



“GENDER EQUALITY” IN UNIVERSITY SPORTS

A study conducted by Mr. Aitor Canibe Sanchez, Head of the University Sports Department in Spain, Member of the EUSA Executive Committee, Chairman of the EUSA Gender Equality Working Group



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INTRODUCTION

This article deals with a study implemented by EUSA in collaboration with FISU and the EUSA member federations on the question of “Women and Sports” on the European scale.

It shows that EUSA’s involvement is and will remain fundamental as a sports structure responsible for presenting lines of action and work adopting the criterion of “Gender Equality” as one of the main objectives to be reached.

At the same time, in our national and international federations, we must take account of the real needs of our university students by defining guidelines and actions that increase and improve our practice in this field.

Consequently, the points of interest mentioned by the Council of Europe and its recommendations on physical exercise and sports in university circles are particularly pertinent.

Not only from the standpoint of the practice of sports, but also in terms of better representation of women in decision-taking and organizational positions at national and European levels.

The “Gender Equality” working group at EUSA was created in 2009 and Mr. Aitor Canibe Sánchez, Head of the University Sports Department in Spain (Higher Sports Council) and also a member of the EUSA Executive Committee, has been appointed to head the group.



INTRODUCTION (2)

Mrs. Johanna St. Clair Renard, Chairwoman of the Swedish University Sports Federation, works with this group to study and review potential actions and projects that could be implemented in the short and medium term.

We all know that studies on the participation of women in the University world are rare, be they national or international.

This is true not only with regard to the participation of women, but also for their presence in decision taking and organizational functions...

Within EUSA, we consider that under these circumstances improving knowledge of the real situation in our universities and federations is a priority. The presentation of this study will help us know more about the policies and strategies currently used by the member countries of EUSA and to analyze them.

The obtained data give us better grounds for tackling and estimating the reality of university sports, not only in quantitative terms, but also and essentially from the perspective of the quality and variety of programmes related to gender equality.

What is more, we can then orient our work on the basis of the experience of each country, and we will have a better understanding of needs and can reinforce the measures adopted by each country in this field.

The EUSA “Women and Sports” committee has determined the following priorities:

Participation of women as athletes nationally and internationally; Roles as leaders (women at the head of university sports departments and national university sports federations); Attentively taking account of projects and initiatives carried out by national federations and universities to promote “Gender Equality” through sports.



CONCEPT OF THE STUDY

After analysing the priority aspects to be considered in the study, we sent a document on line to 43 EUSA member countries.

18 countries had answered (41.86%) on 3 March 2011, the deadline for receiving responses.

The final report was presented at the EUSA General Assembly in Eilat (Israel) on 4 March 2011; this issue of EUSA Magazine includes a summary of the final results drawn from the information transmitted and experience shared by participating countries.



