



Raising the growth and participation  
of female sport officials in Europe

# LEARNING RESOURCES

## /// PILLAR 4: SUPPORT MECHANISMS / POSITIVE ACTIONS

### SUB-PILLAR 4.1

**Consult and engage  
with women officials in  
your sport**



Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union

## /// Sub-Pillar 4.1

# Consult and engage with women officials in your sport

## OVERVIEW

Consulting and engaging with women sport officials in your sport is an important step toward promoting gender equality and inclusivity.

👉 Here are some suggestions on how to do so effectively:

### 1. Research and identify women sport officials:

Start by researching and identifying women sport officials in your sport. Look for local, regional, or national associations that support women in officiating roles. Contact these organisations to gather information and make connections with women sport officials.

### 2. Attend workshops and conferences:

Participate in workshops, conferences, and seminars focused on officiating in your sport. These events often attract experienced officials, including women. Engage in networking opportunities to connect with women officials, ask questions, and seek advice.

### 3. Build relationships:

Reach out to women sport officials individually and express your interest in learning from them. Connect through social media platforms or professional networking sites. Be respectful, genuine, and specific about what you would like to discuss or learn from them. Building relationships can lead to mentorship opportunities and valuable insights.

### 4. Seek mentorship:

Identify women sport officials who have experience and expertise in your specific area of interest. Approach them to inquire about mentorship opportunities. A mentor can provide guidance, support, and feedback to help you grow as an official. Establish clear expectations and maintain regular communication with your mentor.

### 5. Attend women-focused events:

Look for events that specifically highlight women in sport officiating roles. These events may include panel discussions, forums, or conferences dedicated to empowering and promoting women in sports. Participating in such events will allow you to engage with women sport officials and gain insights into their experiences.

### 6. Collaborate on projects:

Collaborate with women sport officials on projects related to officiating. This could involve organising training sessions, developing educational materials, or creating initiatives to increase the representation of women in officiating roles. Working together will foster a sense of camaraderie and provide opportunities for shared learning.

### 7. Advocate for inclusion:

Use your platform and influence to advocate for gender equality and inclusion in your sport. Encourage your sport's governing body or relevant organisations to prioritise diversity and create opportunities for women sport officials. Raise awareness about the importance of gender representation and work toward breaking down barriers.

Remember, it's essential to approach all interactions with respect, empathy, and a willingness to learn. By actively engaging with women sport officials, you contribute to a more inclusive sporting environment and help pave the way for future generations of officials.

Reaching out to women sport officials requires a respectful and professional approach.

➤ **Here are some steps you can follow to initiate contact:**

**1. Research:**

Begin by researching and identifying women sport officials in your sport. Look for their names, roles, and any relevant contact information. Check sport governing body websites, local or regional associations, and social media platforms for leads.

**2. Introduce yourself:**

When reaching out, start with a brief and friendly introduction. Clearly state your name, your role or interest in the sport, and your purpose for contacting them. Be concise and to the point in your initial communication.

**3. Express interest and admiration:**

Show genuine interest in their work and acknowledge their achievements as sport officials. Mention specific accomplishments or contributions they have made to the sport. This demonstrates that you have done your research and value their expertise.

**4. State your intentions:**

Clearly express why you are reaching out and what you hope to gain from the interaction. Whether you are seeking advice, mentorship, or simply looking to connect, be transparent about your intentions. This helps set expectations and ensures that your message is understood.

**5. Be respectful and appreciative:**

Recognise that the person you are reaching out to may have a busy schedule. Be mindful of their time and avoid making excessive demands. Express gratitude for their consideration and offer to be flexible with scheduling or alternative means of communication.

**6. Offer a call-to-action:**

To facilitate further engagement, propose a specific action or request. It could be a request for a meeting, a phone call, or an opportunity to observe them in their sport officiating role. Be clear about what you are seeking and suggest potential next steps.

**7. Follow up:**

If you don't receive an immediate response, be patient. Sometimes sport officials, like anyone else, have busy schedules. Wait for a reasonable amount of time before following up with a polite and concise message, reiterating your interest and request.

