GBV in Basket

Gender-Based Violence in Basketball

Early Detection of GBV in Basketball:

Raising Awareness Handbook for coaches, trainers and staff

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Table of Contents

Introduction 3
1. Scope of the study 4
2. Definitions and concepts of GBV is sports 5
2.1. Sexual violence (e.g. sexual harassment and sexual abuse) 6
2.2. Physical violence 8
2.3. Psychological violence 8
2.4. Prevalence and problems 8
3. Identification and prevention 10
4. Best Practices for the identification of early signs of athletes' deviant behaviour in International and European Level 11
5. Field research methodology and results 26
5.1. Findings from the interviews 26
5.2. Synthesis Report of the online surveys 38
6. Conclusion: Outlining a path towards change 48
References 49

Introduction

The current document has been developed in the context of the *Erasmus+ Sport* project called *Cancel GBV in Basket* with the acronym *CGBV in Basket*. The Consortium consists of four Basketball Federations, one Vocational Education and Training Centre and a Research Centre –all located at the Southeastern part of Europe-, who have identified the following objectives to combat any form of gender-based discrimination and prejudice in the field of basketball settings:

- early detection of athletes' deviant behaviour to ensure a high level of security
- active engagement of athletes in activities for the elimination of GBV phaenomena
- provision of psychological and legal support tailored to the specific needs of GBV survivors
- awareness' raising regarding *Cancel GBV in Basketball* at an EU level

This *Handbook* for coaches, trainers and staff is the first step towards succeeding these objectives. Within its pages you will discover the culmination of an extensive study designed to foster a safe and respectful environment in the world of basketball. The consortium members developed it after thorough investigation into two important areas: recognizing unusual behaviour in athletes at an early stage and proactively addressing gender-based violence (GBV)[1]. Aimed at providing guidance for coaching professionals and sports personnel, this comprehensive resource offers insights and strategies to effectively handle these significant issues within the sports community.

[1] Gender-Based Violence will be mentioned as GBV from this point downwards.

1. Scope of the study

The study's scope encompasses two key aspects leading to the formation of a comprehensive *Handbook* designed for basketball coaches, trainers and staff. This *Handbook* aims to equip them with effective tools for detecting early signs of athletes' deviant behaviour and addressing GBV.

The study comprises of two primary components: the first step was the desk, web-based research and the relevant literature review to identify the basic concepts, notions and definitions linked to the general issue of GBV in sports. An integral element of the Handbook is the identification of **ten** carefully distilled ***Best Practices* for *early detection of athletes' problematic behaviour***, applicable both at international and European level. These practices, drawn from systematic analysis and successful approaches, offer a roadmap for coaches, trainers and staff to adopt a consistent approach in identifying and addressing problematic behaviours. As the *Handbook* becomes an essential tool for professionals navigating the complexities of sports coaching, these *Best Practices* serve as a practical framework guiding efforts towards fostering a safe, respectful and supportive sporting environment.

The second phase of the study centres on primary, qualitative research involving engagement with sector experts including coaches, psychologists and other stakeholders. Forty interviews were conducted across the countries of the project's consortium (Greece, Bulgaria, Cyprus, North Macedonia). These interviews cover diverse subjects, such as establishing a shared understanding of the phenomenon, dissecting regulations and guidelines, comprehending reported incidents of gender-based discrimination, evaluating responses to violent incidents, maintaining confidentiality, encouraging timely reporting, and elucidating training methods focused on detecting and preventing GBV. Simultaneously, an encompassing survey distributed among a wide-ranging group of individuals gathers valuable, quantitative insights that further contribute to a comprehensive understanding of the current situation in the partner countries regarding GBV in the basketball field.

In conclusion, this analysis -integrating both desk and primary research- forms the basis for the development of a *Handbook* that will serve as a supportive tool for crafting a tailored training curriculum enhancing the capability of coaches, trainers and staff to proficiently identify and address athletes' deviant behaviour and GBV. This initiative seeks to inspire collective action and cultivate a sports arena characterized by fairness, empowerment and the holistic well-being of athletes.

2. Definitions and concepts of GBV is sports

Abuse and violence are pervasive worldwide, affecting people of all ages, races, religions, ethnicities, physical abilities, cultural backgrounds and socioeconomic statuses. The most vulnerable groups are women and children of both sexes (WHO, 2020 May 26). Abuse typically flourishes when there are power imbalances and no accountability for perpetrators, and it frequently occurs when the abuser is someone the victim knows. Violence and abuse are unfortunately also present in the world of sports, which is a microcosm of society.

Initially, it seems sufficient to interpret the notion of "violence" from a broad departure point that includes physical, psychological, verbal and other non-physical aspects (Messner, 2013). The European Commission's Proposal for Strategic Actions on Gender Equality in Sport (European Commission, 2014) defines GBV as, "violence directed against a person because of that person's gender (including gender identity/expression) or as violence that affects persons of a particular gender disproportionately". In this document, "sexual violence (including rape, sexual assault, abuse and harassment)" is considered a form of GBV. This strategic document also offers definitions for: gender-based harassment ("unwelcome conduct related to a person's gender and has the effect or purpose of offending another person's dignity"), sexual abuse ("to trick, force or coerce a person into any sexual activity the person does not want or is not sufficiently mature to consent to") and sexual harassment ("behaviour of a sexualised nature which is unwanted, exploitative, degrading, coerced, forced and/or violent"). Therefore, GBV (GBV) in sports refers to any form of violence or discrimination based on gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression that occurs in a sports context. GBV can take many forms including physical, sexual, emotional and psychological abuse (UNODC, 2021). It can also include bullying, neglect, harassment and other forms of intimidation.

The report titled "Sexual Harassment and Abuse in Sport" by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC, 2021) provides an overview of the prevalence and types of sexual harassment and abuse in sports and offers recommendations for preventing and addressing it.

Discrimination, that is treating someone differently or less favourably because of their gender, race, sexual orientation or other characteristic, is a characteristic of gender-based violent behaviours. GBV in sports is a pervasive problem that affects athletes at all levels. It can occur in both team (e.g. basketball) and individual sports (e.g. gymnastics) and can be perpetrated by teammates, opponents and coaches.

Research has also shown that GBV in sports is often linked to gender stereotypes and traditional notions of masculinity and femininity. Male athletes are often expected to be aggressive, dominant and physically strong, while female athletes are expected to be submissive, passive and sexually attractive. Since this environment is so closely linked to hegemonic masculinity and traditional male values, it has been hypothesized that female coaches in sports might make it easier to change the coaching culture and re-script coach behaviours (Fasting & Brackenridge, 2009). According to Flood (2019), men are more likely to resort to violence against women if they adhere to patriarchal and hostile gender norms and hold sexist attitudes. Power imbalance, the unequal distribution of power and control between individuals or groups can contribute to the perpetration of GBV. Social norms and the coaching culture play a significant role in allowing such incidents to take place or being identified and detected. Specifically, the way coaches and trainers lead, manage and train their teams, sets the tone of the team's culture and can either foster or prevent GBV, which can have serious

consequences for the physical and mental health of athletes. GBV can also have a negative impact on their performance and their ability to compete at the highest level.

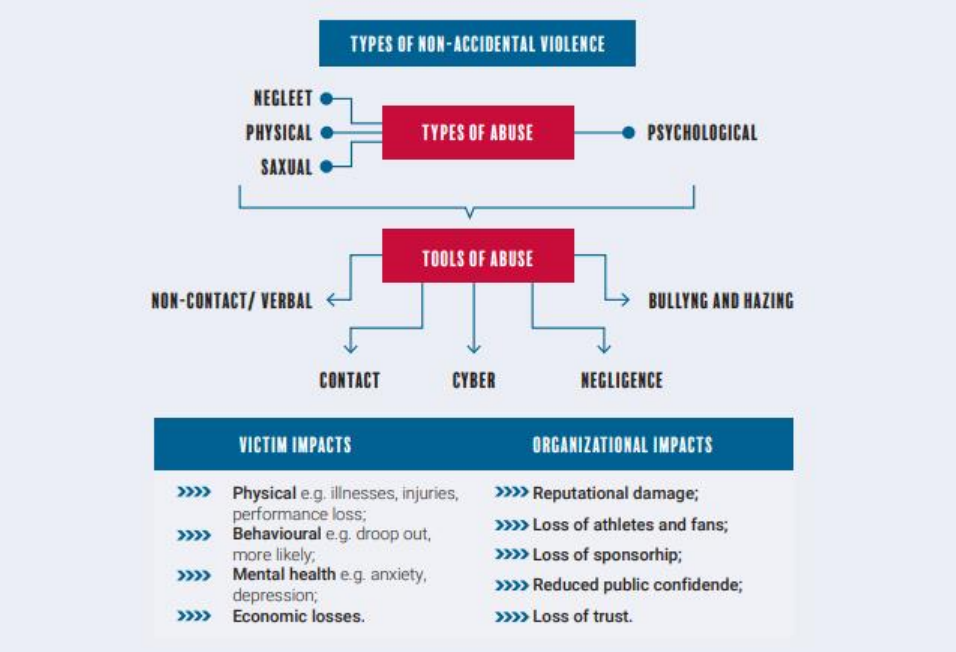

Fig. 1. Types of non-accidental violence (UNODC, 2021).

For that reason, bystander intervention is essential, meaning the actions taken by individuals who witness or are aware of GBV to prevent or interrupt the violence and support those who have been affected by it. Education and awareness raising can play an important role in preventing and addressing GBV. Moreover, the provision of reporting mechanisms is essential towards battling GBV. The way in which incidents of GBV are reported and the response that is given to these reports can have a significant impact on the safety and well-being of those affected. Efforts to address GBV in sports have focused on increasing awareness, providing education and training to athletes, coaches and other stakeholders by implementing policies and procedures to prevent and respond to incidents of GBV. Assisting in making sports safe by preventing injuries, social exclusion, and violence has been listed among one of the main goals of the World Health Organization (WHO) Sports and Health Programme (WHO, 2023).

2.1. Sexual violence (e.g. sexual harassment and sexual abuse)

The term “sexual violence” is usually used as an umbrella term that includes a continuum of different behaviours, ranging from sexual harassment without body contact to transgressive behaviours and to sexual violence with body contact (Gaedicke et al., 2021). Sexual violence in sports refers to any form of sexual abuse or harassment that occurs within the context of sports. This can include acts such as sexual assault, abuse and sexual harassment. Sexual abuse refers to any sexual act or behaviour that is unwanted or non-consensual, including sexual assault, rape and sexual exploitation. Sexual harassment refers to unwanted sexual advances, requests for sexual favours and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that creates a hostile or intimidating environment.

Sexual harassment in relation to sport has started being examined only in the late 90s (Fejgin & Hanegby, 2001).

Behaviours based on sexuality and the abuse of power, which can be intimidating or traumatic for victims, are shared by all these categories (Ohlert et al., 2018). Research on this topic has shown that sexual violence in sports is a significant problem affecting both male and female athletes at all levels of sport. Besides, sexual violence in sports can affect both children and adults, but it is especially important to consider the imbalance of power when dealing with sexual abuse of a child. The psychological concept of sexually aggressive behaviours and the idea that sexually abusive perpetrators might follow pathological sexual needs are largely ignored in working definitions of the term "sexual violence", which instead emphasize the sociological concept of power-execution through the means of sexuality. Because of this broader definition, "sexual violence" can also refer to the institutionalized biases and power dynamics that can encourage abusive sexual behaviour in certain social contexts, such as the sporting arena (Fasting & Brackenridge, 2009).

Since 2000, there has been a dramatic increase in studies examining the frequency and causes of sexual violence in elite and recreational sports. Following the seminal work of Celia Brackenridge in the 1990s (e.g. Brackenridge, 1994, 1997; Brackenridge & Kirby, 1997), researchers from all over the world have delved into this area in an effort to better understand the scope of interpersonal violence in sports, the factors that contribute to its emergence and how to best protect athletes from harm. Certain conditions, such as unequal gender relations and the social structures of competitive sports, have been singled out by studies looking into the origins of sexual violence in the sporting world. The large amount of time spent in training and competition reinforces the importance placed on performance and success, the existence of hierarchical structures, the need for physical touch, and the close relationships that develop between coaches and athletes (Brackenridge 1997, 2001; Burke 2001; Hartill 2017). Research has highlighted the fact that the coach-athlete relationship carries a unique risk for sexual violence, whereas studies on the constellations of interpersonal violence in sport have concluded that offenders of all forms of violence in sport are predominantly male peer athletes (Vertommen et al., 2016). The findings of Fasting and Brackenridge (2009) focusing on the coach-athlete relationship report the case of 19 female elite athletes that have experienced sexual harassment by their coaches in three different forms, shaping three main types of coaches based on sport typology: (1) the flirting-charming Coach, (2) the seductive coach and (3) the authoritarian coach (Fasting & Brackenridge, 2009).

In conclusion, sexual violence in sports is a serious problem that affects both male and female athletes at all levels of sports. According to a report by the International Olympic Committee[2] (2008) sexual harassment and abuse happen in all sports and at all levels, with a greater prevalence in elite sport. Research has shown that traditional masculine ideals, power dynamics and lack of adequate reporting mechanisms and response within sports organizations contribute to the prevalence of sexual violence. It is important for sports organizations to take proactive steps to prevent and address sexual violence, including educating athletes and staff, implementing effective reporting mechanisms and creating a culture that does not tolerate sexual violence.

[2] International Olympic Committee will be mentioned as IOC for the rest of the document.