Mr. Aitor Canibe Sanchez presenting the study during the 2011 EUSA GA in Eilat

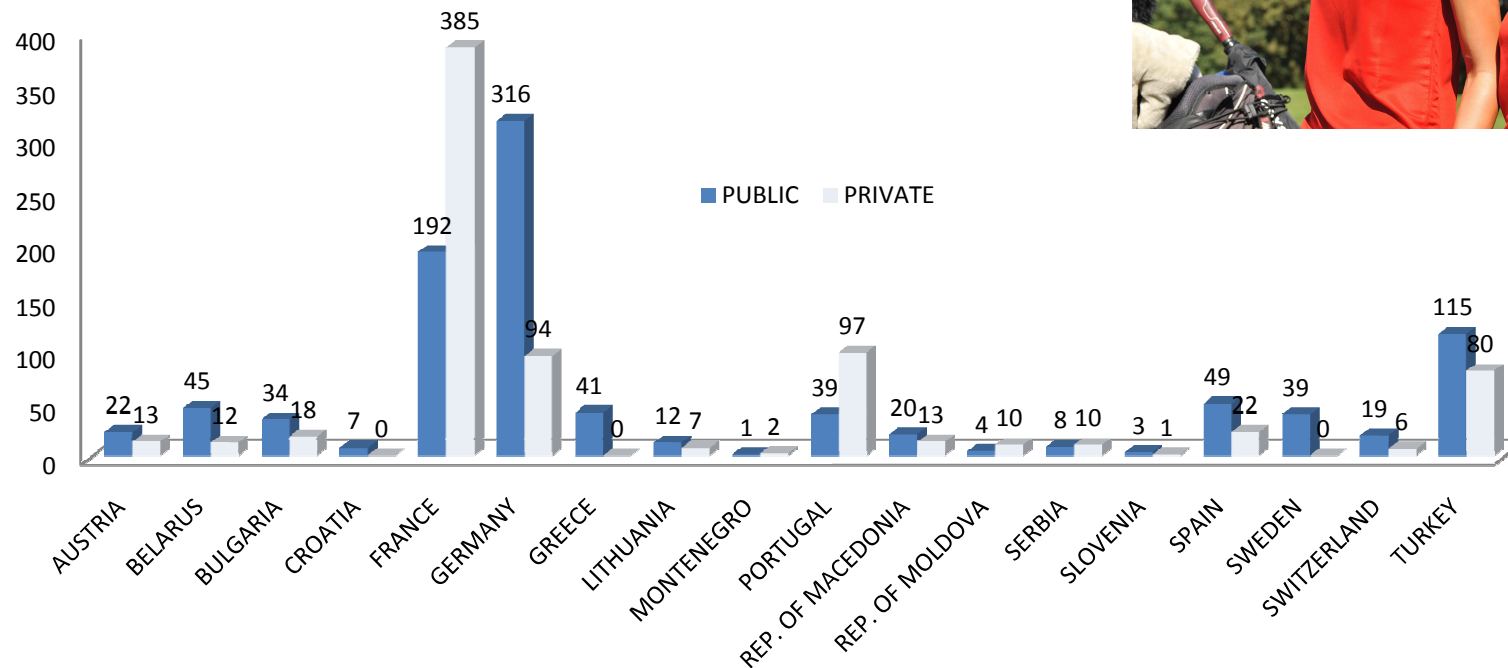
Answering Federations / Associations

	COUNTRY	NAME OF THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY SPORTS FEDERATION
1	Austria	Austrian University Sports Organisation
2	Belarus	Republican Center of Physical Education and Sports for Pupils and Students
3	Bulgaria	Association for University Sports Akademik
4	Croatia	Croatian University Sports Federation
5	France	French University Sport Federation
6	Germany	German University Sport Federation
7	Greece	Hellenic Committee for University Sport
8	Lithuania	Lithuanian Students Sport Association
9	Montenegro	University Sports Association of Montenegro
10	Portugal	FADU-Portuguese Academic Federation of University Sport
11	Republic of Moldova	University Sports Federation of Moldova
12	Republic of Macedonia	University Sport Federation of Macedonia
13	Serbia	University Sport Federation of Serbia
14	Slovenia	Slovenian University Sports Association
15	Spain	Spanish University Sport Committee
16	Sweden	Swedish University Sports Federation
17	Switzerland	Swiss University Sports Federation
18	Turkey	Turkish University Sports Federation



Universities and Students

a. HOW MANY UNIVERSITIES ARE THERE IN YOUR COUNTRY?



Although at first sight, this information does not seem pertinent, we realize that the percentage of private universities (43.8%) in Europe is close to that of public universities (56.2%), which is an extremely important aspect to define guidelines for our work on the theme “Women and Sports”.

In my opinion, the type of university will point to the kind of strategy we can implement to obtain more satisfactory results.

Do public and private universities have the same strategic objectives and policies?

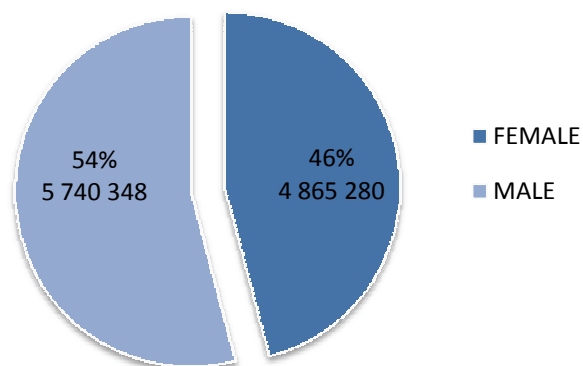
Given the great variety that exists today, we should think in terms of effective coordination between the various universities, the national and continental federations, and FISU so we can move forward and make progress in the practice of physical activity and sports.