**8. Respect their boundaries:**

If a woman sport official declines your request or does not respond, respect their decision. It's important to recognise that individuals may have different levels of availability or comfort in engaging with others. Accept their response graciously and avoid persisting if they have clearly indicated their lack of interest or availability.

Remember, it's crucial to maintain professionalism, respect boundaries, and be mindful of the time and availability of the sport officials you're reaching out to. By approaching them with sincerity and a genuine interest in their expertise, you increase the likelihood of establishing meaningful connections and engaging in valuable conversations.



## >> CONTENT AREA 1: METHODS OF POSITIVE ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION WITH WOMEN SPORT OFFICIALS

Positive engagement and effective communication with women sport officials can help foster productive relationships and promote gender equality in professional settings.

🕒 **Here are some methods to engage and communicate respectfully with women sport officials:**

### **1. Treat women sport officials with respect:**

Approach women sport officials with the same level of respect and professionalism as you would with their male counterparts. Avoid making assumptions based on gender and treat them as equals.

### **2. Active listening:**

Actively listen to women sport officials when they speak. Give them your full attention, maintain eye contact, and avoid interrupting or talking over them. Show genuine interest in their ideas, opinions, and experiences.

### **3. Value their expertise:**

Recognise and acknowledge the expertise and contributions of women sport officials. Encourage their participation in discussions and decision-making processes. Give them opportunities to share their knowledge and insights.

### **4. Use inclusive language:**

Be mindful of your language and use inclusive terms that avoid gender stereotypes. Address women sport officials by their professional titles and avoid using diminutives or nicknames that may diminish their authority.

### **5. Avoid gender biases:**

Be aware of unconscious biases and stereotypes that can influence your perceptions and interactions. Challenge and overcome any preconceived notions or assumptions you may have about women sport officials' capabilities.

### **6. Provide feedback and recognition:**

Offer constructive feedback and positive reinforcement to women sport officials for their accomplishments and contributions. Recognise their achievements publicly and ensure they receive the same level of recognition as their male colleagues.

**7. Foster an inclusive environment:**

Create an inclusive and supportive work environment where women sport officials feel comfortable expressing their ideas and concerns. Encourage collaboration and teamwork among colleagues, promoting diversity and gender equality.

**8. Mentorship and sponsorship:**

Support the professional development of women officials by providing mentorship and sponsorship opportunities. Offer guidance, share your expertise, and help create pathways for their career advancement.

**9. Engage in open dialogue:**

Initiate open and honest discussions with women sport officials about their experiences, challenges, and aspirations. Seek their input on policies and practices that can promote gender equality and inclusion in your organisation.

**10. Be an ally:**

Act as an ally for women sport officials by actively supporting their rights and advocating for gender equality. Challenge and address any instances of sexism or discrimination that you witness in the workplace.

**11. Give credit and recognition:**

Acknowledge the contributions and achievements of women sport officials. Give them credit for their ideas, suggestions, and efforts. Publicly recognise their accomplishments to ensure their work is valued and appreciated.

**12. Encourage participation:**

Create an environment that encourages active participation from women sport officials. Ask for their opinions, ideas, and feedback during meetings and discussions. Ensure their voices are heard and their perspectives are considered.

**13. Provide equal opportunities:**

Ensure that women sport officials have equal opportunities to participate, contribute, and advance in their careers. Offer them the same professional development opportunities, assignments, and promotions as others receive.

**14. Foster open dialogue:**

Create a safe space for open and honest communication. Encourage women sport officials to share their thoughts, concerns, and ideas without fear of judgment or backlash. Actively listen and provide constructive feedback when necessary.

Remember that these methods are not limited to women sport officials but can be applied to all officials to promote inclusive and respectful communication in the workplace.

**Top Tips**

1. Treat women sport officials with respect.
2. Avoid any form of gender bias and use inclusive language.
3. Initiate open and honest discussions with women sport officials about their experiences, challenges, and aspirations.
4. Recognise the achievements of women sport officials along side others.
5. Ensure that women sport officials have equal opportunities to participate, contribute, and advance in their careers.





## >> CONTENT AREA 2: CONSULT WITH WOMEN SPORT OFFICIALS THROUGH A 'HAVE YOUR SAY SURVEY'

Creating a well-designed survey is essential for gathering opinions effectively.

