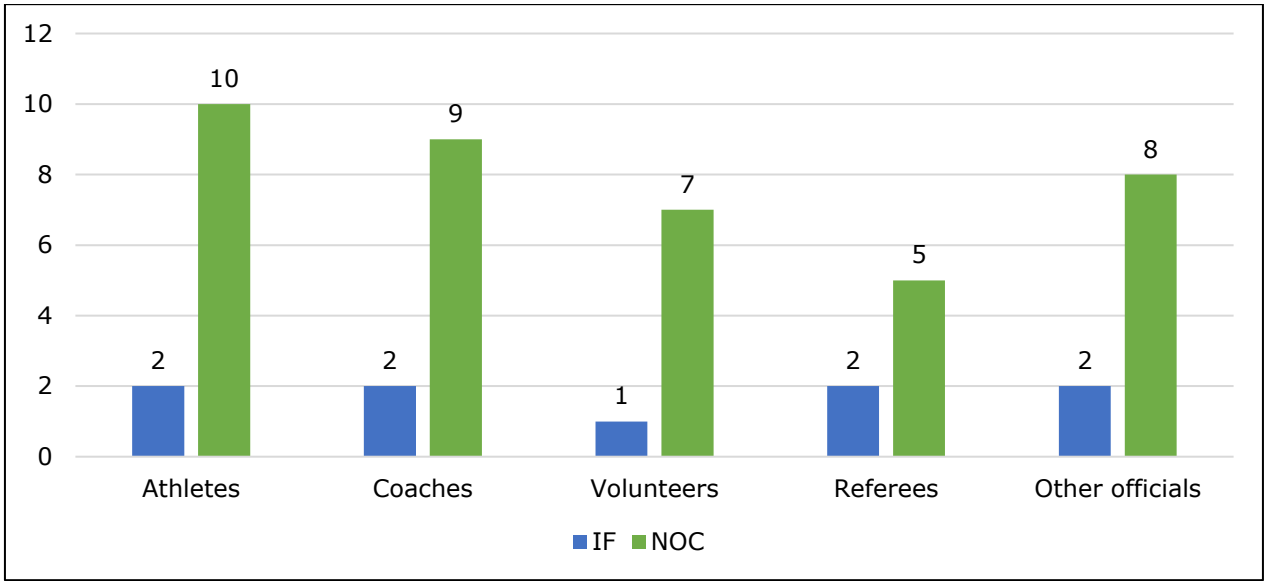


Note: Based on two IFs and 11 NOCs that reported having a safeguarding policy in place (multiple responses possible).

The safeguarding policies are currently *applicable to* NOC delegation athletes and entourage only (n = 3/11 NOC, 27%), and within four NOCs (36%) it applies to all members of sport and Federations. The four remaining NOCs (36%) reported that the policy applies to all stakeholders with a focus on minors (-18 years), or to the NOC's staff, participants, and volunteers. The IFs reported that their policies are applicable to everyone within the Federation.

More in detail, the safeguarding policies are mostly applicable to athletes, coaches, and other officials, see Figure 8 for all details and comparison between the IFs (n = 2) and NOCs (n = 11).

Figure 8 *Target groups to whom the safeguarding policy applies to*

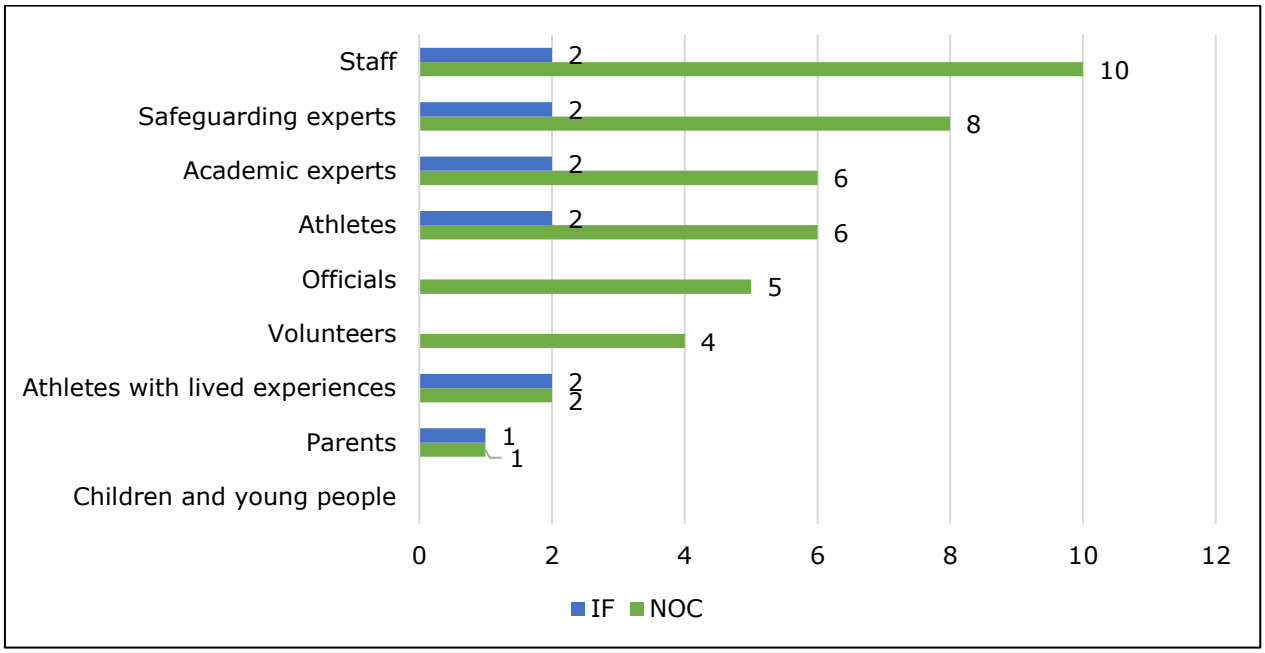


Note: Based on two IFs and 11 NOCs that reported having a safeguarding policy in place.

The safeguarding policy was **publicly available** in both IFs and half of NOCs (n = 5/10, 50%) The policy was *communicated* via education (n = 8 NOC, 2 IF), during commission meeting (n = 7 NOC, 2 IF), via awareness raising campaigns (n = 7 NOC, 1 IF), via a newsletter (n = 3 NOC, 1 IF), and via (social) media (n = 2 NOC, 1 IF). Remaining ways of communicating included partly via the intranet of the organisation and partly on the website, during pre-Games meetings and in emails for the team before the Games, and integration in the code of conduct.

Throughout the **development process** of the safeguarding policy, the staff, safeguarding experts, academic experts, and athletes were involved among both IFs and the NOCs, see Figure 9.