2.2. Physical violence

Physical violence in sports refers to any form of physical abuse or aggression that occurs within the context of sports. This can include acts such as physical assault, fighting and intensive training (Lang, 2010a; McPherson et al., 2017; Oliver, & Lloyd, 2015). Research on physical violence in sports has shown that it is a significant problem in a variety of sports and at all levels of competition. The causes of physical violence in sports are complex and can include a variety of factors such as societal norms, cultural influences and individual psychological factors. Traditional masculine ideals, such as toughness and aggression, can contribute to the acceptance and even encouragement of physical violence in sports (Alsarve, 2021). Additionally, physical violence in sports can have serious consequences for both the perpetrator and the victim (Tuakli-Wosornu et al., 2022). Athlete abuse should be viewed as community trauma by the sports and exercise medicine (SEM) community because its effects are felt far beyond the individuals directly involved. Abuse has far-reaching consequences that affect not only the victims themselves but also their communities, team performance and institutional climate (Tuakli-Wosornu et al., 2022). Physical violence in sports can lead to serious injuries and even death (Fields et al., 2007). It can also have long-term psychological consequences for the victim such as depression and anxiety (Finkel, 2002). Especially, sexual harassment and abuse in sport seriously and negatively affect athletes' physical and psychological health, while such incidents may can damage performance and lead to athlete dropout (IOC, 2008).

2.3. Psychological violence

Emotional and psychological violence in sports refers to any form of verbal, emotional or psychological abuse that occurs within the context of sports (Kerr et al., 2020; Yabe et al., 2019), including also bullying (Nery et al., 2020) and homophobic abuse (Baiocco et al., 2018). This can include actions such as bullying, harassment and intimidation. Research on emotional and psychological violence in sports has shown that it is a significant problem in a variety of sports and at all levels of competition (Finkel, 2002). Emotional and psychological violence is prevalent in team sports (e.g. basketball), but also individual sports (e.g., gymnastics). The causes of emotional and psychological violence in sports are complex and can include a variety of factors, such as societal norms, cultural influences and individual psychological factors. Here again, traditional ideals of masculinity and femininity, such as toughness and passivity, can contribute to the acceptance and even encouragement of emotional and psychological violence in sports (Alsarve, 2021). Additionally, physical and emotional/psychological violence in sports can have serious consequences for both the perpetrator and the victim, with possible long-term psychological consequences for the victim such as depression, and anxiety.

2.4. Prevalence and problems

GBV in basketball, as well as in other sports, is a serious problem that affects athletes of all genders. Systematic data on the prevalence of abuse in sports is lacking, while anecdotal evidence from thousands of cases around the world has surfaced in recent years, demonstrating that the

problem is widespread and warranting immediate attention from sports organizations and governments.

As mentioned earlier, studies have shown that both men and women can experience GBV in sports, including sexual harassment, sexual assault, physical and emotional abuse. The EU Commission's Proposal to Combat Violence against Women from 8 March 2022 states that the COVID-19 Pandemic has exacerbated the Problem of GBV (EC, 2022). One-third of EU women have experienced physical or sexual violence since the age of 15, according to the FRA survey (FRA, 2015). Throughout the 28 European Union member states, 42.000 women were interviewed for the FRA report. The results demonstrate that GBV, which primarily affects women, is a widespread violation of human rights that the European Union (EU) cannot ignore. The picture that emerges is one of widespread abuse that has a significant impact on the lives of many women but is consistently under-reported to the authorities. Also, a large number of women athletes around the world face lack of respect due to the existence of gender stereotypes, which contributes to a disproportionate rate of violence against women in the field of sports. Every instance of violence against women and indeed against any human being can have long-lasting effects on the victims' physical and mental well-being. Research into the effects of GBV in sports has only just begun.

Existing research on the occurrence and prevalence of all forms of GBV in sport was mapped in a scoping exercise the study of Lang et al. (2023). However, because none of these studies looked into the full spectrum of GBV, thus, its prevalence in sports across EU Member States remains unknown. Sexual harassment, the most studied form of GBV, has a prevalence rate reported anywhere from 1% to 64%, depending on the study's methodology and definitions. Research has been conducted including and beyond forms of GBV, such as emotional and psychological abuse (Kerr et al., 2020; Yabe et al., 2019), physical abuse, early specialization and intensive training (Lang, 2010a; McPherson et al., 2017; Oliver, & Lloyd, 2015), bullying (Nery et al., 2020) and homophobic abuse (Baiocco et al., 2018). The implementation and impact of violence-prevention strategies have also been studied (Lang, 2010b; Zehntner, 2020), as have the ways in which sports culture normalizes abusive practices and enforces athlete compliance with these (Nurse, 2018; Rulofs et al., 2019). Overall, there has been a proliferation of studies on the topic of violence in sports, which includes GBV (for more details see Lang, 2023). However, most of these studies have focused on specific forms of GBV, such as sexual abuse and harassment, because these are the issues that gather the most attention from the media (Lang, 2021a).

3. Identification and prevention

Identifying and preventing GBV in basketball is crucial to protect athletes and ensure the integrity of the sport. To do so, it is important to be aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse. These can include physical injuries, changes in behaviour or mood and reluctance to participate in the sport. In addition, coaches, teammates and other athletes should be trained to recognize and report abuse and there should be clear and accessible reporting mechanisms in place for athletes to report abuse.

Preventing GBV in basketball involves creating a culture that does not tolerate abuse or discrimination and providing education and training on GBV to coaches, athletes and other stakeholders. This can include providing education on what constitutes abuse, how to recognize it, how to report it as well as education on healthy relationships and consent. It is also important for sports organizations to have effective policies and procedures in place for addressing and preventing GBV. This can include clear and strict codes of conduct, disciplinary procedures for perpetrators, support and resources for victims. Moreover, the provision of education and training to athletes on healthy relationships, consent and gender equality is crucial. This can help to prevent abuse by promoting respectful and equitable interactions between athletes and coaches and by challenging stereotypes and discrimination that can lead to violence. Finally, it is essential to involve various stakeholders such as athletes, coaches, sport organizations and the community in the process of identification and prevention of GBV in sports. Their perspectives and experiences can be valuable in creating effective policies and programs.

The *White Paper on Sport* adopted by the European Parliament in 2008, promoted the creation of national and European club licensing systems that incorporate measures to deter violence, safeguard minors and uphold basic human rights (Article 69). Further, the Council of the European Union published a report in May 2014 titled “Conclusions on gender equality in sport”. The document states that efforts should be made to combat GBV in sport (Article 17), to conduct research to better understand the issue (Article 11) and it acknowledges that violence and sexual harassment can occur in sport (Article 14). It also encourages Member States to share best practices for preventing and handling cases of GBV in sports, as well as to protect victims and prevent them from becoming victims (Article 24). In particular, the document encourages sports organizations and other relevant stakeholders to create codes of ethics and victim support services (e.g. hotlines) to combat GBN in sports (Article 37). In addition, the Executive Board of the International Olympic Committee (IOC)[3], in 2008 adopted a Consensus Statement on “Sexual Harassment and Abuse in Sport”. The IOC Medical Commission -as part of its efforts towards promoting and protecting the health of athletes- held a conference on “Sexual Harassment & Abuse in Sport” in October 2006 in Lausanne.

Separate initiatives have been launched by national governing bodies of sport in several EU Member States to address the ethical problem of GBV in sports. After a coach at a basketball youth summer camp was sentenced to probation for inappropriate sexual behaviour towards a youth player, the Basketball Federation of Slovenia launched a project called “Basketball's Word of Honour.” The project’s goal is to eradicate all forms of violence in sports, including those based on gender (European Union, 2016). When it comes to protecting children and vulnerable adults from abuse and sexual harassment, the code of ethics of the Bulgarian Basketball Federation is on a par with that of most national governing bodies of sport in the UK (such as those that receive government funding).

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4. Best Practices for the identification of early signs of athletes' deviant behaviour in International and European Level

Austrian Action Plan	
Location/geographical coverage: National	**Organization**: Ministry of Defence and Sports
Type of action	Strategic Policy
Target groups	Sports Organizations
Objective	The Objectives identified from the Action Plan were the following; 1. The Ministry of Defence and Sports and Austrian sports organisations issue clear commitments against (sexualised) violence in sports and for the protection of athletes. 2. Data on GBV and in particular sexualised violence in sports in Austria are to be made available. 3. Sport organisations and sports clubs know how to act when sexualised violence occurs and make use of respective checklists and guidelines. 4. Sport organisations take structural measures to protect athletes from offenders. 5. Sport organisations make the candidates' commitment to the protection of athletes a mandatory requirement in the recruitment of trainers and check if the candidates have committed any offences in the past. 6. Measures combating sexualised violence are a mandatory criterion for publicly funded projects. 7. Sport organisations and funding authorities consider the existence of measures to protect athletes a quality criterion and reward it accordingly. 8. The protection of athletes is structurally embedded within the sport organisations and it is clearly defined who is in charge; 'trust-persons' are appointed and widely known among the members. 9. A co-operation network comprising sports and victim support organisations is established and sports organisations know who to contact in case of an incident of sexualised violence. 10. All people involved are sensitive to the topic of sexualised violence, are aware of their rights and know how to act when an incident of sexualised violence occurs. 11. Educational programmes aimed to raise awareness and provide information on gender-related topics and sexualised violence are developed and implemented. 12. Pilot projects are implemented. 13. Measures to protect athletes in Austria are constantly monitored and evaluated.
Introduction	The European Commission's Proposal for strategic action in sports adopted in 2014-2020, aiming to recommend new strategies in national level for the promotion of gender equality in the field of sports by April 2016 had been

	achieved only by Austria through the inclusion of actions that foster the fight against any kind of GBV in sports. The strategic approach of the Austrian government, especially Ministries of Defence and Sports developed a working group comprised of sports organizations, victim support organizations, and experts aiming to create a national action plan. The Austrian National Action Plan (2014-2018) strives to achieve a holistic approach towards the combat of GBV and gender inequalities. According to European Commission's study the Austrian Action Plan accomplishes its goals by "planning measures to deliver training for coaches, athletes, volunteers and professionals; providing support to victims; strengthening partnerships between sport and victim support organisations; researching gender equality issues in sport, including the magnitude of GBV in sport; monitoring progress; and developing (transnational) screening systems for all for all paid and volunteer coaching applicants." (European Commission).
Stakeholders & partners	Austrian Federal Ministry of Defence and Sports
Innovation	The Plan was based on the idea of the re-instalment of the "trust-persons" that received educational programmes for their sensitization. The main responsibility of the "trust persons" is to report and deliver the information about GBV incidents to their organizations and discuss them with other gender officers, who are experts on dealing with GBV issues in the field of sport.
Sustainability	The Action Plan following the European Commission's Proposal for strategic action in sports adopted in 2014-2020 can be adopted in National level by any EU member-state.
Impact(s)	Nowadays, approximately one of three national governing bodies in the field of sport have launched pilot programmes for the integration of the Plan's measures. The adoption of the Action Plan's measures included the conduction of working groups for officials, coaches and athletes regarding GBV.
URL of the practice	https://rm.coe.int/pss-description-practice-austria-national-action-plan-austria-s-approa/1680770fd7
Related web site(s)	https://eige.europa.eu/publications-resources
Related resources	European Commission's Proposal for strategic action in sports adopted in 2014-2020

FIBA Safeguarding Policy	
Location/geographical coverage: Worldwide	**Organization**: FIBA
Type of action	Policy for the safeguarding of athletes
Target groups	**Within basketball:** • A coach • A team doctor

	• A teammate • A basketball administrator • A basketball official **Outside of basketball:** • A partner • A relative or other family member • A person entrusted to act on behalf of the Adult at Risk in some aspect of their affairs • A service or care provider • A health or social care worker or professional • Person or persons who have no previous connection to the victim
Objective	 FIBA has indicated **5 pillars of safeguarding**; 1. **Rights of Children and Adults at Risk:** "*all persons to whom this policy applies must respect and promote the rights of Children and Adults at Risk".* 2. **Zero Tolerance:** "*FIBA will not tolerate any form of abuse and will take all necessary measures to implement this policy".* 3. **Risk management:** "*FIBA ensures that risks are identified and minimized throughout all stages of activity planning".* *4.* **Collective responsibility:** "*the successful implementation of this policy depends on an individual and shared responsibility of all persons involved in basketball".*
Objective	5. **Duty of notification:** "*any suspected violation of this policy must be reported immediately through the appropriate reporting channels. Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the entire process".*
Introduction	The FIBA Safeguarding Policy has a holistic approach towards any kind of incident that may provoke harm to individuals within the basketball environment, including: • An introduction regarding the policy and the obligations that arise from that.

	• The recognition of harm and the identification of the characteristics that an adult at risk and the abuser may have. • Guidelines on how to react in a violent incident, or how to report any abuse, harm, or other violation. It is worth mentioned that the policy emphasizes on the sanctions that can be imposed after the identification of a violent incident, as well as on the role of the FIBA Integrity Officer. • Safeguarding Report Form regarding any allegation, suspicion or disclosure of a potential safeguarding.
Stakeholders & partners	Basketball federations, organizations
Innovation	The Safeguarding Policy is a holistic approach for identifying and reporting of violent incidents in the field of basketball.
Sustainability	The Safeguarding Policy can be adopted by each sports organization that intends to deal with violent incidents.
Impact(s)	The Policy has taken the initiative for the effective management of the violent incidents in the field of basketball, giving a holistic view about the dimensions and the approaches that must be followed in similar cases.
URL of the practice	http://gb.basketball/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/FIBA-Safeguarding-Policy.pdf
Related web site(s)	https://www.fiba.basketball/en/Module/85132837-66aa-4ff3-a063-8cdfe44ea14d/59679204-d659-4349-8410-afea505e7e0c
Related resources	https://www.icsspe.org/system/files/The%20IOC%20-%20Guidelines%20for%20IFs%20and%20NOCs%20to%20create%20and%20implement%20a%20policy%20to%20safeguard%20athletes%20from%20harassment%20and%20abuse%20in%20sport.pdf#:~:text=According%20to%20the%20IOC%20Consens

IOC safe sport initiatives	
Location/geographical coverage: Worldwide	**Organization**: International Olympic Committee
Type of action	**1. Education and Raising Awareness**
Target groups	Each involved in the sports sector, athletes, coaches, staff etc.
Objective	To raise awareness regarding the common responsibility of each one related to the sports sector towards the safeguard of athletes from abuse and harassment.
Introduction	The current initiative aims to raise awareness towards the incidents of harassment and abuse in the sports grassroots for the further dissemination and communication of safeguarding policies and procedures.
Stakeholders and partners	Olympic movement stakeholders
Innovation	The IOC has taken the initiative to develop educational and raising awareness campaigns for the elimination of violent incidents in the field of sport, such as harassment and abuse.

