In every society, sport is a field of dreams and a force for fabulous positive change – we must do everything to harness this power.

Irina Bokova, Director-General
As the United Nations’ lead agency for sport and physical education, UNESCO informs, orients and supports policy- and decision-making in sport. For performing this global task, UNESCO uses a unique set of instruments:

- the International Charter of Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport – a rights-based reference of universal principles, such as gender equality, inclusivity, safety, integrity and sustainability
- the International Convention Against Doping in Sport – a landmark standard in the field of sport ethics and governance
- the World Conference of Sport Ministers (“MINEPS”) – the forum propelling global consensus about sport policy issues and priorities
- the Intergovernmental Committee for Physical Education and Sport (“CIGEPS”) – the mechanism to ensure buy-in from governments and quality control by experts

From Policy Intent to Implementation

Elaborated by experts and practitioners from all around the world, the International Charter of Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport, adopted by all Member States of UNESCO, and the Declaration of Berlin, adopted by the 5th World Conference of Sport Ministers (MINEPS V), are widely recognized as international references for sport policy development. UNESCO works with government, sport and research institutions to convert these standards into indicators, benchmarks and self-assessment tools and to promote a shift away from mere declarations towards measurable action.
Quality Physical Education

As the only curriculum subject whose focus combines physical competence with values-based learning, physical education provides a vital learning gateway to grow skills, improve academic performance and promote healthy lifestyles. UNESCO has developed Quality Physical Education Policy Guidelines, with the support of the European Commission, the International Council of Sport Science and Physical Education (ICSSPE), the International Olympic Committee (IOC), UNDP, UNICEF and WHO. The Guidelines outline benchmarks to measure progress in crucial areas such as inclusive provision and teacher training. Drawing on good practice, the roll-out of the Guidelines assists governments from all world regions in revising their physical education policy.

Sport Values Education

Values such as fair play, equality, honesty, commitment and solidarity empower youth to make informed decisions. Through the Education Partnership, UNESCO has joined forces with ICSSPE, the International Fair Play Committee, the IOC, the International Paralympic Committee, and the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), to develop a values education through sport (VETS) resource. This resource includes culture- and age-specific materials to practically support school teachers. By teaming up with sport clubs UNESCO also seeks to foster respect of the ethical values of sport amongst professional and grassroots practitioners.
Protecting Sport

Phenomena such as doping, corruption and manipulation endanger the integrity of both elite and grassroots sport. UNESCO fosters a preventive, zero-tolerance response to the threats to sport. This approach is coupled with the promotion of an informed debate about the governance of sport to improve interaction between public authorities, sports organizations, civil society and the business community.

The use of performance-enhancing substances and methods in sport not only jeopardizes the ethical basis of sport but is a serious threat to physical and mental health. This phenomenon is not limited to elite athletes: amateur sport enthusiasts and young people pursuing a bodily ideal are also drawn into doping.

The International Convention Against Doping in Sport has established a near-universal legal framework for government regulation that is based on the World Anti-Doping Code, thus fully harmonizing the efforts of governments and the sport movement to fight doping in sport. Through this Convention, more than 180 signatory States are committed to restrict trafficking in doping substances; apply common practices to control use by athletes in competitions; improve detection techniques; as well as support education and deterrence.

The Fund for the Elimination of Doping in Sport assists States Parties in achieving these aims through the development of anti-doping projects in the areas of education, policy and capacity-building. Since 2008, more than 180 projects in over 100 countries have thus benefited from financial assistance – to the tune of over US$3,400,000.

The global volume of unregulated sport betting is estimated at hundreds of billions of US dollars per year. Combined with the corruption and coercion of athletes and sports officials, on-line sport betting offers major business opportunities for organized crime and money launderers. The manipulation of sport competitions (“match-fixing”) is a frontal attack on a core principle of sport: the uncertainty of the outcomes of competitions. UNESCO fosters the exchange of information between public authorities, the sport movement and betting operators, to ensure that manipulations can be effectively countered.
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22. International Working Group on Women and Sport (IWG)
23. Peace and Sport Organization
24. PL4Y International
25. Play the Game / Danish Institute of Sport Studies
26. Right to Play
27. The Association for International Sport for All (TAFISA)
28. World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA)
29. World Federation of the Sporting Goods Industry (WFSGI)

Intergovernmental Committee for Physical Education and Sport Membership 2016-2017

Permanent Consultative Council
Teaming up with UNESCO

The impact of UNESCO’s work in sport relies on a wide range of partnerships and on voluntary financial contributions. UNESCO’s sport team at Headquarters and in Field Offices offers extensive experience in international policy development, project management and networking with governments, as well as with the major sports organizations, specialized NGOs and academia.

To support UNESCO’s Sport Programme, financial contributions can be made by individuals or institutions to the Fund for the Elimination of Doping in Sport or to the International Fund for the Development of Physical Education and Sport.

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