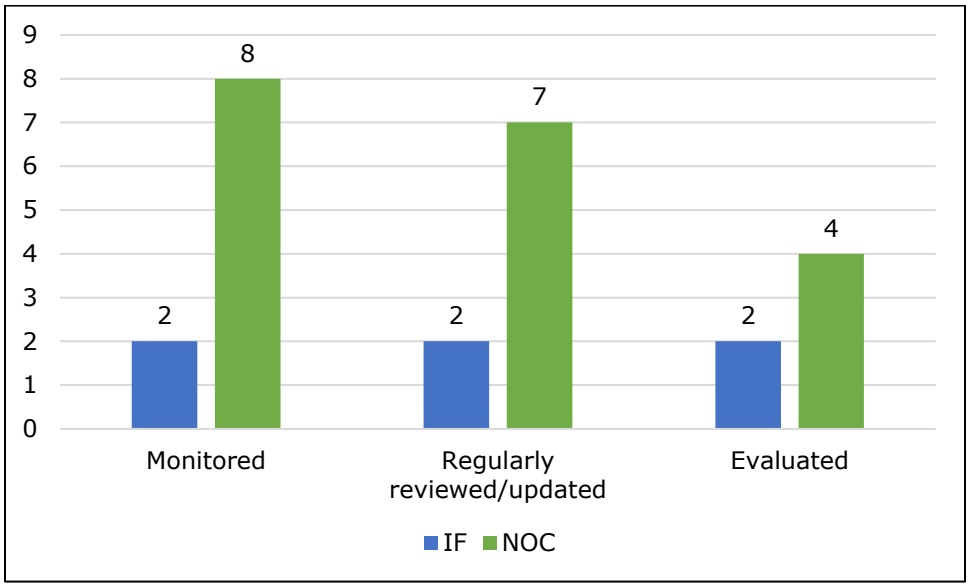
Figure 9 *Target groups that participated in the development process of the safeguarding policy*



Note: Based on two IFs and 11 NOCs that reported having a safeguarding policy in place.

For both IFs, the safeguarding policy was **approved** by the executive commission, which was also true for seven NOCs (n = 7 NOC, 63%). In other cases, the policy was (also) approved by an integrity commission (n = 1 NOC), or a safeguarding commission (n = 1 NOC). The remaining four NOCs had their policies approved by an athlete's commission, management team, athlete's entourage commission, the board of the NOC, sport department and the board. Figure 10 shows to what extent the safeguarding policy is being **monitored, regularly reviewed or updated, and evaluated** within the IFs (n = 2) and NOCs (n = 11).

Figure 10 *Monitoring, updating and evaluation of the safeguarding policy*

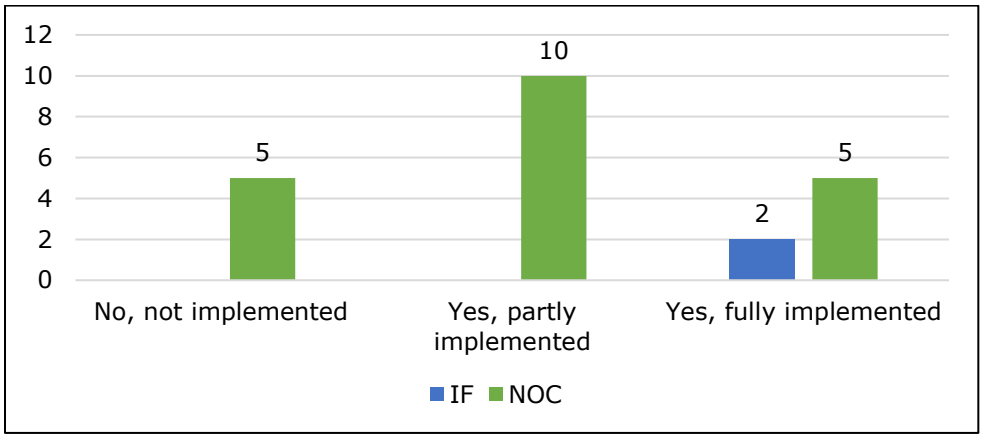


Note: Based on two IFs and 11 NOCs that reported having a safeguarding policy in place.

3.3 Reporting mechanisms for safeguarding concerns

IFs and NOCs were asked about their reporting mechanisms for safeguarding concerns. Both IFs, as well as five NOCs (25%), reported having a **formal reporting procedure** in place, see Figure 11. Ten NOCs (50%) indicated that such mechanisms are only partly implemented, while the remaining five (25%) do not yet have a formal system. In these latter cases, safeguarding concerns can still be raised, for example by emailing or calling the NOC directly (n = 2 NOCs), or by reporting to other bodies such as the National Federation, police, Olympic Committee, Ministry of Sport, or other law enforcement agencies. The *main barriers* cited by these five NOCs to establishing a formal reporting mechanism included limited time and staff capacity, lack of approval from the Ministry of Sport, and the absence of concrete safeguarding strategies and policies.

Figure 11 *Availability reporting systems*



Note: Based on two IFs and 20 NOCs.

The IFs and NOCs with a reporting mechanism in place, have **implemented** these in a comparable way. Both participating IFs provide an online form via which a report can be made, with one having a button to the online form on each page of their website. Both IFs provide anonymous reporting, and one IF has a case management system in which incoming reports are being filed. Next to online reporting, report can also be made via email or phone. The available reporting mechanisms of the NOCs are implemented in a similar way. Reporting mechanisms are implemented online, either by an online form on the website that allows for (anonymous) reporting, or by providing the contact details of the safeguarding officer or ombudsman that can be reached by email or phone. The safeguarding officer, ombudsperson or the ethics committee often consider reports. One NOC says that all information on the reporting mechanisms and accompanying procedures are available in the NOC policy, however, they acknowledge that athletes and their entourage need more information or training to understand how it works.

Regarding the **features** of IFs' and NOCs' reporting mechanisms, most organisations reported that their systems ensure confidentiality, allow reporting on behalf of others, provide clear instructions on how to submit a report, and use understandable language. By contrast, the least frequently included features were information on when and how reports are escalated to the police or national authorities, and clarity about the role of legal or statutory bodies. Full details are provided in Table 2.

Table 2 *Overview of elements that are included in the NOCs/IFs reporting mechanisms and procedures*