Sustainability	The current policy aims to maximize the effectiveness of such initiatives in the sports grassroots for the elimination of violent incidents.
Impact(s)	Increase of raising awareness regarding the prevention of harassment and abuse in sports through the development of videos and several media tools.
Transferability	The raising awareness campaign is applicable to stakeholders in the sports sector, for the enhancement of initiatives that promote the development of best practices across the world.
URL of the practice	https://olympics.com/ioc/safe-sport/education-and-awareness-raising
Related web site(s)	https://olympics.com/ioc/safe-sport/sexual-harrassment-and-abuse
Type of action	**2. Safeguarding webinars**
Target groups	International federations
Objective	To ensure that each athlete can be trained in safe sports grassroots, free from abuse and harassment.
Introduction	• 10 two-hour webinars, opened to all International Federations of sports. • **Content of webinars:** • Welcome and introduction • Safeguarding on the agenda • Normative frameworks for policies and procedures • Responsibility mapping • Safeguarding officers: Role and education • Developing organizational policies and procedures • Developing competition – specific policies and procedures • Educational programs and initiatives • Reporting mechanisms and case management • Investigation, measures and sanctions
Stakeholders & partners	Leading experts in the field of child protection and safeguarding.
Innovation	The IOC has taken the initiative to develop webinars for the elimination of violent incidents in the field of sport, such as harassment and abuse.
Sustainability	The current action aims to maximize the effectiveness of the implementation of educational tools for the elimination of violent incidents in sports.
Impact(s)	Establishment of ameliorated conditions in the sports sector for the protection of athletes from harassment and abuse.
Transferability	The Safeguarding webinars is applicable to stakeholders in the sports sector, especially sports federations, for the enhancement of initiatives that promote the development of best practices across the world.
URL of the practice	https://olympics.com/ioc/safe-sport/ioc-athlete-safeguarding-webinar-series-for-international-federations
Related web site(s)	https://olympics.com/ioc/safe-sport
Type of action	**3. Safeguarding Toolkit**

Target groups	National Olympic Committees and International Federations
Objective	To help organizations to develop two kinds of policies regarding the athletes' safeguarding: ● Competition-specific policies and procedures ● Organizational Policies
Introduction	The toolkit aims to assist National Olympic Committees (NOCs) and International Federations (IFs) in the development of policies and procedures to safeguard athletes from harassment and abuse in sport.
Stakeholders & partners	Over 50 stakeholders from inside and outside the Olympic Movement, including, athletes, IFs, NOCs and subject matter experts.
Innovation	It is the first safeguarding guide in the field of sports that emphasizes on the development of 3 approaching areas: a. Development of policies and procedures b. Prevention mechanisms c. Management of reports of harassment and abuse
Sustainability	The current action aims to maximize the effectiveness of the implementation of educational tools for the elimination of violent incidents in sports.
Impact(s)	The safeguarding Toolkit can be used as the turning point for the further establishment of structured policies and procedures towards the reporting and managing phase of the harassment on the field of sports.
Transferability	The toolkit can be transferred to any athletic/sports associations, organization or federation.
URL of the practice	https://stillmed.olympics.com/media/Document%20Library/OlympicOrg/IOC/What-We-Do/Promote-Olympism/Women-And-Sport/Boxes%20CTA/IOC_Safeguarding_Toolkit_ENG_Screen_Full1.pdf?_ga=
Related web site(s)	https://olympics.com/ioc/safe-sport

SAFESPORT COURSES FOR ALL	
Location/geographical coverage: Worldwide	**Organization**: U.S Centre for Safesport
Type of action	Training and Education
Target groups	Team leaders—coaches, trainers, doctors, volunteers, mentors, and even parents.
Objective	● To establish safer and inclusive sporting environments, eliminating incidents of abuse and harassment. ● To prevent abuse in sports sector ● To recognize early signs and forms of any kind of abuse in the field of sports ● To properly react towards a violent incident in sports industry
Introduction	**Safesport Trained Core;** ● 90-minute overview of facts, principles, and strategies

	Units overview: • Sexual Misconduct Awareness and Education • Mandatory Reporting • Physical and Emotional Misconduct (including bullying, hazing, and harassment)
Stakeholders and partners	Leading experts, national advocacy groups and confidential service providers.
Innovation	The current training programme is comprised of more than 12 courses, having a holistic approach towards the prevention, recognition and report of violent incidents in the field of sports.
Sustainability	The current training programme aims to affect more than 11 million athletes and allies in more than 50 countries around the world.
Impact(s)	• Raising awareness about the elimination of violent incidents in the sports industries. • Establishment of a more coherent sporting environment free of abuse and harassment.
Transferability	**The Training material can be transferred as following;** • Online training for small teams and individuals • Delivery of training to small groups (11-199 learners) • Delivery of training to large organizations (200+ learners)
URL of the practice	https://uscenterforsafesport.org/training-and-education/safesport-courses-for-all/
Related web site(s)	https://uscenterforsafesport.org/training-and-education/
Related resources	**Additional courses:** • Recognizing and Reporting Misconduct; • Creating a Positive Sport Environment

The 3 VOICE Project	
Location/geographical coverage: European	**Organization**: Edge Hill University, University of Southern Denmark, University of Ljubljana Faculty of Sport, Universitat Wien, Debreceni Egyetem, THOMAS MORE, European University Sports Association, ENGSO Youth, European Gay & Lesbian Sport Federation, NWG Network, European Paralympic Committee, Universitat de Vic - Universitat Central de Catalunya.
Type of action	Research project funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union
Target groups	Sports Organizations
Objective	The project is based on the principle that policy and initiatives generated from the accounts of those that have experienced sexual violence in sports settings will be highly valued and, therefore, most effective in 'reaching' the sports community and promoting knowledge-transfer, education and development.
Introduction	According to the European University Sports Association, "The VOICE project focuses on combatting sexual violence in European sport through the voices of

	those affected, promoting freedom from harassment, violence, exploitation and abuse as a universal right and fundamental social imperative."
Stakeholders and partners	The Ryan Commission in Ireland in UK, The Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse in Germany
Innovation	Under the VOICE Programme, a GOOD Practice Guide has been published in 2019 aiming to support individuals affected by sexual violence in sport. Indicatively, the 11 good practices identified in the study are the following: **1. Position Your Organisation to Prevent Sexual Violence and to Support 'Survivors'** *Sport organisations have a public facing statement on sexual harassment and abuse, or abusive behaviour in general, which clearly indicates that the organisation values reports of sexual violence and that such reports will be treated seriously (whether the experience is recent or non-recent).* **2. Designated Officer for Child Welfare/ Safeguarding** *Sport organisations have at least one Designated Officer who has received appropriate training and has overall responsibility for safeguarding issues. This individual's name and contact details must be promoted and easily accessible to all members.* **3. Independent Sources of Support** *Sport organisations publish contact details of independent sources of support, such as victim-support and child protection agencies and charities, in order to offer impartial support for victims and to develop a better understanding of the issues at stake within the organization.* **4. Code of Conduct** *Establish a general code of conduct for those in positions of responsibility in the organisation, e.g. staff members, coaches, board members. Include specific statements relevant to the prevention of sexual violence into this general code.* **5. Receiving and Managing Disclosures of Sexual Violence or Abuse** *"Sport organisations publish a protocol or procedure for handling reports of*
	abuse, including clear advice for staff on how to respond to a disclosure and how to escalate concerns if required". **6. Supporting victims after disclosure** *Following disclosure, where possible and appropriate, maintain contact with the individual (or parents/guardians) and assist them to access the support they need.* **7. Peer abuse and children's rights** *Communicate age-appropriate messages about safety and welfare to children in sport, seek young people's views about issues that affect them, ensure all children understand who they should speak to about abuse, and include children in the development and implementation of safeguarding in your organization.* **8. Self-Care and Support for Designated Officers** *Those working with victims/survivors (e.g. Designated Officers) in sport organisations must receive appropriate training and be appropriately supported, especially when challenging cases arise. The opportunity to talk to*

	(and 'off-load') to supervisors or peers in the organization should be identified in the role description and monitored by those in leadership positions. **9. Apologizing and Acknowledging** *Offer an official apology to the victim on behalf of your organisation in order to acknowledge the harm suffered as well as the organisation's gratitude and respect to the individual for making the disclosure.* **10. Staging a Forum for Acknowledgement** *Facilitate an event that offers 'survivors' of sexual violence in sport the possibility to recount their experiences, in a safe environment, to key stakeholders who are willing to listen and to learn from 'experts by experience'.* **11. Beyond Acknowledgement: Working with Survivors of Sexual Violence** *Establish means by which those with a lived experience may be safely and authentically included in the development of organisational responses to sexual violence in sport.*
Sustainability	e project will function as an educational resource for the European sports community focusing on the prevention of child sexual exploitation and abuse in and through sport.
Impact(s)	The VOICE Project intends to set the first steps for the establishment of process that aims to identify and acknowledge the sexual violence in the field of sport through the establishment of the National VOICE Forums.
URL of the practice	http://voicesfortruthanddignity.eu/
Related web site(s)	http://voicesfortruthanddignity.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/VOICE-GOOD-PRACTISE-GUIDE_Einzelseiten_final.pdf

International Guide to Addressing GBV through Sport	
Location/geographical coverage: Worldwide	**Organization**: **Women Win**
Type of action	A Guide -as a co-created initiative by experts, collaborators, organizations and others- to address GBV through sport that refers to "*anyone, in any country, who wants to empower girls through sport*".
Target groups	• Girls' and women's organizations • Schools • Clubs and faith-based groups • Coaches • International sports and development organizations • Donors • Sport's governing bodies • Caregivers • Researchers

	• Policy makers
Objective	To use sport as a tool to address GBV and contribute to the reduction of violent incidents in sports.
Introduction	Women Win is an organization started as a global women's fund to combat gender-based inequalities and stereotypes in sports. Women Win gives special focus on GBV in sports and on sexual and reproductive health of adolescent girls and young women. Over the years, the organization has developed a network of experts, coaches, program directors and girls to share their knowledge on the issue. The result of the collaboration was the creation of the Guide.
Stakeholders and partners	• Large multinational organizations • Individual experts • Collaborators of Women Win • Attendees of Women Win's workshops
Innovation	The Guide aims to become an open conversation with the community on how to combat gender-based violent incidents in sports industry.
Sustainability	• Community engagement • Social respect • Social well-being
Impact(s)	• Female empowerment • Sports enhancement • Knowledge sharing • Education expansion
Transferability	• Unbound to country • Adaptable values/contexts • Ready to be used material
URL of the practice	https://guides.womenwin.org/gbv/intro
Related web site(s)	https://www.womenwin.org/about-us/history/

International Olympic Committee (IOC) Certificate: **Safeguarding Officer in Sport**	
Location/geographical coverage: Worldwide	**Organization**: **International Olympic Committee**
Type of action	A 7-month course (250 hours of training) organized under the auspices of the Medical and Scientific Commission of the International Olympic Committee

Target groups	• Those who have been appointed or seek to be appointed as safeguarding officers, serve as their organization's focal point for safeguarding issues • Workers in the field of sport integrity for national or international sports organizations, particularly National Olympic Committees (NOCs), International Federations (IFs) and National Federations (NFs)
Objective	The program's main objective is to develop an international network - within the Olympic community - of safeguarding officers highly skilled in preventing GBV in sport.
Introduction	The program was developed to enhance the skills and role of safeguarding officers in sports organizations in prevention and responding to non-accidental violence. Additionally, the program focuses on the athletes' well-being. Key dates: 31 July 2022: Deadline to apply 1 September 2022: Certificate course begins April 2023: Completion of course and final examination September/October 2023: Graduation ceremony
Stakeholders and partners	• Academic advisory board members (academic leaders) • Program faculty (researchers and teachers) • International Federations • National Olympic Committees • National Federations
Innovation	The IOC Certificate Safeguarding Office in Sport course is the first of its kind and about the program faculty is beyond the sources of any single institution. Lectures are provided by expert directors and academic advisory board member and the faculty consists of the best researchers and teachers.
Sustainability	• Social concern • Social respect • Community participation • Gender equity
Impact(s)	• Federations -by enhancing their safeguarding endeavours- move forward to the next level on acting against gender discrimination in sports industry • Sports industry is becoming a safer place for athletes by including people in crucial positions, who are trained and certified in the issues of harassment and abuse in sports
Transferability	• Adaptable technique

	• Flexible and adaptable methodology • Unbound to country • Transferable concept idea • Transferable objectives
URL of the practice	https://www.sportsoracle.com/course/ioc-certificate-safeguarding-officer-in-sport/about-the-program/
Related web site(s)	https://learn.sportsoracle.com/apply/safeguarding
Related resources	Training material, fact sheet (course review), application form

Shooting Touch Rwanda Raise Awareness about GBV	
Location/geographical coverage: Rwanda	**Organization**: **FIBA Foundation**
Type of action	FIBA Foundation's supported project: International Women's Day tournament and GBV Awareness tournament
Target groups	• Youth, ages 1-18, in rural Rwanda • Women, ages 18+, in rural Rwanda
Objective	• Promotion of equal access to physical activity • Increase access to health education and health services • Promotion of social change
Introduction	Shooting Touch Rwanda project designed to combat racial, gender and economic inequalities of youth and women using the power of basketball. Since it was recognized that in Rwanda patriarchy holds an essential role on gender inequality, the project focused on developing a sense of concern about gender issues and violent behaviours against vulnerable groups of population at an early age within family and school. Young children, teenage boys and girls, adult women took part in the tournament and earned knowledge on health and gender equity issues.
Stakeholders & partners	• Kayonza District • Nyamirama Health Centre • Local coaches
Innovation	The project Shooting Touch Rwanda managed to bring together social change (GBV and gender equality in Rwanda) and health improvement (physical health and mental wellness). During the first basketball tournament up to 500 people over 35 years old received health exams and dozens of children and adults got vaccinated for COVID-19.
Sustainability	• Social change • Community participation

