

THE PROMOTION OF WOMEN AND GIRLS IN SWISS SPORTS FEDERATIONS: ADDRESSING, LAUNCHING, AND IMPLEMENTING DECISION-MAKING STRUCTURES AND PROMOTION PROGRAMMES

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Many historically male-dominated sports still have a lower participation of women and girls. At the same time, sports federations are becoming increasingly active in promoting women's sport. However, efforts need to reach the local clubs, which organizes actual sport participation, but do not necessarily follow the reasoning of the federation. This raises the question as (1) how the promotion of women and girls moves on a federation agenda and (2) how specific structures and programmes are launched and implemented in practice.

To examine these questions this study uses qualitative case studies in three selected Swiss sports federations. Ten problem-centred interviews with decision-makers and six focus groups with club representatives were conducted to trace policy cycle phases (Enjolras & Waldahl, 2007) of the promotion of women and girls.

The study shows processes of outsourcing a "women's sport department" in two federations to generate visibility. Yet, decision makers report insufficient financial and human resources to have impact beyond visibility and promotion programmes are (partially) funded by external actors. Committed actors at both federation and club levels as well as societal expectations and demands are key drivers of this development. In many cases, clubs are already committed to the topic. In summary, external pressures, steering impulses and organisational goals are conditions for the successful promotion of women and girls in organised sport.

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