Universities and Students (2)

b. HOW MANY STUDENTS ARE THERE AT UNIVERSITY LEVEL?

Repartition between male and female students

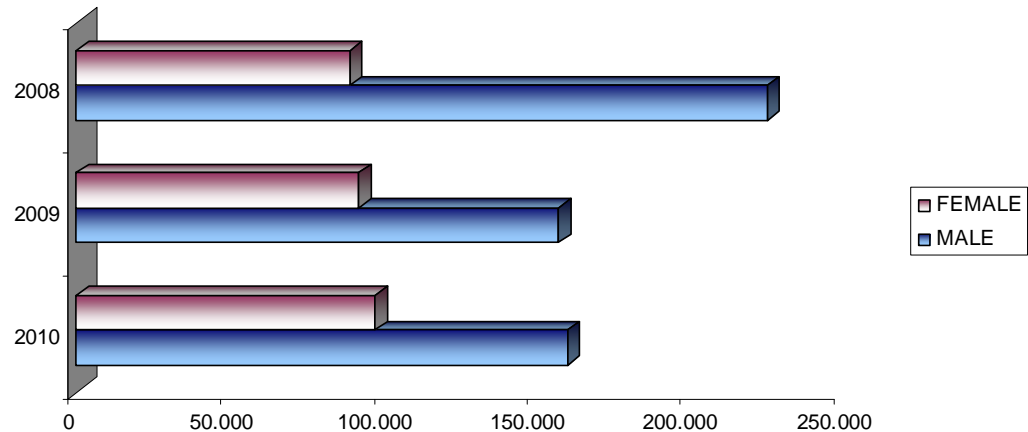


Country	Female Students
Belarus	58.6 %
Slovenia	57.8 %
Republic of Moldova	56.8 %
Sweden	55.0 %
France	54.4 %
Spain	54.3 %
Portugal	53.0 %
Austria	50.0 %
Turkey	28.8 %

For the 16 countries that answered this question, 46% of students are female and 54% are male. It is worth pointing out that in 8 countries, more than 50% of students are women (Belarus 58.6%). The lowest representation is found in Turkey with 28% of women.



University Sport Participation at National Level



12 countries answered the question about to participation of university students in activities in each of the countries at various levels. The responses showed that most important aspect to be stressed is an increase in participation of women by 10% over a period of two years (2008-2010).

Although these figures can cloud gaps that may be hard to estimate, we should still give positive reinforcement to the tendency for improvement of practice of sports by female university students in Europe.



NUSAs Actions with « Gender Equality » as priority objective

One of the most important aspects of this study deals with the knowledge of the projects and initiatives of national federations and universities to promote “Gender Equality” through sports.

Based on the responses obtained, we must realize that this subject needs considerable work for all the associations, all the federations and all the universities both to develop an ambitious programme in terms of practice and to consolidate the presence of women in positions for policy making, management, technical officials, ...

2 National University Sports Associations (12,5%) are « Organising Educational Events Specially for Women » and 5 (38,5%) are « Nominating Woment to Different Positions », 3 (20%) are conducting other actions.

Among these three, Portugal and Spain gave example of good practices.

PORTUGAL

They collaborate with the Portuguese Women and Sports Association to promote actions: “Driving Other Challenges” Female Coaches project – In October, 2010, they participated in a seminar where they presented the conclusion of this study. “The Girls Game” project in which they organize an action with National University Female Futsal Team.