	• Gender equality • Racial equality • Health improvement
Impact(s)	• Increase access to sports • Female empowerment • Leadership development opportunities • Health empowerment
Transferability	• Achievement of objectives • Transferable values • Unbound to specific policy • Flexible and adaptable to similar settings • Specific process/practice • Adaptable practice
URL of the practice	https://d3jtvtg28xmknz.cloudfront.net/news/shooting-touch-rwanda-raise-awareness-about-gender-based-violence
Related web site(s)	https://www.shootingtouch.com/health-awareness-tournaments

STOP GBV Campaign	
Location/geographical coverage: Zambia	**Organization**: **Sport In Action (SIA)**
Type of action	A program focused on the prevention and response to GBV in Zambia by using football to include as part of the solution the male population.
Target groups	Boys and young men aged 12-23 from football clubs and men's groups in general.
Objective	The main and direct aim of the project is to protect the rights women and their role within the community. To meet the above SIA set the below objectives: • To train coaches across districts in Zambia on courses tailored to each group • To use football as a tool to combat GBV • To integrate sports
Introduction	The program designed to stop GBV in Zambia where there is evidence that 50% of women over the age of 15 have been victims of violence (especially physical). SIA supports the involvement of the male population to act on the combat of GBV by participating in anti-GBV education sessions, designed exclusively for the program.
Stakeholders & partners	• World Vision

	• Northern Province of Zambia • UNAIDS • Zambia Wallace Group • USAID • FIFA Football for Hope
Innovation	Despite the empowerment of the wider football community on the issue of GBV and protection of women's rights, during the program participants gain knowledge on public health on HIV and AIDS, sexual and reproductive health services. In addition, through the program co operations with parent and teacher groups were developed to enhance the creation of an environment friendly and safe, free of violence and gender discrimination.
Sustainability	• Community participation • Social respect • Gender equity
Impact(s)	• Exploring gender, sex and sexuality • Understanding and respecting human rights for all • Identifying and responding to GBV at home, at work, at school • Knowledge of HIV and AIDS prevention
Transferability	• Achievement of objectives • Adaptable initiative • Transferable concept idea
URL of the practice	https://www.sport-in-action.com/kicking-out-gender-based-violence-our-responsibility/
Related web site(s)	https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/launch-natwampane-programme-%E2%80%9Ctogether-stop-sexual-and-gender-based-violence%E2%80%9D_fr

ONE WIN LEADS TO ANOTHER	
Location/geographical coverage: Brazil	**Organization**: **UN Women, International Olympic Committee**
Type of action	The programme builds the leadership skills of adolescent girls through quality sports programmes, improving their ability to influence decisions that affect their lives at all levels. It creates safe spaces for girls to break social barriers, empowers and equips them with basic economic skills, increased knowledge of their bodies and the confidence to access services in the event of violence.
Target groups	• 2.500 girls, ages 10-18 years old in Rio de Janeiro • 150 out-of-school mothers in Rio, ages 14-18 years old

	• 50 volunteer coaches of mixed ages • 15 Sport for Social Change organizations • 20.000 girls using the *Transforma* online training platform created by the Olympic Organizing Committee
Objective	Reduction of harmful gender stereotypes and related behaviours, including participating girls' improved self-esteem, economic and leadership skills, knowledge of health and their own bodies and **knowledge of violence prevention and available services.**
Introduction	Upon entering adolescence, girls face new challenges, such as less incentive to develop sports skills, less autonomy over their bodies, and the almost exclusive responsibility to avoid early pregnancy, while their male counterparts enjoy privileges reserved for men, including autonomy, mobility and power. At puberty, a girl's confidence drops two times that of a boy's, and 49% of girls drop out of sports (6 times the dropout rate of boys). Where adolescent girls and young women are excluded from sport and other public spaces, they are prevented from realizing their full potential. Their ability to participate in sport as boys' equals is hindered by a lack of confidence, knowledge, skills, opportunities and connections/networks. Therefore, adolescence is a critical time to intervene to reverse this cycle. Sport is a powerful tool for girls' and young women's empowerment. Sport increases girls' beliefs in their own abilities, which translates into everyday life and encourages them to take initiative and attempt things they never imagined possible. Sport can empower, particularly when combined with safe spaces and holistic life-skills learning opportunities that boost a girl's autonomy. Girls' participation in sport is associated with a multiplier effect on a wide range of development outcomes, such as health, education and leadership, to name a few
Stakeholders & partners	• Women Win • Brazilian Olympic Committee
Innovation	Twice a week, the programme's beneficiaries go to an Olympic Villa close to their home or school. Olympic Villas are spaces with various sports facilities managed by the municipality of Rio de Janeiro. For one hour, girls play sports, and for another hour, they attend a gender workshop run by a facilitator (pedagogue, psychologist or social assistant) from the Olympic Villa.
Sustainability	Based on lessons learned from the pilot in Rio de Janeiro, the programme will be expanded to other Brazilian states and cities. Additionally, 10% of the beneficiaries will be identified as so-called "champions". During their second year in the programme, they will be able to assist the facilitators as volunteers in the workshops and, eventually, themselves become programme facilitators and role models for younger girls.

Impact(s)	In order to measure and evaluate the programme's impact on female adolescents' development, 10% of the beneficiaries participate in monitoring surveys at the beginning, middle and end of the programme. The project is based on the evaluated Goal Programme, developed by UN Women's partner Women Win. The Goal Programme has delivered the following results for 217.000 young women and girls participating in 25 countries: 89% of girls said they were a leader, compared to 46% before the programme 93% of girls know where to report violence 79% of girls now know how to prevent pregnancy, compared to 25% before 99% of girls believe that one day they will get a job 77% of girls now know how to prevent sexually transmitted infections, compared to 21% before
Transferability	• Achievement of objectives • Transferable values • Specific process/practice • Adaptable practice
URL of the practice	https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2016/8/press-release-in-sport-and-for-gender-equality-one-win-leads-to-another
Related web site(s)	https://olympics.com/ioc/news/one-win-leads-to-another-developing-new-ways-to-empower-girls-and-young-women-through-sport https://www.womenwin.org/grls/programmes/one-win-leads-to-another/

5. Field research methodology and results

For the data collection a holistic approach was chosen, so that the data gathered would cover all aspects of the GBV phenomenon. The timeframe of the research expanded from February to November 2023, as it involved both desk and field research phases.

The Consortium conducted field research aiming at both quantitative and qualitative data regarding the current situation at the Basketball Federations and Associations in the partner countries. The targets of the field research were coaches, trainers, athletes and other staff who were asked about their perceptions and experience with GBV in the basketball field. Forty semi-structured interviews (10/country) were conducted providing qualitative data to the research and an online questionnaire was designed and distributed to all partner countries allowing the partnership to have valuable, quantitative data as well. The online questionnaire reached out more than one hundred people giving valuable insights about the perception of GBV in all four countries, while a synthesis report was created to present this data to the public.

The qualitative data of the interviews are presented below separately for each country following the structure of the questionnaire used. The synthesis report from the online survey comes next in order to give the reader the quantitative data gathered at the four partner countries, which will help him/her/it visualise them and identify similarities and differences with the qualitative data from the interviews.

5.1. Findings from the interviews

The interviews were conducted in all partner countries in ordinance with the relevant guidelines and each one of them lasted approximately 30 minutes. In each country, 10 professionals from the field of basketball were interviewed after having signed the necessary consent forms. There were variable means and tools used for the conduction of the interviews, such as *Microsoft Teams, Zoom, Viber, What's Up,* Messenger, the *Blackboard Collaborate platform,* while few of them were conducted via phone or face-to-face.

The interview process included an introduction of ***GBV in Basket*** regarding the topic, the aim and the four dimensions of GBV in sport as well as a section at the end of the interview for further comments by the participants.

All participants were chosen according to the directives of GBV in Basketball, therefore they are active in basketball teams or academies and they participate in female basketball from different positions.

5.1.1. Greece

Interviewees' Profession

- 4 Coaches
- 2 Sports' Events Organizers
- 1 Trainer

- 1 Professor of Physical Education
- 1 Athlete
- 1 Technical Manager

Out of the 10 interviewees, 8 are males and 2 females including a female basketball player with 15 years of experience, in which she has gained knowledge about the differences between women and men teams, the range of opportunities available for both genders etc. Furthermore, the coaches participating in the interviews are coaching female basketball teams engaging daily, during practice, with girls and teenagers. All the participants, regardless of their profession, have many years of experience and they have been part of different teams as athletes.

Definition of GBV in Basketball

Firstly, all participants agreed that **GBV exists in Basketball,** as it is present in our daily lives globally. Most of the interviewees identified that **verbal violence** is the most common form of violence existing in sport in general and in basketball specifically. It is important to note that one participant, who is a trainer in a female basketball team, shared that GBV is not a specific category of violence, but entails a **combination of verbal, psychological and sexual violence**. Another participant mentioned that it entails any harmful action and even the threat of it, while a coach supported that if it keeps on escalating, it will soon be a very real problem. Another participant pointed out that from his experience, **inequality in wages** is a very common issue between female and male athletes.

Consequently, all participants admitted GBV in basketball as a phenomenon that derives from society and reaches all its aspects. Regardless of being witnesses or not, almost everyone agrees that its verbal dimension is the most common both in men and female teams, especially towards male athletes.

Regulations and Guidelines

The experience of the participants with the regulations and guidelines for the elimination of GBV in Basketball varies. Some participants noted that there are clear guidelines and regulations focusing on preventing and dealing with GBV incidents with the scope to protect the athletes. However, the majority admitted that specific regulations for GBV cannot be found in any team or basketball organisation they are employed by. Despite the existence of some guidelines focusing on the appropriate behaviour of coaches towards athletes of any gender and vice versa, GBV regulations are non-existent in basketball teams and associations. A participant shared that at the school where he coaches the girls' basketball team, there are some guidelines and seminars explaining that a coach must be accompanied by another adult even to enter the locker rooms. Another coach emphasized on the understanding of the causes that lead to these behaviours through honest dialogue and directions instead of direct punishment. Moreover, he pointed out how the presence of an expert psychologist functions as a catalyst when a workshop on GBV is given to coaches and athletes.

Provided information on any relevant policies or protocols that are in place

Policies and protocols in place where the interviewees are employed include broad and unclear guidelines, which do not have GBV at their epicentre. This proves, as most participants have mentioned, the deficit in regulations and procedures for a phenomenon that does not only exist in sport, but in the whole society.

On the contrary, one interviewee referred to the caution given in his organization regarding everyone's access to safe methods of reporting incidents, while another one focused on the preventing character that reporting to an authority could have for future perpetrators.

Reported Incidents of Gender-Based Discrimination

Most of the participants said that they have not witnessed incidents of gender-based discrimination while training basketball teams, apart from two of the coaches and the athlete, who mentioned that they have witnessed incidents of **verbal violence.** An interesting fact is that the athlete had to leave a basketball team when felt discriminated against by her female coach due to her sexual orientation. One of the coaches mentioned that the procedure for these incidents entail informing the head of coaching and if aggravated, the head of coaching informs the parents. The other coach, who has witnessed an incident of verbal violence, supported that he immediately reacted by removing the responsible person and reported the incident to the manager of the organisation.

Reactions towards violent Incidents

Most of the participants have not witnessed violent incidents in basketball, but they have seen some coaches verbally assaulting male athletes. Only one of the interviewees revealed that a group of female athletes reported to him a violation of their personal space during a sports' event and the team's reaction was to immediately remove the person responsible for this. Others, who stated that they have witnessed violent incidents, clarified at the same time, that those did not take place during their active participation in the sport, meaning they did not occur while playing, coaching or managing.

One coach, however, extended the violent incidents to the fans' side mentioning that quite frequently he/she has witnessed verbal and psychological violence towards -mostly- female athletes, administrative staff and in some cases coaches from the fans.

While in all cases, there are no regulations or guidelines regarding GBV, some of the participants mentioned that they have received some general guidelines with which they are suggested to be proactive and prevent violent incidents.

Confidentiality

The answers given by the participants ranged between the psychology of the victim and the official and unofficial procedures for violent incidents. Firstly, it is important to note that the participants who mentioned the official procedures for reporting incidents of violence claimed that confidentiality in this case could not be kept. However, the necessary steps for the official report should be in accordance with the will of the victim and her/his legal rights including anonymity, which was mentioned by one participant. Secondly, two participants noted that the psychology of the victim should be respected before any official or unofficial report. The psychological burden should be considered in the cases where there is a chance that confidentiality cannot be kept.

Among the interviewees, the coaches shared the view that it is very important for an athlete, regardless of gender, to trust them and be open to revealing any violent incidents that might occur. Moreover, the team nature of basketball was highlighted and its roots on team effort and trust, in the sense that reporting a violent incident could be the stepping stone for other athletes to open up and share their experience concerning sexual, verbal, psychological violence and unequal pay.

Timely Reporting

All the participants agreed that reporting incidents of GBV almost immediately is important, as it operates as an additional incentive against impunity of the perpetrators. Despite that, some participants mentioned that regardless of the timeframe that a victim will report an incident, violent actions should never be silenced, as the ultimate decision lies with the victim. Again, some participants recognised that the psychological state of the victim plays a crucial role in sharing and reporting violent incidents.

This section can be related to the **regulations or guidelines, which do not exist particularly for GBV incidents** according to most of the interviewees. However, some mentioned that they would act similarly to their daily life, outside the basketball courts, by following the general directives of their schools or basketball associations. These are:

- protocols which explain the hierarchy of reporting, such as a coach must report an incident to the director and consequently the director to the board
- meeting with the victim's parents to structure the best possible way of reporting to the board or director
- meeting every year with all the coaches and the people who are engaging with the athletes to create regulations in case of a violent incident

Training on Detection and Prevention of GBV

Most of the participants have not undertaken any training related to the detection and prevention of GBV. One participant followed an international conference for GBV incidents and the ways to prevent them, 3 more answered that they have received some training within their organization, when another participant mentioned that has read books and science articles about the phenomenon. All participants, however, expressed their willingness to undertake training on how to prevent and detect GBV.