🕒 Here's a step-by-step guide on how to create a survey to gather opinions:

### 1. Define the survey objective:

Clearly identify the purpose of your survey and the specific opinions you want to gather. Determine what insights or information you hope to gain from the survey responses.

### 2. Choose the survey method:

Decide on the most suitable survey method for your audience and objectives. Options include online surveys and paper-based surveys. Online surveys are often the most convenient and cost-effective method. Some examples of online survey platforms include Qualtricks, Survey Monkey and Online Survey.

### 3. Create clear and concise questions:

Design questions that are clear, easy to understand, and specific to the opinions you want to gather. Avoid using jargon or complex language. Use simple and straightforward wording.

### 4. Use a mix of question types:

Include a mix of question types to gather different types of opinions. Common question types include multiple-choice, rating scales, open-ended questions, and Likert scales. Use the appropriate question type for the specific information you seek.

### 5. Keep the survey length reasonable:

Ensure your survey is of an appropriate length to maintain respondent engagement. Long surveys may lead to fatigue and incomplete responses. Focus on the most important questions and keep the survey concise.

### 6. Provide response options:

If using multiple-choice or rating scale questions, provide relevant and comprehensive response options. Ensure the options cover the full range of possible opinions or perspectives. Include an "Other" or "None of the above" option where necessary.

### 7. Ensure survey logic and flow:

Organise your questions in a logical and coherent manner. Start with introductory questions to set the context and warm up respondents. Group related questions together to maintain flow. Use skip logic or branching to customize the survey path based on respondents' answers.

### 8. Use neutral and unbiased language:

Avoid biased or leading language that may influence respondents' opinions. Use neutral language and avoid framing questions in a way that pushes respondents towards a particular response.

**9. Test and refine the survey:**

Before launching the survey, conduct a pilot test with a small group of individuals who represent your target audience. Gather feedback on the clarity and relevance of the questions and make any necessary adjustments.

**10. Consider anonymity and confidentiality:**

If sensitive opinions are being sought, assure respondents of the confidentiality of their responses. Provide an option for anonymity to encourage honest and candid feedback. Ensure the environment is safe for women sport officials to say what they think without reprisals.

**11. Pilot and distribute the survey:**

Once you are confident in the survey's design, distribute it to your target audience. Use appropriate channels such as email, online survey platforms, social media, or in-person data collection.

**12. Analyse and interpret the results:**

After collecting the survey responses, analyse the data to gain insights. Use statistical analysis tools or qualitative coding methods, depending on the nature of your survey and the data collected. Look for patterns, trends, and key findings to draw meaningful conclusions.

**13. Share and act on the findings:**

Communicate the survey findings to relevant stakeholders or the survey participants themselves. Use the insights gained to inform decision-making, improve processes, or address concerns identified in the survey.

Remember, ethical considerations such as informed consent and data privacy should be followed throughout the survey process.

🕒 **The selection process for women sport officials to complete surveys depends on the specific context and purpose of the survey. Here are some general considerations for selecting women sport officials to participate in surveys:**

**1. Define the target population:**

Determine the specific group of women sport officials that you want to include in the survey. This could be based on their role, position, organisation, or any other relevant criteria.

**2. Collaborate with relevant organisations or institutions:**

If you're conducting a survey targeting women sport officials within a specific organisation or sector, collaborate with those organisations or institutions to access their sport official contact lists or databases. This can help facilitate the selection process and ensure a higher response rate. Alternatively a university or education professional might be able to add value in this area.

**3. Seek voluntary participation:**

Ensure that participation in the survey is voluntary and does not impose any obligation or consequence on women officials. Clearly communicate the purpose, benefits, and confidentiality measures of the survey to encourage participation.

**4. Provide clear instructions and accessibility:**

Make sure the survey instructions are clear, easy to understand, and accessible to women sport officials. Use plain language and provide necessary support, such as translations or accommodations for individuals with disabilities, to ensure inclusivity.

### **5. Consider diverse perspectives:**

Pay attention to including a diverse range of women sport officials in the survey. Aim to capture different backgrounds, experiences, and viewpoints to ensure a comprehensive understanding of their opinions.