SPAIN

They work with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Gender Equality: ***Spanish University Merit Award for Women and Sports among the universities:***

Two items are assessed:

- Participation in Spanish University Championships
- Projects and initiatives to promote gender equality through sports

Spanish University Merit Award for Women and Sports among students:

Two items are assessed:

- Academic curriculum
- Sports curriculum at national and international levels



Gender repartition among Directors of Academic Sport Services in Universities

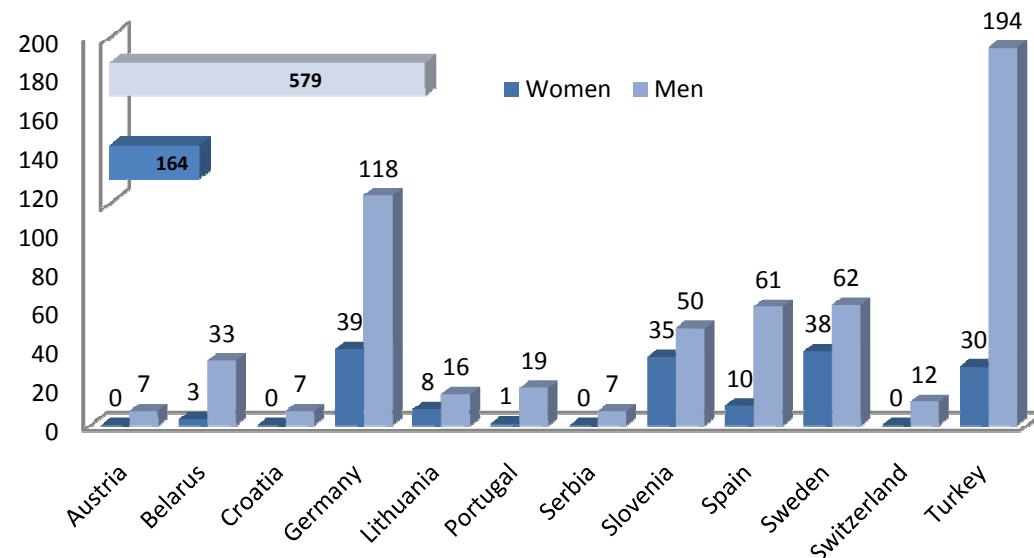
This question was also considered to be fundamental because ...

How can international federations like EUSA, and FISU, etc. take action within universities that are fully independent and have the power to define their own general policies, particularly those dealing with sports?

The graph shows that for the 12 countries that answered this question, 78% of the persons responsible for university sports departments are men and 22% are women.

It should also be underlined that the percentage female presence is higher in certain countries like Lithuania (50%), Slovenia (41%) and Sweden (38%).

In addition, in Austria, Croatia, Serbia and Switzerland, no positions of high responsibility for sports questions in universities are occupied by women.





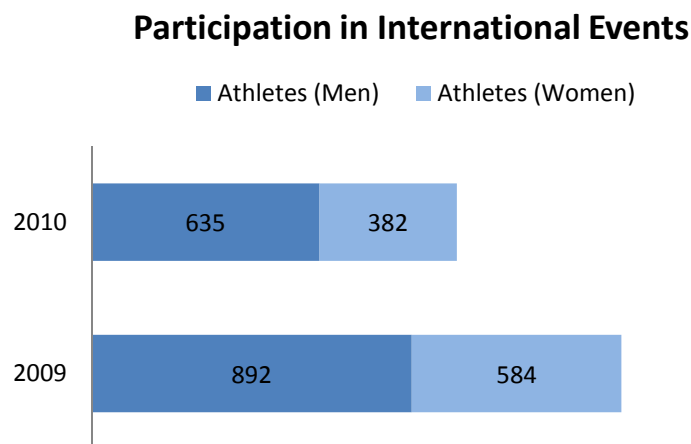
Participation at International Competitions

a. Students

The purpose of this question is to know more about participation of athletes and official representatives in events organized by FISU (World University Championships and Winter and Summer Universiades).

There are many aspects to be taken into account on this point, since the selection of national representatives differs for each of the countries varies with regard to participation in these championships.

Universities, sports federations for each of the disciplines, the Ministry of Sports ... are bodies that have a greater or lesser influence depending on the countries.



% Female Athletes	
2009 - 2010	
Sweden	48,57
Germany	46,56
Turkey	46,35
Spain	44,80
France	43,24
Slovenia	40,94
Croatia	38,46
Austria	37,50
Portugal	36,89
Lithuania	36,25
Switzerland	31,43
Serbia	28,69
Belarus	22,89
Republic of Moldova	16,13

As concerns participation of athletes, 14 countries answered and indicated that at the World University Championships in 2010, participation of women was 39.56% while for the Universiades 2011, the percentage was slightly lower.