Almost all the participants agreed that the areas mentioned to them during the interview are interconnected and should be included in an under development curriculum so as to create horizontal guidelines explaining the ways of detecting, preventing and reporting GBV. One participant noted that encouragement should be the priority as a training area, while others suggest that the training content should not only be subject to the coaches, but all relevant stakeholders including the young athletes and their parents with a focus on respecting all athletes' personal limits.

Conclusion

Regulations or Guidelines for GBV in Greek basketball are basically non-existent. There are some general directives, which are not enough to provide coaches with the necessary knowledge and insight to be able to detect, prevent and report violent incidents. Coaches act similarly to their daily life transferring their social "posture" to basketball. One of the positive elements of these interviews is that the participants acknowledge the existence of GBV and they do not avoid admitting it. This could show openness to a training content, which would work as a formula for the development of horizontal regulations and guidelines. According to the interviewees, creating common guidelines for everyone would be very helpful for the prevention and gradually the elimination of GBV in Basketball.

5.1.2. Bulgaria

Interviewees' Profession

- 5 coaches
- 2 psychologists
- 2 basketball managers
- 1 national team player

The selection of the interviewed individuals has been carefully made following the goal to balance their gender, profession, age and location, but with the understanding that the coaches should have the biggest representation. As a result, 5 female and 5 male people were interviewed aged between 28 and 65 years old with the following professional capacities:

They are currently working for organizations from five different regions in the country. Nine of them have very long experience in Bulgarian basketball as most of them are also former players. One is a psychologist who has been working with basketball players for the last four years.

Definition of GBV in Basketball

There is a common understanding among all interviewers that GBV should be defined as sexual and emotional/psychological violence.

Most of the opinions state that it is quite common in Bulgaria for men to believe that women are weaker physically and mentally, more stupid, annoying "drama queens" and lower level compared to men. Men and even women use the phrase "manly girl" as a compliment when referring to a mentally tough woman and respectively call an indecisive man "girly". However, one of the interviewees believes that at young age there are quite harmful cases of GB emotional violence of girls towards boys, therefore it is important to note that GBV can be observed in any direction regardless of the gender of the victim or the perpetrator.

None of the interviewees suggested that there is gender-based physical violence in basketball except one psychologist who claims that sexual violence is in fact considered a form of physical violence. Half of the respondents believe that financial discrimination also exists, while one interviewee stated that gender-based financial discrimination is a myth.

Almost all interviewees think that GBV exists in Bulgaria and in Bulgarian basketball, but it is not recognized as a problem, unlike in some European and North American countries. Different reasons for this have been shared. There is negligence, a lack of understanding about what exactly constitutes violence, and what behaviours should be unacceptable. There is also a tendency to normalize inappropriate behaviour and attitudes by explaining that such behaviour is "normal" in the Balkans.

Regulations and Guidelines

All the interviewees agree that there are no detailed regulations and guidelines for the elimination of GBV in Basketball in Bulgaria. None of the Bulgarian clubs have such internal regulations and protocols. The Ethical Code of BBF, while containing some general texts on the matter, is not well known among most people in basketball and lacks the necessary policies and protocols to make it effectively applicable. Two of the interviewees, who have experience with education and training on

the matter from their time playing for NCAA during their academic years, highlight the importance of prevention and protection in creating rules and protocols.

Most of the interviewees believe that regulations and guidelines for the elimination of GBV in basketball would be very useful. The common opinion is that the rules and protocols should be mostly oriented towards prevention, protection and management of the cases. They also suggest that if the regulations and protocols are not clear leading to a real sanction, such regulations would be ineffective. However, some of the interviewees express scepticism about the future implementation of such rules in Bulgarian basketball, citing the different mentality in the Balkans as a potential barrier. They note that the effectiveness of regulations and protocols aimed at preventing and addressing GBV in basketball is not solely dependent on the clarity of the rules and the severity of the sanctions. Education, training and a culture of respect and safety are also crucial components in creating an environment that discourages GBV in basketball.

Some of the interviewees also expressed concern that older coaches may resist implementing rules to combat GBV, as they believe they need to be very tough with the players to gain their respect and see such rules as a threat to their authority.

Reported Incidents of Gender-Based Discrimination

Almost all female interviewees, whether current or former players, have experience discussing GBV cases with other players. Sexual relationship between a player and her coach were and most likely still are, not uncommon. However, it is unclear to the interviewees whether such relationships constitute GBV in case they are voluntary from both sides and involve adults only. Some of the interviewees are more concerned about the negative influence such relation could have on the other players in the team.

Some of the coaches have the impression that there are also girls willing to do everything to succeed; they even try to seduce their coach. These girls do not consider themselves victims and are proud of the interest of a male coach/manager towards them. It seems that nowadays such behaviour is no longer considered shameful (as it was in the past when girls kept it in secret) and girls openly discuss the sexual attention they receive.

Only one male respondent had discussed a similar issue with a female player some years ago when he was a player. The other male interviewees -all coaches with over 20 years of coaching experience- have never been informed of such incidents. It appears that female players find it easier to share such issues with other females.

All interviewees, though, have witnessed emotional GBV from other coaches, including the use of inappropriate gender-based offensive language, especially during games, when coaches are under significant stress and experience negative emotions.

Some of the coaches believe that there is a completely different reaction of the female player when a female and a male coach uses not appropriate, gender-based offensive words in an aggressive way. The girls -in their opinion- tend to accept such words from a woman, but are very sensitive to hear it from a man. However, it seems all coaches understand that the fact that some female players may be more accepting of such language from a woman does not make it any less harmful or damaging and therefore such behaviour contributes to a culture of harassment and violence.

Reactions towards Violent Incidents

Most of the interviewees reported that they did not react in any way to incidents of GBV they have noticed, experienced or heard about. Players often do not believe they can challenge the

authority of the coach nor do they believe they can get help on the matter. Most often players try to disregard the verbal offence. Coaches and managers who witness emotional GBV towards players during practices and games do not think they can change anything. They fear that if they report the inappropriate behaviour, it will only harm their relationship with the respective coach, as no actions and sanctions are expected.

One interviewer had a direct confrontation with a coach who was using emotional GBV towards players, however, does not believe there was any effect of this intervention. Regarding cases that could be considered sexual harassment, some female coaches do not see the concerned players as a victim because they appear proud of the attention. Few interviewees suggest that the lack of reaction brings us back to the idea that we are normalizing inappropriate behaviours in Bulgaria.

Confidentiality

The interviewees are divided regarding confidentiality issues. Most of them suggest that confidentiality is very important during the phase of investigation when it comes to sexual violence, however for cases concerning other types of GBV it is not so important. Still, some interviewees insist that strict confidentiality is needed during the whole process; otherwise, the victims would never report and ask for help. One interviewee believes that confidentiality is not needed at all and all violations, actions and sanctions should be announced publicly.

Timely Reporting

There are varying opinions on the importance of timely reporting of GBV in basketball. Some of the interviewees suggest that the limitation period should be the same as the one in the Disciplinary Regulations of Bulgarian Basketball Federation, which is up to one month. Others suggest a one-year limitation period. However, a few interviewees state that although time is critical for the prevention and identification of what exactly has happened, for serious violations like sexual violence and recidivism, the victim needs to have the chance to be heard when they are ready to share their experience regardless of any period limitation.

Training on Detection and Prevention of GBV

The interviewees' opinion is that there is currently no clear understanding of what constitutes GBV and that education is needed for everyone involved to have a clear idea of what is acceptable and what is not. Several responses suggested following the example of some European and North American countries, where coaches require undergoing dedicated safeguarding training before working with players. This training should clarify which approaches and words are appropriate and emphasize that comments on a player's physical appearance should never be made. Another way to protect the player is having at least two adult staff during the individual meetings with a player.

It is also important to note that young male coaches as well as coaches of any gender or age should receive education and training on how to maintain appropriate boundaries with their players and how to prevent and address instances of harassment and violence. Coaching should prioritize creating a safe and supportive environment for all players, where they feel comfortable and respected. While it is crucial for coaches to build positive relationships with their players, it is equally crucial for them to maintain appropriate professional boundaries and not cross the line into a more intimate or personal relationship. Coaches should always prioritize their role as a leader and mentor rather than trying to be a friend to their players. They should avoid engaging in behaviours or conversations that could compromise their objectivity or put their players in uncomfortable situations.

On the other side, players should be aware of their rights and need training for this. It is important to investigate incidents and encourage players to report them in a safe and effective manner, while clear procedures and protocols should be in place for doing so. All interviewees highlight the importance of prevention and protection of everybody involved in the basketball community.

Conclusion

Overall, the interviews suggest that GBV exists in Bulgarian basketball, but it is not recognized as a problem. It is mainly defined as sexual and emotional/psychological violence and it is believed to be more prevalent against women. However, one interviewee pointed out that GBV can happen in any direction regardless of the gender of the victim or the perpetrator. Financial discrimination is also believed to exist according to some interviewees. There is no specific regulation or protocol in Bulgaria for the elimination of GBV in basketball and this leaves room for potential instances of violence and harassment to go unchecked. The regulations, protocols and procedures should be clear and should lead to effective sanctions; most of the interviewees believe that regulations and protocols for the elimination of GBV in basketball would be very useful, but there is scepticism about their implementation due to the different mentality in the Balkans. Another reason for resistance could be the belief of the older coaches that they need to be tough with the players to gain their respect. Regulations are important, but education, training and a culture of respect and safety are also crucial components in creating an environment that discourages GBV in basketball.

5.1.3. Cyprus

Interviewees' Profession

- 6 Coaches
- 2 Team Managers or Directors
- 1 Technical Director
- 1 Female Player (double role with coaching)

7 males and 3 females with a variety of positions in female basketball were interviewed with their average age estimated to be approximately 44 years old. More specifically, participants were selected according to the role and status within basketball and specifically women's basketball, namely active coaching status (past or present in women's or girls' basketball), a female athlete who is also a coach, team managers and directors of women's teams and a technical director who oversees basketball programs. Due to the direct involvement and engagement with women's basketball at various levels, ranging from girls to women, it was assumed that the participants have opinions, attitudes and experience regarding the issue of GBV and have a contribution for the purposes of this project. It should be noted that 8 out of the 10 participants have been players in the past.

Definition of GBV in Basketball

Most of the participants stated that violence based on gender exists in women's basketball in Cyprus. Of the many forms violence and abuse, namely physical, verbal, psychological, neglect, malpractice, sexual), participants focus on verbal and **psychological abuse** towards women and girls. The manifestation according to them is the form of intimidation by men in the sport and incidents of

bullying and incidents of **verbal harassment** towards women and girls, either by male or women coaches using derogatory terms about performance and the body/body image. These include cursing and shaming, masked as pep talk or motivational talk to increase performance.

Some of the coaches admitted that they were the perpetrators and instigators of shouting and intimidation towards female referees but stated that they did not know any better back then and that it was all part gamesmanship in order to win. The theme of "winning at all costs" was recurrent and was often used to excuse behaviours that are violent, abusive or a harassment towards women. Some of the participants have heard about the most known cases of sexual abuse of girls and women in basketball.

It is important to mention that the definition of GBV was not clear to them. Only the definition of Violence was relatively well-comprehend; participants could not express the main motive of such behaviours, which is the gender. The definition was provided in all interviewees for the sake of keeping the interview using the same definitions. It was interesting to observe that to the participants, gender means a binary distinction to men and women. None of the participants mentioned incidents of homophobic violence, bullying or harassment or the use of homophobic slur from coaches, fans and athletes.

Regulations and Guidelines

The over impression of interviewees' experience with the regulations and guidelines for the elimination of GBV in Basketball is poor. This can be attributed to the fact regulations, guidelines and measures are in the very early stages in Cypriot sport and basketball in the wider sense. Except for one private academy, there was no mention of preventive measures, other than those that stem from national law against the sexual abuse and exploitation of children, which dictate the submission of a clean criminal record certificate and a certificate of non-inclusion in the sexual offender's record of the police. The organizations in which the participants are employed have no Codes of Conduct for all participants. Interestingly and even though the Cyprus Basketball Federation is one of the very few Federations that have a Safeguarding officer responsible for the reception of reports, participants did not mention, which shows the lack of knowledge on measures guidelines. The most recent developments on a governmental level, namely the publishing of the Guide for Welfare and Safeguarding, issued by the Cyprus Sport Organization (the governmental sector organization), were not mentioned by the participants.

Reported Incidents of Gender-Based Discrimination

Responding and reporting are vital in the combat against GBV, harassment and abuse. There are actions initiated by the Cyprus Sport Organization, both in prevention and reporting in the past two years. Similar actions have been taken by the Basketball Federation. These actions include an appointed person in both the CSO and the Federation for reporting. It became clear that participants were not aware of the reporting mechanisms. It seems that incidents are passed to team managers/directors, but it is unclear how a report is handled from then on. Additionally, participants were unable to make distinction between actions that can be managed by a disciplinary board and actions that are criminal and must be reported to the police authorities directly by-passing the sport authorities.

Reactions towards Violent Incidents

Almost all participants have witnessed incidents of verbal abuse in the form of intimidation, cursing or use of degrading language towards women in various positions in the sport. Intimidation, lack of trust and prejudice due to gender were more frequently mentioned regarding women referees and coaches, while bullying, degrading language and cursing had athletes as the victims. One coach mentioned an incident where a female coach used body shaming as a mean of per talk during a game.

Furthermore, most of the participants were aware (but have not witnessed) incidents of sexual abuse and harassment. Almost all participants remained as bystanders in the verbal abuse incidents. Arguably, this is due to lack of education and training in the *Recognition, Responding and Reporting* (the so-called 3R of SafeSport). A few coaches took the issue further to the team manager. In most cases, the reporting was never passed to the Federation. The incidents of sexual harassment and abuse that were publicly known were managed by the Federation.

It is evident that there are neither clear nor shared processes and procedures for the handling and reporting of incidents.