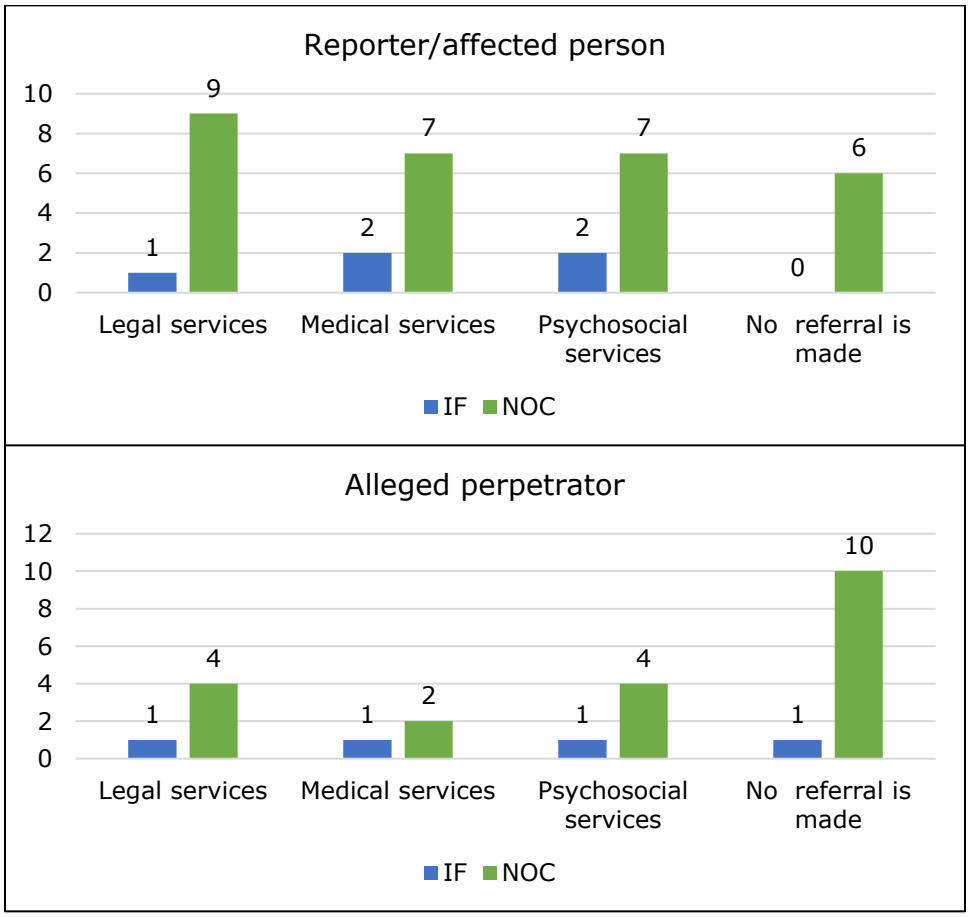
Elements reporting mechanisms and procedures	Number of NOCs	Number of IFs
Confidentiality is ensured	13 (87%)	2 (100%)
The reporting system allows for reporting on behalf of others (e.g., whistleblowers)	12 (80%)	2 (100%)
Information on how to make a report about safeguarding concerns is available on the NOC's/IF's website	11 (73%)	2 (100%)
The reporting procedure entails easy understandable language (i.e., national and additional languages)	11 (73%)	2 (100%)
Information on how to make a report about a safeguarding concern is publicly communicated	10 (67%)	2 (100%)
More than one reporting channel (e.g., phone, email, web form, chat) is available	10 (67%)	2 (100%)
The reporting mechanism allows for anonymous reporting	10 (67%)	2 (100%)
Reports of safeguarding concerns are stored securely	10 (67%)	2 (100%)
The reporting procedure is publicly accessible	9 (30%)	2 (100%)
Information on what to do in the event of an immediate risk is available	7 (47%)	1 (50%)
There are clear and secure policies and systems available for sharing information with necessary stakeholders	6 (40%)	2 (100%)
The NOC/IF monitors, records and securely stores all incidents, allegations, and complaints	6 (40%)	1 (50%)
The reporting procedure includes information for the reporter where the report will go to	5 (33%)	1 (50%)
The reporting system is operated and managed by someone working independently for the organisation	5 (33%)	0 (0%)
The NOC/IF uses trauma-informed practices when dealing with cases of safeguarding concerns	5 (33%)	2 (100%)
Information on when and how a report is made to the police/national authority body	4 (27%)	0 (0%)
The procedure outlines what role legal or statutory authorities play in the process	3 (20%)	0 (0%)

Note: Based on two IFs and 15 NOCs that reported having reporting mechanisms and/or procedures in place.

The safeguarding officer (n = 10 NOCs, 1 IF) **manages incoming reports**. Within one IF, the head of the IF manages the incoming reports, while eleven NOCs reported that (next to the safeguarding officer) others managed the incoming reports, including the ombudsperson, legal staff, the athletes commission, the ethic commission, or a lawyer.

Additionally, IFs and NOCs also reported to what extent they make **referral** to specialised care for the reporter or affected person and the alleged perpetrator. Both IFs reported providing referrals to legal, medical, or psychosocial support services for reporters and/or affected persons. Among NOCs, a majority (n = 9/15, 60%) also offer such referrals, while a substantial minority (n = 6/15 NOCs, 40%) do not refer affected individuals to any specialised care. In contrast, referrals for alleged perpetrators are far less common. One out of two IFs make referrals for the alleged person. Similarly, most NOCs (n = 10/15, 67%) do not provide referrals for alleged perpetrators, although a few do so. See Figure 12 for all details.

Figure 12 *Referrals made by NOCs and IFs to specialised care or professionals for the report or affect person and alleged perpetrator(s)*

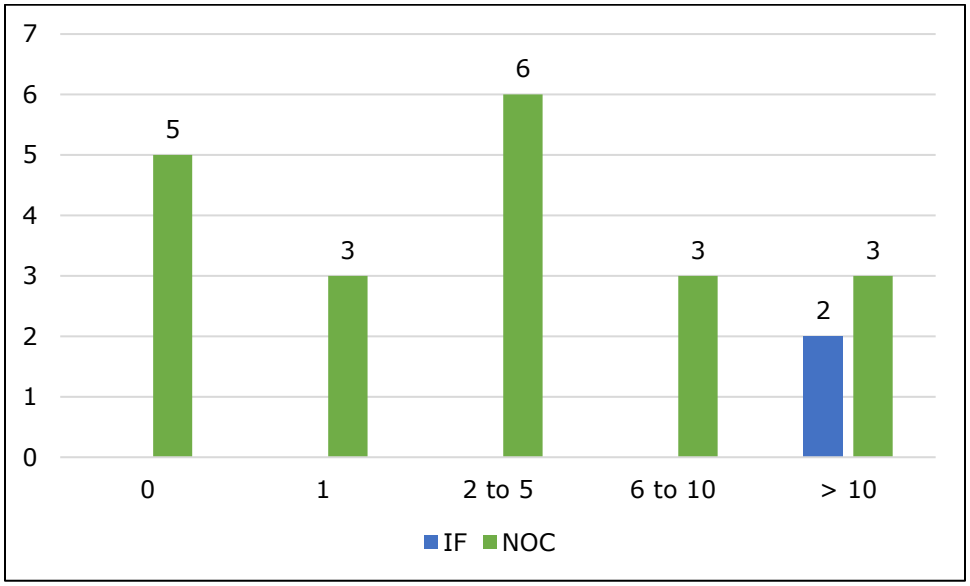


Note: Based on two IFs and 15 NOCs that reported having reporting mechanisms and/or procedures in place.

3.4 Case management

The IFs and NOCs stated on the **number** of safeguarding concerns reported in the past year (2024), see Figure 13. IFs reported the highest number, with more than 10 reports. Among the NOCs, the number of reports varied strongly between no reports at all to more than 10, going even to more than 100 reports.