For participation broken down by country, 6 exceeded 40% (Sweden, Germany, Turkey, Spain, France and Slovenia) and only three countries show participation of less than 30%.



Participation at International Competitions

b. Officials

On this point, 11 countries answered, informing us that the percentage of female officials was roughly 20% (19.24% in 2010 and 19.79% in 2009).

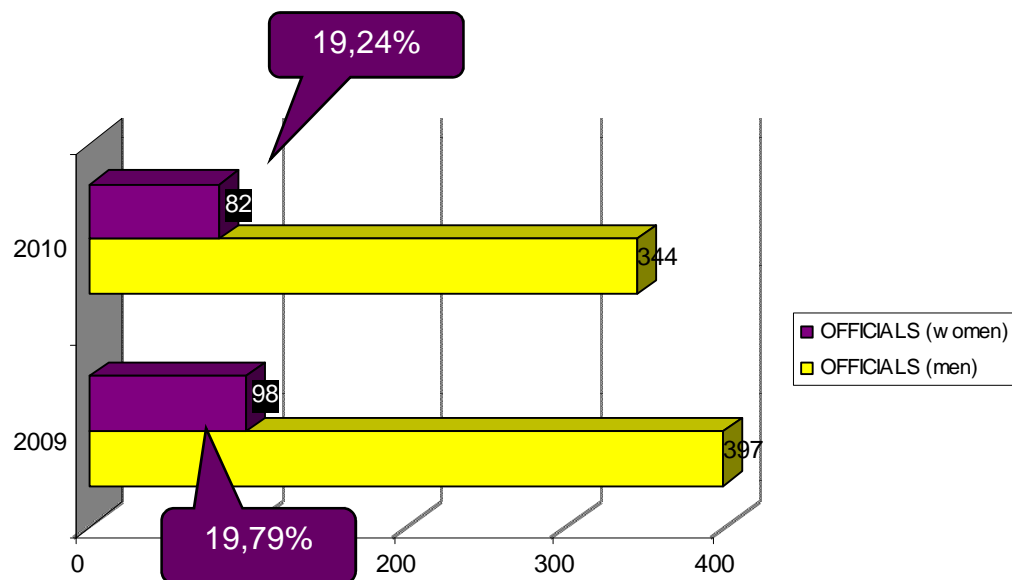
In both cases, it should be mentioned that, whether for athletes or officials, Sweden is the country that has the highest level of female presence.

In countries like Slovenia and Spain, the level was also good when taking account of participation of athletes and technical officials together.

How could FISU and the continental federations support and encourage the national federations to improve access of women to the activities and events we organize?

The response is simple, summarized in three key words to be developed at every chance: COORDINATION, INVOLVEMENT and EFFORT.

% Female Officials	
2009 - 2010	
Sweden	32.86
Switzerland	30.00
Austria	25.00
Slovenia	25.00
Spain	22.67
Belarus	21.05
France	16.79
Lithuania	15.15
Serbia	11.18
Turkey	10.20
Portugal	7.69

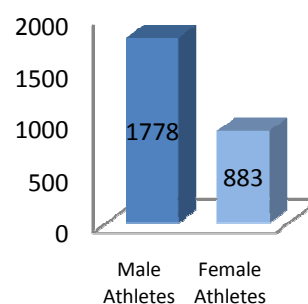
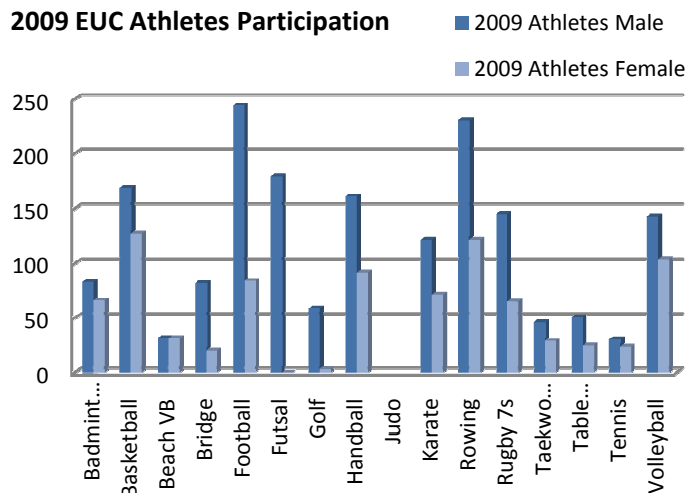