Confidentiality

The issue of reporting incidents by victims and witnesses is perceived as challenging and problematic by the participants, due to confidentiality. Confidentiality, of lack thereof, is perceived as deterring involved persons to report. Participants mentioned the “small place-small society” problem, in which it is easy to figure out who the victim is and who the suspected perpetrator is. The small size of the Federation and the fact that everyone knows everyone was also mentioned as problems for confidentiality. Participants stated that it is desired to have processes and procedures that protect the identity of victims, witnesses, and suspects. Preferably, reports can be made in an organization/body outside of the Federation and even the CSO, a point that shows the lack of trust for the authorities.

Timely Reporting

Timely reporting is related to sound reporting procedures. As mentioned above, most participants seem to “pass the ball’ to someone higher in the hierarchy, team manager, director, federation representative. A timely response is mentioned only by a few of the participants and at least one mentions that timely reporting is important, because the suffering of a person should not be prolonged. However, participants seem to be in doubt regarding the “how” and to “whom” to report, which in essence makes reporting delayed or omitted, considering that participants seem unable to recognize behaviors and actions that are violent or abusive based on gender.

Training on Detection and Prevention of Gender Based Violence

Training received

Training and education on SafeSport, harassment and abuse in sport and specifically on GBV is a key preventing measure and cultivates the 3Rs (Recognized, Respond, Report). However, all participants have never received such training, even though some preliminary training actions have been initiated by the CSO and local academic institutions with Sport Science Programs. Two participants who are employed as Physical Education teachers have received some training within the general training programs of the Ministry of Education.

Areas on which training is needed

Participants were asked to rank the areas among Recognition, Responding and Reporting, which they believed they needed training in. All participants stated that they need training on aspects of the GBV and SafeSport in general, but felt that training and education on Recognition is more important, since it influences the two other steps.

Conclusion

Violence and abuse are terms vaguely known to the participants. Despite recognizing that violence goes beyond physical violence, participants could not identify other main forms violence. Specific to the issue of GBV only a few could state that it is a specific form of violence based on gender, all perceive gender as a binary distinction.

Organized educational programs and training sessions are close to none and even in the few actions existing, participants seem to have no access or information about them. Moreover, tools that are available on an international, European and state levels, by the International Olympic Committee, the Council of Europe and the Cyprus Sport Organization were not known among the participants. Despite the lack of knowledge on behalf of the participants and the fact that on policy level the issue is relatively new in terms of overall management, the participants acknowledge that GBV and abuse is a phenomenon that exists and needs to be dealt with. They are very positive and keen to participate in future educational actions, since they believe that harassment and abuse in general and specifically based on gender do not belong in a sport that should serve as a positive life experience.

5.1.4. North Macedonia

Interviewees' Profession

- 2 Basketball Commissioners
- 1 Basketball Referee
- 1 Coach
- 2 Table Officials
- 1 Stats Personnel
- 1 Sports Doctor
- 2 Basketball Players

All of the interviewees are females aged between 23 to 65 years old reflecting a diverse and inclusive cross-section of the basketball community. These individuals, currently affiliated with basketball organizations throughout the country, bring a wealth of experience to the table. With extensive backgrounds in the basketball field, they not only possess valuable insights, but also continue to contribute actively to the basketball organization reinforcing their ongoing commitment to the sport.

Definition of GBV in Basketball

There is a common understanding among all interviewees defining GBV as financial, sexual, emotional and verbal. It is mentioned that the predominant manifestation of GBV is financial discrimination commencing with the voucher system, where male clubs receive considerably higher

compensation than the female clubs. This disparity extends to the club level, where salaries for women's basketball players are markedly lower compared to their male counterparts.

There are some opinions that women are weaker physically and mentally. This type of harassment encompasses indecent comments, objectification and gender-based stereotyping. A significant number of interviewees in North Macedonia expressed a level of confusion about the concept of GBV attributing it to insufficient attention from institutions. They noted a tendency to downplay its significance suggesting that definitions are subject to alteration and the limits are flexible. Despite a widespread acknowledgment that GBV is present in North Macedonia and within the realm of basketball, it is often not recognized as a distinct problem. Instead, it is perceived as a commonplace aspect of life.

While some interviewees emphasized the importance of addressing this societal issue early on and fostering active participation in educational processes for both genders, the prevailing sentiment indicates a lack of recognition and understanding. There is a notable gap in comprehension regarding what constitutes violence leading to a tendency to normalize inappropriate behaviours and attitudes.

Regulations and Guidelines

The consensus among interviewees is that there is a notable absence of detailed regulations and guidelines for addressing GBV in basketball in North Macedonia. This void extends to the lack of internal regulations and protocols within the clubs. The Ethical Code of the Basketball Federation of North Macedonia (BBF), although containing general statements on the matter, remains relatively unknown within the basketball community and lacks the necessary policies and protocols for effective implementation.

Almost all interviewees, drawing from their experience, point out that education and training on GBV underscore the importance of prevention and protection in formulating rules and protocols. A prevailing view is that comprehensive regulations and guidelines specifically tailored for the elimination of GBV in basketball would be highly beneficial. The emphasis is on developing rules and protocols geared towards prevention, protection and effective management of cases. However, there is scepticism among some interviewees about the potential implementation of such rules in Macedonian basketball, citing the distinctive Balkan mentality as a potential barrier.

Reported Incidents of Gender-Based Discrimination

All interviewees, whether current or former players, share experiences of discussing cases of GBV with other players or co-workers. The occurrence of sexual relationships between players and their coaches was, and likely still is, not uncommon. However, there is uncertainty among the interviewees regarding whether such relationships constitute GBV when they are voluntary and involve consenting adults.

All interviewees have witnessed instances of emotional GBV from other coaches, including the use of inappropriate gender-based offensive language, particularly during high-stress moments such as games. Some coaches believe there is a different reaction from female players when inappropriate, gender-based offensive words are used by a female referee as opposed to a male referee in an aggressive manner. For example “Go home and cook, you are a woman, you don’t know”. Consequently, such behaviour contributes to a culture of harassment and violence.

Reactions towards Violent Incidents

The majority of interviewees reported their passive response to incidents of GBV they observed, experienced or learned about. Players often feel reluctant to challenge the authority of their coach and believe seeking help is unlikely. In many cases, players, female commissioners and referees choose to ignore verbal offences to avoid confrontation, since this behaviour is normally accepted in the Balkans.

There is a pervasive fear that reporting such inappropriate behaviour could strain their relationship with the coach in question, especially when there is scepticism about the likelihood of any consequential actions or sanctions. They also express doubts about the effectiveness of this intervention. In cases that could be construed as verbal harassment, some female coaches do not perceive the affected co-workers as victims, as they outwardly display pride in the attention received. A few interviewees suggest that the lack of reaction may contribute to the normalization of inappropriate behaviours in North Macedonia, since this is a “man’s world”.

Confidentiality

The interviewees hold varying opinions on the importance of confidentiality. The majority asserts that confidentiality is crucial, particularly during the investigation phase of sexual violence cases. A subset of interviewees insists on maintaining strict confidentiality throughout the entire process, arguing that without it, victims may be hesitant to report and seek assistance. There is a contrasting perspective from one interviewee, who believes that confidentiality is unnecessary, advocating for the public announcement of all violations, actions and sanctions. Additionally, some interviewees link the request for confidentiality with societal norms shaping what is deemed acceptable to share and what is not.

Timely Reporting

Most of the interviewees emphasize that while time is crucial for prevention and prompt understanding the details of an incident, in cases of severe violations, such as sexual violence and instances of recurrence, it is essential for victims to have the opportunity to share their experiences whenever they are ready, without being constrained by any limitation period.

Training on Detection and Prevention of GBV

The prevailing sentiment among interviewees is that a lack of clear understanding regarding what constitutes GBV exists, necessitating education for all involved parties to establish a clear framework of acceptable behaviours. Numerous responses propose adopting obliged education for coaches, referees and commissioners as well as dedicated safeguarding training before working with players. This training should elucidate appropriate approaches and language with a specific emphasis on refraining from making comments about a player's physical appearance.

The focus should be on fostering a safe and supportive environment for all players promoting comfort and respect. Positive relationships among all individuals involved in the basketball community is equally essential to uphold professional boundaries, refraining from crossing into more intimate or personal relationships. The importance of investigating incidents, encouraging and creating exchanges, courses and education with other countries is also noted by the participants to realize what is normal and not.

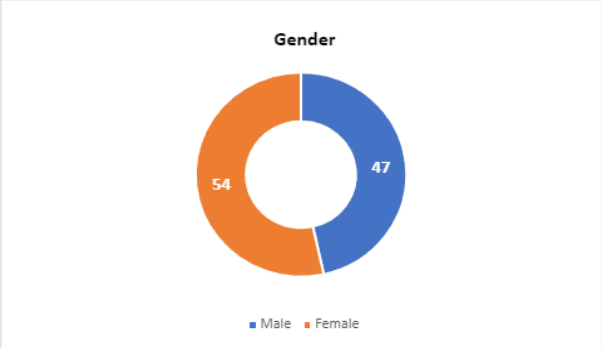
Conclusion

Overall, the interviews suggest that GBV is present in Macedonian basketball, yet it is not acknowledged as a prevalent issue. GBV, as perceived by respondents, encompasses financial, emotional, verbal and sexual forms, with a consensus that it is more pervasive against women. There is a notable absence of specific regulations or protocols addressing GBV in basketball, creating a potential gap for instances of violence and harassment to go unaddressed. It is emphasized that regulations, protocols and procedures concerning GBV should be unequivocal, leading to effective sanctions. Most interviewees stress the importance of early detection as a crucial factor for the successful elimination of GBV in basketball, while support that establishing an environment that discourages GBV in basketball necessitates components such as education, training and exchanges.

5.2. Synthesis Report of the online surveys

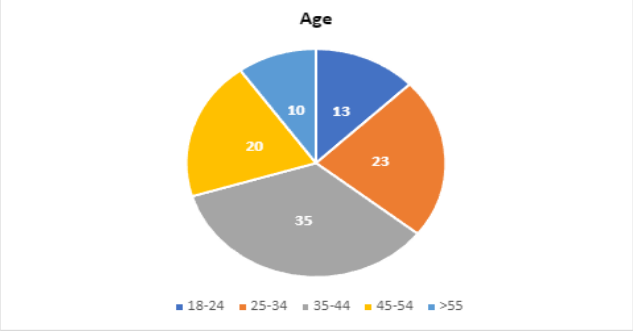
The overall findings of the online surveys conducted by the four partner countries will be presented in this chapter. In total, **101** people from the field of basketball participated in the surveys; twenty people were reached by the Hellenic Basketball Federation as well as by the Bulgarian, twenty-one by the North Macedonian Federation and forty by the Cypriot. All questions will be presented separately with graphics extracted from *Microsoft Excel* showing all the relevant data and short descriptions explaining and commenting on specific points of interest. Firstly, the demographic elements of the participants will be presented followed by the main questions investigating GBV in the basketball field of the partner countries.

Gender of the participants



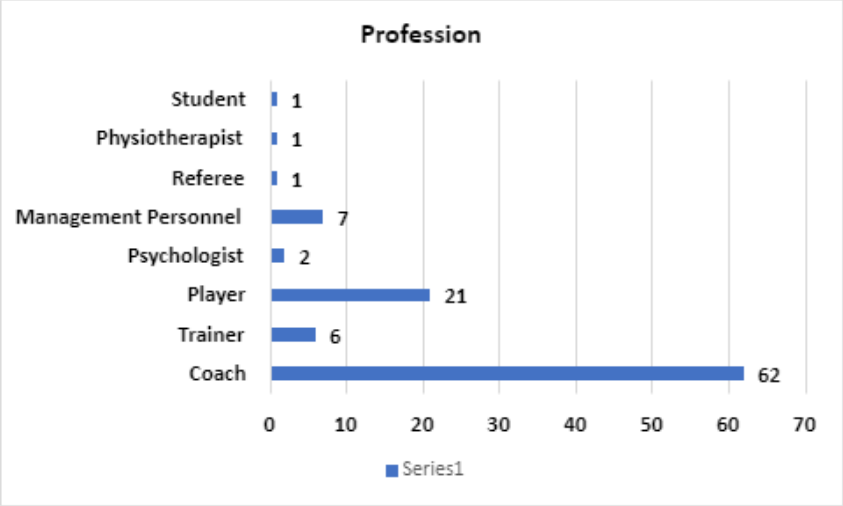
As shown in the graphic above fifty-four women participated in the online surveys and forty-seven men (none of the participants chose the “Non-binary” and “Prefer not to say” options that were available).

Age of the participants



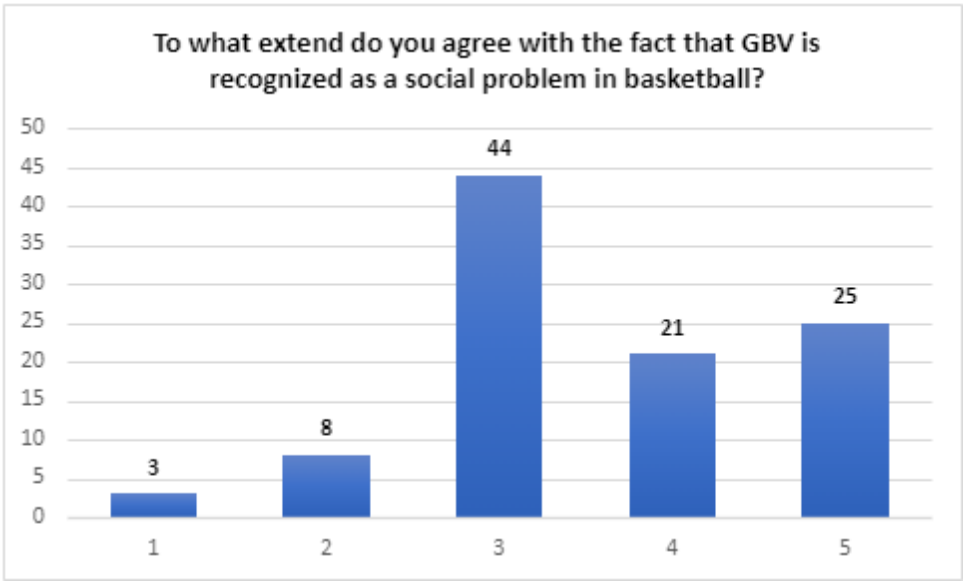
Regarding the age of the respondents, there are representatives from all the available age groups. More specifically, thirty-five participants belong in the age group 35-44 years old, twenty-three people are 25-34 years old and twenty more people are 45-54 years old. The two age groups with the fewest representatives are the ones at the edges of the scale with thirteen people being 18-24 years old and 10 people being over 55 years old.