### **6. Monitor response rates:**

Monitor the response rates of women sport officials to gauge the effectiveness of your survey outreach. If response rates are low, consider implementing follow-up strategies, reminders, or incentives to encourage participation.

It's important to adapt the selection process to the specific context and objectives of your survey. If you're conducting a survey within a specific organisation, consult with their policies and guidelines to ensure compliance and collaboration.

### **Top Tips**

1. Clearly define the survey objectives.
2. Keep the survey a reasonable length and choose your questions carefully to achieve the desired outcome.
3. Make sure the survey instructions are clear, easy to understand, and accessible to women sport officials.
4. Before launching the survey, conduct a pilot test with a small group of individuals who represent your target audience.
5. After collecting the survey responses, analyse the data to gain insights.

## **>> CONTENT AREA 3: PRODUCE AN ACTION PLAN BASED ON FEEDBACK AND OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION**

Producing an action plan based on the feedback and outcomes of a survey involves analysing the survey data, identifying key findings, and translating them into actionable steps.

### **🕒 Here's a step-by-step guide to help you develop an action plan:**

#### **1. Review and analyse the survey data:**

Thoroughly examine the survey responses and data collected. Identify patterns, trends, and key insights that emerge from the data analysis. Look for common themes or areas of concern that require attention.

#### **2. Identify priority areas:**

Determine the priority areas for action based on the survey findings. Focus on the most significant issues or opportunities that surfaced through the feedback. Consider the impact, feasibility, and urgency of addressing each area.

#### **3. Set clear objectives:**

Define specific and measurable objectives for each priority area. Clearly articulate what you aim to achieve through the action plan. Ensure that your objectives align with the overall goals of the organisation or initiative.

#### **4. Develop strategies and initiatives:**

Create strategies and initiatives that will help address the identified issues or capitalise on the opportunities. Consider the feedback and outcomes of the survey when designing these strategies. Ensure that they are practical, relevant, and feasible within the resources and constraints of your organisation.



**5. Assign responsibilities:**

Determine the key stakeholders responsible for implementing each strategy or initiative. Assign clear roles and responsibilities to individuals or teams who will be accountable for driving the action plan forward. Ensure that the responsibilities are aligned with the expertise and resources available.

**6. Set timelines and milestones:**

Establish a timeline for implementing each strategy or initiative. Break down the action plan into manageable milestones or phases to track progress and ensure timely completion. Consider dependencies and any necessary sequencing of activities.

**7. Allocate resources:**

Identify the resources, such as budget, personnel, or technology, required to execute the action plan effectively. Ensure that the necessary resources are allocated and available to support the implementation of the strategies and initiatives.

**8. Develop monitoring and evaluation mechanisms:**

Define how you will monitor and evaluate the progress and impact of the action plan. Establish relevant metrics or indicators to measure success. Determine the frequency and methods of data collection to assess the outcomes and adjust the plan as needed.

**9. Communicate and engage stakeholders:**

Clearly communicate the action plan to all relevant stakeholders, including those who participated in the survey. Share the survey findings, explain the strategies, and outline the objectives and expected outcomes. Seek feedback and input from stakeholders to ensure their engagement and support throughout the implementation process.

**10. Implement, monitor, and adapt:**

Begin executing the action plan according to the established timeline. Continuously monitor progress, assess challenges, and make necessary adjustments as you learn from the implementation process. Regularly communicate updates to stakeholders and celebrate achievements along the way.

Remember, an action plan should be dynamic and adaptable. Regularly revisit and review the plan to ensure it remains aligned with changing circumstances and evolving feedback.

**Top Tips**

1. Thoroughly examine the survey responses and data collected.
2. Define specific and measurable objectives for each priority area.
3. Create strategies and initiatives that will help address the identified issues or capitalise on the opportunities.
4. Determine the key stakeholders responsible for implementing each strategy or initiative.
5. Clearly communicate the action plan to all relevant stakeholders, including those who participated in the survey.





Raising the growth and participation of female sport officials in Europe

## WINS PARTNERSHIP:



Coordinator



[www.wins-sport.eu](http://www.wins-sport.eu)



Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.