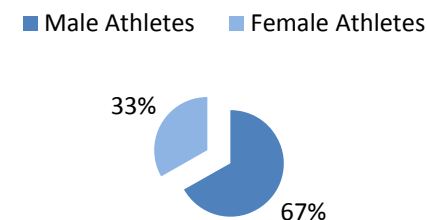
European Universities Championships

a. Athletes Participation Statistics

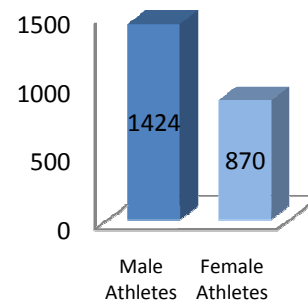
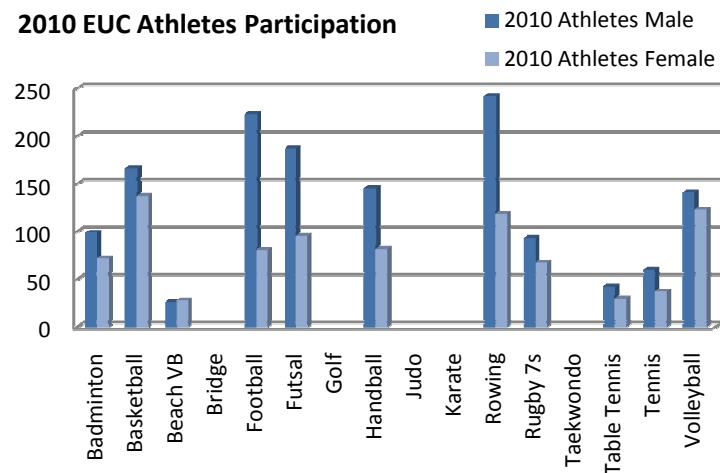
2009 EUC Athletes Participation



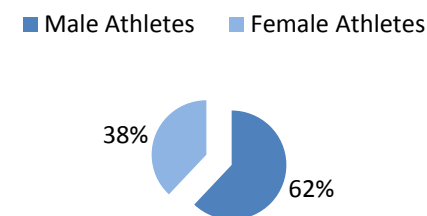
2009



2010 EUC Athletes Participation



2010



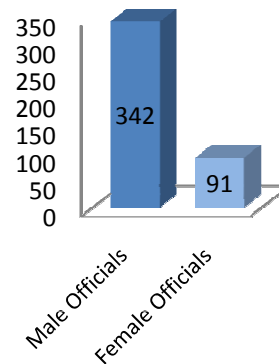
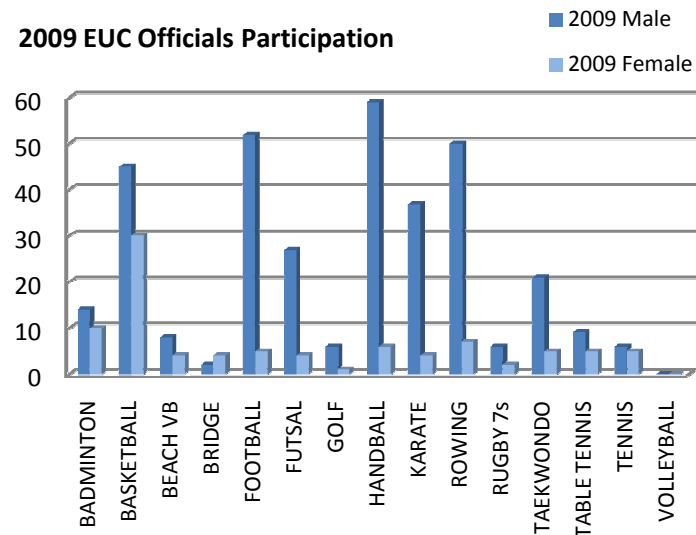
■ Male Athletes