Profession of participants



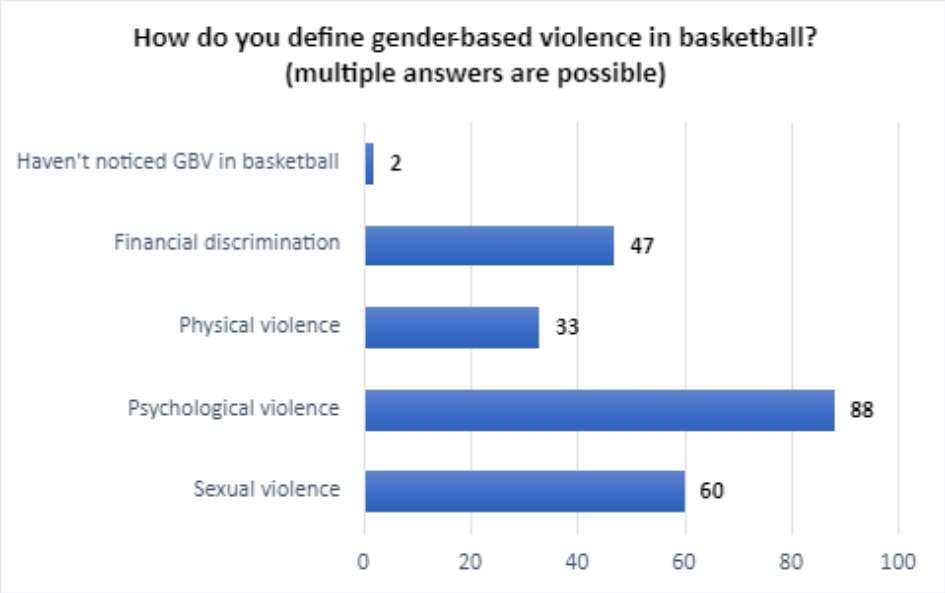
The vast majority of the participants in the surveys are basketball coaches (62) and twenty-one people stated they are basketball players, who are the primary target groups of the project's activities. Seven representatives from managerial positions in the basketball organisations and federations participated in the surveys with six trainers to follow. Besides, there were two psychologists, one referee, one physiotherapist and one student, who responded to the surveys.

1. To what extend do you agree with the fact that GBV is recognized as a social problem in basketball?



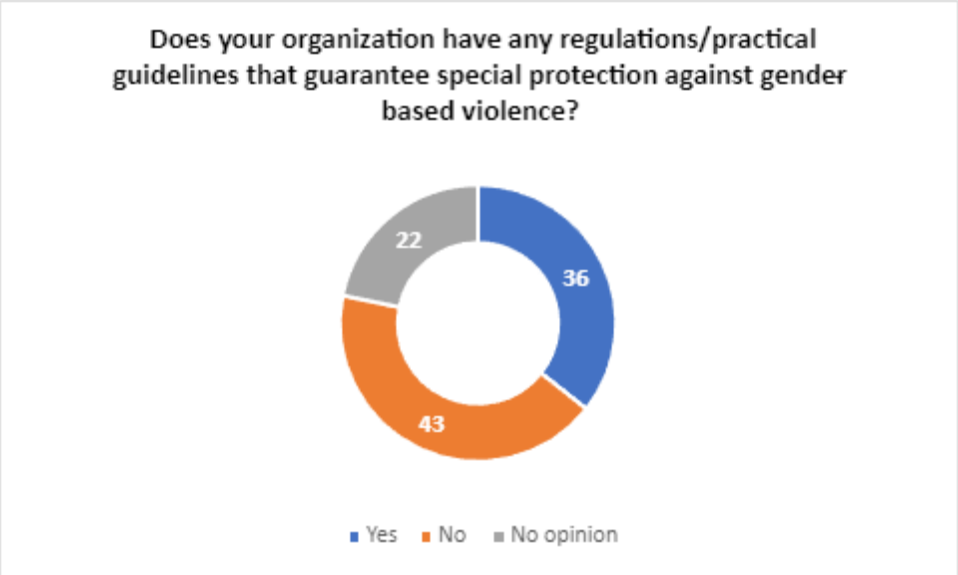
The vast majority of the participants agree with the fact that GBV is recognised as a social problem in basketball, while 44 of them placed their level of agreement in the middle of the scale indicating in any case the existence of GBV in basketball. There are also 11 participants, who expressed their disagreement with this statement.

2. How do you define GBV in basketball? (multiple answers are possible)



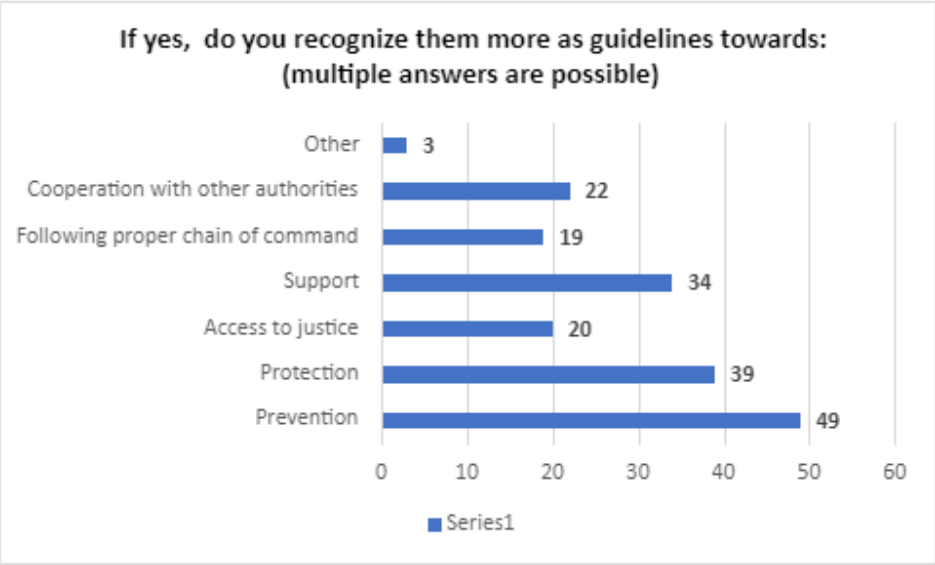
The total number of the answers given appears much bigger than the participants themselves due to the possibility of them making multiple choices to define GBV. The vast majority of the participants define GBV in the field of basketball as *psychological* and *sexual. Financial discrimination* is noticed and recognised as a type of GBV in basketball by 47 participants, while 33 of them have also defined it as *physical violence.* It is worth mentioning that only two people answered that they have not noticed GBV in their field.

3. Does your organization have any regulations/practical guidelines that guarantee special protection against GBV?



The majority of the participants (43) mentioned that the organization they work in does not have specific regulations or guidelines that guarantee special protection against GBV, while significant is the number of the people who expressed no opinion (22). It would be interesting to investigate if this expression of no opinion has to do with the total absence of this kind of procedure or the lack of the participants' knowledge towards this. The remaining 36 respondents on the contrary said that their organizations do have relevant regulations/practical guidelines.

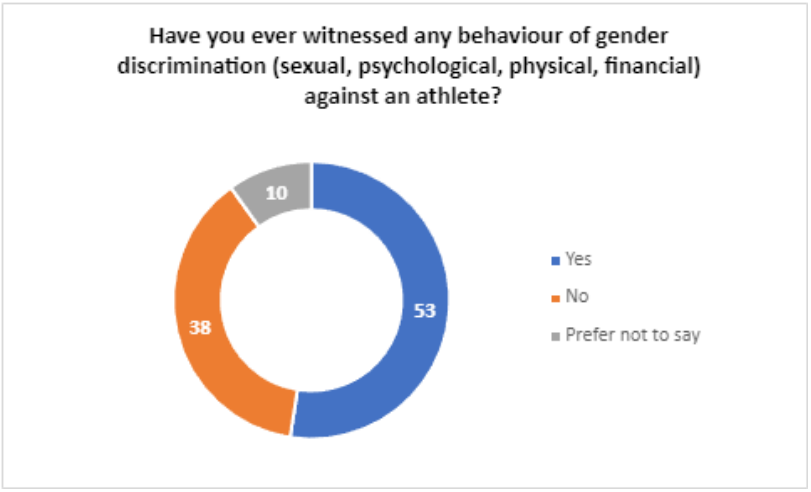
4. If yes, do you recognize them more as guidelines towards: (multiple answers are possible)



In this question the answers gathered are again more than the people who answered "Yes" to the previous question, since the participants had the chance to choose multiple statements. Therefore, 49 people said the regulations/practical guidelines of their organizations function towards the P*revention* of GBV incidents, 39 chose the P*rotection* and 34 the S*upport*. Around 22 participants recognize these regulations as guidelines for the *Cooperation with other authorities,* 20 more people as guidelines for *Access to justice* and 19 as guidelines to *Follow the proper chain of command* when they notice GBV in their professional environment. Finally, 3 participants chose the option *Other* giving the following specifications:

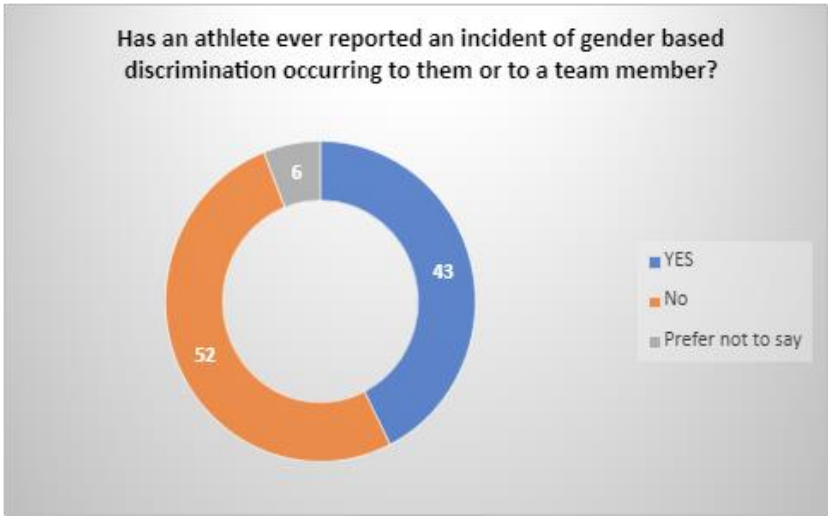
- "I try as a coach to avoid such incident"
- "Everyone is treated equal without using specific guidelines"
- "Silence. No action"

5. Have you ever witnessed any behaviour of gender discrimination (sexual, psychological, physical, financial) against an athlete?



Almost half of the participants in the online surveys answered that they have witnessed gender discrimination behaviour against an athlete in the past. There are, also, 38 who have not witnessed this kind of behaviours and 10 who preferred not to say.

6. Has an athlete ever reported an incident of gender-based discrimination occurring to them or to a team member?

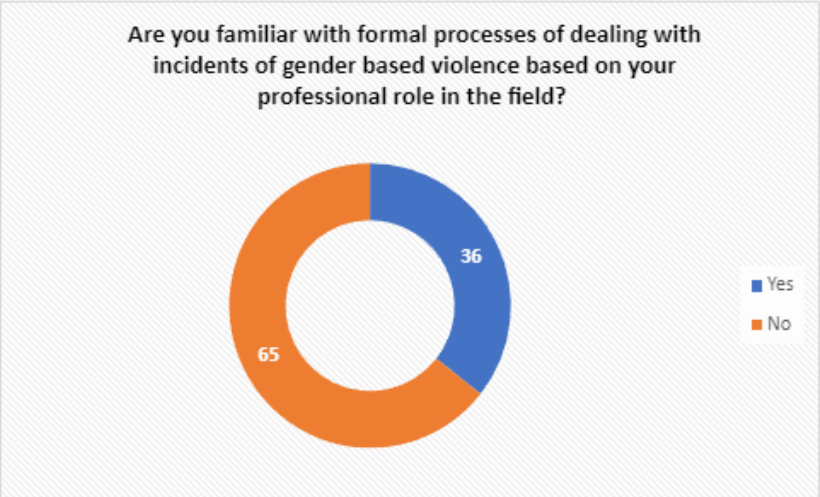


Half of the participants mentioned that they have never received an athlete's report on a gender-based discrimination incident, while 43 stated the exact opposite. In this question, there were 6 people who preferred not to give a specific answer.

7. If the answer is yes to at least one of the two previous questions, what was your reaction? (multiple answers are possible)

Out of the 74 participants who answered this question, 27 stated that they followed an informal procedure when witnessing or were reported an incident of gender-based discrimination. There were 24, who followed a formal procedure, while 23 said they took no action. It should be noted that multiple answers were possible for this question.