Figure 13 *Number of reported safeguarding concerns in the past year (2024)*



Note: Based on two IFs and 20 NOCs.

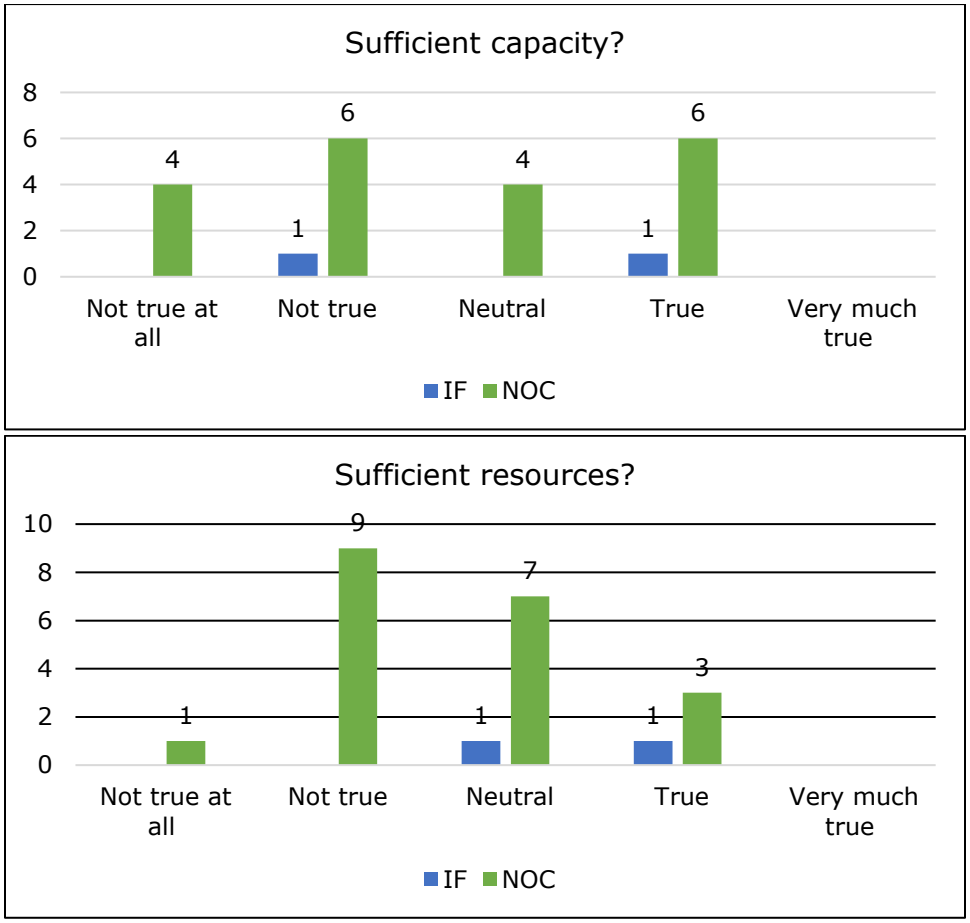
To manage these incoming reports, only one NOC (n = 1/15, 7%) and one IF use a classification system to classify these reports based on type, severity, and/or urgency of the situation. The NOC reports that they classify the incoming reports based on type; however, this is not further explained. The IF using a classification tool, uses the Federation's integrity pillars.

3.5 Needs

One IF and half of NOCs (n = 10/20, 50%) report they currently lack sufficient **capacity** (e.g., staff, human resources) to further develop their safeguarding activities, see Figure 14. Nevertheless, one IF and six NOCs report they have sufficient capacity designated for safeguarding activities. A similar pattern was observed when looking at the **resources** (e.g., financial, material) available to further develop their safeguarding activities. Half of the NOCs (n = 10/20, 50%) report that they do not have sufficient resources available, with only one IF and three NOCs indicating that they have sufficient resources. Importantly, one IF and one

third of NOCs (n = 7/20, 35%), indicated a neutral position, possibly reflecting some uncertainty regarding the organisation's current available resources for safeguarding.

Figure 14 *IFs and NOCs level of agreement with sufficient capacity and resources to deal with safeguarding concerns*



Note: Based on two IFs and 20 NOCs.

3.6 Challenges

IFs and NOCs reported several challenges in responding to safeguarding concerns. One IF highlighted **geographical barriers** such as differing legal systems, jurisdictional complexities, cultural differences, and language barriers. The other IF pointed out the reluctance of people to act as **witnesses** in safeguarding cases.

Among NOCs, the most common challenge was the **absence of formalised safeguarding policies and procedures**. Several NOCs (n = 9, 45%) are still developing these or find **systematic implementation** difficult due to limited staff and financial resources. Other barriers include insufficient safeguarding knowledge across different organisational levels, limited experience in handling complex cases, and legal uncertainties such as GDPR compliance and unclear responsibilities. NOCs also noted **practical obstacles**: referred cases that fall outside their mandate, failing or lacking reporting mechanisms, difficulties collaborating with National Federations or local authorities, and role ambiguity within the broader sport system.

3.7 Facilitators

When asked what would strengthen their response capacity, IFs emphasised the value of **tailored training** for local actors, clear **collaboration agreements** with law enforcement and integrity bodies, **standardised safeguarding procedures**, and access to **best practice** examples.

NOCs highlighted similar facilitators. Key among these were the establishment of **dedicated safeguarding or integrity departments** within the organisation (i.e., NOC) supported by comprehensive policies, strategies, and reporting mechanisms. Many NOCs also called for stronger **involvement of government bodies** (such as Ministries of Sport or Justice) to support national coordination. Additional facilitators mentioned included the availability of a classification tool and case-handling examples, increased resources and staffing, potential legal reforms (e.g., data protection laws), and closer collaboration with National Federations, government actors, and internal NOC commissions.

4. Discussion and recommendations

4.1 Key summary main results

Table 3 presents the main key findings of the current study. For each element of the survey the main results, gaps, recommendations and possible linked SAFE HARBOUR actions are presented.