European Universities Championships

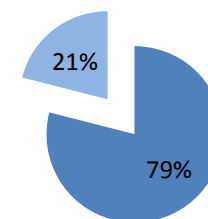
b. Officials Participation Statistics

2009 EUC Officials Participation

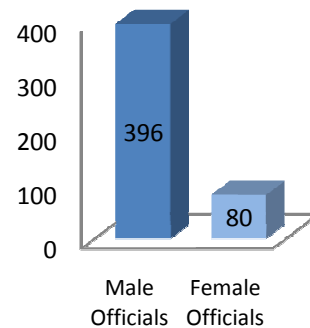
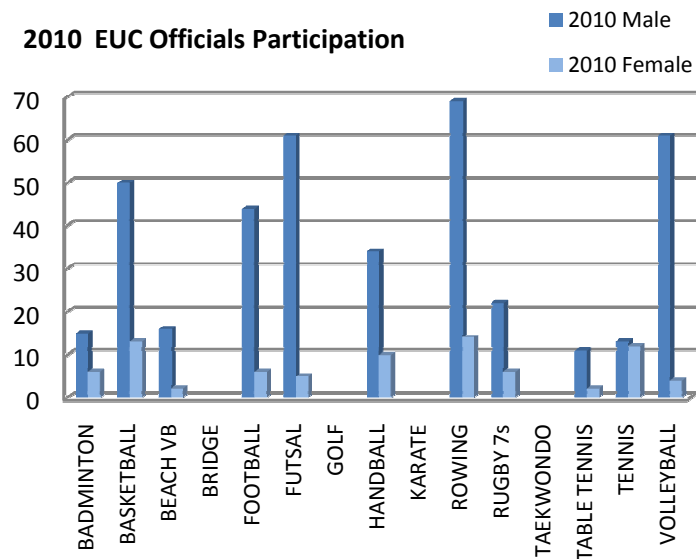


2009

Male Officials Female Officials

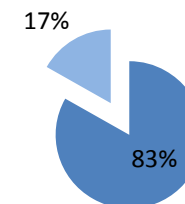


2010 EUC Officials Participation



2010

Male Officials Female Officials





European Universities Championships

c. Comments

For the data obtained on participation in various Universiades and countries present at the European Championships organized by EUSA for the years 2009 and 2010, the important conclusions below can be drawn:

Participation of women athletes increased by 5% (from 33% to 38%) even in 2010, when there were 4 fewer disciplines than in 2009. EUSA has managed to see that competitions for all disciplines include both male and female participation.

The presence of women as official representatives dropped by 4% (from 21% to 17%) although the fact that competitions in badminton, bridge, golf and karate were not organized may have had an indirect influence here.

On comparing the data for European championships with those indicated previously for the presence of women in FISU events, it can be observed that the percentages of athletes and of official representatives are very similar.





Conclusions

WHAT WOULD BE YOUR RECOMMENDATIONS TO ADDRESS THE GENDER ISSUE IN UNIVERSITY SPORT?

There are a number of specific proposals from countries that answered the survey.

I would like to give several of them here, as focusing on what to do in the future not only for EUSA but also for FISU and for University Sports in general, it is the really important point.

- A more diversified and inclusive sports system
- Always promote the same competitive sport with both genders
- Guidelines for the NUSF
- Different Fee for Women's competition
- Female Educational Programmes
- Promote more female volunteering
- During competition, organize workshops that include women and sports (with themes about women as athletes, managers or coaches)
- Joint projects with the FISU
- Involve women's sports in the EUSA competition schedule. For example Rhythmic Gymnastic, Swimming, Aerobic...
- Strive to involve more women at all levels in organization.

As far as EUSA is directly concerned, some actions could be taken to follow this study:

- CARRY OUT EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENTS FOR ALL OUR POLICIES, PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS.
- ENCOURAGE EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL MEMBERS.
- PUBLISH THIS PROGRAM ON OUR WEBSITE (facebook, twitter...), SETTING OUT THE PRIORITY ACTIONS AND GOALS TO BE ACHIEVED.