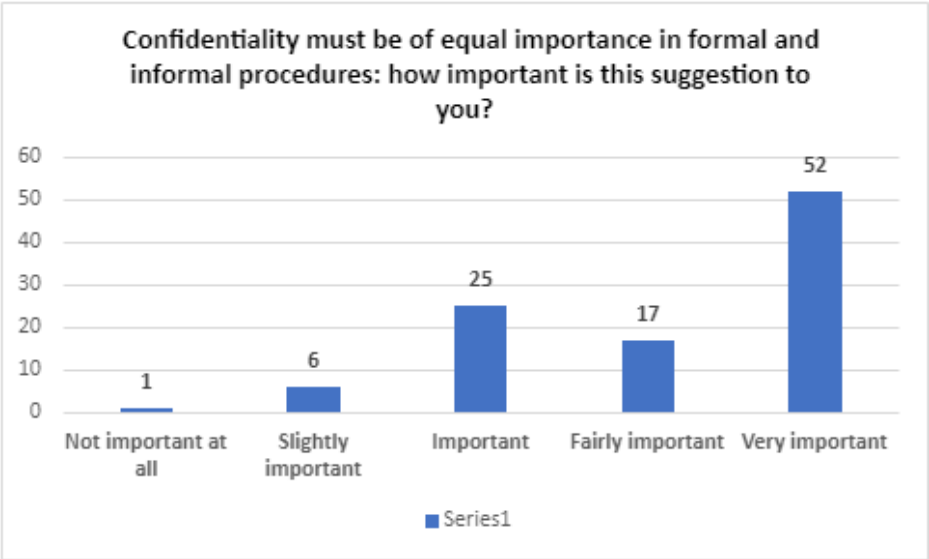
8. Are you familiar with formal processes of dealing with incidents of GBV based on your professional role in the field?



More than half participants (64) in the online surveys noted that they are not familiar with any formal process on how to deal with GBV incidents in their professional field, while 34 participants answered positively to the question. It would be very interesting to clarify for those who answered negatively whether there are any relevant procedures at all at their workplace or in the case they do exist if and how they are spread among the professionals.

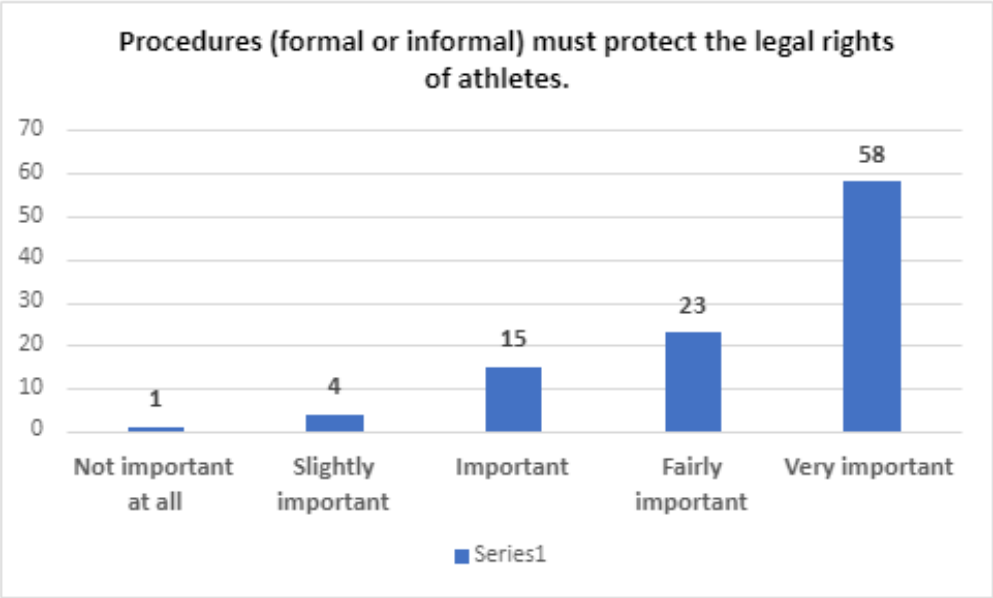
9. How important to you are the following suggestions/aspects concerning the process of addressing a problem of GBV?

9a. Confidentiality must be of equal importance in formal and informal procedures.



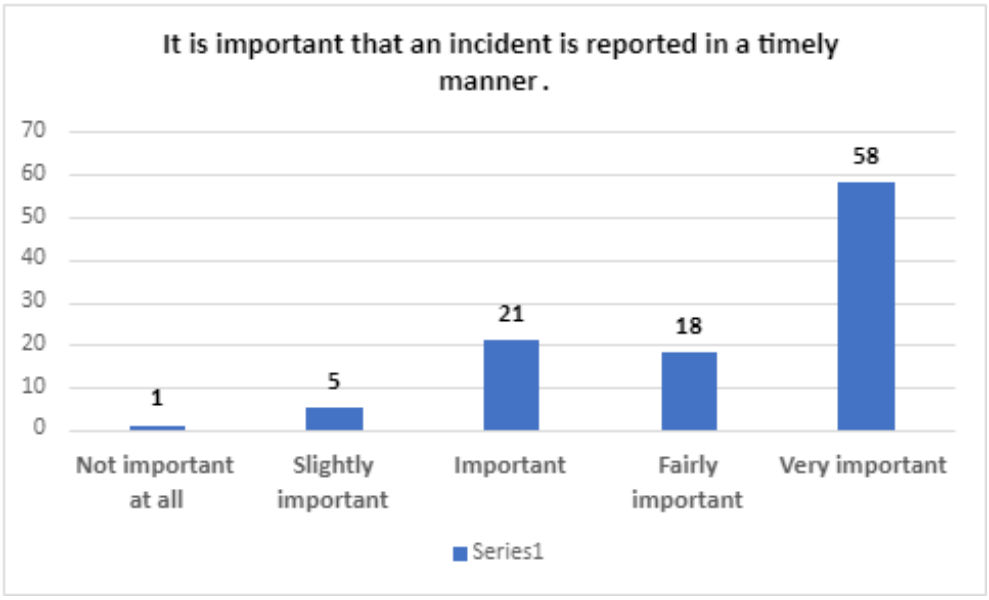
The majority of the participants –more than ninety-four if we sum up those who placed their answers at the third position of the scale and above- believe that confidentiality is of high importance when it comes to addressing a GBV problem both in formal and informal procedures. Only seven do not support this suggestion.

9b. Procedures (formal or informal) must protect the legal rights of athletes.



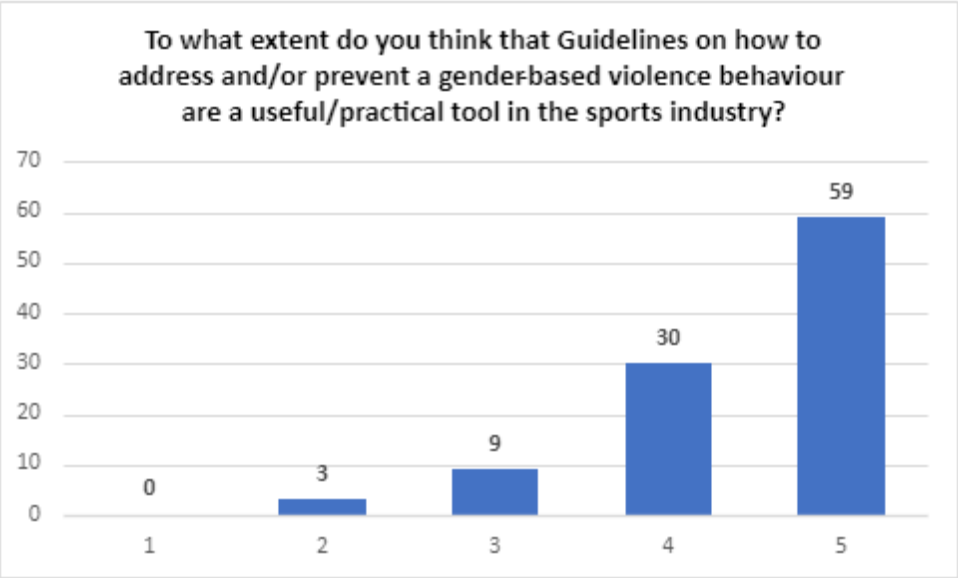
When it comes to the legal rights of the athletes and the need for their protection, again the people who believe this is an important aspect of addressing GBV incidents are the vast majority of the respondents (96 in total). The remaining five participants do not totally agree with suggestion.

9c. It is important that an incident is reported in a timely manner.



The timely manner of reporting a GBV incident seems to be important for the respondents as ninety-seven people placed their answers in the scale from the position three and above. On the contrary, six participants do not believe that the timely manner of reporting a GBV incident is of high importance when it comes to addressing it.

10. To what extent do you think that Guidelines on how to address and/or prevent a GBV behaviour are a useful/practical tool in the sports industry? (1 stands for "Not useful/practical at all" and 5 stands for "Very useful/practical")



More than half of the respondents (59) believe that guidelines on how to address and/or prevent CBV behaviours would be an extremely useful/practical tool in the sports industry while 30 more people characterize them as useful/practical having placed their answers in the 4th position of the scale. There are 9 respondents who think they could be proven somehow useful/practical and 2 others who do not think they are useful/practical.

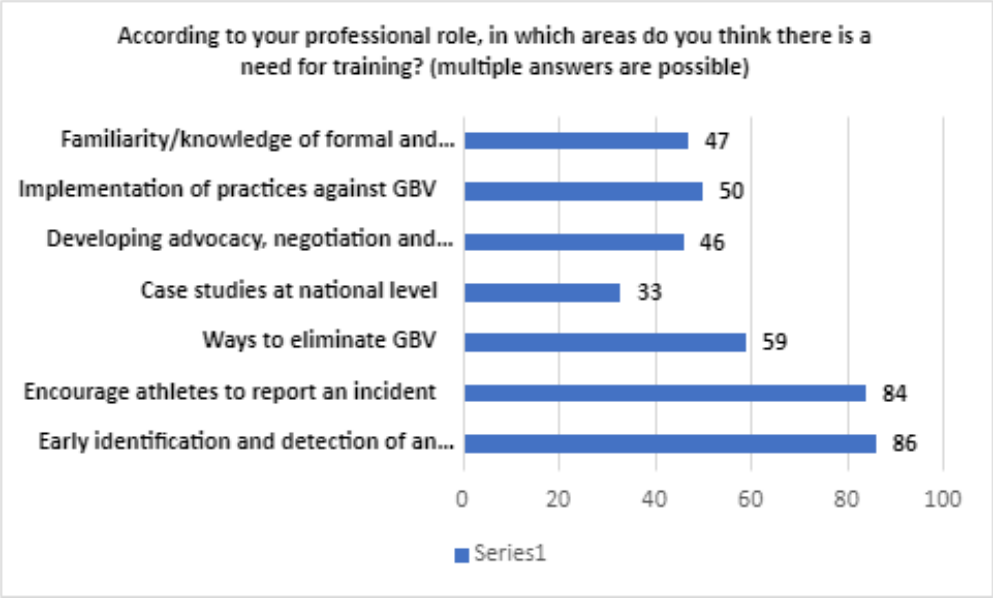
11. Have you ever received any training or education on how to detect and prevent GBV in basketball?

The number of negative responses to this question (74) is significantly higher than the positive ones (27) showing the emerging need for the existence and implementation of trainings related to GBV in the basketball field in all partner countries.

12. To what extent do you think that training on how to respond to gender discrimination incidents is essential to a professional in your field? (1 stands for "Not essential at all" and 5 stands for "Very essential")

Almost all participants except three believe that training on how to respond to gender discrimination incidents is essential for a professional in the basketball field. It should be noted that 59 respondents believe that this is a very essential element, since they chose the fifth position at the scale.

13. According to your professional role, in which areas do you think there is a need for training? (multiple answers are possible)



In this question, the participants had the chance to identify the areas that trainings on GBV issues should focus by choosing more than one answer. The two most popular areas are the "Early identification and detection of an incident of GBV" and "Encouragement of athletes to report an incident" receiving 86 and 84 votes respectively. The area "Ways to eliminate GBV" comes third receiving 59 votes, the "Implementation of practices against GBV" has been chosen by 50 participants, the "Familiarity/knowledge of formal and informal processes (internal and legal procedures)" seems

to be important for 47 respondents, while 46 have identified the “Developing advocacy, negotiation and communication skills” rather crucial to be incorporated in a GBV-relevant training. Only 33 respondents showed interest in a training, which would explore “Case studies at national level”.

6. Conclusion: Outlining a path towards change

Concluding this handbook on GBV in basketball, it is evident that fostering a safe and inclusive environment is crucial for the growth and success of the sport. We have explored the subtle ways in which GBV can manifest within the basketball community, shedding light on the need for awareness, education and decisive action.

The comprehensive survey findings from Greece, Bulgaria, Cyprus and North Macedonia illuminate a common challenge in the realm of basketball, the issue of GBV. In most countries examined, psychological violence, notably verbal abuse, emerges as a distressing commonality, closely followed by instances of sexual violence and financial discrimination. The recognition of GBV as a pressing social problem in basketball is clear, yet the differing perspectives on its extent underscore the critical need for heightened awareness and education.

Participants in the surveys voiced a collective call for clear guidelines and solid procedures to effectively address and prevent GBV, emphasizing the principles of confidentiality, protection of legal rights, encouragement of reporting and implementation of preventive practices. However, it is evident that some organizations lack the necessary regulations and practical measures, highlighting a gap in implementation and support. The resounding theme across all surveyed regions is the necessity for comprehensive training initiatives. Professionals within the basketball community must be equipped with the skills to identify, prevent, and respond to GBV incidents, thereby fostering a safer and more inclusive environment. The demand for targeted training aligns with the broader desire for increased awareness in tackling GBV. Training is not merely a means of empowerment; it is a catalyst for cultural change within basketball.

As we reflect on the results, it becomes apparent that formal and informal education processes are essential. These processes ensure that organizations handle GBV cases efficiently and confidentially, safeguarding the rights of all involved. By investing in comprehensive training programs, the basketball community can instil a culture of responsibility, sensitivity and collective accountability, creating an environment where GBV is not tolerated. Increased awareness, coupled with targeted training, holds the key to fostering a safe and inclusive basketball culture. This, in turn, promotes gender equality and respect within the sport.

This handbook has underlined the importance of recognizing the signs of GBV, dismantling harmful stereotypes and promoting a culture of respect and equality for all. Basketball is not merely a game; it is a platform for empowerment, teamwork and personal growth. It is necessary that all stakeholders, from players and coaches to staff and fans, actively contribute to a sporting landscape free from discrimination and violence.

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