Table 3 *Overview of key findings*

Topic	Strengths	Gaps	Recommendations	SAFE HARBOUR Actions
Safeguarding officers & capacity	➢ Almost all IFs/NOCs (95%) have safeguarding officers ➢ Most trained or in training	➢ Average 0.85 FTE, many combine safeguarding with other duties ➢ Only 30% of NOCs have full-time roles ➢ Officer contact details often not transparent	➢ Strengthen officer roles with dedicated time/resources by establishing their role as an independent position within the organisation ➢ Ensure visibility and accessibility of officers ➢ Provide ongoing training and peer support	➢ Provide practical resources, templates, and training modules ➢ Offer training sessions for safeguarding officers ➢ Enable peer learning and exchanges via ENSS ➢ Provide ad hoc financial support for integration in daily operations
Safeguarding policies	➢ IFs and 55% of NOCs have a policy ➢ Many apply year-round ➢ Most are monitored/reviewed	➢ 45% of NOCs lack a policy ➢ Limited evaluation of policies ➢ Leadership buy-in often missing	➢ Support drafting of policies with adaptable templates ➢ Strengthen leadership awareness and commitment ➢ Develop simple evaluation and review frameworks	➢ Provide practical policy templates and guidance ➢ Offer training for leadership and staff ➢ Promote leadership awareness through structured dialogues ➢ Provide monitoring & evaluation guidance
Reporting mechanisms	➢ Most IFs/NOCs (77%) have mechanisms, often online ➢ Managed by safeguarding officer (50%)	➢ 5 NOCs (23%) lack mechanisms ➢ Barriers: resources, missing procedures, lack of support	➢ Establish minimum standards for reporting systems	➢ Develop guidance on minimum reporting standards (added emphasis)

	➢ Referral pathways for victims/reporters exist	➢ Limited follow-up support for alleged perpetrators	➢ Ensure accessibility and procedural fairness ➢ Broaden support to all parties involved	➢ Provide templates and tools for reporting mechanisms ➢ Enable peer learning and sharing of good practice through ENSS
Case management	➢ Reports are being received ➢ Referrals to external services exist	➢ Large variation in case numbers (possible underreporting) ➢ No classification tool used	➢ Introduce classification tool for consistent handling ➢ Harmonise data capture and analysis ➢ Train officers in fair and consistent case management	➢ Develop a standardised classification and case management system ➢ Create a complementary decision-making framework ➢ Use these tools to analyse trends and risk factors
Cross-cutting challenges	➢ Acknowledgement of need for resources and capacity ➢ Some monitoring processes exist	➢ Lack of resources and skills ➢ Weak leadership buy-in ➢ Complex and diverse legal frameworks ➢ Geographical barriers (IFs)	➢ Build capacity through training and financial support ➢ Strengthen peer learning and regional collaboration ➢ Provide clear legal navigation guidance ➢ Introduce practical Monitoring & Evaluation indicators	➢ Create ENSS ➢ Provide ad hoc financial support ➢ Develop a European Response framework ➢ Provide guidance on relevant EU/national legislation & roles ➢ Share practical Monitoring & Evaluation indicators

The key findings of the SAFE HARBOUR GAP analysis **confirm** that partners NOCs and IFs are increasingly aware of the importance of safeguarding but face clear operational and strategic challenges. Importantly, some **limitations** need to be considered when interpreting the findings. The differing mandates of IFs and NOCs complicate direct comparisons, and findings should be interpreted with this in mind. Importantly, all data were self-reported and not independently verified; no review of policy documents was conducted, which may limit the completeness of the findings. Although these limitations do not compromise the findings, they may introduce some degree of social desirability in the responses. Nonetheless, the full participation of all SAFE HARBOUR partner organisations represents a notable **strength**, offering a comprehensive and practice-based overview of safeguarding structures within this group. With this strong collaboration underway, the SAFE HARBOUR project is uniquely positioned to provide the tools, guidance, and momentum needed to build robust, context-sensitive safeguarding systems across Europe.

4.2 Bridging the gaps – From analysis to action

The **results** of the SAFE HARBOUR GAP analysis **offer** a timely and practice-based insight into the evolving safeguarding landscape in European sport. While they reveal important foundations already in place, such as the widespread appointment of safeguarding officers and initial efforts to develop policies and reporting procedures, they also expose persistent and structural gaps that hinder effective safeguarding response and protection.

Crucially, these gaps do not reflect a lack of will or awareness but rather, they point to systemic limitations in organisational capacity, clarity, and coherence. Addressing safeguarding concerns in sport requires more than reactive procedures—it demands confident leadership, legally informed structures, sustainable systems, and culturally embedded norms of care, respect, and accountability. Based on the analysis, **five interconnected areas** emerge that, if addressed collectively, can significantly strengthen safeguarding implementation across both European NOCs and IFs.

1. SAFEGUARDING OFFICERS & CAPACITY

Many organisations have appointed safeguarding officers and initial procedures in place. However, these safeguarding officers are often hindered by limited human and financial resources. Appointed safeguarding officers frequently work part-time, juggle multiple responsibilities, and lack structural or material support.

Recommendation: Build safeguarding capacity as a core function of sport governance, not a peripheral task. This includes investing in dedicated staff roles, providing accessible tools and templates, and ensuring sustainable financial resources.

SAFE HARBOUR Action: The project provides practical resources, policy templates, training modules, and peer exchange opportunities, while advocating for safeguarding to be structurally embedded in national and international sport institutions. The project will create the ENSS, fostering peer learning, and the exchange of good practices across national contexts. Ad hoc financial support is also made available to help organisations integrate safeguarding into their daily operations.

2. SAFEGUARDING POLICIES

Safeguarding policies are available and often apply all year-round. Nevertheless, a substantial number of NOCs lack policies, and these often experience weak leadership buy-in.

Accordingly, in many of these organisations, safeguarding still lacks visibility at decision-making levels, leading to stagnation, under-reporting, or fragmented responses.

Recommendation: Strengthen leadership engagement and secure leadership buy-in through education, accountability structures, and evidence of good practice. Clarify roles and responsibilities at all levels to ensure coordinated action and develop simple valuation and review frameworks.

SAFE HARBOUR Action: Through structured dialogues, targeted leadership training (i.e. providing policy templates and guidance), and community-building efforts, the project cultivates a governance culture that recognises safeguarding as a shared leadership responsibility. Model frameworks and peer learning opportunities further support partners in developing coherent and coordinated safeguarding strategies.

3. REPORTING MECHANISMS

Reporting mechanisms and procedures are available among IFs and some NOCs, and concerns are managed by safeguarding officers. Some NOCs, however, do lack mechanisms, miss procedures, and have lack of support.

Recommendation: Develop minimum standards for reporting systems by broadening the support to all parties involved.

SAFE HARBOUR Action: Providing guidance and templates to develop minimum reporting standards. Besides, peer learning and sharing good practices is encouraged through the ENSS.

4. CASE MANAGEMENT

Overall, reports are being received, and referrals are made by the NOCs and IFs. NOCs and IFs report a lack of using a classification and/or response tool when managing their cases. Without a shared tool to classify and respond to safeguarding concerns, organisations struggle with inconsistent decision-making and unclear response timelines. This affects both the quality of care for affected persons and the accountability of organisations.

Recommendation: Introduce a standard tool to systematically classify and respond to cases—ensuring responses are trauma-informed, timely, and proportionate.

SAFE HARBOUR Action: The project is developing a standardised, European classification system and accompanying decision-making framework, based on an international set of tools developed by the IOC. These tools will support frontline professionals in assessing cases consistently, prioritising responses, and collecting data to inform prevention and policy development.

5. CROSS-CUTTING CHALLENGES

NOCs and IFs share a growing awareness of capacity, legal and coordination needs. The current persistent challenges include limited resources, leadership buy-in, and complex national contexts.

Recommendation: Strengthen collaboration, peer learning, and practical guidance to ensure equitable progress across Europe that considers the different legal contexts.

SAFE HARBOUR Action: The project is connecting organisations through the ENSS, provides European-level guidance and capacity-building tools, and promotes monitoring and evaluation indicators to sustain long-term safeguarding development.

5. Conclusion

The SAFE HARBOUR project positions safeguarding as a central pillar of strong, ethical, inclusive, and resilient sport governance. By moving from individual, fragmented efforts to coordinated and systematic approaches, and by strengthening collaboration across organisations, SAFE HARBOUR helps create the conditions for lasting cultural change within European sport.

The findings of this gap analysis are not an endpoint but a starting point for collective action. As implementation moves forward, continued collaboration between the IOC, EOC - EOC EU Office, NOCs, IFs, public authorities, and safeguarding experts will be essential. Therefore, SAFE HARBOUR's next phases will build on this shared knowledge to co-create solutions that are responsive to real-world constraints while ambitious in their vision for safe, supportive sport environments for all.

6. Appendix 1

Dear partners,

As part of the **SAFE HARBOUR project** (funded by the EU Erasmus+ program), we are conducting this survey to gain a **comprehensive understanding of how NOCs and IFs manage safeguarding concerns**. Our goal is to identify **both strengths and gaps** in current procedures and services, ultimately helping to enhance safeguarding practices across the sports sector. Thank you for your initial feedback during the Project Meeting 1 in Brussels, which allowed us to optimize the questions.

Your participation in this survey is part of your NOCs' or IFs' partnership and commitment in the SAFE HARBOUR project. By completing this survey, you are directly contributing to the next steps of the SAFE HARBOUR project. The insights gathered will inform the development of improved safeguarding policies and support systems. The survey includes a **glossary** at the beginning with key terminology to enhance clarity and ease of understanding. We recommend having the glossary at hand when completing the survey. The glossary is available on the **Google Drive**. The survey takes **approximately 15 minutes** to complete. You have the option to resume the questionnaire at another time by saving the questionnaire.

Before starting, please review the following points and provide your **informed consent**. If you choose to opt out of having your (pseudonymized) responses represented in scientific reporting, your inputs will still contribute to the SAFE HARBOUR project insight but will be excluded from scientific reporting.

We sincerely appreciate your time and contribution. Your expertise is key

to shaping safer environments in sport.

The SAFE HARBOUR Team

SAFE HARBOUR DISCLAIMER

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are, however, those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or EACEA. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

The personal data of the National Olympic Committee (NOC) and International Federation (IF) will be processed in compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Throughout the SAFE HARBOUR project, funded under the Erasmus+ Programme 2024 (Project ID: 101183590), data will remain confidential at all times, with researchers and academic experts implementing measures to safeguard my privacy.

For research purposes, the data of the NOCs and IFs will be pseudonymized. This means the data will no longer be directly linked to a specific NOC or IF-without the use of additional information, which will be securely accessible only to the researchers. I understand that

- pseudonymized data from NOCs and IFs may be reused for other scientific research purposes and potentially for teaching or academic presentations;
- views and opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or EACEA; therefore, neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

INFORMED CONSENT FOR ACADEMIC AND SCIENTIFIC PURPOSES

Before starting the survey, we ask you to read the following bullet points

and to confirm them if you accept that your answers can be used for academic purposes in a pseudonymized way:

- I understand what is expected from me during this survey.
- I know that I will participate in an online survey which focuses on the current procedures and services of my organization in relation to responding to safeguarding concerns.
- I know that my participation may be associated to risks or discomforts: there are little to no risk involved in completing the survey.
- I or others can benefit from this research in the following ways: by completing the survey, more insights will be gained in the strengths and gaps of the current procedures and services of NOCs and IFs regarding responding to safeguarding concerns. This information will guide further improvement of these procedures and services.
- My participation offers a contribution to the scientific research. I know that I will not receive any further reward or compensation for my participation.
- I understand that I voluntarily consent for the inclusion of my responses for academic and scientific purposes. I do not have to give a reason if I do not wish my responses to be included for scientific purposes, and I know that this will not have any negative repercussions for me.
- My personal data will be processed in line with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Only the data that are strictly necessary to achieve the research objectives will be processed. My data will be kept confidential at all times throughout the study and the researchers will take measures to protect my privacy. For example, my personal data will be pseudonymized, meaning that my data can no longer be linked to me without the use of additional information that is only accessible to the researchers. I understand that my pseudonymized data may be reused for other scientific research and possibly for teaching or academic lectures. More information on my rights as a participant in this study in terms of AVG and privacy are available on the Thomas More website https://thomasmore.be/en/privacy-statement. For more information

regarding the processing of personal data and privacy regulations, contact dpo@thomasmore.be.

- In case of further questions about the research, I know that I can contact: Karolien.Adriaens@thomasmore.be (Thomas More) or info@euoffice.eurolympic.org (EOC EU Office).
- This study has been reviewed and approved by the Social and Societal Ethics Committee (SMEC) of KU Leuven (G-2025 02 2240). In case of complaints or other concerns with regard to the ethical aspects of this research I can contact SMEC: smec@kuleuven.be

---

* **I have read and understood the information in this document, and I have received an answer to all my questions regarding this research.**

- ○ I give my consent to include my NOC or IF response for academic and scientific purposes.
- ○ I do not give my consent but will complete the survey for the aims of the SAFE HARBOUR Project. My data will not be used for academic purposes.

Below is a glossary of key terms used throughout the survey to ensure a shared understanding of the terminology used. The glossary is also available on the Google Drive if you need it while completing the survey. We recommend having the glossary at hand while completing the survey.

- **Interpersonal violence**: The intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation. Interpersonal violence involves the intentional use of physical force or power against other people by an individual or small group of individuals. It can occur online, be perpetrated by different actors and take different forms (Tuakli-Wosornu et al., 2024).
- **Safeguarding**: All proactive measures to both prevent and appropriately respond to concerns related to harassment and abuse

in sport, as well as the promotion of holistic approaches to athlete welfare. (Tuakli-Wosornu et al., 2024).

- **Safeguarding officer**: Safeguarding officers are appointed by a sport organization or public authority. They contribute to preventing all forms of interpersonal violence against children/adults and responding to concerns in sport settings. Their role and responsibilities may be different depending on the organization in which they operate.
- **Safeguarding policy**: The outlining of an organization's principles and approach to safeguarding athletes from interpersonal violence in sport (International Olympic Committee, 2017).
- **Safeguarding procedures**: The specific steps or actions which should be followed to achieve the objective of the safeguarding policy, i.e. safeguarding participants from interpersonal violence in sport (International Olympic Committee, 2017).
- **Safeguarding concern**: Anything that might impact the safety and welfare of children, young people, and adults, that causes them harm or put them at risk of harm.
- **Reporting mechanism**: Any formal process or system established for individuals to report safeguarding concerns, including incidents of interpersonal violence.
- **Response mechanism**: Any system or process in place that provides for a case management and/or an investigation of the reported concern and/or a resolution of the concern, including access to remedy.
- **Policy monitoring**: Measures taken to check the effectiveness of the policy in terms of its impact.
- **Policy implementation**: The process of rolling out the policy and developing procedures and taking measures in line with the policy.
- **Immediate risk**: A situation where there is a high likelihood of harm or danger occurring without prompt action, requiring urgent intervention to prevent injury, damage, or loss.

Project ID: 101183590

The first part of the survey focuses on some general questions regarding the NOC/IF you are representing and the current role of the safeguarding officer.

* What is your name?

* Which NOC/IF are you representing?

- ○ NOC Belgium
- ○ NOC Bosnia and Herzegovina
- ○ NOC Croatia
- ○ NOC Cyprus
- ○ NOC Czechia
- ○ NOC Denmark
- ○ NOC Germany
- ○ NOC Hungary
- ○ NOC Kosovo
- ○ NOC Latvia
- ○ NOC Lithuania
- ○ NOC Luxembourg
- ○ NOC Malta
- ○ NOC Montenegro
- ○ NOC Norway
- ○ NOC Poland

- ○ NOC Portugal
- ○ NOC Romania
- ○ NOC Slovakia
- ○ NOC Slovenia
- ○ International Biathlon Federation
- ○ International Ice Hockey Federation
- ○ Other, specify:

* What is your role in the NOC/IF?

Please outline the overall role and mandate of your NOC. Does your NOC have Games-related tasks only, or does your NOC have a broader scope, including the support of competitive athletes, provision of residential training centers, funding to sport organisations etc.?

For IBU and IIHF, this question is not applicable to your organisation.

* Does your NOC/IF currently have an appointed safeguarding officer?

- ○ No, not yet
- ○ Yes, one
- ○ Yes, more than one, please state how many:

Please outline the operationality of your NOC/IF safeguarding officer(s) when it comes to safeguarding athletes:

- ○ The safeguarding officer is operational in Games-times only
- ○ The safeguarding officer is operational all year round

The NOC/IF safeguarding officer is responsible for:

- ○ NOC employees only
- ○ The NOC delegation athletes and entourage only
- ○ All members of sport federations and (grassroot) clubs
- ○ Other, specify:

What are the main roadblocks for your organization to appoint a safeguarding officer?

At your NOC/IF, how much FTE (Full-Time Equivalent) is appointed to the safeguarding lead/officer(s), to work specifically on safeguarding?

What is the professional status of the safeguarding officer(s)? Indicate the status for the number of safeguarding officer(s) present in your organisation and use the 'Not applicable' option for the remaining options.

	Safeguarding officer 1	Safeguarding officer 2	Safeguarding officer 3	Safeguarding officer 4

Full-time (= 100%), responsible for safeguarding only	☐	☐	☐	☐
Full-time (= 100%), but with additional responsibilities next to safeguarding	☐	☐	☐	☐
Part-time (< 100%), responsible for safeguarding only	☐	☐	☐	☐
Part-time (< 100%), but with additional responsibilities next to safeguarding	☐	☐	☐	☐
Volunteer	☐	☐	☐	☐
Not applicable	☐	☐	☐	☐

If you have any additional comments regarding the professional status of the safeguarding officer(s) in your NOC/IF in addition to the previous question, please add them here.

* Is the safeguarding officer/the team responsible for safeguarding only?

- ○ Yes, safeguarding is the only responsibility
- ○ No

The safeguarding officer/the team is also responsible for:

- ☐ Anti-doping
- ☐ Competition manipulation
- ☐ Governance

- [ ] Human Rights
- [ ] Gender Equality
- [ ] Ethics Committee/Commission
- [ ] Disciplinary Committee/Commission
- [ ] Fight against corruption in sport
- [ ] Other, please specify:

Did at least one (of the) safeguarding officer(s) follow a certified training to become a trained safeguarding officer?

- ○ No
- ○ No, but at least one person is currently following a specialised training safeguarding training
- ○ Yes

The safeguarding officer is following or followed the following training:

IOC Certificate Safeguarding Officer in Sport
FIFA Guardians
Other, please specify:

The appointed safeguarding officer(s)'s name, pictures, and contact information are shared transparently with all members and stakeholders of the organization:

- ○ No
- ○ Partially
- ○ Yes

Project ID: 101183590

The following questions will focus on the NOC/IF safeguarding policy

Which good practices does your NOC/IF has when it comes to safeguarding?

* Does the NOC/IF have a safeguarding policy (including policies to respond to safeguarding concerns daily and/or during events) in place?

- ○ No
- ○ Yes

Please outline the applicability of your NOC/IF safeguarding policy when it comes to safeguarding athletes:

- ○ The safeguarding policy is applicable in Games-times only
- ○ The safeguarding policy is applicable all year round

The NOC/IF safeguarding policy is applicable to:

- ○ NOC employees only
- ○ The NOC delegation athletes and entourage only
- ○ All members of sport federations and (grassroot) clubs
- ○ Other, specify:

Is the safeguarding policy implemented within the NOC/IF, meaning that the policy is being rolled out and procedures have been developed and

taken in line with the policy?

- ○ No, not implemented
- ○ Yes, partly implemented (not all procedures and actions in the safeguarding policy are currently implemented or communicated to all stakeholders)
- ○ Yes, fully implemented (all procedures and actions in the safeguarding policy are implemented and communicated to all stakeholders)

Is the safeguarding policy publicly available?

- ○ No
- ○ Yes, published here (insert link):

In what ways is the safeguarding policy communicated? Tick the boxes that apply in your NOC/IF:

- ☐ NOC/IF website
- ☐ Newsletter
- ☐ Awareness raising activities
- ☐ Education (e.g., webinars, seminars, workshops)
- ☐ (Social) media campaigns
- ☐ Commission meetings (athlete, GEDI etc.)
- ☐ Other, specify:

Select all the periods that the existing safeguarding policy is valid/operational/enforced:

- ☐ All the time
- ☐ Olympic Games-Time

- [ ] International events
- [ ] National events
- [ ] Local events
- [ ] Other, specify:

* Does the NOC/IF have an additional separate Games-related safeguarding policy for the Multidisciplinary Olympic events (e.g., Olympic Games, Youth Olympic Games, European Games, Olympic Qualifiers)?

- ( ) No
- ( ) Yes

Explain how this Games-related safeguarding policy differs from the overall safeguarding policy:

Who was involved in the development process of the safeguarding policy?

- [ ] Children and young people
- [ ] Athletes
- [ ] Athletes with lived experiences
- [ ] Officials
- [ ] Staff
- [ ] Volunteers
- [ ] Parents

- [ ] Safeguarding experts
- [ ] Academic experts
- [ ] Other, specify:

To whom does the safeguarding policy apply to?

- [ ] Athletes
- [ ] Coaches
- [ ] Volunteers
- [ ] Referees
- [ ] Other officials
- [ ] Other, specify:

Who (which body within your NOC/IF) approved the safeguarding policy?

- [ ] Executive commission
- [ ] Gender commission
- [ ] Integrity commission
- [ ] Safeguarding commission
- [ ] Human Rights commission
- [ ] Other, specify:

Is the safeguarding policy ...

	Yes	No	I don't know
... monitored?	○	○	○

183590

... regularly reviewed/updated?	○	○	○
... evaluated?	○	○	○

What elements are included in the safeguarding policy? Tick all the boxes that apply to your NOC's/IF's safeguarding policy:

- ☐ Clear role description of the safeguarding lead/officer/focal point's role.
- ☐ Clear policy statement covering the commitment to keep everybody safe and importance of safeguarding
- ☐ Clear description and definitions of safeguarding concerns and interpersonal violence
- ☐ Description of the scope of application, this includes to whom the policy and related procedures should apply to (i.e. all people affiliated with the NOC/IF, including athletes)
- ☐ Clarification on applicable legal framework(s) at national or international levels, government guidance and principles that underpin the policy, as well as the instances in which different legal frameworks may apply
- ☐ Description on competition safeguarding including all safeguarding measures and procedures applying specifically to competitions
- ☐ Description of a safer recruitment procedure to prevent the access of unsuitable persons to positions of responsibility over athletes and other groups of vulnerable people
- ☐ Description of the standards of behaviour that apply (e.g., codes of conduct)
- ☐ Description of how the NOC/IF commits to providing safeguarding education and capacity building
- ☐ Description of the reporting procedures to address all reports and concerns in a timely and thorough manner
- ☐ Description of the investigation procedure to respond to alleged incidents of interpersonal violence which aims to assemble comprehensive information on the alleged incident
- ☐ Description of when and in what circumstances a report, or a concern should be referred to the relevant authorities for investigation

- [ ] Description of the disciplinary procedure for alleged incidents of interpersonal violence
- [ ] Description of the fair process for the responding party
- [ ] Description of the appropriate mechanisms available to provide support and information to people involved in an alleged incident of interpersonal violence
- [ ] Description of a confidentiality policy stating that an alleged incident of interpersonal violence is regarded as confidential, and that personal information shall not be disclosed
- [ ] Description of how athletes were involved in the development cycle of the safeguarding policies and procedures
- [ ] Description of the timeline for the dissemination and implementation of the policy and its recurrent revisions as well as indications on how its effectiveness is going to be monitored
- [ ] Other, specify:

What are the challenges/main roadblocks within your organization when it comes to developing and implementing a safeguarding policy?

Are there other related policies/actions your NOC/IF uses or refers to that include the topic of safeguarding (e.g., code of ethics, gender equality framework etc.)?

- ○ No
- ○ Yes, please specify:

3590

What would help your NOC/IF to start developing a safeguarding policy?

The following questions will focus on the NOC/IF reporting mechanisms for safeguarding concerns.

* Does the NOC/IF have a reporting mechanism/procedure (i.e. clear, published procedures that provide step-by-step guidance on what action to take if there are concerns about an individual's safety or well-being) in place for safeguarding concerns, as part of the safeguarding policy?

- ○ No, not implemented
- ○ Yes, partly implemented
- ○ Yes, fully implemented

Clarify how the reporting mechanism/procedure is implemented:

Consider your NOC's/IF's reporting mechanism/procedure and tick all the boxes that apply to it:

- ☐ Information on what to do in the event of an immediate risk is available.
- ☐ Information on how to make a report regarding safeguarding concerns is available on the NOC's/IF's website
- ☐ Information on how to make a report regarding a safeguarding concern is publicly communicated
- ☐ More than one reporting channel (e.g., phone, email, web form, chat) is available

- [ ] The reporting mechanism allows for anonymous reporting
- [ ] The reporting procedure entails easy understandable language (i.e., national and additional languages)
- [ ] The reporting procedure is publicly accessible
- [ ] The reporting procedure includes information for the reporter where the report will go to
- [ ] The procedure outlines what role legal or statutory authorities play in the process
- [ ] Reports of safeguarding concerns are stored securely
- [ ] Confidentiality is ensured
- [ ] The reporting system allows for reporting on behalf of others (e.g., whistleblowers)
- [ ] The reporting system is operated and managed by someone working independently for the organization
- [ ] Information on when and how a report is made to the police/national authority body
- [ ] There are clear and secure policies and systems available for sharing information with necessary stakeholders
- [ ] The NOC/IF uses trauma-informed practices when dealing with cases of safeguarding concerns
- [ ] The NOC/IF monitors, records and securely stores all incidents, allegations, and complaints
- [ ] Other, specify:

Who is managing the incoming reports?

- [ ] No one
- [ ] Safeguarding officer
- [ ] Someone else, please state who:

Project ID: 101183590

Do you provide referral to specialized care/professionals for ...

	Legal services	Medical services	Psychosocial services	No referral is made
... the reporter/affected person?	☐	☐	☐	☐
... the alleged perpetrators?	☐	☐	☐	☐

Clarify in what ways someone can report a safeguarding concern:

What are the main roadblocks for installing a reporting mechanism/procedure?

The following questions focus on the case management of safeguarding concerns within your NOC/IF.

* How many reported concerns did the NOC/IF receive in the past year (2024)?

- ○ 0
- ○ 1
- ○ 2-5
- ○ 6-10
- ○ More than 10, specify:

Project ID: 101183590

Does the NOC/IF use a classification system to classify reports based on type, severity and/or urgency of the situation?

- ○ No
- ○ Yes, specify which one:

Does the NOC/IF have information available on existing safeguarding policies and leads in the National Federations of your country?

- ○ No
- ○ Yes

What is the biggest challenge you currently face regarding responding to safeguarding concerns?

What would help/assist you most with this challenge?

Select the answer that best expresses your view on the NOC:

	Not at all true	Not true	Neutral	True	Very much true
The NOC/IF has sufficient capacity (e.g., staff, human resources) to further develop their safeguarding activities	○	○	○	○	○

SAFE HARBOUR

Strengthening Response Mechanisms for Safeguarding in European Sports

Co-funded by the European Union

Project ID: 101183590

SAFE HARBOUR

Strengthening Response Mechanisms for Safeguarding in European Sports

Co-funded by the European Union

Project ID: 101183590

The NOC/IF has sufficient resources (e.g., financial, materials) to further develop their safeguarding activities	○	○	○	○	○

If you have any other **ideas, suggestions, or concerns** regarding the **NOC/IF safeguarding policy, procedures, and services**, you can share these with us here. Your input can help us to further finalize the peer-to-peer roundtables:

If you have **any other suggestions, questions or concerns** you would like to share with us, you can share these with us here. Your input can help us to further finalize the peer-to-peer roundtables:

* If you wish to elaborate on your responses during a virtual meeting with a Thomas More researcher, please let us know here!

- ○ Yes, I would love to elaborate more and speak with a Thomas More researcher
- ○ No, this is not necessary at the moment.

* Via which email address can we contact you to schedule a virtual meeting?

Project ID: 101183590

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or EACEA. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.